

**A Guide for working with Care Experienced People in HMPPS**

This guide is intended for practitioners working with care experienced people. This guide should be used, alongside the resources listed below, to ensure that care experienced people receive the support they require to improve their outcomes.

AN INTRODUCTION TO WORKING WITH CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE

**Care Experienced** – Someone who has previously been in the care of a local authority as a child, regardless of their current age, time spent in care or whether they meet the legal definition of a ‘Care Leaver’.

**Care Leaver** – Someone between the age of 18-25 that qualifies for local authority support, including the provisions of the Local Offer for Care Leavers and a personal advisor until they reach the age of 25. See ‘Care Experienced & Care Leaver Entitlement’ below for further information.

In order to improve outcomes for Care Experienced People in prison and probation we need to understand what additional support this group may require and ensure they have access to all the services they are entitled to.

Consideration should be given to people who have experienced care, particularly in the following areas:

**Adverse Childhood Experiences** – Care Experienced people may have experienced trauma, potentially made worse by the care system. Staff should recognise the impact of these experienced and take a trauma informed approach. See the Trauma Informed Tool in the Y2A Principles and Guidance document (Wales).

**Family and Relationships** – Care Experienced people may not have a ‘traditional’ family structure, so it is important to note any supportive relationships they have.

**Accommodation** – Care Experienced people may find it difficult to find suitable accommodation. Staff should assist the individual in securing suitable accommodation and should provide ongoing accommodation support where possible.

**Education and Employment** – Care Experienced people are more likely to have special educational needs so they should be encouraged to engage in any available education, training or employment opportunities. See the ‘Support Organisations’ section below for a database of support services.

**Mental Health** – Mental health issues can be more common amoung care experienced people. Mental health needs may not have been identified so special attention should be paid to this and mental health referrals should be made where necessary.

Resources to support practitioners working with Care Experienced Young Adults can be found on the dedicated [MyLearning](https://mydevelopment.org.uk/course/view.php?id=9139) page.

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

A trauma informed approach should be taken when working with Care Experienced people. The five guiding principles of trauma informed care are **safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness** and **empowerment**. The trauma informed tool in the [Y2A Principles and Guidance document (Wales)](../../../Downloads/Y2A%20Principles%20and%20Guidance%20Wales.pdf) contains practical considerations for each of these principles.

**Safety** – Ensure that the young person feels physically and emotionally safe by ensuring familiarity with new locations and processes as well as providing continuity of support.

**Choice** – Emphasise individual choice by incorporating the view of the young person.

**Collaboration** – Encourage input from the young person so that a collaborative relationship can be developed. Take an ‘individual needs’ approach, focus on individual not process.

**Trustworthiness** – Be clear and consistent about expectations and maintain appropriate boundaries. Where possible arrange appointments at the same time on the same day of the week to build a sense of consistency and follow through on commitments in a timely manner.

**Empowerment** –Support the young person to build skills and provide opportunities to practice those skills by identifying strengths and setting achievable goals.

CARE EXPERIENCED & CARE LEAVER ENTITLEMENT

**Care Experienced**

It should be noted that if the care experiencedindividual does not qualify for extra support that they will likely still require additional assistance in managing family and relationships, finding accommodation, education and employment matters, and mental health. Please see the ‘Support Organisations’ section for further information on what third sector support is available.

**Care Leavers**

To qualify for Local Authority support the young person must have been looked after by a local authority for a period of 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16 years (Regulation 47 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Wales) Regulations 2015). The support provided is intended to be equivalent to what a child who has not been looked after might reasonably expect from their parents.

The support provided to Care Leavers will depend on two factors:

* What category of Care Leaver they come under
* What support and services are provided by their Local Authority

Categories of Care Leaver

The eligibility of Care Leavers for support from Local Authority depends on which category they fall into. Please see [this document](Other%20Resources/Handout_Categories_of_Young_People_Leaving_Care.docx) for a list of categories and corresponding support.

Local Authority Support

To find out exactly what support is provided in each Local Authority please contact them directly.More detailed information on entitlement can also be found in the **‘HMPPS Offer for Care Experienced People’.**

As a general guide the support provided to Care Leavers usually includes the entitlements set out below.

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| **Entitlement** |
| **Personal Advisor** | Will develop a Pathway Plan with the young person and ensure they have access to necessary support. If they don’t know who their Personal Advisor is they can contact their Social Worker. |
| **Housing** | Care Leavers do not have to pay Council Tax (up to age 25) |
| Care Leavers under the age of 25 are exempt from the rule that single people without children under 35 can only get the [shared accommodation Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate](https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Benefit-guides/Universal-Credit-housing-costs/How-much-Universal-Credit-housing-costs-element-wi). They are entitled to the more generous one-bedroom LHA rate instead. |
| Local Authorities should support their young people to find suitable accommodation. Care Leavers under 21 are also priority need for emergency housing. |
| **Education** | They are entitled to apply for bursaries from their chosen educational establishment to help with costs associated with courses. |
| The Local Authority should support their young people with finding employment or education opportunities. They may also offer financial support such as buying equipment and books. Some Local Authorities offer schemes such as free haircuts or dry cleaning before interviews. |
| **Finance** | They will be given a ‘Setting up Home Allowance’ when they secure suitable accommodation. This is usually around £2000 (exact figures can vary from different Local Authorities) used to buy furnishings and white goods.  |
| Clothing grants are provided by some Local Authorities |
| **Community & Lifestyle Support**  | Most Local Authorities will offer their young people opportunities to become part of a care leavers community, whether this is through organised committees, or providing them with a hub to spend time at. They may be given gym passes or other vouchers for activities. Support for any health issues, including physical health, mental health, substance misuse etc. is also available. |
| **Access to Social Care Files**  | Please see Annex G of the ‘HMPPS Offer for Care Experienced People’ for further information and access to a consent form so the young adult can access their files.  |

