

Care leavers say... this! about the Sufficiency Strategy

Young people said
this...

"We need more training to prepare us for life after supported accommodation. Training needs to be at different levels, so we can build on what we already know".

...and this...

"We want to know what help we're entitled to from people like Job Centre Plus"

Before today, care leavers all over Devon were asked for their views.

This is what Children's Service decision makers think should happen with placements as a result of listening to those views.

DCC Children's Services say:

"We think this is important. This is near the top of our list for providers to think about. We want placements to be the best they can be and help you have the best experience possible. This means making sure the placement fits your individual needs and preferences. This will best help you to gain the skills you need to live independently as an adult."

As well as this...

"We're also making sure your placements talk to you and listen properly to what you want and need. This has been written into contracts with providers of placements. We'll want to know from you if your provider has listened to you. What ideas do you have to make this work?"

We say:

"I didn't know how to do anything. My foster carer listened to me and I haven't got a bad word to say about her, and I like it that she keeps in touch with me. Matching the placement with the person is really important."

"It has to be personal to you. Things weren't always my choice even if people say they were. I was listened to however when I insisted I didn't want to go into supported living. Carer's views aren't always my views. I hate it when they butt in. People should have the choice to stay with foster carers until they feel ready to leave - not forced into supported accom."

DCC Children's Services say:

"This is another item at the top of our list. Your placement should be helping you to access other support services that could help you get education, employment and training opportunities where you live."

As well as this...

"We've also developed more information about all the services and support that are available to you when you leave care. And we're working with District Councils to reduce Council Tax bills for Care Leavers."

We say:

"I'm not interested in the job centre but I do need to know what choices are out there. Placements don't know where to find things so they definitely need more help. It seems like PAs do most of that type of work. Foster carers need to know where to get support. Definitely a yes re council tax, up to what age, and where, please keep us informed."

"We want to understand and remember what we've been told we are entitled to. I forget what benefits I'm on. And support for our choices, even when they don't like it!"

Words we don't understand

Care leavers say... this! about the Sufficiency Strategy

...and this

“Support to feel happy in Placements by having good carers, support needs met and being treated as individuals”

DCC Children's Services say:

“This is very important to us too, and is in our list of what we can do to improve the things we do for you.

We want as many children and young people as possible to be brought up in family environments.

We're looking to increase the number of foster carers across Devon. We'll carry on the training we give them, and make it even better.

We'll help foster carers so they can provide a steady placement in the best way to support you. This is so you can stay with the same people wherever possible. It will also increase choice.

In the future we want children to be able to choose a placement out of several options, and for it to be a local placement. This might mean being adopted or being cared for by a special guardian, or friends and family.

We also want to continue to work with our residential providers to ensure, where needed, you can get into a good residential placement in Devon. A good quality placement is the one that best supports your needs.

We're making sure residential placement providers talk to you and listen properly to what you want and need. This has been written into contracts with residential providers. We'll want to know from you if you feel listened to by your provider. What ideas do you have to make this work?”

We say:

“We agree with most of this but the carers need a lot of support and training to help this happen. Social workers should speak to the young person BEFORE the carers and we should get to speak to them on our own. Not everyone can support all of our needs all of the time but if they can get it as close as they can, then that's good enough.”

“That happened to me; I had a good experience, I was with one foster carer. BUT: I didn't like getting all my files when I was 18 just sent electronically to me. There were things in there I didn't understand. I thought my mum didn't want me, turns out she wasn't given the choice and I was taken away. I don't know what a strategy meeting is and I now feel I wasn't involved in a lot of decisions about me.”

KEY MESSAGES

“Life story work is very important.

AND

When we apply online for our files there should be a box we can tick to nominate support to go through the files and that person should be sent a copy. It's very COLD.”

“HAVE FUN AND LISTEN PROPERLY!”



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Have we missed ANYTHING?