

National Care Leavers Strategy

North West Meeting
February 2016

National Care leavers Strategy Aims to:

Our ambition is for the state as 'corporate parent'
to provide the same level of support as any
reasonable parent

We want to improve the life chances for care
leavers and their ability to go far in life, so that
they aren't held back by their childhood
experiences

What do care leavers say they need?

SUPPORT – People easy to get hold of, positive relationships, people who aim high for them, useful support

PREPARATION TO LEAVE CARE – decisions to be well planned and not rushed, more preparation for living independently

OPTIONS – More and better choices of where to live, better help from job centre plus and housing, to be able to stay in residential care when you are over 18, decisions based on what is best for the young person (not money)

Less Debt, Less Poverty

Making sure care leavers can still get housing benefit
(other 18-21 year olds can't)

Change the rules so care leavers get a lower rate of
housing benefit (for shared accommodation until
they're 25 (22 now))

Review how housing benefit is used to fund 'staying
put'

Promote new ideas to avoid council tax and rent
arrears

Access to Education, Employment and Training

Make it easier to get into apprenticeships and jobs and give more support

Closer working with job centre plus staff to offer support depending on what each individual wants/needs

A place on the national citizen service for every 16/17 in care or care leaver

Develop ways to do 'payment by results' (organisations get paid when they help care leavers get better outcomes)

Safety and Security

Work with home office to protect care leavers from risks such as sexual exploitation and gangs

Think about inspecting semi-independent placements and hostels.

Improve accommodation for care leavers

Know who in criminal justice system are care leavers and support them better

Health and Well being

Mental health – make sure CAMHS plans will benefit care leavers

Manage care leavers move to adult services to avoid a 'cliff edge' at 18

Think about having a specialist mental health assessment for children when they come into care.

Physical Health

More support to avoid unplanned pregnancies

Highlight the support that is available to young parents, such as the family nurse partnership programme

More support to avoid substance misuse

Well Prepared for Independence

Test ways to support care leavers better

Look at what Personal Advisers do and how we might improve them

Share the good stuff local authorities are doing

Introduce a corporate parenting score card

Encourage new creative ways of working