



THE TRUST TIMES

17+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

Spring 2025

SPRING 2025

SPECIAL EDITION

- **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OFFERS**
- **ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AND MUCH MORE!**

SPRINGTIME BEST WISHES TO YOU!

Hi everyone,

Welcome to the Spring 2025 issue of the Trust Times. We hope you are taking advantage of the sunny weather and spending some time outdoors.

For those of you who have been fasting in March 2025 we wish you Eid Mubarak, and for those of you celebrating in April we wish you a Happy Easter, just make sure you don't eat too many chocolate eggs!

We have plenty of news, features and lots of education, employment and training opportunities.

On **Page 9** we have an important article about the benefits of work-experience and volunteering - so make sure you find five minutes to read.

We also have plenty of money saving offers and opportunities for you to learn and develop, so grab a cuppa and have a good read of this issue.

NEW DATES - We offer 45-minute drop-in sessions with Juliette to talk about careers - **see page 4**.



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. We love to read and see what you are up to each month, and to be able to celebrate all your achievements.

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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USEFUL APPS AND WEBSITES

Here are four productivity apps that you can help you this Spring.



everlog

- Everlog is a lightweight and elegant journal and diary app that helps you reflect on your life. Everlog was created with the simple premise of being fast and uncluttered, so it's just you and your thoughts.



Crouton: Recipe manager

- Crouton is feature packed recipe organiser and meal planner. The best place to store your favorite recipes from where ever you find them, websites, cookbooks or a handwritten note from your best friend.



Book Tracker: TBR

- Book Tracker is the perfect companion for every book lover, available on iPhone, iPad, and Mac. Easily track your books - whether they're already on your shelf or on your wishlist for future reading.



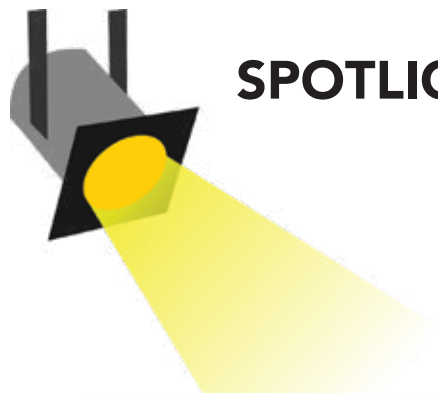
House Chores Cleaning Schedule

- Home Tasker is an app that helps you schedule and organize your home chores in real time. Use simple, customizable templates to turn your house cleaning routine into a fun engagement. You can also split your cleaning chores between household members and track progress.



All apps are available in the Apple app store or Google Play store.





SPOTLIGHT: The Birmingham Settlement Money Advice Centre

This organisation can give you advice and support around benefits, budgeting, hardship grants and debt management.

One of our care leavers living in the area has had a lot of help from this organisation and wanted us to share it in the newsletter.

If you have any organisations charities or services that you would like us to share as well, get in touch with Juliette Walton.

Visit The Birmingham Settlement Money Advice Centre website:

www.birminghamsettlement.org.uk/newtown/



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.





Careers **advice** and **guidance** appointments with Juliette face-to-face 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: Birmingham Community Hub, 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 4 April 2025
- Friday 11 April 2025
- **No session on 18 April 2025 (as it is a Bank Holiday)**
- Friday 25 April 2025

Slots

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

How to book a slot

To book a slot please **ring Juliette** on **07825 117381**

or email

juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



WE NEED YOU

Here In Rights and Participation, we have groups for our children in care and care-experienced young people to be a part of.

Together all these groups are called **United and Unique** – with the aim of '**Empowering Minds of the Future**'. All groups meet regularly, and their role is to improve children and young people in care as well as care leaver's experiences.

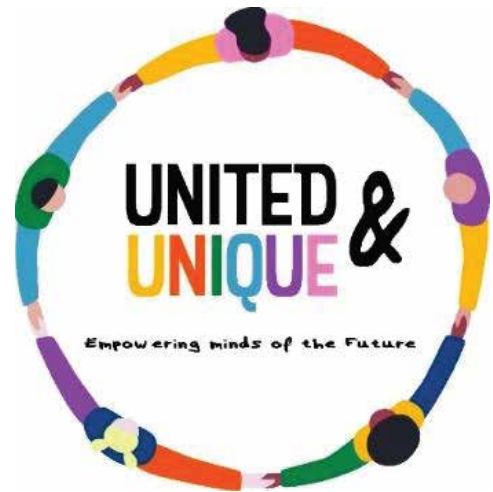
You don't need to disclose anything personal about why you may be in care. All you need to be able to do is commit to attending meetings and work with others to improve things for children in care and/or care leavers.

