



Your Life, Your Care: *a survey of the views of looked after children and young people aged 4-18yrs in North Somerset*

*August 2021
Áine Kelly, Coram*

About this research

Bright Spots

This research is part of the Bright Spots Programme: a collaboration between Coram Voice & the University of Oxford, funded by the Hadley Trust.

Currently official statistics only provide a partial picture of children in care & care leavers' lives. Data focuses on adult perspectives using objective outcomes measures – e.g. where children live, educational results. None of this information tells us about how children feel: are they happy, safe and feel they are doing well?

The Bright Spots Programme seeks to address these gaps by measuring children's subjective well-being. Subjective well-being is defined as feeling good and doing well at an individual and interpersonal level.

- The Programme helps LAs systematically listen to their children in care and care leavers about the things that are important to them.
- Through the Programme we developed the *Bright Spots Well-Being Indicators*, which put children's experience and voices at the heart of how we measure subjective well-being.
- The indicators are measured by the '*Your Life, Your Care*' survey – a tool grounded in research and comparable to national data sets.
- The survey was developed from literature reviews, roundtable discussions with professionals and from focus groups and individual interviews with 140 looked after children and young people living in nine different local authorities.
- The survey identifies the areas where children appear to be flourishing and where things could be improved, providing an evidence base of children's experience and well-being to inform service improvements.

Index

	Pages
Section 1: Summary: Key findings	4-11
Section 2: Methodology	12-15
Section 3: Survey results	16
1. Demographics	17-22
2. Relationships	23-32
3. Resilience	33-42
4. Rights	43-51
5. Recovery	52-61
6. Well-being	62-73
Section 4: Children and young people's comments	74-78
Section 5: References	79-82



Section 1: Summary: Key findings

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

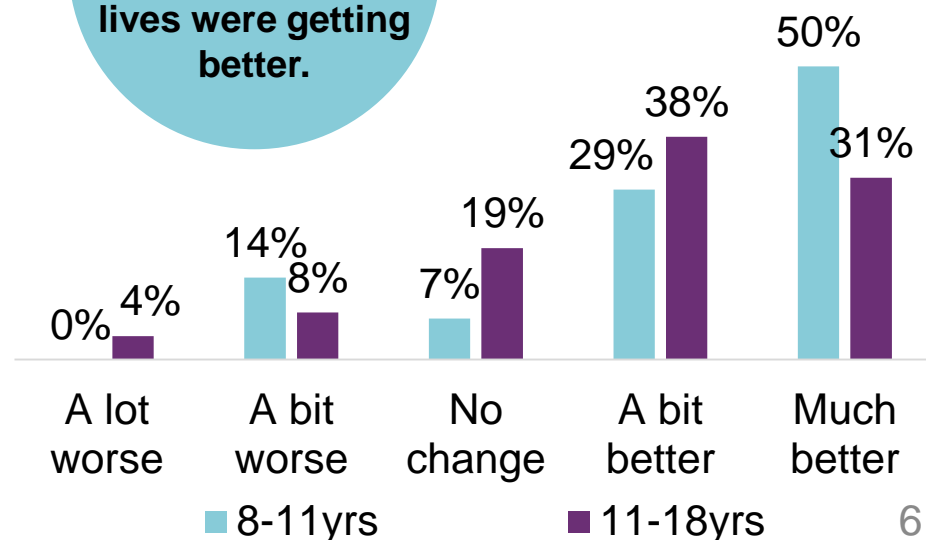
- 100% of young people (11-18yrs)* and all but one child aged 8-11yrs reported that their carers **showed an interest in their education.**

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*.



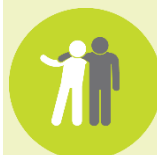
Having fun

- 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.



Section 2: Methodology

Methodology

- Three online surveys were used to capture looked after children and young people's views on their own well-being. The three versions were for:
 - a) children aged 4-7yrs (16 questions);
 - b) children aged 8-11yrs in primary school (31 questions); and
 - c) young people of secondary school age 11-18yrs (46 questions).
- There was a common set of 16 core questions.
- Paper surveys were also available and used in cases where no Internet was available, or when the young person preferred this method.
- In North Somerset at the time of the survey 172 children and young people aged 4-18yrs were looked after and able to complete the survey.
- Children and young people completed the survey anonymously: individual identifiers such as name, school etc. were not collected in order to allow responses without fear of consequences.
- If children recorded names or any identifying information on the survey these were removed by the researchers.

Methodology (2)

- The survey was distributed through the virtual school to head teachers and designated teachers in schools.
- Social care staff, including foster carers and social workers, were asked to encourage children and young people to complete the survey.
- Regular reminders were sent to head teachers and designated teachers and some schools were followed up directly.
- The survey was promoted in training sessions for designated teachers.
- Most children and young people were asked to complete the online survey in school in March – July 2021, generally with a trusted adult present. The trusted adult was usually the designated teacher, learning mentor or SENCO.

Methodology (3)

Subjective well-being:

Are children flourishing?

- Subjective well-being in this survey refers to children's own evaluations of how they feel about their lives.
- There are questions in the surveys about affect (e.g. how happy a child feels now), cognitive judgements (e.g. evaluations of relationships) and the inner world (e.g. life having meaning).
- All these elements help us understand if children are flourishing.

- Where possible, local authority (LA) data are compared to data on children in the general population, and to the average responses from 17 LAs.
- Data were weighted and tests run for significant difference between LAs.
- In addition to questions that measure overarching well-being indicators (happiness, life satisfaction etc.) the questions cover four domains that are important to children and young people: Relationships, Resilience, Rights and Recovery. The report covers each of these.

On some pages of this report you will see a **'Bright Spots'** icon (top right of page), and a yellow text box. This indicates a 'good news' story – a positive aspect of practice in your LA. This is where children and young people are doing significantly better than children in care in other LAs or report the same or higher well-being than their peers in the general population.

We also highlight with a grey text box where young people are doing significantly less well compared to children in care in other LAs, or where results are markedly less favourable than in the general population. This may be an area to focus on in service development.

- If we have not highlighted a difference the findings are in line with the results in other LAs.



Section 3: Survey results



3.1 Demographics

- Sample sizes
- Age and gender
- Ethnicity
- Placements
- Length of time in care

Sample sizes

Although the sample size must be borne in mind when considering the representativeness of the data, the response rate was significantly better than in some similar surveys. *The State of Nation: Children in Care 2015*, for example, had a response rate of 3%.

- 77 children and young people responded to the surveys from an eligible looked after population of 172.
- The overall response rate was 45%.

Age range	Care population <i>n</i>	Responses <i>n</i>	Response rate %
4-7yrs	15	15	(100%)
8-11yrs	34	14	(41%)
11-18yrs	123	48	(39%)

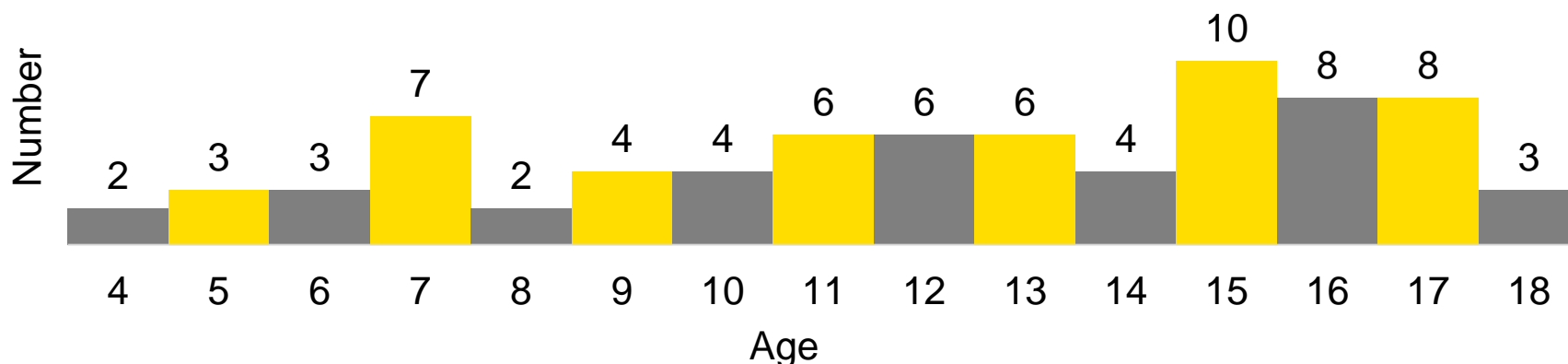
Age and gender

- In North Somerset, 55% of the looked after population were boys and 45% girls (DfE, 2019).

