

1993-2018: Special anniversary edition

Children in Scotland magazine

25 years,

25

calls for
change

Marking our quarter century, we asked young people, our staff, members, and experts from across the sector what it will take to transform children's lives

This is what
they told us...

 Certified Instructor
INDESIGN CC

Adobe InDesign Made Easy!



Alma Training offers InDesign training courses throughout Scotland tailored to your specific requirements.

Bespoke training is delivered on-site and can incorporate learners 'live' projects.

All levels catered for, from beginners to advanced users.

BY INVESTING IN TRAINING YOU:

- eliminate expensive outsourcing
- upskill your team to meet your company design needs in-house
- build confident, efficient and accurate InDesign users
- save time and money by increasing productivity
- ensure learners are using best practices while creating professional looking documents.



Get in touch to discuss your training requirements

email: alma@almatraining.com tel: 07963 715646 visit: www.almatraining.com

GILLESPIE MACANDREW

We offer Children in Scotland members **free legal advice** and assistance on legal and business matters in a free 30-minute consultation.

We take the time to understand your aims and goals and have the expertise to help your organisation achieve these by providing practical advice and solutions to meet your particular needs: We can provide legal advice on the following:

- Charity Formation
- Constitution and Governance
- Incorporation & Changes to legal form
- Charity reorganisation
- Reorganisation of restricted funds
- Trading subsidiaries
- Collation, amalgamation and wind-up

If you would like to discuss your business objectives please contact Lianne Lodge on

lianne.lodge@gillespiemacandrew.co.uk
0131 260 7523



Children in Scotland

Level 1, Rosebery House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ
Telephone: 0131 313 2322
info@childreninScotland.org.uk
childreninScotland.org.uk

Issue 188
October-November 2018

Editorial

Editors: Lisa Clark, Jennifer Drummond, Lynn Gilmour, Caitlin Logan and Chris Small

Advertising

Tracy Hope
T: 0131 313 8829
E: thope@childreninScotland.org.uk

Design

Template and cover: Alan Tait

Head of Engagement & Learning: Simon Massey

Chief Executive: Jackie Brock

We acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government through a CYPFEIF and ALEC Fund Grant.

Our vision is that all children in Scotland have an equal chance to flourish.

The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily the opinions of the editor or Children in Scotland.

To contribute to *Children in Scotland Magazine* contact Caitlin Logan, Acting Editor:
T: 0131 313 8823 /
E: clogan@childreninScotland.org.uk

Membership

Members of Children in Scotland receive discounts on publications, training and conferences, plus a range of digital communications.

For information on joining contact:
T: 0131 313 8829
E: membership@childreninScotland.org.uk
W: childreninScotland.org.uk/join

Subscriptions

Children in Scotland Magazine is published bi-monthly and is free for members. If you would like to subscribe, contact clogan@childreninScotland.org.uk

Registered charity in Scotland
SCO03527

Registered company number
83383

ISSN 1474-9424

Call 26: Always remember to take your trout home on a Friday.

Welcome...

...to the 25th anniversary special edition of *Children in Scotland Magazine*



Caitlin Logan
[@cisweb](https://www.instagram.com/cisweb)
[#CISMAGAZINE](https://www.facebook.com/CISMAGAZINE)

I join Children in Scotland as Acting Editor (while Jen is off on leave with her new baby girl – congratulations Jen!) at an exciting time. My first issue of the magazine marks the 25th anniversary of the organisation

– a time for reflection on all that has been achieved in children and young people's rights over the past quarter century, but also a time for looking ahead to the vital progress which still needs to be made.

Established in 1993 following a report which called for the creation of a new national organisation to encourage 'progressive child and family services' and speak 'across the disciplines', Children in Scotland has seen remarkable steps forward in its lifetime.

From the introduction of the first formal entitlement to childcare provision in 2000 to an ambition of 1140 hours per year by 2020. From the scrapping of Section 28 to the establishment of a Cross-Party Working Group on LGBTI inclusion in schools. This

year, the Scottish Government has stated its support for the Equal Protection Bill, which would protect children from physical punishment, and committed to incorporating the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law.

There is an ever-growing appreciation of the importance of children's participation in policymaking, and of the need to work to ensure all children have an equal start in life.

And yet, that work is far from over.

In this special edition, people and organisations across civil society join us in outlining 25 calls for change to transform the lives of children in Scotland for the better. If you agree with the calls, please help us share them far and wide, use the #25Calls hashtag, and, most importantly, join us in making them a reality for children and young people.

For now, enjoy reading our incredible collection of contributions – they're sure to inspire you into action!

Caitlin Logan

Children in Scotland staff, Autumn 2018



Not pictured: Jackie Brock, Alison Clancy (Parenting across Scotland), Lisa Clark, Jen Drummond (on maternity leave), Clair Halliday (National Parent Forum of Scotland), Alison Hay (CHANGE), Catherine Garner, Elaine Kerridge, Marion Macleod, Sandra Mitchell (Resolve), Alison Payne (Resolve), Chris Ross, Svenja Schulz, Clare Simpson (Parenting across Scotland), Jemma Tracey, Vicky Wan, Jacqueline Wilson.

Feel like you're talking and no one is listening?

Independent advocacy for children and young
people across Scotland

0141 847 0660

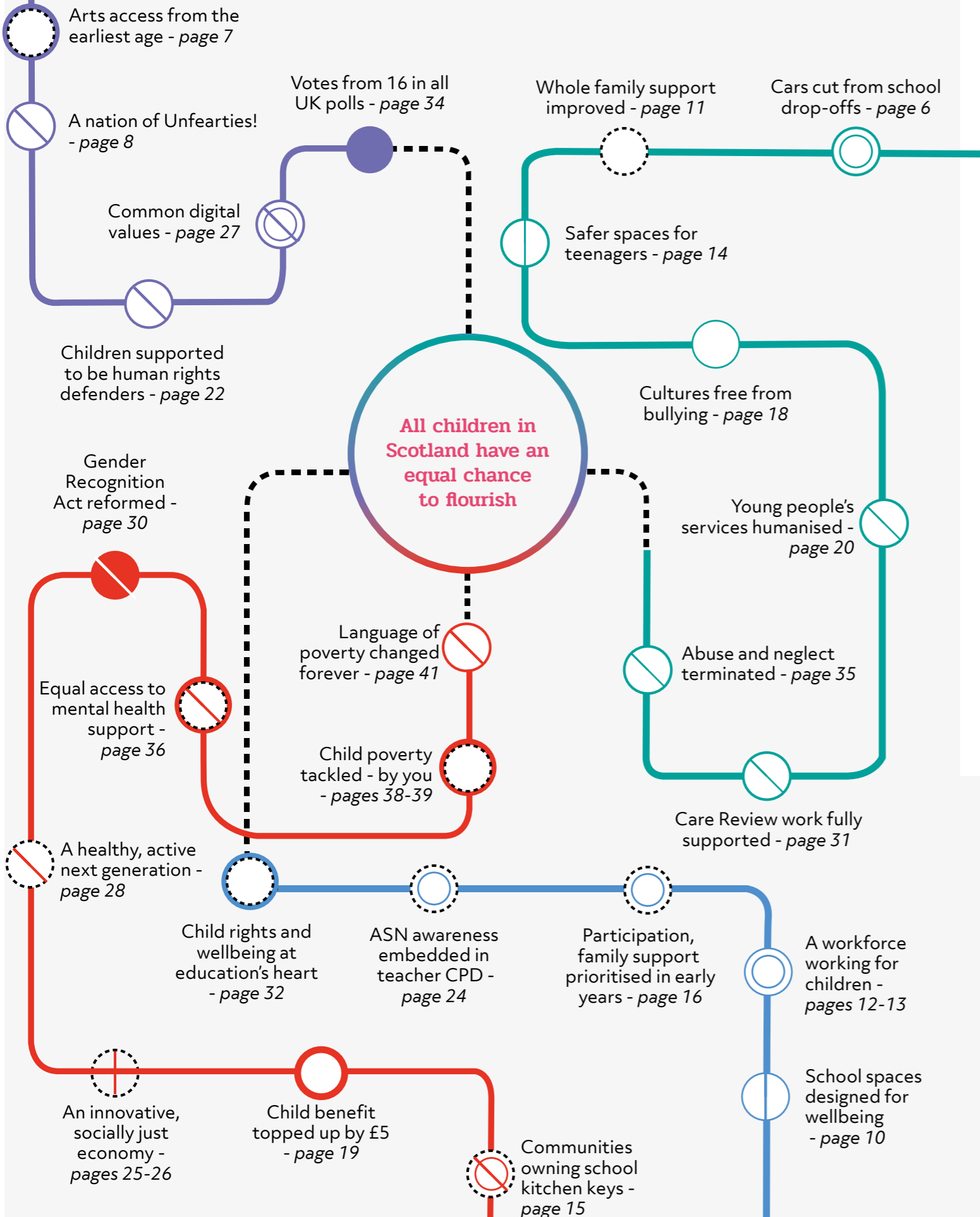
www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk

 Partners in Advocacy Children  @PIAScotland

partners
in
advocacy



25 Calls: A route map to a better future



25 years, 25 Calls for change

Our anniversary campaign brings together diverse voices with a shared vision to improve children's lives, as *Chris Small* explains



Chris Small is Children in Scotland's Communications & Marketing Manager

"After eight years of austerity it's important that our ambitions for young people aren't compromised by lack of bravery, imagination or optimism"

Last year through our rebranding process we asked members, ex-members, staff, friends and 'critical friends' for an honest view of what they thought of us. The verdict was overwhelmingly positive, with a few caveats.

We were told we needed to make more of our leadership role, be unafraid to take a stand on issues that matter for children and put extra effort into listening to members. Evidence should be at the core of all positions we take, children's views have more profile in our work, and we needed to always demonstrate our values in the way we communicate.

Over the past year we've made a real effort to absorb these messages. This has led us to our anniversary project, 25 Calls, intended both as a celebration of our contribution since 1993 and a sign that we're listening to you. We wanted to create a campaign that would bring together diverse voices, drive dialogue, and express shared values.

So, here are 25 calls for change to enhance children's equality and rights, published in partnership with more than 50 organisations and individuals. They've been shaped by the priorities of our young people's advisory group, Changing our World, followed by a survey of members which helped us hone specific topics. Then, over the past six months, we reached out to young people, members and our own staff and asked them to take part.

The result is an unapologetically broad and ambitious set of ideas, ranging from specific policy prescriptions (CPAG and Poverty Alliance's 'Top up child benefit by £5 per month' - page 19) to calls requiring fundamental shifts in attitudes (YCSA's 'Young people's

services must be humanised' - page 20). After eight years of austerity it's important that our ambitions for what we can achieve for young people aren't compromised by lack of bravery, imagination or optimism. That's especially true when we're surrounded by so much persuasive evidence and practice telling us what can work.

A list of 25 is useful presentationally, but we want to stress that every contribution here is valid and valued. Donna Borokinn's manifesto for food education (page 15) is as important as Jade's view (page 30) on recognition for trans young people. Inevitably though, some key themes emerge. The Changing our World group tells us why better access to mental health support for young people is so vital (page 36), while John McKendrick contextualises the challenges we face in tackling child poverty (page 38). And we would urge everyone to read our number one call from Josh, Rebecca, Divine and Somer (page 41), which is expressed with great sincerity and power.

The Calls have been divided up into themes, or 'routes' (see key, below) and our 'route map to the future' (left) will help you navigate. In the margins of every page we link the Calls to Articles of the UNCRC or relevant General Comments from the UN (we're grateful to Juliet Harris and Together for all their help).

We want to thank everyone who has contributed and we look forward to taking these calls forward with you. Achieving what's described here will take years of work. But look back a quarter century to pre-devolution Scotland and you might feel encouraged by the progress we've made. We know working in partnership has been central to this success - so let's build on that over the next 25 years.

Key to the map

Access and improvement works

- Closed pending legislative changes
- ⦿ Access to route subject to adequate funding
- ⊙ Customers may experience delays at any time due to adverse policymaking
- ⌚ Children and young people-led destination
- ⊙ Access subject to development of good practice
- ⊖ Work underway to change attitudes

Routes to success

- Strengthening rights & participation
- Supporting young people, families & communities
- Challenging inequalities
- Improving education, skills & learning experiences

Call 25 Cut cars from school drop-offs to boost active travel and improve air quality for our children



Alex Quayle is Senior Policy Officer with Sustrans Scotland, the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle

sustrans.org.uk/scotland

"...the right to good quality health care, clean water and good food... Children should be able to live in a safe and healthy environment..."

