

WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

PROMISING PRACTICE

HIGHLIGHTING POSITIVE CORPORATE PARENTING PRACTICE NATIONALLY



INTRODUCTION

In November 2017, the Training and Education team at Who Cares? Scotland released a [‘Promising Practice’ round up](#), featuring positive examples of Corporate Parenting in practice, nationally.

We have now put together a second round up, highlighting the great work being done by Scotland’s Corporate Parents as we enter into the next phase of supporting Care Experienced people to succeed and achieve their true potential. This round up features:

- Disclosure Scotland
- NHS 24
- Queen Margaret University
- University of Aberdeen
- Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration
- Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland
- Scottish Housing Regulator
- The University of Glasgow

This round-up is only a small snapshot of the activity that is taking place across Scotland and relates to Corporate Parents we have worked with closely.

If you are a Corporate Parent and have an example of promising practice you would like to share, please get in touch as we hope to develop the round-up in the future and collect even more examples of good Corporate Parenting. Our ambition is that other Corporate Parents will build on these examples so that together, Corporate Parents can make sure all Care Experienced people feel in control of their lives and able to overcome the barriers they face.

For our next ‘Promising Practice’ round up, we are particularly interested in hearing from Corporate Parents who have done positive work around employment for Care Experienced people, either as an employer, or by supporting Care Experienced people to secure meaningful employment. If you have an example you would like to share with us on this, please email: corporateparenting@whocarescotland.org.

Disclosure Scotland

Disclosure Scotland is part of an alliance group with other organisations known as 'Scotland Works for You'. The group includes Who Cares? Scotland and CELCIS, with a collective aim to secure positive and meaningful opportunities for people with convictions. In March 2018 the group hosted an event for employers, to promote understanding of the context behind criminal convictions.



At the event, Disclosure Scotland launched an [online guidance pack](#) aimed at both employers and individuals, which features a case study of a Care Experienced person and their experiences of being criminalised whilst in care. At the event, a Care Experienced person also took to the stage to share aspects of her own care journey, urging employers to engage and talk to applicants with convictions.

Disclosure Scotland also delivered key information on the current disclosure system at the [Debating Disclosure](#) event in June 2018, co-hosted by the Centre for Criminal and Youth Justice Scotland, CELCIS and The Scottish Care Leavers Covenant. The event brought together young people's practitioners to discuss what needs to change in the sector, raising awareness, understanding and highlighting areas to challenge. Disclosure Scotland is aware that these changes need to involve Care Experienced people and is working with Who Cares? Scotland to include Care Experienced voice when improving and developing their services, ensuring that these are accessible and inclusive.

Lorna Gibbs, Chief Executive of Disclosure Scotland, said:

“ Disclosure Scotland is proud to be a Corporate Parent and to work with Who Cares? Scotland to reduce and remove some of the barriers facing Care Experienced young people. Listening to young people talk about the challenges they face and the decisions they take to exclude themselves from opportunities because they are worried about things that happened in their past brought it home to all of us how important it is that we stand up and help. We are proud to be part of the Scotland Works for You initiative which is working with employers to help them evaluate the meaning of someone's criminal record to a job or opportunity they've applied for. It's also for people with convictions to help them make positive applications for employment. We will also ensure our Corporate Parenting is a key part of our thinking as we analyse the responses to the PVG review consultation and begin to draft legislation to achieve the right balance between protection and rehabilitation.

A note from Who Cares? Scotland: Care Experienced people are more likely than their peers to have contact with the police early in life, either because family members are known the police, because they encounter the police in their communities or because the police are regularly called to their care placements.

In residential care in particular, Care Experienced young people often face criminalisation of behaviours and circumstances which typically **wouldn't attract police involvement in a private household**, with situations such as fights between children or arguments with carers resulting in the police being called, sometimes leading to **escalation**.

To hear about this in the words of a Care Experienced person, listen to [Kareen](#) and [Dionne](#) sharing their experiences of policing and criminalisation.

We encourage Corporate Parents to take measures to better understand the criminalisation of people in care, and to remove barriers which Care Experienced people with convictions face in securing meaningful employment.