Our Forum groups provide opportunities to:

- Make friends.
- Feel part of a wider community.
- Have a voice and support the voice of others.
- Make change.
- Get paid and receive vouchers.
- Paid consultation opportunities.
- Be a presenter or deliver training at conferences and events.
- Be on young people's recruitment panels.
- Be part of trips, socials, and fun activities.

CLICK HERE to register interest in joining any of our groups and forums.

APPLY TODAY TO BECOME PART OF..



Together all our groups are called **United and Unique** – with the aim of '*Empowering Minds of the Future*'.

Groups available to join:

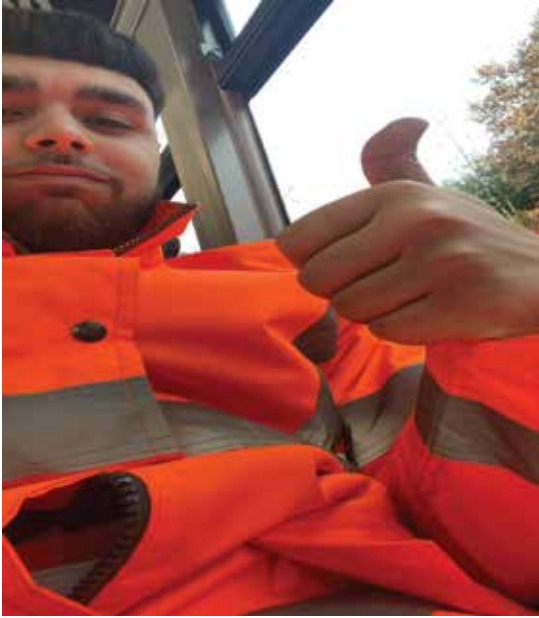
- Children in Care Council (age 12-18)
- Junior Children in Care Council (age 8-11)
- SEN (age 12-18)
- LGBTQ (age 12-18)
- Young Parents (up to age 25)
- Care Leavers' Forum (age 18-25)
- Group for young people who are Black, Asian or from any other ethnic minority background (age 11-18)

Scan the QR code below to register your interest:



YOUR SPRING 2025 GOOD NEWS

- **Adam P (pictured below)** in his Track Engineer uniform. A thumbs-up to you Adam for securing this new job role.



- Just 10 weeks ago, **Kyle** was facing challenges, feeling stuck and unsure if things would ever change. But fast forward 8 weeks, and the transformation has been incredible. With hard work and determination, his confidence has grown, his communication skills have strengthened, and his employment skills have developed massively. All of this hard work has paid off, as he has now secured a permanent role at Amazon. Kyle should be extremely proud of how far he has come.

This is just the beginning of an exciting journey ahead! for Kyle, according to his Barnardo's JOBS Project worker Josh Roberts.



- **Tadala** wanted to share a quote that her dad taught her. Sage advice.

**Labour for learning
before you grow old.**

**For learning is better
than silver and gold**

**Silver and gold will
vanish away but a
good education will
never decay.**

- **Sinead** and her friend have set up a business selling hampers and personalised items. What a great entrepreneurial idea!

See one of their adverts below:



PersonalisedbySC

Personalised items and hampers! 🍷🍷

Instagram - personalisedbysc_

Facebook - Raffles Birmingham

Message us on our social for enquires!

🍷🍷🌹💖

More **GOOD NEWS...**

- **Ryan** attends Aspire Training, and the course is all geared up for students to get those all-important employability skills.

Ryan taking part in clearing some ponds at a local area to make it accessible for people to enjoy.

Well done Ryan!



Cooking up a treat with **Mia**

'Cooking with Mia' has been set up at the Birmingham Community Hub, in partnership with the BCFC Foundation. This will provide accessible and supportive opportunities for care leavers. This has been possible with funding from Bfriends Charity. Take a look at some of the preparations below.



Access to Work for Work Experience arranged by your Work Coach through Jobcentre Plus

Access to Work can give practical and financial support to help you overcome difficulties to starting or keeping a job due to a disability or long term physical or mental health condition.

Access to work can also give practical advice and guidance to employers to help them understand physical and mental health conditions and how they can support employees.