Age group	Girls <i>n</i> (%)	Boys <i>n</i> (%)	Prefer not to say/ no reply <i>n</i> (%)
4-7yrs	7 (47%)	8 (53%)	0 (0%)
8-11yrs	9 (64%)	5 (36%)	0 (0%)
11-18yrs	20 (42%)	26 (54%)	2 (4%)
TOTAL*	36 (47%)	39 (51%)	2 (3%)

*Adds to 101% due to rounding of percentages

Age of children responding

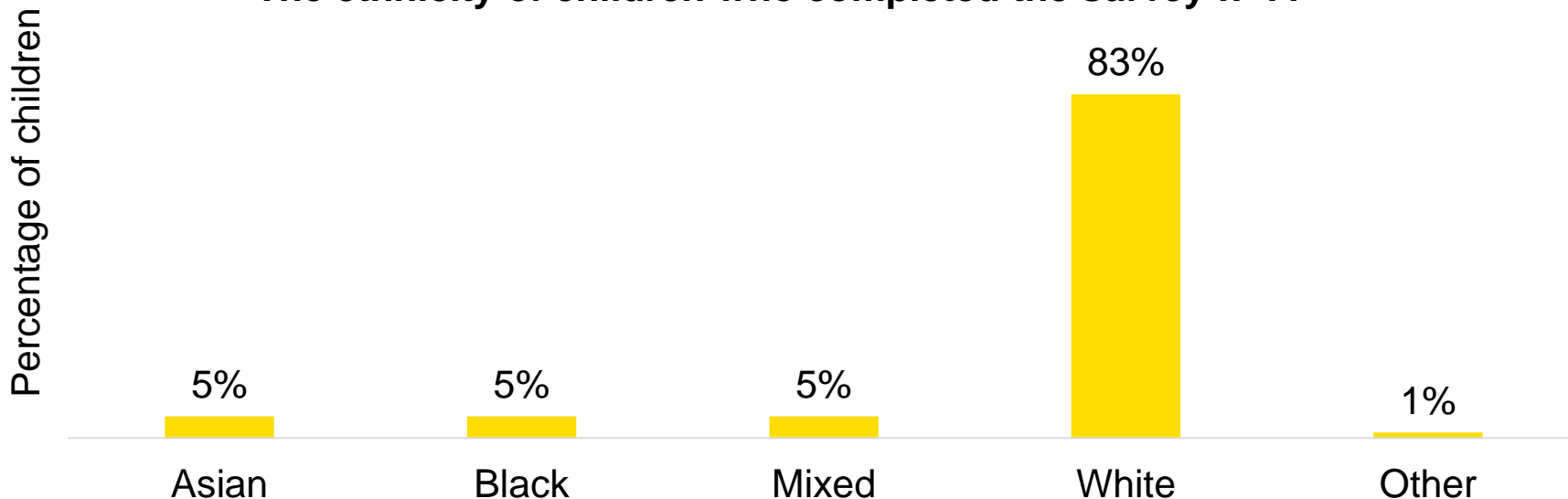


Ethnicity

Children of Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities appear proportionately represented in the survey as they make up 14% of the care population in North Somerset's statistical return to the DfE (2019) compared to 16% in our sample.

- The majority (83%) of children and young people who completed the survey were white.

The ethnicity of children who completed the survey *n=77**



*Adds to 99% due to rounding of percentages

Placements

Responses broadly mirror the pattern in the local authority where 75% are placed in foster care. (DfE, 2019)

- The majority (73%) of children and young people were living in foster care.

Age group	Foster care %	Family or friends care %	Residential care %	With parents %	Somewhere else %	Prefer not to say %
4-7yrs	87%	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8-11yrs	93%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%
11-18yrs*	63%	6%	15%	0%	17%	0%
TOTAL	73%	8%	9%	0%	10%	0%

*Adds to 101% due to rounding of percentages

Length of time in care

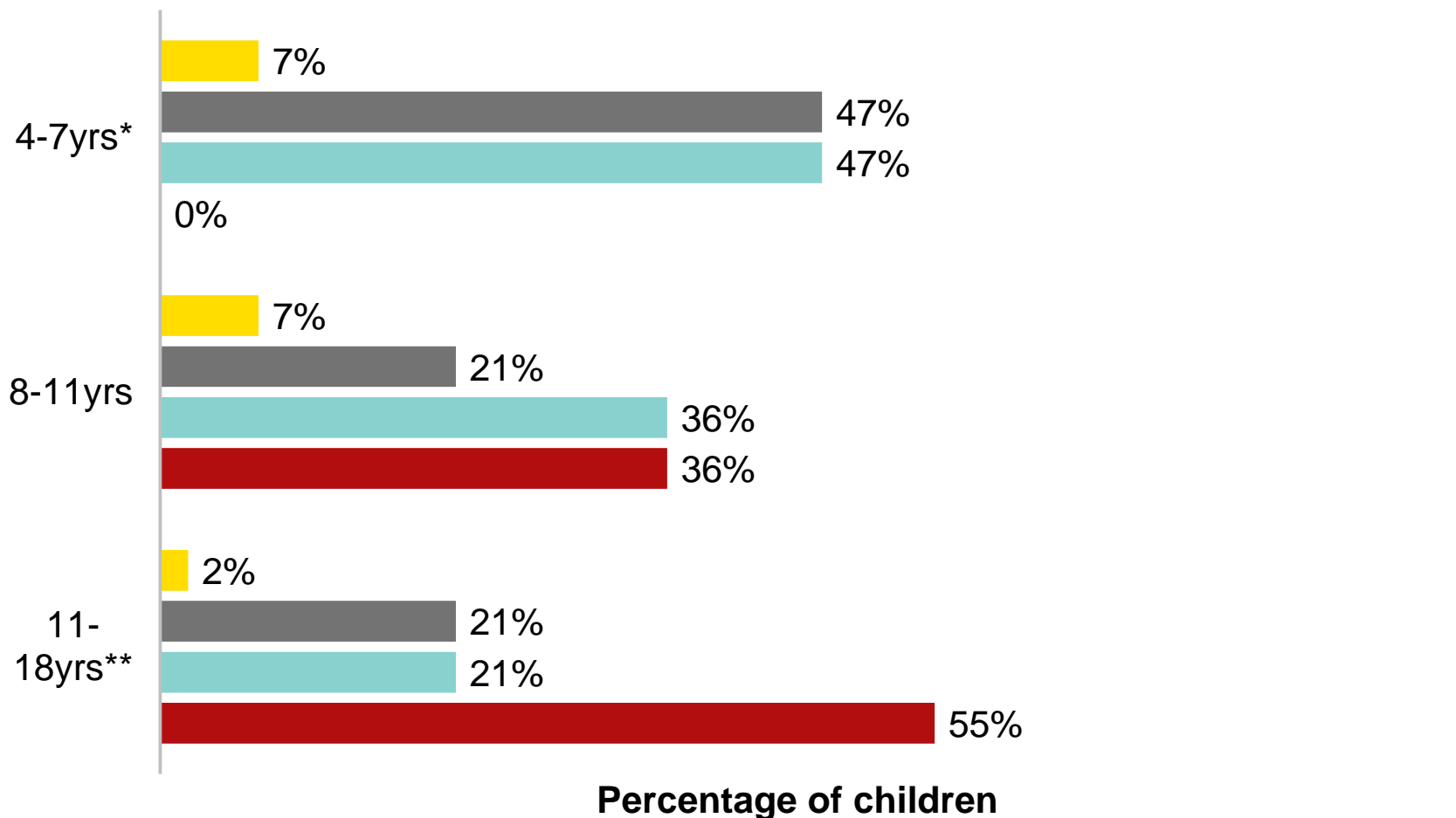
How long have you been in care?

Don't know

Under a year

1-3yrs

3 or more yrs



*Adds to 99% due to rounding of percentages

**Adds to 101% due to rounding of percentages



3.2 Relationships

- Family time
- Good friends
- Pets
- Adults you live with:
Continuity and trust
- Social worker:
Continuity and trust

Family time




The youngest children (4-7yrs) were not asked questions about family contact, as it was thought that they might become distressed or anxious.



Children and young people (8-18yrs) were asked if they were *content with the frequency of contact that was taking place with their mother, father, and siblings.*

- One (7%) child (8-11yrs) and 13 (31%) young people (11-18yrs) had no face to face contact with either parent.
- A larger proportion of children aged 8-11yrs (69%) in North Somerset were happy with how often they saw their siblings compared to children (48%) looked after in other local authorities. However, this difference was not statistically significant.
- Around half of children aged 8-11yrs and young people aged 11-18yrs felt that they saw their mother for the right amount of time.
- 19% of young people aged 11-18yrs reported that their father had passed away.
- Most children and young people wrote that they wanted to spend more time with their families.

Family time (2)

Family member	Age group	Too much	Just right	Too little	I cannot see them	Parent passed away	Don't have any siblings
 Mother	8-11yrs n=14	0 (0%)	7 (50%)	4 (29%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	-----
	11-18yrs n=43*	0 (0%)	20 (47%)	9 (21%)	12 (28%)	2 (5%)	-----
 Father	8-11yrs n=14	0 (0%)	4 (29%)	6 (43%)	3 (21%)	1 (7%)	-----
	11-18yrs n=42	0 (0%)	11 (26%)	4 (10%)	19 (45%)	8 (19%)	-----
 Siblings	8-11yrs n=13	0 (0%)	9 (69%)	4 (31%)	0 (0%)	-----	0 (0%)
	11-18yrs n=44	1 (2%)	18 (41%)	15 (34%)	10 (23%)	-----	0 (0%)

*Adds to 101% due to rounding of percentages

Family time: 8-11yrs (comments)

Children and young people were also asked to say *what they thought about family time*.

- Nine children wrote down their thoughts and feelings about family time. Example quotes are shown below.

I don't see 2 of my sisters enough. I haven't seen one of my sisters for over 3 years.

I would like to see my Mum, Dad, brothers and sisters a little bit more.

I'd like to see more of my Mum and my brother but not my Dad or my sister.

It's fun seeing my Mum, Dad and sister. I would rather live with Mum and family but at the minute I am in foster care.

At the moment I see Dad every 2 weeks on a Saturday. I would like to see my Dad every Saturday because I miss him on the Saturdays that I don't see him. The only problem is that I normally stay at Nana's on a Friday and Nana and Dad don't talk.

Family time: 11-18yrs (comments)

- 36 young people wrote down their thoughts and feelings about family time. Example quotes are shown below.

I want to stay over [at] Mums sometimes.

I choose not to see my birth family. I am allowed to see them, but I don't want to.

I want to see them more.

I feel like I would like to see my brothers and sister a little bit more.

I wish my Mum phoned more often.

I'm happy with it.

I wish I saw my Mum more, but not Nan.

I'm able to call them but I'm not able to actually see them as I want to. I would rather be seeing them in person so I can give them a hug and that, but I'm not able to do that.

[I] want to see them in my own area.

I have had contact with my sister but would like more, and I would like to meet my birth parents if I can.

Good friends



A lack of friendships is associated with loneliness and anxiety. All children and young people were asked if they *had a really good friend*.

General population: *The Millennium*

Cohort Study (2015) of young people aged 14yrs found that 3% of young people did not have a good friend.

