



THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

May 2024

COOKING UP A TASTY CONFERENCE

Hi everyone,

We can't wait to see you face-to-face at our next **conference for care-experienced young people**.

The event will be taking place at The Lighthouse Young People's Centre on **Thursday 30 May 2024**, starting at **11.00am**. Find out more on page **2**. There will be free Caribbean food !!!

A big shout out to the new apprentices who have just started their apprenticeships in Fostering, Rights and Participation, Commissioning and our Youth Offending Service Music Studio – **Louise, Shannon, Tayla, Edward, Julie-Ann** and **Charlie** – well done and welcome 😊 And a big thank you to Dawn Crooks who coordinates the Trust care leaver apprenticeship scheme and has made these life-changing opportunities possible.

We also want to wish you all the **best of luck with your exams** if you are nearing these. Read our tips to help you prepare on page **8**.

NEW DATES - We offer 45-minute drop-in sessions at The Willows to talk about careers - **see Page 13**.



Massive thanks to Maria Taylor (above left), Tracy Fitzgerald (above right), Kadene Williams, South 2 Team and Michelle Gardner (Trust staff) for donating and collating hamper items, prizes for the May conference.

We love your good news

If you have anything you would like to be considered for next month's edition please email it to Juliette Walton.

Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
If you can't get hold of your PA, please call: **0121 464 1229**.

*****NEED HELP ? CALL OUR DUTY LINE ON 0121 464 1229*****

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No need to book **Just turn up!**



BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST

The Conference

Come and find out about all of the opportunities and support services.



**Freshly cooked
Caribbean lunch**
veggie options available*



**Prizes and
Giveaways**



Meet new people

Visiting organisations: Rees Foundation, Springboard Hospitality, UHB Learning Hub, Aston Villa Foundation, Epic Youth and much more!

Thursday 30th May 11am - 4pm

The Lighthouse Young People's Centre 100 Alma Way, B19 2LN



Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
07825117381

USEFUL APPS AND WEBSITES

Here are three apps/websites that you can help you in daily life .



Couch to 5k

- If you want to get into running but don't know where to begin, the NHS Couch to 5K app will get up to speed no matter your experience or fitness level. You can work through at your own pace that has helped thousands of people improve their confidence, endurance and enjoyment when running.



Libby

- Read and listen to over 30,000 eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines for free. To get started, email: enquiries@libraryofbirmingham.com with your library card number and request a Libby/eLibrary account. Then download Libby, search Birmingham Libraries and see what's on offer!



Too Good To Go

- You can have a positive impact on the planet while eating your favourite foods. Local restaurants, takeaways, bakeries and supermarkets all end up with surplus food. But now you can reserve a tasty selection of it and pick up a bargain towards the end of the day.



Duolingo

- Want to learn a new language? Then Duolingo is the app for you. It's fun, free and effective – even if you only do 5-10 minutes a day. With 100 total courses across 43 languages, it's a great way to pick up a new skill that can really benefit you in the future.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE BLESST CENTRE



BLESST (Building, Learning, Education, Safe Space, Transition) CIC (Community Interest Company) is a group of individuals that are dedicated to creating an environment where there are opportunities for self-development, learning and transitional change for all.

BLESST is made of a grassroots community of four directors and five voluntary specialist workers and three youth and community leaders.

Their mission: To build relationships, learn with others, educate within a safe none judgemental space, and create better life transitions for deprived communities.

Find out more: <https://www.blesst.co.uk>

OUR OFFICE BASE FOR THE 18+ DUTY SERVICE

Below is some important information for young people about access to our 18+ duty service for care-experienced young people. We are here to help, either by phone or in person.

To contact the 18+ duty service, please continue to call our duty line, 0121 464 1229. There is always a Personal Adviser and 18+ Manager available to give advice or help.

Our office base

We are open:

- Monday – Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm
- Friday – 8.45am to 4.15pm

You can call in at our new office, **One Avenue Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 4DU** between these hours.

Ask the friendly reception staff, as you go in, to let the 18+ duty team know you would like to see a Personal Adviser. Reception will call us and a team member will come to reception to see you. We have access to a quiet space where you can speak in confidence.

Buses to use: The main bus routes are the Number 65 and 67, both go from the city centre. These buses will drop you right outside One Avenue Road, and the Number 8 route crosses nearby. The 65 and 67 buses go from outside the large B&M store in the city centre.

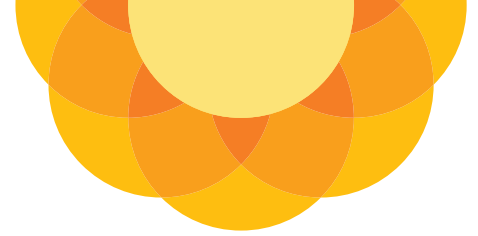


Walking here

From Birmingham New Street Station there are a number of pedestrian routes you can take from New Street Station to get to One Avenue Road. This is the most direct route that follows a designated pedestrian path from the station, all the way through to the office and is well lit.