Customers claiming a benefit and who start a work experience placement with an employer may be entitled to Access to Work support, as well as disabled people starting a self-arranged work experience placement and who do not claim a benefit.

How can it help me?

Access to Work can help pay for support you need because of a disability or long-term health condition.

The types of support that may be available through Access to Work include aids and equipment in your workplace, adaptations to equipment to make them easier for you to use, and money towards extra travel costs to and from work experience if you can't use available public transport or your own transport, plus lots more

How do I apply?

If you are claiming benefit speak to your Jobcentre work coach. If you are not claiming a benefit, find out more at www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Work-experience and volunteering

By Juliette Walton

Being a bit of nerd, I look at websites about education employment and training.

This quote is from the Youth Employment website:

“Often employers are looking for examples of when you have used or shown your work-skills as a selection criteria at interviews. So without any work-experience this can be a real barrier for that all important first job.”

Over the many years that I have been doing this work, many young people have said to me: *“I’m not doing work experience, I just want to get paid.”*

Then they never get a paid job because they haven’t had any work experience.

If you haven’t got any experience of work – paid or unpaid – it’s really hard to get shortlisted for interview.

Once you’ve got a bit of experience, you’ve got something to put on your C.V. and job application forms – then you’ll get shortlisted for interviews.

On the right of this page are a few ideas and links to follow up in 2025.

As always, if you want any help or extra info to get started, contact me on:

07825 117381

juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Care Leavers Covenant – All sorts of opportunities for care leavers locally and nationally. I had a quick look and there are work-experience opportunities in construction, legal, sports coaching, people seeking asylum, and more:

CLICK HERE

There is some useful info and links from **Birmingham City Council:**

CLICK HERE

We have good links with an organisation called **Volunteer It Yourself** who work with volunteers to do up community spaces:

CLICK HERE

The King’s Trust (used to be Prince’s Trust) offer work experience and community projects through their **Get into courses** (for ages 16-30) and **Team programs** (for ages 16 to 25):

CLICK HERE

Also, thanks to our Corporate Parenting team in the Trust we have some great employer links, who all offer work experience.

They include **John Lewis and Partners, Birmingham City Football Club Foundation, NHS** and more.

So don’t wait - get in touch 😊



The Care Leaver Covenant has created over 2,000 opportunities covering employment, training and holistic support along with home kits, home DIY refurbishments, free tickets, discounts and giveaways.

Scan the QR code below to go to the current opportunities:



connects

You can also stay up-to-date with news and events by signing up to CLC Connects.

Opportunities including work and education, through to recreational offers and giveaways.

Scan the QR code below to sign up:



COUNCIL TAX EXEMPTION

A reminder from the Trust's 18+ Service

Birmingham care leavers from the age of 18 are exempt from paying Council Tax, if you live in Birmingham.



Our 18+ team shares data with the Council Tax team to confirm who is a care leaver.

To be thorough you need to apply for the single person 25% discount and any council tax reduction you are eligible for. If you live at the family home or share with others it is only any liability that you have that is discounted and the Council Tax office does not sort that out for you, as you need to declare their situation (or the bill payer would have to).

University students, wherever you live, are exempt from Council Tax, but you do have to let the Council Tax office there know you are a student.

There is information about this and a link to a form that over 21's can use, just scan the QR code below:



If you live outside Birmingham, each individual will need to also apply for any discount and reduction and then send their PA the bill and the Trust 18+ team will pay the remainder (on condition you are liable for the tax and have claimed all deductions). This policy is led by Birmingham City Council, and is in place until your 25th birthday.

BOOKED & BUSY BOOK CLUB



Krystyna B has created a fantastic Book Club, called **'Booked & Busy'**.

The Book Club is an opportunity to get together and discuss the latest reads, meet friends and enjoy great conversation.

The Book Club takes place on the first Thursday of every month, between 6.00pm and 8.00pm at The Lighthouse Young People's Centre.

The next **'Booked & Busy' Book Club** takes place on **Thursday 3 April 2025**.

No need to reserve a place, just turn up. Light refreshments will be available for FREE.



GRUB AT THE HUB

We now have our very own food store at the Birmingham Community Hub (formerly the Willows), Emmeline Street, B9 4NG (Bus 60 from the City centre).

It is open to care leavers every Friday afternoon from 1.30pm – 4.30pm.

No need to book, just turn up and take as much as you want – it is all good quality and completely free.