- Most of the children and young people stated that they had at least one good friend.
 - Four (5%) young people did not have a good friend which is a similar proportion to their peers in the general population.
- 100% of children aged 4-11yrs in North Somerset had at least one really good friend. This is a Bright Spot of practice.

Age group	Yes, I have a really good friend <i>n (%)</i>	No, I don't have a really good friend <i>n (%)</i>
4-7yrs	15 (100%)	0 (0%)
8-11yrs	14 (100%)	0 (0%)
11-18yrs	44 (92%)	4 (8%)
TOTAL	73 (95%)	4 (5%)

Pets



Pets were important to children in all the focus groups we ran.

Children and young people said that pets are non-judgmental – they love you no matter what and are always pleased to see you. They can also give children an opportunity to take responsibility. Children and young people aged between 8-18yrs were asked if they *had a pet in the home they lived in.*

- 93% of the 8-11yrs children lived in a household with a pet, which is a larger proportion of children compared to children (72%) looked after in other local authorities. However, the difference was not statistically significant.
- In the older (11-18yrs) group, 54% of young people had a pet where they lived.

*[I] enjoy taking the dog for a walk with [name] and my sister.
4-7yrs*

Adults you live with: Continuity & trust

Placement moves



Young people (11-18yrs) were asked: *How many placements have you had?*

Number of placements	Percentage
1 placement	37%
2-4 placements	41%
5-7 placements	9%
8-10 placements	7%
11+	4%
Don't know	2%

- Significantly more young people (37%) in North Somerset had remained in one placement compared to young people (32%) looked after in other local authorities, which is a Bright spot of practice.

Trust



Children and young people were asked if they *trusted the adults they lived with (i.e. carers or parents).*

- 100% of the youngest children (4-7yrs) trusted the adults they lived with, which is a Bright Spot of practice.
- All but one (93%) of children aged 8-11yrs; and
- All but one (98%) of young people (11-18yrs) trusted the adults they lived with.

*[Being in care] is nice as long as you have the right carers.
11-18yrs*

Social worker: Continuity & trust

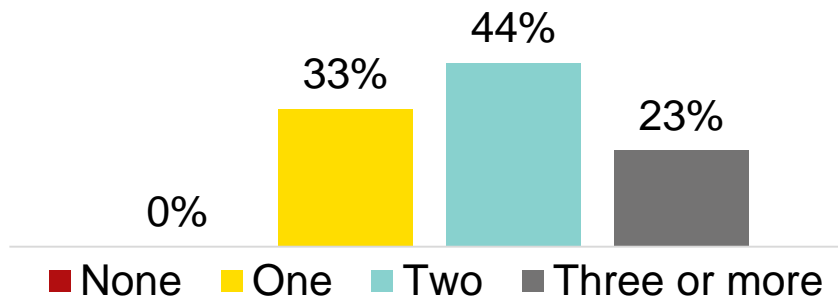
Changes in social workers



11-18 year olds were asked:
How many social workers have you had in the past 12 months?

- 23% answered that they had had three or more social workers in the previous year.

How many social workers have you had in the last 12 months?



Trusting social worker



Children & young people ($n=73$) who knew who their social worker was were asked if they *trusted their social worker*.

The level of trust in social workers was high.









- 100% of the youngest children (4-7yrs) trusted their social worker, which is a Bright Spot of practice.
- 85% of children aged 8-11yrs; and
- 91% of young people (11-18yrs) trusted their social worker.

Changes since last survey

Better than last survey

No significant change

Worse than last survey

	4-7yrs		8-11yrs		11-18yrs	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
 Contact with mother just right			58%	50%	39%	47%
 Contact with father just right			48%	29%	23%	26%
 Contact with siblings just right			43%	69%	41%	41%
 Have a good friend	100%	100%	95%	100%	94%	92%
 Have a pet			80%	93%	74%	54%
 Trust the adults they live with	100%	100%	100%	93%	94%	98%
 Trust social worker	94%	100%	100%	85%	95%	91%
 1 social worker in last 12 months					55%	33%



3.3 Resilience

- Trusted adult
- Being trusted & helping out
- Liking school
- Adults you live with:
Support for learning
- Having fun & hobbies
- Access to nature
- Second chances
- Life skills
- Access to Internet at home

Trusted adult

Children and young people aged between 8-18yrs were asked: *Do you have an adult who you trust, who helps you and sticks by you no matter what?*



The availability of one key adult has been shown to be the turning point in many looked after young people's lives. (Gilligan, 2009)

Having a trusted adult has been shown to be the main factor in helping children recover from traumatic events.

- Most children and young people wrote that they had a trusted adult in their lives:
 - 93% of children (8-11yrs) and
 - 96% of the 11-18yrs young people.
 - Three looked after children and young people had no such adult in their lives.

Being trusted & helping out

Younger children (8-11yrs) were asked if they *got the chance to help the teacher*. Children had said in the focus groups that they were never trusted to show visitors around school or deliver a message because they were looked after.

- 7% of children (8-11yrs) responded that 'all or most of the time' they were asked to help and 71% answered 'sometimes'.
- 21% wrote 'hardly ever' or 'never'.



We asked young people: *How often do you get the chance to show you can be trusted?*

Having trusting relationships and being trusted were key issues raised by the children in the focus groups that underpinned the development of this survey.

- 48% of young people (11-18yrs) thought they were given opportunities 'all or most of the time' to show they could be trusted and 44% given them 'sometimes'.
- 6% responded 'hardly ever' and 2% 'never'.

Liking school/ college



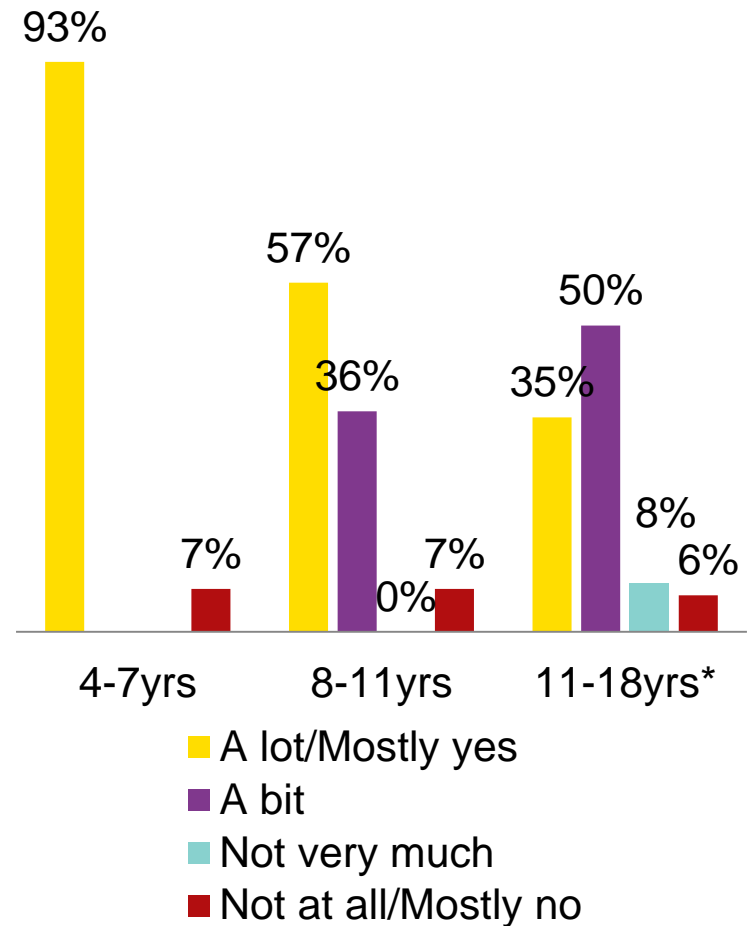
All the children and young people were asked how much they *liked school or college*.

General population: Liking school

The *Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey* (2015) of 5,335 young people (11-15yrs) reported that 80% liked school 'a lot' or 'a bit' and 20% 'not very much' or 'not at all'. Liking school decreased with the child's age and girls were more likely to say they enjoyed school 'a lot' in comparison with boys.

- 85% of the 11-18yrs group liked school or college 'a lot' or 'a bit', which is a bigger proportion than their peers in the general population. This is a Bright Spot of practice.
- Only one child aged 4-7yrs and one child aged 8-11yrs did not like school.

Do you like school/ college?



*Adds to 99% due to rounding of percentages

Adults you live with: Support for learning



Children in the 8-11yrs and 11-18yrs surveys were asked if the adults they lived with (e.g. carers, parents)

showed an interest in what they were doing in school or college.

General population: Support with learning

In comparison the *Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey* (11-15yrs) reported that 90% of children in England said their parents were interested in what happened at school.

- 93% of children aged 8-11yrs and 100% of young people aged 11-18yrs recorded that the adults they lived with showed an interest in their education 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes'.
- The proportion of children and young people in North Somerset who reported that their carers showed an interest in their education is higher than that recorded by children (90%) in the general population. This is a Bright Spot of practice.

Having fun & hobbies

Children aged 4-11yrs were asked if they had *fun at the weekend*.



The 11-18yrs survey asked young people if they were able to *spend time on their own hobbies or activities outside of school*.

- The majority of children and young people had fun and took part in hobbies or activities outside of school.
- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs in North Somerset got to have fun at the weekends, which is a Bright Spot of practice.

Age group	Yes, I have fun/ take part in activities <i>n (%)</i>	Sometimes I have fun/ take part in activities <i>n (%)</i>	No, I don't have fun or take part in activities <i>n (%)</i>
4-7yrs	15 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
8-11yrs	9 (64%)	4 (29%)	1 (7%)
11-18yrs	22 (47%)	18 (38%)	7 (15%)
TOTAL*	46 (61%)	22 (29%)	8 (11%)

*Adds to 101% due to rounding of percentages

Access to nature



Contact with nature can reduce stress and improve mental health. (Play England, 2012)

Some of the children in our focus groups said safeguarding fears limited their opportunities.