– Article 24, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read why changing our economic model could improve children's health
> Call #11, page 25

> Follow #25Calls online to see which organisations have endorsed this call

By Alex Quayle

The chaotic scene of cars jostling to drop children off for school will be familiar to many. We believe it is unsafe, unhealthy, and unnecessary. So many children being driven to school causes congestion, increases air pollution around schools and raises concerns about road safety.

A YouGov survey, carried out for Sustrans in spring 2018, polled more than 1,000 children aged five to 16 on what they thought about their journey to school. It found that less than one in four children wanted to be dropped-off by car near the school gates and more than half wanted to travel actively; on foot, by bike or by scooter. Troublingly, however, 39 per cent of children identified traffic as a barrier to walking or cycling to school.

Cars around the school gates are a key reason why more parents or guardians choose the car for the journey to school. But, each car only increases safety concerns, meaning more people think they need to drive. We cannot expect change when traffic is only encouraging more cars. But there is a simple solution to this problem – close the road to traffic.

Since 2015, Edinburgh has closed roads around 11 primary schools for drop-off and pick-up. Results are promising. There was an immediate reduction in cars around school gates as the number of children who were driven to school decreased. Speeds on nearby roads decreased without an increase in congestion. In fact, there were 2,259 fewer vehicles on the road as

a result of the street closures – more than 200 fewer per school.

More children were allowed to walk as the road closures tackled two of the biggest factors for parents and guardians: dangerous parking and fast traffic. Some schools, those that decreased traffic by the most, saw walking increase by up to 10-12 per cent.

It gets better. Motor vehicles are responsible for as much as 80 per cent of nitrous oxide pollution in urban areas. Nitrous oxide inflames lungs, increases lung infections and respiratory problems, and disproportionately hurts young people. An evaluation of the school street closures by the City of Edinburgh Council showed they resulted in consistently reduced overall nitrous oxide levels, often by more than 50 per cent.

This is not a call for a complete ban on cars around schools. Each school should be considered on a case-by-case basis, and we appreciate that often it may not be practical for children to walk to school as many parents juggle school drop-off with getting to work. However, schools need to work with parents and guardians to prevent the drop-off moving to a busier road nearby and to ensure that children, parents and caregivers who cannot travel actively are not excluded.

This is a simple, inexpensive and quick measure that is proven to make a difference to road safety, congestion, children's physical activity and air quality. It's time for all of Scotland's local authorities to make this change for children.

"Nitrous oxide inflames lungs, increases respiratory problems and hurts young people"



Photograph: Brian Morrison / Sustrans

Call 24 Ensure all children can participate in high quality, innovative arts experiences from the earliest age



Rhona Matheson is Chief Executive of Starcatchers, Scotland's National Arts and Early Years Organisation

starcatchers.org.uk

"...the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts..."

– Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about children's rights to participate in arts, and be listened to
> Call #23, overleaf

By Rhona Matheson

It was during a performance of *Hup*, our live classical musical and theatre experience in an Aberdeen nursery, that a two-year-old girl who had been selectively mute since the death of her mother spoke for the first time.

It was whilst adventuring in foam-filled jungles and embarking on trips to the moon in homemade space suits that a kinship carer participating in our Creative Kin project found "the chance to bond as a family".

And it was after working with an artist to embed creative approaches in an early years setting that a practitioner described how the experience had "completely revolutionised" her practice.

These examples are a glimpse of the transformative impact that participation in high quality arts experiences can have on children and their families.

This participation might be experimenting in a playful, creative and colourful way with different materials, dancing, making music or experiencing live theatre. It is the *process* that matters. All of these experiences facilitate deep learning, allowing children to explore

From Starcatchers' show 'Hup'.



Photograph: Dahlia Katz

the world around them, developing curiosity and imagination, and stimulating dialogue, connection and empathy. They bring about powerful physical and emotional responses that will have a lasting impact, even in the very youngest babies.

The arts enable all of us to express ourselves. For children, particularly those who are pre- or non-verbal, this freedom of expression gives them a voice. Indeed, the right to participate freely in cultural life and the arts is enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). However, it is still viewed as a nice 'add-on' rather than a fundamental part of our development.

Over the next 25 years Scotland must build on existing foundations and take a bolder, more strategic approach to the development and delivery of arts and creativity within families, communities, education, social care and

"High quality arts can have a transformative impact on children and their families"

early learning and childcare. We need arts and creativity to be embedded at every level in every community.

This will require a system of funding that connects across sectors and provides long-term, consistent support.

Through Starcatchers' live performances we've seen the instinctive, joyous response all children can have to the arts and the possibilities for learning and development that stem from that experience. Scotland needs the resources to ensure the very best professional theatre, dance and musical experiences can be accessed by all.

Through our community engagement projects, where professional artists work directly with vulnerable children and their families within communities for sustained periods of time, we've seen participants' confidence grow, relationships become stronger and increased wellbeing and parental capacity as a result. We need to embed these projects in our communities for the longer-term, with families supported through participation in artist-led activity over a number of years.

Our Creative Skills programme, in which professional artists deliver artist-led training for early years practitioners, teachers, childminders and voluntary sector staff has increased professional confidence and understanding of how the arts can be embedded in pre-birth to three and Early Level Curriculum for Excellence to improve outcomes for children – and we've seen positive changes to delivery as a result. We need to take this further and embed practical expressive arts skills into initial teacher education, early learning and childcare training programmes and continual professional development.

These steps value the arts as a fundamental part of every child's earliest experiences. The pay off for our children and for society as a whole far outweighs the cost.

Call **23**

Let's make Scotland a nation of Unfearties!

By Rona Blackwood, Chelsea Stinson and Juliet Harris



Rona Blackwood is Head of Programmes at the Children's Parliament



Chelsea Stinson is Children's Voices Programmes Manager at the Children's Parliament

childrensparliament.org.uk

What is an Unfeartie?

Unfearties are people who are courageous in discussing children's issues, make a difference in children's lives, and speak up for them so that children growing up in Scotland are healthy, happy and safe. Anyone with an interest in children's rights is invited to become an Unfeartie, adhering to six basic principles:

Listen to children and view them as capable assets to their communities.

Strive to ensure children's voices are heard and challenge infringements of human dignity.

Help children and adults learn the values of honesty, empathy, respect and social justice.

Promote greater awareness and understanding of children's rights.

Support children who want to be children's human rights defenders.

Speak up about the Unfeartie role and spread the message about how to join our movement.

Where did the movement come from?

The Unfeartie movement started in early 2017 to mark the 21st anniversary of the Children's Parliament and to provide an opportunity for adults to champion children's rights.

We want to create a world where all children grow up in an environment of love, dignity and respect. To achieve this, we need a culture change in how adults value and listen to children in every walk of life.

Much is going on across Scotland to give us hope that this culture change is possible. More children and young people are learning about their rights, and many are keen to become Human Rights Defenders, to stand up for their own rights and the rights of others.

Many adults – from community workers and school bus drivers through to police officers and politicians – are Unfearties in practice and take every step they can to uphold children's rights.

Whilst the Scottish Government has made a number of welcome commitments to support children's human rights, Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is clear that further tangible action is needed to make rights a reality for every child. This should start immediately with the full incorporation of

the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into law - making children's rights binding, not guiding.

For example, Article 31 of the UNCRC enshrines every child's right to rest, play and recreational activities and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. This means that children's rights need to be at the centre of decisions that aren't always associated with children.

For example, decisions made about transport and planning can have a real impact on children's right to play – affecting the amount of green space around their homes and schools, and their ability to get to places where they can play safely.

Participation in action

Children's Parliament have worked with the A9 Community Group in Dunkeld & Birnam to include children in the planning process for the dualling of the A9.



Lachlan, a member of the A9 Community Group who supported engagement of children in the Dunkeld and Birnam project and who is an active Unfeartie

Children from the Royal School of Dunkeld explored their vision for the future of their community, what they valued now and their hopes for the future. This led to the development of five 'billboards' (see example, right) that highlighted their key messages which included safety, intergenerational connections, the natural environment, equality and respect, and opportunities to explore interests and talents.

The children's billboards were used as a touchstone with members of the community, Transport Scotland and Jacobs (the contracted engineering consultancy) to develop route options together.

Children's Parliament facilitated workshops for children and young people to explore different ideas for the road and junctions in the area, and one Member of the Children's Parliament (MCP) came up with a differently shaped roundabout for the Dunkeld Junction:

"An eggabout wouldn't take up much space and it would keep the trees. And it could have a guinea pig reserve in the middle!"

Member of Children's Parliament, aged 8

This idea was so clever (and cleverly named!) that it made it through to the next stages of the process, and was mentioned by former Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work, Keith Brown in a committee meeting in the Scottish Parliament.

Over the summer, Children's Parliament supported more than 40 children and young people to vote in the Big Decide, an event where the community voted on its preferred route option. When the result was announced, the community chose the same route option that was preferred by children and young people – Route A combined with Junction 1.

This option includes the 'eggabout', although there's no news yet on the guinea pig reserve!

This work in Dunkeld and Birnam demonstrates the impact of listening to children. They offer a unique insight into the world and their ideas can help shape developments in infrastructure, policy and practice. It also highlights what can be achieved when adults embrace a rights-based approach and value children for what they can offer the world.

"Our views are important, we see the world in an imaginative and positive way. We need to be valued for what we can offer the world now as children, and not just as citizens to be!"
Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament

Children want to be a part of the solution and are keen to share their experiences and views with adults – we just need to listen! So join us, become an Unfeartie today and make Scotland a happy, healthy and safe nation for children.



Juliet Harris is Director of Together, the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

togetherscotland.org.uk



Image from the Dunkeld and Birnam billboards, created by young people

"...the right to be listened to and taken seriously..."

"...make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike..."

– Articles 12 and 42 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about how children can be supported to be human rights defenders > Call #13, page 22

Call 22 Build wellbeing into the design of our learning spaces to show young people they are truly valued

By Diarmaid Lawlor



Diarmaid Lawlor is Director of Place with Architecture & Design Scotland
ads.org.uk

Equity and excellence drive education in Scotland. They influence how we choose to close the attainment gap, design the curriculum and empower teachers. It underpins how we try to get it right, for all young people.

The foundation of learning is wellbeing. Healthy social and emotional development in childhood and adolescence has been shown to be positively associated with better educational outcomes. The quality of our environments directly affects the experience of wellbeing.

Often we find young people have negative experiences of spaces in school, with a common complaint being there aren't enough social spaces to gather and build relationships. The results can be disengagement, disaffection or a sense of not feeling safe, affecting mental health, behaviour and attitudes – as well as learning.

To achieve excellence and equity in young people's experiences across the learning estate, we need to make more of the spaces we already have, and design new environments to better respond to changing wellbeing needs.

Schools and local authorities regularly assess the suitability of spaces for learning using guidance set out in the Scottish Government's Core Fact on the suitability of the school estate. We call for collective leadership between learners, educationalists and local authority asset teams to drive improvements in social spaces to better support wellbeing using evidence from the Core Fact assessments. 'Design for wellbeing' should be a key element of all school improvement plans across the country, at all stages of learning, supported by an evidence-based approach to impact.

To achieve this ambition, we suggest a series of measures. First, more participation by young people in the decision-making around changing and managing spaces in schools, as part of the client team on management and investment. We need to listen to what it is they want, and respond appropriately.

We also need more spaces within schools and learning spaces allocated to learner needs. This will involve creative thinking, and challenge to old patterns of use, to create new multi-purpose spaces, more social spaces, more and different learning settings and more places young people can feel relaxed to be themselves. In addition, diversifying the range of spaces within schools will help to better



The Soyoo Joyful Growth Centre in Beijing, designed by Crossboundaries

manage transitions between learning stages, enabling learners to make decisions with confidence, adapt spaces to their needs, and find retreat and support spaces as they need.

"We need to design new environments to better respond to changing wellbeing needs"

As part of this we should be re-thinking our use of the outdoors, recognising its role as a space for wellbeing and learning and enabling more learner led opportunities in these settings. We need to build on evidence, linking to the Scottish Public Service Improvement cycle, supported by the low-cost Tests of Change project by Architecture & Design Scotland to drive more and better inspiring spaces.

