IN YOUR CARE

The role of philanthropy for children in care and care leavers

Rachel Wharton, Plum Lomax and Rosanna Thomasoo

April 2017

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

There are currently 70,440 children in care in England[1], and around 10,000 children leave care in England every year.[2] Many children in care have a positive experience and thrive in their new environment. Yet overall children in care have poorer life chances and outcomes than peers living with birth families. They are more likely to have mental health issues and poor emotional well-being. Their educational attainment is consistently low and, understandably, they find it hard to form strong relationships. When they leave care from age 16 onwards they can struggle with independent living, often end up homeless, and are over represented within the criminal justice system.

These children are some of the most vulnerable in our society. Yet as a group they can be easily forgotten or grouped together with other 'vulnerable' children, meaning the distinct challenges they face are not dealt with as they should be. Children in care and care leavers are a relatively small group of children in England and outcomes for them should be much better than they are at present. They need targeted and tailored support that can give them a better start in life.

The needs of these children are officially dealt with by a multitude of local and central government agencies and departments, resulting in a care system that is complex. There are a range of charities—some focusing exclusively on this group, and many others working more widely with children and young people—who provide valuable support and services, alongside the state, to children directly, to their carers and to relevant professionals. But more can be done, and philanthropy, whether from individuals, corporate or trusts and foundations, can play a big part if it knows how. Funders need to be prepared to work with the state in this area. Together they can work toward better outcomes and improved life chances for looked-after children.

About this report

This paper looks at the landscape of the charity sector working with children in care and care leavers in England. It is based on an extensive literature review and interviews with experts in the field, and is designed to be of particular use to donors with an interest in funding organisations working in this space. In the paper we present:

• key contextual information about the care system

• profiles of some of the charities and funders already operating in this area

• five core issue areas where we think funders can improve outcomes for looked-after children: well-being and mental health; relationships; independent living for care leavers; safety and the criminal justice system; education, employment and training. For each of these five issue areas we:

– outline some of the key challenges for the children and young people involved and how these issues might be improved;

– highlight innovative and interesting practice in each area to provide funders with ideas on how their giving could create impact; and

– provide an overview of the different levels at which funders can work, with examples of charities working at each level.

It is only through considering these issues in collaboration with others—including children and young people themselves—and producing solutions together that we can achieve real, long lasting change for those in our care system.

CONTEXT: THE CARE SYSTEM

Some key figures about the care system

- 70,440 children are in care in England.
- 56% (39,670) of these children are male and 44% (30,780) are female.[3]
- Nearly one in four adults in prison has spent time in care.[4]
- Around a quarter of those living on the street had been in local authority care.
- Care leavers are seven times more likely to die in early adulthood (aged 19–21).[5]
- Almost a quarter of care leavers become teenage parents, three times the national average.[6]
- 40% of 19–21 year old care leavers were not in employment, education or training in 2016, compared with 14% of all 19–21 year olds.[7]

What is the care system and how does it work?

Why do children go into care?

Children are taken into care by local authorities when it has been agreed, or decided, that their parents or guardians can no longer care for them. The main reasons for taking a child into care are to protect them from further harm and to improve their life chances. Children taken into the care system have nearly always experienced a prolonged period of severe disruption at home, which can include experiences of abuse, neglect and instability.

> 60% of the current looked-after child population are in care because of abuse or neglect.[8]

A child officially becomes 'looked-after' by a council when they are either 'accommodated' under Section 20 of the Children Act, or a care order is granted by a court that gives the council shared parental responsibility for the child. The terms 'children in care' and 'looked-after children' are used interchangeably in this report.

A child can cease to be in care at any time by returning home to live with their family or by being adopted. Young people also cease to be looked-after when they leave care anytime between the ages of 16 and 18 (or 21 in the case of the 'Staying Put' initiative—see page 7 for more). If that young person has been in care for 13 weeks or more between the ages of 14 and 18 they are known as a 'care leaver' and are entitled to ongoing support and assistance from the local authority. Local authorities must support care leavers till they are 21, or 25 if they are in education, employment or training. 10,310 young people aged 16 and over left care in 2013–14, up 50% over the last ten years.[9]

> Though 18 is the usual age young people leave care, 33% of care leavers left care before their 18th birthday in 2013–14.[10]

What types of care are there?

The two main types of care available to looked-after children are foster care and residential care. Other types of care include: children living at home with their parents under the supervision of social services; and living in other residential settings like schools or secure units. Not all children who cannot live with their parents become 'looked-after'; some go into kinship care, have a special guardianship order, or are privately fostered.

Foster care

74% of looked-after children are cared for in foster placements.[11]

Foster care is the preferred form of care by local authorities. Foster care generally involves a child being placed with another family until they can return home. However, around 30% of children who return home are back in care within 5 years.[12] Some children never return home and remain in long-term foster care till they are adopted or are old enough to live independently. There is currently a shortage of foster families in England that disproportionately affects certain groups—teenagers, disabled children, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, and sibling groups often require more demanding care so can be difficult to place with foster families.

Residential care

11% (7,600) of children in care in 2016 were living in secure units, children's homes or hostels.[13]

Residential care involves a child being placed in a home with many other children. Generally speaking, those in residential care tend to have been in foster care before, tend to be older children, and they can have more complex needs—such as behavioural difficulties—which is why foster care has not been sustained.[14] Research shows that generally outcomes for children in residential homes are worse than for other looked-after children. This is not that surprising given their higher level of needs, and often poorer pre-care experiences. Evidence suggests, however, that children who spend a longer time in residential care have better outcomes than those only spending a short time.[15]

Kinship care

There are almost 153,000 children in England being raised by a non-parent family member—51% live with a grandparent, 23% with an older sibling, and the rest with other relatives, eg, aunts and cousins.[16]

Kinship care involves a child being cared for by a relative or family friend. Children in kinship care are not counted in the 'looked-after' children population as the local authority does not have responsibility for them. Children in kinship care can face similar challenges to looked-after children and still need support (though in general their life chances are better than their peers in foster or residential care).[17]

Because they are seen as providing a 'stable' family environment kinship carers can be considered a low priority by local authorities and government departments.[18] They can therefore struggle to get the support and benefits they are entitled to. Kinship carers also need support and their outcomes are worse than foster carers because they often do not receive any financial assistance or training. Most kinship carers live in extreme financial hardship. Research by Buttle UK showed that almost a quarter could not afford to put the heating on whenever they needed it (compared to just 1% of the general population).[19] Two of the main charities working in this field raising awareness of, and providing support and information on, kinship care are Grandparents Plus and Buttle UK.

Who are children in care?

There were 70,440 children in care on 31 March 2016, an increase of 5% from 2012.[20]

The number of children in care has risen steadily over the last few years. Some of the rise has been attributed to the death of Baby P in 2007 leading to higher referral rates.[21] In the last year the higher numbers also reflect

rising numbers of unaccompanied asylum seekers entering care, up by 54% from 2015, and now making up 6% of all looked-after children.[22]

The majority of children in care are white (75%). Mixed heritage children make up 9% and Black or Black British make up 7% of the children in care population: this means they are over-represented in the care system, as only around 5% of the child population of England is from Black or Black British and Mixed groups.[23]

Of those in care 56% are male and 44% female. Children can be taken into care at any age but 36% of children that went into care in 2016 were under four years old.[24] However, children in this age band have the highest rate of adoption—77% of children adopted from care in the year to 31 March 2016.[25]

What are the likely outcomes for children in care?

Children in care or leaving care face significant challenges, given their difficult start in life. Children in care are:

- more likely to have lived in neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation[26];
- four times more likely than their peers to have a mental health difficulty[27] and have lower levels of educational attainment[28];
- at greater risk of teenage pregnancy than their peers in the general population[29]; and
- six times more likely than children in the general population to be convicted of a crime.[30]

Their pre-care and care experiences, such as neglect, abuse and placement instability, can mean they do not trust many adults and subsequently struggle to form positive relationships with adults that can support them. And care leavers and those with experience of care are often unemployed.

Poor outcomes do not just affect children but also their carers and families and these outcomes can affect children for the rest of their lives.

