

## CHICC US OUT

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We are on twitter @CHICCherts so give us a follow



We have a monthly E-News Bulletin with all our up to date info. Just e-mail CHICC@hertfordshire.gov.uk to sign up.



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## THE PARTICIPATION TEAM

### Who are we?

We are Nancy, Mark, Ellie and Jo



### Why do we exist?

We exist to support young people in care and care leavers to have their say.

### What do we do?

We help to run the CHICC and the CHICC Care Leaver's Group. We run lots of fun activities throughout the year and lots of consultation sessions where we ask for your views. We also support care leavers to help improve services by helping to recruit social workers and train social workers and carers.

### How do we contact you?

We are based at County Hall in Hertford (in a very messy office in the basement!)

You can call us on:

Nancy - 07812323854 , Mark - 07812324465, Ellie – 7812323853

**Or you can write to us at:** The Participation Team, Child Protection and Statutory Review Service, Rooms 50-52 Lower Ground Floor, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DQ



**CHICC**  
(Children In Care Council)

**NEWSLETTER**  
SUMMER 2018



## Hello from THE EDITORS

Welcome to the summer edition of the CHICC newsletter! You'll find updates on recent activities, plans for summer and things you've helped to change recently about being in care.

The first part of 2018 has been busy. We have had plenty of involvement from young people in interviews, training and presentations, as well as a range of events and activities.

We look forward to keeping you up to date with all the news from the CHICC and everything that involves young people in care in and out of Hertfordshire. We would also encourage you to get involved and input into the newsletter or be apart of the editorial board. You can do this in many different ways and can contact us on the info on the back page.

Enjoy,

*Luke*

Young People's Editorial Board

are for young people in places like: private young people's residential homes; crash pads for homeless young people; semi-independent accommodation for young people 16yrs plus.

### **Care Leaver's Group**

We meet regularly to have a say on lots of things to do with services for care leavers and also to socialise and support each other.

If you would like to be involved in any of these projects please contact the Participation Team - details on the back page.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

We hope you'll be able to come to one of our summer events. Places fill up quickly so please contact the team to book your place as soon as possible and by **Friday 13 July** at the latest.

### **Big Summer Event**

**Tuesday 31st July 10am to 2pm**

This year's Big Summer Event will be at Stanborough Lakes in Welwyn where we will be biking, raft building and stand up paddle boarding.

### **Boat trip for young people with disabilities**

**Wednesday 8th August 10:30am to 1:30pm**

This will be our first big event for young people with SEND and we will be heading up the River Lea on an accessible party boat with music, games and food. The event will be tailored to accommodate differing levels of need.

### **Junior CHICC**

**Tuesday 14th August 10am - 1pm**

This summer our Junior CHICC will head to Herts Young Mariners Base for a kayaking session and lunch

*decisions that can change their life around, help your young people be the people they want to be. Make transition from different services easier, make trustworthy relationships with them and more importantly just treat them like you would any other individual. We don't want you to feel sorry for us because we've been through a lot. We need your help, support and encouragement to change our lives around!*

## HOW YOUR VIEWS HELP TO IMPROVE THINGS

When you give your views, we feed them back (anonymously) to Senior Managers so they can make changes to being in care if needed. A recent example is that a young person said care leavers shouldn't have to pay Council Tax. This was listened to and Managers are looking at how to make this happen.

Please help to make changes by taking a few moments to complete our surveys on line. If you visit Hertfordshire's website [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) and search CHICC you'll see our surveys there. One is about whether you get opportunities to do interesting and fun things – e.g. like going to museums or the theatre or to see a musical. Nearly 50 of you have already completed this – thank you!

Another survey is about how things are if you live out of county and another survey will soon go on about what it is like if you have been in care for longer than 3 years.

## CARE LEAVERS - THE WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

CHICC have many opportunities for care leavers to get involved in many different ways. For example:

### **Being on a range of interview panels**

We will train you to be able to do this – it's great for your own development and to put on your CVs.

### **Monitoring Visits**

Again, we can train you to undertake a range of visits and find out how things

## RECENT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

In the Easter holidays we had a lot of different events. The Junior CHICC group went to Paradise Wildlife Park for the day where we started our top tips for Foster Carers and then explored the park seeing Penguins, Tigers and Dinosaurs!

