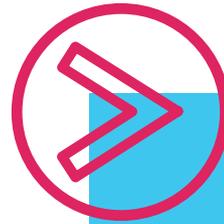




A newsletter for all young people in care in Medway brought to you by Medway's Children & Young People Council



Inside

This Issue:

- MCYPC FOOTBALL MATCH
- SUMMER BBQ
- MCYPC TALENT SHOW
- IAN SUTHERLAND: THE INTERVIEW
- THE PLEDGE & TOP 10
- NANCY SAYER: HEALTH & MEDICALS
- DID YOU KNOW?
- REVERSE TAKE OVER DAY
- CARE LEAVERS WEEK



Follow us



@mcyipc1



@mcyipc1



mcyipc channel



@mcyipc1

hello



Hey everyone! Wow, what a year it has been! The MCYPC have been busier than ever working hard to raise your issues and explore new suggestions such as council tax exemption for our care leavers and regularly reviewing the Top Ten and Medway Pledge, making sure professionals and young people know about them. A **MASSIVE THANK YOU** to all the MCYPC members and young people for attending our meetings and the positive activity groups, we couldn't do it without you! We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and finding out more about what we've been up to!

John, Participation Apprentice



Want to join or share a story?

If you want to be part of the MCYPC then drop us a line - it's a great experience and you can make a big difference. Don't forget you can also get in contact with us to share your stories... YOU could be featured in the next newsletter!





What We've Been Up To...

MCYPC VS MEDWAY FOOTBALL MATCH

It was a Friday evening, the sun was setting, and 250 people were arriving at Gillingham Football club to watch some intense games of football! It was the return of the MCYPC VS Medway football match on 3rd May and 3 different football matches were played; Juniors (6-10), MCYPC (11-16) and Leavers (17+). The MCYPC triumphed for the second year running, winning 2 out of the 3 games. 45 young people played and it was a great evening!

The MCYPC would like to say a huge thanks to Gillingham FC for allowing us to use their ground, Andy Willetts for helping to organise the event and Cllr Andrew Mackness for his very generous donation of £1000 towards our services!



MEDWAY SUMMER BBQ



The summer break was bought to a close on Friday 6th September by the MCYPC's Summer BBQ at Gun Wharf! It was great fun with lots of activities including football, tennis and karaoke. Over 30 of Medway's young people attended and it was a great opportunity to meet and chat to Corporate Parents. Some of our young people even managed to get a selfie with the Mayor!! We're already eager for the next one and hope to see lots more of Medway's young people joining us!

MEDWAY'S GOT TALENT

The MCYPC held another Talent Show on Thursday 10th July at Mid Kent College, Gillingham!! The show was bigger, louder and better than last year as it was hosted by two of the young people with a bigger venue and larger variety of acts such as singing, comedy and dancing on segways! It was the most memorable night of the year so far and all that took part had great things to say:

"All the young people did so well, I'm so proud of all their individual unique talents, so brave!"

"I loved performing on stage in front of everyone because I can show off my skills."

Certificates and trophies were presented to all acts at the end of the night by the judges; the famous Harry Reid (Actor), Stephen Gray (CEO) and Vanessa White (Medway Children's Services).



INTERVIEW WITH IAN SUTHERLAND



"It's an honour to be involved in young people's lives"

MCYPC Chair, John, met with Ian Sutherland, Director of People's Services at Medway Council. We wanted to ask him about lots of issues affecting young people in care and care leavers, including social worker changes, council tax exemption and stigma.

The interview as a whole was a great opportunity to find out more about Ian and his role within Medway Council, as well as what Medway Council are doing to improve services for young people in care.

To see the interview in full head here: <https://youtu.be/WDx11qXFtDA>



The Pledge & Top 10

Below is just some of The Medway Pledge, which is Medway Council's pledge to young people in care and leaving care. The MCYPC monitors this by requesting quarterly information from Medway Council to make sure it is being achieved. To see the pledge in full, take a look at our website! www.ylf.org.uk/mcypc

After consultation with MCYPC and Medway's Participation and Engagement Project, it was found that job descriptions for social workers were inconsistent and vague. So, MCYPC came up with these Top 10 Professional Standards for social workers that were important to them. Now these standards feature in the Job Descriptions of all Social Worker positions in Medway!