We asked *how often in the last week* children and young people (8-18yrs) had opportunities to *explore the outdoors*, such as visiting parks, beaches, fields and forests. Answer options were *'every day'*, *'more than once this week'*, *'once this week'* and *'not at all'*.

General population:

70% of children (6-15yrs) had visited the natural environment at least once a week in the last year. (Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey, 2016)

- 100% of children (8-11yrs) answered that they had spent time outdoors at least once that week, which is a Bright Spot of practice.
- 89% of young people (11-18yrs) answered that they had spent time outdoors at least once that week.

Life skills



We asked the young people in the 11-18yrs group

How often do you get to practise life skills like cooking healthy food, washing clothes or going to the bank?

This question was asked as many young people in the focus groups thought that they had been insufficiently prepared for independence.

- 89% of young people answered that they were taught independence skills 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes', but five young people (11%) reported this was 'hardly ever' or 'never' true.

Access to the Internet where you live



Young people 11-18yrs were asked *if they could connect to the Internet where they were living.*

General population: Access to the Internet

- In the UK, 100% of households with children have an Internet connection. (ONS, 2020)
- The *Millennium Cohort Study* of children aged 11yrs old found that children who never used the Internet outside school had a high probability of low well-being. (The Children's Society, 2014)









- The majority (92%) of young people reported that they had access to the Internet where they lived.
- However, four (8%) young people did not have access.

Changes since last survey

Better than last survey

No significant change

Worse than last survey

	4-7yrs		8-11yrs		11-18yrs	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
 Have a trusted adult			100%	93%	96%	96%
 Asked to help at school/chance to be trusted			80%	78%	97%	92%
 Like school	94%	93%	81%	93%	67%	85%
 Adults interested in education			90%	93%	92%	100%
 Have fun/do hobbies and activities	100%	100%	95%	93%	91%	85%
 Access to nature			95%	100%	89%	89%
 Practise life skills					96%	89%
 Internet access at home					96%	92%



3.4 Rights

- Included in decision-making
- Stigma of being in care
- Feeling safe in placement
- Bullying
- Knowing identity of social workers
- Contact with social workers

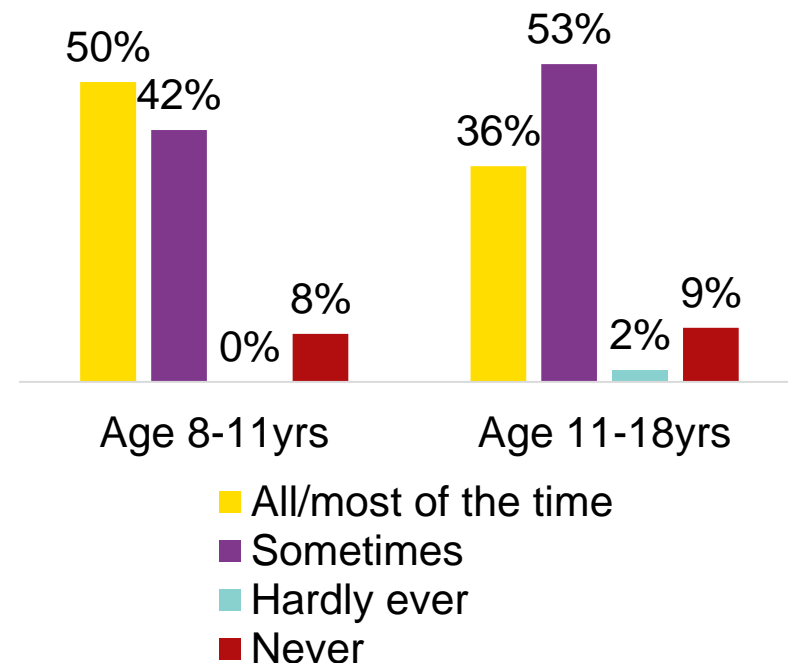
Included in decision-making



Children aged 8-18yrs were asked, *Do you feel included in the decisions that social workers make about your life?*

Do you feel included in the decisions that social workers make about your life?

- 92% of children aged 8-11yrs 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes' felt included, which is a larger proportion compared to young people (84%) looked after in other local authorities. However, this difference was not statistically significant.
- 89% of young people aged 11-18yrs 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes' felt included.
- One child and five young people 'hardly ever' or 'never' felt included.



Included in decision-making (2)

- 10 young people left comments about being included in decision making. Example quotes are shown below:

I would have liked to have been involved in being taken into care this time. I felt that I had no say in it.
11-18yrs

I do know that I can talk to my social worker on my own, but I can't do this because all my communication is supervised. I don't feel like my views are being seen, met or heard.
11-18yrs

I am not happy about it.
11-18yrs

I feel included in decisions that are made about me.
11-18yrs

[I'd like my] social worker to pick up the phone when [I] call.
11-18yrs

[Name], my social worker, is always willing to listen.
11-18yrs

Stigma of being in care



The 11-18yrs age group were asked a question in the survey about feeling different *Do adults do things that make you feel embarrassed about being in care?*

Younger children were not asked these questions, as the focus groups suggested that being made to feel different was of much greater concern in adolescence.

- 13% of young people recorded that adults did things that made them feel embarrassed about being in care.

[They] tell people I'm in care, follow us around when we are out, and make comments that don't need to be made.

11-18yrs

Say things out loud, jokingly.

11-18yrs

Social workers ask stupid questions.

11-18yrs

When I am out and about people speak to my carers and say things like 'your daughter is good' and they are not my parents, so I feel embarrassed.

11-18yrs

It's not what they do, it's how I feel. I think everyone knows.

11-18yrs

Feeling safe in placement



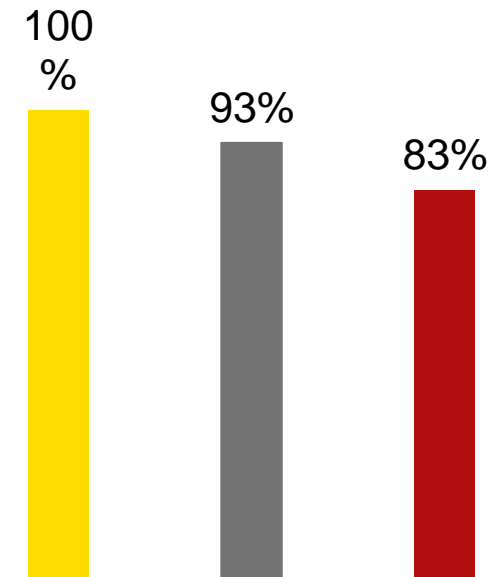
All children were asked if they *felt safe in the home they lived in now*. It is difficult to know what children were thinking about when answering, but feeling secure is about how the world *feels*, not necessarily how it is.

- Overall, 88% of children and young people reported that they 'always' felt safe in their placements.
- One (7%) of the 8-11yrs group and eight (17%) of the 11-18yrs group ticked the 'sometimes', 'hardly ever' or 'never' boxes.
- All of the 4-7yrs group answered 'yes, always', which is a Bright Spot of practice.

General population:

The Children's Worlds survey found that 75% of children (8-13yrs) in the general population felt 'Totally safe' at home. (Rees *et al.*, 2014) Not feeling safe is associated with raised cortisol levels and difficulty in learning and concentration. (Harvard University, 2012)

I always feel safe in the home I live in



4-7yrs* 8-11yrs 11-18yrs

* Percentage of 4-7year olds answering 'Yes, always' (4-7 year olds had 'yes, always' and 'no, not always' as response options whereas the older age groups could indicate whether they 'always', 'sometimes', 'hardly ever' or 'never' felt safe).

Bullying

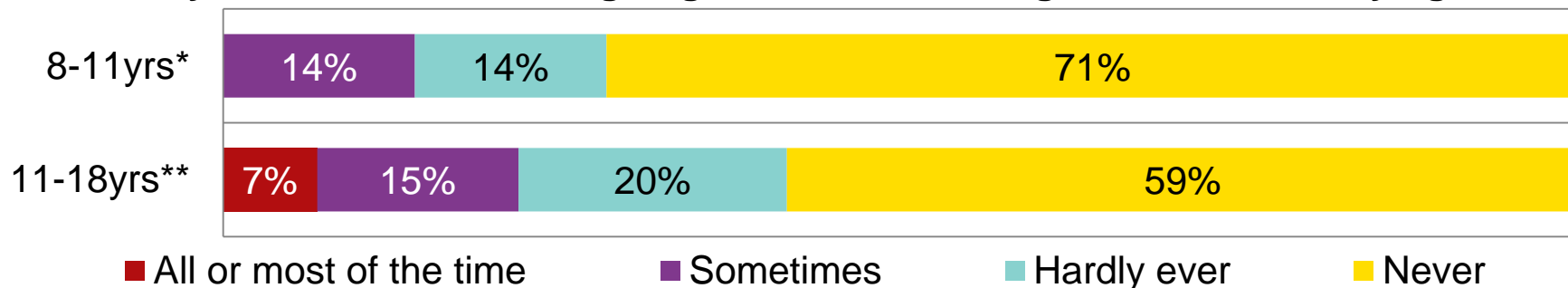
Our question asked if *children felt afraid of going to school because of bullying* and if they were afraid were they *getting support from an adult*.

General population: Bullying

- The analysis of the *Children's Worlds surveys* in 22 countries has shown that being free from bullying is one of the most important factors in children's well-being. (Rees *et al.*, 2010)
- About 88% of children in England say they are not bullied at school. (ONS, 2016b)

- Two children aged 8-11yrs reported that they were afraid 'sometimes'.
 - One of these children reported that they were receiving support from an adult and the other child skipped the question.
- In contrast, more young people (22%) aged 11-18yrs reported that they were afraid to go to school because of bullying 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes'.
 - Nine out of these ten young people reported that they were receiving support from an adult, and one got no support.

Do you ever feel afraid of going to school or college because of bullying?



