Placement Instability Through the Lens of Lived Experience

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This presentation represents the views of the facilitator and is not a representation of the organisations they are affiliated with.

Although it is not designed to be triggering, due to the nature of lived experience, some topics or themes may be triggering, I have worked hard to deliver in a way that is true to lived experience whilst being cautious of triggering others.

Please be kind to yourself, if you need a break, feel free to pop out for a moment. If you would like to speak after the session you are welcome to find me through out the afternoon or contact me on Linkedin or email – details of which will be on the last slide.

CLA and Care Leaver Placements
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
ATG
CL
GN
KLB
KAS
MR
MB
SA
AS
SM
FB
CM
ER
RH
TS
SAH
FT
TA
SM
VY
EA
HJ
RM
LG
PC
CLA Placements
Care Leaver Placements

This data is from a service review undertaken in a local authority that reported 96% of children in care and care leavers in ‘suitable’ accommodation

CYP THAT EXPERIENCED A MOVE WITHOUT MEETING
100%
100%

CYP AVERAGE MOVES PER YEAR
1-2 per year
3-4 per year
Less than 1 per year
14%
18%
68%

The 25 young people in the service review represent

176

moves and their journey is not yet finished

Coping with loss and change

”Moving home is one of life’s most stressful experiences, because it involves having to cope with change. Most of us like familiarity, routine and order. When you’re moving, you have none of those. Plus, it causes a ripple effect of change throughout your life. ”

(Nicky Lidbetter, chief executive of charity Anxiety UK)

Things that affect stability

- Unplanned moves
- Poor matching
- Unrealistic expectations
- Relationship breakdowns
- Motivation
- Insufficient support
- Being treated like an outsider
- Circumstance
- Attachment
- Not exploring the child's past
- Money
- Training and development
- Perceptions
- Outside influences
- Behaviour / Safeguarding
- Area

How do we promote stability?

DO

- ✓ Involve young people in their own referrals
- ✓ Let the young person choose after visits with homes or families where ever possible
- ✓ Where visits aren't possible, meet in a neutral location before the home and give as much information as possible
- ✓ Promote small gestures that let a young person know they were thought about before they arrived
- ✓ Prevention is always better - support the family or home before issues arise
- ✓ Mediation when challenges do arise, the same as would be done for a family
- ✓ Prepare families or homes for 'regression' behaviours from feeling secure
- ✓ Challenge unplanned endings and find a connected person to bridge the gap if possible
- ✓ Understand that 'respite' with unknown carers feels just as unsettling as a move and promotes feelings of rejection
- ✓ Remember that the young person is experiencing loss and grief
- ✓ Recognise the signs of attachment trauma and refusing to settle in
- ✓ Manage young peoples expectations
- ✓ Manage carers expectations
- ✓ Change the narrative – promote the positives

AVOID

- Unnecessary change
- Clinical thinking
- Becoming detached from how stressful and at times painful it is for young people
- Accepting placements that you feel just wont work
- Inaccurate or negatively charged referrals
- Blame
- Speaking or allowing carers to speak about 'pay'

Commoditisation

the action or process of treating something as a commodity

A product that can be traded, brought or sold for financial gain

Commodity

Example Referral Form

Anonymised referral extract child X

Things I Like to do…

“I like to take things out of boxes and toys and throw them on the floor, as well as running in and out of rooms. Sometimes I grind my teeth very loudly and I'm not sure why. I like to take off my nappy and smear it on things like the walls. I am unhappy and do not get my way, I will throw myself on the floor. Sometimes I enjoy trying to take food off other's plates, I also sometimes eat food off the floor.”

Example Referral Form

Child X :

Child x is a five year old with a developmental delay. It has been reported by their school that X currently operates at the development milestones of a child of 1-2 years, this means they are currently non-verbal and find physical ways to communicate typical of a younger child. Child x demonstrates behaviours typical of a 2 year old, including removing nappies and clothes and expressing frustration through laying on the floor and crying. Child x does not yet understand social cues and can therefore do things like taking food they want off of others plates or picking up dropped food from the floor. Child x is a fun and sociable child who is keen to try and communicate.

Official

ABOUT ME

Please insert a photo of you here!

To insert a new image into the PDF from an image file, go to the **Tools Panel** and choose "**Content**" and "**Edit Object**." Then right-click in your document where you want the new image to go, and choose "**Place Image**" from the menu that appears. You can **scale down** the image by putting your cursor at the corner of the image, hold down the **shift key** and drag your mouse to make smaller into the space provided.

I see myself as a:

Boy	Girl	Other	Prefer not to say

If other, please specify:

I know or understand why I am looked after:

Yes	No	Other	Don't Know

I would like to live with pets:

Yes	No	Other	Don't Know

If yes, let us know what kind of animal here:

BACK NEXT

WHAT MAKES ME, ME?

Please insert a photo of something you like here!

To insert a new image into the PDF from an image file, go to the **Tools Panel** and choose "**Content**" and "**Edit Object**." Then right-click in your document where you want the new image to go, and choose "**Place Image**" from the menu that appears. You can **scale down** the image by putting your cursor at the corner of the image, hold down the **shift key** and drag your mouse to make smaller into the space provided.

My Religion is:

(Please give some information about rules etc. or draw a picture)

Hobbies and activities I enjoy:

A few of my favourite things:

(Please tell us about your favourite things or draw them)

BACK NEXT

DREAMS AND GOALS

When I am older I would like to be:

Things that might help me get there:

Skills I would like to learn outside of school:

(i.e. Swimming)

BACK NEXT

MY EMOTIONS

When I am happy I:

When I am angry I:

When I am sad I:

When I am nervous or frightened I:

BACK NEXT

About your new home

Please insert a photo of the young persons new home

Your new carers are called _____

Please insert a photo of the carers within the placement

Please insert a photo of the young persons bedroom

This is your new bedroom _____

Who we are:

Please insert a photo of the first carer

My name is: _____

My age is: _____

My favourite colour is: _____

Fun fact: _____

_____

Please insert a photo of the second carer (or delete as appropriate)

My name is: _____

My age is: _____

My favourite colour is: _____

Fun fact: _____

_____

The area

We live in: _____

Please insert a photo of the area

The closest shopping centre is: _____

Please insert a photo of the shopping centre

Please insert a photo of something the area is known for

The area is well known for: _____

Your questions

We know you may feel shy at first and may have questions you do not know how to ask. Instead of feeling nervous, why don't you pop your questions in the box below and ask us?

Example: Can I help myself to juice or do I need to ask?

Personal reflections on multiple placement moves

- It never got easier to be a stranger in someone's home, feelings of being unsettled, on edge, uncomfortable that later transition to not unpacking
- The first placement felt 'infiltrated' by the parent they had been removed from and therefore unsafe
- Missed opportunities to work with them to understand the place they would feel the most stable and the most positive match
- Other young people can destabilise an otherwise stable placement if issues aren't addressed or matching is not robust
- Regression is surprisingly a very good sign of forming an attachment
- There are positives that have followed me into later life – adaptable, able to manage stress and change
- Differences in ability to regulate relationships – not necessarily negatives but good to be reflectionally aware

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