All of this requires a radical change in our thinking and our approach, but ensuring consideration and understanding of design and space is a key element of teacher and practitioner training, and Career-long Professional Learning, will help to cement the long-term approach we need.

Young people who took part in design workshops run by Architecture & Design Scotland told us:

"(We need) a building that allows independence and choice."

"(We need) a good place to go and talk to your friends."

"Social space is important for our mental health."

We owe it to them to listen.



Clare Simpson is Manager of Parenting across Scotland
parentingacrossscotland.org

> Follow #25Calls online to see which organisations have endorsed this call

Call 21 Invest in relationship-based whole-family support

By Clare Simpson

The impact of growing up in poverty on families is devastating. Living in poor housing and feeling insecure about money is hardly conducive to good parenting. Asking parents to take part in parenting programmes when they don't know how they're going to put food on the table is more of a slap in the face to struggling families than a supportive move. If we truly want to ensure that parents can support their children, first, we need to make sure that they have the resources to do so.

When families set out on their parenting journey they need good universal services that offer the help, support and information they need. It's an important time for any new parent. For some, it can be that golden moment when change is

possible, because the overwhelming majority of new parents want the best for their children.

It's a key time to make a difference and there are already some welcome initiatives in place – the new Best Start antenatal programme, a baby box for every new baby in Scotland, and the new health visitor pathway. To make sure these initiatives are able to deliver on their promises, they need to be adequately resourced.

The high take-up of universal services means that they can identify where families are having problems and direct them to appropriate support. Unfortunately, local authority budgets have been cut so drastically, with children and families services bearing the brunt, that all too often family support is simply not available. In order for children and families to thrive, central and local government need to invest in family support.

Only when families are able to meet their basic needs and have supportive universal services should we think about targeted programmes. There will be some parents who are still struggling; many who are vulnerable and need additional help. For some, this may be through family support, while for others, a parenting programme may have a role to play.

"Asking parents to take part in these programmes when they don't know how they're going to put food on the table is a slap in the face"

Holistic family support, which is relationship-based and works with the strengths of families must be the starting point. We believe it will be more financially affordable and, as importantly, effective in meeting families' needs. We need a new focus on supporting the whole family, recognising that families are where children are nurtured to grow and thrive.

We are calling for a Supporting Families Strategy that: ensures families have their basic needs met; provides comprehensive universal services; requires government departments to family-proof their policies; respects and values families; provides sufficient resources to local authorities to support families; and works with families in a relationship-based model using their strengths to help them thrive.

"...a right to live with a family who cares for them..."

– Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about supporting parents and families
> Call 9, page 29



Picture: Belinda Lawley

Call 20 Deliver a workforce that works for children: confident, skilled and values-driven

By Simon Massey and Liz Green



Simon Massey is Children in Scotland's Head of Engagement & Learning

childreninscotland.org.uk



Liz Green is Senior Development Officer at YouthLink Scotland

youthlinkscotland.org

"Sixty-five per cent of children may end up in jobs that don't exist today – but people skills will always be needed"

"...the right to an education which develops their personality, respect for their rights and the environment..."

– Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about supporting young people in our future economy > Call 11, page 26

Childcare, youth work, teaching, social work, family learning... The children's sector covers such a range of specialisms and ways of working, it can be a daunting task to establish how it should be best equipped to meet the ever-changing needs of children and families.

Despite this, here are seven common aims that, if achieved, we believe would result in an effective workforce:

Ensure that children's sector professions are seen as attractive, meaningful and rewarding.

Recruit people of all ages and backgrounds, who are passionate about their work, to ensure we have a diversity which represents the world we live in.

Invest in and prioritise induction, on-going supervision and the development of the workforce – nationally, locally and organisation by organisation.

Ensure learning and development opportunities provide the right balance of knowledge, skills and experience, and are accessible for all.

Create specific leadership development opportunities at all levels to ensure quality, confidence and continuity.

Embed some consistent approaches such as the Common Core, which describe the skills, knowledge, understanding and values everyone should have if they work with children and their families, while also being open to trying new approaches.

Connect the workforce – share learning and skills at all levels, see what works and gain from multidisciplinary learning.

Embrace digital, protect 'soft' skills

We must make use of digital advancements. The provision of online learning opportunities is just one example. But we also need to think further ahead.

The World Economic Forum report, *The Future of Jobs* (2016), said that 65% of primary school children will end up in jobs that don't exist today, something that makes longer-term planning challenging. Luckily for us in the

children's sector, PricewaterhouseCooper's (PWC) report, *How will automation impact jobs?* (2018), emphasised that 'people skills' will always be required. To take one example, by the mid-2030s, a much higher level of manufacturing jobs will be affected than those in education, health and social work.



Develop leadership at all levels

Children in Scotland is increasingly looking to the future from a longer-term, strategic perspective. We ask the question 'what do we need to have in place to best meet the needs of children and improve their lives?'

From autumn 2018, we will be testing two exciting new projects which could help shape the workforce and bolster partnership working:

A collective leadership programme involving all the components of the system around the child across all sectors, focusing on building leadership capacity. The intention is to add value to existing sector-specific programmes, enabling us to take a collective approach to improving outcomes.

A specific learning and development pathway that will provide Pupil Support Assistants with the knowledge and skills they need to undertake their vital role in our children's learning settings – celebrating their achievements and supporting their professional development.

We also champion the participation of children and young people by making full use of the contribution of our advisory group, Changing our World, recruiting young people to our Board and, in partnership with others, providing young person-led projects such as FMQT: Next Generation. We are particularly keen to offer leadership opportunities for young people and want to see their experiences embedded in the workforce in a meaningful way.

What works? Share it

YouthLink Scotland develops the workforce by providing a range of activities, including our practice development offer, listening to our members' experiences and connecting people via our networks. Our guidance, training and resources address sector priorities such as digital, equalities and health. Scotland's Youth

Work Outcomes (and accompanying indicators) are designed as a quality improvement and evaluation resource for the workforce to use.

The Youth Work Training Forum, supported by YouthLink Scotland, is developing a National Youth Work Induction Checklist to be used across youth work settings in the statutory and voluntary sectors. This will ensure that new entrants to the sector have an agreed grounding in the values, principles and skills for youth work and an understanding of young people's realities.

As we develop our new strategic plan, we will gather the views of members and young people to understand how we can best support the growth of a confident, skilled and well-led workforce.

Adapt, collaborate – and listen

YouthLink Scotland and Children in Scotland feel that there is a real opportunity to embed the views and experiences of children and young people in the development of an effective workforce – either as service users or those delivering services. This is central to building the workforce of the future.

All organisations can create meaningful participation work and bolster young people's leadership skills by:

Asking and listening to children's views of what they need from their workforce.

Facilitating young people's involvement in governance in delivery and training organisations in a meaningful, non-tokenistic way.

Engaging with the younger workforce: organisations have a role supporting them into the sector and learning from them.

An effective workforce for the future relies on providing the right leadership opportunities now. These should be embedded at all levels of development, from induction through to the role of sector leaders, and post-retirement. Those new to the children's sector, whatever their age, should have the chance to develop their leadership skills. These early career moments are extremely formative and can be built on progressively.

We need 21st century leaders: people who can be adaptable, collaborative, listening, democratic citizens, who use technology, are problem-solvers and can enable others to grow and shine.

Work hand in hand

Scotland's children deserve the best possible workforce able to meet their needs. Scotland's children's workforce deserves the best possible support and learning opportunities. Achieving both of these is not necessarily easy, but they do go hand-in-hand.

We need to draw on shared principles, use the learning from the work described above, listen to young people and those working with them, and collaborate. The reward will be an evidence-based approach to workforce development, and a confident, skilled, values-driven workforce. Working together, we can ensure all children in Scotland have an equal chance to flourish.



RESOLVE:ASL offers workplace mediation to help resolve conflict in a work setting

In a modern workplace nothing slows down progress faster than conflicts associated with unresolved human resource issues. The resolution of interpersonal disputes by an experienced and qualified mediator can provide a non-adversarial alternative to otherwise sanction-orientated actions.

Conflict between colleagues is often unavoidable, but need not produce negative results, as mediation can re-establish good professional working relationships

With Workplace Mediation:

- >> over 90% of disputes are resolved in just one day
- >> 83% of employers saw improved relationships between employees
- >> 98% of clients feel mediation resolves the issues it is designed to address

For more information contact our Mediation Manager, Sandra Mitchell on 0131 313 8844 or email resolve@childreninscotland.org.uk



CPD-accredited Training Courses in your area now available!

Has a child with Down's syndrome recently started at your school? Are there already children with Down's syndrome in your school who have transferred to your class?

We are delivering training courses regionally across Scotland on Supporting a Child with Down's syndrome, Positive Behaviour Support and Teaching Numeracy and Reading. Please check our website for dates and locations, and how to book your place. We can also offer bespoke training on specific issues and individual consultation visits to nurseries and schools.

To discuss your training needs contact our team on 0131 442 8840



T: 0131 442 8840 | E: info@dsscotland.org.uk | W: www.dsscotland.org.uk
Registered in Scotland No. 356717. Scottish Charity No. SC011012.

Call 19 Launch a national effort to provide 'Well Teenager' clinics to help all young people who need it

By Karyn McCluskey



Karyn McCluskey is Chief Executive of Community Justice Scotland

communityjustice.scot

"... the right to access adequate information essential for health, development and the ability to participate meaningfully in society..."

"...in order to act adequately on the information, adolescents need to develop the skills necessary, including dealing with particular social situations, interpersonal communication, decision-making, and coping with stress and conflict. States should stimulate and support opportunities to build such skills..."

– General Comment Number 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read what our young people's advisory group are saying about mental health reform
> Call 3, page 36

"Research studies show that traumatic experiences when young increase the likelihood of becoming involved with the justice system"

Those of us who were young in the past might think we know what it is to be young in the present. But we haven't been young in the 21st century. This fast-paced, ever-changing and very critical world has 24/7 access to news, information, gossip and opinions via smartphones and social media. It's very different from the world we lived in when we relied on public phone boxes and the Six O'Clock News.

Like most workplaces, everyone in our office keeps in touch when out and about by phone, email, WhatsApp and Twitter. We let people know we're running late, ask who the resident expert is on an issue we've just been blindsided by in a meeting, and double-check exactly where and when we're expected to be. It is a boon – even if we do occasionally forget to turn it off when we go home. And if it all gets too much for us, we know of services that can support us. They might be workplace-based, third sector or NHS services such as Well Men or Well Women Clinics. We've designed a world that suits the majority of adults very well.

But what about the next generation? Those of us working in community justice are acutely aware that our world doesn't suit everyone, especially young people. There are numerous research studies and personal testimonies that show that negative or traumatic experiences when young directly affect future life chances – including increasing the likelihood of becoming involved with the justice system.

Scotland is becoming familiar with the language of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). But what are we actually doing to ensure that children and young people develop the resilience needed to cope now and in the future? We warmed the planet, crunched the credit and created a technological panopticon for them to live in – where is the infrastructure to help them navigate it?

We already know that people in our prisons are disproportionately more likely to be suffering from mental health or addiction problems or to have grown up in care than the rest of the population. We also know that crime is often generational: by supporting parents we support their children and prevent their involvement in crime. That in turn means fewer victims and communities that are safer for all of us. But young people living in difficult circumstances have their own mental health and other needs, often compounded by financial exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination. A preventative approach, providing support when and where it is needed can halt the cycle of offending and further offending.



We met with health colleagues to discuss the recently published Public Health Priorities for Scotland. And we are happy to support and promote the messages they contain around creating a vibrant, healthy and safe Scotland, where we flourish in our early years and where good mental wellbeing is paramount. What we need now is action. Action to make this happen, action to create support services and action to normalise accessing them.

As a starting point, where are our Well Teenager Clinics? We need to develop a safe space for young people to discuss mental health or indeed any other issues that may be bothering them, not to medicalise problems, but to help teens introduce things to keep themselves well and to intervene early when more substantial issues emerge.

That is not to say there aren't lots of excellent projects in our communities supporting young people. But we need a concentrated national effort to ensure that support is available to every young person, wherever and whenever they need it. And in true 21st century style this must be available face-to-face, online, via text, phone or whatever communication tools young people are using.

Will this cost money? It will, but where would you rather spend it? Now – or when young lives are already broken?

