

Key Messages from Care Experienced Young People

**National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum,
Catch22**

National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum

133 local authority leaving care team members

YPBMF - Young Person's Benchmarking Forum

Improving services & support for care experienced young people

Through:

- Events, networks & resources for member LAs
- National Influence work



YPBMF members take part in Ministerial Roundtable with David Johnston, Childrens' Minister & Johnny Mercer – Cross Government Lead for care leavers
Jan 2024

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



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Topic 1:
Cost of Living
(YPBMF)

"SURVIVAL IS NOT EASY"

Capturing the views of 461 care experienced young people on the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis

December 2022



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT.....



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64% of care leavers said that they are in debt or their debt has increased.

45% are struggling to buy food and are having to choose between food and rent/bills.

65% of young people said that the cost of living has significantly impacted them financially, mentally and emotionally.

76% said yes to having an impact of mental health

Many care leavers live independently and many of them do not receive any financial support from friends or family.

EXPERIENCES.....



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“I’m worried & stressed, giving up on hobbies & interests, losing motivation in general and feeling it’s pointless to try and budget”

“I have to choose between heating and eating”

“Without the means to socialise we are left isolated and this affects our mental health and causes stress”

“Even with Universal credit, it’s not enough to cover all expenses as gas and heating prices are increasing.”

“how can we budget when there is not enough money to afford all essential items”

**WE NEED
YOUR HELP**

LOCAL AND NATIONAL ASK

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Access to Advice:

Tips on reducing heating, budgeting support, workers taking me shopping, helping with meal plans”

Prioritize financial well being as critical to care experienced young people and their futures

Crisis Support:

Leaving care teams and personal advisors. Pay point vouchers or crediting the utility accounts when we are running low, food parcels or supermarket vouchers

Best Practice:

Secure ring fenced money from your local authority’s household support fund

Debt support:

How to reduce debts, payment plans

OUR ASK.....

- + • Care Leavers Hub in every local authority
- Coproduce your Hub with young people
- o • Keep young people involved in the development of the facility, form a steering form
- What physical spaces do you have that you could free up for this?
- What businesses could support this?
- Get it in the budget and keep resourcing it

Free Transport for care leavers we know of:

- + - Cornwall,
 - - Greater Manchester – free buses
 - - London 50% off buses,
 - North East - Free Bus/metro



OUR ASK.....

- +• Free Transport across the country
 - Not just buses, trams, underground etc.
 - For Local Authorities to work with their travel providers
 - May need a regional approach, which could be part of a regional care leavers' offer

Top 10 Asks for the Local Offer

1. Travel

2. Digital Connection

3. Mental health and Wellbeing

4. Leisure

5. Offers for specific groups of young people

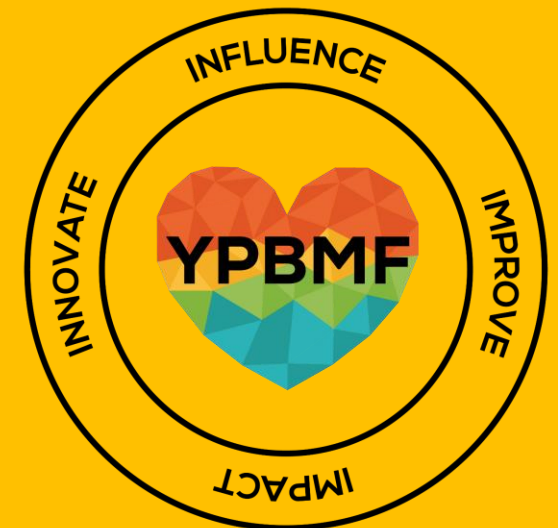
6. Housing Support

7. Health – Prescriptions, dental, optical

8. EET Support

9. Post 25 Support

10. Accessing Records



What can you do?

1. Please do take away & share the 5 key messages [Blog: In Their Own Words | National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum](#)
2. Please take away our top 10 asks for Local [Top 10 Asks for the Local Offer | National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum](#)
3. Please come to our 'In Their Own Words' event this year



In Their Own Words

Hear directly from care experienced young people & their experiences – 5 Key areas they believe you should be working to improve & their ideas about how you can help.

11am - 1pm, 12th July, Online

For: Senior Policy and Decision Makers across government, local authorities and the third sector including MPs, Lead Members, DCSs, Policy Leads.

[More Info and Booking Here](#)



**catch
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