

Essential reading for Scotland's children's sector

December 2018 – January 2019 Issue 189


Children in Scotland. magazine

Shortlisted in
the 2018 PPA
Scotland Awards
– Best Member
Magazine



FUELLED BY
DESIRE TO
CHANGE SOCIETY
WE SHALL NOT
BACK DOWN

How children can change the world: A special Year of Young People edition with contributions from our children's advisory group and Panel on Europe, ENABLE Scotland's ACE Youth, Reach, Scotland's Minister for Mental Health – and many more

A portrait of Clare Haughey, Scottish Government Mental Health Minister, smiling. She has dark brown hair with bangs and is wearing a white top and a necklace. The background is a warm, out-of-focus interior.

Scottish Government Mental Health Minister *Clare Haughey*, appointed in July 2018, says the whole system must be changed if the goals of prevention and early action are to be achieved.

Members of our children and young people's advisory group, *Changing our World*, quizzed her on one of the most pressing issues affecting young people today

“Young people’s voices are at the heart of how we think about mental health”

As part of Children in Scotland’s 25 Calls campaign, launched in October 2018 to drive forward 25 actions to improve the lives of children in Scotland, our children and young people’s advisory group – Changing our World – chose its own top priority: making support for mental health and wellbeing accessible to all children and young people when they need it, without discrimination.

Last month, Chair of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Task Force and convener of Children in Scotland’s board Denise Coia warned that problems relating to mental health, and in particular emotional distress, among young people were “increasing exponentially”. NHS Scotland reported to a Scottish Parliament committee that there had been a 69 per cent increase in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) workforce over the last 10 years.

With a view to turning their Call into real change and holding those with the power to achieve this to account, the young people from the Changing our World group chose to interview Minister for Mental Health, Clare Haughey to learn more about what the Scottish Government is doing to address the issue.

This is what they found out.

What impact do you think social media has had on mental health?

Social media has become part of everyday life – it’s certainly difficult to imagine life without it. It can be used in a hugely positive way, to empower and to connect people, particularly young people. It can also be crucial in helping find the right help and support for issues we may be facing, and be a tool to help talk about how we are feeling. That can be especially powerful with mental health, where many people find it easier to describe how they feel online rather than in person. However, what is important is the *healthy* use of social media. There are links between unhealthy use of social media and lower mental wellbeing in children and young people. This is a major public policy challenge right now, and we are committed to getting it right in Scotland so that people are using social media healthily.

What quality of mental health training do teachers get? How can this be improved?

Mental health training for teachers is incredibly important. Local authorities, as teachers’ employers, are expected to ensure high quality professional learning opportunities are available to teachers. And before being permanently appointed, all teachers must meet the Standard for Full Registration which includes several actions aimed at supporting pupils’ mental health needs. In our 2018/19 Programme for Government we also committed to improving the support and professional learning materials for teachers, and making sure every council has access to Mental Health First Aid training for teachers.

How is the Scottish Government going to make sure all teachers receive training on working with pupils who experience mental health problems?

Since 2014, we have funded the delivery of Mental Health First Aid training for teachers by offering a grant to local authorities to undertake the Scottish Mental Health First Aid Training programme. We initially offered this to local authorities identified as being in the most need of immediate support, and we are rolling this out to every council by the end of the 2019/20 academic year. This will be enhanced by our commitment to have school counsellors in every secondary school in Scotland, along with significant additional investment in CAMHS.

Experiencing mental health problems impacts on learning and education. How do we ensure that teachers and school staff are working in a way that supports children and young people with mental health problems to do well in school?

We want to ensure young people can access support at the right time and in the right location. Schools have responsibilities to identify, support and develop the mental wellbeing of all their pupils. Every child and young person should have access to emotional and mental wellbeing support in school, and we have committed to making [sure] there are counsellors in every secondary school in Scotland.

What parts of the school curriculum currently support children and young people with their mental health and wellbeing, and how?