Call 18 Take the next step in participation and food education: give communities the keys to school kitchens

By Donna Borokinni



Donna Borokinni is a nutritional health consultant and trainer working in Glasgow. She is one of the community chefs involved in Children in Scotland's Food, Families, Futures partnership programme



Children at Clydebank Primary cook in the school kitchen as part of our Food, Families Futures partnership, July 2018.

This article is based on an interview by Chris Small

"Achieving this must go hand in hand with top-level reform of welfare, so families have more security"

"... the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development..."

– Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about how Donna's call links to proposals for ensuring our next generation is active and healthy
> Call 9, page 28

I've been working in the Glasgow community since 2005 and over the last five years I've observed food poverty getting much worse, linked to changes in the benefits system. Families are skipping meals to ensure their children are fed – they're not looking after themselves because they don't have the capacity to. The implementation of sanctions has had such a negative effect: one person I met was sanctioned for 26 weeks. Meanwhile, the cost of living for families has gone up while real wages are static or decreasing. People are being forced into low-wage jobs or zero-hour contracts. In other words, they have no stability.

A few years ago, Glasgow City Council weren't really acknowledging food poverty as an issue. Now, there's been a major shift. It's great that the council has responded with funding, but they're going to have to sustain it until the problem is resolved. Achieving this must go hand in hand with top-level reform of welfare, so families have more security and feel empowered. It will mean changing the whole ethos of 'who owns kitchens in the community?'

The motivation in my work is seeing the change in people that food education and practical cooking brings. People can cook anything, but most come to the classes I run believing other people cook and that they're not able to. Many are socially isolated, so I really like the idea of bringing people together through food and building genuine communities. That's what cooking together has the power to do.

In my work, I see the impact of advertising on children all the time. We need to be much more conscious of its power, and challenge it. Let's remind everyone how many billions of pounds McDonalds and other corporations have to spend on advertising to make you buy their products, which are full of fat, salt and

sugar. I like to make milkshakes with children I work with, to show them what goes into a homemade milkshake versus what goes into a McDonald's one. Small exercises like that are important, but it's vital not to preach. There are areas of Glasgow dominated by fast food outlets. People must not be blamed for making 'unhealthy choices' when the only choice available to them is unhealthy.

In schools, we need to work harder to remove the pressure and anxiety around food. We're living in a culture where the message is that food should be fast and come in a packet. In many schools, dinner is served in moulded plastic trays. There is no social element, no encouragement to take your time and enjoy food, and – because children aren't involved in food preparation – a massive issue with food waste.

How do we begin to answer these problems? My vision would be that all schools have training kitchens and that there are always opportunities for parents to access these spaces. One of the best things is helping to build up the relationship with parents so they can incorporate cooking with their children in the home. Food education should be a requirement from P1 upwards; if there are green spaces nearby, they should be used to establish a link with local food; and we should shift Home Economics into school training kitchens. Work I did recently with autistic children hosting their own restaurant, deciding the menu and making the food shows what can be achieved, even when an idea sounds radical and ambitious on paper.

The Food, Families, Futures programme demonstrated that local partnerships can support families effectively and give the problem of food poverty a national profile. It's time for the next step.

Call 17 Prioritise integration, support for families and participation to give children the best start

By Sally Cavers and Anthony O'Malley

The early years are a collective responsibility

Scotland is fully signed up to the importance of investing resources in a child's early years – we see this in our laws, policies and funding priorities, writes Sally Cavers. But now we need to make sure that every child and their family really does get the very best start and early childhood, and that these benefits are sustained through to their adolescence.

We are calling for progress in three key areas – integration, support for families and participation – where we want to see a faster pace of change.

As required under our legislation, we need integrated children's services from pre-birth. This means organisations, governance and structures have to be aligned around meeting children's and families' needs rather than bolted on to arrangements that are designed for other purposes, such as health and social care for older people.

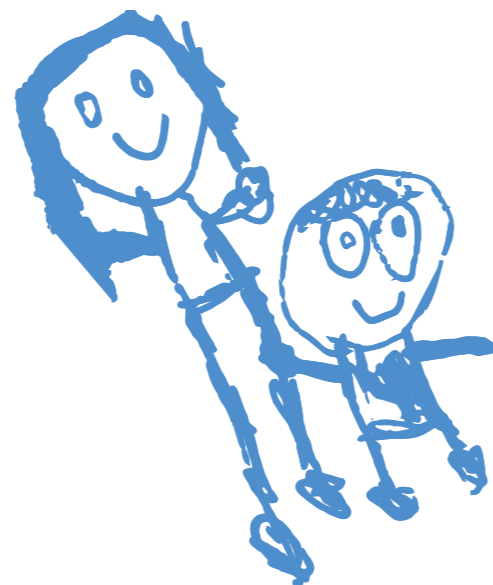
We believe that the diverse workforce in children's services in the early years must be better integrated to fulfil Scotland's laws and policies. An early years workforce action plan that brings together a shared, training, development and qualifications framework with a unifying regulatory and professional body, and equity in terms and conditions and parity of esteem across the range of disciplines within the early years will strengthen the workforce. This is the single intervention most likely to transform outcomes in the early years.

We need services planned around a child's learning and development journey. The welcome investment in early learning and childcare (ELC) must ensure alignment and effective transition between services to allow for the needs of children and their families to be best met. The transition from ELC to school should be smoother and we should consider raising the school starting age to maximise the welcome development of ELC.

Integration for children with additional support needs and for their families is essential for their wellbeing. They are particularly dependent on services based on effective partnerships that share collective responsibility.

The goal of reducing the poverty-related attainment gap must be sustained. But broadening how this is achieved beyond schools is essential. Policy and practice must support the broad foundations of a child's life, providing nurturing services that are

developed alongside the families they aim to benefit. Looking to wider support for children and families within their communities is vital – families benefit from this but so will early years settings, schools and their staff.



From a very early age, children can and must contribute powerfully to how services for them are run, and this must be transparent and accessible to all children. In the early years this can be daunting for practitioners, but it should be supported. We are confident that a sea change in participation and engagement is underway and will become the norm for our next generations.

Children in Scotland has been fortunate to have led on projects such as CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East, and Food, Families, Futures, which instigate and test how things can be done differently to make a lasting change. Working with an extraordinary range of partners has been key to making these projects a success.

We are also pleased to support Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland in the North-East of Glasgow and in its planned expansion. Local child-focused community approaches are a development that we think will make the most of Scotland's national and local commitments to strengthening communities with children at their heart.

We are in no doubt that nationally we have an achievable vision and the commitment needed to secure happy and healthy lives for our youngest children.

The first question we should always ask communities is: what do they need and want?

CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East has been working with communities in the East of Glasgow since October 2016, writes Anthony O'Malley. The project, with funding from Big Lottery Fund, was set up to test some of the recommendations made by the Commission for Childcare Reform in 2015.

We have spent considerable time talking to families who live in the area about what needs to change in order to support their access to childcare. This has enabled us to develop a solid foundation that ensures we keep the needs of the community at the heart of our work. It was not a surprise that families initially spoke about how much childcare costs and how difficult it can be to get a place that meets their needs. However, a key factor that enhanced families' access to and experience of childcare and other services working with children, was the relationship between families and professionals. This sometimes undervalued element was often one of the first things people shared about their experience.

One grandparent told us: "Every wean that comes in that door in the morning gets a hug or a big hello", while a dad using out of school care said: "The biggest thing for me is that my daughter loves being here. It's the relationships she builds with the staff...she loves spending time with them."

We are fortunate to be working with professionals with a deep understanding of the importance of nourishing relationships. As Geraldine Millar, head of St Paul's Primary in Glasgow, told us: "If my children are worried about a problem and it's affecting them then there will be no attainment in my school – unless I sort this out for them. You need a relationship with a person so they can trust and respect you."

There are many highly-skilled professionals like Geraldine out there working to improve children's lives. This might include the staff at their nursery or out of school care. It might be a childminder, a respite service or a local play service providing drop-in sessions. Ultimately, it's these professionals whom we are entrusting with the task of supporting children during this formative stage. They need our backing. This willingness among the community of professionals to drive forward changes to improve the lives of families is a common theme. Many childcare providers have thrown open their doors and welcomed the support CHANGE offers. They are experiencing a period of transformation on an unprecedented scale. The planned expansion of Early Learning and Childcare for 2020 means registered services have ever-increasing demands placed upon them.

Supporting children and their parents and carers during periods of family difficulty has become second nature to many of the services CHANGE works with. During our Family Voices

work we heard from a kinship carer who was grateful for support offered by a nursery, saying: "You just need to go to that office door and say, 'I've got a problem'...problem solved."

This goes beyond registered childcare. We know there are many third sector organisations working just as hard to ensure that children in their early years have access to the support they need to thrive. These services, typically offering activity sessions free of charge, are building meaningful relationships and creating a network of support for families with young children. It's essential we value their work.

If we want to continue to provide the best support to children during their early years, consideration needs to be given to how professionals interact with and show solidarity to each other. The CHANGE Hub, led by Alison Hay, brings together organisations working with families in Glasgow East to share ideas, concerns, good practice and innovation. The aim is to lead change at a local level by creating a template for the future which will reduce barriers to accessing childcare. Current tests of change are underway to support services to access low cost quality food options and increase uptake of holiday provision.

Children in Scotland and the CHANGE project team want to support this vision of creating a better environment for children to grow up in. We need to use what we have learned about relationships to shape the future of early years provision in Glasgow East and further afield. It would be a pointless exercise to develop these services without first considering what the community wants. This can be achieved through engagement that works locally and by encouraging embedded participation from children and their adult care-givers. This approach allows projects like CHANGE to be directly influenced by communities.

In essence, people are the experts in their own lives and have been able to tell us that simply 'more' childcare is not the answer. If we want to provide the best start in life, we need to provide support to quality services working in an integrated manner with our youngest and most vulnerable children. If this is what we work towards then we will have a chance of creating lasting change across the early years sector.



Anthony O'Malley is Project Officer at CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East

childreninScotland.org.uk/change

"People are the experts in their own lives. They've been able to tell us that simply 'more' childcare is not the answer"

Illustrations by Lucas Small, aged four

Sally Cavers is Manager of Enquire and CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East

enquire.org.uk

"There can be a lack of clarity over responsibility for meeting a child's additional support needs"

"...the Convention on the Rights of the Child is to be applied holistically in early childhood..."

" States parties [should] construct a positive agenda for rights in early childhood."

– General comment 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about the importance of play in early education
> Call 6, page 32

Call 16 Work together to build cultures where every voice is valued, and create a society free from bullying



Katie Ferguson is Director of respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service

respectme.org.uk

"...the right to be protected from direct and indirect discrimination."

– Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read related calls on wellbeing in schools and respecting rights
> Call 22, page 10
> Call 8, page 30

More than half (55 per cent) of Muslim young people encountered verbal Islamophobia in high school, and half of all school children who have a disfigurement have experienced bullying because of it.

Where and how bullying takes place has also evolved. In today's digital age, children and young people no longer distinguish between online and offline lives. Similarly, face-to-face and online bullying aren't always exclusive – as one S3 pupil recently summed up, "bullying isn't online or offline, it's everywhere".

And as another young person told us: we are all part of the problem if we do not challenge it.

By Katie Ferguson

Too many children and young people's lives are undermined by bullying. Our research suggests a third of young people experience bullying, but that figure may be higher given that many won't admit or realise they are being bullied.

But while bullying is not new, a raft of research has given us more insight into its nature and how it affects particular groups.

The majority (71 per cent) of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people experience bullying in school on the grounds of being LGBT, while two-thirds of young people who have learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorders have been bullied.

In the last decade in particular, a huge amount has changed in how we address bullying. In Scotland we've developed a globally unique anti-bullying approach, captured in the Scottish Government's guidance, *Respect for All*. This approach takes a progressive step away from labelling children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims' which disempowers and is ineffective in changing behaviour.

Rather we focus on individuals' behaviour; addressing the impact it's had, fostering positive relationships and nurturing cultures built on respect. In addition, *Respect for All* is explicit in its message that bullying based on prejudiced views has no place in Scotland, and should be swiftly addressed.

"Leadership, meaningful youth participation, genuine parental involvement and co-produced policies are vital"

Despite this progress, there is much still to be done and renewed energy and focus on the prevention of bullying is critical. This means creating the right culture and ethos in our schools and youth services, built on respect and inclusion – a culture where bullying cannot thrive. Effective leadership at all levels, meaningful youth participation and genuine parental involvement can each help create the foundation for a culture which has at its heart mutual respect and a value for the wellbeing of every child.