A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF TWO SOCIAL WORKERS



MEET CINTIA AND DOMINIKA

Cintia and Dominika are senior social workers who joined Birmingham Children's Trust in 2019 on an ASYE (Assisted and Supported Year in Employment). They have both grown and developed within the profession ever since.

To bring you a bit closer to the work of the Trust, we spoke to them about their roles, the challenges they face and what it takes to be a good social worker...

Cintia: "Myself and Dominika work in the ASTI team, which stands for Assessment and Short-Term Intervention.

"We are on duty every five weeks, which is when we get our allocations - our families.

"I'm on duty this week. Yesterday, for example, I was allocated two families and four children.

"So now I have three working days to contact the family, arrange a home visit to go and see them and complete my notes.

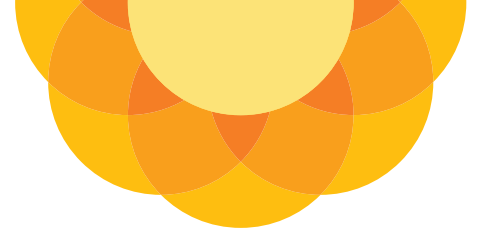
"It's very fast-paced, a lot of pressure and you have to make quick decisions.

"Whether you are seeking legal advice, going to child protection conferences, directly working with the children, speaking to parents and professionals, or completing genograms (family trees) and family histories."

Dominika: "Often we are the first professionals that go out and see a family, and they are not always welcoming.

"You have to have a set of skills. You have to be resilient, strong within, know what you want and be able to stand up for yourself. Thinking outside the box is important, too.

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF TWO SOCIAL WORKERS



Cintia: “Definitely, you have to be creative in how you communicate. It’s not just verbal and non-verbal but body language. A lot of cues are in body language, especially for children, and you have to be able to pick up on that. We also work with special educational needs children.

“You might also find you need to use an interpreter. Even this week, I asked Dominika to interpret for me as she’s Polish, and I was working with a Polish family.”

Dominika: “It’s important to build relationships with this job.

“I start from a place of: ‘We’re not here to put you in any trouble or discomfort. We just want to see what’s not working well for you at the moment and how we can change that and help you’.

“They usually have frustrations. But as soon as we’ve explained everything and have been respectful and listened to them, everything is usually OK.”

Cintia: “Families sometimes have stereotypical views; that we’re only there to remove the child.

“It’s about being open and honest with the family, breaking down those barriers of why they don’t want to engage with us and explaining that we’re only there to support them.

“It can be difficult but it’s just about remembering that, at the end of the day, we’re all humans. These families are the same as us, they’re just going through a difficult time and we’re there to support them.”

Dominika: “With my background of working with children in care and seeing the challenges children were faced with and how difficult placements can be, in my view, the child is safest with the family and however we can make it safe, that’s going to be the plan.”

Cintia: “For me, the best part is working with the children. Going into homes, just sitting on the floor, playing with them, drawing things. Anything, because they’re so precious.

“It’s also seeing the progress families make when we can make a positive change in their life.”

Dominika: “It’s that gratification for me as well. It’s the fact that I came to this family at crisis point and I was able to make sure the child was safe, one way or another. Whether that’s with a child protection plan or as a case closure because the risk is no longer there.

“That’s a very, very nice feeling and the highlight of our week when it happens.”

Big thanks to Cintia and Dominika.

Stay tuned for an interview with different Trust staff in June 2024’s Trust Times.



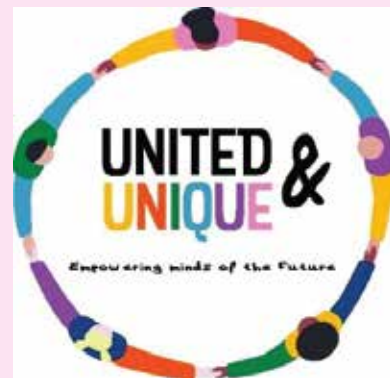
'ME FIRST' RETREAT IS ROARING SUCCESS

A women-only care-experienced 'Me First Retreat' was held earlier in May at the Red Shed in Edgbaston, hosted by Trust partner Journal to Dreams.

The aim of the session was to ensure every woman taking part had a safe space to restore, retreat and re-energise for life when feeling a bit depleted.

It enabled the group to look at ways to develop and strengthen their bond with other members of the group, to enable them to grow through sharing their lived-experiences.

The retreat was attended by young women from the Trust's Care Leavers' Forum and Young Parents Group - both part of United & Unique - the collective group name for all the representative groups in Birmingham.



Retreat participant **Lele** said:

"This women's only session was a great event. Really enjoyed all of us coming together and having fun. Looking forward to many more events like this!"

