

CHANGE COUNCIL UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2018

Regional Children in Care Council

On the 13th of July the regional children in care council went on their annual residential to plan for this year's regional conference which is on the 2nd of November at St. James Park. The local authorities separated into groups and chose a topic to work on this year. Sunderland are working with south Tyneside and they are working on life story work, there workshop is called **It's my life**. Below is a table of the other workshops that will be a part of the conference.

<p style="text-align: center;">Its a family affair</p> <p>This workshop is designed to put you in the shoes of children in care. As an interactive workshop, you will be immersed in the complexities and barriers that children in care and their family endure during contact, resulting in a deeper understanding of the practical and emotional barriers that inhibit lifelong positive relationships.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Its my life</p> <p>Everyone has gaps in their life, whether it's because you were too young to remember or no one to explain what was happening at that time, as you get older this is where photo albums come in and explanations help but often, children in care do not get this, resulting in huge gaps in our understanding. This workshop will explore how to help people look back to move forward.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Right here, right now</p> <p>This workshop will take you through a young person's journey in the care system, and focus on their rights and entitlements and how this affected everything from practicalities to mental health and emotions. It will focus on young people's experiences on what happens when you don't get your rights and entitlements, with real life examples.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Who Cares?</p> <p>This workshop will explore Corporate Parenting and the difference it can make in the lives of the young people in our care. It is vitally important that we act in a way which ensures children in our care achieve the best outcomes for their future. Young people want to and expect to be treated the same as their peers. We will be doing fun based interactive activities which are based on real life scenarios.</p>

To register your interest please email regional.cicc@northtyneside.gov.uk you will then receive a booking form to secure your place on the event.



Two members of change council represented Sunderland and had a great time; they participated in team building, canoeing, ghyll scrambling and tree climbing.

Sunderland and South Tyneside ready to go ghyll scrambling!



TFC board – The Change Game

Change council came up with a game in 2016 which we named the 'Change Game' it is designed to help professionals understand what life can be like as a child looked after or leaving care. The game requires a group of professional, split into groups, who are given a board piece shaped as a young person and they have to draw their own young person. This can be done in two ways, stereotypes that they feel society has about children in care or actually what a young person in care may look or feel like.

Each group takes turns rolling the dice and the first group to reach the end wins. However, while making their way around the board there are thumbs up and thumbs down cards. If you land on a thumbs up it could read "you have moved into semi-independent accommodation and this is going well move forward 5 spaces" or you could land on a red card and this could say "you have been moved to a new placement and are not sure why this is happening and you feel unsettled and lost go back to the beginning".

Change council have played this game with Corporate Parents and most recently in August 2018 they played it with the TFC Board Members.



Recruitment and Selection

Members of change council have recently been involved in the recruitment for a new Director of Social Care and the Virtual Head Teacher. Young people met with HR and developed questions for the young person's panel. The young people choose a formal interview process. Young people have enjoyed being part of the process and empowered and that they are being listed to when they are involved in the recruitment of social care staff which is really important to them.

CLA Celebration and Awards Evening

Change Council have been working hard planning their annual Children Looked After Celebration Event and Christmas Party, they have lots of activities booked and nominations have started to filter in for the awards part of the evening. As with everything Change Council are always looking for valuable donations for the evening, particularly for their goodie bags that they like to give all CLA and LC young people when they leave that evening. If anyone has any ideas please email Loren Nergaard loren.nergaard@togetherforchildren.org.uk



Name change

There has been many discussions regionally about the name 'contact' which we refer to when many children have time with their family members, previous carers, friends and others. Contact can be very important in helping children develop their sense of identity and understand their lives, however children and young people don't like it is called 'contact', they feel it is too formal and not 'normal'. After much discussion regionally the children and young people in Change Council have discussed changing the name to 'family time'. They would also like to take this one step further and support Children's Social Care in relation to developing family time spaces. Change Council has raised with Jill Colbert and Martin Birch who are happy to progress with this. The young people will also work with TfC communications team to brand and communicate the change.

