



Listen More, Assume Less 8

Introduction

Welcome to the 8th edition of Listen More Assume Less. East Lothian Council is committed to making sure that looked after children and young people, their families and carers, are involved in making decisions and planning for their care, education and development. This publication is for young people, parents, carers, and staff including Team Leaders, Head Teachers, Service Managers, Executive Directors and Elected Members . Listen More Assume Less reports on a range of consultation and participation activities that have taken place with children and young people in East Lothian. Listen More Assume Less has a focus on the voice of young people who are care experienced and who have additional support needs as well as their parents and carers. We welcome your comments and feedback on this publication.

Champion's Board

The East Lothian Champion's Board was launched on the 1st May at Fisherrow Community Centre. The Champion's Board aims to give young people with care experience a platform to have their voice heard. The Board is made up of three groups. The Champions Group is made of young people. The Support Group is made up of staff that support the young people in every way they can. The Ambassador's Group is made up of Heads of Services and Elected Members. The young people have identified 7 priorities for change. They presented these to the Children's Strategic Partnership. A number of Ambassador's have signed up to the Board and pledged their commitment. If you would like more information about the Champion's Board or if you interested in getting involved, please contact Lisa Shine; lshine@eastlothian.gov.uk



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Commitment Statement

"We will unite together to look at the priorities for change. We will invest time and resources to produce results and deliver on promises. We will listen to each other when things go wrong and accept no excuses for lack of progression towards our goals."

Champion's Board Priorities for Change

Education

- ☺ Investigate and improve young people's experience of attendance, bullying and exclusions
- ☺ Improve support for transitions
- ☺ Raise awareness amongst education staff about the issues that care experienced young people face
- ☺ Equip staff with skills and approaches in how to support care experienced young people in schools

Keeping Loved Ones Together

- ☺ Flexible placements to take larger sibling groups
- ☺ Mother and baby placements in East Lothian
- ☺ Effective support to maintain contact with loved ones

Health

- ☺ Improve supports available to parents
- ☺ Support to prepare for parenthood and the birth
- ☺ Continue support after the birth designed especially for care experienced young people such as mother and baby groups, father's groups and parenting classes

Housing and Aftercare

- ☺ Support to develop independent living skills
- ☺ More supported housing options
- ☺ Appropriate emergency housing options available in East Lothian
- ☺ Wider understanding of corporate parenting responsibilities within Housing Services
- ☺ Ensure housing support staff understand the issues experienced by care experienced young people
- ☺ Specialist allocated housing support workers
- ☺ Support with housing maintenance and repairs
- ☺ Clear plans on how additional responsibilities for throughcare and continuous care will be provide



Finance

- ☺ Clear information for young people about benefits, pocket money and allowances that they are entitled to
- ☺ More consistency across care placements for clothing allowances, pocket money, birthday gifts
- ☺ Clear information about how finances and support will change when 18 in union with the DWP

Police

- ☺ Improve relationships and build trust
- ☺ Wider understanding of corporate parenting responsibilities within Police Scotland
- ☺ Create opportunities for better engagement between the police and people with care experience
- ☺ Support for young people to understand how previous charges can impact things like future jobs and how PVG's work

Recent Champions Board Developments

- ☺ The Champion's (young people) met with Jim Lamond (Ambassador for the finance priority). They had a great time getting to know Jim and explored the finance priority in further detail
- ☺ The Champions' Board have negotiated with Community Learning and Development to have access to the Gatehouse, Lewisvale park, Musselburgh as their permanent base.
- ☺ Members of the Champion's Board learned about Part 9 of the Children's and Young Peoples Act (2014) in relation to continuing care and aftercare and shared their views on their aftercare experience with Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare forum 'The Voices' project



Life Changes Trust

The Champion's Board applied for funding through the Life Changes Trust. Their application was successful and they are now through to the final stage of the application process. The second stage has involved two young people Lisa and Richard and a team leader from Children's Wellbeing participating in a week long leadership course at Columba 1400 on Skye. This was an invaluable experience for all involved. A decision about funding for the Champion's Board will be made in December.



Viewpoint

Children's Services uses the Viewpoint online survey system to look at how to involve service users in decision making processes and the development of services.