EXAM AND REVISION TIPS

by Juliette Walton

Many of you will be taking exams soon, and from my own experience – it can be stressful. I have pulled together some useful advice – it's only brief but could really help. So, please read and pass on to anyone else who might need it.

Top five tips for revision

- Make sure your exams are in the diary – what, where and when.
- Make a plan of what to revise and when, and then make yourself stick to the plan.
- Don't revise for too long at any one time – take a break every 45 mins, move around and get some fresh air.
- Ask for help from your tutor, head of department or learning mentor - use past papers if they are available.
- Look after yourself – eat and drink healthily, get a good night's sleep, keep in touch with the kind and caring people (and animals) in your life.

Top five exam tips

- Using the top five revision tips, be prepared for your exam.
- Eat before the exam, your brain works better on food and take water into the exam.
- Arrive in good time – early – with any equipment you need.
- Look through the whole paper and start with the easy questions.
- If it doesn't go well, don't beat yourself up. Remember - from every difficult experience, we learn and become stronger.

If you want any help with your exam prep, speak to your PA or Juliette Walton.

We also have mentors who can help you get through. Good luck 😊.



Suicide and self-harm prevention

If you, or anyone you know, is feeling suicidal, or wanting to harm themselves, there is always help available.

However bad you are feeling right now, there is help that you can get.

Lots of people have felt like this and - with help – managed to get through it.

Here are some numbers and links to supportive professionals and organisations who offer help to those feeling suicidal.

These links will be included in all future newsletters so they will always be here for you to access.



- Papyrus has a lot of useful advice and also a suicide prevention helpline.

<https://papyrus-uk.org/>

- Samaritans helpline **116 123**
- SANE helpline **0300 304 7000**
- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) (for men) **0800 58 58 58**
- Help Guide suicide prevention

www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.htm

Also please see the [TESS offer](#) on **page 13**.



The Eve Brook Scholarship Fund

25 years of helping young people go to college

by David Edgar, Chair, Eve Brook Scholarship Fund

The Eve Brook Scholarship Fund is an independent charity which was set up 26 years ago to help Birmingham care leavers to go to university. It was founded by a Birmingham city councillor, Eve Brook. Eve had been in charge of children's services and had been inspired by the young people she met. She was sure many of them could go to university if they had the chance.

In 1997, Eve learnt she had cancer and set up EBSF before she died in March 1998. Since then, Eve's charity has spent £445,000 supporting nearly 300 young people to go to university. Currently, 95% of what the fund spends goes directly to young people.

The Fund's Trust meets approximately five times a year to consider applications. We're helped by Sarah Barker from Birmingham Children's Trust 18+ Care Leavers Service, and we work closely with the Trust.

We help with fees for students who can't get loans, support for expenses like travel and childcare, grants for equipment and materials, and a £3,000 postgraduate bursary. Subjects studied by our recent beneficiaries range from drama, creative writing and animation to engineering, biomedical science, forensic psychology and law.

Birmingham care leavers in higher education are a huge success story. Nationally, 6% of care leavers go to university. In Birmingham, over the last five years, it has ranged from 7% to 12%.

To find out more: Either drop EBSF an email at evebrookfund@gmail.com or visit our website at www.evebrookfund.org.uk, which gives more details about the fund's work, including how to apply (under Award Schemes). Or view our short film, made to celebrate our 25th anniversary last year. <https://vimeo.com/802625640/e9eea87675>

We will be delivering a 'Going to University' Workshop at the conference for care-experienced young people on Thursday 30 May 2024, 11am – 3.30pm at The Lighthouse Young People's Centre in Aston.

Child Trust Funds



If you were born in the UK and turned 18 after 1 September 2020, and don't have details of your Child Trust Fund (CTF), please use the online form below to find your details and take control of your CTF (usually worth £250 or more): <https://findctf.sharefound.org>

Junior Individual Savings Accounts

If you turned 18 before 1 September 2020 (born since 3rd January 1994) you may have a Junior Individual Savings Account (JISA) set up with £200. To be eligible you must have been in care in the UK, continuously for 12 months or more, since 2 January 2012. Please use the online form below to find your details so you can take control of your JISA:

<https://myjisa.sharefound.org>

If you need to contact the Share Foundation regarding the online forms please email:

info@sharefound.org

Or call

01296 310400

For further enquiries please contact:
Tracey.Britton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

SIGN UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE

We are looking to provide future newsletters in a different way for care-experienced young people like yourselves.

The plan is to move to using an emailer platform called Mailjet to send you updates direct to your inbox.

To do this we will need your permission to send direct emails from this platform, so we kindly need you to complete a short online form on our website. **Scan the QR code below** to go to the form. There are just eight quick questions.



Once you click 'Sign up' at the bottom of the form you will be sent an email to verify that you wish to sign up to future newsletters. Please make sure you accept this invite, and your name and email will then be added to our database.

