



## **CHILD AND YOUTH VOICE TEAM UPDATE 19/05/2021**

**AUTHOR Elly Mills – Operational Lead**

1. We successfully recruited two CYV (Child & Youth Voice) workers at the end of 2020 who began working in February (Cameron Strawson – Support Worker) and March 2021 (Joe Sutton – Lead Worker).
2. We launched the team on 1.4.2021 with a press release. Joe undertook a radio interview with a young person to promote the new team on BBC Wiltshire Radio.
3. Joe has undertaken training with AQA and is now able to assess young people for certificates. We have launched our CYV Academy and have formed links with Winchester University to deliver training days for Wiltshire young people. We plan to start delivering training to our consultants in June.
4. On 1<sup>st</sup> May we officially launched our 'consultant scheme' as we now have an information card approved by branding. So far, we have recruited 5 consultants (two care experienced young people, one young carer, one who is YOT (Youth Offending Team) experienced and a parent).
5. Two of our consultants have provided support for 'Aspire House' on inclusivity to ensure it caters for all children and young people's ethnicity needs, particularly in terms of hair and skin care. Aspire House have started following advice given and now have a diverse and inclusive range of hair and skin products to cater for all needs.
6. One of our consultants has provided a booklet for carers and staff on ensuring skin and hair needs are met for all our children and young people.
7. We have been supporting the CICC (Children in Care Council) since 1/12/2020. Having formed links with another Local Authority's CICC (Oxfordshire) we have made the following changes.
  - a. Rather than having a quarterly face to face meeting CICC now meets fortnightly via an online forum (TEAMS), this means young people who are

placed outside of Wiltshire can still attend and young people do not have to travel to the meetings.

- b. We will be organising face to face meet ups for CICC which will be activity based for every school holiday (including) half terms.
  - c. We have a core group of about 10 young people who are committed to CICC and we have undertaken outreach work to social workers and teams to increase CICC numbers.
  - d. We have organised a trip to Longleat Safari Park (young people's choice) for the summer holidays and an online health and wellbeing festival.
8. CICC offer one of their meetings per month for workers to book in and have 'consultancy'. CICC have been supported to provide a range of consultations which have included:
- a. What makes a good foster carer?
  - b. What makes a good IRO?
  - c. What makes a good social worker?
  - d. How we find our health assessments?
  - e. Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
  - f. Community engagement.
  - g. Tackling climate change.
9. We have also launched our CICC Ambassador scheme. This means young people, councillors, council workers and members of the community can be Ambassadors for important CICC issues such as tackling racism, pets, tackling climate change, community links and mental health. We now have over 30 Ambassadors. This means our children in care have a network of Ambassadors who can help and give advice on issues important to our children in care.
10. We arranged for the youth consultants to give advice to operational colleagues who are responsible for 'return' home interviews when young people go missing. This has made the process more child and young person friendly and inclusive.
11. We provided some advice for colleagues in SEN (special educational needs) on how to include children and young people's views in auditing and inspecting.
12. We have facilitated a mental health survey for our children in care which is run by Bristol University. This will enable us to have up to date evidence on the mental health of our young people in care.

13. We supported 2 of our youth consultants to meet with Myfanwy Champness from the Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group to give advice on making their annual report more inclusive and child friendly. Our consultants gave specific feedback on changes needed to make the report more accessible for young people.
14. We supported one of our youth consultants to meet with Youth Offending Team (YOT) colleagues and assist them in making the YOT referral form more accessible and child friendly.
15. Our support worker (Cameron) has delivered training with the principal social worker on language in social work. This is to improve the language we use verbally and in written reports, so it is more inclusive and user friendly.
16. We supported a small group of youth consultants to meet with the service manager of MASH (multi agency safeguarding hub) to make the telephony more child friendly so it is now much easier for children and young people to report concerns to MASH.
17. We supported some youth consultants (approximately 4) to give their lived experiences of lockdown to Children and Young Peoples Mental Health.
18. We are part of a working group who are designing a new care leavers app for all children in care to access important information.
19. We supported a youth consultant to be part of social work interviews.
20. Joe and Cameron were part of interview panels that interviewed ASYE social workers (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment). Feedback from one of the panel chairs was *“Cameron was brilliant – he focussed more so on the attributes of the candidates around direct work/voice (understandably) but contributed in his own feedback to all the questions. Cameron challenged us on a question and asked what we ideally wanted from a candidate with regard to one question, which generated lots of helpful discussions around team culture and identity. He was a big contributor and his views were valued.”*
21. We have been part of the planning and delivery of the induction training for all the newly elected councillors.
22. We supported a youth consultant to be part of a panel of interviewers who were recruiting a CIC Personal Advisor.
23. We have supported an operational head of service set up Wiltshire Council's Children and Young People's Cultural Diversity Inclusivity Task Force. This has included setting up the task force (identifying and recruiting appropriate members including supporting people with lived experiences).