For more information on this work, contact the Scotland Works for You group on ScotlandWorksforYou@gov.scot or 03000 2000 40. Contact the Training & Education Team at Who Cares? Scotland by emailing corporatепarenting@whocarescotland.org or by phoning 0141 226 4441.

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

In order to progress the Section 60 'duty to collaborate,' the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland has set up a Corporate Parents Collaboration Group which meets three times a year. This comprises around 12 Corporate Parents. The aims of the group are:

- To facilitate discussion and exchange of practice between Corporate Parents (cross fertilisation of ideas)
- To identify areas for joint working e.g. projects, seminars and other events
- To alert group members to relevant activities and highlight any relevant research
- To invite external guests as appropriate in order to share information on issues relating to our role as Corporate Parents

Máire McCormack, Head of Strategy, said:



Hearing directly from Care Experienced young people is really important to the group and we have input from young people based at the Life Changes Trust, from Falkirk Champions Board and from Who Cares? Scotland. We are hoping to hear from the young inspectors at our next scheduled meeting in the course of 2018. The group has also heard about the work of MCR Pathways and the Care Inspectorate with regard to their young inspectors' work.

To mark Care Day 2018, the group produced three videos: ['It takes a village'](#), ['We're delighted to be Corporate Parents'](#) and ['We need to change our behaviour'](#).

A note from Who Cares? Scotland: Corporate Parents serve a huge range of functions in relation to Care Experienced people, always with a view to improve. As such, it's hugely beneficial to share to share learnings and good practice as well as identifying opportunities

for collaborative working in the best interest of Scotland's Care Experienced population. Collaborative working should be evidenced within Corporate Parenting plans.

Scottish Housing Regulator

In June 2018, the Scottish Housing Regulator [published research](#) which explores what makes a difference to people's journey through the homelessness system. The findings are based on individual interviews with almost fifty current and recent users of homelessness services, including Care Experienced young people, from seven local authority areas.




National Panel of Tenants & Service Users
Key findings - Year 5 - Homelessness

Insight into people's experiences of homelessness services:

Importance of clear information on what to expect	Impact of previous experience using homelessness services
Challenges of adjusting to temporary accommodation	Value of practical and emotional support

Visit our website to find out more
www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

 **Scottish Housing Regulator**

The report features a detailed section on Care Experience, capturing feedback from Care Experienced interviewees on the specific needs of the Care Experienced population, including “the importance of effective relationships with support workers and other staff, difficulties for those with limited experience of the homeless system, and challenges adjusting to temporary or settled accommodation.”

Iain Muirhead, the Regulator's Director of Strategy and Communications, said:

“ Our national panel of tenants and service users is a great way for us to hear directly about peoples' experiences of social housing and homelessness services. This year we wanted to get an insight into what makes a difference to people's journey through the homelessness system. We know that access to social housing and homeless services are important issues for many Care Experienced young people. So we worked with Who Cares? Scotland to include some Care Experienced young people in our research. The feedback highlighted the importance Care Experienced young people place on support networks and meaningful relationships with support workers. Sensitivity to Care Experienced people's needs and services being delivered in a respectful and non-judgemental way also came through as strong messages. We are grateful to everyone who took part and to Who Cares? Scotland.

You can read the feedback in full in the National Panel of Tenants and Service Users 5th Year Report, available at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk.

Queen Margaret University



A media production lecturer at Queen Margaret University (QMU) has created two new films highlighting the experiences of young people who have been through the care system. The short films focus on their experiences of education whilst being in care. They also offer helpful advice to teachers in engaging with Care Experienced pupils.

[The film](#) presents an honest and very personal account of young people's issues during their schooling. Pupils discuss some hard hitting subjects including bullying, teenage pregnancy and isolation. However, importantly, the film highlights the positive impact that teachers can have on people's lives – while they are in school and beyond.

QMU's filmmaker, Graham Drysdale, volunteered to work with the East Lothian Champions - a group of Care Experienced young people who meet once a week in Musselburgh.