*Adds to 99% due to rounding of percentages

**Adds to 101% due to rounding of percentages

Knowing identity of social workers



All the children and young people were asked if they *knew who their current social worker was*.

[Care could be better by] knowing who my social worker is.
11-18yrs

- 100% of children aged 8-11yrs in North Somerset knew who their social worker was, which is a Bright Spot of practice.

- Overall, 4% did not know who their social worker was.
- The proportion of children aged 4-7yrs (87%) who knew the identity of their social worker was higher than the average (80.5%) for other local authorities. However, the difference did not reach statistical significance.

Age group	Know social worker <i>n</i> (%)	Don't know social worker <i>n</i> (%)
4-7yrs	13 (87%)	2 (13%)
8-11yrs	14 (100%)	0 (0%)
11-18yrs	46 (98%)	1 (2%)
TOTAL	73 (96%)	3 (4%)

Contact with social workers



Young people aged 11-18yrs ($n=46$) who knew who their social worker was were asked *how easy it was to contact them*.

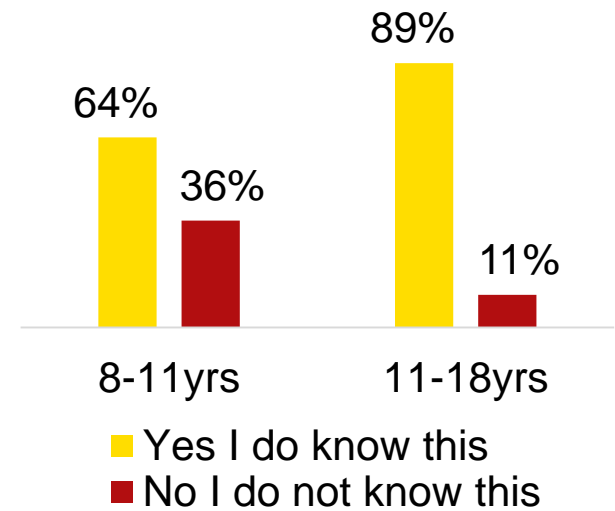


Children and young people (8-18yrs) were also asked if *they knew they could speak to their social worker on their own*.

- Nine in 10 (91%) young people (11-18yrs) reported that they could **easily get in touch with their social worker** 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes'. This is a significantly larger proportion than young people (84%) looked after in other local authorities and is a Bright Spot of practice.

- However, significantly fewer children (64%) aged 8-11yrs and young people (89%) aged 11-18yrs in North Somerset **knew 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.

Do you know you have the right to speak to a social worker on your own?










Communication with social workers is difficult as they are hard to get hold of. 11-18yrs

Changes since last survey

Better than last survey

No significant change

Worse than last survey

	4-7yrs		8-11yrs		11-18yrs	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
 Included in decision-making			95%	92%	90%	89%
 Embarrassed by adults for being in care					6%	13%
 Always feel safe where they live	100%	100%	95%	93%	92%	83%
 Afraid to go to school because of bullying			5%	14%	17%	22%
 Know their social worker	94%	87%	100%	100%	90%	98%
 Easy to contact social worker					83%	91%
 Know they can speak to social worker alone			86%	64%	95%	89%



3.5 Recovery

- Knowing reason for being in care
- Feeling settled in placement
- Liking bedrooms
- Adults you live with:
Sensitive parenting
- Adults you live with:
Sharing confidences
- Support with worries
- Parity with peers
- Happiness with appearance

Knowing reason for being in care

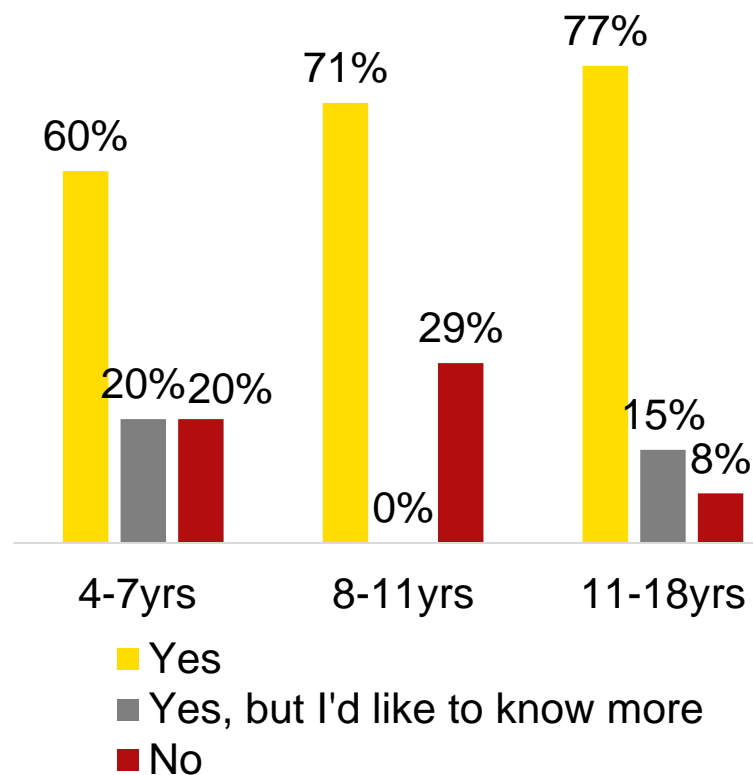
Having a coherent account of one's history and understanding the reasons that led to becoming looked after are important in the development of an integrated identity and in recovery from abuse and neglect. (Adshead, 2012; Adler, 2012)



All the children and young people were asked if *an adult had explained why they were in care.*

- Children and young people were more likely to understand the reasons why they were in care as they became older.
- More children (60%) aged 4-7yrs in North Somerset reported that an adult had explained why there in care compared to children (50.5%) looked after in other local authorities. However, this difference was not statistically significant.

Has an adult explained why you are in care?



Feeling settled in placement



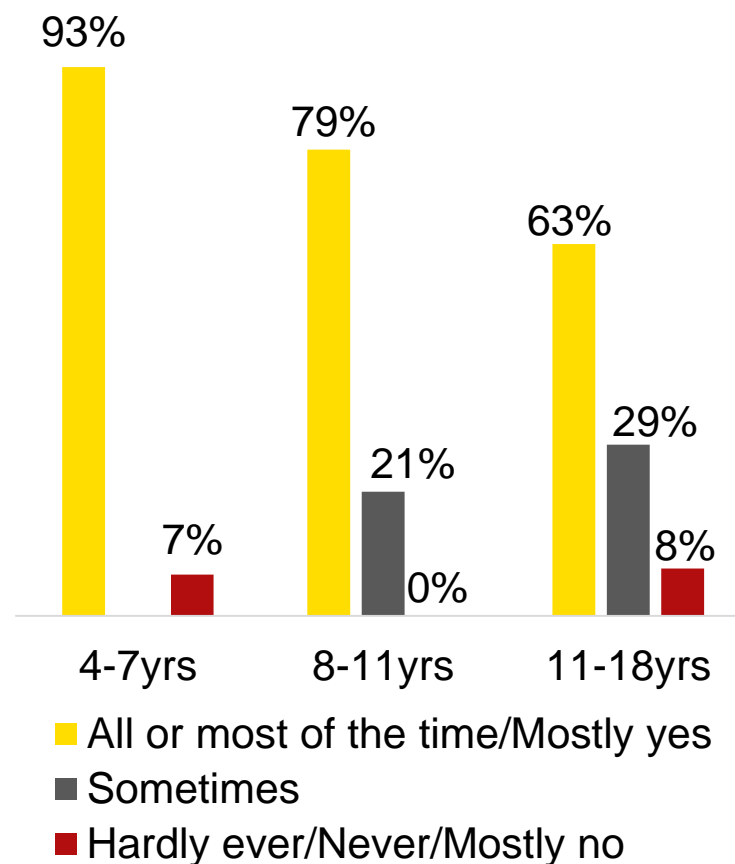
We wanted to know if children felt a sense of belonging and felt at ease in their placements. Based on the advice from our focus groups, children and young people were asked:

*Do you feel settled in the home you live in now?
(Do you feel comfortable, accepted and at ease?)*

The youngest children (4-7yrs) could answer 'mostly yes' or 'mostly no'. Children and young people (8-18yrs) could answer: 'all or most of the time', 'sometimes', 'hardly ever', or 'never'.

- 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.

Feeling settled



Liking bedrooms

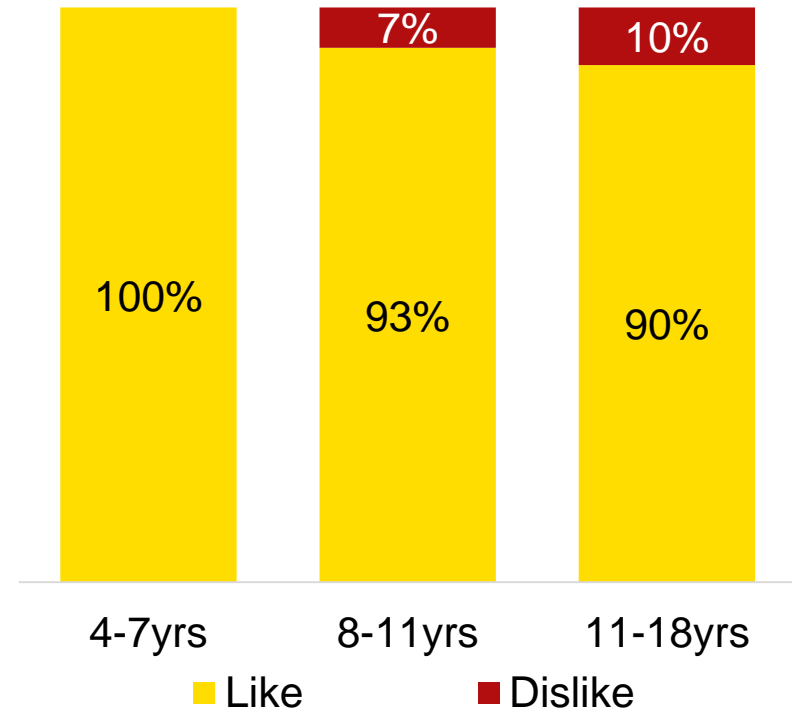


Liking your bedroom was an important feature for the focus groups we ran.

