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Volume 4, Issue 4

January 2005

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We've Joined Forces!!

Welcome to our new newsletter!! Corporate Parenting and Children's rights have joined forces to create this Newsletter. As well as saving money it will mean that we can offer you a much more interesting and informative read. Rather than receiving two separate

newsletters you will just receive the one, which means less reading for you! If you are aged 11 or over and are still in care, you will also receive a copy of the 'Who cares magazine' with this newsletter. We are very keen on hearing your ideas, and want your contributions, so we can find out what

you think, and find out what's important to you.

Special points of interest:

- * Don't Spend your own money! Let us help! Take a look inside!!
- * Care Leaver? Want a brand new laptop totally FREE!?

Now we have a new Newsletter we need a new and interesting name for it! So we thought who would be the best people to ask! And guess who sprung to

mind. Yes, you! Who better to ask than the young people who the Newsletter is created for. So we will give you £50 if you can come up with a new and interesting name for

We'll give you £50 if you give us a name for our new Newsletter!!!

the Newsletter!



Time To Change Group (T2C)

The T2C group is a consultation group that contains 8 young people who are in care.

The group meets Weekly, on a Wednesday at Coalville. The group deals with funding requests from other young people in care and this year have been allocated £14,000 just to deal with funding requests. The decisions and handling of the budget is totally down to the group members and they have control. T2C also acts as a consultation group, working towards getting young people in care a voice and letting everyone know what kind of things are important to young people when they are in care.

The group are currently working on improving the Information and Advice the Leaving Care Team offer to young people leaving the care system. They are aiming to improve the existing documents that the Leaving Care Team send out and providing them with practical ideas of how they can improve the service offered to Care Leavers'.

Another area that the T2C group are working on is raising the awareness of teachers on how/how not to work with looked after children. This will involve getting professionally printed posters to send out to Schools to inform teachers. The group also want to get involved in any training offered to teachers/foster carers or Social Workers.

The group have also created a logo and a unique identity for T2C, to help raise awareness of T2C and encourage other young people to join the group by advertising using a credit card., which is included in this envelope.

They want to create a video to show at training events and team meetings, for social workers etc, that shows young peoples personal experiences of being in care.

The group is also very keen on creating a 'Coming into Care DVD' that will be given to all young people entering the Care system.

There is lots of work to do, but the group also has a lot of fun and enjoy themselves. The group are currently planning a residential weekend, so they can get on with their work and have some fun!

You Might Want To Join Them???

If So Call

Elaine Constable on (01530) 513817

Or

Fee Scott on (0116) 2657537

New Members of T2C!

Welcome
Jonathan and Aimee



Hi my name is Jonathon. I am from T2C, and have been part of the group for sometime. My independent review officer came to see me at my last review and told me about the group, and what they do. I said yes, I would like to attend the meeting and see how it goes. We have been doing some funding requests and talking about the Xmas dinner. Elaine Constable has told us about the complaint leaflets. We do it every week on a Wednesday and you will get £34.05 every month!

Jonathan



Hi my name is Aimee, I am from T2C. I have been part of the group since September. Ayshea, my independent chair person told me about the group when she came to my review, and explained about what they do. I said that I was interested and Josie from the Corporate Parenting Team came to see me and gave me some leaflets and a newsletter. I agreed to attend meetings to see how they run their business.

What we do is we fund money for children in care that want to do inside and outside of school activities

that you enjoy . We as a group decide whether or not we should provide the money for the young person depending on what they are asking for and how much. We all give our opinions of the requests. Elaine Constable has been talking to us about the complaint leaflets. We meet up every Wednesday and have new members and give a warm and friendly welcome. We hope to see you soon.

Aimee
xxx

Want to Join T2C?

