

This is a message from a 15 year old young person in Argyll & Bute with considerable experience of our Looked After system.

From the age of 2 she experienced the best and worst of what we can offer across numerous placements within and out-with our local authority area. These placements include kinship care, foster care, respite care, emergency respite care, 2 attempts to reunite them with their birth parent, residential care and secure care.

All in all she has experienced more than a dozen moves and losses over a 13 year period. She has a lot to say about the journey she has been on. It is imperative that we listen to her words and ACT on them.

She wanted her social worker to convey her views to you on her care experience:

"It's basically shit...it's unique for every young person but for me it was just shit...moving from home was honestly so so sad...I lost my family...but if I was at home I'd be out my face or in hospital or something...my mum's too soft on me and my staff give me boundaries...it's annoying at times but I know yous want me to be safe but I get angry.

I don't want people to judge me cause I'm in care...my life isn't normal but I want to be normal and I want to feel normal like everyone else. If I had advice for your bosses it would be do it better cause what happens now is just ridiculous being moved around and feeling like you're a nuisance or something you know what I mean?"

When asked what makes a good social worker, she advised, “A good social worker listens to you, like they don’t always agree with what you’re saying an’ that and you don’t always get your own way but at-least you know they were listening.”

She also highlighted it is important to have time to build up the trust and relationship with a social worker saying, “It’s alright for yous its your job but this is like my life...I’ve spoken to hunners of workers and I think what’s the point? Sometimes you’re just waiting for them to leave you too.”

She stated, “I was just a kid and my life was mucked up by everyone else...here I am trying to make my life better.”

Let's tell this young person that we are listening.

Take a post-it

What one thing will you do from today to find extra time to build trust and relationships and listen better to the children and young people you are working with?