Young people reflected that their bedrooms were a place for being on your own in busy homes. It is linked to safety, sense of identity and feeling a sense of belonging.

- The majority of children and young people liked their bedrooms.
- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs in North Somerset liked their bedroom, which is a Bright Spot of practice.

Do you like your bedroom?



Adults you live with: Sensitive parenting



All children were asked if the adults they lived with *noticed how they were feeling*.

- 93% of children (8-11yrs) and 98% of young people (11-18yrs) thought their carers noticed how they were feeling 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes'.
- 100% of children aged 4-7yrs in North Somerset felt that their carers noticed how they were feeling, which is a Bright Spot of practice.

*Okay, so I don't live with an adult.
That's why I answered no.
11-18yrs*

*A good thing about being in care is the fact that [name] and [name] ask about improvements that they could do to make me feel safer.
8-11yrs*

Adults you live with: Sharing confidences



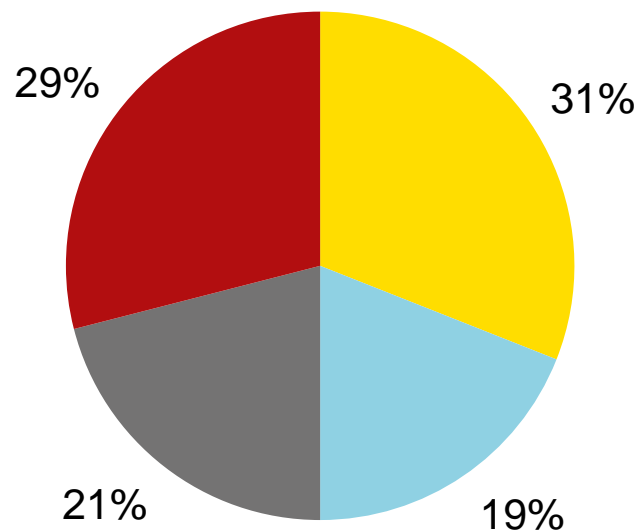
Young people (11-18yrs) were asked how often they *talked to the adults that they lived with about the things that mattered to them.*

General population

The *Understanding Society* survey (2017) found that 66% of children (10-15yrs) talked regularly to a parent.

- 50% of young people talked regularly with their carers/parents about things that mattered to them.
- This is a significantly smaller proportion compared to their peers in the general population (66%) and young people (70%) looked after in other local authorities.

Speaking to adults about things that matter to you



- Most days
- More than once a week
- Less than once a week
- Hardly ever

Support with worries



Children and young people (8-11yrs and 11-18yrs) were asked if they *worried about their own feelings or behaviour* and, if they *did have concerns, were they receiving support*.

General population & other comparative data: Mental health

- In England, 39% of looked after children aged 5-16yrs have concerning SDQ scores. (DfE, 2019)
- Studies of looked after populations show that children's level of difficulties are much higher, ranging from about 45% of children in foster care to 75% of those in residential. (Ford *et al.*, 2007)
- In the general population, 13.5% of children have SDQ scores that suggest they have a clinical level of mental health difficulties. (ONS, 2016b)

- No children (8-11yrs) worried 'all or most of the time' about their feelings and behaviour, but 54% worried 'sometimes'.
- 71% of children who reported worrying thought they were getting help from an adult to cope with their worries.
- 17% young people (11-18yrs) worried 'all or most of the time' and 46% 'sometimes'.
- 64% of young people who reported worrying thought they were getting help.

Parity with peers



Young people (11-18yrs) were asked if they *got the chance to do similar things to their friends.*

- 74% of young people reported that ‘all or most of the time’ or ‘sometimes’ they did similar things to their friends.
- 12 (26%) young people reported that they could ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ do similar things to their friends.

A problem is that I can't see all of my friends and family as much as I could at home, and [in order] to see friends and family outside of school it has to be arranged. Another problem is that the restrictions are VERY strict.

8-11yrs

I want to be able to make my own decisions especially in terms of [the] time I go to bed. It doesn't feel right. It doesn't feel like a normal family. It's just all the rules by social services get in the way of feeling like a family.

11-18yrs

They say you're going to live with a family, but treat you differently with their stupid rules.

11-18yrs

Let the foster carer make some decisions so [that] it feels more natural – like a proper family.

11-18yrs

Happiness with appearance



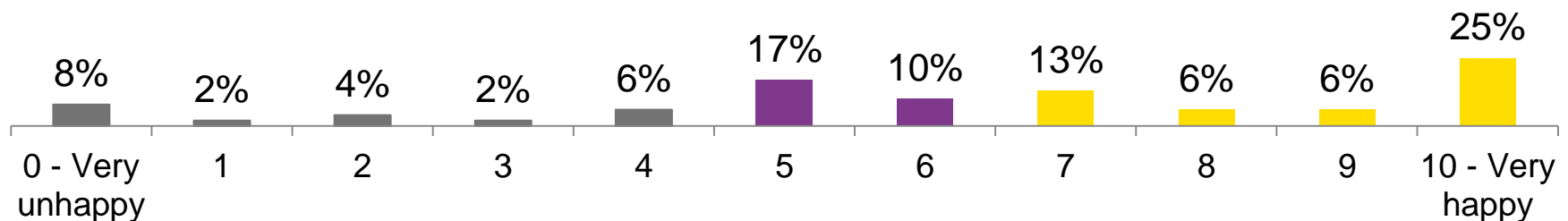
Studies have shown that poor body image is associated with low self-esteem, depression and self-harm. (Cash and Smolek, 2011)

General population: Happiness with appearance

- 10% of 10-17 year olds in the general population are unhappy with their appearance. Girls are more likely to have a lower opinion of their appearance than boys. (The Children's Society, 2019)

- The majority of young people were happy with their appearance.
- However, 11 (23%) young people were unhappy with how they looked.

How happy are you with the way you look?*



*Adds to 99% due to rounding of percentages

Changes since last survey

Better than last survey










No significant change

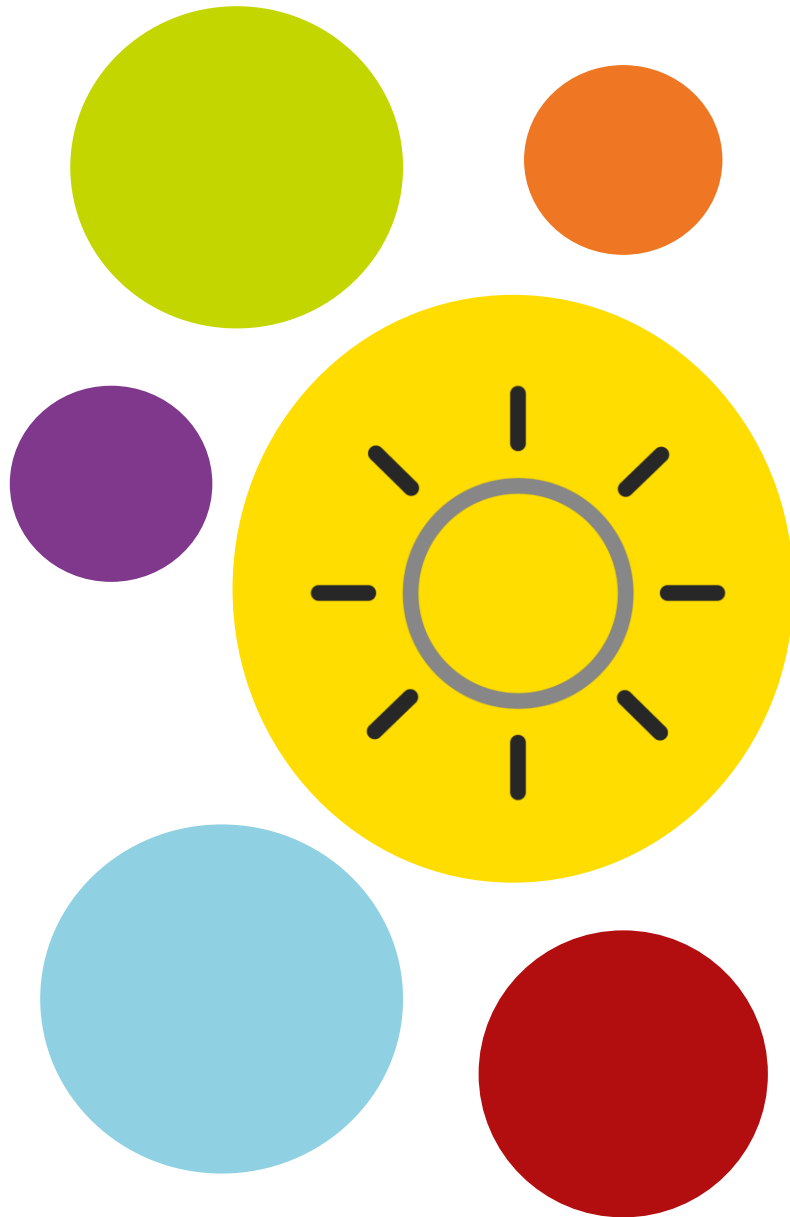
Worse than last survey

4-7yrs

8-11yrs

11-18yrs

	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
 Reason for care fully explained	82%	60%	71%	71%	79%	77%
 Feel settled where they live	94%	93%	86%	79%	88%	63%
 Like their bedrooms	94%	100%	100%	93%	100%	90%
 Adults they live with notice feelings	100%	100%	90%	93%	98%	98%
 Talk about things that matter					64%	50%
 Worry about feelings/behaviour			38%	54%	48%	63%
 Supported with worries			100%	71%	78%	64%
 Same opportunities as friends					83%	74%
 Happy with appearance					84%	77%



