



Tools and templates for children in care councils and corporate parents

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Introduction

The Taking it to the Next Level Corporate Parents and Children in Care Councils project was funded by the Department of Education between 2013-2016.

The project ran **24 events and workshops** across the country for children in care council members to attend with their corporate parents.

The aims and objectives of these events and workshops were to;

- Encourage and support corporate parents and young people to work together and;
- Facilitate the sharing of ideas between local authorities in order to strengthen the children in care councils and the corporate parents;
- Explore how corporate parents and children in care councils could work more effectively together;
- Raise the bar in terms of aspirations for children in care and;
- Stimulate actions to improve outcomes for children in care.

This document brings together some of the exercises, tools and templates that were used in the sessions, which can be copied and or adapted for use at a local level. These were designed for corporate parents and young people. Further exercises for corporate parents can be found at <http://www.ncb.org.uk/corporate-parenting>

HUMAN BINGO:

Birthday in winter	Can swim	Is left handed	Has been to Scotland	Has managed to make a change as part of the CiCC for other children and young people
Has been to football match	Like pizza	Favourite colour is red	Is a good singer	Watched a YouTube video in the last week
Name begins with J	Does not like fast food	Has a brother or sister	Plays a musical instrument	Has a middle name
Knows 1-5 in a different language	Has read a book in the last month	Can play chess	Is wearing something blue	Was born in the same month as you

Aim: getting to know you game/icebreaker

Each participant must try to complete their human bingo sheet by moving around the room and talking to members of the group. Tick the box when you meet someone to whom the statement applies- i.e. if you come across someone who can play chess- you tick that box. The first person to complete their human bingo sheet is the winner.

HUMAN BINGO Template



Purpose of the Children in Care Council

Session purpose: To examine the purpose and role of the children in care council, and to establish what corporate parents need to do to help the children in care councils achieve their aims and objectives.

Part One Activity:

Ask the group to brainstorm:

- 1) What do they think is the purpose of a CiCC and what job should it do.
- 2) The things corporate parents need to do to help the children in care council achieve this.

Write the statement on a piece of paper and attach it with Blu-Tack to the wall. Each piece of paper should have just one idea written on it. When you have 10 ideas written down for (1) the purpose and role of a children in care council and 10 ideas written down for (2) the things that corporate parents could do, then move to part two of the exercise.

Part Two Activity:

- Starting with the statements about the children in care council role and function, the group should then discuss and put in order the statements - with number one being the top priority - main purpose and task through to statement number 10 which denotes the least important.
- The exercise should be repeated with the statements about what corporate parents should do.
- Essentially, this exercise determines what young people feel is the group's main purpose and function, what their priorities should be and helps to identify what support and help children in care councils might need from corporate parents.
- This exercise can also be done with groups of corporate parents.

Communication Exercise

Aim: This exercise can be used as an icebreaker exercise. It can also be used to introduce themes on communication as well as a way to think about the language used in documents, guides etc.

First task

Think of one sentence that explains your CiCC or job that it carries out (can be anything) or a sentence that describes one aspect of the role of a corporate parent to a younger person.

Second task

You will need to communicate that sentence on a piece of paper using as few words as possible - you can use pictures/ widgets/symbols/emojis. 😊

Be creative.

Third task

The different groups try to guess what is being communicated.

Alternative suggestion - you could create your own emojis to use in materials for young people.



Brick in the Wall

Children in care council groups

What you need

- Post-it notes or small pieces of paper
- Pens

Discuss

- Are there any particular groups (be specific) of children and young people your children in care council have not heard from, reached out to, who are not involved currently with the work of CiCC or with any other participation/consultation opportunities as far as you are aware?
- What are the barriers for children and young people getting involved in the children in care councils?

Task

- Write down on post-it notes the barriers to some children and young people getting involved in the CiCC (be as specific as possible).
- Put them up on the wall or on a table so that the whole group can see.
- In pairs or small groups take some of the post-it notes and discuss how the barriers could be addressed and who could help? This exercise could be done as a whole group exercise.
- Look at what actions can be taken and formulate an action plan to address the barriers and issues identified.

Brick in the Wall

Corporate parents group

Corporate parents are responsible for ensuring all the voices of children in care in your area are heard - in terms of service development, feedback and strategic and operational planning etc.

Are there any particular groups (be specific) of children and young people you have not heard from, involved or know about in terms of their views, thoughts etc. – what are the barriers?

Task

On the bricks you will be given - write down:

- What might the barriers be for some children and young people having their voices heard by corporate parents (be as specific as possible)?
- Which groups of C&YP you may not be reaching (state why - if you have worked out a particular barrier to reaching particular groups)?
- How could you address those barriers?
- Agree an action plan.