You can of course opt out of receiving these newsletters at any time, using the 'unsubscribe' link, but we hope you will stay with us for future newsletters and bulletins.

A screenshot of a web form titled "Sign up for our care-experienced news and information". The form has a header with the same diverse group of people illustration. Below the title, it says "Please add your details below." and lists three input fields: "First name", "Last name", and "Email address". Each field has a white input box with a thin border.

YOUR GOOD NEWS IN MAY '24

We are continuing to celebrate your good news in this newsletter.

Congratulations to every one of you on your achievements in May 2024.

- **Peyton** has completed their nursing degree achieving a First grade. Incredible stuff!



Cash transfer scheme

Kings College London are doing a research project which involves making cash transfers to care experienced young people aged 18-25.

The purpose of the research is to see if the cash (which doesn't have to be declared to DWP because it is a 'gift') makes a positive difference to wellbeing.

To be part of the research you will need to complete an online survey - you will get a £20 voucher for completing.

Scan the QR code below to go to the survey:



NHS
Birmingham and Solihull

Care Leavers Prescription Form



NHS Birmingham and Solihull have published a form for you to apply for free prescriptions.

Simply scan the QR code below, complete the form, save it and send it to:

nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net



You can get a copy of this form from your Personal Adviser or by sending an email to:

nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net

THANK YOU **MASTERCHEFS**

Big thanks to Personal Advisor Collette Jeffrey (above right) for delivering home-cooked meals to The Willows for the Friday careers drop-in sessions.

Big thanks to Lewis the chef from The Robin Hood pub in Ironbridge (above left) for making hot meals for the same sessions, pictured with Juliette Walton!





Develop Me - May 2024 update

Melissa Jackson, Develop Me lead (pictured below) said: "There's been amazing milestones reached on the Develop Me Programme. It has been nearly two years since we launched the programme. Thank you to all the social workers, PA's and the wider team for the support and referrals.

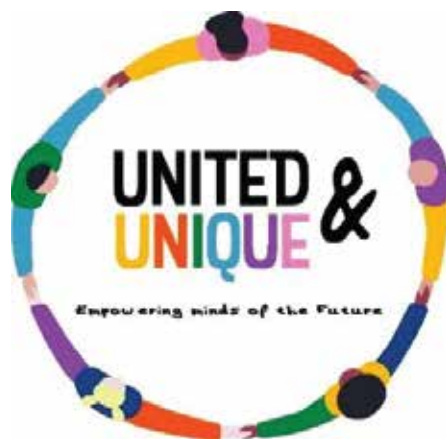
"We have received over 50 referrals since we started the programme and currently have 30 active mentees accessing support, participating in workshops and working with mentors.



"From our feedback all of our mentees who have participated have developed confidence, self-esteem, relationship skills, overcome anxiety and are starting to engage in education or training."

Here is some feedback from our participants:

- "Xxx is an absolute delight to mentor."
- "It is going well and I think Xxx has grown in confidence in a short space of time and I think is now comfortable talking to me."



Thanks to Trust apprentice Rakia Gayle we now have three new social media accounts to share the great work and news of all of our groups that represent different children and young people in Birmingham.

'United & Unique' is the collective name for the different groups, such as the Care Leavers' Forum and the Children in Care Council.



The new social media accounts are on 'X', 'Instagram' and 'Tik Tok'.

To find links to them all, please scan the QR code below:





Careers **advice** and **guidance** appointments with Juliette at The Willows on Friday afternoons

- Do you have dreams and ambitions about what you'd like to do in the future?
- Are you hoping to get a job that will make you proud, connect you with people, earn some decent money, and give you independence?

Well everything is possible – you just need to know where to start.

If you would like a careers advice and guidance appointment, to talk through your ideas and options, work out where to start and which way to go, then book a 45-minute slot using Eventbrite.

Venue: The Willows, Emmeline St, Birmingham B9 4NG.

How to get there: Bus number 17 or 60 from Birmingham city centre.

Get off near the McDonalds by Bordesley Green roundabout, cross over the road and it is a three minute walk to The Willows.

Times and dates

Slots are available to book for the following times and dates:

- Friday 31 May 2024
- Friday 28 June 2024
- Friday 26 July 2024
- Friday 9 August 2024
- Friday 23 August 2024

- 1.30pm - 2.15pm
- 2.15pm - 3.00pm
- 3.00pm - 3.45pm
- 3.45pm - 4.30pm

Book a slot

To book a slot please scan the QR code below, and then click on the Eventbrite link for the day you wish to book, or ring Juliette on 07825 117381 to secure a slot:



Therapeutic Emotional Support Service (TESS)

Come along and join our monthly TESS afternoon drop-in sessions for Birmingham's 18+ care-experienced young people, aimed at enhancing your emotional wellbeing.

Where will the sessions take place:

TESS, 67 Bournbrook Road, Selly Oak B29 7BX

Phone to book: 0121 675 1781

Dates: These will take place on the first Wednesday of every month.

