Future Rules: providing services for children in care

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Children's Rights Director for England

Safeguarding Children: Prevention, Protection, Provision - 18th June 2009

Provenance ...

- ***Children's Rights Director consultations***
- ***Reports to Government, Ofsted and published***
- ***Personal Statutory functions – ascertaining, advising, raising children's individual, policy or practice issues***
- ***For children in care, leaving care, or receiving children's social care services, and children in boarding schools, residential special schools or residential FE colleges***

www.rights4me.org

your Rights! your say

Ofsted

Ten Rights requested by children

now with Ministry of Justice for Bill of Rights & Responsibilities consultation

- **Always to get the help the law says I should get**
- **Not to be bullied**
- **To be treated as an individual, not as one of a group of children**
- **To make and keep my own friends**
- **To enjoy myself now, as well as to prepare for the future**
- **To make decisions for myself if I understand enough, whatever age I am**
- **To have my views, wishes and feelings asked about and thought about when people decide things for me, however old I am**
- **To do hobbies I want to do**
- **To keep in touch with my parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, if I want to and they want to, wherever we all live**
- **To be told about my past life if and when I wish to know**

Requests for Regulations

- **Monthly visiting by social workers**
- **Being seen in private by social workers**
- **Independent Visitors to be care experienced**
- **IROs to keep in touch with child and be powerful**

Children's Views Report: "Future Rules"

Corporate Parents Receive into Care

- Do this gradually if possible
- Tell me why !
- See if other people in my family can look after me
- Don’t dump me with strangers
- Keep me informed – even when not much is happening
- Tell me and involve me in decisions on where I am going
- Keep my family contacts if you can
- Don’t fit me into “things that are good for all children” – like being adopted

Corporate Parents make Placements

- In placing us have a RANGE of placements
- Enough to give us a CHOICE of at least two real alternatives whenever we are being placed
- Help us into new placements gradually, and with information – including photos
- Keep checking our settling in very closely
- Have a BACKUP placement and use it if the first one isn't working out really well

Where children feel safe

- **92% feel fairly or very safe in the building they live in (same as last year)**
- **87% feel fairly or very safe at school or college (similar to 88% last year)**
- **76% feel fairly or very safe in the countryside (same as last year)**
- **66% feel fairly or very safe in the town or city (similar to 67% last year)**

Worrying about safety

- **43% worry a little or a lot about their safety (up from 40% last year)**
- **Top score for reducing worries about safety went to being with people the child knows and trusts**

Who would children go to for help?

NB – survey of children in CRD remit, not children generally

- **A friend (62%, up from 56% last year)**
- **A parent (46%, down from 52% last year)**
- **Foster carer (48%, down from 51% last year)**
- **Police (52%, similar to 51% last year)**
- **Teacher (48%, similar to 49% last year)**
- **Social worker (47%, similar to 46 last year)**

Top risks according to children

- Drugs (27%)
- Kidnapping (17%)
- Alcohol (17%)
- Bullying (10%)
- Traffic accidents (8%)

Most likely accidents

- Road traffic accidents
- Results of alcohol abuse
- Falls
- Being beaten up or fighting
- Drug abuse or overdose
- Stabbing or shooting

Children's Assessment of Corporate Parenting 2009

From 2009 Monitoring survey of 1157 children & young people

- **9% often or always being bullied – no change from 2008**
- **45% never being bullied – up from 38% last year**
- **15% worry often or always about getting bullied – no change from 2008**

Children's Assessment of Corporate Parenting 2009

- **50% are usually or always asked their opinions about things that matter to them – down from 56% last year**
- **48% say their opinions, when asked, usually or always make a difference to decisions about their lives – little change from last year's 49%**
- **68% say adults usually or always tell them when changes are going to happen in their lives – down from 73% last year**

Children's Assessment of Corporate Parenting 2009

- **90% rated their care as good or very good – up from 87% last year**
- **84% considered their present placement was the right one for them – the same as last year**
- **69% considered their last placement change was in their best interests – the same as last year**

Children's Assessment of Corporate Parenting 2009

- **73% stated they had a care plan – little change from 72% last year**
- **77% of those knew what was in their care plan – up from 73% last year**
- **65% of them had a say in what is in their care plan – up from 52% last year**
- **68% of them agreed with their care plan – up from 66% last year**
- **82% of them said their care plan was being fully kept to – up from 79% last year**

Children's Assessment of Corporate Parenting 2009

- **Just over two thirds of care leavers rated their support since leaving care as good or very good – the same as in 2008**
- **88% had a current support worker**
- **Almost two thirds considered their current accommodation as the right place for them – the same as in 2008**

Some quotations from children ...

- **Always keep an eye open when you're by yourself**
- **Always make sure you're with someone**
- **Always stick with your instinct**
- **At night when I hear motorbikes or people shouting I get scared**

A knife can provide you safety but so can you and your family and friends. If you want to be safe grow up and watch your back because your family and friends are not always there for you.