3.6 Well-being

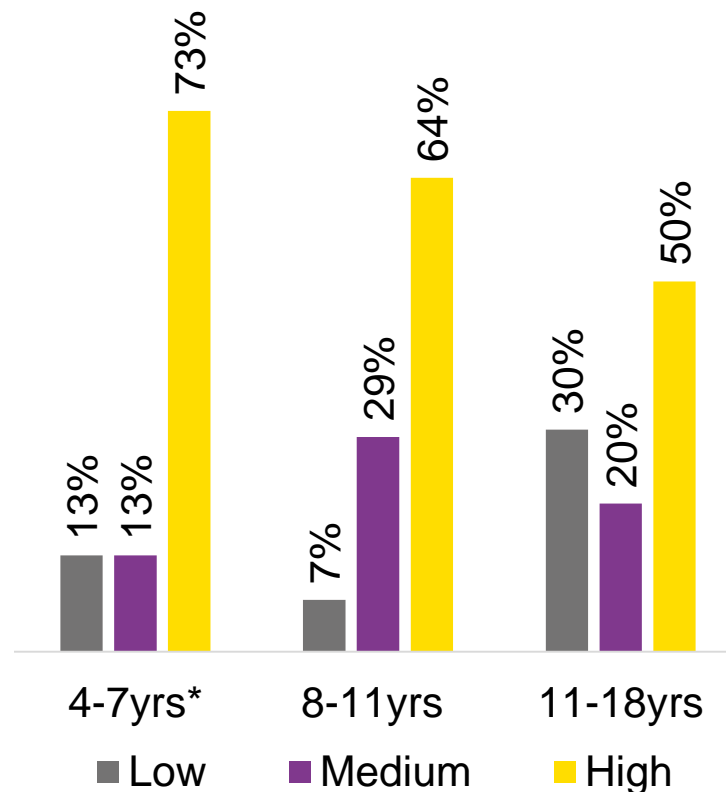
- Happiness yesterday – affect
- Life satisfaction – overall evaluation
- Are the things you do worthwhile? – psychological/eudemonic well-being
- Positivity about the future
- Comparisons – other LAs and general population
- Life is improving
- Gender differences: 11-18yrs
- Low well-being

Happiness yesterday

A decrease in happiness with age occurs in all surveys. Well-being decreases from school year 5 onwards with age 14-15yrs being the lowest point. It then starts to rise again. (Rees *et al.*, 2010)

- Children (4-7yrs & 8-11yrs) were asked to rate *how happy they were yesterday* on a five-point scale, from 'very unhappy' to 'very happy'.
- Young people (11-18yrs) selected a point on a 0-10 scale with 0 being '*not at all happy*' and 10 '*completely happy*'.
- The majority of children and young people had been happy the previous day.
- Three (10%) children and 14 (30%) young people reported that yesterday they had been unhappy.

Happiness yesterday



*Adds to 99% due to rounding of percentages

Life satisfaction

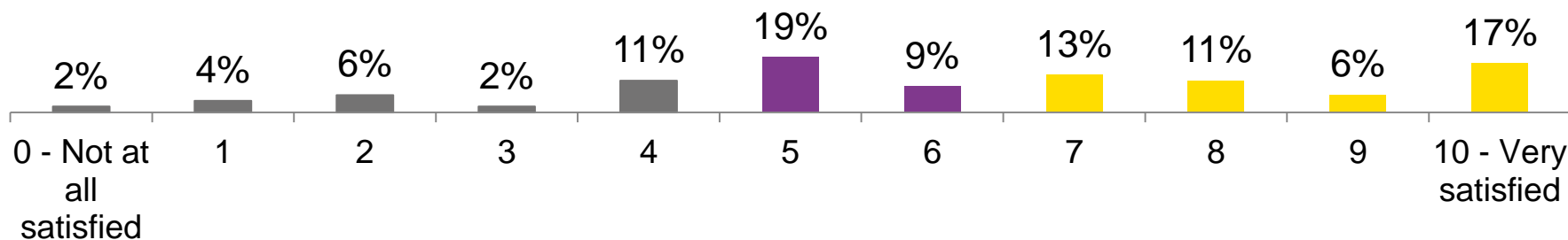


Young people (11-18yrs) were asked *how satisfied they were with their life* on a 0-10 scale.

This question exactly replicates The Children's Society survey question. A score of 7 or more is considered to be high life satisfaction. (The Cabinet Office, 2012)

- A larger proportion of young people (26%) in North Somerset reported low life satisfaction compared to young people (15%) looked after in other local authorities. However, this difference was not statistically significant.
- Unlike the general child population in England there was no positive correlation between high life satisfaction scores and being happy at school.

How satisfied are you with your life?



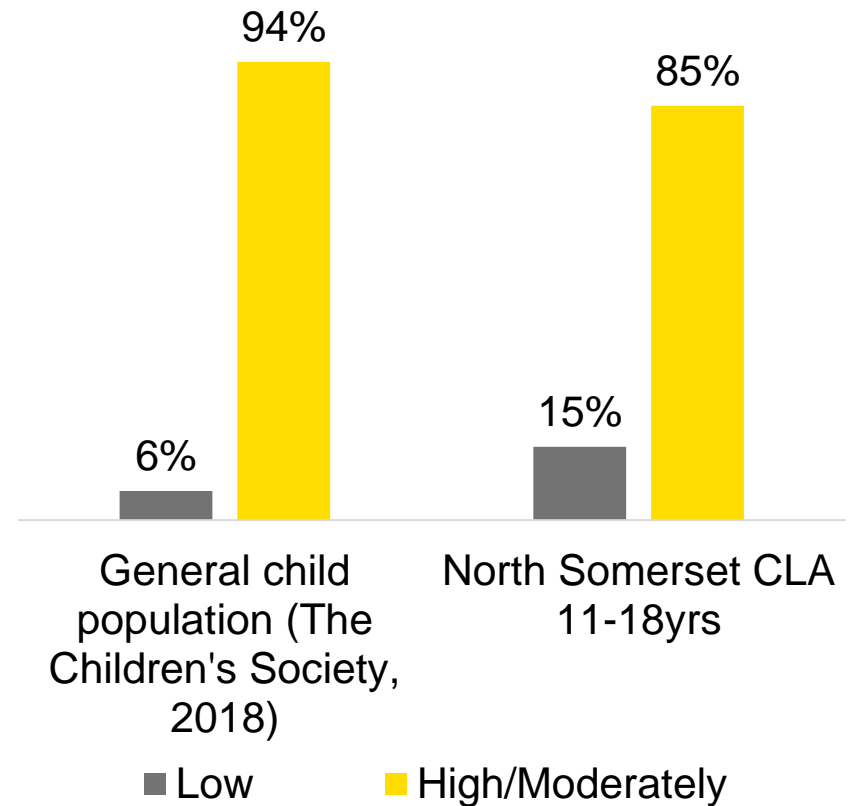
Are the things you do worthwhile?

Having a meaning or a purpose to life is strongly associated with well-being. (ONS, 2014)

Young people (11-18yrs) completed the same 0-10 scale as used by The Children's Society (2018) in their household survey with 3,000 young people aged 11-17yrs.

- 57% of young people scored high or very high;
- 28% moderately; and
- 15% low.

Overall, to what extent do you think the things you do in your life are worthwhile?



Positivity about the future



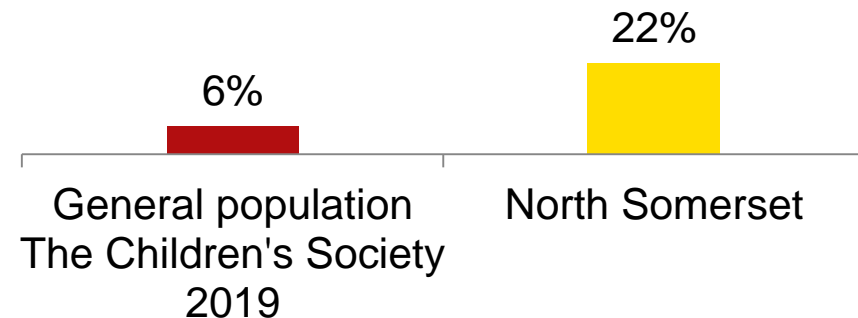
Optimism about the future is linked with happiness and resilience. (Conversano et al., 2010) Young people were asked on a scale of 0-10 *How positive are you about your future?*

- 28 (61%) were positive about their future.
 - Eight (17%) were moderately positive about their future.
 - 10 (22%) had low scores and did not feel positive about their future.
- Significantly more young people (22%) aged 11-18yrs in North Somerset were pessimistic about the future compared to their peers (6%) in the general population and young people (11%) looked after in other local authorities.

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

I worry about the Home Office.
11-18yrs

Young people who were pessimistic about their future



Comparisons

- Levels of well-being – North Somerset’s looked after young people (11-18yrs) compared to peers (10-17yrs) in the general population (The Children’s Society, 2019) and to the average scores of looked after young people in 17 LAs.