We had the first Regional Meeting of the year in Milton Keynes with 7 other regions from the East of England and a total of 33 young people. The young people mixed and discussed each region's top ten tips for social workers and came up with the ultimate list that will be developed into short films by each region for Care Day 2019.

We had our first CHICC Club at the Zoo Café in Hertford where there was a great chance for the young people to hang out and play pool, games make some chocolate eggs and Easter crafts. It was really good for everyone to spend some time together, talking and relaxing.

Finally we spent a day at Watford Palace Theatre where we learnt about all aspects of the theatre from acting on stage to how everything is run back stage.

## ARE YOU LIVING OUTSIDE HERTFORDSHIRE?

**Competition for young people living out of county - £100 High Street Voucher for the winner and £10 each for the first 20 entrants.**

We are running a competition at the moment for our young people living out of county. We want to hear about where you live, and what you think about it. You can do a picture, poem or anything you want to show your views. To get an entry form, contact the Participation Team in one of the ways on the back page. We need your entries by **Friday 29th June 2018**. We also have an online survey for you to complete if you can. It is very short and doesn't take long to complete. If you visit [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) and search 'CHICC' you'll find the survey there.

We are also looking for young people to be part of a short documentary on life outside of Hertfordshire. If you feel you have a story to tell and would like to be

interviewed, recorded or filmed please contact Mark from the Participation Team.  
If you don't live in Hertfordshire you are still entitled to all the same things as everyone else, including being part of CHICC. Your views are very important to CHICC as we need to know what it is like when you don't live near to the area that is responsible for caring for you. You can always contact us to get your views across – see back page for contact details.



## YOUNG PEOPLE ASK CORPORATE PARENTS FOR MORE SUPPORT

In May, 5 members of CHICC spoke to over 70 elected Members at the full Council meeting in the Council Chambers at County Hall. Members of the Council are the people who are voted for in elections, to run local services. Our young people delivered a powerful presentation on education, training and employment, and the different stages they were all at in life. Members listened to what was said and are looking at all the issues raised to see if anything needs changing. Members will report back to CHICC in September. Our young people did brilliantly, and everyone was proud of them. Below are some of their key messages:

**E', who is 15yrs and sitting her GCSE's next year asked Corporate Parents to:** *'Make sure stat reviews and PEPs are more discreet because when people come in with badges, other pupils ask questions. Also, as our Corporate Parents please provide more work experience placements for young people in care. Invite us in to work with you.'* Also a general message for everyone working with young people in care: *'Let us create our own first impressions. Don't judge us by our files. Be persistent and support us, even if we push you away'*

**A', 16 and taking GCSEs this year said:** *'Please help to make sure that all young people in care can achieve their*

*goals. Make sure we get support as soon as difficulties arise at school or placement. Make sure that things are as stable as possible when we are doing exams and encourage us to remain in education and do our best. Never give up on us.'*

**K', 18yrs and on a Level 1 apprentice in Health and Social Care said:** *'We need to make sure teachers are taking more of an interest in children's lives. I think sometimes teachers think it's not their responsibility to raise concerns about young people's home lives. But if it's not theirs, whose is it? Also, there should be more support for young people when being put into care or transitioning placements for them to access some form of education, even if it's not school e.g. tutors or small groups as soon as possible, because people think that it's too much at that time, when actually you like to have moments of distraction from all the chaos.'*

**C', 24yrs and in her 2nd year of a Degree in Law said:** *'Things to do with University should be promoted more with children and young people in care and care leavers. We should have promotional days at universities. I went on Aim Higher for two days at Cambridge University and it gave me a feel for University and how much funding I'd get etc. It inspired me to think I could do it – there should be more of that. More days in Universities doing activities. I also think it should be easier to access*



*education after 21yrs. It is so stressful to get your case re-opened and it could put you off. We should encourage young people of every age to go to University – even as a mature student is great. More financial assistance would also help, to cover travel etc. It's harder for care leavers because we don't have our families to fall back on.*

*It can be hard to get a job, and having a degree really helps improve life chances and gives you loads of experience. It opens up more avenues. Education may not be for everyone but we should encourage as much as possible – who knows where you can end up?'*

**E', 23yrs and a Children's Nurse working in Children's Emergency said:** *'My advice to you as Members, carers, social workers, managers, parents etc. is to listen to young people, 5 minutes of your time is more valuable than you realise.*

*Support your young people in making*