Viewpoint is designed to record the views of young people and their carers.

Viewpoint was re-launched with in Children's Wellbeing in January 2015. Questionnaires for children and young people who are Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC) were revised and shortened. Throughout this section you will see that we use SHANARRI.

SHANARRI

All local authorities work to Scottish Government guidance which says that every child must be:

Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. These are known as the 'eight well-being indicators'. They are used by local authorities, health and inspection agencies to try to find out how well wide range of services meet children and young people's needs.

From January 2015—August 2015 a total of 35 young people filled in the LAAC questionnaire. & of these young people 7 were aged 5-8 and 28 were aged 8-17.

What young people tell us?

The children and young people in this report are:

LAAC aged 5 to 7 years. Total 7

LAAC aged 8 to 17 years. Total 28

	Where 75% or more gave the <i>most positive response</i>
	Where 50-74% gave the <i>most positive response</i>
	Where under 50% gave the <i>most positive response</i>

Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Do you feel safe where you live? (Yes)	86%
5-7	Does anyone hurt you where you live now? (No)	57%
5-7	Does anyone hurt you at school? (No)	43%
8-17	Do you feel safe where you live now? (Yes definitely)	96%
8-17	Does anyone bully or pick on you where you live now? (Not at all)	89%
8-17	Does anyone hurt or upset you at school? (Not at all)	64%

Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Are there times when you are sick and can't go out? (No)	43%
5-7	Do you wake up much at night? (No)	43%
5-7	Are there times when you get angry? (No)	29%
8-17	Do you have any problems with sleeping? (Not at all)	39%
8-17	Do you have any worries or concerns about your health? (Not at all)	61%
8-17	Do you have someone to talk to about your health? (Yes definitely)	82%
8-17	Are you worried about how angry or frustrated you feel? (Not at all)	43%

Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Do you have nice food where you live? (Yes)	86%
5-7	Are people kind to you where you live? (Yes)	71%
5-7	Is it easy to talk to the people you live with about things? (Yes)	100%
5-7	Do you have a book or memory box with pictures or photos of you and your family? (Yes)	86%
8-17	Do you feel settled where you live now? (All the time)	82%
8-17	Is your carer someone you can talk to? (Yes completely)	86%
8-17	Do you have the things you need for your personal care? (Yes completely)	93%
8-17	Are you able to follow your religion and customs where you live? (Yes definitely)	68%
8-17	Do you have a life story book or information about people you know? (Yes as much as I need)	39%

Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Do you play the sports or games you like? (Yes)	100%
5-7	Do the people you live with now help you play sports or games? (Yes)	57%
8-17	How often do you exercise or play sport? (3 times or more)	57%
8-17	Can you do your hobbies or sports as often as you like? (Yes definitely)	75%
8-17	Does your carer encourage you to do hobbies or sports? (Yes definitely)	89%

Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Does your social worker come to visit you? (Yes)	100%
5-7	Do people ask you what you want to happen in the future? (Yes)	71%
8-17	Do you have time alone with your social worker? (Yes definitely)	86%
8-17	Is your social worker someone you can talk to? (Yes definitely)	75%
8-17	Are you helped to understand your care plan? (Yes definitely)	68%
8-17	Do you think your views and opinions are listened to? (Yes most of the time)	74%
8-17	Do you have enough information to make decisions about your future? (Yes definitely)	67%

Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Do you think that the rules where you live now are fair? (Yes)	100%
5-7	Do you ever damage your own or other people's things? (No)	57%
5-7	Do you know how to get help if you are not happy? (Yes)	86%
5-7	Do you know why you are living where you live now? (Yes)	71%
8-17	Do you know why you are living where you are now? (Yes definitely)	82%
8-17	Do you think the rules where you live are fair? (Yes definitely)	79%
8-17	Have things you have asked for been included in your child's plan? (Yes everything)	56%
8-17	Are you doing what you need to do, to achieve what has been agreed in your child's plan? (Yes definitely)	67%
8-17	Do you know that if you are not happy about something you can get help to sort it out or make a complaint? (Yes definitely)	70%