What is the role of the state?

The Department for Education (DfE) has overall responsibility for the 'care system' and its main objective is to improve the quality of care and the stability of placements for looked-after children. It works to achieve this through local authorities and Ofsted. Local authorities have a duty to care for looked-after children in their area, through using their own services or buying services from private and voluntary sector providers. Ofsted inspects local authority and independent fostering services as well as individual residential homes and judges how effectively local authorities are meeting the needs of children in care, benchmarking them against each other.

Social workers are employed by local authorities and it is their role to judge when to take children into care. Once this decision is made, social workers have a responsibility for assessing a child's needs and finding a suitable placement for them. Social workers then write a care plan for children that includes any health, education or placement needs. A care plan involves multiple partners, such as a child's school, their foster carers and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). A social worker should meet with the child regularly to review the plan and their progress. However, research shows that in practice this does not always happen.[31]

How well a local authority and the DfE meet the needs of children in care is highly dependent on all parts of the care system working effectively together.

How is the policy context changing?

Over the past five years the government has taken a more active interest in the care system with quite a few policy changes being put in place. Edward Timpson MP—whose parents have themselves fostered over 90 children—was appointed as the first Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families in 2016. His

appointment is a very visible sign that the government accepts that the outcomes currently achieved for vulnerable children, including looked-after children, are not good enough.

Timpson has played a central role in trying to create culture change within the departments that are in charge of caring for children and families by placing children and their needs at the heart of these systems. The Children and Families Act 2014 (the Act) has been seen as movement in the right direction when it comes to children and young people as it places them at the centre of their care. The Act introduced a scheme called 'fostering for adoption'. When a child is fostered they can be placed with carers who are also approved adopters, meaning that if a court decides adoption is right for that child the process can begin with the child's current foster carers. The scheme has advantages for both child and carers—limiting the disruption of moving children into new placements can help to create a more stable home for a child.

Timpson also played an important part in the introduction of the 'Staying Put' arrangements that were introduced in the Act. 'Staying Put' enables children in care to remain with their foster families until the age of 21 years if both the young person and foster family are happy to do this. The implementation of 'Staying Put' has been a welcome step forward in acknowledging that there needs to be greater support for care leavers in their journey to independence.

Other recent developments for care leavers include the government's 2016 strategy 'Keep on Caring'. The strategy defines its first key outcome as ensuring that care leavers are better prepared and supported to live independently. Committed actions to achieve this include: legally outlining what it means for a local authority to be a good corporate parent; introducing a duty for local authorities to consult on and publish information about care leavers; and ensuring all care leavers have access to a personal advisor up until age 25, regardless of educational status. A new national care leaver advisory group is also being created to ensure care leavers are able to contribute to the formation of government policy.

A piece of new policy currently going through Parliament is the Children's Social Work Bill. The bill is considered by some, including Timpson, as an attempt to promote culture change within social work but it has been controversial. It initially proposed allowing councils to request specific exemptions from child protection laws so that they could innovate to improve children's outcomes.[32] However the government has recently backed down and removed the exemption clause, under enormous pressure from the social work profession and children's rights groups, who feared that these exemptions would erode vital legal protections for children[33].

As part of the government's drive for innovation in the care system, DfE launched the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme in England in October 2013 and extended it in 2016. The programme seeks *'to inspire whole system change for children's social care'*. It is viewed as a positive force to support innovation in improving the quality and impact of children's social work and rethinking support for adolescents in or on the edge of care.

What funding does the system receive?

The cost of care is high. In 2014, the National Audit Office estimated that local authorities in England spend £3.4bn on looked-after children. This includes foster care, residential care, care leavers, adoption support, education and training, but excludes health services and voluntary sector spending.[34] Funding for children's services comes primarily from the Department for Communities and Local Government. Because it is not ring-fenced, local authorities can choose to spend it differently—some choose mental health provision while others fund foster carers.

Costs of care also varies across local authorities from £15k to £57k annual spend per child for foster care provision.[35] Spending on care leavers also varies, with independent living grants ranging from £750 to £2,500.[36] As is well documented, all local authorities are facing funding pressures currently as their budgets from central government are reduced. This brings difficulties to the sector at a time of rising need, with more children entering care and outcomes remaining poor.

But there are significant long-term costs of not providing children with the right type of care. For example, in 2016 40% of 19–21 year old care leavers were not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 14% of 19–21 year olds in the general population.[37] The lifetime costs of a young person being NEET are estimated at £56k a year.[38] Research by NSPCC modelled some care pathways to show how savings could be made if the right support was put in place for children at an early stage. Its analysis showed that a child's unstable and unsupported experience of care cost £22,415 more per year than another child's stable and well-supported care.[39]

LANDSCAPE: CHARITIES SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN CARE

What type of work are charities already doing in this area?

Within England, the charity sector working with children in care and care leavers is comprised of:

- large national charities that work in a variety of areas with children and young people and have separate streams of work for children in care; and

- small and medium sized charities dedicated specifically to children in care, mainly working at a local level.

Charities work very closely alongside local government, with many commissioned to deliver services for children in care and care leavers. But they play an additional role too—enhancing such services using voluntary income to improve outcomes, providing services where state provision is inadequate or non-existent, as well as innovating and influencing to improve practice.

It is difficult to estimate the size of the charity sector working in this area—either by number of charities or by income. **Throughout this report, we highlight charities of all types and size working to improve the life chances of children in care and/or care leavers. NPC has not analysed these organisations in any detail.**

These charities are working with different beneficiaries, tackling a range of issues as shown in the table below.

Table 1: The types of support charities provide to different actors in the care system

Children in care	Care leavers	Parents and families	Professionals
Mental health and well being	Mental health and well being	Family restoration	Social pedagogy
Relationships	Relationships	Good parenting and prevention	Training and support for social workers
Safety and the criminal justice system	Independent living, including suitable accommodation	Early intervention work	Training and support for foster carers
Education	Criminal justice		Restorative justice
Appropriate care, and children's rights in care	Education, employment and training		Training and support for police
Bringing children's voice into the care system	Bringing children's voice into the care system		

In this report we have focused on five key areas:

- mental health and well being;

- relationships;

- independent living for care leavers;

- safety and criminal justice; and

- education, employment and training.

Our research highlighted high levels of need in these areas, as well as innovative practice being conducted. We also believe these are areas in which funders can make a significant impact.

What funding opportunities are there?

Children and young people are the third most popular cause amongst UK givers, after medical research and animal welfare.[40] But there is not a great deal of private funding specifically directed at children in care and care leavers despite them being some of the country's most vulnerable individuals. There is a significant role for philanthropy in this sector: funding charities to deliver additional services to those contracted by local government, particularly when statutory spending is being cut; funding innovation by piloting new services or programmes; and providing funding to improve the system, for example through training and supporting professionals or directly influencing government policy.

For funders thinking about supporting this sector, NPC's funding levels model (see Figure 1) is a useful starting point. This helps funders think through the trade-off between having a quick, direct, relatively certain impact on a small number of people, versus creating change for a large number of beneficiaries at the society or policy level (which is much less certain and could take a long time to achieve). By considering the reach of an intervention in relation to its level of certainty, funders can make key decisions about what types of organisations they might want to fund.