Schools across the country are developing imaginative ways of ensuring health and wellbeing is high on their agenda and that young people receive interactive and engaging teaching. Young people develop at their own

“Links between unhealthy use of social media and lower mental wellbeing is a major public policy challenge right now”

"Mental health needs to be something that everybody talks about"

pace so learning is planned to suit their stage of development, maturity and ability, not age.

A review of Personal and Social Education (PSE) by Education Scotland is underway. It will provide ministers with an analysis of existing provision and recommendations by the end of 2018. As well as reviewing the delivery of PSE, this work also includes the role of pastoral guidance and counselling services for children and young people.

The learning from the review will inform the roll-out of our commitments to fund counsellors in every school and increase school nursing support.

Experiencing mental health problems can impact on attendance at school. How do we support people who miss school due to mental health problems to engage in learning while they are off?

We want all children and young people to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Children and young people who are unable to attend school due to ill health should continue, whenever they can, to access education during periods of prolonged ill health. In these circumstances, education authorities have duties to provide education elsewhere than at a school.

Also, the Additional Support for Learning Act requires education authorities to identify, provide for, and to review the additional support needs of their pupils. This includes additional support due to a health condition.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Call 3

"All children and young people should be able to, and know how to, get support with their mental health and wellbeing when they need it, without discrimination. This is their right and shouldn't be taken away or judged by people. There should be access to different types of support whenever you need it, whatever your situation, with people you can trust and who respect your right to privacy"

Do you think the media has 'romanticised' mental health?

This is a really interesting question. People across Scotland have an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mental health. That is in large part due to increased media coverage, and the bravery of well-known people speaking out about their own experiences. Sir Chris Hoy, Neil Lennon, Limmy and many others have been open about how mental health problems have affected them. That's inspiring to hear, and I think that also gives strength to young people to hear they are not alone.

However, we still have lots of work to do. We want everyone to understand that mental health exists on a spectrum. We all have mental health, and it is strongly connected to our physical health. But it is not simply a matter of

either having good mental health or being mentally unwell. We can be anywhere on that line in between, and that can change from day to day. So part of dealing with this is having the resilience to deal with the normal pressures of everyday life. That's a really important part of the picture, and one the media could help with.

What are your thoughts on bringing in universal mental health and wellbeing provision similar to regular dentist appointments for children and young people?

It's a really interesting idea. What we need to focus on is how we ensure young people are always able to access the support and help they need when they need it – ask once and get help fast. Early

Nina, Evie and Ellie from the Changing Our World group beside their Call on access to mental health support at the 25 Calls campaign launch event



intervention and prevention are the cornerstones of our approach. Mental health needs to be something that everybody talks about, and reducing stigma and promoting discussion and early action are vital to ensuring that Scotland is the best place to grow up.

We know we have to change the whole system if we are to achieve these goals, and our Task Force on Children and Young People's Mental Health has that exact job. Specialist clinical services are not the whole answer, and other services in young people's lives are vital to providing practical and emotional support, including education, social work and the third sector. We need to get this balance right so young people don't fall between the cracks.

What is the Scottish Government doing to ensure children and young people's own views and experiences are taken into account in decisions about policy and practice around mental health?

Engagement with children and young people is at the heart of how we think about mental health as a government. There have been some fantastic examples of working with young people recently to create programmes and get their views.

Firstly, we currently have a Youth Commission on Mental Health underway, which we're working with Scottish Association for Mental Health and Young Scot on and supporting with £95,000 investment. The commission is made up of young people, and in the new year they will provide recommendations to ministers on how to shape CAMH services and support. The commissioners are also co-chairs of the task force, which ensures that young people's voices are at the heart of everything we do.

Secondly, as part of the Year of Young People, we funded See Me to run the biggest conversation with young people we've ever had in Scotland on what mental health means to them, which involved people aged 12 – 26. We also asked them to tell us what they wanted a campaign for young people to look like. The campaign, "Feels FM", launched in September, harnesses the power of music to help people talk about how they feel.

