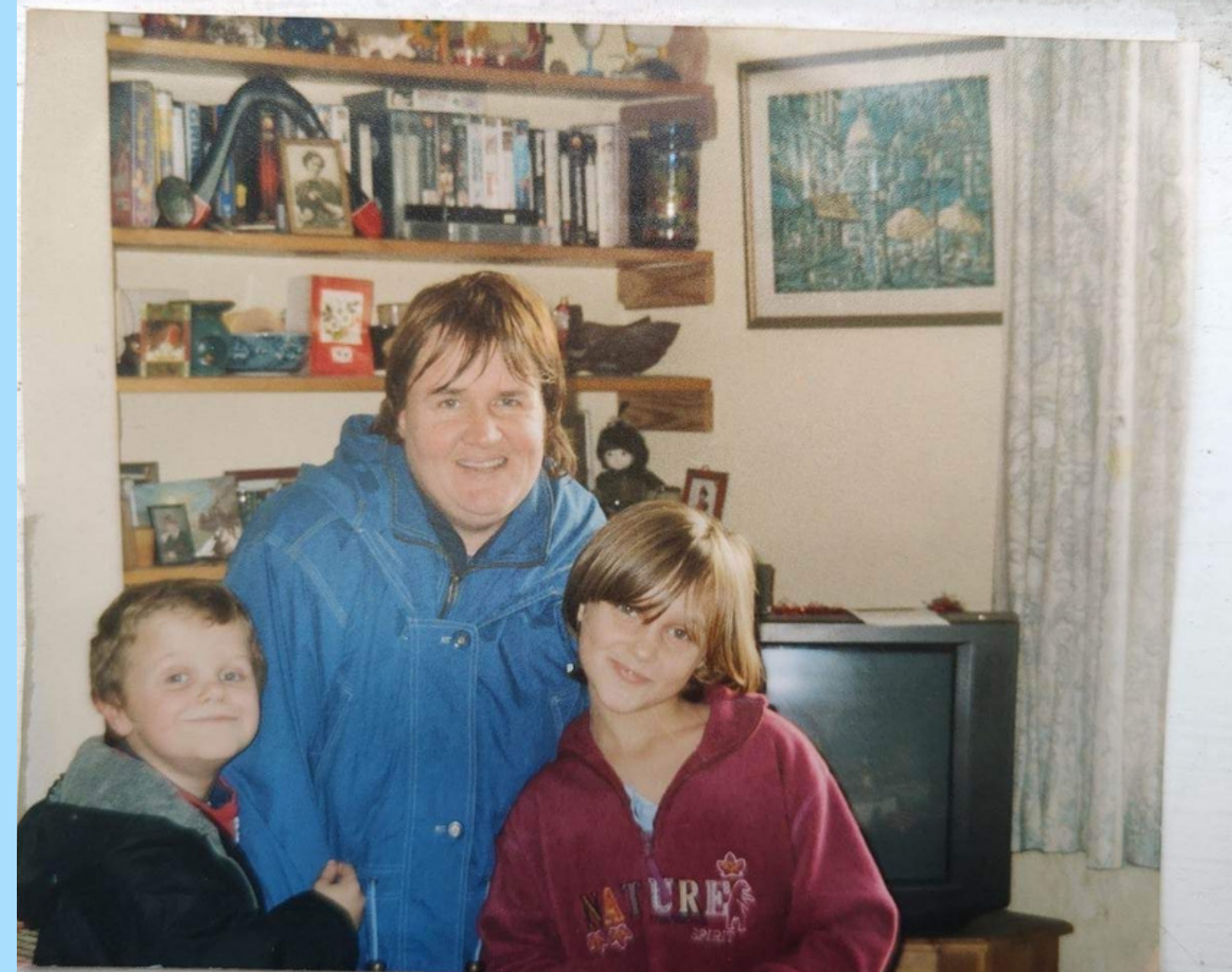


The Journey Beyond



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Today

1. A young person's starting point
2. In care; connection, advocacy
3. Leaving care; interdependence and priorities



Our starting point

What are our priorities?

What is our purpose?

Why do we do what we do?

**To create environments
where young people feel
supported, secure, valued,
safe...**

**To provide good care for the
children and young people
we support**

What is our purpose?

**To support improved
outcomes/young people
thriving/ having
opportunities**

**To know and understand our
young people**

**A young person's
starting point**

1



What words/images/phrases are associated with or used to describe the young people you support?