Figure 1: NPC's funding levels model for supporting the children in care sector
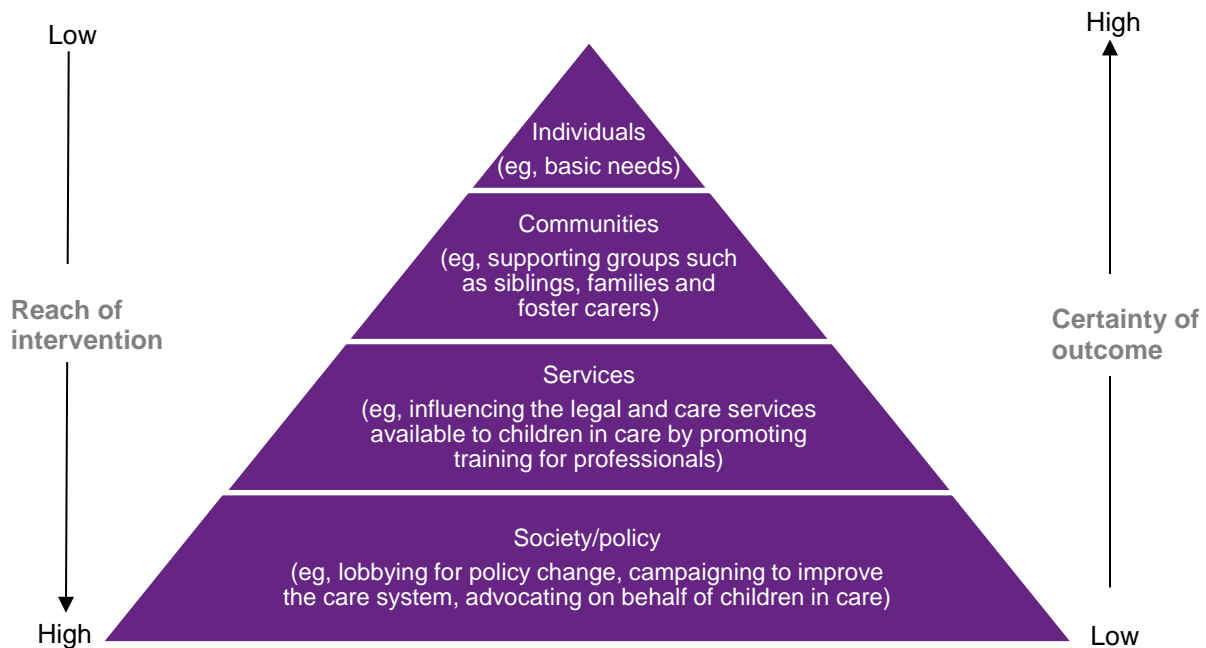
With rising levels of need and diminishing funding, it is important to note that there are opportunities for philanthropists to have a significant impact at each funding level: supporting organisations who work directly with individual looked-after children or care leavers; helping children in care as a group by funding counselling or therapeutic work; improving the care system and processes that affect looked-after children; or influencing policy around children in care. Many of the charities operating in the children in care sector in England work across these different levels, but it may be possible to fund streams of work or programmes working at a particular level.

Unfortunately there is not enough research to definitively prioritise one or two interventions that will fundamentally improve outcomes for looked-after children. But some key themes have emerged as being vital—such as the damage stemming from multiple placements, the need for children to form trusting relationships with a number of adults, and the importance of collaboration between all those involved, such as local authorities, police, social workers, carers, schools and more. Throughout the report we have highlighted a variety of approaches taken by organisations working at these different funding levels to help funders navigate through the sector.

There is a range of funders already working in this space including: Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the KPMG Foundation, BBC Children in Need, The Blagrave Trust, Buttle UK, Big Lottery Fund and Comic Relief. Many of these funders share knowledge and experience with each other and use this to help devise their programmes. We have not come across much collaboration between funders in this space, for example running programmes together, but anecdotally we see funders showing more interest in working more closely together. The report highlights some of the specific programmes being run by some of these funders in each section.

SUPPORTING WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

What are the key issues affecting children in care and care leavers in this area?

Children in care can be particularly vulnerable

60% of children who become looked-after in England and Wales do so due to abuse or neglect.[41] Family breakdown, trauma and loss can result in emotional and behavioural difficulties—like attachment disorders—and can have long-lasting effects on a child's well-being, mental health and physical health.[42] Behavioural disorders have been linked to higher incidences of placement breakdown as carers struggle to cope with the behaviour.[43] Placement breakdowns subject children to yet more uncertainty and trauma.

They need access to mental health services

To tackle the emotional and behavioural difficulties that arise from traumatic experiences, children in care need access to specialist mental health services. Mental health provision is a national crisis for everyone but for looked-after children it can be even harder to access and receive the support needed. This is particularly true if they have been placed in care outside of their local authority area or are in residential care.[44] Being placed in care far from home can also increase feelings of vulnerability and a sense of isolation for children when they go into care, further harming their well-being.

…but it can be hard to ensure they get what they need

In England, local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and the Department of Health (DoH) all have responsibility for ensuring that the physical and mental health needs of children in care are met. When a child enters care the local authorities should conduct a health assessment that feeds into that child's care plan. In theory the health assessment should include mental health. However, research by NSPCC found that in practice the assessment focused primarily on physical health.[45]

Failure to identify emotional and mental health needs at such an early stage in a child's care journey can cause significant challenges later on. A child may not go to a placement that best supports all their needs because their needs have not been identified. A carer can struggle to know how best to support a child, and may find it difficult to access mental health services because the care plan has not made mental and emotional well-being a priority and waiting lists for CAMHS services are long. If a carer is struggling to cope, this could lead to placement breakdown and yet more upheaval for an already vulnerable child.[46]

Good well-being is particularly important for a child's life chances

Alongside mental health needs, it is recognised that having high levels of well-being also incorporates 'soft' traits, such as confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Evidence has linked well-being with both mental and physical health, as well as outcomes later in life, such as education and employment.[47] But these characteristics can be hard for children in care to develop due to pre-care experiences of abuse and neglect as well as experiences during care—such as placement instability—which can leave them feeling unwanted with low self-esteem.[48]

Research by NPC has shown that well-being amongst girls in the general population is lower than boys as they get older.[49] Bright Spots—a research project run by Coram Voice that focuses on gathering the views and

experiences of children in care—shows this is also true for girls in care. It found that girls in care were five times more likely to have low well-being in comparison with boys.[50]

Children in the general population usually develop qualities such as resilience and confidence, at school, within families, at clubs and with friends. More work around developing friendships and strong positive relationships with adults could help looked-after children increase their confidence, self-esteem and resilience—improving their well-being.

How can funders help tackle these issues?

Below are some examples of different approaches that charities are taking to improve well-being and mental health for children in care and care leavers at different levels. They help illustrate the different types of work funders may wish to support.

Providing direct services for children

Funders can play a critical role in supporting early intervention work around children's mental health and well-being. The Anna Freud Centre focuses on children's mental health research, training and treatment. It runs specific programmes for children in or on the edge of care, such as teaching life skills to young people struggling with behavioural and emotional difficulties. Charities such as Place2Be and the Art Room run counselling and therapy sessions for children in school to support children with mental health challenges and poor well-being. Though these charities do not specifically target children in care they do target vulnerable children, many of whom will be in, or will have experienced care. It could be possible for a funder to support a specific programme that focuses on children in care in this area. The national charity NSPCC works at an individual level providing therapeutic services to help children move on from abuse and also running Childline—a telephone helpline for children. NSPCC service centres work directly with children and families on a range of issues—from protecting children from sexual abuse, through to helping families who misuse drugs and alcohol. It also provides social workers with the tools they need to tackle neglect.
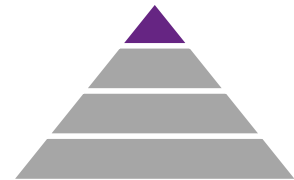
The SAFE programme, run by the Hampton Trust is a 12-week programme to support young people aged 12–18 who have been adopted. It helps the young person to understand how their previous life experiences have impacted on their feelings and behaviour. It also encourages the development of empathy to understand the feelings of others. Key areas covered include dreams and aspirations, anger management, positive relationships, self-esteem and goal setting. SAFE also includes parent workshops on childhood trauma awareness and understanding the impact of trauma in childhood.