In one school in North Lanarkshire, an Anti-Bullying committee was established. Made up of pupils from the school, in its two years of existence the committee has introduced an anti-bullying policy, created several opportunities for young people to report bullying and has raised the profile of bullying across the school. As one young person put it, it has "done our school the world of good".

Respect for All provides us with a framework around which all anti-bullying work should be based. Our challenge now is to ensure its principles are translated into a consistent approach across Scotland for every child and young person – including those who are bullied and those who bully others.



John Dickie is Director of Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) Scotland

cpag.org.uk/scotland/



Peter Kelly is Director of The Poverty Alliance

povertyalliance.org

Call 15 Top up child benefit by £5 per week to loosen the grip of child poverty

Between now and 2022, Scotland will introduce a new income supplement for low-income families; a welcome step that recognises the need to use the new social security powers that Scotland has to reduce poverty.

Why is this so needed? For many families, the cost of living is rising faster than their incomes, due to a combination of stagnating wages and the benefits freeze. One million people in Scotland continue to live in poverty, including one in four children. This simply cannot be right.

So the development of the new income supplement – as a means of loosening the grip of poverty – is vital. Deciding how it will be delivered is the next step, and there is a range of options open to the Scottish Government.

The Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland and the Poverty Alliance, along with Children in Scotland and a host of organisations from across civil society, have led the call to use new powers to tackle child poverty, campaigning specifically for a top-up of child benefit by £5 per week. The Give Me Five campaign believes there are powerful reasons for considering child benefit as a serious option for delivery of the new income supplement.

By John Dickie and Peter Kelly

We know parents can face barriers to accessing means-tested benefits, meaning that those who need the support most are too often unable to access it. Delivering the new income

"Sanctions, delays and administrative errors are becoming all too common features of means-tested benefits"

supplement through topping up child benefit – which is received by most families – would bypass these difficulties and ensure everyone who needs the additional support obtains it. As well as being the simplest and most efficient way of boosting family incomes, it may also be the best option

financially, as means-tested benefits tend to be significantly more expensive to administer. Sanctions, benefits delays and administrative errors are becoming all too common features of means-tested benefits, negatively impacting

on families' incomes. Child benefit is not part of Universal Credit, nor is it affected by sanctions. It constitutes a stable and reliable source of income for families, which allows them to better plan and budget. Given that most families receive it, topping up child benefit would help to keep children out of poverty and help all families cover the additional costs of having a child.

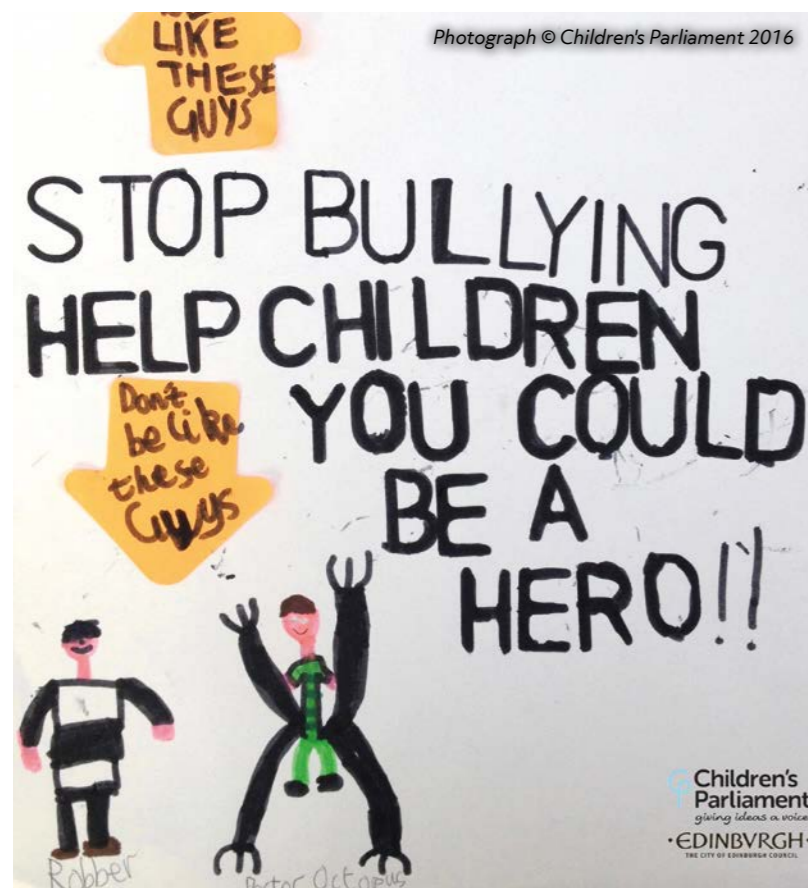
Sixty-eight per cent of children living in poverty in Scotland are in households where at least one person is in work, demonstrating the importance of ensuring that, whatever form the new income supplement takes, it supports working households. Topping up child benefit fits this requirement, supporting families in and out of work – creating no problems when parents take up work or increase their hours.



Can £5 a week make a real difference? We think so, and the parents we speak to think so too. It could cover, for example: seven breakfasts of cereal, milk, fruit juice and a banana, or taking part in a school trip or out of school activity each week, or, over two months, a good quality winter coat – all things which can have a critical impact on children's life chances. Of course, a supplement of more than £5 would go even further in supporting families and reducing overall levels of poverty.

So the Scottish Government's commitment to delivering a new income supplement is hugely welcome. It represents a maturation of our approach to tackling poverty in Scotland, and provides recognition that we have at our disposal the tools to free people from the grip of poverty. In choosing how to deliver the new income supplement, ministers must now take account of the need for urgency – families are in no position to wait for this vital income boost – as well as the need to maximise uptake and support families in and out of work.

Only by doing so can they ensure that every child truly does have every chance.



Call 14 From homelessness to the Home Office, young people's services must be humanised

By members of the *Youth Community Support Agency's* film club, with a response from *Alison Phipps*, right

Interview by **Vicky Wan** and **Chris Small**. With thanks to Leo Plumb, Ian Hamilton and the young people from YCSA.

ycsa.org.uk

"... the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development..."

– **Article 27** of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about creating safe, supportive spaces for young people > **Call #19, page 14**

The Youth Community Support Agency (YCSA) is a charity based in Pollockshields, Glasgow, providing holistic support for young people from mainly black minority ethnic backgrounds and encouraging them to be active participants in a diverse society. YCSA focuses on engaging young people deemed 'hard to reach', at risk of social exclusion and on the fringes of society.

Amongst the projects run by the agency is a weekly film club. Over the summer of 2018 seven members of the club produced a short film titled *Where Homelessness Lives*, focusing on their experiences of coming to Scotland, what makes for a meaningful welcome, and the quality of support they were offered.

As part of the 25 Calls project, Children in Scotland staff met them to talk about these experiences. Four members of the group, Victoria, Lawrence, Ishaq and Moshin, discussed whether they thought services for young people in Scotland that they'd engaged with recognised individuals as being different and having diverse needs, and what needed to change. Here's what they told us.

On being welcomed and not welcomed in Scotland...

Victoria: "I feel like I was not really important [in visits to the Home Office]. If you are doing great, they start noticing you... my auntie took us to the Refugee Council to study but there was a long wait. I went to Skills Development Scotland because my cousin told me they could help finding places in college and with employability, things like that. The person that was helping is just amazing. I feel like he actually cares. He would ask me, 'How was the interview?'. All the time, he was encouraging. I think that's so important."

"When I go there, I'm just happy because there's something constructive that I'm getting out of there. And he's actually helping. He is the person that helps me through college, and to getting into college... When someone is actually giving you support, they can motivate you to do something. I think this is important... So I stopped going to the Home Office. I started to do things that are beneficial for me."

Lawrence: "Organisations need to understand a lot of young people don't have information

or confidence to engage. Sometimes when I go to these organisations, I don't feel welcome... For some young guys, they don't want to go back again."

Ishaq: "When I first came here, I found it very difficult to understand the situation in this country... I didn't know anything. I didn't speak English. I didn't know how to use Google Maps and GPS. I was staying at home all the time. It was really cold and it was snowing. Although there are some organisations that help people to learn English, I didn't know where to go to learn. Then I met someone from my country. He put me in touch with a community organisation. Still I didn't know how to get there. I had to phone him and he would take me there."

"When I had an appointment with the Job Centre, I didn't know how to speak English. I didn't know what to do and what they said. I asked if I could have an interpreter so I could understand what was said to me. But I was told I couldn't get one because I have already been in this country for eight to nine months. He [the person at the Job Centre] gave me the date and time for my next appointment and said if I don't attend the appointment, they were going to cut my money. The Job Centre said

"We are not appointments"

but he was working. By the time he arrived, we were 10 minutes late. We were shouted at and told that I should be looking for jobs through the advertisements. It was very stressful!"

On what genuine individualised support can feel like...

Lawrence: "Support [for young people] should be about more than materials. Giving out leaflets is not enough."

Moshin: "To help people in the homeless situation, it needs more than a house... they need practical help and genuine support. What needs to change? See me as a person, not an appointment! Put more effort and time into genuinely supporting us."

Victoria: "It's not effective if services are delivered in one way. Use diverse approaches to understand the person, their culture and know how to appropriately interact."

Lawrence: "I need to feel that a person really cares about me before I can open up with my problems."

On being inspired and unbeaten by negative experiences...

Victoria: "There are different ways of support to meet people's needs. When support is right, it can go a long way and change someone's life... I want to become a social care worker, so other people don't have to go through what I've been through."



Alison Phipps is UNESCO Chair for Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts at the University of Glasgow

What would help? Empathy, stories – and people as bridges

What the young people from YCSA are saying, especially those talking about seeking refuge, is my daily bread. I hear it every day. Official people speak a language which even I would struggle to recognise as my mother tongue. For the last ten years I've filtered all encounters with support providers, officials and the Home Office through the lens of young unaccompanied minors.

"So what you need is to get you PYJ3 card and then enter your details into the 018GP3 Form online and then when you have passed your Advanced Intermediate Level 2 you can progress to the SQA. There is an online form. You need to find the form and register. You can't go for an appointment without an online registration. To register you need you XP95A identification number. You'll need to verify this through a text message to your mobile phone."

"What do you mean, you don't have credit?"

"You can go to the library and get online there."

"What do you mean you don't have any money for bus fares?"

"It's okay, you don't need cash you can just tap on with your debit card."

"What do you mean you don't have an account?"

Everything the young people say about their experiences is underscored by research. Leaflets don't help people navigate the maze of identification numbers, calls on hold, English spoken at speed. Young people in the asylum system speak many languages, but often not English, or at least not yet, and certainly not the bureaucratic English of online navigation, forms and appointments.

Coming from contexts where protocols with elders and officials are face-to-face and involve relationships the abstractions of our technocratic world are alienating in the extreme. Information is usually often with a thick accent and serious lack of intercultural communication training. Stories help. Empathy helps. People to act as bridges between officialdom and the world which they have left, helps. Leaflets, Apps, and more service-providers who amplify the bureaucracy and levels to navigate are hopeless.

In the Poverty Truth Commission, we spent several years learning that 'nothing about us without us is for us' when it comes to policymaking and poverty reduction. What the young people are identifying is precisely where the problems lie, and they have all the solutions. As survivors of this system they have found ways through despite, not because of the barriers. And what those ways are, are crystal clear – people, welcoming people; kindly people; guides from within their own communities; people who act as re-assurers, accompaniers, translators, guides, and one another. Peer support is the way forward for policymaking. And radical reform of the Home Office to be, well, more like home and less like a departure lounge with no exits.



Call 13 Support children to become

human rights defenders

Children and Young People's Commissioner **Bruce Adamson** meets **Ruby**, aged 9, to hear about her campaign challenging gender stereotypes – and her plans to change the world

Bruce Adamson is the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

cypcs.org.uk

"...make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike..."

– Article 42 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about children's right to be listened to and taken seriously > Call #23, page 8

Bruce: Ruby, it is great to meet you. Could you tell me a bit about your campaign?

Ruby: I was looking through a clothes catalogue and noticed that the girls all had pink dresses, all pretty and sparkly. That's not helpful if you are trying to play. Dresses don't work for climbing trees or adventures because they get ripped. They also said the boys' clothes were all for adventures.

Bruce: What did you do after you saw this catalogue?

