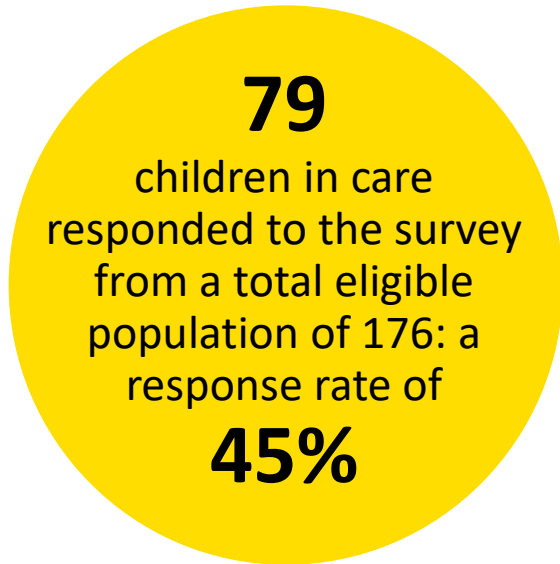


Your Life, Your Care 2022-23

The views of children in care aged 4-17 in North Somerset on their well-being

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Between February and April all children in care aged 4-17yrs 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.

- 50% of the surveys were completed by boys, 47% by girls; two children and young people (3%) gave other responses and one preferred not to disclose their gender.
- 8% of responding children were from Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnicities – below the proportion (17%) in care in North Somerset.
- Most (67%) children and young people were in foster care, 17% were in the care of family or friends, 4% in residential care, 4% were living with parents and 9% in other types of care*.

***does not add to 100% due to rounding**

Age group	Number of responses	Response rate
4-7yrs	14	67%
8-11yrs	24	71%
11-17yrs	41	34%

What is working well?

Placements and carers



- All the youngest children (4-7yrs) **felt safe and settled** where they lived.



- All children aged 4-11yrs **trusted the adults they lived with**. All of them thought their carers **noticed how they were feeling**.



- 96% of children and young people (8-17yrs) felt that their carers **showed an interest in their education**. This compares to 88% in the general population.



- All children aged 4-11yrs **liked their bedrooms**.



- Children and young people (8-17yrs) were significantly more likely to **live in a household with a pet** vs. their peers in other local authorities.

I feel happy and safe living here.
4-7yrs

I like being in care with my carers.
11-17yrs

Family time



- 44% of young people (11-17yrs) felt they **saw their Dad the right amount** – significantly more than in other local authorities (26%).

I like seeing my younger brother and sister when we see Dad.
8-11yrs

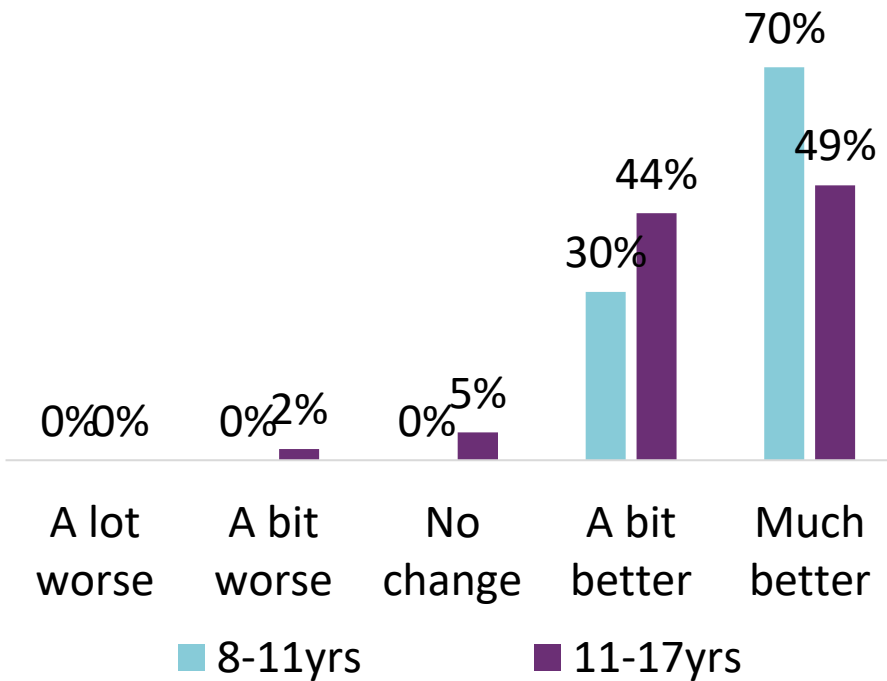
Social workers



- All of the youngest children (4-7yrs) who knew who their social worker was, trusted them.

What is working well? (2)


Is your life improving?



I love being in foster care with my foster parent and my brother. I love having a foster family that loves me and my brother.
11-17yrs

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Well-being

- The majority (95%) of children and young people **felt that their lives were getting better** (including 100% of 8-11yrs). This was a significantly higher proportion than in other local authorities (85%).