Supporting foster carers and families

Support for foster carers can be provided at an individual level through interventions such as respite care. Respite care enables carers to have space from their responsibilities and has been highlighted as particularly useful when caring for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.[51] Cornerstone operates in England and Scotland providing respite care as well as running centres for emergency care placements and working to increase placement stability. Safe Families for Children also offers respite care as well as befriending and support for parents and the wider family, helping to prevent children being taken into care in the first place.
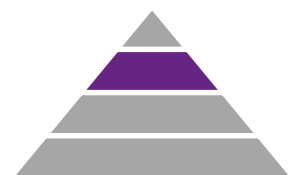
Training carers and professionals

Further training for foster carers, social workers and adoptive parents around mental health and emotional well-being is also needed. Research has shown that foster carers and social workers feel that they need a greater understanding of the mental health problems and emotional traumas that looked-after children can struggle with.[52] Funders have the flexibility to find innovative ways of improving the profession.
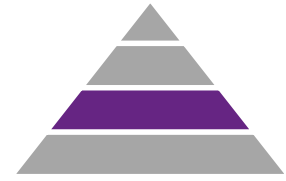
The KPMG Foundation funded a pilot programme across seven local authorities, to test whether training foster carers in social pedagogy would improve the poor educational and life outcomes for children in foster care. Learning was brought over from Europe that focused on building strong, positive relationships with children in care and helping carers better understand emotional well-being. Further training will have an immediate impact on social workers and the children they support. It should also have longer-term impact as new understanding, training and awareness filters through a local authority.

Leap Confronting Conflict is piloting a new three-year programme to train foster carers and care home professionals, along with the young people they care for, in conflict resolution techniques. It helps form stronger relationships on both sides, and allows the children to develop emotional resilience.

Campaigning to raise awareness of mental health issues

At a societal level, funders could work to fund campaigns that raise awareness of mental health issues for children in care or support charities that lobby for policy change. The charity Young Minds works to improve the emotional well-being and mental health of children and young people in general so they can better cope with adversity and find help when they need it. It also raises awareness of mental health issues amongst young people and professionals who work with them, as well as lobbying for policy change.
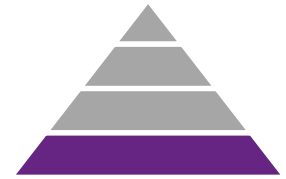
SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

What are the key issues affecting children in care and care leavers in this area?

Relationships are fundamental to children's development

Relationships are now understood to be so vital to looked-after children that the Care Inquiry[*] has called for a care system that '*places at its heart the quality and continuity of relationships, and that promotes and enhances the ability of those who are important to children—care givers and others—to provide the care and support they need.*'[53] Evidence has shown that looked-after children value relationships, particularly with their wider families, and want to maintain them when they go into care.[54] These relationships may not always be with a parent, they can often be with siblings. Denying them can cause emotional distress to children, as well as increase the likelihood of going missing from care and offending.[55] Maintaining contact with wider family members can help children in care build connections and gives them a wider support network for the future.

…but placement instability makes it harder to maintain positive relationships

Placement instability makes it hard for children in care to develop relationships and can negatively affect their well-being. In the year to March 2016, 10% of children in care had three or more placements during the year.[56] Placements far from home can be damaging because they make it much harder for children to sustain contact with family members.[57] Data from DfE showed that in 2014–2015 37% of children in residential care and 14% in foster care were placed more than 20 miles from home.[58]

Children value relationships with a trusted adult

Work done gathering the views of children in care highlights how children themselves want a relationship with an adult that they can trust[59] and how they value talking to someone who has been through similar experiences.[60] The Bright Spots research showed that young people who could not identify a trusted adult in their lives were nearly 11 times more likely to have low levels of well-being.[61] In England every child in care is entitled to have an adult mentor—an independent person who visits, advises and supports them. However, research from Barnardo's found that only 3% of children are actually receiving this independent support.[62] The research found that two in three local authorities have a waiting list for children in care to be matched with an independent visitor, and in many local authorities these services are either little known or not available at all.[63]

Social workers could provide a trusted relationship

Social workers and primary carers are well placed to provide the children they care for with a trusted adult relationship, yet multiple placements, placement breakdown and high turnover of social workers is preventing this. Children in care find it difficult to develop relationships with their social workers as they change so much.[64] Nearly a third of the participants aged 11–18 years in the Bright Spots research had had more than three social workers that year.[65] For social workers there can be many factors that prevent them forming trusted relationships with the children they help care for. Workload for social workers is high and pay relatively low, leading to high rates of

---

[*] A collaboration of eight leading charities looking at what works best in achieving permanence for children in and on the edge of care.

absenteeism. Those working in the sector need to have more time, resources and knowledge to make better decisions for the children they care for and to establish strong relationships with them.

…as can quality foster care

Quality foster care can provide children with stable and loving relationships but with a shortage of 7,600 foster carers in England[66] it is hard for local authorities to prioritise this when there are not enough carers in the first place. Despite the shortage of foster carers, high quality foster care can help children in care form relationships with adults they can trust and keep in contact with once they leave care. Training and support for foster carers can vary wildly across local authorities and providers. As mentioned in the previous section, many carers want further support and training to help them cope with challenging behaviour and develop a better relationship with the children they care for.

How can funders help tackle these issues?

Relationships are central to achieving a high quality of life. For looked-after children relationships have been broken and damaged in the past, making new ones harder to form. Funders can help children repair relationships and build new ones in many different ways.

Providing mentoring

At an individual level, mentoring is used by many charities to help support vulnerable children in care. For example, Chance UK works in primary schools, running a mentoring programme for children on the edge of care and in care. Primary school aged children often experience a gap in terms of mentoring, but programmes of this kind could help children develop emotional resilience at a younger age that will help them later in life. Other charities offering mentoring include Mentoring Plus, The Prince's Trust and Catch 22. Meanwhile, it has been shown that mentoring from care-experienced adults contributes to a more trusted relationship with their mentor. Rees—The Care Leavers Foundation runs peer mentoring programmes where care leavers meet to share experiences and support each other. The national charity Barnardo's works with local authorities to provide training for volunteer independent visitors, raises awareness of the scheme, and helps the local authority manage it.
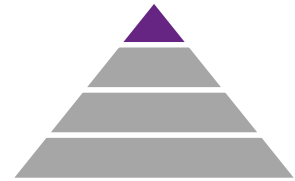
Supporting families

Investment in good family support to reduce family breakdown at an early stage can be incredibly beneficial both in the short term and long term for children and families. TACT (The Adolescent and Children's Trust) the UK's largest fostering and adoption charity—is running a programme working with Cardiff Council to use the expertise of foster carers to support the whole family, not just the child. Foster carers help to change the dynamic in a family home through their knowledge of caring whilst offering respite to a family as needed. This helps prevent children entering full-time care and helps maintain and build family relationships. Daybreak specialise in family group conferences—meetings of the extended family and friends to make decisions and plans for resolving problems around a child. It has recently received funding from the DfE to test out a mandatory offer of family group conferences to families who are on the brink of court proceedings for child protection. Siblings Together helps young people in care initiate and continue to have contact with their siblings. The charity wants children to develop strong family bonds and sibling relationships that can help them achieve an independent and positive place in society. Lifelong Links is an evidence-based programme that aims to build positive lifelong support networks for children in the care system. Originally a US programme, the DfE has given funding to seven local authorities working in collaboration with Family Rights Group and Become to pilot the programme here in the UK.
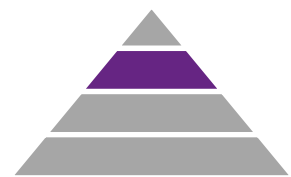
It is also important not to forget the needs of adoptive parents. Adoptive parents often require support dealing with the issues of their adopted child and may also have support needs of their own, such as coming to terms with being unable to conceive.

Training carers and professionals

Charities like the Fostering Network, Foster Talk, Barnardo's and Action for Children all provide information about fostering, give support and advice to foster carers and campaign to improve foster care.

Frontline's mission is to transform the lives of vulnerable children by recruiting and developing outstanding individuals to be leaders in social work. Frontline wants to reduce the high turnover of social workers by raising the reputation of the profession and encouraging more young graduates to enter the profession. It recently received funding from the DfE to develop, scale and spread Firstline—an intensive year-long programme to transform good managers into excellent leaders—making it available to all local authorities and reaching over 400 social work managers across three years. Improving services for children
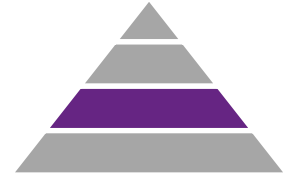
Leeds City Council has adopted the ambition to be '*the best city for children and young people to grow up in*'. This work includes a focus on 'Best Start' and 'Early Help', which has contributed to a reduction in the number of children who are looked-after or on child protection plans. When a child is identified as 'at risk' the council works with the whole family, investing in reunification through family group conferences, restorative practice and the Multi-systemic Therapy Family Integrated Transitions (MST FIT) programme.[67] Leeds City Council has an ongoing ambition to achieve a whole city restorative approach for children and families, incorporating all children's services—from social work to education and criminal justice.
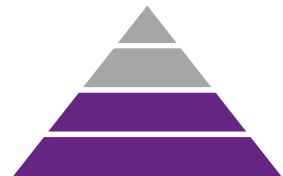
SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR CARE LEAVERS

What are the key issues affecting children in care and care leavers in this area?