HMPPS MYLEARNING RESOURCES

Staff working with Care Experienced People should be familiar with the learning materials on MyLearning.

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| [Care Experienced Young Adults](https://mydevelopment.org.uk/course/view.php?id=9139) | Includes specific information on what support and services young adults should receive. |
| [Care Experienced Young Adults NDE](https://mydevelopment.org.uk/enrol/index.php?id=9728)  | Explains what legal rights a care experienced young adult has as well as HMPPS responsibilities to provide support. |
| [Supporting Care Experienced People in Custody](https://mydevelopment.org.uk/enrol/index.php?id=410) or [Supporting Care Experienced People in Custody](https://mydevelopment.org.uk/enrol/index.php?id=538) | Upon completion of this module you will know:* Who are care experienced people?
* What are HMPPS responsibilities to care experienced people?
* How can you identify a care experienced person? What can you do to support care experienced people?
* What services are care experienced people eligible to?
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SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Below is a list of organisations that offer support to Care Experienced People in Wales.

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| **Support Services for Care Experienced People** |
| **Become**Support for care experienced people through resources and coaching | mailbox@becomecharity.org.uk  |
| **Care Leaver Covenant**A national inclusion programme that supports care leavers (aged 16-25) to live independently | info@careleavers.com  |
| **Care Leavers Association**Young People's Project - gives young care leavers advice and support, offers support on leaving care rights and entitlements and provides signposting to services that can offer assistance. Criminal Justice Project - supports care leavers through peer support groups. | 0161 826 0214 info@careleavers.com  |
| **Rees Foundation**Offers care and advice to care experienced individuals, including employment coaches, financial management skills and financial support. | 0330 094 5645 contactus@reesfoundation.org  |
| **The Care Leavers' Foundation**Funding is available to those under 30 (primarily targeted at those aged 21+) who have no recourse to statutory funding or other sources of support | 01678 540598 |
| **Other Relevant Support Services** |
| **Shelter Cymru**Prison Link Cymru - a homelessness prevention service at point of entry into custody | [Contact us - Shelter Cymru](https://sheltercymru.org.uk/contact-us/) |
| **Llamau**Provides supported accommodation, family mediation, training and employability and a range of gender specific services for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness | 029 2023 9585 enquiries@llamau.or.uk  |
| **Maximus**Delivers employment and skills programmes across Wales | [Contact Us | MAXIMUS UK](https://www.maximusuk.co.uk/contact) |
| **MIND**Provides support to those suffering from mental health issues through online and local resources | info@mind.org.uk029 2039 5123  |

BEST PRACTICE INFORMATION FOR WORK WITH CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE

[A guide to the care system created by young adults with experience of care for Care Leavers](https://justiceuk-my.sharepoint.com/personal/zara_kelly_justice_gov_uk/Documents/2%20-%20YA%20-%20Reducing%20Reoffending%20Workstream/Care%20Experienced%20Resources/MyLearning/YJA-YP-Guide-to-the-Care-System-2022.pdf)

[A National Best Practice Guide on Working with Care Experienced people](https://justiceuk-my.sharepoint.com/personal/zara_kelly_justice_gov_uk/Documents/2%20-%20YA%20-%20Reducing%20Reoffending%20Workstream/Care%20Experienced%20Resources/MyLearning/Working%20with%20People%20Who%20Have%20Experienced%20Care%20%282%29.docx)

CARE EXPERIENCED GRANT IN WALES

Care Leavers in Wales turning 18 years of age between 1 July 2022 and 30June 2023 will be eligible to receive a basic income of £1,600 (pre-tax) for 24 months commencing the month after their 18th birthday.

RECORDING CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE

The visibility of Care Experience people within the Criminal justice system is important so that support and services can be directed effectively. Please refer to this [7-Minute Briefing](https://justiceuk-my.sharepoint.com/personal/zara_kelly_justice_gov_uk/Documents/2%20-%20YA%20-%20Reducing%20Reoffending%20Workstream/Care%20Experienced%20Resources/MyLearning/7%20Minute%20Briefing%20-%20Care%20Experienced.docx) to learn more about how to ensure Care Experienced people are recorded on our systems.

FURTHER RESOURCES

This issue of Prison Service Journal, co-edited by Debbie McKay and Dr Kate Gooch looks at the question of care leavers and the criminal justice system: [Prison Service Journal 258 | Centre for Crime and Justice Studies](https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/publications/psj/prison-service-journal-258?s=09)