Currently in stock we have soups, sauces, pasta, tea, coffee, chocolate, baby-milk and much more!

We also have chopping boards, baking trays and muffin trays.

So come and grab some grub from the hub 😊

Enquiries to:

Juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
07825 117 381



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:
Sajid.H.Khan@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 includes a header with the same diverse children illustration, a sub-header "Please add your details below.", and three input fields labeled "First name", "Last name", and "Email address".

BIRMINGHAM CAREERS SERVICE

guiding young people

Library of Birmingham Careers advice sessions



If you are a young person aged 16-19 (up to 25 for those with additional needs) and not in Education, Employment or Training and need help with your career choices, you can visit Careers Advisers for a one-to-one guidance session.

CLICK HERE to book a 45-minute slot. When on the booking form page, click on the green button with 'Careers Interview' on it, and then select a date and time.

For more information about **Birmingham Careers Service** visit their website:

www.birminghamcareersservice.co.uk

THANK YOU MESSAGE

We wanted to share a thank you message for Trust Aftercare Advisor **Georgia Bryan** from **Sharna**.

Georgia completed her final visit to Sharna in February 2025. Sharna took the time to write Georgia a card, stating how grateful she was for all of her "incredible" support.

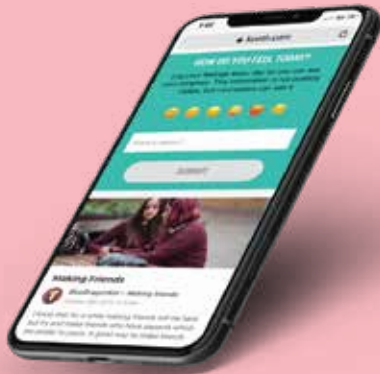
She recognised Georgia as a person that had believed in her and that this, in turn had meant that she was now able to believe in herself.

Sharna went on to thank Georgia for the profound impact she had had in her life over the course of the past few years.



If you would like to send a thank you message to a member of Trust staff that has supported you, please email: trust.comms@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

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 April 2025 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

Courses in April 2025

Healing your trauma

Date: 15 April 2025

Time: 1.00pm - 2.00pm



Led by an expert with lived experience, this session offers insight into breaking harmful cycles, understanding past experiences, and building resilience. Whether you're on a personal healing journey or supporting others, this session equips you with valuable tools for recovery.

Circle of Support

Date: 9 April 2025

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.

Careers Clinic with Lucy

Date: 30 April 2025

Time: 2.00pm - 3.00pm



Book a 15 minute slot with Lucy, a Careers Mentor.

To sign up to any of the groups, please complete the form in the link below:

<https://form.jotform.com/203141499622353>

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

2 April 2025.

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



Racism, fear and trauma

The Trust have recently published an article on their website '*Supporting our children and young people experiencing racism, fear, and trauma*'.

Whilst the key audience is children, we felt it would be useful for you to read too.

This article features part of a statement made recently by the British Association of Play Therapists (BAPT).

To read the article simply scan the QR code below:



Employment and Emotional Wellbeing

Why not explore volunteering opportunities to help build your 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>**



**Birmingham Women's
and Children's**
NHS Foundation Trust



UNIVERSAL FAMILY CAREER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

20 May 2025 (12.00pm – 2.00pm)

Join us at Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Hospital.

Find out about careers in the NHS.

Join the workshop and find out more about Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust including:

- Routes into the NHS.
- Job search, application and interview techniques.
- Practical training skill(s) from the NHS Trust core education team.
- Meet healthcare professionals and other Industry professionals to inspire your journey.

Eligibility

- You are 16-25 and care-experienced.
What do we mean by care leaver? The legal definition of a care leaver comes from The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 which states that a Care Leaver is someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority or foster care.
- Living in the West Midlands.

Venue

Birmingham Children's Hospital, Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham, B4 6NH

Please feel free to contact Nav or Femi for more information:

- Nav Sharma - navsharma@nhs.net
- Femi Kuforiji - o.kuforiji1@nhs.net



DATA OFFER

Information from Care Leavers' Association

Are you struggling with the cost of living and in need of data? The Care Leavers' Association Data Bank is here to help!



In association with The Digital Inclusion Network, The Care Leavers' Association presents:

'Keeping Care Leavers Connected'.

They know how important staying connected is, especially in these challenging times.