Young care leavers are entitled to a minimum level of support from their local authority when it comes to transitioning from care to independent living and many local authorities have dedicated teams to assist those in care with their transition to independence. However standards vary greatly across local authorities and for young care leavers who might not be able to rely on family support or wider networks, the transition period can be a very difficult time.

A lack of appropriate accommodation can put care leavers at risk

Standards of accommodation for care leavers vary and in some case there can be a lack of appropriate accommodation available.[68] Research has described housing as '*a vehicle for stability*', and care leavers who access good housing tend to have better outcomes later in life.[69] Despite this, around 11% of those leaving care in England are placed in unsuitable accommodation[70], such as bed and breakfasts for extended periods of time, or hostels shared with adults with substance misuse problems and complex needs. Unsuitable accommodation can make care leavers feel more vulnerable and isolated, putting them at an increased risk of emotional and physical harm as they transition to independence.[71]

Very vulnerable care leavers have higher housing needs

Those who leave care at a younger age, have a history of substance misuse or offending, or suffer from physical or mental health issues tend to have greater housing needs. Research has shown that those who are most vulnerable within care—those with the most traumatic pre-care experiences—are more likely to struggle on leaving care.[72] These care leavers are also at an increased risk of experiencing homelessness. While there is no official data on the exact number of people becoming homeless upon leaving care, it is thought that almost one third experience homelessness within 6−24 months of leaving care.[73]

…which means more support is needed for independent living

Within the general population young people are living at home for longer and return to live at home more frequently than any other generation. These young people rely on their families to help them develop independent living skills—such as cooking, cleaning, financial management and washing clothes. Young care leavers rarely have access to such opportunities and hence often lack these skills. While 88% of care leavers report receiving some support to prepare them for independent life, many still feel under-prepared when the transition happens.[74] Research has shown that involving care leavers in the planning of their leaving care arrangements and listening to their requests can help them to better prepare for independent life, and contributes to more positive outcomes.[75]

Care leavers often seek support from family members

A significant proportion of young people leaving care attempt to re-establish contact with their birth families.[76] For many care leavers these relationships can be positive. For others they do not go as planned and are distressing

and negative, leading to further familial breakdown.[77] This can increase feelings of vulnerability, isolation and low self-esteem. More support and guidance is needed to help young people re-establish and manage these relationships.

…and worry about their finances

Although local authorities are legally obliged to assess the capacity of each care leaver to independently manage their finances, almost 50% fail to offer financial education guidance, making care leavers especially susceptible to financial difficultly.[78] Personal advisors—whose role includes offering such guidance and informing care leavers of additional support they may be entitled to (eg, leaving care grants)—are often unaware of the current rights of those leaving care and are unable to offer accurate guidance. A lot more work is needed here to ensure that policy is put into practice and care leavers receive the financial assistance they are entitled to.

How can funders help tackle these issues?

Offering basic support to care leavers

Funders can support charities that provide for care leavers' basic needs. Rees—The Care Leavers Foundation has a crisis fund that provides emergency financial support to care leavers in need of food, shelter or fuel. There are also charities that provide advice and support to care leavers, such as Coram Voice, which has an online portal to inform individuals of the support they should be receiving as they go through the leaving care process. Become runs a free advice line for children in care and young care leavers. Mentoring charities are another possibility for funders looking to intervene at this level. Become runs a coaching programme where young care leavers develop the tools they need to build strong, positive relationships, become more resilient and set attainable goals to work toward. The KPMG Foundation's 'Forever Families' project aims to provide those in care with a network of key individuals who commit to offer life-long support, thus creating a more robust support network to aid their transition to independent living. The Big House Theatre Company is a small charity working in London that aims to use theatre to help young care leavers. Young care leavers participate in workshops and help write, act in and produce a play at the end of a 12 week course. As part of the course, care leavers also participate in intensive workshops that are designed to develop life skills and help increase confidence and build self-esteem.
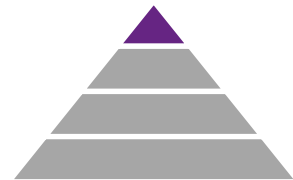
Funders could also decide to run separate funding streams for organisations that specifically work with care leavers to ensure the work is targeted. The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has been funding work in the children and young people sector for a long time but at the end of 2016 it launched a funding stream focused on care leavers. The funding stream has three priority outcomes: helping care leavers to form healthy relationships; ensuring young people receive a consistently high standard of statutory support that has been informed by their own views; and increasing alignment in the voluntary sector to ensure successful transitions to adult life for care leavers. These priority outcomes allow Esmée to do some very targeted work in an area with a relatively small beneficiary population (around 10,000 young people leave care every year[79]). Esmée again asks for applications from charities that work in partnership with local authorities—recognising that any systemic change can only be achieved through collaboration with others that work with care leavers.

Providing accommodation for care leavers

Commonweal Housing is a charity that creates housing for people who are facing social injustice and provides them with bespoke services to help support them. They introduced a peer landlord scheme, which offers an opportunity for tenants to learn the skills required for shared housing—and understand the costs and budgets of living in private accommodation—from someone they can relate to and form a
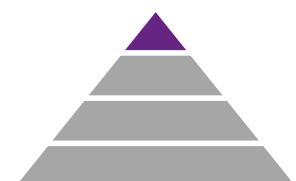
trusting relationship with. Commonweal use social investment with private funders to finance its projects. Though it does not have any projects focused on care leavers at the moment, they have outlined this as a strategic focus area. The charity 1625 Independent People is a small charity working in south west England proving accommodation and other support to care leavers. As well as supported housing, the charity runs a variety of projects with young people to help them with independent living, employment, education and training, and life skills.

## Amplifying the voices of care leavers

There are a number of innovative projects that aim to bring the voices of care leavers to the front of the system. Trafford Council, for example, has designed its leaving care services with the needs of care leavers in mind. To help care leavers on their journey to independence and find suitable accommodation, it has published *A guide to young people's accommodation in Trafford*, which details the available options and encourages those approaching care leaving age to proactively contribute to planning their future accommodation needs. Trafford also provides services for care leavers that are above the statutory minimum. It ensures that young people engage with both a personal advisor and a social worker concurrently from the age of 15 to avoid a sudden transition. It also works to engage with care leavers more than the legal minimum of three times a year. Trafford Council was the first local authority in the country to receive an Ofsted rating of 'outstanding' for their leaving care programme.
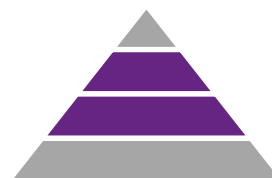
Charities focused on getting user voice into service delivery include Become who run a programme called 'Ask Our Experts'. This supports care-experienced young people to devise and deliver training for professionals who come into contact with children in care and care leavers.

Campaigning for policy change

There are many charities in this space that campaign for policy change and advocate for care leavers, such as Become, Coram Voice and Action for Children. The national charity Catch22 runs the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum. The Forum consists of 80 local authority leaving care services who aim to achieve the best outcomes for young people transitioning from care to adulthood by sharing best practice and informing policy development at a national level. Catch22 also ran the National Care Advisory Service—an information and advice hub dedicated to supporting care leavers in the transition from care—unfortunately this closed in March 2015 due to a lack of funding.
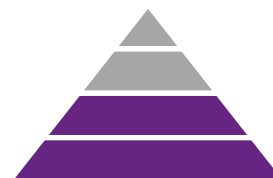
Research is also a key element in supporting any advocacy work. Barnardo's have developed a 'Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Framework', which identifies five stages that young people commonly experience as they leave care. It can be used by local authority staff to review their services and it encourages collaboration across government agencies, the voluntary sector and the private sector. The government supports the implementation of Barnardo's accommodation framework through its previously mentioned 'Keep on Caring'.

