

Your Life, Your Care 2020

The views of children in care aged 4-18yrs in North Somerset on their well-being

77

Children in care responded to the survey from a total eligible population of 172: a response rate of

45%

In March-July 2021 all children in care aged 4-18yrs in North Somerset were asked to take part in an online survey to find out how they felt about their lives. This is a summary of the findings.

- Boys made up 51% of the sample and girls 43%. Two (3%) young people preferred not to disclose their gender.
- 83% of respondents were white.
- Most children and young people (73%) were living in foster care placements.

Age group	No. responses <i>n</i>	Response rate %
4-7yrs	15	100%
8-11yrs (primary)	14	41%
11-18yrs (secondary)	45	39%

What is working well?

Relationships with carers



Carer trust

- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs **trusted their carers***.
- Trusting your carer was also reported by all but one child aged 8-11yrs and one young person aged 11-18yrs.



Sensitive parenting

- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs felt their **carers noticed their feelings***.
- Sensitive parenting was also reported by all but one child aged 8-11yrs and one young person aged 11-18yrs.



Support for learning

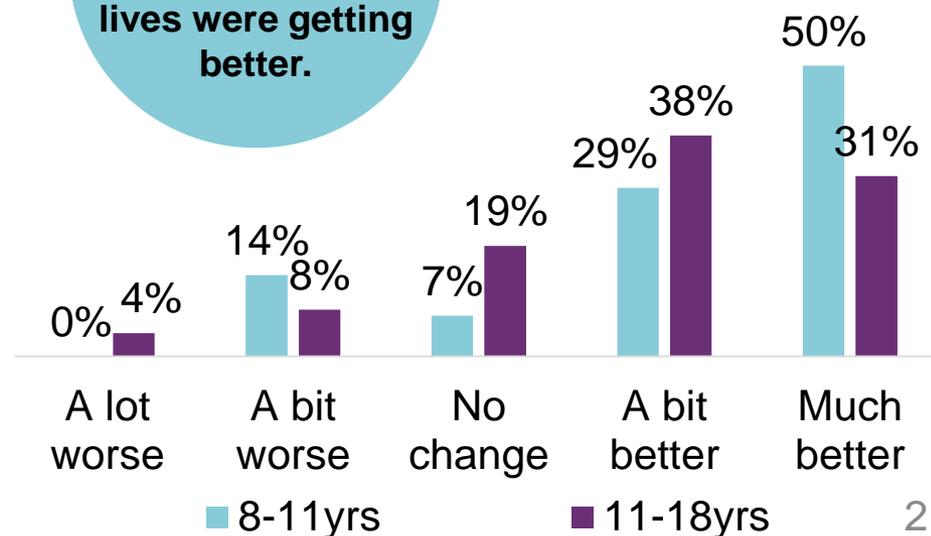
- 100% of young people (11-18yrs)* and all but one child aged 8-11yrs reported that their carers **showed an interest in their education.**

I have a nice foster family who really look after me. I like being in care.
11-18yrs

Yes, I would like to say that I love [name] and [name] (foster carers).
8-11yrs

Is your life improving?

71% of children and young people (8-18yrs) felt their lives were getting better.



* Denotes a Bright Spot of practice

What is working well? (2)

Placements



Placement continuity

- Significantly more young people (37%) in North Somerset had stayed in **one placement in the last year** compared to young people (32%) in other local authorities*.



Feeling safe where you live

- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs 'always' **felt safe where they lived***.
- All but one of the 8-11yrs age group 'always' felt safe where they lived.



Liking your bedroom

- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs in North Somerset **liked their bedroom***.
- All but one child aged 8-11yrs liked their bedroom.



Liking school

- A larger proportion of young people (85%) looked after in North Somerset liked school 'a lot' or 'a bit' compared to their peers (80%) in the general population*.
- Only one child aged 4-7yrs and one child aged 8-11yrs did not like school.

I like being in care because I feel safer than I was at home.
8-11yrs

It's nice as long as you have the right carers.
11-18yrs

It's a good life for me.
11-18yrs

* Denotes a Bright Spot of practice

What is working well? (3)

Relationships with social workers



Trust

- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs trusted their social worker*.

[Name] my Social Worker is always willing to listen
11-18yrs

[I] enjoy taking the dog for a walk with [name] and my sister. [I also] enjoy riding and learning to ride my bike, [and] playing with my toys.
4-7yrs

Free time



Knowing who your social worker is

- 100% of children aged 8-11yrs knew who their social worker was*.



Having fun

- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs got to have **fun at the weekends***.
- All but one child aged 8-11yrs wrote that they had fun at the weekends.



Contacting your social worker

- More young people (91%) aged 11-18yrs in North Somerset reported that they could easily get in touch with their social worker compared to young people (84%) looked after in other local authorities*.



Good friends

- 100% of children aged 4-11yrs in North Somerset had at least **one really good friend***.



Access to nature

- 100% of children aged 8-11yrs reported that they had spent time outdoors at least once in the last week*.

What could be improved?



Feeling settled in placement

- Significantly more young people (37%) aged 11-18yrs in North Somerset reported that they did not always feel settled where they lived compared to young people (22%) looked after in other local authorities.



Positivity about the future

- Significantly more young people (22%) aged 11-18yrs in North Somerset were pessimistic about the future compared to young people (11%) looked after in other local authorities.



Sharing confidences

- Significantly fewer young people (50%) regularly confided in their carers compared to young people (70%) looked after in other local authorities.



Speaking to social worker

- Significantly fewer children (64%) aged 8-11yrs and young people (89%) aged 11-18yrs in North Somerset knew that they could ask to speak to their social worker on their own compared to children (87%) and young people (97%) looked after in other local authorities.

What could be improved? (2)

[I'd like] more financial support.
11-18yrs

I would like a change of PEP office.
11-18yrs

It's horrible living with people you don't know and moving from house to house all the time. I now live with a family who have their own children and two foster children. They treat their own children differently to me.
8-11yrs

[I'd like the] Home Office to make quicker decisions.
11-18yrs

[I'd like to go to a] different school – smaller and [with] more support.
11-18yrs

[I'd like] to see my brother more.
11-18yrs

Let the foster carer make some decisions so it feels more natural – like a proper family.
11-18yrs

I just want to be back with my Mum.
11-18yrs

What would make [care] better would be going to a new family, so I have more people to play with.
4-7yrs

Well-being



- The majority of children had moderate to high well-being, including all children aged 4-7yrs.
- Overall, 13 (17%) of children and young people were scored as having low well-being: one (7%) child aged 8-11yrs and 12 (27%) young people (11-18yrs).
- However, the proportion (27%) of young people (11-18yrs) in North Somerset who had low well-being was larger compared to young people (15%) looked after in other local authorities.



I'm happy at my foster carers' – it's just the rest of it that is difficult.
11-18yrs

I feel as though I don't have enough freedom at the moment.
11-18yrs

I worry about the Home Office
11-18yrs



Data from the survey showed four factors that were associated with children and young people's low well-being, including:

- Adults did things that made them feel embarrassed about being in care;
- Not always feeling settled where they live;
- Feeling unhappy with their appearance; and,
- Worrying about their feelings or behaviour.

For enquiries about the Bright Spots project see:
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Funded by the Hadley Trust