If you're a care leaver in need of data, please reach out to the Data Bank at:

info@careleavers.com

This offer is open to care experienced people of any age

Please email: **info@careleavers.com** with any queries.



FAMILY HUBS

For all the latest news about universal services for families, new and expectant parents, children under 5, please do spend some time looking at the **Family Hubs** pages on Birmingham City Council's website.

You can find links to everything family related:

Family Hubs bring together a range of organisations and professionals to offer early help services, advice, guidance, and support.

There are health links and housing information links, and lots more.

To go directly to the **Family Hubs** homepage, please scan the QR code below.





Root2Rise

**24 Fully Funded Grants Available To
Become a Qualified Forklift Driver***

Program includes:

Forklift Truck License

Level 2 Food Hygiene

Level 2 Health and Safety

CV & Interview Prep

Guaranteed Job Interview



**Check out our
website to find
out more**

***Grants are subject to meeting FareShare Midlands program entry requirements and financial assessment made by our funding partner National Zakat Foundation.**

Root2Rise

Project Aim

Our goal is to provide you with the support you need to gain employment in the logistics sector.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Kyle!

Email:

kyle.drackley@faresharemidlands.org.uk

Phone Number:

07442 372 973



Our Location



National Zakat
Foundation

FareShare Midlands

SKILLSHARE



Age:
16 - 25 Y/O

Prize:
5 ASK JAN MEMBERSHIPS

Date:
31ST MARCH 2025

MARCH SIGN UP GIVEAWAY

March giveaway is in partnership with Rees Foundation and includes 5 x Ask Jan Memberships for a year. This is a fantastic giveaway and we are incredibly excited to be working in partnership with Rees Foundation to support care experienced people with their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Connects is how we connect you to our opportunities. You will receive updates on brand new offers that come to the Care Leaver Covenant right to your inbox. Here's how you can participate:

Any care leavers (aged 16 to 25) who sign up to connects via mycovenant.org.uk/for-care-leavers/connects/ (or by scanning the QR code below) will be automatically entered into the draw.

Winners will be announced week commencing 31st March.

Please support any care leavers in your network to sign up!



THE SUMMER JOBS PROGRAMME

Our Summer Jobs Programme is a six-week paid initiative taking place over this Summer, for young people aged 16-20.

The Summer Jobs Programme aims to combat the barriers that many young people face in gaining employment by fostering career development, personal growth, and positive engagement. It is specifically designed to reduce the risk of youth violence by providing structured opportunities that empower young people and build brighter futures.

The Summer Jobs Programme aims to build evidence on the best ways to support the most vulnerable young people in our country by keeping them safe and improving their future involvement in education, training, and employment.

The programme successfully engaged 500 young people in 2024, and this year the programme is expanding with the inclusion of a Randomised Control Trial (RCT).



Where does the programme run?

North East	Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees
Yorkshire and the Humber	Sheffield and Doncaster
Greater Manchester	All boroughs
West Midlands	Most areas are included
South Wales	Swansea, Newport and Cardiff
London	Several areas in London are included

For the full list of areas, please visit our website www.ukyouth.org



Referrals are open from **17th March - 17th May 2025**.
To refer an eligible young person, please complete the form on our website
www.ukyouth.org



What does this programme involve?

- A preparation week with your youth worker (participants are **PAID** for attendance)
- 5 weeks of paid work experience, 25 hours a week
- Contribute to an evaluation study
- A referrals does not guarantee a place on the programme

Who is eligible?

ESSENTIAL Young people must meet all of these criteria	AND one or more of the following criteria
Minimum age 16 (on 1st September 2025)	Are, or have been, in contact with Youth Offending Teams
Maximum age 20 (on 1st September 2025)	Have been arrested and released with no further action
Has the right to work in the UK	Have previously been in the secure estate (prisons, approved premises, bail accommodation and youth detention accommodation)
Able to take part in 25 hours of employment each week (with reasonable adjustments)	Are attending, or have attended, an alternative provision unit
Not currently employed for more than 15 hours per week	Have had at least two fixed-term exclusions
Available to participate in at least 5 of the 6 weeks of the programme	Have been permanently excluded
Must be able to attend the preparation week	Are, or have been, in care
Living in one of the areas that the programme is delivered in and not planning to move out of the area during the duration of the programme	Have been the victim of violence
Not living in the secure estate (at the start of the programme)	Have, or have had, a social worker
Proficiency in spoken English	Have a sibling or parent who have been involved in serious violence
Not currently charged with a serious offence	Are, or have been, persistently absent from school (less than 90% attendance)
Not studying towards a degree	Have been identified as at risk of criminal exploitation

Referrals are open from **17th March - 17th May 2025**.
To refer an eligible young person, please complete the form on our website
www.ukyouth.org



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."