Social Impact Bonds (SIBs). A Social Impact Bond is a financial mechanism in which investors pay for a set of interventions to improve a social outcome that is of social and/or financial interest to a government commissioner.[80] There have been a number of SIBs developed in the UK specifically for children in, or at the edge of care. The Essex SIB provides a multi-systemic therapy programme to adolescents on the edge of care to enable them to remain safely at home. The Manchester SIB for looked-after adolescents aims to move 11–14 year olds out of residential care into foster care through training and supporting foster carers. Both were designed by Social Finance[81]. The DfE is now exploring the use of SIBs for care leavers, specifically working to get care leavers into sustained education, employment or training.[82]

SUPPORTING SAFETY AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

What are the key issues affecting children in care and care leavers in this area?

There has been more research recently into the connection between care and offending. But it is crucial to understand that overwhelming majority of children and young people in care do not offend.[83]

Looked-after children are over represented in the criminal justice system

Children in care are six times more likely than children in the general population to be convicted of a crime or receive a caution[84] and the Prison Reform Trust estimates that up to half of all children in custody are, or have been, looked-after children.[85] Reasons for this over representation are complex. But many of the issues already discussed above may be contributory factors—trauma or neglect in early childhood, difficulties with forming relationships, low self-esteem, multiple placements, lack of trust and feeling unsupported or isolated.

This is partly due to early and unnecessary criminalisation

Research has shown that police are called out to incidents involving looked-after children that they would not have been if they happened in a domestic setting, such as a child breaking a glass in a temper. Residential care workers and foster carers are working in a risk averse environment with poor resources, so 'challenging' behaviour—especially from adolescents—can often be seen as 'offending' behaviour and the police are called.[86] However, it is a very complex issue—where children engage in risk-taking behaviour often due to emotional trauma and difficult environment—and it is not clear cut as to whether they are the perpetrator of a crime, or a victim of their circumstances. But once the crime is reported, the police have to get involved. There is also a worry that police are being used as a form of respite care by staff in residential care homes who are not properly trained or equipped to manage difficult behaviour.[87]

Often vulnerable children are viewed a 'the problem' and can go missing from care

Children going missing from care is often a reason police are called. Reporting children missing from care can result in unnecessary criminalisation as children are seen as 'the problem'. There were 8,670 children who were recorded as missing at least once in 2016, with an average of five missing incidents per child.[88] Many children feel they are stigmatised for being in care—they are viewed as trouble makers—and treated differently by the police as a result.[89] Children are not seen as victims in these situations and funding pressures within the police and local authorities mean that children who go missing from care are lacking the support they need.

…which can leave them at risk of child sexual exploitation

When a child goes missing from care it puts them in danger of child sexual exploitation (CSE). CSE involves children and young people being forced or manipulated into sexual activity in exchange for something—money, gifts, accommodation, or less tangible goods such as affection or status. Though the sexual activity may appear consensual, it is based on an imbalance of power where the victim feels unable to say no.[90] Children in care can be particularly vulnerable to CSE due to factors such as poor safe-guarding measures in residential care settings

and alternative care provision, and a lack of stability in care.[91] An estimated 20–35% of sexually exploited children are children in care.[92] Children being treated as the criminal not the victim when they present to the police often means that they are missing out on the necessary interventions to support them and the abuse continues.

How can funders help tackle these issues?

There is little doubt that intervening at the point of criminalisation maybe too late, and that prevention work earlier is crucial. Many of the approaches discussed earlier in the report can help reduce offending rates of looked-after children—such as help forming relationships, good parenting, and appropriate support for care leavers. But there are some specific opportunities for funders to improve outcomes, outlined below. For funders interested in this specific area, see NPC's recent *Beyond bars* report[93]—highlighting the valuable role of charities in the criminal justice sector.

Supporting restorative practice

Using interventions like restorative practice has been shown to be successful in resolving incidents between carers and children. It brings together victims and offenders in a restorative meeting, used both for prevention and repairing harm. Unfortunately it is not used by many local authorities as funding for this preventative work is not available. Surrey Council and Surrey Police run extensive training across agencies on restorative practice, including training for foster carers and staff at residential homes, and their Youth Restorative Intervention scheme has been very successful in reducing re-offending and saving costs. Leap Confronting Conflict provides training to help young people in care—and the professionals and adults that support them—to manage conflict, improve their relationships and unleash their potential to become successful adults. Although it works with a range of young people, children in care are a priority area currently.
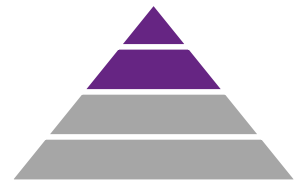
## Promoting collaboration between different bodies and organisations

Collaboration between police, local authorities and care providers, including charities, is essential in helping children in care stay safe and out of the criminal justice system. Funders can aid this collaboration by working with organisations that collaborate with local authorities and help build their capacity to prevent the criminalisation of looked-after children. The Prison Reform Trust, for example, runs a programme that aims to help local authorities understand what is happening in their area around children in care and the criminal justice system and looks at ways to improve practice. This sort of work is very difficult for local authorities to do without external support, because often their time and money is spent on immediate need rather than more preventative work that could have long-term impact. Funders could play an important role here, helping to shift the conversation to prevention through early intervention.
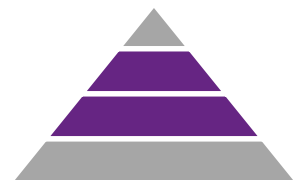
Another example of successful collaboration includes Surrey County Council and Surrey Police, who in 2011 adopted a multi-agency strategy, involving police, social workers and local counsellors, to reduce offending by looked-after children. From 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 the rate of offending by children in care in Surrey fell by 45%.[94]
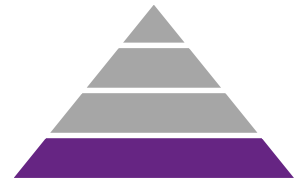
Preventing child sexual exploitation

Since the Rotherham abuse scandal there has been increased interest and funding for the prevention of child sexual exploitation (CSE). The government recently announced it would invest £40m in protecting children and young people from sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking, and to crack down on offenders.[95] Charities like
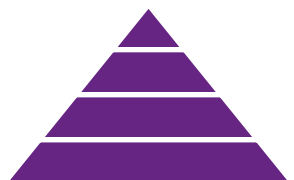
NSPCC, The Children's Society and Barnardo's are doing a lot more work around CSE, including research, raising awareness and direct service provision. Though these services are not specifically for children in care they are certainly included. Barnardo's is the largest provider of CSE support in the UK. It runs centres for victims of CSE where they can receive counselling and be in a safe environment. It works with local authorities to help them identify children at risk of CSE and works in schools to deliver training on healthy relationships and raise awareness of CSE.

Enabling campaigning and advocacy work

There is a lot of work needed at a societal level to help change behaviour and attitudes to young offenders. The Howard League campaigns for reform to the criminal justice system. It runs programmes to help children and young people in prison, as well as producing research and engaging in policy and influencing work. It has also just launched a two-year programme of work to end the criminalisation of children living in residential care by exploring best practice within the sector. ECPAT UK is a children's rights organisation that campaigns and advocates for trafficked children and adults as well as conducting research.

There are opportunities for funders to collaborate with each other at this level as well. The Child Sexual Exploitation Funders Alliance (CSEFA) is a group of charitable funders who are aligning resources in order to bring about a step change in how CSE is dealt with across the UK.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

What are the key issues affecting children in care and care leavers in this area?

