

BECOME.

THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE
AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS

Become responds to Government reforms to children's social care: Monday 18 November, 2024

Katharine Sacks-Jones, CEO at Become, the national charity for children in care and young care leavers, says:

“We welcome the Government's announcement to prioritise reform of children's social care, which is long overdue - too many young people are being failed daily by a care system in crisis.

With almost half of children in care now living out of area and children still being placed in unregistered accommodation - even caravans, barges and tents - we're pleased the Government plans to tackle this and the profiteering that has prioritised shareholders over young people's lives.

No young person leaving care should have support stripped away when they turn 18, and these plans include steps in the right direction to end the care cliff so that young people are better supported into adulthood.

“It's now crucial the detail behind these reforms and the funding underpinning them backs up the ambition so children in care aren't let down once again”

With persistently high numbers of children in care and a system that is currently failing too many young people, it's positive that the new Government recognise the urgency of taking action to address this.

Almost half of children in care are now living out of area. They are often moved overnight and without warning, sometimes as far as 500 miles away, separating them from brothers and sisters and pulling them out of school.

Become have been campaigning to ensure children in care are kept close to the people and places that matter to them, calling for national and local strategies to increase supply of appropriate local options and better data so we know the true scale of the problem and what is driving it. ***Today's announcement includes welcome measures to start to tackle the lack of safe and suitable homes including greater oversight and location assessments to ensure homes are where children need them.***

More than a third of care leavers are not in education, employment or training and the number of young care leavers aged 18-20 who are homeless has increased by 54% over the last five years.

Become's End the Care Cliff campaign calls for young people not to be forced to leave care before they're ready, with proper housing support and stronger homelessness legislation to provide a safety net. ***The Government's plans to legislate for Staying Close support to be available to all care leavers up to age 25 is a very welcome and important first step, but this mustn't become another postcode lottery.***

Care-experienced children and young people do not have a level playing field and experience disproportionately poor outcomes. This has a significant human cost, impacting on their lives and life chances, as well as a significant financial cost.

As Secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for care-experienced children and young people, Become led an inquiry into corporate parenting reforms. ***The Government's plans to extend corporate parenting responsibilities to a wider range of public bodies is a pivotal reform that can help support care-experienced children and young people to fulfil their potential and aspirations, but responsibility must come with accountability.***

Become looks forward to working with the Government to make sure these reforms start to deliver the changes care-experienced children and young people need.

-ENDS-

As the national charity for children in care and young care leavers, we have young people wanting to respond to the announcement and our CEO, Katharine Sacks-Jones, is available for interview.

For more information or to request an interview, please contact Victoria Wilson, Strategic Communications Manager on 07932 009761 /victoria.wilson@becomecharity.org.uk

[Become](#) is the national charity for care-experienced children and young people. We put young people at the heart of everything we do, supporting them to get the help they need now and empowering them to bring about change in their own lives, the care system and society.

Further information on our campaigns, including policy asks can be found below:

[Gone Too Far](#): Keeping children in care close to the people and places that matter to them.

[End The Care Cliff](#): Ending the expectation of 'independence' asked of young people as they approach 18.