Ruby: I wrote to the company and said I am a girl, I like to play and go on adventures every day and I can't do that with some of your clothes. They said they didn't get my letter so I phoned them up and read the whole letter out.

Bruce: Can you share a bit of your letter?

Ruby: [reading from letter] I am writing to inform you that I am a bit upset because some of the captions in the girls section are suggesting that girls cannot do some stuff and that only boys can. I am upset because I am a real girl who can climb trees, loves adventures and can stand up for myself. Also it's

making girls feel like that they have to be pretty. I am sure my friends would not appreciate this either. Also, I think that if I change the world, I would not be sitting around looking pretty and pretending I don't have to do anything. Not all girls have to be pretty. From Ruby. P.S Here are some of the pictures and examples which annoyed me out of the catalogue.

Bruce: That is a really powerful way of doing things. One of the things I really loved about the

way you wrote the letter is that you didn't just say I am angry about this, you were really clear about what you thought they were doing wrong and why and then you offered examples as well. Did you get a reply?

Ruby: They sent me a voucher and said they would send [the letter] to all their departments.

Bruce: There's lots of things that you talked about in your letter that are your human rights. You told them that you shouldn't be treated differently, and it doesn't matter whether you are a boy or you're a girl. You said that you play every day and play and rest is also an important right. Children also have the right to an education that helps you grow and that includes nature and being able to

climb trees, that's part of learning too. You are challenging the company and you're doing that based on human rights.

"Boys and girls don't get treated the same, not just with clothes"
Ruby

given me a badge to wear, what's on it?

Ruby: [points to badge] The tree is because I like climbing trees, the face is for being happy, the shorts and T-shirt are because some girls feel like they have to wear dresses and skirts all the time and the cloud stands for the adventure, whenever you want.

Bruce: Whatever the weather, I like that too. It's about adventuring, it's about being yourself.

Ruby: I'm going to write to other companies and me and my friend are going to design adventure clothes for girls. Boys and girls don't get treated the same and not just with clothes. Once my tennis teacher said that 'girls don't know what a punch is' like only boys fight. Some teachers shout at us too.

Bruce: You are standing up and defending human rights. It's not just about knowing about your rights, it's about taking action and you have already done that so you are a human rights defender, which is amazing. Writing this letter and putting together your campaign – and I know you are just at the beginning- you are a leader and

you are helping change the world. Challenging people is quite hard sometimes because it might feel a bit scary so one of the important things about human rights defending is that adults in charge must listen and protect you. What do you think would happen if you asked a teacher not to shout at you?

Ruby: Maybe they would get really cross.

Bruce: You shouldn't get into trouble for standing up for your rights. When you write a letter or say to a teacher 'actually you shouldn't speak to us like that' then the people in charge must listen to you. I'm trying to work on making sure that adults know that when children defend their rights, you have to be protected and you can't get into trouble.

Ruby: Do we have the right not to be shouted at?

Bruce: You have the right not to be shouted at and you shouldn't be treated differently based on who you are.

How did you know what you wanted to do in your campaign?

Ruby: I made this mind map about what I wanted to do and my mum is a campaigner too so I know about campaigns.

Bruce: You're lucky that your mum is a campaigner and she can inspire you. How could we make it easier for other children to help change the world like you?

Ruby: It could be in school or I think we should have campaign cafés and you could just pop in and have something to drink or eat and there could be loads of campaigners there and they could tell you about how to change things.

Bruce: A campaign café sounds brilliant. The government is on your mind map. What could they do?

Ruby: I could write to them and tell them about campaigning. They might tell schools and they will tell parents and the parents might tell their children and it would go on and on and people would then know about how to make changes.

Bruce: Young human rights defenders like you need the skills and support to stand up for rights and people in power need to know that when you do speak up, that they have to respect and listen to you.

Ruby: I want to tell everybody that we can all adventure.

Bruce: That's really important about being a human

"I am writing to inform you that I am upset because some of the captions in the girls' section [of your catalogue] suggest girls cannot do some stuff, only boys can. I am a real girl who can climb trees, loves adventures and can stand up for myself"

Extract from Ruby's letter

rights defender too. It's not just about one person, it's about lots of people. Being treated differently is equally the same problem for older girls and for boys too. What has started in your head, has become action and defending rights leads to changing the world.

Looking around outside, there is space for you to adventure here.

Ruby: Would you like to climb that tree?

Bruce: Sounds good, let's climb some trees.



Call 12 Support our pupils and teachers: embed understanding of ASN in initial teacher training and ongoing development



Charlene Tait is Acting CEO of Scottish Autism

www.scottishautism.org

By Charlene Tait

We want to see every child in Scotland reach their potential. The presumption of mainstreaming means early career teachers will expect to be teaching learners who have a wide range of additional support needs (ASN) including autism. As a result, we need an education system staffed by teachers and support staff who feel confident in their skills to meet pupils' individual needs.

All teachers, including those who are experienced, need support to adapt to the individual learning styles of autistic pupils, and to their sensory and communication needs.

Recent research by Scottish Autism, the National Autistic Society and Children in Scotland, laid out in the report *Not Included, Not Involved, Not Engaged*, indicates that autistic children are experiencing unacceptable levels of formal and unlawful exclusion in Scotland's schools. This not only has an impact on pupil health and wellbeing but also has an emotional, practical and economic impact on their families.

Other research also demonstrates the impact on those in the teaching profession. Approximately 62 per cent of class/subject teachers said they had experienced stress and professional anxiety due to the thought of not having the right support to meet the needs of children and young people who have learning disabilities. Almost all (98 per cent) of the education workforce felt that teacher training does not adequately prepare them for teaching young people who have learning disabilities.

These findings support recommendations put forward in the report:

The Scottish Government should urgently extend plans to gather evidence on initial teacher education programmes' coverage of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to include coverage of additional support for learning needs within those measurements.

Programmes of initial teacher training and Continual Professional Development should be enhanced to improve understanding of autism.

Teachers need support to augment their skills in a way that enables them to understand the impact of autism on learning and behaviour. When behaviour is understood in the context of the school environment, peer and teacher interactions offer a more holistic understanding of the child, and their needs can be established. Training should not focus

solely on pupil behaviour but should support education professionals to recognise the relational aspects of practice and take account of how teachers can adjust their approach and classroom practice to better support pupils.

"Staff must feel confident enough to meet individual needs"

We call for education professionals to be supported with theoretical and practical knowledge to enable them to ensure pupils are meaningfully included and accessing learning in all educational settings. For this to happen we believe there should be a compulsory element on autism within initial teacher education; the rationale being that the teaching and learning strategies that are essential for autistic pupils will be beneficial for all children.

But initial teacher training is a starting point for effective teaching practice. A systematic approach to the CPD of new and experienced teachers is required to ensure they are equipped with the most accurate current and developing knowledge.



Autistic children are experiencing unacceptable levels of formal exclusion from schools, the *Not Included, Not Involved, Not Engaged* report found

This could be achieved through a more strategic roll-out of The Autism Toolbox, a resource for schools developed by the Scottish Government and Scottish Autism, by developing a training pathway that utilises e-learning along with mentoring support from within the teaching profession, the autistic community and the third sector, and by learning from models of national training initiatives such as that developed by The Autism Education Trust in England. Mentoring for teachers such as the Synergy programme developed by AT-Autism show promising outcomes for relatively small investment.

It is time to take a different approach so that education professionals can teach those with additional needs with confidence, and all children benefit from our education system. If we want things to be different, we have to do something different.

Call 11 We need an economy underpinned by sustainability, innovation and social justice



Dr Craig Dalzell is head of research at the 'think-and-do tank' Common Weal allofusfirst.org

By Craig Dalzell and Graeme Roy (overleaf)

Let's recognise that 'growth' does not equal wellbeing for young people

Our approach to the economy and to our environment is far too linear, writes Dr Craig Dalzell. In agriculture, we dig up resources, turn them into chemical fertilisers for our fields, grow crops and animals, transport them to our cities, consume them and let the waste flow out to sea.

For energy, we dig up fuels, burn them to create electricity and pump the waste into our soil, our water and our atmosphere. Some 9 million people die every year as a result of pollution.

In our economy, we dig up metals and oil, turn them into consumer goods, use them for a short time – sometimes a few months, sometimes just once – then throw them into landfill (if they're not just dumped and end up as rubbish drifting out of sight and out of mind). And we're told that we always want more. We need the next new, shiny thing. We need it yesterday and we need it before the one after that comes out.

We measure our "success" as an economy and as a country by our Gross Domestic Product – GDP. Nothing else seems to matter, except perhaps things like "employment" and "productivity" – in other words, how much you're contributing to that GDP and how you're helping it grow. To endlessly and relentlessly grow.

This can't go on. Our planet simply cannot sustain this way of life. It is already telling us that we're stressing it beyond its limits. The climate is changing, soils are degrading, resources are depleting and we're feeling the impact on our own tired, stressed, overworked and increasingly polluted bodies.

We will pass these impacts on to the next generation. The links between exposure to pollution and the ability to learn is known and measurable. It won't matter how well funded our schools are if the children in them are ill, stressed and malnourished.

We need to learn how to grow our food without destroying the ground underneath it. This means fewer of the most destructive products – agriculture contributes to around 13 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions and is the third largest source of emissions after power generation and transport – and it means growing more food closer to us.

We need to consider another approach to how we live here. We need to close up those linear chains into loops. We need to build things to last, build them to be repaired and build them with sustainable materials. We need to stop powering the world with fuels that are killing us and shift to renewable sources.



We need to learn how to use less. Better, warmer homes, offices, and schools need less energy to heat. We have the technology to construct buildings that can cut energy bills by 90 per cent without increasing construction costs. If we do this using a National Investment Bank instead of relying on the "private market", we can even build as many houses as we need and reduce the rent of tenants at the same time. This would have a massive impact on the living standards of young people and families, on energy use (thus reducing pollution), and on the shape of our economy as a whole.

The UK economy is now so dysfunctional that young people have no money left from their stagnant wages after paying their rent, utilities, commuting costs and childcare. Is it any wonder that a consumer-based economy starts to flounder when it runs out of consumers?

We can make a start on fixing a lot of this by changing how we measure "success" in our society. Instead of "GDP" and "growth", let's talk about "sustainability", "wellbeing", "environmental degradation" and "happiness". What does it profit us as a whole if a few of us become as rich as Midas but we're all just as miserable as he was? Instead of chasing growth, even the new sanitised version called "inclusive growth", we can build a truly sustainable economy, society and environment.

Transitions are hard. Change can be scary. But once we find ourselves in our happier, healthier, more equal and more fulfilling lives who among us would ever think to look back and say, "I wish it was like it used to be"?

"...children with disabilities have the same right to education as all other children and shall enjoy this right without any discrimination..."

– General Comment nine of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read about why child rights must be at the heart of education > Call #6, page 32





Dr Graeme Roy is director of the Fraser of Allander Institute

strath.ac.uk/
business/economics/
fraserofallanderinstitute

Call **11**
cont.

This article is based on an interview by **Chris Small**

"Falling short should be understood as part of the journey to success"

Read about how this call links to our views on workforce development
> Call #20, page 12

Focus on 'micro' evidence – learning from the local

Every young person should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, writes **Graeme Roy**. But that's easier to say than it is to deliver in practice, particularly in a world where resources continue to be squeezed. Investment in schools and support systems, innovation, and evidence-based policy development will be essential to ensuring it can happen.

But it is also about innovation and flexibility; trying new things, learning what works and putting resource into those things. In the past, young people could study at school, get a trade or go to college or university. That would be the end of their qualifications and learning. Now, the economy is changing fundamentally and at a pace faster than anything we've seen before. Young people will be far less likely to come into the labour market and have one job which defines their future.

We need to think increasingly about tailoring education and skills to the needs of young people at a particular point in time, developing greater transferable skills, and being more flexible in providing opportunities for learning, whether it's through working, volunteering or education at a later date. That might sound challenging but it's also exciting and offers more choices to young people.

It also necessitates innovation and thinking ahead to the future. For example, digital is going to be an integral part of the economy, so we need to think about developing skills in digital entrepreneurship across all sectors.

Environmental challenges also present economic opportunities, particularly for an economy like Scotland's which has abundant natural resources. So, we should be asking how we can grow the economy in a sustainable way and use that to our advantage, whether that's through renewable energy, water or air quality. In many cases, young people in Scotland are already well ahead of us in understanding the type of economy that they want to see in the future.