Thirdly, we have launched new Transition Care Plans (TCPs) to help young people move more smoothly from child and adolescent services to adult services. The TCPs have been designed entirely by young people, working with the Scottish Youth Parliament and talking with clinicians.

All these are examples of what can happen when we listen to the views of young people when we create policies that directly impact on their lives.

Thank you to the members of Changing our World for their work in devising these questions and for raising mental health improvement as a priority for children and young people in Scotland.

> Read responses by Denise Coia and Children 1st chief executive Mary Glasgow to the 25 Calls mental health call at childreninscotland.org.uk

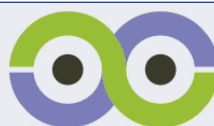
Subscribe to *Children in Scotland Magazine* today



6 issues for just £20!

Unique bi-monthly insight, analysis, comment and features – delivered directly to you.

To subscribe email clogan@childreninscotland.org.uk or visit childreninscotland.org.uk/cismagazine



VIG Orkney



AVIGUK-accredited Initial Training Courses in Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)

Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) offers a therapeutic intervention to help clients repair their important relationships e.g parent with child.

VIG Orkney delivers:

- regular face-to-face VIG training and supervision throughout Scotland for professionals from health, education, social work and voluntary sectors
- distance learning in VIG throughout the world
- professional development projects and training through Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP)
- Residential Initial Training Courses in VIG, hosted in Orkney, in April and August 2019
- VIG therapeutic sessions for clients in Orkney

Interested?

Visit vigorkney.co.uk or contact Miriam Landor miriam@vigorkney.co.uk

"It's our future – decided by adults"

The Scottish and UK Governments must take action to ensure children's rights are protected in the wake of Brexit, writes *Juliet Harris*



Members of the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe at the Scottish Parliament with Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP



Juliet Harris is director of Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

@Ulgrid

“The will of the people”. Politicians from all sides of the Brexit debate refer to this concept regularly and with ease. And yet – when talking about the outcome of the Brexit referendum – the phrase is fundamentally flawed. Brexit is one of the biggest decisions the UK has taken, but no one under 18 had the opportunity to vote and have their views taken into account.

It is essential that all adults – especially politicians – recognise the democratic deficit and take extra steps to ensure that the will of children and young people is known, acknowledged, and acted upon. Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child's right to express their views freely in decisions that affect them, and have these views taken into account. Children and young people often struggle to access this right, and without a vote, there are very few ways in which they can influence the UK and Scottish Governments.

The UK Government's decision not to incorporate the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights means children are losing legal protections of their rights. With only months to go until Brexit, urgent action must be taken to safeguard against further regression of children's rights protections. The EU has introduced more than 80 laws that support children's rights – in areas including child protection, toy safety, harmful advertising, paediatric drug development, and cross-border family law. EU funding supports breakfast clubs, youth training and education programmes.

Given the clear impact that leaving the EU will have on children and young people, it is essential

that children and young people are listened to. Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is pleased to be working in partnership with Children in Scotland to deliver the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe which will channel its members' views to decision-makers. We welcome the Scottish Government's commitment to listen to the views of children and young people on Brexit and hope this is the beginning of a sustainable and ongoing relationship through which children and young people's views on Brexit are known, understood and taken into account.

Members of the Panel have already met Michael Russell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Constitutional Relations, as well as members of the First Minister's Standing Council on Europe, and the Panel has started to identify what they think the Scottish and UK Governments should be prioritising to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people. We hope that through working with the Panel, decision-makers will see that not only do they have a duty to listen to children and young people, but that doing so produces better decisions – and it's fun!

It remains unclear exactly how the UK and Scottish Governments will address gaps in protection that could arise as a result of Brexit. It's essential that children and young people (on both sides of the debate) are given a voice in what happens now, throughout any transition period and beyond. The creation of the Panel is a welcome first step, but far more is needed. Decision-makers must make a serious and long-term commitment to protect and fulfil children's rights and take into account the views of those who will live with the results of Brexit for the longest.