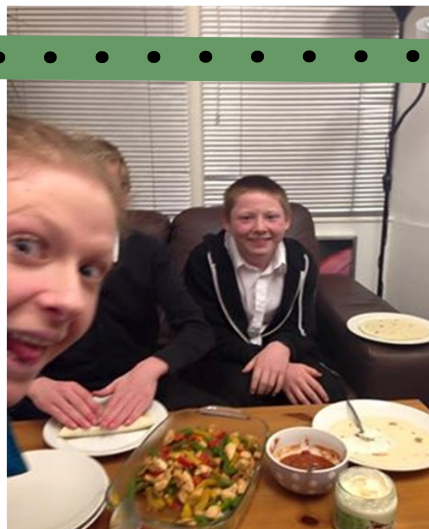
Age	Question	Jan -Aug 2015
5-7	Do your friends visit where you are living? (Yes)	43%
5-7	Do you get to visit or talk to your family you used to live with? (Yes)	71%
8-17	Can friends visit where you live now? (Yes definitely)	57%
8-17	Have you made new friends where you live now? (Quite a lot)	43%
8-17	Are you able to keep in touch with your family as much as you want? (All the time)	71%

Viewpoint developments

- ☺ Viewpoint reports on what young people tell us will be discuss within Children's Wellbeing supervisory groups and areas for improvement will be identified
- ☺ A Viewpoint report will be presented to the Children's Strategic partnership in December 2015
- ☺ Viewpoint is now available online and can be administered using iPads
- ☺ Young people can now see their views presented on a wellbeing web
- ☺ A questionnaire for young people when they leave a placement has been developed and will be available from August 2015.
- ☺ A questionnaire for young people looked after at home has also been developed and will be rolled out in September 2015
- ☺ An online Viewpoint learning hub has been created specifically for East Lothian staff
- ☺ If you would like to find out more about Viewpoint or if you wish to administer a questionnaire using Viewpoint please contact Lisa Shine:
lshine@eastlothian.gov.uk

The Group

'The Group' is a youth group for young people who are looked after. This group meets every Tuesday from 5.00pm -7.00pm at the Gatehouse (opposite Musselburgh Grammar). 6-7 young people attend the group on a regular basis. These young people have experience of a range of care settings including residential, foster care and kinship care. The group is open to young people aged 13 plus. There is no restriction on the upper age limit. Young people have taken part in lots of interesting activities. They held a 'Come dine with me' competition, They also went bowling. Some young people went to the National Who Cares? (Scotland) Conference and their summer camp. The young people in the group tell us:

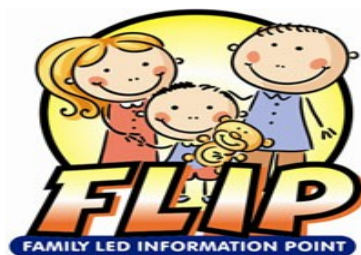


- ☺ They like having somewhere to go and something to do and that's why they always come back..

If you would like to join the group or know of a young person that would like to join please call Lisa Muirhead our Who Cares? Participation Assistant on 07793378531 .

Family Led Information Point (FLIP)

FLIP is for parents and carers who have a child or relative with additional support needs in East Lothian. The group meets up for two hours usually on the last Wednesday of every month at Musselburgh East Community Learning & Development Centre in Musselburgh. FLIP has an active facebook page and currently has 169 friends. FLIP has taken part in a wide range of consultations for the council, voluntary organisations locally and nationally. As a result, recently they have:



- ☺ Shaped a proposal for better breaks funding for children with a disability,
- ☺ Influenced the autism strategy and action plan
- ☺ Contributed to new plans for specialist secondary provision for young people with communication difficulties
- ☺ One parent is going to take part in the Partners in Policy making course in November 2015.

FLIP parents and carers tell us that they would like:

- ☺ More inclusive service provision including after school clubs
- ☺ Having the same staff to support their children in schools from one year to the next



Signs of Safety

"Signs of Safety" is an approach to working with families which is respectful and challenging. It aims to make child protection processes more child and family friendly.

Signs of Safety uses a tool to gain children's views, called the Three Houses. Children draw or write their thoughts and feelings onto pictures of three different houses which are labelled the "House of Worries", the "House of Good Things" and the "House of Wishes". The child's views are then physically placed on the wall and held central to the proceedings and are more clearly linked to the decision-making in the recorded minute of the meeting. (This was a result of the Three Houses evaluation.)