Insecure Attachment **Hard to engage** **Lost** **Disconnected**

Unloved **Unwanted** **Risk behaviours**

Trauma Behaviours **NEET** **Parents have issues**

Abused **SEN** **LAC** **Abusers**

Aggressive **Challenging Behaviour** **Isolated** **Violent**

**Neurodivergent/
additional needs** **Lost** **Naughty** **Likely to abscond**

**In the criminal justice
system, or likely to end
up there** **High Risk** **Attention Seekers** **Challenges**

**Emotional
dsyregulation** **Poor Outcomes** **Struggling** **Different**

Homeless **Struggling** **Sexualised Behaviour**

Hopeless

Outcomes
Insecure Attachment
Hard to engage
Rotas
Disconnected

Reports
Deadlines
Risk behaviours
Contact

Trauma Behaviours
NEET
Capacity
Parents have issues

Abused
SEN
LAC
Thresholds

Challenging Behaviour
Have suffered abuse

Staff
Respite
Isolated
Transitions
Reviews

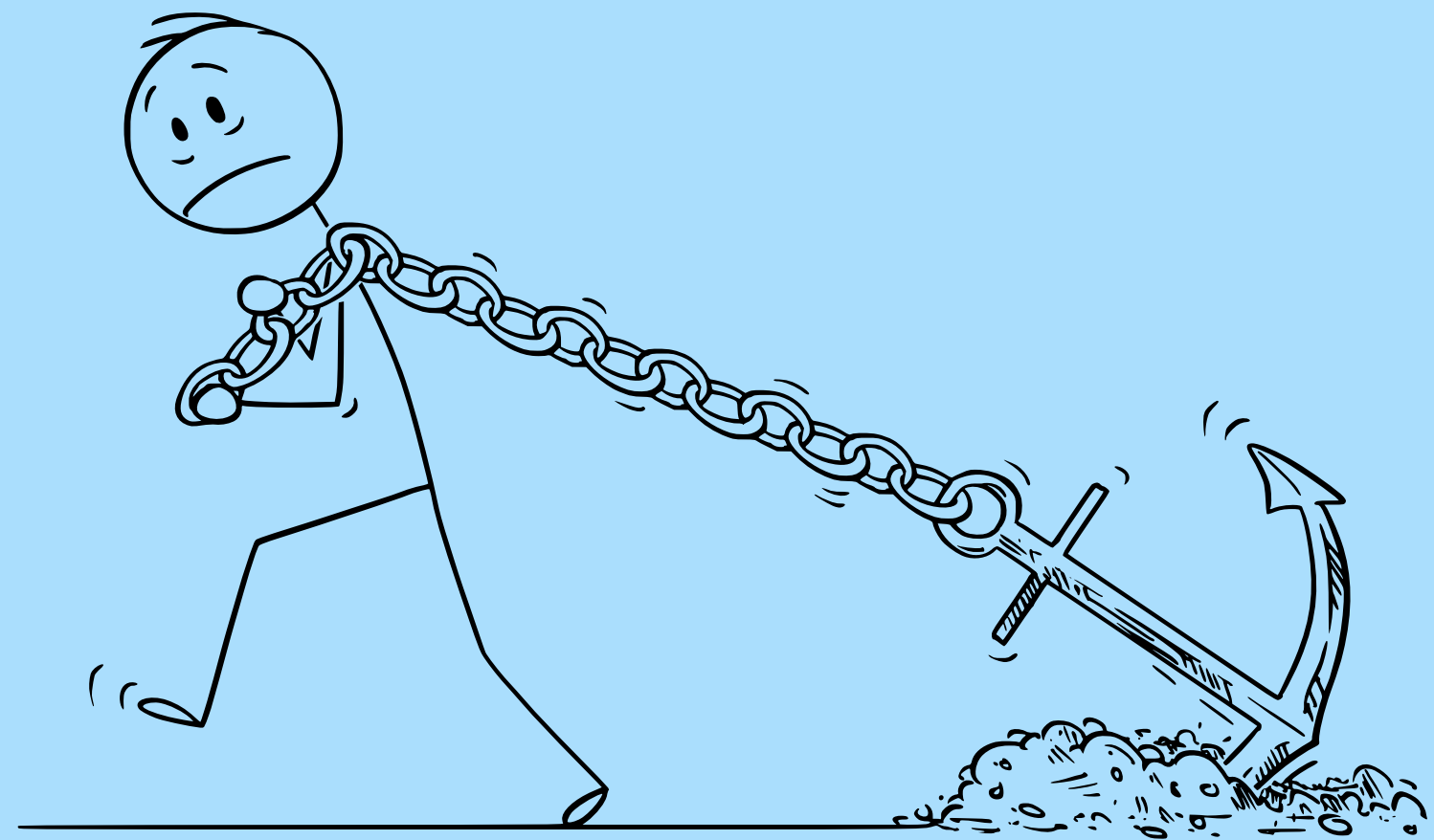
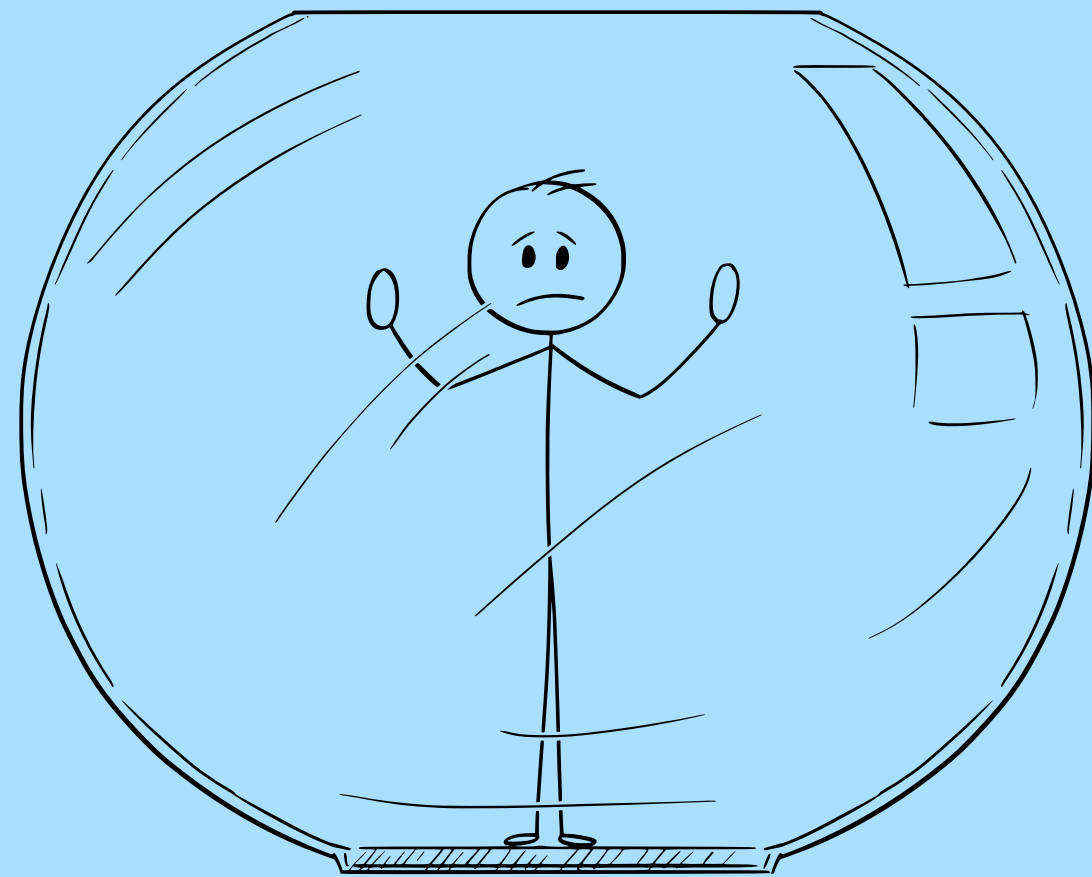
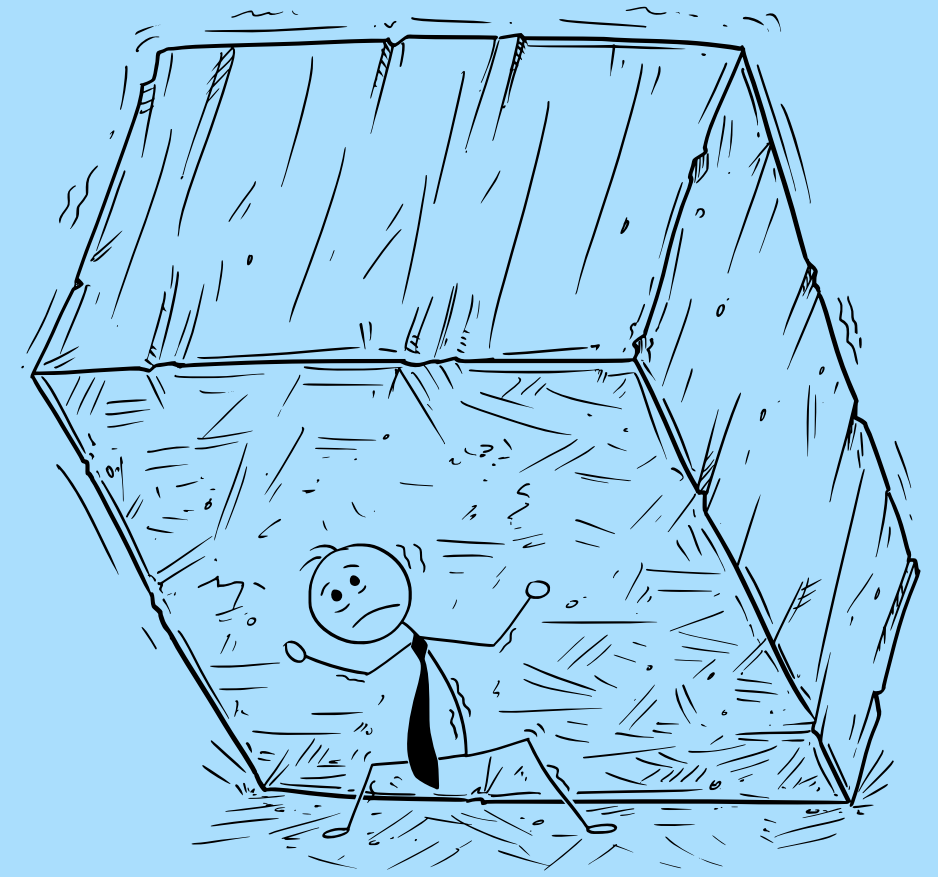
Neurodivergent
Fees
Lost
Naughty
Likely to abscond