FREE APPLIANCE FITTING SERVICE



If you are a care-experienced young person living in Birmingham, you are entitled to **free** appliance fitting from Birmingham City Council.

This includes fitting cookers (gas or electric), washing machines and other appliances.

How to get this free service

To get this service please download a request form by scanning the QR code below.



Complete the form and send to **ALL** the email addresses listed at the top of the form.

Please copy in your PA.



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.

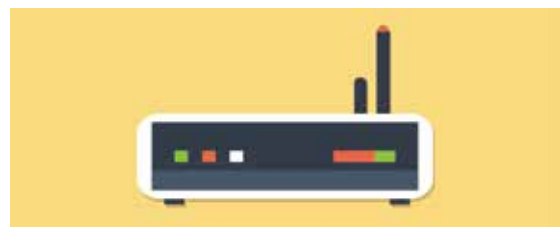
We have the finance to pay for 1,000 young people to have broadband fitted by August 2026.

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.





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.html

Also please see the **TESS offer** on **page 14**.



HELP WITH WATER BILLS

Birmingham Children's Trust has been working with Severn Trent Water and we are pleased to let you know, Severn Trent Water are now able to offer a discount on water bills for care leavers.

Severn Trent Water is committed to supporting care leavers through the **Big Difference Scheme**, which can reduce water bills for care leavers living independently up to the age of 25. Severn Trent have taken steps to help care leavers access this opportunity.

If you live within the Severn Trent Water region, and receive services from Severn Trent, care-leavers can join the **Big Difference Scheme**, offering a reduced tariff of up to 70% off water charges. To qualify for the reduced tariff, they must receive notification from Birmingham Children's Trust. We will be sending names every month (the last Friday of the month) in one transaction, so once confirmed as eligible there may be a wait before it is sent to Severn Trent Water.

For this and for you to opt into the scheme, we will need to share with Severn Trent Water that you are a care leaver. We will only share that you are a care leaver to Severn Trent Water and will not share any information around why or how you are a care leaver.

PLEASE NOTE: Severn Trent Water only supply to certain areas of the West Midlands. Please check the link below to confirm you receive water from Severn Trent.

To check if you're a customer of STW, check this link:
www.water.org.uk/customers/find-your-supplier

Please scan the QR code to complete the form for the Big Difference Scheme:



Like many other utilities, Severn Trent Water share your personal data with, and receive your personal data from, Credit Reference Agencies (CRAs). The Big Difference Scheme is a non-standard payment arrangement to help those who need assistance with their water charges. If accepted onto this scheme Severn Trent Water will share information with credit reference agencies, and this could influence your credit status. For more information, please visit

www.stwater.co.uk/help-and-contact/customer-information/sharing-data-with-credit-reference-agencies/

PAUSE HUBS

Leaving care can be a challenging time for many young people.

Care leavers are identified to be at a higher risk of experiencing mental health issues and report lower wellbeing compared to their non-care-experienced peers.

If you need support or would like to talk to someone... **Have you heard about Pause?**

Pause is a service delivered by The Children's Society, in partnership with Forward Thinking Birmingham:

- They provide access immediate support and you can speak to an Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner.
- They listen to you and help you find solutions.
- There are no referrals or waiting lists - you choose when and how to use their service.
- Pause can help anyone under 25 years old who is registered with a Birmingham GP

Pause drop-ins happen at different places or 'Hubs' each day.

Pause hubs are in Digbeth, Northfield, Sparkbrook and Erdington.

Each week we publish the Pause drop-in dates, times and locations.

Please see this link:

<https://forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/pause>





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



MIKE



DADS ARE DIAMONDS

This support group provides a safe space for care experienced fathers, or partners of care experienced individuals, to discuss parenthood.

Why come along?

Both new and experienced fathers have the opportunity to network and share experiences openly and honestly ✓

Older children are welcome to come with you ✓

Led by a mental health professional and dad, sessions aim to strengthen emotional wellbeing ✓

The group seeks to reduce feelings of isolation and build new relationships ✓

Sessions also available virtually ✓



Weekday



Morning / Afternoon



Hodge Hill
Ladywood
Northfield



Sign up today using the QR code!



www.reesfoundation.org/startforlife



JACKIE



PARENTING BEYOND CARE

Join our friendly group and meet other parents who have been in care. The care experienced group leader will share her experiences of becoming a mother, and now a grandmother.