The next session will be on

5 June 2024.

Time: 12.00pm – 4.00pm.

What can I expect:

- A relaxing and welcoming environment with an outside garden and indoor area.
- Connection with the TESS 18+ team, which will give you the opportunity to talk and engage in activities.

Staff available on the day:

- Davinia Burrell • Paul Campbell
- Vibha Jivan • Sally Burgess
- Emily Kigonya • Rachel Quinn



Employment and Emotional Wellbeing

Continuing to work can be challenging when we feel anxious or low in mood and it is natural for us to want to avoid places or situations where we feel stressed. Whilst we might feel better for a while, the longer we avoid places where we feel anxious the more difficult it becomes to manage our feelings.

This can become a vicious cycle. This also leads to feeling more isolated, stressed, low in mood and self-confidence. If we stay off work due to experiencing anxiety or low mood these difficulties can feel worse. The longer we avoid work places because of the way we feel, the more challenging it can become to commit to work life.

It feels daunting to go into employment because of the new responsibilities that this involves and the impact this might have on our entitlement to benefits. One way of helping us prepare for this is to consider working part-time to begin with.

Another option is to explore volunteering opportunities to help build our self-confidence. There are lots of opportunities to volunteer with local charities, for example food banks or charity shops. Please click on this link for the Birmingham Voluntary Service Council for more information:

<https://www.bvsc.org/>

Returning to work provides you with a routine, gives you a sense of identity and purpose, opportunities to form friendships, better financial security and the feeling that you are playing an active part in society.

Please note the following links for tips on maintaining good mental health:

10 ways to maintain your positive mental health on Spunout - **<https://bit.ly/495lqRK>**

Top tips for care-experienced young people - IMO - **<https://bit.ly/4ar0BCw>**

START YOUR CARE CAREER WITH PRINCE'S TRUST



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE PRINCE'S TRUST

Are you aged 18-30 and would like to work as a Health Care Assistant in a Residential or Nursing Home?

Or become a Support Worker helping those with disabilities and mental health issues?

Or even work in Community Care or the NHS?



Make a difference to someone's life

Join Embark Learning's one week training programme and we will...

- Guarantee you a job interview upon completion
- Offer local, flexible shifts with the option of trying different care roles/settings
- Interview support and a FREE DBS
- Support to pay for essentials when starting a new job such as travel expenses and uniform
- Offer 6 months progression support from a Prince's Trust Youth Development Lead to support you with your next steps
- You need to have a previous Health and Social care qualification at Level 1 to 3 or some personal experience of helping a friend or family member for 6 months or more



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



START
SOMETHING

OVER 80%

OF CANDIDATES WHO COMPLETE THE PROGRAMME ENTER EMPLOYMENT!

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

You can Enrol and register your interest using the ENROL NOW button on our website (embarklearning.co.uk)

ENROL NOW



SCAN ME

The Cold Store, Beorma Quarter, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR
Information session: Tuesday 28th May, arrive at 10am, finish no later than 1pm
Course Starts: Monday 3rd June - Friday 7th June
Course Times: 9.30am - 3.30pm

Interested in a rewarding career in care?



Would you like to work as a Health Care Assistant in a Residential or Nursing Home?

Or become a Support Worker helping those with disabilities and mental health issues?

Or even working in Community Care or the NHS?



Make a difference to someone's life

Our 4 week training will...

- Guarantee you a job interview upon completion
- Achieve two accredited qualifications, L1 intro to Health & Social care & Children's & Young People's Settings (QCF) plus Level 1 in Digital Skills if required
- Offer local, flexible shifts with the option of trying different care roles/settings
- Interview support and a FREE DBS
- Excellent opportunities for progression including Level 2 and 3 Diplomas in Care
- No experience or driving licence required



OVER 80% of candidates who complete the programme enter employment!



SCAN ME

Scan the QR code or visit www.embarklearning.co.uk and click the button to register your interest in a course near you.

ENROL NOW

in partnership with



Central Library, 316 High St, West Bromwich, B70 8DZ
Information Session: Wednesday 29th May, arrive by 10am, finish no later than 2pm
Course Starts: Monday 3rd June - Friday 28th June (Mon to Fri)
Course Times: 9.30am - 3.30pm



Care Leaver Internship Scheme

Realising Potential



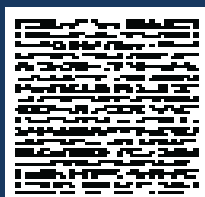
About the scheme

The scheme offers interns an 18-month job role in one of our government departments. Here, you will be able to gain key skills and knowledge in a professional environment.

Whilst on the scheme, you will receive the same salary as other employees who are your grade in the department. You will also be eligible for civil servant benefits such as a competitive pension and generous annual leave. After the first 12 months, there is a chance that you could be made a permanent member of staff. Please see our website for further information.