In the criminal justice system, or likely to end up there
Unit
Attention Seekers
Challenges

Agency
Timelines
High Risk
Different
Caseload

Emotional dysregulation
Poor Outcomes
Sexualised Behaviour

Unwanted



2



What positive words come to mind when you think about the young people you support?



Empathetic

Perceptive

Loving

Insecure Attachment

Hard to engage

Caring

Ambitious

Challenging Behaviour

Trauma Behaviours

NEET

Parents have issues

Curious

Intelligent

Naughty

Challenging Behaviour

Have suffered abuse

NEET

Learning

Thoughtful

Determined

In the criminal justice system, or likely to end up there

Isolated

Kind

Lost

Resilient

Funny

Creative

Different

Trying

Tim Mcardle Poem

The potential impact of early childhood trauma and adversity... neglect, abuse, household dysfunction

Stigma

Intergenerational trauma

Expectations

The invisible rucksack



Discrimination

Examples of 9 social workers in one year; 4 'placements'; 2 schools.

Stereotypes

Inner working model



Inconsistency leads to feelings of mistrust/loss of hope/ feeling unwanted etc

When a flower
doesn't bloom, you fix the
environment in which it
grows, not the flower.

-Alexander Den Heijer

8-IMAGES.BLOGSPOT.COM



Strengths

Interdependence

Evolving

Autonomy

Relationships

Collaborative
problem solving

Reframing Language; our focus

Healing

Education

Understand our
starting point

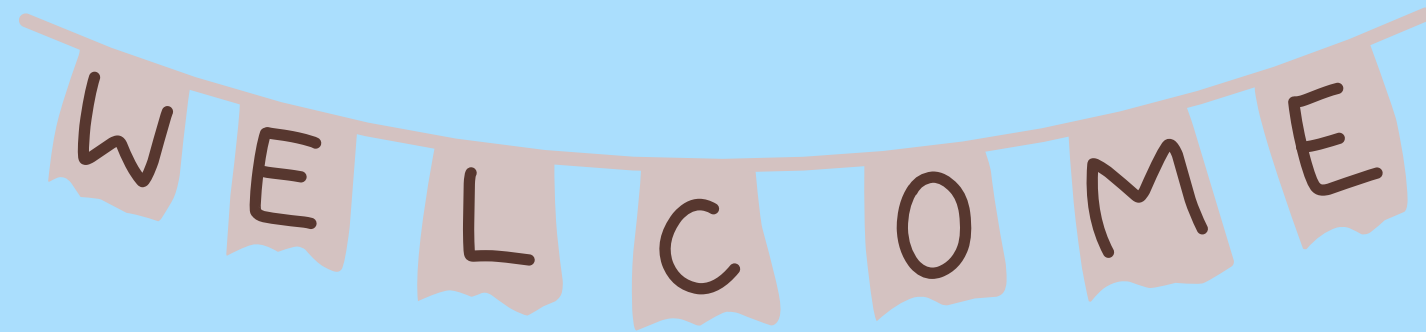
Get specific

Give context

Transparency

Honesty

**How do we welcome
young people to our
homes?**



**What considerations
can we have in
understanding their
perspective/reality?**

CONNECTION

Intimacy

**A feeling of goodwill
toward the other person**

Reciprocal relationships

CONNECTION

Alignment

**Feelings of empathy and
compassion**

A sense of openness

**Connection is the energy
that exists between people
when they feel seen, heard,
and valued.**

- Brené Brown.

Activity

Part 1

1. **Begin by rating the person next to you on how connected you currently feel**
2. **Have a 3-minute conversation, aiming to further connect**
3. **Rate the level of connection following the activity**

Part 2

- 1. Everyone will get up and change seats**
- 2. We'll do it all over again**
- 3. we'll reflect on our feelings, thoughts and concerns throughout this time**

Part 3

- 1. Mary will add in an additional information**
- 2. We'll consider and discuss this**
- 3. We'll reflect on factors for connection**
- 4. We'll consider barriers to connection**

Details

Part 1

1. **Begin by rating the person next to you on how connected you currently feel**
2. **Have a 3-minute conversation, aiming to further connect**
3. **Rate the level of connection following the activity**

Part 3

1. **Mary will add in an additional information**
2. **We'll consider and discuss this**
3. **We'll reflect on factors for connection**
4. **We'll consider barriers to connection**

Part 2

1. **Everyone will get up and change seats**
2. **We'll do it all over again**
3. **we'll reflect on our feelings, thoughts and concerns throughout this time**

Factors for connection

The bits we shared

Already being in a team environment

Previous relationships/ wider relationships

The knowledge that we're all 'in it together'