Call (0116) 2657518

Our New Look Team



Hi, I'd like to introduce myself to you all. My name is Nick Randall, and I have just started working for the Corporate Parenting Team. I have been here for 3 months and have filled the Care Leavers Post. I will be with the team for 2 years. The job specification states that I must be in full time education, so I am either in the office or at college studying Psychology. We are trying to develop more jobs for care leaver's within the department, and have already secured one in the library service and one in human resources. I am very excited and keen to be a part of the team. I am involved in a variety of projects and am involved in all aspects of the team's work and



The Team!

look forward to meeting you.

Many of you probably know our Development worker Sarah Hubbard. Well she's flying the nest and is going on Placement to Hinckley Childcare Operations Team at the end of this month for 5 months. Good Luck Sarah!

We still have the rest of the team

Fee Scott - Manager

Josie Bevin Nicholls - Worker

Katharine Goodacre - Clerk

Nick Randall - Trainee

Nick Randall

Need A Computer?

Are you 11 or over and need a computer? If the answer to these questions is 'yes' then we can help!

We can provide your carer with a computer free of charge.

What will I get?

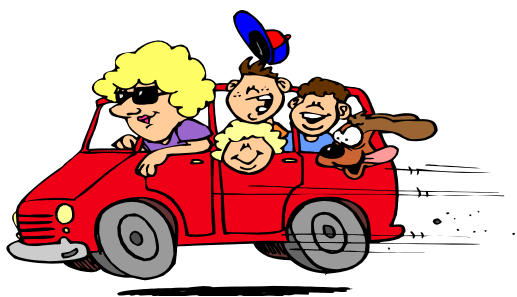
- PC
- Windows XP
- Office XP for students
- Encarta Encyclopaedia
- Printer

If you want a PC, talk to your Carer and get them to speak to their social worker.



Did you know - If you're a care leaver in full time education you are eligible for a brand new laptop which is yours to keep!!

Corporate Parenting Team
Room 416a
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8RL



Learning to drive?

Are you learning to drive?

If you are 17 or over the Corporate Parenting Team can help you to learn to drive.

We will pay for -

- Your Licence
- Practical And Theory Test Fees
- 1/2 of your lessons

The only thing the Corporate Parenting team ask is that you pay half towards the lessons as well.

And when you pass you will receive a £20

Foster Care isn't so bad!

Hi, my name is Jason and I'm 15. This year I have my GCSE's!!!

I'm writing to tell other people out there that foster care isn't bad and you're never alone. I've been in care for 2 years now with two people called Tony and Matt, and they are the best thing that has ever happened to me.

They are kind, supportive and understanding. I know I'm lucky living with these

two and I'm grateful, but foster care isn't that bad. At home I live a normal life, normal friends, normal activities. I started to learn BMXing at the age of 14 and now my life is BMXing. I do it all the time. I'm in care because my mum physically abused me, I've dealt with it and now I live a normal life.

My foster carers helped me through the difficult times and help me now if I need help. Don't ever feel alone. Someone is always there, just ask and try to be confi-

dent. Speak your mind and let people know how you feel so they can help.

Next year I might be leaving care, but my foster carers have told me they will support me through this. I am happy in life and hope that other people are as lucky as me.

J Marchant

"Don't ever feel alone. Someone is always there, just ask and try to be confident."

Want money to spend on things you enjoy?

If you enjoy doing an activity or have a hobby you are interested in, or just want to try something new then we may be able to help you.

We realise that it can be very expensive paying for lessons and bits of kit. This is why we offer money to help you pay for these things.

If you want to put in a request you can -

- Fill in the funding request form enclosed with this newsletter and send it back to us.
- Get your foster carer



to fill the form in for you or help you to fill it in.

Or

- Ask your social worker to do the application.

Your names and addresses will then be taken off the forms, so don't worry, no-one knows who you are.

The request will then be passed on to the T2C group, who will make the final decision.