Eligibility criteria

- Aged 18 - 30 as of 08/07/2024
- Eligible for a leaving care package
- Satisfy the Civil Service nationality requirements
- No qualifications needed!



Visit our website for
more information

Application Process



10th June - 8th July
Apply to the scheme via
Civil Service Jobs



24th July
Successful candidates
invited to book interview



5th - 9th August
Interviews take place



23rd August onwards
Candidates notified of
interview outcome



princes-trust.org.uk

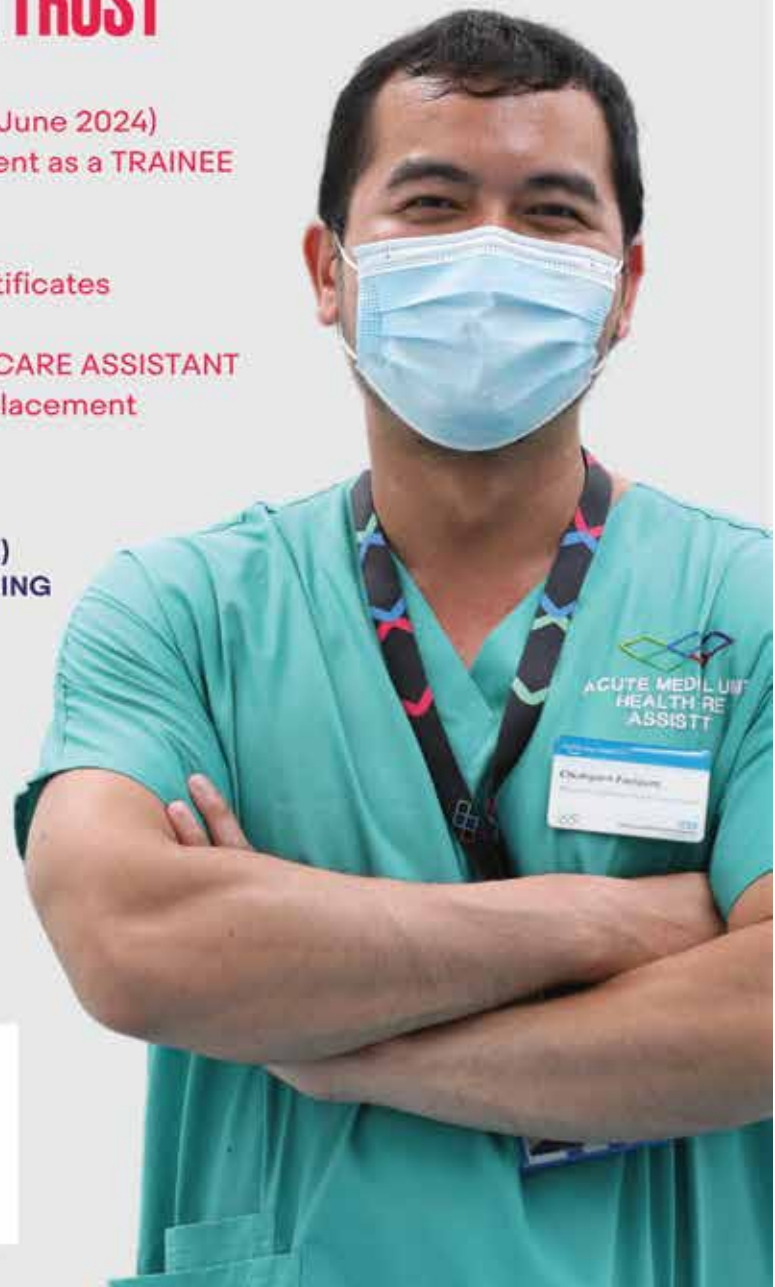


WANT A JOB AS A HEALTHCARE ASSISTANT? THE PRINCE'S TRUST HELP 18-30-YEAR-OLDS INTO WORK.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

- FREE 5 day course (10th, 11th, 13th , 15th and 20th June 2024)
- Guaranteed interview for a 12 week paid placement as a TRAINEE HEALTH CARE ASSISTANT
- Placement starts in August / September
- Access training and work towards NHS Care Certificates
- Birmingham based role vacancies
- Full and part time positions available for HEALTHCARE ASSISTANT roles upon successfully completing the trainee placement (£20,000+per annum pro-rata starting salary)

ELIGIBLE FOR 18-30-YEAR-OLDS
MUST HAVE THE RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK (FULL TIME)
MUST NOT BE IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING
MUST LIVE IN BIRMINGHAM OR SOLIHULL
MUST BE ABLE TO ATTEND SESSIONS IN DIGBETH AND MOSELEY



To apply, contact:
Steve.belcher@princes-trust.org.uk
text 'Call Me' 07908 155 910
Freephone 0800 842 842

Care Leavers' Forum

We are a group of care leavers who work together to use our experiences to make things better for other children in care and care leavers.