The knowledge of who they are and the agenda behind the sharing

Our reservations

Not knowing the person

Waiting to see how much they share

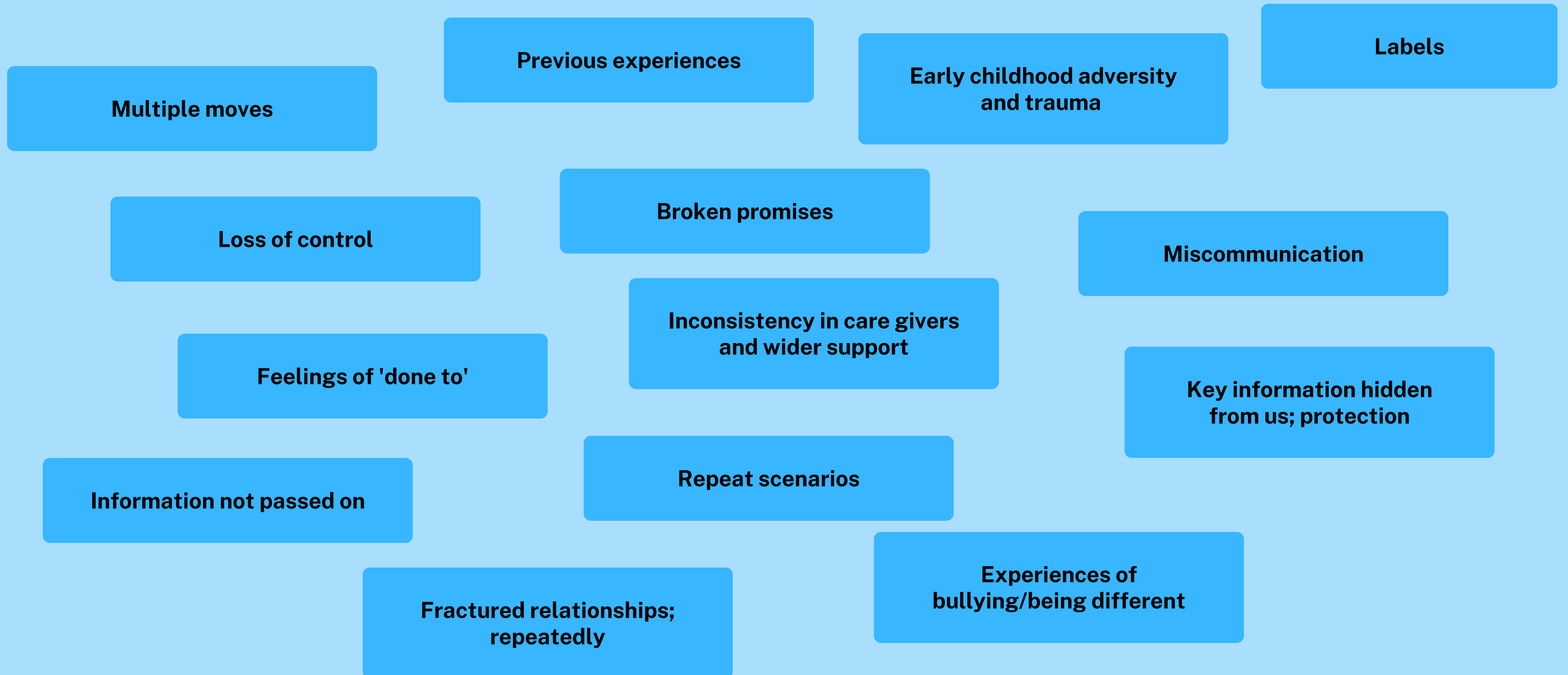
Not knowing what they will do with the knowledge

Only telling what we feel comfortable with

Being in a room full of other people

Understanding barriers; children and young people

A picture of disconnection



My friends don't understand and people call me names

I feel like I'm doomed for failure

I don't understand why this has happened to me, is it my fault?

I want to understand why what happened happened

My care experience limits me

I just want to play and have fun

What this sounds like from a child's perspective

I am scared

It's easier to say I am fine

I can't make mistakes

I don't understand what I am feeling or how to talk about it

People expect me to make the same mistakes as my parents

I didn't ask for any of this

I feel judged

I feel like I have no control in my life

I am really struggling with the impact of what happened to me

vulnerable
distorted perception
unwillingness to change
NFA: dysfunctional. Lack of
unemotional. needs to sort herself
out. reliant. talks in a detached manner
unwillingness to change. manipulative. NFA.
overreaction. young person. threat
tears did not MISPER. Strop
complained detached
manner. poor stable.
high risk absorbed.
attachment. ue.
needs to social skills. Strop. ue.
toxic triad. psychologically up. childlike;
emotional. of self harm and delusional
refuses. distorted perception of attachment
air of heavily reli. talk. emerging disorder
self absorb MISPER. Vulner. young person
irrational. unemotional. comp. in the past.
talks in. air of grandeur. needs of so
MISPER. vents. young
emerging. panic at
does not. as to cha
dysfun. stable
a lack. health.
NFA. Can. air. grandeur. vulnerable. high r
childlike. reliant. del. attachment. may. attach
very withdr. refuses to. manipulative. mental
healthy. Strop. dysfunction. personality disorder
vulnerable. entered suici. MISPER.
attachment. not cop. rational behaviour.
refuses to. overreaction. emotional
dependent. self. tears did not app. genuine.
lack of social. air of grandeur. reli. manipulative.
strop. talks. detached manner. can. predictable.
high risk pati. threaten. harm. strop.
needs to take. manipulative. overrea
manipulative. ability. stable. Strop. unpredict
emotionally and. psychological. Strop. unstable
poor attachment. of grandeur. manip. Strop.
reliant. Strop. manipulative. irrational. Strop. refuses
high risk patient. unemotional. dysfunctional. distor
manipulative. self. lack. skills. air of gra
unwillingness to. to engage.
psychologically. with del
refuses to do so. behaviour
overreaction. is. dox. needy
heavily reliant. people. vulnerable. very
complained in. Tears did not. genuine.

REDACTED

**Young people need
to feel they are
invested in, in order
to want to invest
themselves**

**How then do we
bring that
investment?**

**Advocacy,
participation and
engagement**

**How do you define
engagement?**

Defining Engagement

**How do you define
participation?**



Meaningful Engagement

Defining engagement

"The sustained and meaningful involvement of a young person in an activity focused outside of themselves".

1. Sustained
2. Meaningful
3. A focus outside the self

(JCSH Youth Engagement Tool Kit)

Autonomy

Relationships

Community

**What if I a not ready for
this conversation?**

**Can I choose when it
happens?**

Can I change my mind?

**Do I have/get to say
something?**

"It's easier to say I'm fine"

**"I want this over as
quickly as possible"**

**"Cool, a whole meeting
about me"**

Questions & Thoughts

Why do I have to do this?

Do I have to be there?

Young people's voices

Can I ask for things?

What's this all about?

"This sounds boring"

**Who is everyone
involved?**

**"My firends don't have to
do this"**

Who knows about this?

**What challenges do you
face?**

**How do you currently
facilitate participation?**

What works well?

Making it work

Our stories are not
meant for everyone.
Hearing them is a
privilege, and we should
always ask ourselves this
before we share:
"Who has earned the right
to hear my story?"