MCYPC THE MEDWAY PLEDGE

Medway Council Pledge to Children in Care

This is Medway Council's Pledge to Young People in and leaving care. It is based directly on young people's wishes, feelings, experiences and feedback.

All professionals have a responsibility to ensure that the Medway Pledge is achieved.

The Medway Pledge is monitored and reviewed quarterly by MCYPC on behalf of all Children in Care and Care Leavers in Medway.

Our Young People Tell Us:

Please remember things about us, like our Birthdays and important dates that are personal to us, like when we have exams and what we like or don't like.

TREAT US AS INDIVIDUALS

- To send you Birthday and Christmas cards
- To remember special dates that are important to you and offer support to celebrate achievements and help you through difficult times
- Make sure we make enough time for you so you aren't rushed during visits with your worker and that you meet your worker at a time and location that you are happy with.

WE PLEDGE

Our Young People Tell Us:

Our social workers can't get to know us if they are always changing, it's not helpful. We need stability so agency social workers aren't helpful for us.

TOO MANY CHANGES ARE DISRUPTIVE

- To reduce the number of social worker changes you have throughout your life in care and reduce the number of agency social workers
- Make sure that we let you know as soon as possible if you will have a social worker change, the reasons why and ensure any work you have been doing together is not lost or forgotten

WE PLEDGE

TOP 10!

A Good Listener
Have at least 1 ear for me

Non-Judgemental
If we are in care does that make us a problem?

Consistent and Stable
Be there for me, stick by me

Contactable
Can i reach you? Will you make time for me?

Understanding
Put yourself in my shoes, don't feel sorry for me

Honest
Don't beat around the bush, just tell me!

Focused
See me for me, I'm not just another number

Realistic
Don't make me a promise you can't keep

Good Timekeeper
It's just good manners!

Resourceful
Be creative, the same approach won't always work!

Do you meet Medway Young People's TOP 10 professional standards?

MCYPC
AN INDEPENDENT YOUNG PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1119826

Medway
Serving You

THE MCYPC CHOIR

Fancy seeing yourself performing at Wembley Arena!? Performing on that stage under the bright lights!? Well then get involved with the MCYPC choir! We have a modern twist on our choir group, singing current chart songs allowing us to express ourselves through music! We meet fortnightly and always have the best time! And if you don't feel your quite ready to perform in front of an audience but still love to sing, fear not, we will support you to get you 'choir confident'!

Join us!

If you are 11 or over and in care in Medway, then just get in touch with us at activities@ylf.org.uk and we will give you all the details! Look forward to hearing from you!

Are you 11+ and in foster care in Medway?

JOIN THE MCYPC CHOIR!

Want to share how you feel through song?

Then We want you to join our Young People's Choir!

Meeting fortnightly in Medway and performing at Wembley Arena!

Could this be you?

Get in touch today!
activities@ylf.org.uk

MCYPC
AN INDEPENDENT YOUNG PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1119826

Medway
Serving You

COMMUNITY FUND



In September, Participation Apprentice, John spent time with Nancy Sayer, Designated Nurse Consultant for Medway, talking all things health. Here's what she had to say:

Who are you and what do you do?

I am Nancy Sayer and I am the Designated Consultant Nurse for looked after children in Kent and Medway. My job is all about giving expert advice on the health needs of young people in the care system, to different people and groups, including social workers and foster carers. I am here to make sure young people or their social workers are able to find the right person to talk to get the help they need.

What is a health assessment and why is it important that we have them?

Young people that come into the care system have often missed important health check-ups such as vaccinations, eye tests or dental appointments. When a young person comes into the care system an initial health assessment is done by a Doctor. From this, a healthcare plan is created, which looks at what health problems have been found and how those problems are going to be resolved. Health assessments are important as each child is allocated a nurse for their whole time in care, so this could potentially be one of the only stable and consistent people in that young person's life. However, it is also important to remember that you do not have to wait for your health assessment to speak to a specialist nurse about your health. If you have any concerns and want someone to talk to then you can contact your nurse at any time. Overall the health assessments are a good opportunity to get to know someone in the healthcare system and to make sure young people in care are growing and developing as they should be.