International examples show that UNCRC incorporation can foster the culture change needed to truly embed meaningful participation practices. It is within the Scottish Government's power to take forward its commitment to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law as a matter of urgency to ensure that children and

young people are placed at the heart of decision-making. Incorporation will provide the extra step needed right now – and in the future – to ensure that “the will of children and young people” is understood and acted upon in all decisions around Scotland's relationship with Europe.

We caught up with Soroush and Oscar from the *Children and Young People's Panel on Europe* to learn more about its work

Why do you think it's important to include children and young people's voices in the Brexit negotiations?

Oscar: Because it's *our* future. One of our rights as children is to be heard and respected so we want to exercise that! There isn't much about Britain's future in Europe in the Curriculum for Excellence, so the Panel is an important way for us all to learn more.

Soroush: Young people have to experience Brexit first hand. Nowhere near enough information was given to young people about what Brexit would mean for us. Many young people are worried that they will have fewer opportunities, and this affects their future more than other groups.

What made you want to get involved in the Panel?

Soroush: I wanted to be a part of this Panel because I believe many people will be affected by Brexit. According to Theresa May, “Brexit means Brexit”. But will it be a soft Brexit? Will it be a hard Brexit? We don't know.

What we do know is that Brexit will heavily alter Scotland's future, whether it's for the better or the worse. The youngest generation, who will be the first to grow up in Scotland outside the EU will be the *first* people to experience the consequences of Brexit. It is us who will grow up to be the electricians, the engineers, the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. It is our future, decided by adults – so far without the inclusion of our voice.

Oscar: Because it's going to affect our future more than anyone else's because we are young. It's important – we can change that future – it's our world. I wanted to be part of that change.

Can you tell us what you've been doing as part of the Panel?

Oscar: We have had a few meetings, each with a topic. We ask questions, we talk about them and write down our answers and turn these into recommendations for the Scottish Government. I also went to the Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on Children

and Young People. We all spoke to the MSPs about what the Panel has been doing. We split the MSPs into groups and had discussions with them.

Soroush: I am one of 19 members of the Panel, all aged between 8-19. The Panel was formed with the purpose of discussing areas of importance to children and young people and the impact of Brexit in the future. Already the panel has been making a positive impact by making recommendations to Mike Russell, who is in charge of negotiating the best deal for Scotland when we leave the European Union.

We have met with a number of influential people and groups and have participated in the Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People at the Scottish Parliament and a debate at the Festival of Politics. I also had the privilege of meeting Professor Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on Poverty and Human Rights in Glasgow. I was able to discuss with him how Brexit may affect poverty levels within my local community.

What can you tell us about the Panel's recommendations?

Soroush: The recommendations agreed so far are:

To ensure that all children and young people can access opportunities in the EU27 after Brexit. This includes opportunities to travel, volunteer and study.



A strong economy and employment opportunities after Brexit.

For post-Brexit trade deals with non-EU countries to respect workers' rights and the environment.

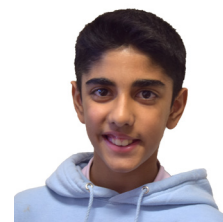
As much clarity about leaving the European Union as possible. Young people must have access to the clear, accurate and accessible information so they can make informed choices.

And clarity on whether current EU funding will be replaced after Brexit by the UK and Scottish Governments.

Oscar: We are covering lots of different subjects such as Erasmus+, who to make trade deals with and lots more. All these recommendations will go from the Scottish Government to the UK Government. Watch this space!