BRENE BROWN

What are some key components or considerations?

Do we refer to any models of participation to support our practice?

How we plan

How can we support young people to see the benefits of participation?

How can we ensure we're hearing the authentic voice of the young people we work with?

Lundy Model

"Voice is not enough"

SPACE	Must be safe and exclusive
VOICE	Facilitated to express their view
AUDIENCE	Listened to
INFLUENCE	View is acted upon and feedback for the decision taken is communicated

Sheir, 2002

Pathways to participation

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	OPENINGS	OPPORTUNITIES	OBLIGATIONS
1. Children are listened to	Are you ready to listen to children?	Do you work in a way that enables you to listen to children?	Is it a policy requirement that children must be listened to?
2. Children are supported in expressing their views	Are you ready to support children expressing their views?	Do you have a range of ideas and activities to help children express their views?	Is it a policy requirement that children must be supported in expressing their views?
3. Children's views are taken into account	Are you ready to take children's views into account?	Does your decision-making process enable you to take children's views into account?	Is it a policy requirement that children's views must be given due weight in decision making?
4. Children are involved in decision-making processes	Are you ready to let children join in your decision-making processes?	Is there a procedure that enables children to join in your decision-making processes?	Is it a policy requirement that children must be involved in your decision-making processes?
5. Children share power and responsibility for decision-making	Are you ready to let children join in your decision-making processes?	Is there a procedure that enables children and adults to share power and responsibility for decisions?	Is there a procedure that enables children and adults to share power and responsibility for decisions?

How we plan

Involving young people

Authentic engagement

FUN

Getting creative with it

Safe spaces- what is the environment/
how are we ourselves coming into that space

Active listening

- Relating to children and young people as experts at this point in their lives
- Valuing their perspectives of their lived experiences
- Being open to hearing the views of children and young people when they are ready to share them, not just when adults require them
- Making it safe
- Using language and communication methods that are inclusive, engaging &
- meaningful for the child/young person

How do we know what we're entitled to?

Role modelling

Would young people reflect the same?

Show an understanding of our experiences and barriers

How we plan

Involving young people

Authentic engagement:

Getting creative with it

FUN

Safe spaces- what is the environment/
how are we ourselves coming into that space

Active listening

Help us see the benefits of personal development plans/participation in general:

- It brings your vision to reality.
- It ensures you take appropriate and logically planned action.
- It helps you improve your time management skills so you can achieve your goals.
- It's a plan to keep track of progress, which serves to motivate you when you want to give up.
- It's been proven to reduce stress, improve balance in life, and increase self-confidence.

How do we know what we're entitled to?

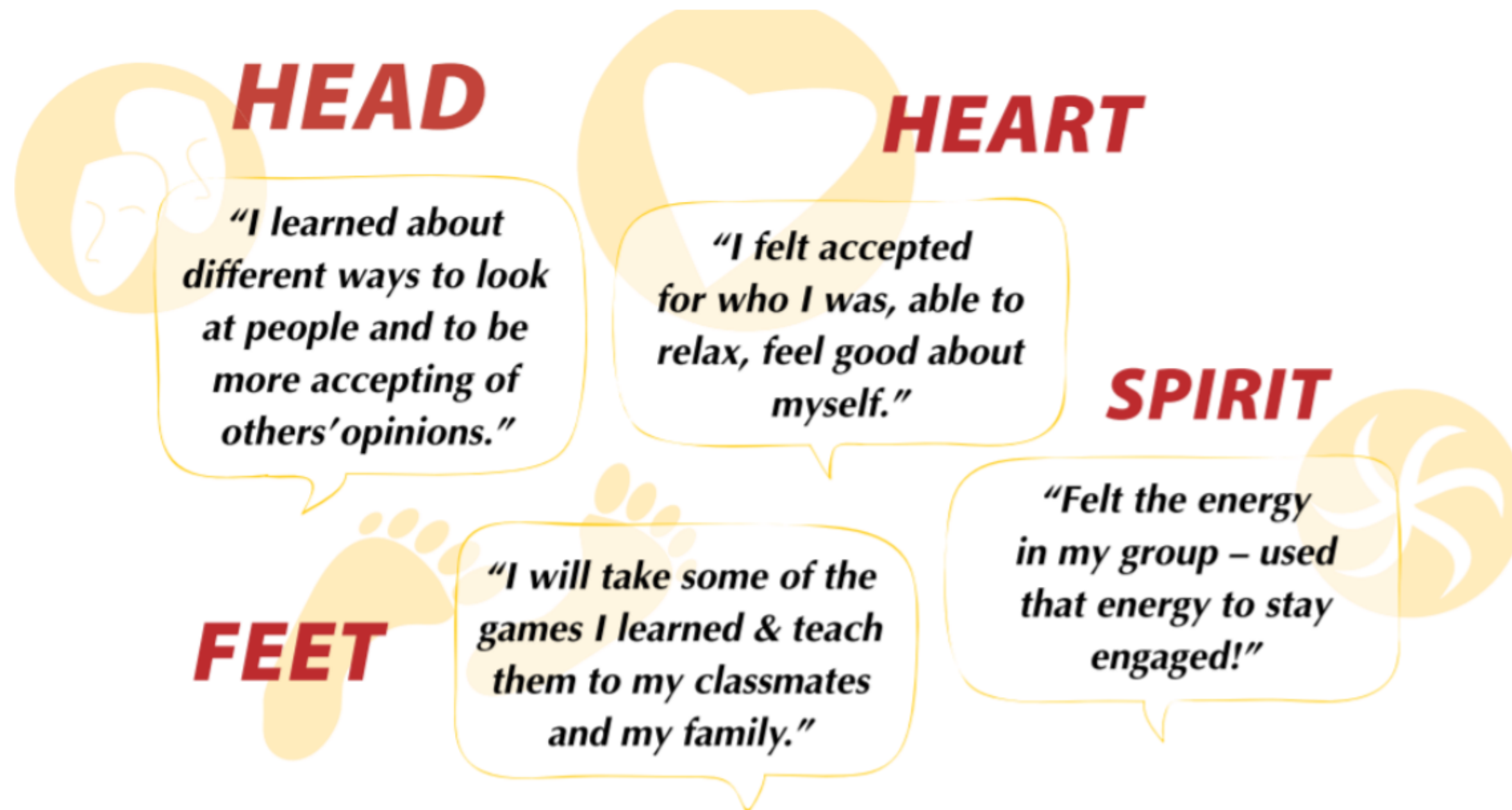
Role modelling

Would young people reflect the same?

Show an understanding of our experiences and barriers

How we plan

Measuring impact



How we plan

Having high ambitions

What goals can I realistically attain through my own efforts?

Setting SMART goals; knowing my options; storytelling

What skill or knowledge will I need to improve or acquire?