CELEBRATION EVENT 2004

We have just had our Celebration of achievement events as most of you probably know. We held 2 events over two nights at Parklands Leisure Centre in Oadby. We held an event for 5-11 year olds and an event for 12-19 year olds. These were both a great success and we hope you all had a good time.

We had Neil Kefford from Leicester Sound as our host who's help ensured the nights were successful and entertaining. Young people from our consultation group

T2C (Time To Change) were at both events explaining about the group.

At the younger event we had a bouncy castle, a variety of amusing games, a storyteller and an amazing face painter! At the older peoples event we had 'The Tug Of Fun' inflatable challenge and a variety of games.

At both events we had a buffet with loads of tasty food! Which went down very well.

It will all be happening again next year, so look out for details, or ask your social worker/foster carer to contact us nearer the time.

Legal Right to support when you have a problem or want to make a complaint about Social Services

All children and young people who are Looked After (In Care) or get any other support from Social Services now have a legal right to have someone to help them speak up if they want to make a complaint. These people are called 'Advocates'.

The Children's Rights Officer is an advocate. Elaine Constable is employed by Social Service to make sure that children and young people are listened to. There are also three Independent Advocates who help Elaine. They work part time for a few hours each month visiting young people.

The advocates will also be able to support you if you are not happy with Social Services, or they will be able put you in contact with someone else who is even more independent.

You might be able to think of someone you have a good relationship with who would be able to help you say what it is you are not happy about, and what things you would like to change.

The things you tell the Children's Rights Officer or the Advocates will be private. They will only tell someone else if you agree, or if they think that you or someone else may be harmed.

An Advocate will be able to help you to get your message across if you find it hard to say what you mean. They will help you to sort out any problems you have about your services. If things are really bad they will be able to help you to find a solicitor if your legal rights are not being met.

You can find out how to contact Elaine and more about the other advocates on the page 8 of this newsletter.

Summer Schools at Beal Universities

If you are in years 10, 11 or 12 and are thinking about going to University you might want to have a taster session first. There are a range of residential courses over the summer, which give you a taste of subjects like, Computing design, fashion, fine art, law, nursing, motorsport and social work. There's social activities on offer in the evenings so you'll have lots of chance to meet new people and make friends. The summer schools are completely free! If you think you might be interested then talk to your social worker or teacher, or call Fee on 0116 2657537

Who are the Children's' Rights Advocates ?

Elaine Constable is the full time Children's Rights Officer. She can help you if you want to get your opinion heard by people who make decision about you.

There are also three people who work a few hours each month visiting young people who live in Community Homes around the County.

Trish Hartley visits young people living in Educare - Sileby and the FSS home in Loughborough.

Carole Eastwood visits young people who are living in Littlehill House and the Educare Home in Groby.

Shirley Marwood visits young people living in the Educare home in Earl Shilton and the FSS Home in Burbage.

Trish, Carol and Shirley will also visit and offer support to young people who are in foster placements. If you want to speak to someone who is independent and will be able to help you to talk to adults in your life about what you would like to happen then contact Elaine Constable, on 0800 0830 652 or 07789 081528 and she will arrange for herself or an advocate to come and visit you and see how they can help you.

Who Cares Magazine ?

If you are aged 10 or over you will receive the latest **Who Cares Magazine** with this newsletter. The Who Care's Trust print four magazines each year.

Each issue of Who Cares has a **special theme**. The theme this time is **Mental Health**, the next one will be about **Your Money**. There are also letters, poems and a photo story as well as information about what other young people in care are up to across the country.

You will also receive a small booklet which explains about the new law which says you **have the right to help from an advocate when you are thinking about making a complaint or wanting things to change**.

Who Cares Trust offer a confidential telephone line for young people who are in care and living away from home. This is called the **Who Cares? Linkline**. The telephone number is **0500 564570** - it's free to call and the lines are open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday between 3:30 pm and 6.00 pm. Phones are staffed by trained people who listen, offer support and provide information on a number of issues including bullying, benefits, and leaving care.