Do we get given information about our health at the health assessments? Is this information confidential or shared with other people such as foster carers and social workers?

At the end of every appointment, a summary of the discussion is written up and a health care plan is written. These 2 documents go to the young person and the foster carer, social worker and GP. A young person will always be asked by the nurse if they would like to be seen on their own. If you have things you want to talk just to the nurse about then you are allowed to do that. If maybe you have a worry about school or home or something that you just want to speak to the nurse about but don't want to nurse to do anything about, then the nurse will make notes for their records, but will not pass this information on. Information will only be passed on if you share information about you hurting yourself, hurting someone else or someone hurting you, as we will need to take action to make sure you are safe. You just need to make sure you let the nurse know that you want your discussion to be kept just between yourself and the nurse.

Can we choose where and when we have our annual medical check-ups and who we have them with?

Every young person gets allocated a specialist nurse who do the health assessments, but if you have a preference you can ask for a particular nurse and the team will try and accommodate this. If you are uncomfortable seeing the nurse you have been allocated, there is no reason why you can't request someone different. You do also have some choice about appointment times, but the team of nurses is not a big team, and there are lots of young people that need to be seen, so it may not be possible to see everyone out of school time. You are able to choose which time of the day you prefer, but some flexibility is important. In the past we have tried offering appointments both at the weekend and in the evening, but these appointments were not taken up or very popular.

"I AM REALLY SATISFIED WITH THE WORK I CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH"



What happened to the named nurse for care leavers? Who should care leavers speak to now about health issues?

The LAC health service used to be provided by the hospital as part of their services, but it was decided that the service didn't really belong there, so it was moved and put into the community. So, we had to go through a process of looking for a new service provider within the community. Now the LAC health service is provided by Medway Community Healthcare, and unfortunately when it was moved to this new provider, the Care Leavers Nurse was not part of the service. We need to find out now what care leavers are missing. So, what were they getting when the Care Leavers nurse was there, that they are not getting now? There are lots of professionals you can speak to; there are GPs and they have practice nurses, there's also sexual health clinics which are confidential, but for a lot of young people I think it is about knowing where to go and who best to speak to. So we need to spend some time doing some work with young people around filling the gap that is there now that there is no Care Leavers Nurse. All care leavers should have a PA so it may be about seeing what PA's are providing and could provide to help bridge the gap.

If you could go back and give your 18 year old self some advice, what would it be?

I didn't like school and when I left I didn't really have any qualifications. I am dyslexic so school was difficult for me. So I would say to my 18 year old self to believe in yourself. For a lot of young people school isn't the place they excel in, and so to believe that you can still do well for yourself despite leaving school with not much is really important. The other advice I would give is to listen to people. It is really important to listen and let other people help you, but also to make sure you make decisions for you and not to please other people.



Some of us may be feeling anxious about the recent OFSTED report and what will happen now. Will health services be impacted? What is your message to reassure looked after people in Medway?

I believe that a report like this is in some ways a good thing for us as it helps us to focus. It is very easy to just get stuck in your ways when you are in it, but now people have come in from outside of Medway to look at what we do, help us to understand it is not good enough and that we need to improve the services we offer. We need to particularly focus on our communication and making sure that health services and the Local Authority are working better together. It is important though that we don't rush around making it better without taking a step back, thinking about it and making sure we are speaking to the young people first. I think the young people in Medway should feel reassured that we've now got a good opportunity to change things for the better. It is not going to be quick and it is not going to be easy, but we have a great opportunity to make changes for the better now.

DID YOU KNOW...?

If you are in care for more than 12 months and born after 2 January 2011, you should have a Junior Savings Account which the Government will put £200 in to. However, you won't have access to this until you are over 18.

A LAC Review should be held with your IRO within 20 working days (4 weeks) of you moving to a new placement.



If you are happy and safe where you live, you should not be moved unless there is a really good reason and your social worker should speak to you about it first.

Once you turn 16 you should have a Pathway Plan, which should be reviewed with you every six months as a minimum.

Every care leaver is entitled to a leaving care grant, which could be £2000.

If you are in care, you should be receiving pocket money.

You have a right to be involved in all major decisions about your care, including what support you receive. If you are unhappy with decisions made about your care, feel like your voice is not being heard or need to know more about your rights and entitlements, then YLF's Advocacy Service can help you. Get in touch today!