Practical skills, regulation skills, communication skills etc..

What self-management capability will I need to improve or acquire?

What are my concerns, how do I manage my time etc

What are my strengths and how can I develop them?

Learning to how to identify strengths; Ambitions and expectatins that currently surround us

ABC's and Me: Charrise Nixon

Accepted

Belong

Control

Meaningful Acceptance



Supporting guidance:

- The National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services, summarised at Annex A
- The National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes, Residential Schools and Fostering Services under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Advocacy

Legislation and guidance

[https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/9177/15/77981-DoH-Eff\[1\].tive%20Advocacy_Redacted.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/9177/15/77981-DoH-Eff[1].tive%20Advocacy_Redacted.pdf)

Guidance on Providing Effective Advocacy Services for Children and Young People 5 Making a Complaint under the Children Act 1989

Advocacy is about speaking up for children and young people and ensuring their views and wishes are heard and acted upon by decision-makers.

When a child or young person articulates that a concern or problem is not being resolved and a complaint is likely to be made, local authorities should ensure that help and assistance is given if children or young people would like an advocate to speak for them.

Early detection, early resolution

A listening culture: The Government wants advocacy and children's rights services to be linked to other activities which help professionals to listen to children, thereby creating a culture of openness where listening and responding to children and young people's concerns become an integral part of everyday practice.

Local authorities should:

- **Inform children and young people about advocacy and children's rights services if they intend or wish to make a complaint;**
- **Provide help and assistance when children and young people want an advocate to speak for them**

The Children's Complaints Officer or Designated Complaints Officer with Responsibility for Children's Complaints



The Transitions Journey

Ages 16+

Preparing for adulthood

Pathway Planning

A focus on "leaving" care.

What does independence mean to us?



**What challenges are young people
faced with at this time?**



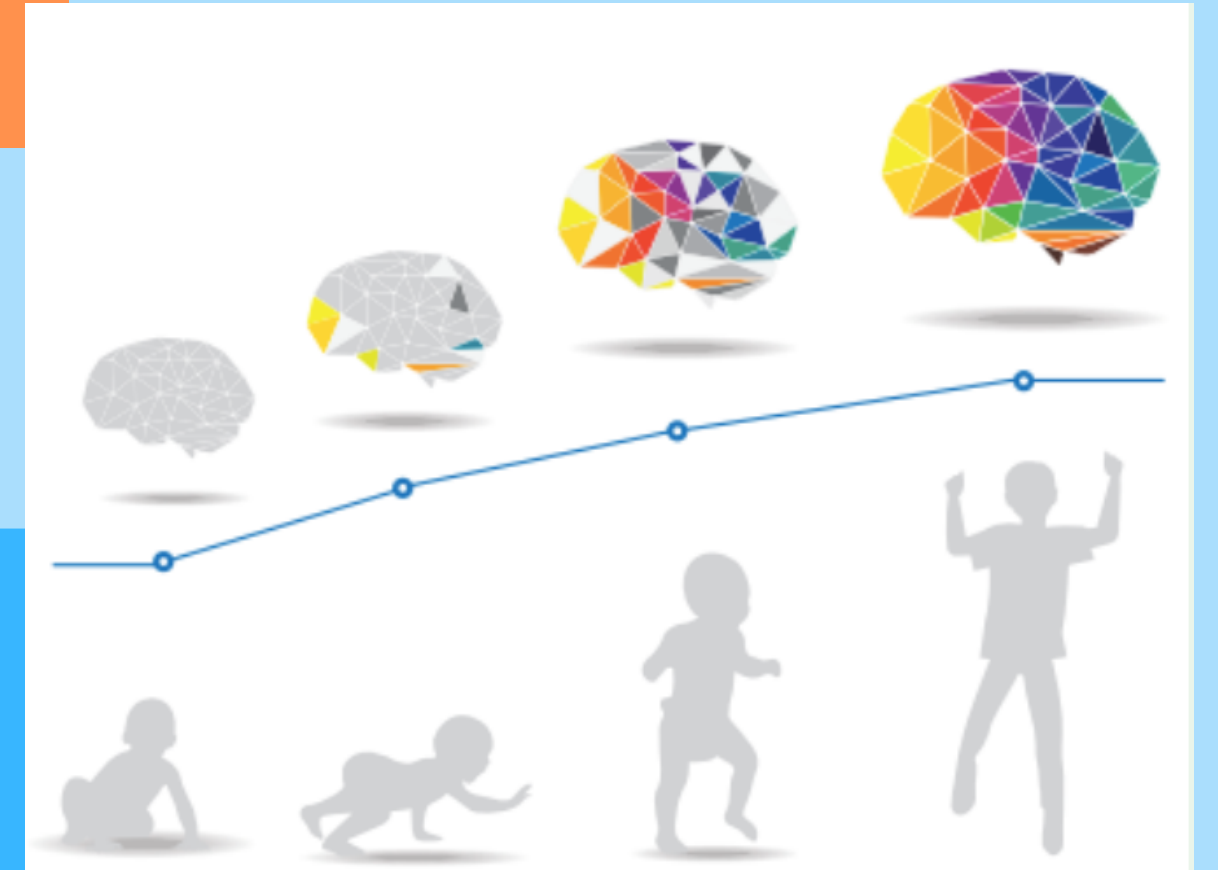
Challenges



Being a teenager!

- Brain development
- Autonomy and sense of self
- Social norms and expectations

This is before we consider early childhood adversity and trauma.