Review Prompt Questions

The following questions are prompt questions to use in discussion as a way of reviewing what has been achieved and work to be done. These questions can be used by corporate parents and/or children in care councils or together in a mixed group.

We would suggest completing an action plan following discussions to record the areas for improvements.

Questions to consider

- What do corporate parents and children in care councils do to improve outcomes for children in care?
- How are corporate parents and children in care councils engaging all the staff in the authority to improve outcomes?
- How do you know that it's working/ making a difference?
- And if not, what could make the difference/ what could be done or if it's great how do you take it to the next level?

Action plan

Today's date

Action	By whom	By When
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		



Identifying Opportunities to Achieve, Succeed and have Positive Experiences- Part One

In your groups

Discuss what the children in care council and corporate parents could do to give all young people opportunities to achieve, succeed, and have positive experiences. **(Think outside the box/be creative/fast thinking/ new ideas)**

It could be any activity/intervention/ uses local services. The key criteria is that **no matter where you start - everyone can achieve or learn the skills to achieve/succeed**. Consider making sure it is realistic - a chance of becoming reality.

Certain things are a given for this exercise that help young people in life i.e. stable, warm home, people who care, access to decent education etc. We want you to think beyond that (be creative) **you need to take things to another level**.

Task

1. Using flip chart paper, draw two columns and put your group number at the top.
2. Discuss and record the idea/suggestion clearly on the flip chart paper.
3. Leave the right column blank.

Identifying Opportunities to Achieve, Succeed and have Positive Experiences

Part two – Raise the bar higher



Scenario

You have been tasked with making a judgement as to which of the ideas/ suggestions have reached/ achieved a gold award/star (you make the decision as a group).

When you have decided, place sticker next to the suggestion/idea that has met the criteria.

Star award

Criteria

- Whereby every young person has the opportunity to achieve
- Accessible to all young people

NB. Stars can only be given under a strict criteria – both must be met.

Smiley face stickers

If you liked an idea but it hasn't quite reached the criteria – you can give it a smiley face/ other sticker.



Pathway Mapping Exercise

In smaller groups, each group will look at one or more of the four topics.

These are:

- *Pathway to a home of my own/place called home*
- *Pathway to health and wellbeing (includes leisure, hobbies etc.)*
- *Pathway to family, friends, relationships and community*
- *Pathway to education and financial security including employment*

Aim - to draw out/plot/identify what corporate parents need to do to enable/contribute/ help over and above the statutory duties and CiCC as a group could do to help.

Task

Each group will be given the four templates, pens, materials and flip chart (notes)
On one flip chart - **draw/write/map out answers/ possibilities to the help young people along the pathway.**

Time: 30 minutes - choose to do one or two together, or you can do all four in less detail (but only have the allotted time) will warn before the end and allow 20 minutes to take highlights.

Pathway to a home of my own/place called home

Preparation	Skills	Knowledge	Confidence	Moving on	Moving in	Settled
CiCC What can you do as a group to help?			Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?			



Pathway to health and well-being (includes leisure, hobbies)

Physical health	Emotional health	Mental health
CiCC What can you do as a group to help?	Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?	

Pathway to education & financial security including employment

Qualifications	Skills	Experience	Knowledge	Budgeting	Volunteering	Work ready
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CiCC What can you do as a group to help?	Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?

Pathway to family, friend, relationships, community

Good relationships	Support networks in place	Somewhere to go	Someone to talk to	Being involved	Integrated into the community
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CiCC What can you do as a group to help?	Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?
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Pathway to a home of my own/place called home

Preparation	Skills	Knowledge	Confidence	Moving on	Moving in	Settled
CiCC What can you do as a group to help?			Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out leaflets. Like who to get in contact with if you are unhappy with where you are • Meet other young people who know how you feel • Have someone speak to them on first day of residential care and given an option for a leaflet • Up-to-date information about entitlements (booklet, website), Care leavers/CiC hub on website A link to help with budgeting, health etc • Skills workshops organised by young people. Role play phone calls etc • Mock applications housing • Free phone number for young people • Walk through video for new placements • Encourage other services to assist in developing skills in maintaining own homes • Encouraging young people to test out skills as volunteers • Share information and experiences with other young people • Getting your property up and running (step by step guide). • Activities – interacting with others building confidence • Peer mentoring • The empowerment booklet (a leaflet to help inform the options around leaving care; 14+ inc. guide to healthy eating) • Something like the ‘Coming into care pack’ • Blog on CiCC website for care leavers, written by care leavers. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design the leaflet and get yp advice. • Dedicated space on main website • Encourage and motivate professionals and services to volunteer to support developing skills across care leavers. • Be clear about appropriate timing of when to talk about? • Commitment to placement stability. • Commitment to developing resilience amongst young people. • What are the safety nets for young people if things go wrong • 24 hr support (weekend staff, free phone number). • Flexible working (PA, see young person often) depending on individual. • Make sure vulnerable people are in suitable properties with good support networks. • Doing pathway plans earlier 14-15 years old. • List of things you may need to help live independently. • Set up ‘youth club’ for care leavers to get out and about and meet more people that are in similar situations. • Helpline for care leavers open a few hours 7 days a week for quicker responses and advice. • Planned day out for care leavers as a treat once/twice a year because care leavers don’t have the money/funds to go out and treat themselves to a day out. • Floating support with tenancy • Hold workshops- Budget training, cooking lessons • Realistic price plan of living independently • Mock housing application 			