Why come along?

Relaxed and informal group

All children are welcome to come with you and remain with you during the course

Led by an Ofsted registered, care experienced childminder and parent

Topics include identity, accessing services, and overcoming stigma

Sessions also available virtually

Weekday

Morning / Afternoon

Hodge Hill
Ladywood
Northfield



Sign up today using the QR code!

www.reesfoundation.org/startforlife



ABBY



NURTURING BEGINNINGS Q&A SESSIONS

An opportunity to ask questions of a midwife to support expectant new parents as they prepare for the birth of their baby.

Why come along?

- Get ready for the joys and challenges that come with becoming a parent ✓
- Find support for day-to-day life from both the group leader and also other parents on the course ✓
- Learn about taking care of your wellbeing and the emotional wellbeing of your baby ✓
- Sessions are virtual ✓



Weekday



Morning / Afternoon



Hodge Hill
Ladywood
Northfield



Sign up today
using the QR
code!



www.reesfoundation.org/startforlife





SARAH



IT'S TIME FOR FRESH STARTS

50-minute one-to-one sessions developed specifically for care experienced parents, focusing on taking control and making positive, informed choices into the future.

Why come along?

Especially developed to support parents who have lost children through care proceedings ✓

Addresses issues overcoming low self-esteem, anxiety, and low mood ✓

Each session is with a counsellor with professional care experience, specialising in loss and bereavement ✓

Up to four, one-to-one sessions available per person ✓

Sessions also available virtually ✓



Weekday



Morning / Afternoon



Hodge Hill
Ladywood
Northfield



Sign up today using the QR code!



www.reesfoundation.org/startforlife





START FOR LIFE: SUPPORTING CARE EXPERIENCED PARENTS IN BIRMINGHAM

Start for Life is a project being delivered by the Rees Foundation to support care-experienced parents across Birmingham to navigate the joys and challenges of parenting, manage stress, and boost self-esteem. The sessions will include:



Weekday



Morning / Afternoon



Hodge Hill
Ladywood
Northfield

Getting together to chat with other care-experienced parents ✓

One-to-One Wellbeing: to offer support to managing stress, anxiety, and mood ✓

Support for Dads: Providing a safe space for fathers to come together ✓

Beyond Birth Parenting Courses, Question and Answer sessions about pregnancy and being a parent facilitated by a midwife ✓

Sessions are both virtual and in-person ✓

Various resources and activities at our Rees cafes including art therapy, budget management, cooking classes, and assistance in finding employment ✓



For more information and to sign up, go to:
www.reesfoundation.org/startforlife



Are you aged 18-29?
Not in education or employment?
Unsure about what to do next?

**Next Cohort Starts
28th APRIL 25**



The JOBS Project is working to support young people into employment in your area!

We can help you to:

- Build confidence and social skills.
- Develop CV writing and interview skills for life.
- Explore opportunities and gain the employment of your choosing.*

Contact:

Josh Roberts
07546 760895
josh.roberts@barnardos.org.uk

The Jobs Project Birmingham

**The YMCA Erdington,
The Chris Bryant Centre,
300 Reservoir Road,
B23 6DA**

Scan me to get in touch...

Use the QR code to register your interest and a member of the team will be in contact or email us at:



thejobsproject@barnardos.org.uk

*Course material, lunch and travel reimbursed. Guaranteed interview at Amazon based upon attendance and commitment.