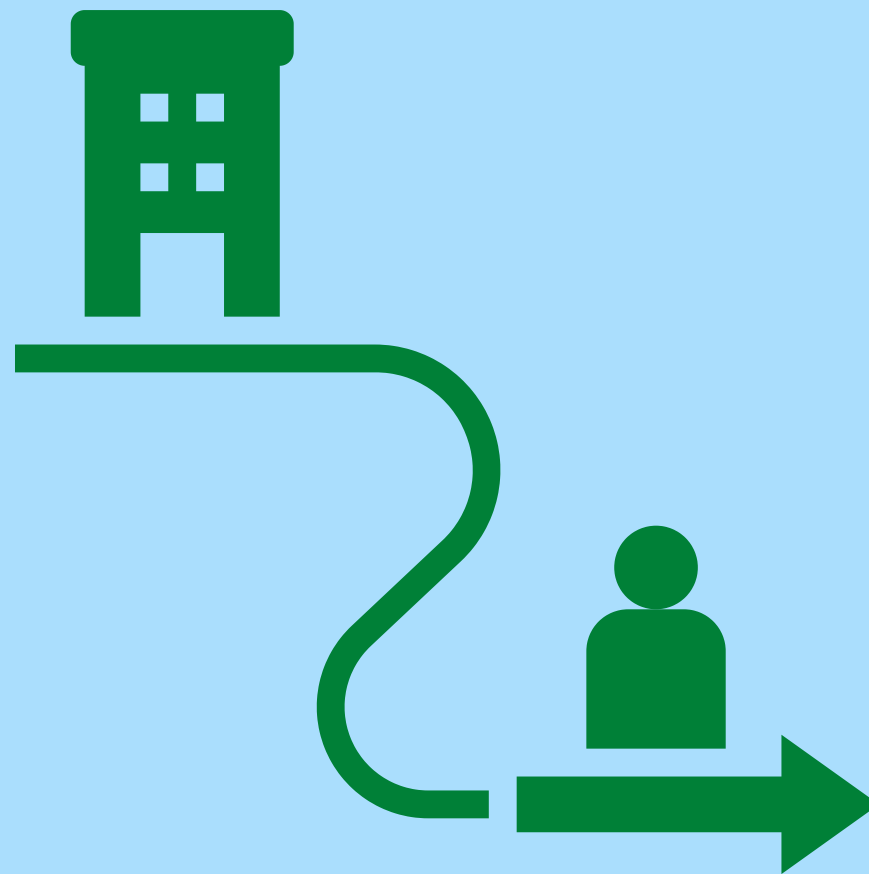


**How do we ensure the young persons
voice is central to this journey?**



Independence: What does this look like?

What does the current transitions prep look like?



Pathway Planning



- The Pathway Planning process, leads us to focus on independence.

A focus on:

Independent living skills

The practical elements: finances; employment/education; housing....

Social and emotional skill development often take a back seat.

Independent Living Skills

The practical elements: finances; employment/education; housing...

How can we hear the young person's voice in each area?



Independent Living Skills



The practical elements: finances; employment/education; housing...

How can we hear the young person's voice in each area?

Finances: understanding their starting point, goals, aims

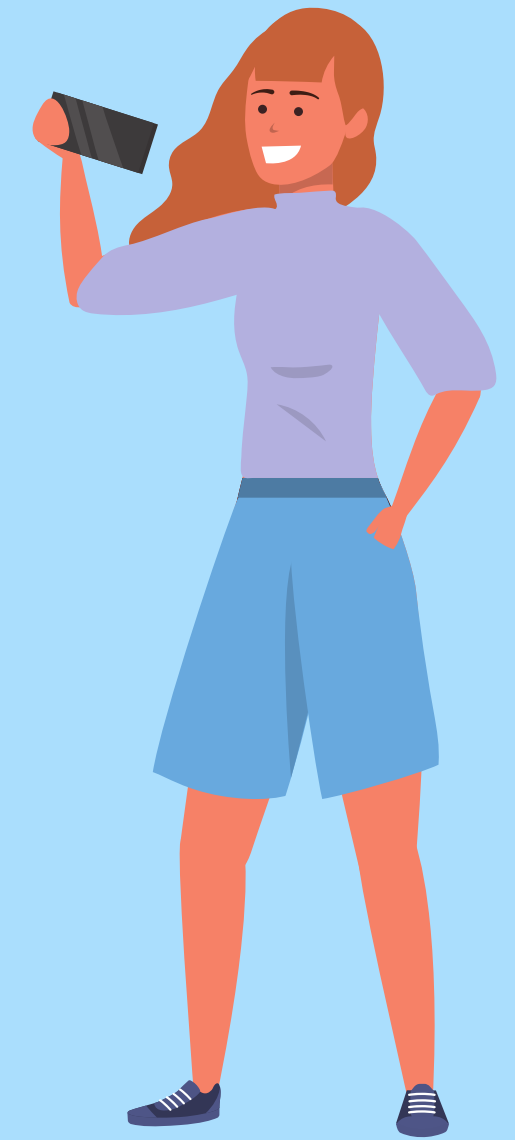
Employment/Education: providing options; case studies, letting them know what's out there and using their strengths to hone in areas of interest

Housing: knowing their rights, what they are entitled to, what different routes look like...

SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL skill development

Independence The reality?

- Young people expected to be self-sufficient
- Relying on ones-self
- Links to perceptions of what a successful transition looks like



Research on independence

- "We don't leave care, care leaves us".
- "I remember thinking, why isn't there someone here to help me"...
- ...(Young Peoples) belief that the support they received from their care givers was based on a contractual relationship, rather than born out of a sense of personal investment- Rogers, 2011.
- According to Rauktis, Kerman, and Phillips (2013, 108) young people `do not achieve 'instant independence', but gradually take on adult roles as they navigate through their twenties'. This need for emotional and practical support at that time in their lives re-echoes what the young people reported to Iglehart (1994).

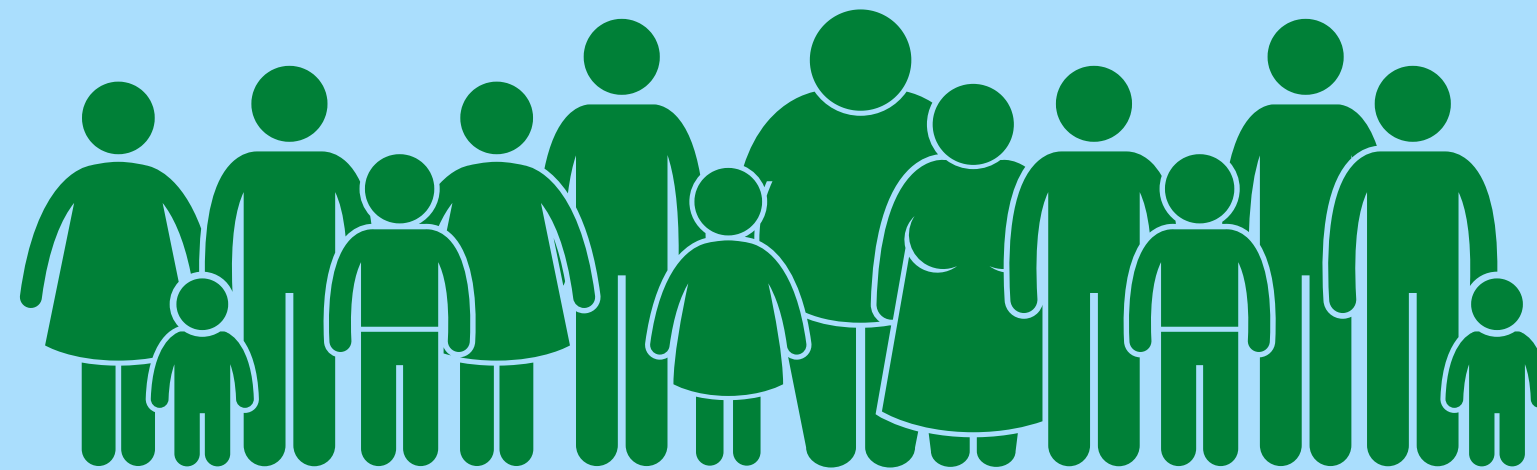
Let's Compare

With Young People in Care....