0808 164 0096

ADVOCACY@YLF.ORG.UK

QUIZ CORNER

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!

Medway Young People's Top 10 Professional Standards are all hidden somewhere in this word search. Can you find all 10?!



T I U A Q H N B T D G C V L G
 R N T N V I T B E V O I A C O
 M Z E U D Z N S S N H T Z K O
 T I N T C E U I T G N S F W D
 M P Z O S C R A U E M I X Y L
 D D C H O I C S M U O L B F I
 T N U F B T S E T H C A A A S
 U T P W A X G N N A D E Y U T
 T C F B R D M A O O N R U Y E
 S Q L H U H F Q U C Q D T J N
 T E K J T V K R K Q V C I L E
 C F N U W G O T M H I G Z N R
 G O O D T I M E K E E P E R G
 N D R O L U F E C R U O S E R
 H O N E S T A M U D U T I U O



Someone has been messing with our logo! Are you able to find the 5 differences between the 2 logos above?

WORDSEARCH!



National Care Leavers Week

It was National Care Leavers Week in October and MCYPC alongside the Young Lives Foundation shared top tips, feedback, stories, and info about care leavers rights. But the most important thing we did that week was host our very first 'Reverse Take Over Day' with the Corporate Parents at Medway's Gun Wharf offices so they could find out what life as a care leaver is really like. See more below:

REVERSE TAKE OVER DAY



The YLF Participation Team, alongside our MCYPC members, hosted a thought provoking Reverse Take Over Day for Medway Council to help them understand the fears that care leavers face. The scene for our first ever Reverse Take Over Day was an 18th Birthday party. The event was designed to help educate Medway Corporate on the real life potential challenges care leavers face. There were workshops for the Corporate Parents on Finance, Accommodation, Setting Up Home and Seeking Employment, which were challenging, eye opening and valuable. At the end of the session our MCYPC members made sure they received feedback and a pledge from every Corporate Parent who attended, even just a small one, to help care leavers in some way after hearing of their real life challenges throughout the day.

In the future, we hope to be able to get Corporate Parents to spend a day with us, living life like we do. Thank you to all Corporate Parents for attending and taking part. A special thank you also goes to our young people who supported the day and added some real life experience to the challenges. Full story here: www.ylf.org.uk/news/take-over-day/



CHECK OUT THE VIDEO HERE: <https://youtu.be/hOJQTYZmQgM>



Coming Soon...

MCYPC BLOG LAUNCH



We have some exciting news! The MCYPC will soon be launching a brand new Blog!!

The blog will feature lots of updates, including events we've been attending, how our meetings are going and some useful hints and tips to help you! Make sure you keep your eyes peeled on our social media pages for more info in the new year!

MOMO EXPRESS

Another exciting launch is on it's way to you! We will soon see the launch of Mind of My Own Express!

It has been created for our younger looked after children, and is a great way to communicate with the important adults in your life at any time without having to wait for a visit. But don't forget, MOMO is still available to use as well, and is a great way to keep in contact with your IRO. Your IRO's love to hear from you about all that's going well for you, what you are worried about and any questions you may have. So, get in touch using the MOMO App!!



CHRISTMAS IS FAST APPROACHING



The MCYPC crew will be celebrating Christmas at our planned parties during December, exchanging gifts and being together.

Our older members will be enjoying a Christmas dinner and thanks to YLF, will all be receiving a Christmas Hamper packed full of food and gifts to help them over the festive period.!

The MCYPC wish you a peaceful and joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Join Us!



I AM, BECAUSE WE ARE

MCYPC



MEDWAY CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE COUNCIL


Trips & Activities


Surveys

JOIN US TO HELP
MAKE POSITIVE
CHANGES FOR ALL
MEDWAY CHILDREN IN
CARE & CARE LEAVERS


Prizes


Arts Awards


ASDAN Awards


Social Media


Formal Council Meetings


Youth Groups

CONTACT US



01622 693459



MCYPC@YLF.ORG.UK



YLF.ORG.UK/MCYPC

MCYPC IN PARTNERSHIP WITH...



I AM, BECAUSE WE ARE

MCYPC