Well-being of 11-17yrs

- Every young person (11-17yrs) **had an adult they trusted** in their lives.
- 85% of young people (11-17yrs) **talked regularly with their carers about things that mattered to them** (vs. 66% in other local authorities).
- All young people (11-17yrs) reported that they **had spent time outdoors in nature** at least once in the last week.

What could be improved?

Social worker continuity



- 16 (40%) of 11-17yrs reported that they had had three or more social workers in the last year – compared with 29% in other local authorities, although this difference was not statistically significant.
- 71% of children (8-11yrs) knew they could speak to their social worker on their own vs. 85% in other LAs – but the difference was not significant.



*I think I have had too many social workers (13)!
11-17yrs*

*Sometimes I don't get told if I have a new social worker, kids should be told when they have a new social worker.
11-17yrs*

*I feel sad about being in care but I feel happy because my new carer loves me and looks after me. I want to know why I've been put into care.
8-11yrs*

*Please tell me the truth about my family and let me have a better life.
11-17yrs*

Understanding why they are in care



- A smaller proportion of children (4-11yrs) understood why they were in care compared to other local authorities, although the difference was not statistically significant. The figures had also declined since the last (2020-21) Bright Spots survey in North Somerset.

What could be improved? (2)

I would like to see my mum every month instead of every two months.
8-11yrs

This [is] going to happen but I want it to be quicker. I want Nan to be [in] charge but it's taking a long time.
8-11yrs

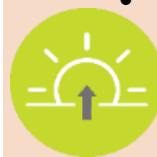
Good friends



- There were more children and young people (9%) in North Somerset without one really good friend than in the general population (3%).

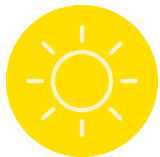
	North Somerset 22/23	Other local authorities	North Somerset 20/21
<u>8-11yrs declines</u>			
Liking school 'a lot' / 'a bit'	71%*	87%	93%
Seeing Mum the right amount	33%	47%	50%
Spending time outdoors at least once this week	79%	n/a	100%
Having a say in decisions social workers make	79%	85%	92%

*Difference vs other local authorities was statistically significant.



- Some figures declined for the 8-11yrs age group in particular, compared with the previous (2020-21) survey in North Somerset.

Well-being



- The majority (87%) of children and young people had moderate to high well-being – including all children aged 4-7yrs.



- Ten were scored as having low well-being – three (13%) children aged 8-11yrs, and seven (17%) young people aged 11-17yrs.



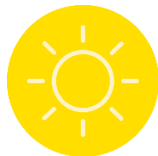
Young people with low well-being

As the number of young people with low well-being was so low, it was not possible to analyse any statistical patterns relating to their low well-being. However, we note some of their other responses below and on slides 75-78.

Of those reporting lower well-being:

- Most reported not seeing family members enough
- Most reported not liking school/ college
- Several reported not having a say in decisions social workers make about their lives
- Several reported not liking their appearance
- A few reported not feeling settled (or safe) where they lived
- A few reported not trusting the adults they lived with, or not having an adult they trusted
- A few noted they didn't have the chance to do similar things to their friends
- A few were afraid of going to school due to bullying
- A couple reported not having a really good friend
- A couple wanted to know more about why they were in care

North Somerset changes over time (comparing 2020-21 with 2022-23)



Three Bright Spots that were awarded in the 2020-21 survey were awarded again this year. However, 11 new Bright Spots have been awarded. They are:

Contact with Dad (11-17yrs)

Trusting the adults they live with (8-11yrs)

Having a trusted adult (11-17yrs)

Access to the internet (11-17yrs)

Liking bedrooms (4-11yrs)

Sharing confidences with carers (11-17yrs)

Pets in the home (8-17yrs)

Life is getting better (8-17yrs)

Access to nature (11-17yrs)

Feeling settled in placements (4-7yrs)

Carers notice how you're feeling (8-11yrs)

The 2022-23 survey also showed a number of improvements since 2020-21, including:

Pets in the home (11-17yrs) +39%

Getting help with worries (11-17yrs) +32%

Getting help with worries (8-11yrs) +22%

Sharing confidences with carers (11-17yrs) +35%

High life satisfaction (11-17yrs) +26%

Life is getting better (11-17yrs) +24%

However, compared with the 2020-21 survey, there were decreases, including:

Liking school (8-11yrs) -22%

Knowing their social worker (4-7yrs) -18%

Have a good friend (4-7yrs) -14%

Access to nature (8-11yrs) -21%

Contact with Mum (8-11yrs) -17%

Reason for care fully explained (4-7yrs) -14%

bright spots

For enquiries about the Bright Spots project see:
<https://coramvoice.org.uk/for-professionals/bright-spots-2/>

or contact:

brightspots@coramvoice.org.uk

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