

**THIS NEWSLETTER HAS BEEN CREATED
BY YOUNG PEOPLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
AND ADULTS**



Welcome to the 4th edition of the Durham CICC newsletter. All of the articles have been written by care experienced young people aged between 8 and 16 capturing their experiences and thoughts regarding their life choices and support received.

Place2Be launched the first ever Children's Mental Health Week in 2015 to shine a spotlight on the importance of children and young people's mental health. Now in its seventh year, we hope to encourage more people than ever to get involved and spread the word.

The next Children's Mental Health Week is taking place on 1-7 February 2021, this year sees schools, youth groups, organisations and individuals across the UK take part in Children's Mental Health Week. This year's theme is Express Yourself.

Read how our writers talk openly about mental health, the impact of being separated and moved around and the positives from caring for an animal or immersing yourself into a fantasy world through computer games.

I have really enjoyed reading them all and please keep them coming. If you would like to feature an article in the next edition then please just get in touch via Rob Johnson: email: robert.johnson@investinginchildren.net

Kindest Regards Alex (16) Editor

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ASK SOMEONE HOW THEY ARE FEELING – I ‘DARE’ YOU. IT COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

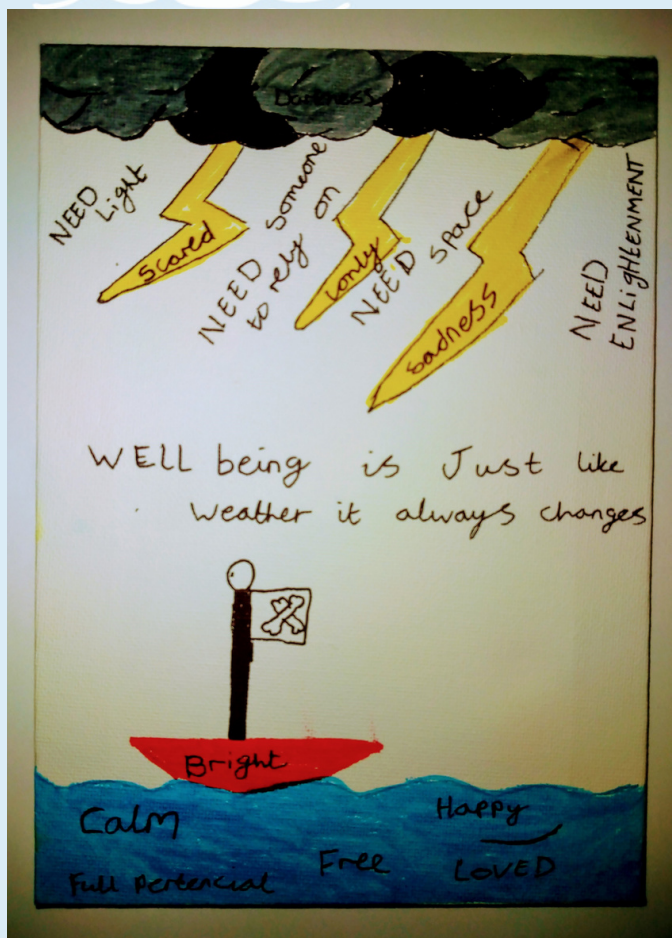
Mental health can affect young children and adults. Even though people may look happy it doesn't mean that they are. If you think someone is suffering from mental or physical harm they should be helped before it escalates because you never know what's really going on. Coronavirus can also have an effect on this because some people like to go outside on a walk or go meet their friends but can't because of the restrictions.

Also, some young people are home-schooled and can be put under stress and make matters worse as it's so different. So, **I SAY** ask someone how they are feeling.

Written by Megan

Aged 12

**LET'S TALK
ABOUT MENTAL
HEALTH**

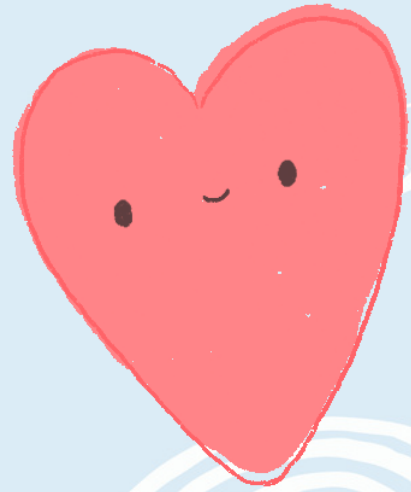


*Artwork by Kai
Aged 12*

LIVING TOGETHER

Children should live together more because some children in care don't live with their brothers or sisters. That is why I am very lucky because I am living with my big sister and it's a nice feeling where you feel loved and cared.

*better
together*



I don't live with my brothers, but at least I still see them, but some people don't see their brothers or sisters.

It might sometimes be hard to get 3 or 4 brothers or sisters together in the same home, but it's a lot easier to put 2 brothers or sisters together in the same home. This is what happened to me.

I am happy that my brothers got put in the same home and are still together and I am living with my older sister who has helped me to write this and makes me happy.

Written by Jane
Aged 8

LOVE

VIDEO GAMES - GOOD OR BAD?

Many people know about gaming also a vast majority of people play videogames in their spare time or as a full-time job. This includes Professional E-Sports Player, Content Creator, or Streaming for personal use.

Adults normally don't want children playing games for a long time but lots of good things can come from this. For example, it is proven gamers are 10 to 20% better at problem-solving and other cognitive tests than non-gamers. Gaming also improves the ability to multi-task and other day to day abilities like hand to eye co-ordination. I think all parents should let their kids play games for as long as they want as long as they are behaving appropriately.