We feel that the group:

- Stops us feeling alone and isolated
- Makes us feel like we are making a difference
- Builds up our confidence
- Builds up skills, such as speaking in front of other people

What we do:

- Interview new Trust staff
- Use our experience in producing and delivering training
- Discuss issues – what works and what needs to change, and make changes happen

We tell people what we need and get people to work in a different way. We don't share anything that is painful or private and have lots of support for you. Some of this work is paid (in vouchers). We also organise days out – like a trip to Drayton Manor.

How we do this:

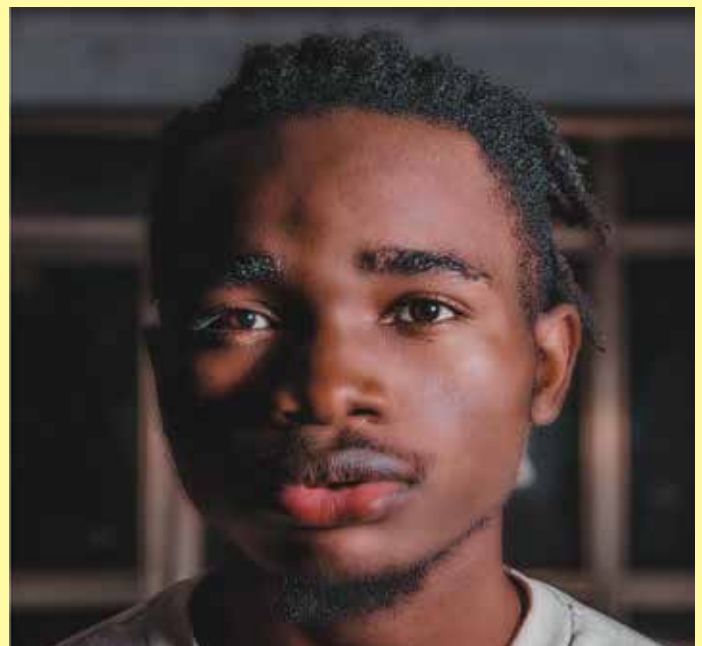
- We meet every month, sometimes face-to-face and sometimes online
- When we meet face-to-face we have food together
- We get help with transport to the meetings if we need it

Over the next few months we are particularly going to look at **HOUSING** (including the state of housing, repairs and semi-supported) and **HEALTH** (including mental health, in-patients, autism and neurodiversity). We have work to do for the city council and NHS on these topics, so if you have experience please get in touch.

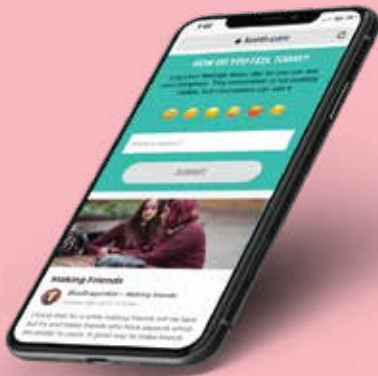
Contact us today

Try **Julia Balston**, Children's Rights Officer
Julia.balston@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
or **Emily Blythe** by text or call **07704 539 011**
Emily.Blythe@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Emily is our Transformation & Improvement Apprentice!



Give Kooth a try



Kooth offers free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support, with many different features and sections to offer you support such as:

- **Magazine** - helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team.
- **Discussion Boards** - start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community. Lots of topics to choose from!
- **Chat with the team** - chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.
- **Daily Journal** - write in your own daily journal to track your feelings or emotions and reflect on how you're doing.

Visit the **Kooth** website to see the features listed above and much more!

www.kooth.com

THE TRUST TIMES

Back issues of the 18+ newsletter

You can find the last two years worth of 18+ newsletters on the Birmingham Children's Trust website. Many of the feature articles, including those providing information and guidance, are still valid.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/3yliug3>

REES FOUNDATION June 2024 UPDATE

Rees Foundation run a number of groups called '**Let's Connect**', which allow you to connect with other members of the care-experienced community. Rees find that these networks can lead to lifelong and empowering friendships.

Website: www.reesfoundation.org

The groups are facilitated using a team whose members may be care-experienced or individuals who are experienced by profession, with the ultimate aim of creating a safe place where care-experienced people like you can meet to discuss matters of personal interest.

Courses in June 2024

Access to Records Support Group

Date: 11 June 2024
Time: 7.00pm - 8.00pm



This support group is for care-experienced people who have either already accessed their records or are in the process of accessing them and need support.

This session is being hosted by Rees ambassador Jackie McCartney.

Circle of Support

Date: 5 June 2024
Time: 7.00pm - 8.00pm



Group for care-experienced people of all ages to discuss a range of topics. Each online session focuses on something different.

To sign up to any of the groups, please complete the form in the link below:
<https://form.jotform.com/203141499622353>

Unite

Foundation

Education is for everyone.