To enable innovation and the best use of resources, it's important that we can learn from successes and failures and develop policy accordingly. The Scottish Government's

National Performance Framework uses high level indicators of outcomes to guide its approach to policy, which makes sense. But we also need evidence which is much more 'micro' – learning from what has been achieved at a local level, why it worked and what the limitations were, sharing that learning across the country, and, crucially, not being afraid to walk away from something which isn't working.

One of our weaknesses in Scotland is that where an innovation in policy does not work, or falls short of what was hoped for it, it becomes a story of political failure. Instead, falling short should be understood as part of the journey to success. You need to learn from the experience of trying new innovations in order to effect meaningful change in outcomes. Hopefully, this is an approach which will be seen in the Education Attainment Fund; it means people are innovating.

To an extent, the Scottish Government's hands are tied in improving the labour market for young people because employment law is reserved. However, there are significant steps it can take to promote the fair work agenda. For example, the government has demonstrated leadership in highlighting the importance of apprenticeships, gender equality, anti-discrimination, the Living Wage, opposing harmful zero-hours contracts, and the Scottish Business Pledge, which asks businesses to commit to fair and sustainable practices.

There are further actions the Scottish Government could take to show leadership, for example through their control of procurement and the NHS, and by encouraging ever greater transparency of the kind enforced by the requirement for gender pay gap reporting in the public sector and larger companies. There are also areas, for example around apprenticeships, where innovation, twinned with robust evaluation, could help achieve better outcomes for young people.

The Scottish economy young people will inherit will look quite different to today's economy. It will be much more dynamic and innovative. Change will happen quickly, and this undoubtedly poses risks. But with the right policies and ambitions it is also presents great opportunities for Scotland's children.

Call **10** It's time to agree a common set of values in the digital world

By **Jess McBeath**



Jess McBeath is a consultant and trainer specialising in online safety and digital citizenship in Scotland, and regularly runs events for Children in Scotland. She is the Scottish contact for SWGfL, lead partner in the UK Safer Internet Centre

lemontreeconsulting.uk

Technology moves apace. 'Going online' no longer involves the once-familiar beeps and screeches as the modem connects you to the world wide web. According to Ofcom, 70 per cent of adults now use a smartphone to go online. Whilst we publicly debate the pros and cons of screen time, many people would find it difficult even to pinpoint when they are online versus offline.

In its infancy, the internet heralded the dawn of the information society. News and information would be equally accessible to all, cutting across hierarchies, breaking down boundaries and enabling everyone the freedom to access, create and express themselves online.

The tech industry has flourished as we promote the virtue of 'digital' for business growth. We encourage children to gain essential coding skills for the workforce of the future. We teach digital literacy so no-one gets left behind in the digital age. Tech is good. We are in awe.

But the internet is redefining our understanding of the world. Free now means *pay with your personal data*. News means *my version of the truth* – and 'Fake News' means facts I don't agree with. Truth is defined by power and repetition rather than fact. Equality becomes *inequality* as the internet amplifies not only the best but also the worst of our human potential.

Low self-esteem? Social media can plumb those depths. Being bullied at school? Let's broadcast it to the world. Feeling disenfranchised? There's an online tribe ready to recruit you. For those with a sexual interest in children, the internet is your new playground. As technology evolves, so do the risks for our children and young people

We have apps, games, websites and online services that use exploitation and manipulation as their default business model. Online games encourage gambling behaviour; clickbait headlines manipulate emotion; sophisticated analysis of our online habits has been used to assess, predict or modify our emotions; and personal data has been harvested for political influence. Why and how did this happen?

We had the technical skills and profit motive to create new products but we didn't recognise the importance of shared values in defining success. Being able to create something doesn't mean we should create it. Could a focus on empathy, integrity, responsibility or respect make a difference?



We teach children to keep personal information secure, say no to strangers, and be nice to each other. We teach them that what is unacceptable offline should be unacceptable online (and in the meantime, they need to be resilient). As professionals, our work is informed by an understanding of the digital challenges faced by young people. But as citizens, we ignore our own advice. We are the fake news. We are the trolls. Does the internet create negative content, or simply expose it?

We are digital citizens. Our digital lives operate in parallel to, and intersect, our physical lives. What we do and say online has an impact. We need a dialogue at a national level about the values we want to espouse online (and offline) in Scotland, and how we can build these values into our digital lives and landscape. Values drive behaviour. Let's harness shared values to drive different behaviour.

The internet and advancing technologies undoubtedly offer opportunities, benefits and rewards. To operate effectively as digital citizens we must recognise the importance of skills such as the ability to make sound judgements, to resolve conflicts and to be self-aware. Children develop these skills through sustained conversation, debate and consideration of issues with the influential adults and peers in their lives. Every interaction with a young person is an opportunity to understand, share perspectives, lead and shape their online experience.

We can all be the beacons of online citizenship. Let's support young people across Scotland not only to stay safe online, but to flourish as digital citizens.

"...ensure the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources..."

"... protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her wellbeing..."

– Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about creating cultures free from bullying, and accepting difference
> Call #16, page 18
> Call #8, page 39

Children in Scotland has signed up to the **5Rights Framework**, which offers a single, principled approach that could be used to set a standard by which young people are treated in the digital world

5rightsframework.com



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 Caitlin Logan: clogan@childreninScotland.org.uk
or visit childreninScotland.org.uk/cismagazine

Call 9 Ensure Scotland's next generation can lead active, healthy lives

By Andrew Fraser, Eileen Scott, Linda de Caestecker and Sonya Scott



Dr Andrew Fraser is Director of Public Health at NHS Health Scotland

healthscotland.scot

"Achieving this will require a mindset that puts quality ahead of cost. Can we do it?"

Make targeting child poverty our number one priority

Reducing child poverty is the single most important step we can take to ensure that every child starts life with hope and promise, and the prospect of healthier lives, writes Andrew Fraser.

The profound impact on children's health and wellbeing of living in poverty persists into adulthood, creating the conditions for poor health in later life. Lack of money increases the risk that children encounter adversity while simultaneously reducing their families' ability to counteract them. For example, we know from research that food insecurity contributes to poorer educational and emotional outcomes. Families living in poverty spend a smaller total budget although a greater proportion of their income on food than those who have higher incomes. Over the next four years, Every Child, Every Chance, the Scottish Government's Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, provides us with an opportunity to work together to reduce child poverty, increasing family income and supporting families so they can afford healthier foods.

Preventing poverty and reducing the impact of living in poverty takes resources. Nonetheless, ensuring healthier lives for the next generation requires a culture that nurtures all children, a mindset that puts quality ahead of cost to get results, whether that is about safe routes to school, school meals, places to play, parenting support, or childcare.

Strengthen the links between health and 'social wellbeing'

An active child is more likely to be a smart, confident, happy child, and adult, and a balanced approach to food, leisure, culture and education is more likely to yield a resilient, balanced young person. All children have the right to good health, and to grow into the most active and healthy adults they can be. We as a society have a duty to provide the conditions in which they can do so.

To take one example, sportscotland has recently highlighted the power of school sporting activities and initiatives like the Changing Lives Through Sport and Physical Activity (CLTSPA) Fund to encourage children and young people to become and stay active, helping them to feel confident and connected.

Financial barriers such as the cost of equipment or transport have been highlighted as reducing children and young people's opportunity to take part in sport and other activities, directly impacting health and wellbeing.

Even small costs mount up but, by reducing the costs of taking part, addressing barriers like transportation and accessibility for children with additional support needs, we can ensure young people have the most active healthy start to life, have the greatest opportunities to contribute more to society as soon as they are able and for longer through their lifespan.

Use new legislation to curb the impact of advertising

We know an increasing amount about the impact of advertising and marketing on children and young people. Aiming to increase the amount that children consume, food and drinks that most frequently feature in adverts and promotions are high in fat, sugar and/or salt. With modern communication and social media, this kind of advertising and marketing is becoming more challenging to address. Our children need the protection of regulation and legislation to curb the excess consumption that benefits those that put their own interests before children.



Invest in the parent-child relationship

Good quality, supportive relationships are key to improving the health of children, write Linda de Caestecker and Sonya Scott.

The parent-child relationship is the template on which all others are shaped. Investment in practical support for parents including with parenting skills is an essential practical action we can take to support better relationships for children. The last National Parenting Strategy for Scotland was published in 2012 with funding commitments until 2015. It's time to consider a refresh, especially as the evidence on parenting programmes and attachment programmes continues to grow.

Increase support routes for at-risk mothers

If we are seeking to minimise infants' exposure to maltreatment, then mothers who were maltreated themselves are particularly at risk. Women with histories of abuse or trauma including domestic violence report higher rates of depression, substance use problems and social disadvantage. We need to make sure we are asking the right questions in the right way from the antenatal period onwards and also that mothers get information to find the help they need. Our systems and pathways to provide support must be strengthened.

Value the work of parenting in its own right

The growing awareness of ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) is already helping practitioners and policymakers to think more about how to prevent these experiences and also how to mitigate their effects.

Good enough parenting in the best of social and financial circumstances can be challenging but it is particularly difficult in stressful social circumstances. There is now strong evidence that household income is a causal factor in children's physical health and cognitive, behavioural and social development as a result of both the negative impact on parental mental health and the ability adequate income provides to invest in a child's development. One in four children in Scotland are currently living in poverty and this number is projected to increase to one in three over the next 12 years, mainly as a result of welfare reform.

Every Child, Every Chance makes clear that the drivers of poverty are inadequate incomes and high living costs. Action to maintain and create high quality jobs and reduce barriers to accessing these for parents, such as lack of flexible employment opportunities, is therefore also critical to the health of future generations. With 68 per cent of children in poverty now living in working households we also need to do everything we can to

implement the Fair Work Framework and take-up of the Scottish Business Pledge to make sure work pays. We need to ensure parents have adequate access and opportunity for employment, as well as ensuring we value the role of parenting in and of itself.

Lone parents are particularly at risk of reduced household incomes and we should consider how we can adequately support them if they choose to focus on work inside the house. The proposed use of devolved powers to create an additional income supplement for families would be an opportunity to achieve this.

Make Equal Protection a reality now

We also must prioritise child safety and physical wellbeing in all environments, addressing the UK's reluctance to offer equal protection to children and young people. Physical punishment is not effective and is associated with significant harm to children's health which persists into adulthood.



A private members' bill on equal protection from assault for children has recently been introduced in Scotland. We are pleased to see the cross-party support on this issue and would urge MSPs to vote for it to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children.

Prioritise healthy environments

Finally, we need to ensure we are making healthy choices – and easy choices – for children and families by doing everything we can to create healthy environments. Healthy environments include those which are tobacco-free, which have sufficient affordable housing and green spaces, where there is easy access to affordable healthy food and reduced availability of alcohol, and which foster physical activity and social connectedness.

The impact of the ban on smoking in public places in significantly reducing acute asthma attacks in children illustrates the importance and effectiveness of using our regulatory powers to create healthy environments.



Dr Linda de Caestecker is Director of Public Health with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

nhs.gov.org.uk



Sonya Scott is a consultant in Public Health with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

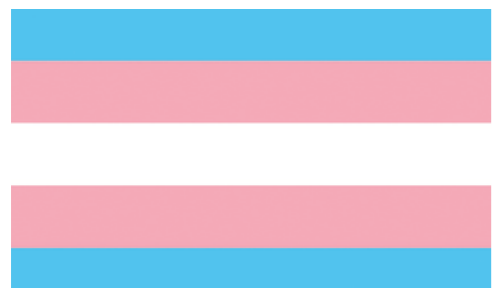
Call 8 Reform the Gender Recognition Act and give trans young people the chance to live full, happy lives

By Jade Holland



Jade Holland is a queer activist and artist and a trainer curator

"Ultimately we must make sure trans young people are given the strength, power and hope they need"



The Transgender Pride flag

"...respect and ensure the rights set forth in the Convention to each child without discrimination of any kind..."

"...take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination..."

– Article 2 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more on freedom from discrimination
> Call 1, page 41

Themes identified by our young people's advisory group Changing our World as 'hot topics' and regularly highlighted by our network include inclusion, health and wellbeing, discrimination and participation. We asked Jade, a queer activist, to tell us about an area of equality and discrimination that matters to her.

In the UK, one of the greatest issues facing transgender people of all ages is gender recognition. This is a process used to change a person's gender on their birth certificate, allowing them to marry as their correct gender and change their registered gender details with HMRC. Not every trans person wishes to go through this but, for those that do, attaining a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) involves an arduous journey.