Oscar is a member of the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe

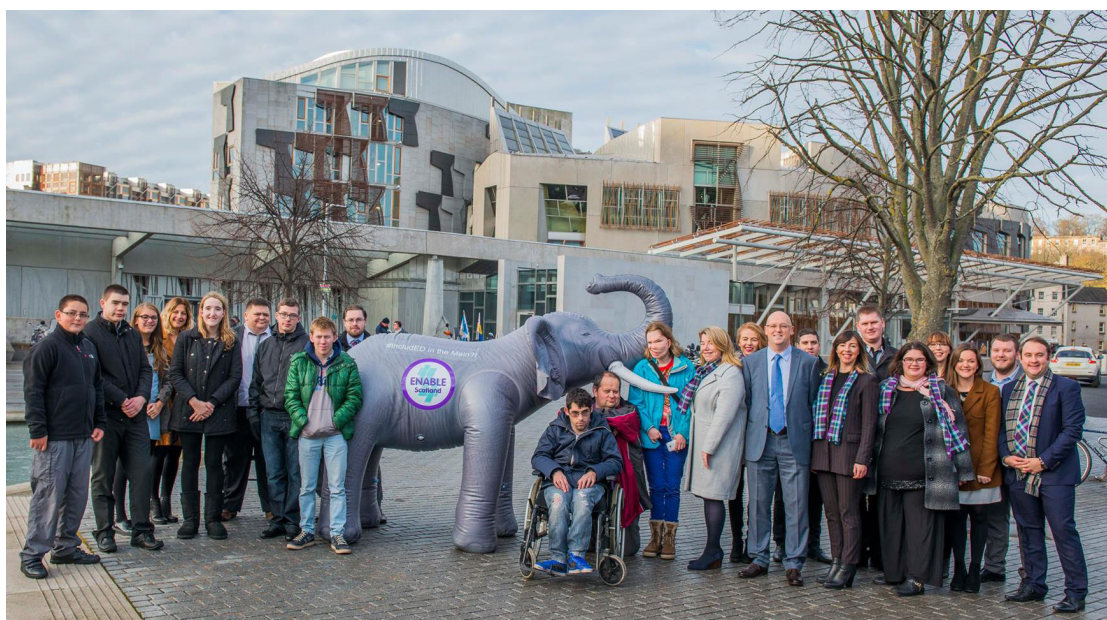


Soroush is a member of the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe

> Find out more about the Panel at childreninScotland.org.uk

"We made politicians sit up and listen"

ENABLE Scotland's ACE Youth programme empowers young people with learning disabilities to campaign on issues that matter to them. In the latest members' spotlight, *Jordan McKenna* and *Lucy McKee* explain



ACE Youth members visiting Scottish Parliament to discuss inclusive education

"It was difficult to stand up and say those things to the whole school. But I'm glad I did it. It needed to be said"

ENABLE Scotland is a charity working for an equal society for every person who has a learning disability. We were founded in 1954 by 10 parents of children who had learning disabilities. They knew that their children should have the same rights as everyone else. This is still what we believe and fight for today. As the largest member-led learning disability charity in Scotland, our members are the voice of our organisation. Our activism groups and committees provide us with a way to find out our members' views and give them a platform for their voices to be heard, locally and nationally.

ACE Youth is an Active Community of Empowered Young People who have learning disabilities, and has been a core project of ENABLE Scotland for more than 10 years. Its purpose is to challenge barriers to an equal society for every person who has learning disabilities, in every community across Scotland.

The ACE Youth project brings young people together to reduce isolation, identify issues that matter to them, and be empowered to use their voices to campaign for equality. For young people who have learning disabilities, our ACE Youth groups play a significant role in supporting them to feel valued and included in their community.

There are seven ACE Youth groups, with three further groups in development. Currently, more than 70 young people attend weekly groups across Angus, Fife and Greater Glasgow.

What does ACE Youth achieve?

Young people who have learning disabilities typically find it more difficult to make friends and usually have smaller social networks than young people without learning disabilities. ACE Youth is vital in not only amplifying the voices of young people who have learning disabilities on issues of importance, but also the general skills many take for granted such as the opportunity to develop confidence, independence and friendships.