Sample of responses given at the Taking it to the next level 2015 workshops with corporate parents and children in care councils

Pathway to health and well-being (includes leisure, hobbies)

Physical health	Emotional health	Mental health
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CiCC What can you do as a group to help?	Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook book • Positive activities • Mental health support • Tailored health assessments • Raising awareness • Celebrating achievements • Leisure passes – gym, swimming • Peer delivery support around mental health/emotional wellbeing • Try new things to get new hobbies • Get more people involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with other agencies/professionals/services – looking for support networks. • Identify budget for supporting CiC/CL in leisure activities • Free leisure cards • Discounted travel • CSE risk education 18+ • Transition from children’s health services in CAMHS to adult services • Reopen services that have been closed down • 16+ mental health nurse dedicated to care experienced • Free leisure pass • Free tuition for chosen hobby • Standardisation of services • Get in touch with local companies and groups to provide more opportunities

Sample of responses given at the Taking it to the next level 2015 workshops with corporate parents and children in care councils

Pathway to education & financial security including employment

Qualifications	Skills	Experience	Knowledge	Budgeting	Volunteering	Work ready
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CiCC What can you do as a group to help	Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?
<p>Debating lack of opportunities at ‘the dinner’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CiCC to set up group for care leavers (older leaver group). <p>Increase weekly allowance up to £100 like Trafford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure young people express their feelings and thoughts. Join Children in Care Councils. Attend scrutiny groups. <p>Encourage more young people to attend groups and training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work around preparing for adulthood (multi-agency working) Training/work with schools/colleges/employers re understanding issues faced by LAC and care leavers. Triangulating support from specialist agencies. Preparing from an early age: life skills. Give young people positive role models, raise aspirations/achievement! <p>Talent match – work with local businesses/employers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock job interviews CV writing, employability sessions. Budgeting workshops College/university applications Pre apprenticeship programme confident futures <p>DVD stereotypes of being in care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support between allowance ceasing and benefits being received Support where benefits are sanctioned – work with DWP. Not necessarily money! Personal occupation plans Uni students to ‘mentor’ CiC to tell them about Uni at an early age Work experience, apprenticeships. Look at needs of 15+ and match to local businesses. Ambassadors for Uni who are care experienced Aspirations raised Children’s champions Training for foster carers on education eg how to apply for college, fill in UCAS applications. Doing pathways plans sooner 14-15 years old. Apprenticeships and training ships. Work placements and work experience. Free bus pass to help out with transport. The firms that the council give contracts to are given the work providing they offer apprenticeships to at least 2 CLs. Provide training which is accredited. Provide apprenticeships within the council – trainee ships. Being prepared to go the extra mile. Ensure LAC/CL get priority re work experience/apprenticeships (needs led). Allowances – in view of inflation/cost of living. Human resources (HR) host interviews) local companies, charities. Virtual school team support.

Pathway to family, friends, relationships, community

Good relationships	Support networks in place	Somewhere to go	Someone to talk to	Being involved	Integrated into the community
CiCC What can you do as a group to help?			Corporate parents What can you do over and above the statutory duties?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly meetings • 1:1 support • Time to build relationships • Have an informal drop in for care leavers. • Have links with universal services ‘Youth Groups’, encourage young people to attend other groups (hobbies), promote youth activities • Put them in contact with support groups • Advocate for more child centred meetings- case conferences etc • Raising awareness campaign 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe place to meet family • More youth workers • Provide adequate Funding • Drop in sessions- Up-to-date information about what’s going on • Ensure access to youth groups • Ensure young people decide how and when contact works (with humans and pet) • Creative arts project that allow young people to express their needs, wishes and feelings in different ways • Find a way to help corporate parents experience or understand how it feels to be separated from their family • Corporate parenting reintegration assessment – have circumstances changed? • Less out of authority placements. Keep closer to home • Listen to care leavers and respond • Make sure family and friend relationships are maintained, where possible • Continue with relationships built possibly for life • Professionals developing relationship with birth family to support young adult • Groups of care leavers/in care just to hang out • Facilitate university visits • Continuous review of contact v. risk • Keep children within their community where it is safe to do so • Work with neighbouring authorities where children are placed 		



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