The Unite Foundation supports estranged and care-experienced students with rent-free accommodation for up to 3 years through a nationwide scholarship scheme.

Deadline to **apply**

If you know someone who is thinking of going to university this year, or has already started their degree but could benefit from the scholarship, applications are now open until **14 June 2024**.

How to **apply**

All of the information, including eligibility and how to apply, can be found by reading the Unite Foundation adverts on pages **14** and **15** of this newsletter, or scan the QR code below on your phone.

Any questions, drop us a line at **info@unitefoundation.org.uk**



Instagram Facebook Twitter Spotify

@thisisusatuni
@thisisunitefdn

thisisusatuni.org

thisisusatuni.org/unite-foundation-scholarship



The **Money House** is an award-winning workshop that helps young people, 16-25, prepare for independent living and adult life through a three or five-day workshop in our flat-style space in Digbeth.

You get vouchers once you finish the course (£30 or £50), AND you can also apply to the **MyBnk** grant scheme for £100. Since December 2023 we've awarded almost £5,600!

We reimburse you for your travel each day, there's breakfast and hot lunch, Wi-Fi, free hygiene and period products, a mental health first-aider on site, chill out spaces, a signposting board, gender-neutral toilets and a fully stocked kitchen!

It's much more than money management though – young people tell us that they like going to a new place, the routine is good for them, they never thought they'd like something like this, sometimes they make new friends, and they feel safe and respected. The money bit is often secondary to the overall experience for them!

Find out more and sign up

Speak to your PA, or contact us on **TMHMidlands@mybnk.org** or **07562 665234** and ask for **Danielle**.



Sexual health and wellbeing services for young people (up to 25)

Did you know that Umbrella provides dedicated counselling and support for people up to 25 years with any issues that may impact on your sexual health and wellbeing.

This includes support around:



- Sexuality
- Relationships
- Pregnancy
- Body image and self-confidence
 - Sexual assault and abuse
- Problematic pornography use
 - Gender identity
 - Domestic abuse



You can expect a safe, non-judgmental and confidential environment

umbrellahealth.co.uk

0121 237 5700

Monday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Tuesday 10.15am - 5.00pm
Wednesday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Thursday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm

ADVOCACY SERVICE

The aim of **Rights and Participation (RAP) Advocacy** service is to ensure that Birmingham children in care, care leavers and children on child protection plans (wherever they may live), are provided an advocacy service. You are entitled to have the support of an advocate and access to children's rights.

RAP Advocacy is the representation of your wishes and feelings, your views, and your voice, to professionals and services. This could be at meetings, through the complaints process, or wherever you wish us to do so.

RAP Advocacy is **ALWAYS** led by you the young person - our **BOSS**. Your advocate will work on your instructions alone.

RAP Advocacy is issue based, so it is provided for a particular purpose, and is there until there is an outcome for the complaint, or concern.

Advocacy referrals are normally allocated to an advocate within three working days of receipt. The advocate will then contact you and support you with your issue/s.

You can make a referral for yourself or anyone else can make a referral on your behalf.

To make a referral or if you have any questions about RAP Advocacy service please email advocacy@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Testimonials about the RAP Advocacy service

"Thanks so much my advocate - everything went the way I wanted."

"Thank you for helping me learn and grow as a young mum you stood up for me and believed in me. It's all paid off, you're truly amazing and I hope we can always stay in contact."

"My advocate helped me to have housing officials listen to my housing needs. Without her they would not have listened to me and fobbed me off."





CLEANSING OUR DATABASE

We are cleansing the newsletter mail-out group. Young people who are 26 or older will be taken off the group unless you tell us you want to stay on it. If you are aged 26 or older and would like to stay on the email group, please let us know by emailing:

garry.james@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



OUR OFFER TO YOU

This is our support offer to you, so you know what to expect as you leave our care and beyond. Our website contains information you need about our support offer to you. Scan the QR code below to go to the offer page.



Care Leavers' opportunities

The Trust care leavers' opportunities page contains opportunities for you to get your hands on!

It is regularly updated, so be sure to favourite the page to keep an eye out for updated opportunities.

<https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/opportunitiesCL>

DO YOU WANT FREE BT BROADBAND?



We want to give you an update on the BT care leavers' broadband project where you can apply for a 24 month broadband contract with BT. Birmingham Children's Trust will pay for using funding from an HSF grant.

We have the finance to pay for 1,000 young people to have broadband fitted by August 2026.

Since August 2023 we have had 66 young people referred to BT for a broadband connection, and 40 now have an internet connection.

The average wait from sending BT the order to the order being completed was four weeks plus when we started the project in August 2023. For the majority of young people, the wait is now just 2-4 weeks

How do I find out more?

To find out more about this terrific offer, please contact your PA (personal advisor), and ask them to support you in applying for a BT Broadband line where you live.