Many people will agree that video games are an escape from reality because they want to get away from day to day life problems.

I myself am a Personal Streaming and Content Creator. One of my many jobs as well as providing fun, exciting content for those around myself is managing a server on gamer based software system called Discord. Discord is a multi-platform talking and interaction software based on PC and mobile. Gamers can connect and make new friends and play games with those around the globe. Discord was also made by 2 gaming friends who didn't want to keep calling one another over their mobile phone.

In conclusion, video games aren't the enemy in life and they don't do any harm to anyone. It is the parents job to make sure what happens in video games stay in video games. Many might think that games make people violent when in fact it's not the games or the parent's fault, actually I think many kids are just having fun. I say connect with their world and understand it more.

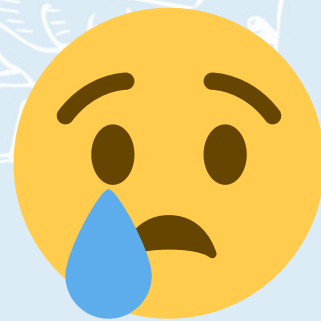


THINK BEFORE YOU MOVE! - MY EXPERIENCES

I went in to Durham services when I was 4 years old at the time, I didn't know what was happening because everything was a bit weird. When I got older around about 7, I got told what was happening which was better.



I was still seeing my mum and dad when I turned 10, then my contact stopped, I wondered why I could not see my family, but I kept in touch with my older brother and I have his phone number to keep in touch, which helped a bit. I was in one placement for 10 years but after that got moved when I turned 14 years old, I got moved around about Christmas time.



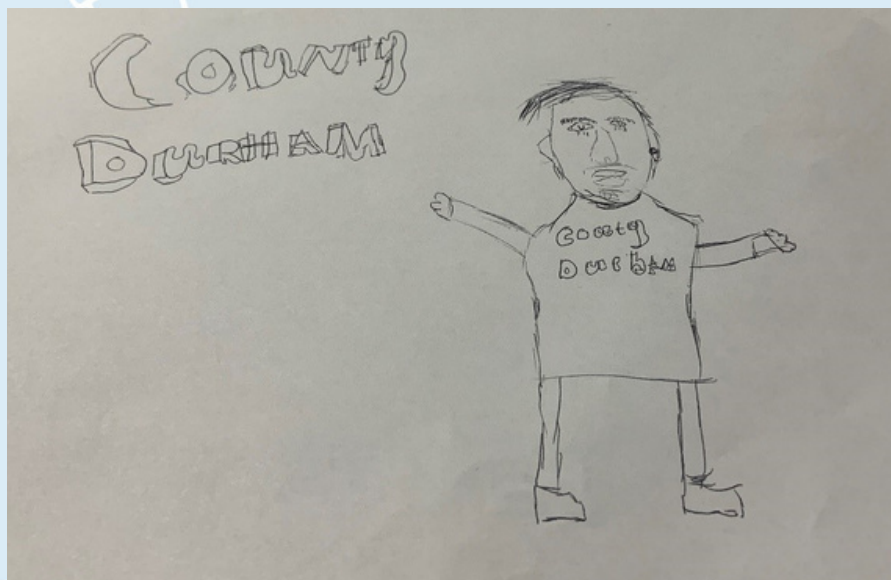
It was hard around that time then. I then moved again to someone else's and I got angry and I used to stop in my room all day every day. When I turned 15, I got moved into a residential home. It was hard settling in at first then in November last year it was my 16th birthday and I got everything I asked for and in 18 months, I am going to get my own flat and feel better.



TIPS

My top tip - The one big thing in my own opinion is that young people should not be moved near Christmas time. It made me feel angry and sad and I did not fully understand why.

*Written by William
Aged 16*



HAVING PETS IN CARE

Having animals in my foster homes has helped me and I feel for a foster child like me, pets can be a cornerstone of my emotions and best of all a friend and a presence in my world. Having pets does not prevent you from fostering. Every family, including their animals will be judged as part of becoming a foster carer, considering what the animal is like.

Will having a dog prevent you from being a carer?

Well not in my life and lots of foster carers also own a dog, we think at CICC it's important as it shows a foster carer's nature, to care for others and animals alike, paw in hand. So, don't be put off becoming a foster carer if you have pets.

Our dogs are called Peggy and Ellie. We also have a guinea pig called George - what more can I say it's great looking after them and walking them.



Written by Paige
Aged 14



THE IMPORTANCE OF PETS

They teach you how to care for another living thing

They are able help with your mental stability

You can talk to them and I know they won't tell anyone

They can make you feel safe

There for company and for leisure.

Pets are important to me because:

When I get angry they are there to calm me down and take my mind off what I was angry about.

They cheer me up if I am having emotional problems.



*Written by John
Aged 15*

MIND OF MY OWN APP

The Mind Of My Own app is aimed at children and young people from the age of 4 years old to 18 years old who want to share their good or bad experiences in life.

The app functions really well and has many options to choose from, ranging from general day to day encounters to long term meeting plans.

The best feature of the app is that it is easy for children and adults to understand. The way the app is set out is well presented and easily understandable but the category layout could be better.

The first page you are greeted with "What would you like to do today" but has options to review how your day has already been planned out, therefore the question could be worded differently.

Overall the app has potential, however the home page could be more inviting but I feel overall that this app will help many young people have a better say,

So, I give this App 7/10

Written by Thomas
Aged 16

Mind of
MY OWN