Question	Scores	North Somerset	2018 average in 17 LAs	Peers in general pop. (10-17yrs)
Life satisfaction	Very high (9-10)	23%	34%	36%
	Low (0-4)	26%	15%	5%
Happiness yesterday	Very high (9-10)	28%	37%	33%
	Low (0-4)	30%	19%	6%
Things I do in life are worthwhile	Very high (9-10)	36%	37%	35%
	Low (0-4)	15%	12%	6%
Positivity about the future	Very high (9-10)	22%	36%	26%
	Low (0-4)	22%	11%	6%

Life is improving

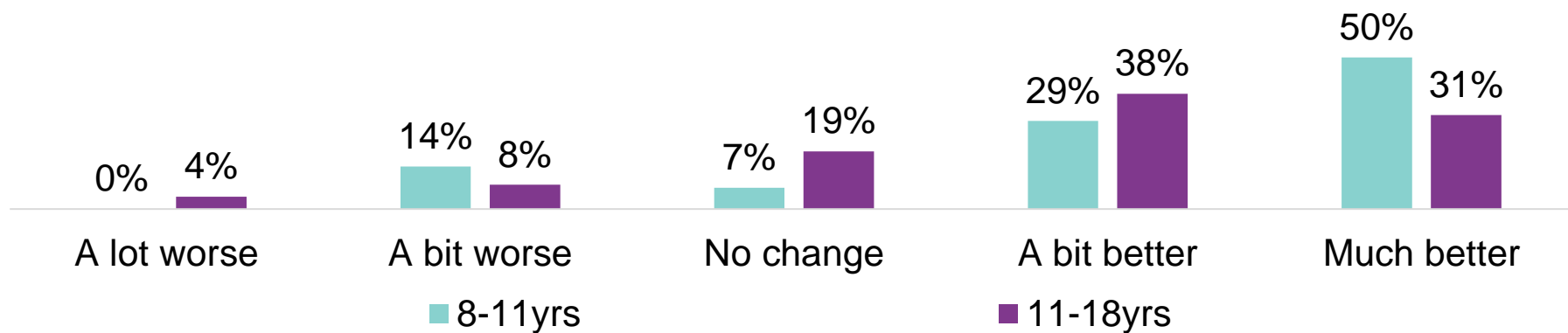
Children aged 8-18yrs were asked if they thought their *life was getting better*, and could choose from a five point scale ranging from 'A lot worse' to 'Much better'.

- The majority (71%) of children in North Somerset felt that their lives were improving.

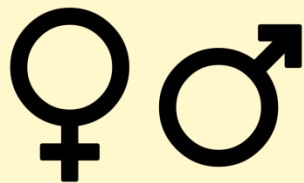
I have a nice foster family who really look after me. I like being in care.
11-18yrs

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

Is your life improving?



Gender differences: 11-18yrs



The Children's Society (2017) reported that in the general population one in seven (14%) girls (10-15yrs) were unhappy with their lives as a whole as were one in ten boys.

Examining gender differences in our surveys in 2017, we found no gender difference in the surveys for 4-7yrs and 8-11yrs but girls aged 11-18yrs were more likely to report low well-being. Girls were four times more likely to be unhappy with their appearance and this contributed to gender differences in well-being. (Selwyn & Briheim-Crookall 2017)



Only one gender difference was found in North Somerset:

- Girls were more likely to report that they were unhappy with their appearance (35% compared to 8% of boys).

Low well-being: 4-7yrs



- Two of the children in the 4-7yrs group responded 'very unhappy' to the question 'how happy were you yesterday?'.
- Neither of them gave any further responses to indicate low well-being, although one child said they would like to know more about why they were in care.
- All children in the 4-7yrs age group had moderate or high well-being.

Low well-being: 8-11yrs



- Only one (7%) child – a girl – in the 8-11yrs group described themselves as ‘unhappy’.
- She also reported that she:
 - Did not like her bedroom;
 - Did not always feel settled where she lived;
 - Wanted to know more about the reasons she was in care;
 - Saw her Mum, Dad and siblings too little;
 - Felt her life was getting ‘a bit’ worse;
 - Did not trust her carer;
 - Felt her carer ‘never’ noticed how she was feeling;
 - Felt that her carer was ‘never’ interested in what she was doing at school;
 - Did not trust her social worker;
 - Only ‘sometimes’ felt included in decisions made about her life;
 - Did not like school;
 - Never got the chance to help the teacher at school; and
 - Did not get to have fun at the weekends.

Low well-being: 11-18yrs









- 12 (27%) young people had low well-being (i.e. scored 4 or less on two or more of the 0-10 well-being scales). This is a significantly larger proportion of young people compared to those (15%) looked after in other local authorities.
- Young people with low well-being also tended to report that:
 - Adults did things that made them feel embarrassed about being in care (33% compared to 3% with higher well-being);
 - They did not always feel settled where they lived (67% compared to 27% with higher well-being).
 - They were unhappy with their appearance (50% compared to 15% with higher well-being).
 - They worried about their feelings or behaviour ‘all or most of the time’ or ‘sometimes’ (92% compared to 53% with higher well-being).

Changes since last survey

Better than last survey
 No significant change
 Worse than last survey

W
E
L
L
·
B
E
I
N
G

	4-7yrs		8-11yrs		11-18yrs	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
 Happy yesterday	76%	73%	85%	64%	73%	50%
 Satisfied with life as a whole					94%	75%
 Things they do are worthwhile					96%	85%
 Positive about the future					85%	78%
 Life is getting better			95%	79%	86%	69%
 Low overall well-being					11%	27%



Section 4: Children and young people's comments

Is there anything else you would like to tell us? What would make being in care better for you?

Comments: 4-7yrs

- Eight (53%) children (age 4-7yrs) gave text responses on: *What would make care better/ anything else you want to say?*
- Four (50%) children wrote that they did not want to say anything further.
- Other children wrote:

Yes, I would like to say that I love [name] and [name] (foster carers). What would make it better would be going to a new family so I have more people to play with.

I like everything.

[What would make care better?]
*I like it most of the time.
It would be better if Mum, Dad, brother and sister were there too.*

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

Comments: 8-11 yrs

- Nine (64%) children gave text responses on: *What would make care better/ anything else you want to say?*
- Five (56%) children wrote that they did not want to add anything further or that they did not know what would make being in care better for them.
- Other children wrote:

I like it in care because I feel a bit safer than I was at home. Anyway, a problem is that I can't see all of my friends and family as much as I could at home and [in order] to see friends and family outside of school, [it] has to be arranged. Another problem is that the restrictions are VERY strict. [...] I find it quite hard to adapt to my home and the way we live there.

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.

I like being in care.

[What would make care better?]
Seeing Mum, Dad, brothers and sisters a bit more.

Comments: 11-18yrs

- 30 (63%) young people gave text responses on: *What would make care better/ anything else you want to say?*
- 11 (37%) young people wrote that they did not want to add anything further or that they did not know how to make care better.
- Other young people wrote:

To stop putting different aged children together in the house.

See my brother more.

Seeing all my family [...].

I just want to be back with my Mum.

Letting me go home to Mum and Dad. Changing [the] rules at the home.

They understand me better.

More contact with [my] siblings.

Nothing, it's perfect.

Not being with my sister.

Get rid of social workers

[There are] a lot [of things] I would make different, but [I] can't put [them] into words.

Different school – smaller and more support.

Nothing, I am happy with the way things are.

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

Knowing who my social worker is.

Staying at [my] Mums and friends sometimes.

A note on Covid-19

The *Your Life, Your Care* survey took place during Covid-19 restrictions. Only one young person mentioned Covid-19:

If I could change anything it would be that Covid would be over so then friends could come over.

11-18yrs



Section 5: References

References

Adshead, G. (2012). Their dark materials: narratives and recovery in forensic practice. Royal College of Psychiatrists Publication Archives, available at: www.rcpsych.ac.uk (accessed 31 January 2013).

Adler, J. M. (2012). Living into the story: agency and coherence in a longitudinal study of narrative identity development and mental health over the course of psychotherapy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(2), 367.

Cabinet Office (2012) Wellbeing Defining high and low scores
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/225519/wellbeing_defining_high_low_scores.pdf

Cash T & Smolek L (2011) *Body Image: A Handbook of Science, Practice and Prevention*. Guilford Press: London.

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2012). *The Science of Neglect: The Persistent Absence of Responsive Care Disrupts the Developing Brain: Working Paper No. 12*. Retrieved from www.developingchild.harvard.edu.

Children's Commissioner for England (2015) State of the Nation: Children in Care
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Care-monitor-v12_1.pdf 80

Conversano C, Rotondo A, Lensi E, Della Vista O, Arpone F, Reda MA. Optimism and Its Impact on Mental and Physical Well-Being. *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health* : CP & EMH. 2010;6:25-29.

DfE (2019) Children looked after in England including adoption: 2018 to 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2018-to-2019>

Ford, T. Votares, P., Meltzer, H. & Goodman, R. (2007) Psychiatric disorder among British children looked after by local authorities: comparison with children living in private households *British Journal of Psychiatry* 190, pp 319-325

Gilligan, R. (2009) *Promoting resilience* London BAAF

Gleave, J. & Cole-Hamilton, I. (Revised 2012) *A world without play: a literature review*. Play England

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children survey <http://www.hbscengland.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/National-Report-2015.pdf>

Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey (2016)

ONS (2014) *Measuring National Well-Being-Exploring the Well-being of Children in the UK 2014*

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/measuringnationalwellbeing/2014-10-08#what-we-do>

ONS (2016a) *Measuring National Well-being: Domains and Measures*

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/measuringnationalwellbeingdomainsandmeasures>

ONS (2016b) *Children's Well-being Measures*

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/childrenswellbeingmeasures>

ONS Statistical bulletin (2020) *Internet access – households and individuals*

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2020>

Rees G., Bradshaw J., Goswami H., and Keung A. (2010) *Understanding Children's Well-being: A national survey of young people's well-being* London: The Children's Society

Rees, G., Main, G., & Bradshaw, J. (2014). *Children's World National Report England*. <http://www.isciweb.org/Uploads/dbsAttachedFiles/ChildrensWorldsEnglandReport-V2.pdf>

Selwyn, J., & Briheim-Crookall, L. (2017). *Our Lives, Our Care: looked after children's views on their well-being*. School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol & Coram Voice

The Children's Society (2014a) *The Good Childhood Report*. London: The Children's Society https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/The%20Good%20Childhood%20Report%202014%20-%20FINAL_0.pdf

The Children's Society (2019) *The Good Childhood Report*

For enquiries about the Bright Spots project see:
<http://www.coramvoice.org.uk/professional-zone/bright-spots>

or contact:

brightspots@coramvoice.org.uk



bright spots

coram
Voice 
getting young voices heard

Rees Centre



Funded by the Hadley Trust