

Leicester
City Council

What Is Proving Most Effective In Attracting & Engaging Looked After Young People?

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The Participation of Looked After Children And Young People In Leicester



Stand Up, Speak Out! (SUSO)

- Participation Group – Looked after, leaving care, child protection, child in need.
- Meet once a month as well as attending other participation activities and events.
- Began with the question – what do you want to change?
- And the principle that participation as a right (Article 12, UNCRC).

“We want more information about where we are going to be placed”

- ***“About us”*** Foster Carer profile was born.
- Changed Social Workers Practice in Leicester.
- Monitored, evaluated fed back to young people.
- **One social worker said they actually requested a profile for a young mum she was working with after hearing about it from SUSO.**
- **One young person was placed on an emergency basis, saw a profile and was really happy to know her new carers had pets and a baby.**

ABOUT US

NAME OF CARER

Here is some more information about our family and where we live.

Who lives in the house (include things like family, pets, ethnicity/culture, who has which bedroom, what you'd like to be called):

Where we live (include things like area, local shops, community resources, schools):

What we do as a family (include things like interests, activities, outings and hobbies):

About our fostering (include things like age group of children, how long you've been fostering, why you like fostering):

“We want to get our messages out to the people that work with us!”

- ***“FROM US 2 U”*** Calendar 2007/2008.
- 12 key messages to key professionals.
- Chosen by young people.
- Calendars disseminated across the City and to key national figures.



“We want to get our messages out to the people that work with us!”

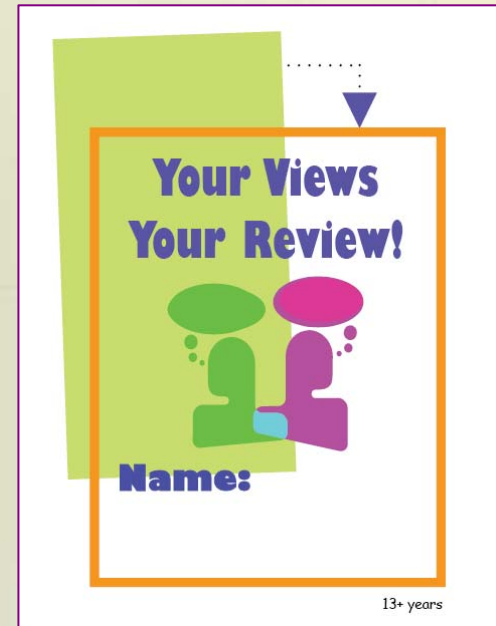
Feedback gained by evaluation form:-

- “We really like it, very bright and colourful but we also thought it was inspirational to both staff and young people” – 2008
- We have noted: “Let young people know who to contact in social workers absence and always ensure that there is a team representative at Court”. 2007
- “It is a very “eye catching” calendar and great way to get your views across – the calendar will be discussed/shown at our Team Meetings”. 2008



Depth & Breadth of Our Participation Work so Far...

- From consulting on and re-designing our own services – e.g. LAC Consultation document redesigned by SUSO Group.



Through meeting and engaging with Management and Corporate Directors...

- SUSO bowling.
- Running the department.
- Interviewing the Corporate Director and Chief Executive.
- Young people's views Influence Corporate Parenting.



Leicester City Council
Children & Young
People's Rights
& Participation
Service

Corporate
Parent Forum—What
do you think we could
do to make things
better for you and
other children in care?



Please return this form back to
Lesley/Danielle by
Monday 14th January 2008

To...

- Meeting MP's.
- Hosting Q&A with MP Parmjit Dhandra.
- Taking part in National Youth Consultations.
- Writing to Gordon Brown.



Participation of All...

- Aim – To have participation EMBEDDED in all of our practices, for looked after children and young people. Health, education, youth offending, child care etc all need to be considering and acting on the views of young people.



Participation through a variety of methods – *“A Continuum”*

- Newsletter to all LAC, professionals, services.
- SUSO involvement in Social Work Induction.
- Work linked in with citywide participation strategy for all young people in Leicester.
- Looked after representative in Leicester Youth Council.
- Participation events/projects for younger children, unaccompanied young people, young people with disabilities.

Barriers to Overcome?

1. Accessibility

- Time, motivation, changing personal circumstances.
- Young people don't do 9-5!
- The Basics – venue, transport, food and FUN.

2. Labour/Resource Intensive – takes money, time and commitment from all.

The Benefits

- **Outcomes for Young People**

- Promotes Resilience – Builds on young people's strengths.
- Central to positive development:-
 - Social skills, relationships, emotional development, work experience, self esteem.

- **Outcomes for services**

- Service Improvement – Young people as part of solutions, not the focus of the problems.
- Young people more likely to commit to something if they:
 - Feel listened to.
 - Have ownership for.
 - See change.

Beacon Winners

"I've never been so proud!"

(SUSO members)



- Participation achievements recognised.
- Young people pivotal to application and award.
- Involved from beginning to end.
- Care Matters to us! DVD produced and disseminated.

“It feels like there’s so much we’ve achieved just over the past two years and it’s something I’d never thought I’d be able to achieve... I’ve always been out to prove that people in care aren’t always going to do badly at things.

I feel I’ve sort of proven that”.

Chloe, SUSO member

Aged 15

Summary of SUSO's Achievements

Children's Rights Website

Corporate Parent Forum consultation

"About Us" Fostering profile

Calendar 2007 & 2008

Social Care Inductions

BBC Radio Leics – Family Wanted Campaign

Beacon Bid

SUSO members Meet MP's

Young Minds Conference

BBC Radio Leics – Telling Lives Project

Children's Rights Leaflets

Children's Rights Logo

Participation talk At Safeguarding Unit Manager's Mtg