He explained:



It's heart-breaking to know that there are 15,000 kids in care in Scotland. The issue of support for young people in the care system is something that is very close to my heart, and I wanted to use my professional skills to give these young people a voice. I was struck by the eloquent way in which the young people explained their situations and offered advice as to how teachers can communicate and support people with lived care experience.

Richard Butt, Deputy Principal of Queen Margaret University, said:



QMU aims to be a university of ideas and influence and this project, with the East Lothian Champions, fits with QMU's community engagement work. Our staff and students are encouraged to make a real difference to the world around them. I am therefore proud that Graham has created a powerful film that encourages wider awareness of the issues faced by Care Experienced children and young people during their education.

Graham also produced a second film on Care Experience and housing, which you can view [here](#).

NHS 24



In March 2018, the Participation and Equalities Coordinator at NHS 24, accompanied by a Scottish Health Council Local Officer, visited the Young Radicals, a group of Care Experienced young people who meet at Who Cares? Scotland's Glasgow office, to have their say on the care system. The aim of this session was to raise awareness of the services offered by NHS 24 and to find out what matters to Care Experienced young people.

We asked the young people, 'What matters to you?' and scribed their responses and discussions. The young people were asked how they wished their answers to

be presented to NHS 24 staff and they replied, "in our own words."

Following from this engagement, a poster was created titled 'Ten Top Tips to use when Speaking to a Care Experienced Young Person'. This poster was shared with staff via the 'Hot Topics' email. This is a weekly message that goes out to all frontline staff and contains key information.

The poster was added to NHS 24's Knowledge Lab, an online database of information to support continuing professional development. NHS 24's Knowledge Management Facilitator also shared the poster more widely through the [@knowledgeN24](https://twitter.com/knowledgeN24) Twitter account. In addition, the poster was printed and displayed across centres and uploaded to the staff intranet.

The Participation and Equalities Team fed this activity back to the Young Radicals group via Who Cares? Scotland's Corporate Training and Education Officers. The young people responded very positively to the poster and expressed their satisfaction with it.

Brenda Wilson, Deputy Director of Nursing & Care, NHS 24, said:

“ As an organisation, it is important we provide safe, effective and person-centred care to the people of Scotland. As a Corporate Parent, we have particular responsibilities in respect of our Care Experienced young people. The work we have been carrying out with Who Cares? Scotland has allowed us to meet with the Young Radicals, a group of Care Experienced young people in Glasgow, and listen to what matters to them. We were delighted by the way in which the young people readily engaged with us, offering their views and experiences. This allowed us to raise awareness of the issues Care Experienced young people may face across our organisation, in the form of a poster.

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

In developing their Corporate Parenting Plan, The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) collaborated with Children's Hearings Scotland to develop four high-level aims for the Hearings System in relation to Corporate Parenting. It was decided to develop a three-year Corporate Parenting Plan that was aligned to the organisation's 2017-20 Corporate Plan – two out of the three organisational outcomes are around the delivery of Corporate Parenting. Most importantly, it was decided that the Corporate Parenting Plan would be aimed at the audience of young people that SCRA is Corporate Parents to.



SCRA has a Participation Group that has been in place since 2009 that looks at how they could better engage with young people (as well as children and parents/carers), support and encourage their participation and promote their rights. It was this group that SCRA worked with to develop the Corporate Parenting Plan. The group has a number of young people who have experience of the Hearings System, and they were key to what was included in the plan, and the language that was used to describe what SCRA was going to do. It was decided that the plan, the commitments and the actions should be clear, accessible and meaningful. SCRA's commitments are up front as they should be, the detail – the planning and the legal bits - are all still there - just at the end.

In writing the plan the focus was not just on those children coming to Hearings, or even more narrowly on those that end up being looked after. It was decided that the Corporate Parenting Plan would be aimed at all children and young people that have an interaction with SCRA – even if that interaction was just a letter to invite them to attend a Hearing. SCRA also committed to looking at every part of that interaction to make sure it was the best it could be.

To support the launch of the plan a Corporate Parenting website was developed www.mycorporateparents.co.uk and this contains loads of really useful information for young people about coming to Hearings, what to expect, how to come in and visit, what their rights are and who can support them to exercise those rights. One of SCRA's Modern Apprentices regularly blogs on the site – aimed at other young people. The website was developed in collaboration with Children's Hearings Scotland by the communications team and in consultation with SCRA's Modern Apprentices – both in its format and also in its content.