amazon

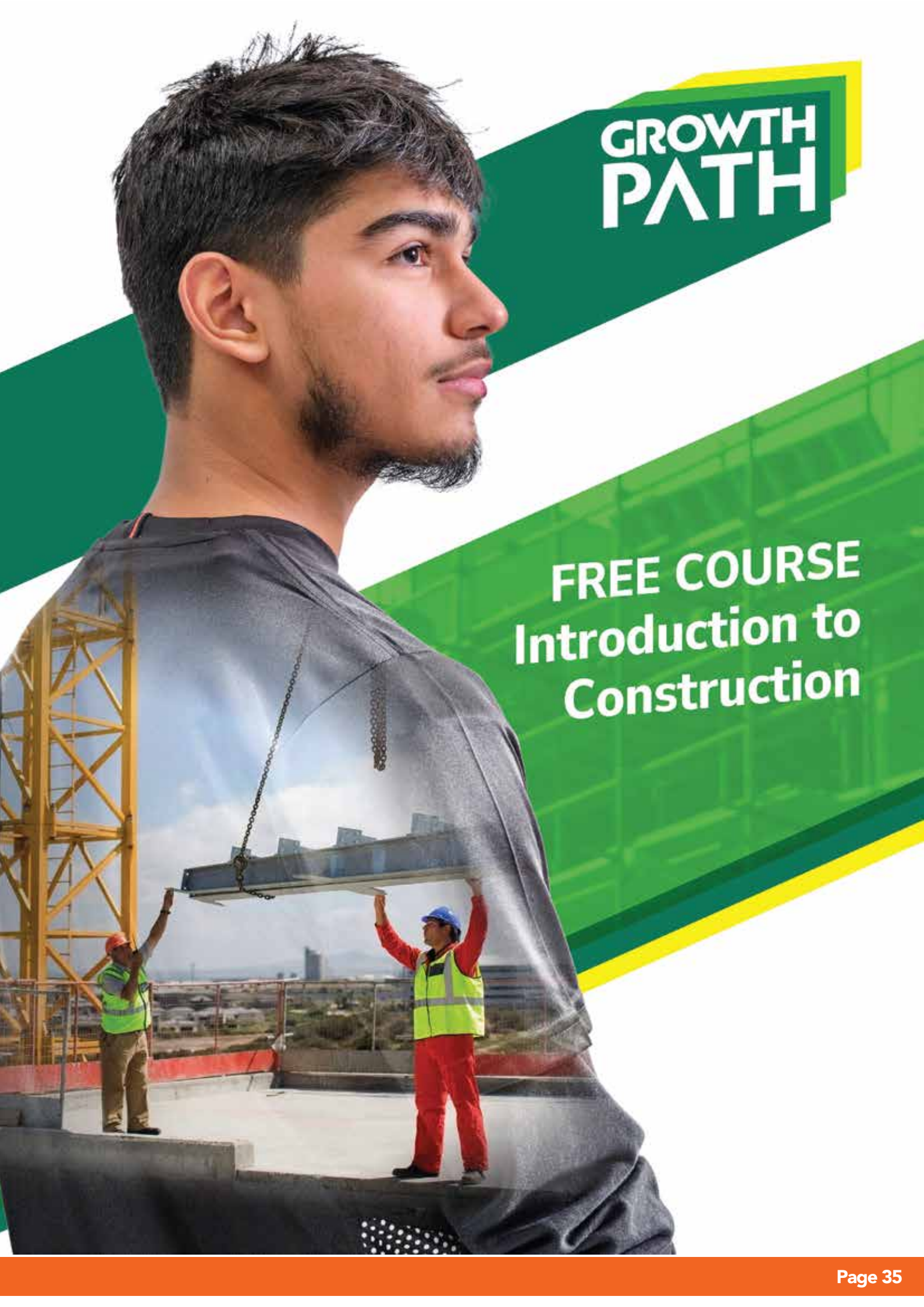
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

BARNARDOS

Barnardo's Registered Charity Nos.216250 and SC037605 25039shc24

GROWTH PATH

FREE COURSE
Introduction to
Construction





Go for it!

Call 0121 439 6780 or
email hello@growthpath.org.uk

www.growthpath.org.uk

Growth Path Services
1 Brookvale Park, Erdington,
Birmingham B23 7AG

Who

- Anyone aged 16-29

You'll get

- Site Safety Plus qualification Level 1
- CSCS Green Card (Construction Skills Certification Scheme)
- Routes into employment, training and apprenticeships
- Work experience on real jobs
- Employability skills, CV and reference

When

- 4 week course
- New courses start every month

<CODE>YOUR FUTURE

**Free training and support
to get a job in tech**



You don't need any experience

The majority of CodeYourFuture graduates get jobs in tech. They work at companies like Google, Slack, Capgemini, BBC and others.

The CodeYourFuture introductory course includes AI, data analysis and website building. Our courses are *free*, and we offer personal support.

Our graduates work in different types of tech roles: software development, DevOps, support, systems engineering and others.

Visit codeyourfuture.io for more info about our courses.

Our next intro course opens April 1st.

Find out if you are eligible and register at
codeyourfuture.io