Family members share their views on the Signs of Safety approach through questionnaires. Family members have reported that the meetings are inclusive; people are listened to; family members are respected; while the meeting is strengths based, all risks and dangers are discussed fully and the plans are robust.

In 2014, 18 questionnaires from family members were completed.

- ☺ 96% of family members reported that they had an opportunity to express their views
- ☺ 97% of family members reported that they think the Child's Plan is going to change things for the better

Join the East Lothian Youth E-Panel

Are you aged 14-25? You could become a member of the East Lothian Youth E-Panel and make your opinion count. You'll be emailed a link to regular surveys where you can tell us your thoughts on a whole range of issues including your community, the environment, education, employment, health and wellbeing, culture, sports and leisure, transport and more...

The information gathered through the Youth E-Panel will be used to help plan and improve services relevant to young people. The East Lothian Youth Council and other groups of young people will also use the information to help them identify what's important to young people locally.

And as a Youth E-Panel member you'll also qualify for discounts, have the chance to win prizes and to earn Young Scot points.

You Said ,We did, so What?

You said that young people with care experience want a space that they can call their own

We negotiated with CLD to have exclusive access to the Gatehouse alongside the community groups that already use it.

So what?: You can chose to have your review meetings in the Gatehouse if you wish.

You said there were too many questions in the old Viewpoint questionnaire.

We revised the questionnaire and reduced the number of questions.

So what?: More young people are now using Viewpoint again.

Parents and carers said they want information about what leisure , sports and arts activities that their children with additional support needs can access.

We are working with parents Family Led Information Point and partner organisations to 'Get Connected East Lothian'

So what?: you will be clear about who you can contact if you want your child to access an activity.

You said that you want the youth group to continue to meet during the summer holidays

We arranged cover to support the group during the holidays

So what?: on average , 4 young people attended their youth group weekly during the holidays.

You said that young people should have more support with life story work

We have delivered training to Children's Wellbeing staff on life story work. We are also reporting back this Viewpoint information to all staff in Children's Wellbeing supervisory groups

So what?: More young people should report that they have sufficient life story work.

You said that young people with communication difficulties should have appropriate specialist secondary education provision

We are creating a specialist secondary provision for young people with severe communication difficulties in Haddington

So what?: Young people can access appropriate specialist provision in East Lothian

You said that young people need a buddy to help them access new activities

We are working with STRIVE and looking at possible funding sources to set up a befriending scheme.

So what?: Young people who feel isolated can get support from a befriender and try new things.

You said that we need more specialist leisure and recreational activities for young people with autism

The Lothian Autistic Society and Steps to Inclusion now offer a range of activities for young people with autism

So what?: Young people can have fun, make new friends and parents get a break too.

You said we should engage children and young adults with autism in the delivery of the autism strategy by launching a competition about 'What autism means to me?'

We are running this completion during September 2015 and October 2015.

So what: Winning entries will be displayed an autism event in 2016

Golden rules for Participation—The Children's Strategic Partnership signed up to the seven golden rules for participation

In June 2015, the Children's Strategic Partnership signed up to the seven golden rules for participation

<http://www.sccyp.org.uk/education/golden-rules>

These golden rules have been developed by the Scotland Commissioner for Children and Young Children and young people through consultation with children and young people across Scotland. Every golden rule has a list of things to consider about children and young people's participation.

Understand my rights

Young people should be given information about their rights and have a right to participate in all decisions that affect them.

A chance to be involved

Children and young people should have the opportunity to participate in an age-appropriate way. We will work to support those who face the greatest barriers.

Remember - it's my choice

All children and young people should have an equal opportunity to participate, should they choose to.

Value me

Involve children and young people from the start. Listen to children and young people and take their views seriously. Promote their successes.

Support me

Think carefully about how to communicate with children and young people in a way that they will understand.

Work together

Children and young people can learn from you and you can learn from them. Respect each other.

Keep in touch

Explain to children and young people what decisions have been made, or not made and why.