Looked-after children consistently underperform in education compared to their peers

The ability of children and young people in care to thrive in education is influenced by their early experiences as well as the treatment they receive while in care. Placement instability can be particularly disruptive to a child's learning. Data on educational attainment and school attendance is collected and used as indicators of how well the 'looked-after' population is doing in comparison with their peers. In 2015 only 18% of looked-after children achieved five or more A*–C GCSEs or equivalent, including English and mathematics, compared to 64% of children who are not looked-after.[96]

But educational attainment should not be the only indicator of a child's success

It is widely considered that there has been too much focus on educational outcomes for the last few years when it comes to looked-after children. There is now recognition that GCSE grades should not be the only indicators of a child's success, although of course, we need to ensure that educational expectations for looked-after children are not lowered too far. Professionals and the children themselves believe more attention needs to be paid to emotional well-being as well as educational attainment.[97]

Children in care can have emotional and behavioural difficulties that affect their performance at school

Teachers and schools need to be alert to the emotional and behavioural difficulties that children in care may have, as outlined earlier in this report. Recent data for England shows that 29% of young people who had been looked-after for a year had a statement of special education needs (SEN), and a further 38% had SEN without a statement.[98] Looked-after children are also likely to have speech, language and communication (SLC) difficulties that could affect their engagement at school.[99] Children with SEN, SLC or behavioural difficulties can display disruptive behaviour, which is seen as 'bad' behaviour. The child is then disciplined instead of work being done to try to understand the causes of such 'bad' behaviour—like attachment disorders and separation anxiety. Schools and teachers can play a preventative role here if they have the skills to recognise developing emotional and well-being problems and understand how they can seek help and support for the child involved.

…and can struggle beyond school too

Only 6% of care leavers in 2012 entered higher education, compared to 43% of young people in general[100]. And of those that do, it is thought that there are higher drop out rates, although lack of data at this level makes it harder to understand how well these young people progress. . This is likely due to financial issues and emotional well-being, such as lack of supportive networks, but there is not enough hard evidence to understand the problem.

Employment and training is another area where care leavers underperform their peers. As detailed in the earlier section on independence, more support needs to be given to care leavers for a longer period of time. Data from 2016 tells us that of the care leavers aged 19–21, 40% were not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared with 14% of all 19–21 year olds.[101] Children in care are often not as well prepared for employment as their peers. Their educational attainment is lower but they also struggle to develop some of the softer skills needed for employment, such as confidence and resilience—as detailed in the earlier sections.

How can funders help tackle these issues?

There are many charities that work in the education space and NPC's publication—*School report*—provides more detail on these charities and the areas they work in. Many of these charities are working with children in care but not always exclusively. This means that funders have the opportunity to provide more targeted solutions to some of the challenges discussed above.

## Getting care leavers into education, employment or training

Support for care leavers entering further education and employment is also an area where funders can make a targeted impact. Drive Forward offers career coaching to make sure that care leavers have the support and help they need to be confident in the work place as well as offering practical support to find work. The Prince's Trust and Tomorrow's People are well known national charities that run multiple programmes to support care leavers into further education, training or employment.
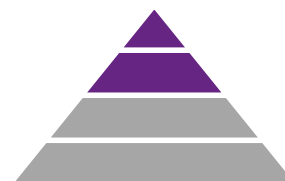
There is a large gap in the data available on care leavers in higher education. In order to tackle this data gap local authorities and universities need to work closely together to collect this data. If more was known about these care leavers within the higher education system then they would have a better chance of receiving the support they need. Become run a programme called 'Propel' that works to support care leavers at university. Buttle UK, which also works with care leavers, has developed a quality mark for universities. Based on research of care leavers' experiences at university it provides a framework that allows universities to develop their support for children and young people who have experienced care.

Providing training for teachers

There are a number of charities that offer and encourage continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers in a range of areas. Teacher Development Trust provides resources and training for teachers with the aim of improving educational outcomes for children through effective learning. Funders could work with organisations like these and experts to develop more CPD around the needs of children in care. Adoption UK has a range of resources, support and training for teachers to help them understand issues that specifically affect children in care and adopted children, like the difficulty children face in forming lasting relationships (known as 'attachment disorders' or 'attachment difficulties').
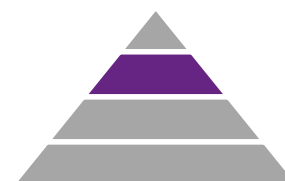
Campaigning for change

Few charities directly campaign and raise awareness of looked-after children in the education system, and more could be done in this area. Adoption UK has joined forces with the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), and others, in a bid to make every school attachment-aware, where all staff have a good understanding of the impact of relational traumas on their pupils. The aim is to provide all school leaders and teachers with knowledge, practical strategies, access to training, and a network of support.
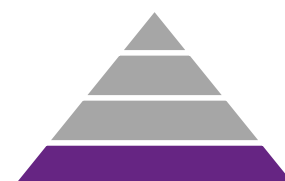
CONCLUSION

Children in, at the edge of, or leaving care are a group that deserve significant attention. They are rising in numbers, face distinct challenges due to their circumstances, and their life chances are significantly worse than those brought up by their birth families. Government policy is heading in a more positive direction for these young people. But their needs are not being best met by local authorities constrained by a difficult funding environment, and significant variations in the quality of service provision.

Charities play a vital role in helping address the needs of these children and young people, often working closely with the multitude of state agencies and professionals responsible for these children. Charities work across the spectrum, directly with those in or leaving care, supporting families and carers, training professionals to deliver better services or working to improve the system entirely through campaigning or influencing policy.

Funders have a real opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children in or leaving care but a good understanding of the complex care system and knowledge of the priority needs is key. We have highlighted a number of areas for funders to focus on, all closely interlinked: helping children in care form positive relationships from an early age; improving their mental health and well-being; supporting care leavers as they transition to adulthood; working to reduce numbers of looked-after children as both victims and perpetrators of crime; and approaches to improve education, employment and training outcomes.

A number of cross-cutting themes have emerged while undertaking this research. The importance of giving children in care and care leavers a voice, and involving them in decisions that directly affect them. The importance for funders to be prepared to work alongside the state, more closely than in most other sectors. And the opportunity for funders to pilot new programmes or approaches that, if successful, can be taken on by local authorities and replicated across the country. Examples of good practice on these themes are dotted throughout the report.

We hope this research enables those who care about children who have had a difficult start to have lasting impact and improve life chances for these individuals. As always, we are keen to hear from those who would like to discuss the issues in more detail with us—do get in touch via info@thinkNPC.org.

Questions for funders to consider

We recommend philanthropists thinking about this sector consider the following questions:

- Do you want to help at a particular level?
  (eg, individuals, communities, service development, system/policy change)

- Are you interested in supporting specific groups of children or young people?
  (eg, unaccompanied asylum seekers, care leavers, minority groups)

- Are you interested in supporting children in care in a particular geographical location, or do you prefer to work across the UK or even internationally?

- Are you happy to fund small, local organisations or would you prefer to fund large, national charities?

- Are you happy to fund a large organisation where looked-after children are one strand of its work, or would you rather focus on organisations solely working in this sector?

- Are you interested in learning from and collaborating with other funders already active in this space?

- Are you willing to work closely with local authorities?

REFERENCES

[1] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[2] Department for Education (2015) *Care leavers' transition to adulthood*.

[3] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[4] Ministry of Justice (2012) *Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds*.

[5] Greenwood, G. *'Early deaths among care leavers revealed'* on the BBC website, 15 February 2017

[6] Centre for Social Justice (2015) *Finding their feet: Equipping care leavers to reach their potential*.

[7] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[8] *Ibid*

[9] *Ibid*

[10] Department for Education (2015) *Care leavers' transition to adulthood*.

[11] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[12] Department for Education (2013) *Data pack: Improving permanence for looked after children*.

[13] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[14] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble. How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[15] Department for Education (2014) *Children's homes data pack*.

[16] Wijedasa, D. (2015) *The prevalence and characteristics of children growing up with Relatives in the UK: Briefing paper 01*. University of Bristol.

[17] Buttle UK website: www.buttleuk.org/areas-of-focus/kinship-care

[18] Gautier, A. and Wellard, S. (2014) *Disadvantage, discrimination, resilience: the lives of kinship families*. Grandparents Plus.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[21] National Audit Office (2014) *Children in care*.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] Office for National Statistics, (2011) *Census data*.