- Instant adulthood
- No room to fall or falter
- From no control, to all control: reflected in safeguarding legislation
- Managing with the potential impact of adversity
- Preparations do not amount to feelings of being wanted or cared about unconditionally.

Which leads us to...

Compare with the general population...

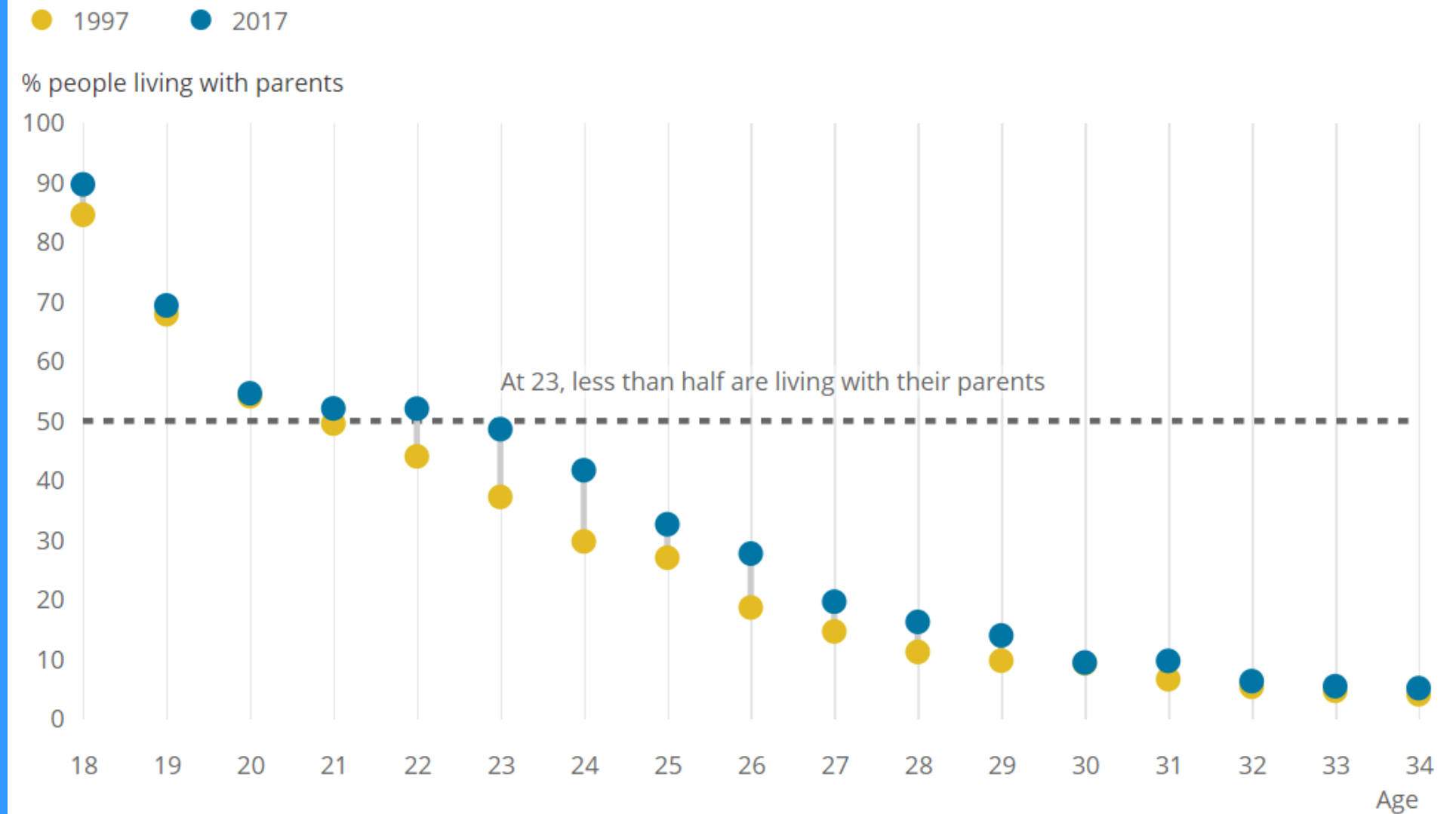


Let's Compare

With the general population:

- Boomerang Generation
- Leaving home at a later age
- Dropping off washing- ongoing 'small' gestures of support
- Room to fall or falter

Percentage of people living with parents by age, UK, 1997 and 2017



Source: Office for National Statistics - Young adults living with their parents

The Question

Is Independence where it's really at?

Do we know more now than we ever have? About healthy development and good outcomes.

Is there a better way?



Interdependence

- **What we know brings us to ask how we can do it better.**
- **How can we better support young people to develop skills that support their success in adulthood- what do these skills look like?**
- **Brings us to the concept of interdependence: where two or more people act in a reciprocal relationship in each others lives.**

Research on Interdependence

- **Transitions are experienced as an ongoing process, with personalisation, flexibility and maintained support with adults who genuinely care (Hyde, 2018).**
- **"The concept of interdependence more visually points to some form of action, and this action is put in play between people. The concept suggests that people may support each other in the very act of relating to each other" - Storo 2018**
- **"The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely he will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love." - Bruce Perry**

Social and Emotional Skill Development



Social awareness:

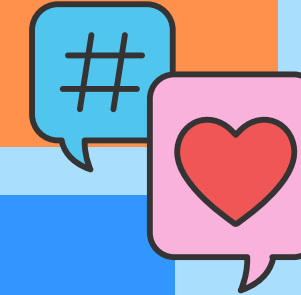
Self-Management:

Self-awareness:

Responsible decision-making

Relationship skills:

Social and Emotional Skill Development



Social awareness:

Perspective-taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, respect for others

Self-Management:

Impulse control, stress management, self-discipline, self-motivation, goal-setting, organizational skills

Self-awareness:

Identifying emotions, accurate self-perception, recognising strengths, self-confidence, self-efficacy

Responsible decision-making

Identifying problems, analysing situations, solving problems, evaluating, reflecting and ethical responsibility

Relationship skills:

Communication, social engagement, relationship-building, teamwork

Making it sustainable

**A commitment to learning,
growth and change**

**Values of welfare, safety and
security**

**Leaders have a commitment
to wellbeing**

**Relationships are the
priority, agenda comes
second**

A culture of care.

Appropriate training

A whole system approach

**A proactive, supportive
approach**

**Environments guided by
empathy**

**Commitment to a blame-
free, shame-free learning
environment**

**Values co-production and
collaboration**

**Promotes a sense of
community**



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