Report on the outcomes of the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy 2011- 2013

This report will document key outcomes from the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy 2011-2013. http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/4735/children_and_young_peoples_participation_strategy

During the period 2011-2014, the following outcomes were achieved:

- ☺ All agencies/departments within Integrated Children's Services signed up to the principles of participation outlined in the strategy. Through social media and briefings; staff at all levels were

- ☺ Eight agencies including Health, Children's Wellbeing, Education and Community Learning and Development identified a lead officer for participation. These lead officers supported the implementation of the Participation Strategy Action Plan within their own agencies and reported on progress via the Participation Steering group.
- ☺ Commitment to the UNCRC and the central role of Article 12 was realised through the increase in numbers of schools that signed up to become rights respecting schools. Through engagement with a Right Blether and a Right Wee Blether, pupils were provided with a greater awareness of their rights under the UNCRC. In 2011, 600 2-5 year olds engaged with a Right Wee Blether.
- ☺ Multi-Agency GIRFEC guidance on 'Involving children and young people in meetings' was developed and circulated to all staff supporting young people through staged assessment and interventions. http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/4734/involving_children_and_young_people_in_meetings
- ☺ A range of accessible information materials were produced for children and young people including information about trusted adults, child protection processes and how to make a complaint.
- ☺ Young people including young people with care experience were involved in the recruitment and selection of a number of posts including Heads of Service and Head Teachers. This practice was promoted as an area of good practice by the Care Inspectorate.
- ☺ Young people were provided with opportunities to share their views using a range of different tools including the Student Evaluation of Experience Survey in 2012,
- ☺ During 2010- 2012, the then Director of Education and Children's Services facilitated 'Listen and Learn' sessions with pupils in all six secondary schools in East Lothian. Approximately 170 pupils participated in the sessions.
- ☺ The views of young people were reported on via bi monthly 'Listen More Assume Less' publications. These publications also responded to the 'so what' question where we need to report on what action has been taken in response to what young people tell us.
http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/google_results.pp?q=listen+more

Next Steps

- ☺ Embed participation of children young people into the work plans of all Children's Strategic Partnership planning groups and work the Children's Strategic Partnership Board.
- ☺ Adopt the 'Golden Rules for Participation, key commitments as the new framework for supporting the participation of children and young people.
- ☺ Share feedback data across the planning groups via Children's Strategic Partnership and the supporting Planners group.
- ☺ All Children's Strategic Planning Group Chairs should report back on the outcomes from the participation of children and young people to the Children's Strategic Partnership planning group chairs on an annual basis.
- ☺ Develop a consultation plan for the ICSP 2105-2018 using the community engagement framework.
- ☺ Identify a multi-agency budget that will support consultation and participation activity.

Upcoming events and activities

East Lothian Council

Children's Services
Randall House
Macmerry Business Park
Macmerry EH33 1RW

Email: children&families@eastlothian.gov.uk
Telephone 01875 824309

▶ **Emergency no.**
0800 731 6969

- ☺ **Champion's Board meeting on the 15th Oct to progress final stage of the Life Changes Trust application**
- ☺ **Youth group for young people with care experience Tuesday's from 5.00pm to 7.00pm at the Gatehouse in Lewisvale park, Musselburgh**
- ☺ **Family Led Information Point meetings on the last Wednesday of every month from 10.00am - 12.00 at Musselburgh East Community Learning and Development Centre**

Useful links

7 Golden Rules for Participation

<http://www.sccyp.org.uk/education/golden-rules>

UNCRC: The Foundation for getting it right for every child

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/publications/uncrc-girfec-report>

East Lothian guidance on Involving children and young people in meetings

<http://www.edubuzz.org/gettingitright/files/2012/04/Involving-children-and-young-people-in-meetings1.pdf>

Children's and young people's participation in Scotland: frameworks for practice

<http://www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/participation>

How young people's participation in school support achievement and attainment

<http://www.sccyp.org.uk/ufiles/achievement-and-attainment.pdf>

East Lothian Citizen's Panels

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/670/consultations_complaints_and_compliments/1631/east_lothian_citizens_panel

East Lothian Consultation Hub

<https://eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/>

East Lothian community Planning – engaging people and communities

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200135/east_lothian_partnership_priorities/1586/community_planning_in_east_lothian/5

Viewpoint

<http://www.vptorg.co.uk/>

Family Led Information Point

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/4188/flip_remit