Research by Mencap (2016) shows that almost one in three young people with learning disabilities spend less than one hour outside their home on a typical Saturday. Sadly, additional research by Scope found that 85 per cent of young disabled adults from the 18 to 34 year-old age group feel lonely. More than half of working age disabled people who have felt lonely in the past year said they experienced depression (62 per cent) and anxiety (58 per cent); and half experienced stress. ACE Youth seeks to combat this through reducing isolation and increasing participation.

Lucy's story

Chair of ACE Youth Lucy McKee (below, centre) first became involved in ENABLE Scotland's anti-bullying campaign, Be the Change, and later trained to deliver workshops addressing stigma and promoting understanding of learning disability.

I was 14 when I first went to the Youth Group. I was shy, had no friends, no confidence and I was being bullied at school. It's not easy to ignore when someone suggests that you should never have been born. So I decided to do something about it.

I was going to concentrate on what I wanted to say. I asked to speak at my school assembly on bullying behaviour. I told them that the nasty comments and jokes can ruin lives. They can really affect people like me. It was difficult to stand up and say those things to the whole school. But I'm glad I did it. It needed to be said.

I joined the *#IncludED in the Main?!* campaign and shared my experience as someone who has

a learning disability and attended a mainstream school. Through the campaign I was able to talk to newspapers, radio and television journalists. I went to the Scottish Parliament and spoke to ministers and then to representatives from Inclusion Europe.

#IncludED in the Main?! made politicians sit up and listen to what was going on in schools. Because of this campaign, the government is changing the guidelines on how people who need support are treated at school. I think that's an achievement, and I'm proud that I helped to make that happen.

When I think about the bullies now, they don't bother me. I think, I've been in the news and visited parliament to speak with ministers – so who's the failure here?

ENABLE Scotland is an organisation that wants to make the world better for people who have learning disabilities. The way I see it, that's something that's worth being part of, and that's why I'm a member.

To ensure all groups are heard throughout Scotland, ACE Youth elects two representatives from each area to meet as National ACE Youth. National ACE Youth guides ENABLE Scotland, providing accountability to young members. It is also a forum to consult our membership on key issues to inform our influencing work.

The impact of ACE Youth

The project has grown from strength to strength over the last decade. Led by young people, ACE Youth has:

Campaigned for and secured **the right to free bus travel** for people who have learning disabilities;

Championed equal access to transport by securing a **20-hour reduction** in the notice required for passenger assist on trains;

Challenged political parties to think differently and **#ENABLEtheVote** for people with learning disabilities; and

Trained young people to deliver community workshops to **challenge stigma** as part of their **#BetheChange** campaign.

Most recently, through the award-winning campaign *#IncludED in the Main?!*, ACE Youth secured the right to be included at school, achieving **specific guidance from the Scottish Government** on the presumption to mainstream.

ACE Youth celebrated Year of Young People by hosting an inclusive music event – You Can't Stop the Beat – at SWG3 Glasgow. This formed part of their latest campaign to influence change in the live music industry; ensuring young disabled people can enjoy gigs alongside their peers. This and other ACE Youth projects have attracted media coverage from outlets such as the Daily Record and Third Force News and has been highlighted by Scottish Government ministers on social media.

ENABLE Scotland will celebrate our 65th year in 2019, and alongside some very exciting anniversary celebrations, we will continue to work towards an equal society for every person who has a learning disability.

Jordan McKenna is ENABLE Scotland's Chief Storyteller.

Benefits of Children in Scotland membership

"Being part of the Children in Scotland network offers an excellent opportunity to connect with like-minded third sector organisations and to hear their latest ideas on improving the lives of kids in our country."

*Jordan McKenna,
ENABLE Scotland*

ACE Youth members launching #BetheChange campaign



> ACE Youth is continually looking to expand its groups throughout Scotland. If you, a family member, or someone you know would like to join, visit enable.org.uk/ace-youth-groups

> Follow us on Facebook / [ENABLEScotland](https://www.facebook.com/ENABLEScotland) and Twitter @ [ENABLEScotland](https://twitter.com/ENABLEScotland)