On the site there are opportunities to provide SCRA with feedback – there is a permanent spot for this but also new and fresh prompts. Feedback has been received from young people about what they would like to see from the site and we are acting on it – requests for more video clips and vlogs.

In the same way that SCRA planned, they also reported. In January 2018 they published an annual report for young people, which was early, but they wanted it to launch at the start of the Year of Young People. The annual report gave a clear picture against each commitment of all of the things that SCRA had done to deliver on it. They are planning to do this for each year of the plan – and again have been asking for feedback to help improve it.

Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy and lead on Corporate Parenting, said:



We see this model of planning as one that is accessible, inclusive and also very effective for what we are trying to deliver – change and improvement one step at a time. The plan is about young people and it is written with them in mind – we have to support them to be able to hold us to account. I think that the final product reflects the message we wanted it to deliver as well as the shared approach to its production.

The University of Aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen is working collaboratively with Aberdeen City Council's [Virtual School](#) to develop and deliver an initiative that will see undergraduate students from the University volunteer to help primary school pupils in their own classroom. During this initiative's successful pilot year, two of the University's students volunteered to help local Care Experienced school pupils with their literacy skills as part of the 'Emerging Literacy' programme that is being run in Primary schools across Aberdeen City. Each student volunteered for 8-10 weeks, with flexibility around exam and holiday periods. The students underwent training from the Virtual School to develop their understanding of the needs of the Care Experienced children they would be working with and how best to support them within the classroom. Students also participated in the Emerging Literacy Launch day which provided the background to the programme. Further in-school training was then provided by the Head Teachers in the two pilot schools. Students also underwent the Local Authority child protection training.

In 2018, the University and the Virtual School plan to recruit and train a further **20** students to undertake this role, with **66** students having already shown interest following the recruitment process. The initiative is a two-way process, with those students electing to volunteer having a motivation to support vulnerable groups, as well as to gain valuable experience in working with children and young people - particularly useful for those pursuing a career in teaching. To recruit, the University asked each academic school to send out an email to all undergraduates, and those who expressed interest in taking part were then asked to provide

a CV and covering letter. During the recruitment process, students will be interviewed by the University, the Virtual School Head Teacher, and a primary school teacher. In order to educate and raise awareness, students will be informed of the work being done by the Local Authority and University to support Care Experienced children and young people in the city.

The University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow is committed to increasing the opportunities for students from non-traditional backgrounds to access and benefit from all that a university education can offer. They recognise the particular challenges that those with experience of care can face in progressing on to university and, for over ten years now, the university has had specific [provision and supports](#) in place to address these barriers.

As part of their comprehensive **Widening Participation** admissions system, they **guarantee** Care Experienced applicants an [adjusted offer of entry at the relevant Access Threshold](#) for their chosen undergraduate degree subject. These adjusted offers are clearly labelled and displayed in the [prospectus](#), to emphasise that study at the University of Glasgow is a realisable goal, and to encourage applications.

All applicants who are given an adjusted offer of entry will also benefit from participation on one, or more, of the University of Glasgow's suite of **pre-entry programmes**. The pre-entry programmes provide customised engagement and preparation, equipping applicants with the relevant skills and experience to help them become successful university students on their chosen degree path.

For further information on the university's guaranteed adjusted offers of entry and/or pre-entry programme participation for Care Experienced applicants, please contact Dan Keenan, the University of Glasgow's Care Experienced Student Support Coordinator: daniel.keenan@glasgow.ac.uk; 0141 330 4022.



The University has always been, and always will be, interested in potential rather than circumstance or background, and as such our Academic Entrance Requirements may be adjusted based on contextual information pertaining to an individual applicant. Where adjusted Entrance Requirements are offered the University's intent is to EQUALISE admissions for ALL applicants, recognising the context of their background, the difficulties that they have faced, and the efforts that they have made to prepare for entry to Higher Education.

EXTRACT FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW ADMISSIONS POLICY