

# CHICC

*(Children In Care Council)*

## NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2017



Welcome to the summer edition of the CHICC newsletter! You'll find updates on recent activities, plans for the rest of 2017 and things we've helped to change recently about being in care. We start with a poem written by a young person in care. It has such a positive message and is so inspiring. We love to receive your work – you can send it to us using one of the ways listed at the end of this newsletter.



## POEM FROM A YOUNG PERSON

I know the horrid feeling  
Of our minds not feeling well  
We lack hope for the future  
And feel there is no one to tell.  
But whatever happens in life  
Everything will be ok  
Never feel you cannot do something  
Because where there is a will  
There's a way  
And if you ever feel weak  
And your heart starts to weep  
And you feel you can't make it through the week  
Always remember my words  
Be strong because things will get better  
It may be stormy now  
But it can never rain forever  
With the rain can come a rainbow  
Where there is darkness you'll find light  
There is goodness on the horizon  
It just may not be in sight  
You were given this life because you are strong enough to live it  
Look at all you have been through and you are still living  
Take the good with the bad  
Smile when you're sad  
Make the best out of what you've got  
And remember what you had  
Forgive others, but never forget  
Learn from mistakes, but never regret  
Life won't always be a dance and song  
Just remember life goes on!

By Caitin, 16yrs, young person in care in Hertfordshire.

## RECENT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

In May CHICC held an open forum for all ages of young people at Top Golf in Watford. Over 35 young people attended. We split into teams to play golf, with workers from all over Hertfordshire County Council coming to help play and support us. We did some great consultation, asking views about top 10 tips for social workers and foster carer's profiles and reviews. We've also been doing a big piece of work about reviews, asking what young people think of them. Thanks very much to all of you who have completed a survey. We'll report on the findings in the next newsletter.

### Activities Week

Following on from last year's Activities Week where we ran a Creative Writing, Cooking and Kick Boxing courses we ran another week this spring break with Movie Making, Motorbike Maintenance and Mosaic Making. We had 25 young people

take part over the 3 activities. The young people produced a fantastic short film about what's on a young person's mind by filming puppets and then adding their voices to the film and editing it together. The Mosaic class produced "Melfies" which were mosaic selfies, copying a picture of them and mosaicking it.



Finally we had a motorbike maintenance course at Bushey Wheels Youth Project where our participants learnt about motorbikes, how to do a safety check and then how to ride. It was a very hands-on experience and the young people loved the chance to get on a motorbike.



## Charity run for the Homeless

Reece, 13yrs, who attends The Centre School, Cottenhnam completed a 10 mile run around the Graphen Water in Royston in April. Reece had wanted to do something for charity for a while and when he started his new school his designated teacher encouraged him to do it and helped him with the fundraising and also completed the run with Reece. Reece chose a local Homeless Charity to run for and raised over £700 which they will use to buy food and belongings.

Reece is quite active playing Hockey and Football at school but didn't have any running training before he took on the 10 miles. Afterwards Reece said he felt "really tired but really happy". Well done Reece, this was an amazing achievement and you should be very proud. We look forward to seeing what your next adventure will be

## Joint CHICC – helping to change things

We have just had one of the quarterly meetings between senior managers in Children's Services and the CHICC. Twenty four young people came and gave their views on lots of topics including: relationships with workers, relationships with carers, support for care leavers and health and mental health. The young people felt that they were listened to and the managers agreed to do a number of things as a result of what the young people said. For example, some of the young people said that carers don't always understand the needs of teenagers, so we are going to run a workshop in August to highlight some of the learning points that came up.

## What happens to the views you give before your review?

Before each review you should receive in the post a purple form called 'what you want people to know'. The form is to find out how you feel about things. It's really helpful that young people take the time to fill in the form and give their views. We thought you'd like to know what happens to the form once you've sent it back.

When we receive the form back in the post it is forwarded to your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) so that they are aware of your views. This should help to ensure that your voice is heard in your review.

In addition, the answers to 3 of the questions are gathered together to see if any particular concerns are being expressed by lots of young people. This information is gathered anonymously, so that nobody knows who said what. The questions we gather answers on are: 'What has gone well since your last review?' 'What has not gone well?' 'Any other comments'.

Your answers to these questions are so important and help us to develop and improve services. For example, recently, quite a few people mentioned that contact had not gone well. This enabled us to tell the social care managers and we asked them to consider whether enough is being done to

enable contact to take place and to listen to young people's feelings about contact.

There is another way you can give your views too, using the Mind of My Own (Momo) app which sends your views straight to the person you want to see them (eg social worker or IRO). You can download the MOMO App from Google Play or the App Store or online: [app.mindofmyown.org.uk](http://app.mindofmyown.org.uk).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**BIG Summer Event - Thursday 27th July 2017**  
**9:30am to 3:30pm**

This year's BIG Summer event will be held at Phasels Woods Activity Centre where we will be setting the CHICC Challenge for young people and workers to take on the Climbing Wall, Trampolines, Human Table Football, Underground Tunnels and more. Who will be victorious?

This is our biggest event of the year and we want as many young people and workers to be there to enjoy the day. We will also be holding our Annual Young Person's Awards for Workers, Carers and other professionals.

**Boat Trip – Wednesday 9th July 2017**  
**10am to 1pm**

The Boat Trip will depart from Ware Town Wharf at 10am and take a leisurely trip up the River Lea. On board we will have lunch, play games and there will be arts and crafts. We will return to Ware at approx. 1pm

To book your young person's place please contact:

[ellie.foster@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.foster@hertfordshire.gov.uk) 07812 323 853  
[mark.hinton@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mark.hinton@hertfordshire.gov.uk) 07812 323 851

## CHICC IT OUT!

There are plenty of ways to stay in contact and up to date with the CHICC.

- 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](mailto:CHICC@hertfordshire.gov.uk) to sign up.
- We have Podcast's and films available to listen to and view. Contact us on the details below for more information on this and any of our other work.
- You can see all our information and leaflets by visiting [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/youngpeopleincare](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/youngpeopleincare)



# 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 - 07812323851**

**Ellie - 07812323853**

## NYAS

NYAS is an independent advocacy service. They support children, young people, vulnerable adults, parents and carers by helping them to be heard. They give confidential and independent advice, information and representation.

Call on: 0808 808 1001  
0151 649 8700

Visit at: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)  
Email to: [help@nyas.net](mailto:help@nyas.net)

Is there something you want to say about being in care? We would love to include your letters, poems, songs or anything else. Please email any articles to the team, as above or write to the address below:

The Participation Team  
Child Protection and Statutory Review Service  
Rooms 50-52 Lower Ground Floor  
County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DQ