[24] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Dixon, J., Wade, J., Byford, S., Weatherly, H. and Lee J (2006) *Young People Leaving Care: An evaluation of costs and outcomes*. York: University of York Social Work Research and Development Unit

[27] Calculation based on Office of National Statistics data taken from https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/children-in-care/statistics/

[28] Department for Education (2014) *Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities*.

[29] Social Care Institute for Excellence (2005) *Research briefing 9: Preventing teenage pregnancy in looked after children*.

[30] This figure is for looked-after children in England. Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble. How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[31] Bazalgette, L., Rahilly, T., and Trevelyan, G. (2015) *Achieving emotional wel-lbeing for looked after children*. London: NSPCC

[32] Tickle, L. 'Social workers in fierce row over children's bill,' in the *Guardian,* 18 October 2016

[33] McNicoll, A. 'Government scraps controversial social care exemptions plan,' in *Community Care*, 2 March 2017

[34] Audit Commission (2014) *Councils' expenditure on looked after children*.

[35] *Ibid*

[36] Department for Education (2015) *Care leavers' transition to adulthood*.

[37] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[38] Coles, B.,Godfrey, C., Keung, A,. Parrott, S. and Bradshaw, J. (2010) *Estimating the life-time cost of NEET*. York, University of York.

[39] Bazalgette L, Rahilly T and Trevelyan G (2015) *Achieving emotional wellbeing for looked after children*. London: NSPCC

[40] Charities Aid Foundation (2017) *UK Giving 2017. An overview of charitable giving in the UK*.

[41] Department for Education (2015) *Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities*.

[42] Bellis MA., Hughes K., Leckenby N., Perkins C. & Lowey H. (2014) *National Household Survey of adverse childhood experiences and their relationship with resilience to health-harming behaviours in England*. BMC Medicine

[43] Rock S., Michelson, D., Thomson, S., and Day, S. (2013) *Understanding foster placement instability for looked after children*. British Journal of Social Work, 45(1), pp.177–203

[44] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble. How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[45] Bazalgette, L., Rahilly, T. and Trevelyan, G. (2015) *Achieving emotional wellbeing for looked after children*. London: NSPCC

[46] *Ibid*

[47] Helliwell, J., Layard, R. and Sachs, J. (2013) *World Happiness Report.* New York. UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

[48] *Ibid*; Selwyn, J. and Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017) *Our lives our care: Looked after children's views on their well-being*. Coram Voice and University of Bristol

[49] Harrison-Evans, P., Hargrave, R. and Nobel, J. (2015) *That awkward age: Children, well-being and charities*. New Philanthropy Capital.

[50] Selwyn, J. and Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017) *Our lives our care: Looked after children's views on their well-being.* Coram Voice and University of Bristol

[51] *Ibid*

[52] *Ibid*

[53] The Care Inquiry (2013) *Making not breaking: Building relationships for our most vulnerable children*.

[54] Ibid, Selwyn, J. and Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017) *Our lives our care: Looked after children's views on their well-being*. Coram Voice and University of Bristol.

[55] Blades, R., Hart, D., Lea, J. and Willmott, N. (2011) *Care: A stepping stone to custody? The views of children in care on the links between care, offending and custody*. London: Prison Reform Trust

[56] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[57] Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, Ofsted and Estyn (2012). *Looked after children: an inspection of the work of the Youth Offending Teams with children and young people who are looked after and placed away from home*. London: HM Inspectorate of Probation.

[58] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[59] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble: How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[60] Ibid; Selwyn, J. and Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017) *Our lives our care: Looked after children's views on their well-being*. Coram Voice and University of Bristol

[61] Selwyn, J. and Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017) *Our lives our care: Looked after children's views on their well-being*. Coram Voice and University of Bristol.

[62] Gordon, A., and Kris Graham, K. (2016) The National Independent Visitor Data Report. Barnardo's

[63] *Ibid*

[64] Bazalgette L, Rahilly T and Trevelyan G (2015) *Achieving emotional wellbeing for looked after children*. London: NSPCC

[65] Selwyn, J. and Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017) *Our lives our care: Looked after children's views on their well-being*. Coram Voice and University of Bristol

[66] See The Fostering Network 'Media release,' January 2016.

[67] Source: MST UK website www.mstuk.org

[68] Department for Education (2016) *Children's Social Care Innovation Programme: Developing social impact bonds for care leavers: What we heard*.

[69] Stein, M. (2010) *Increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation'*. C4EO.

[70] Department for Education (2014) *Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities*.

[71] Action for Children (2014) *Too much, too young. Helping the most vulnerable young people to build stable homes after leaving care*.

[72] Stein, M. (2010) *Increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation'*. C4EO.

[73] *Ibid*

[74] Morgan, R. (2013) *Children's care monitor 2013/14 – Children on the state of social care in England*.

[75] Fauth, R., Hart, D. and Payne, L. (2012) *Supporting care leavers' successful transition to independent living*. National Children's Bureau

[76] *Ibid*

[77] Department for Education (2016) *Children's Social Care Innovation Programme: Developing social impact bonds for care leavers: What we heard*.

[78] Ayre, D., Capron, L., Egan, H., French, A., and Gregg, L. (2016) *The cost of being care free: The impact of poor financial education and removal of support on care leavers*. The Children's Society.

[79] Department for Education (2015) *Care leavers' transition to adulthood*

[80] See Social Finance's website for more information: www.socialfinance.org.uk

[81] Social Finance website: www.socialfinance.org.uk/impact/young-people

[82] Department for Education (2016) *Children's Social Care Innovation Programme: Developing social impact bonds for care leavers: What we heard*.

[83] Table 4, Department for Education (2015) Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities, as at 31 March 2014.

[84] Table 4, Department for Education (2015) Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities, as at 31 March 2014.

[85] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble: How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[86] Shaw, J. (2014) *Residential children's homes and the youth justice system: Identity, power and perceptions*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

[87] Howard League for Penal Reform (2016) *Criminal Care: Children's homes and criminalising children*..

[88] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[89] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble. How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[90] Barnardo's (2012) *Tackling child sexual exploitation*.

[91] *Ibid*

[92] Office of the Children's Commissioner and Berelowitz, S. (2012). Briefing for the Secretary of State for Education on the emerging findings of the Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups

[93] Wyld, G., and Noble, J. (2017) *Beyond bars: Maximising the voluntary sector's contribution in criminal justice*. New Philanthropy Capital.

[94] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble. How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[95] Home Office press release 'Government delivers £40 million to tackle child sexual abuse and child trafficking,' 16 February 2017.

[96] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

[97] Prison Reform Trust (2014) *In care out of trouble: How the life chances of children in care can be transformed by protecting them from unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system*.

[98] Department for Education (2014) *Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities*.

[99] Hopkins, T. (2014) The language, literacy and communication skills of young offenders and non-offenders: A mixed methods study. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Sheffield: University of Sheffield

[100] Office for Fair Access (2015) *Topic briefing: Care leavers*.

[101] Department for Education (2016) *Children looked after in England including adoptions*.

TRANSFORMING THE CHARITY SECTOR

NPC is a charity think tank and consultancy which occupies a unique position at the nexus between charities and funders, helping them achieve the greatest impact. We are driven by the values and mission of the charity sector, to which we bring the rigour, clarity and analysis needed to better achieve the outcomes we all seek. We also share the motivations and passion of funders, to which we bring our expertise, experience and track record of success.

Increasing the impact of charities: NPC exists to make charities and social enterprises more successful in achieving their missions. Through rigorous analysis, practical advice and innovative thinking, we make charities' money and energy go further, and help them to achieve the greatest impact.

Increasing the impact of funders: NPC's role is to make funders more successful too. We share the passion funders have for helping charities and changing people's lives. We understand their motivations and their objectives, and we know that giving is more rewarding if it achieves the greatest impact it can.

Strengthening the partnership between charities and funders: NPC's mission is also to bring the two sides of the funding equation together, improving understanding and enhancing their combined impact. We can help funders and those they fund to connect and transform the way they work together to achieve their vision.

www.thinkNPC.org