The Gender Recognition Act (GRA) of 2004 was, at the time, viewed as a groundbreaking step forward for trans rights. However, 14 years later it falls short of international best practice and ultimately makes it difficult for many trans people in the UK to live their lives.

The gender recognition process is very difficult due to the expectations placed on those going through it. This includes having to live as their gender for two years to prove their commitment – a humiliating and arbitrary manner of measuring the legitimacy of a person's identity – while providing extensive documentation to prove they have not wavered in their 'choice' during this time period.

The process is also heavily criticised for not acknowledging non-binary transgender people and, most pressing to young people, for insisting applicants have to be aged 18 or over.

The fact people can only select between male or female offers no alternative for those who do not identify within the traditional western template of gender. This leaves non-binary trans people without the legal protections offered to binary trans people under the GRA – effectively not recognising or representing them in the system.

Excluding 16 and 17-year olds can have serious implications. Not only is it inconsistent with the rights of other 16 and 17-year-olds in Scotland, it ignores them and their needs. They will not have the same legal rights – for example being able to marry as their correct gender – or, if

transitioning while at school, receive the same protections, potentially leaving them at greater risk.

Due to these issues and the often unattainable cost of a GRC, the UK has a lower percentage of applicants compared to countries with a self-declaration model. Overall, applying for a GRC is a gruelling endeavour that forces transgender people to prove the legitimacy of their identity to gatekeepers who they never meet, and who have the power to dramatically change the course of their life. The entire process is geared towards discouraging transgender people from seeking out support or recognition.

Recently published research including the findings of the UK Government's National LGBT Survey (2018) and LGBT Youth Scotland's *Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People* (2018), shows that transgender people in the UK are at a higher risk of homelessness, violence, self-harm and suicide. We have lots of information like this, and we know we need to do more to improve the lives of trans people now. But there is hope.

The UK Government is currently consulting on reforming the GRA but, even better, the Scottish Government completed its own consultation in March this year. There were more than 15,000 responses with Scottish respondents clearly in favour of change:

Sixty-six per cent (UK/62 per cent) said Scotland should take action to recognise non-binary people

Sixty-five per cent (UK/60 per cent) support proposals to introduce a self-declaration system

Sixty-six per cent (UK/61 per cent) agreed that 16- and 17-year olds should be able to obtain legal recognition.

In September 2018, the Scottish Government confirmed its commitment "to bring forward legislation on gender recognition in the next legislative programme".

The big challenge will be to take any changes in legislation and turn them into change in practice and at societal levels. We need to make sure that all trans people have the legal protections they deserve; processes are affordable and accessible; trans people are not forced to prove their existence by arbitrary means; and society starts accepting them and their gender identity.

Ultimately, we need to make sure that trans young people are given the support and strength, power and hope they need to live full and happy lives.

Call 7 Support the aims and work of the Care Review – making changes to improve care now and in future

By Fiona Duncan



Fiona Duncan is Chair of the Independent Care Review in Scotland

carereview.scot

Over the past 18 months the Independent Care Review has heard from 1,136 infants, children, young people and adults across Scotland about their experience of care.

These voices have consistently told the Care Review how important it is for them to have meaningful and consistent relationships, for their rights to be respected and upheld, and for love to be part of their everyday lives instead of the stigma they too often encounter.

The themes that emerged from the discovery stage conversations were discussed and developed along with a go-to group of 62 care-experienced young people. As a result of this, ten thematic areas were identified that required deeper understanding, and the Care Review's 12 Intentions were developed.

The Care Review Intentions:

Families on the edge of care will get the support they need to stay and live together where safe to do so.

Scotland's infants, children and young people will be nurtured, loved and cared for in ways that meet their unique needs.

Relationships which are significant to infants, children and young people will be protected and supported to continue unless it is not safe to do so. This recognises the importance of brothers and sisters, parents, extended family and trusted adults.

Care experienced infants, children and young people will thrive in supportive and stable learning and work environments, ensuring they have the same opportunities as others.

Aftercare will be designed around the needs of the person leaving care supporting them to lead a fulfilling life, for as long as they need it.

Infants, children and young people's rights will be part of normal everyday life, practice and decision making.

Infants, children and young people's voices will have a visible and meaningful impact on decision making and care planning.

All adults involved in the care of infants, children and young people are empowered, valued and equipped to deliver the best care system in the world.

Scotland's care services will plan and work better together, sharing information more

A video of the Intentions with voice-overs from member of the Go-to group can be found at:

carereview.scot/intentions/

"...a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State..."

– Article 20 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about the importance of relationships and rights for children
> Call #17, page 16
> Call #6, page 32



easily to ensure we understand the what and how of supporting infants, children, young people and their families from a local through to a national level.

Scotland will understand the financial and human cost of care, including what happens when people don't get the help they need.

The words used to describe care will be easily understood, positive and not create or compound stigma.

There will be no stigma for infants, children and young people in care because Scotland will understand why our children need care.

These Intentions are at the heart of the work of the current stage of the Care Review, the Journey; the Intentions are guiding work groups as they explore these areas of practice.

The Care Review has learned that while there is practice that causes difficulty for children and young people – which must end as soon as possible – there are also many things happening for children and young people that should be celebrated.

The Care Review calls on Scotland to get involved and stay involved in order to identify and implement changes to day-to-day practice, as well as system-wide improvements, and support the delivery of these Intentions to ensure that Scotland is the best place in the world for all children and young people to grow up.

Call **6**

Rights, wellbeing and love of learning must be at the heart of education if Scotland is truly to be the 'best place to grow up'

By Elaine Kerridge



Elaine Kerridge is Policy Manager (Participation & Engagement) at Children in Scotland and was a teacher for 18 years

Child rights and wellbeing must be at the heart of education in Scotland and our approach to how children learn. Curriculum for Excellence recognises that wellbeing is fundamental to learning. Combined with delivering Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC), embedding wellbeing in all policies and practice linked to Scottish education must be prioritised.

Children in Scotland's direct work with children and young people means we hear and amplify the voices, experiences and opinions of children and young people living in Scotland. This includes their experience of education, especially formal education in a school setting.

We know that children and young people understand that experiencing positive health and wellbeing leads to more successful education and learning outcomes. One of the key messages that emerged from our Leaders of Learning project (2013-16) was that personal and emotional events impact significantly on children and young people's ability to learn and achieve: children and young people emphasised the negative effect of stressful personal circumstances on their ability to concentrate and make progress.

However, positive relationships are key to success: relationships with teachers, or adults who have a teaching role, are central in the learning journeys of all children and young people. Young people taking part in the project voiced a desire for relationships that are based on mutual respect and allow them to engage with adults in an equal and honest manner. The message was clearly to learn within an ethos of 'learning together.'

Through our recent project with the General Teaching Council for Scotland, supporting the refresh of the Professional Standards for Teaching, we again heard that children and young people are clear that they want schools to take a child rights and relationship-based approach in everything they do. School settings need to be supportive and nurturing environments where positive, respectful, reciprocal relationships are developed between all, mutually agreed 'rules' are consistently applied, and individual needs are understood and supported.

We know that, as a whole, Scotland's education system (formal and informal) is delivering improved outcomes at school and long after young people have left it. But there are still too many children not receiving the education they are entitled to because their additional support needs are not being met. This has to be addressed as a matter of urgency. In the words of one young person, "Use equity to achieve equality".

Scottish education can succeed in improving every child's life, but only if we recognise that education does not happen in isolation. As the African proverb reminds us, it takes a village to raise a child – working with parents and partners is essential to a successful and positive experience for children and young people in education.

There are key areas where a difference in approach is necessary:

Policymaking based on evidence

Decision-making in education needs to be de-politicised. There are too many short-term goals based around parliamentary cycles. This has knock-on effects on funding and approaches to curriculum design and content.

We need long-term and sustained connections and consensus on the purpose of education and how Scotland achieves an excellent education and learning system. This must be agreed across political parties and successive governments at national and local levels.

We need a genuinely child-centred, evidence-driven, outcome-focused approach to education policy and practice, accentuating how children and young people learn and how we secure their wellbeing to help them succeed. Recent examples such as the introduction of standardised testing in P1 – a policy Upstart's Sue Palmer has said means "schools teach to the test, the curriculum narrows and children, teachers and parents grow increasingly anxious about educational performance" – suggest we are still far from this.

We need to act on the evidence we have with the full support of national and local politicians over the long term. Evidence telling us about the fundamental importance of a play and outdoors-based curriculum for young children; how parental engagement supports learning; assessment based on developmental and learning milestones, especially in the early years; and supporting each individual to understand how they develop and improve.

We need training and empowerment of the workforce in early years settings, schools and colleges so that teachers can develop their practice to deliver the very best learning outcomes for all children and young people. The workforce should be able to contribute to a continuous learning journey for each child and young person, with transitions becoming a positive indication of a child's progress rather than a disruptive break in their learning.

Participation shaped by entitlements and a two-way relationship

This is the Year of Young People, an opportunity to celebrate the contribution young people make to society. It is also a chance to ingrain policies, processes and practices that ensure young people have a stronger voice and a greater say in decisions that affect their lives. Education is one of the key environments where this change can take root.

Decision-making at local, regional and national levels of education must develop and embed policies, processes and practices to support children and young people's participation. This is to ensure children and young people's entitlements are realised through their lived experience (as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including Article 12).

This participation must be of high quality and an ongoing process – a two-way relationship – and must include all aspects of education, such as how and what children learn, their individual support needs and wider education governance issues.

As Article 12 of the UNCRC states, every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Resourcing that strengthens schools and communities

Austerity measures have had a damaging impact on education budgets. This must change for children and young people to gain the individualised support they need and to flourish in their education.

In particular:

Education staff require more time and support to augment their knowledge and skills around the needs of children and the theory and practice of implementing a child rights-based approach

Pupil Support Assistant numbers must increase to support the varied and complex needs of our children and young people

Access to related professionals such as Educational Psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service practitioners, and speech and language therapists must be enhanced

Parental and community engagement should be adequately budgeted for to enable all schools to develop inclusive, supportive whole school communities, within and outside of school terms.

When we (the village) support children and young people's wellbeing through a relationship-based and child rights approach, our young people will thrive, achieve their academic potential and enjoy sustained, positive life outcomes.

"We need to act on evidence telling us about the fundamental importance of a play and outdoors-based curriculum for young children"

"...the education of the child shall be directed to: a) the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter..."

– Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about wellbeing in education and the importance of relationships from the earliest stage
> Call #20, page 10
> Call #17, page 16

"Pupil Support Assistant numbers must increase to support the varied and complex needs of our children and young people"



Pupils at a Perthshire Primary discuss what makes a good teacher as part of Children in Scotland's project with the General Teaching Council for Scotland

Children in Scotland

Annual Conference

7-8 November 2018
Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh

Join us for a highly interactive and practical two days filled with learning, discussions and planning for everyone working in the children's sector.

We'll be discussing family engagement at times of trauma with lead practitioners from the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena tragedies, with speakers including Fiona Murphy MBE (pictured), who was instrumental in setting up the new Greater Manchester Bereavement squad.

To book, visit childreninscotland.org.uk email events@childreninscotland.org.uk or call 0131 313 8828.

Call **5**

16 and 17 year olds must be able to vote in all UK polls. Brexit proves this is a civil rights issue



Jackie Brock is Chief Executive of Children in Scotland

The Children and Young People's Panel on Europe led by **Children in Scotland and Together** has been involved in discussions ranging from how to ensure youth projects currently in receipt of EU monies continue to receive funds to ensuring the post-Brexit costs of Erasmus+ don't block children from disadvantaged backgrounds from accessing the scheme. The Panel's recommendations are being shared with the Scottish Government and will be published later in 2018.

In 2016, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted increasing calls from children and young people to **lower the voting age to 16 years old** and recommended that the UK and devolved governments consult with children and young people on the issue.

Read Professor Richard Wilkinson's perspective on the future for young people in the UK > **Call #2, part 2, page 40**

> Follow **#25Calls** online to see which organisations have endorsed this call

By Jackie Brock

Will it be a Blind Brexit? Norway plus? Boris-minus? Or are we due a People's Vote? Whatever we end up with, the distinguishing feature in public and media discourse on EU withdrawal remains the same: young people barely get a mention.

I'm writing this in early October 2018 and as we hurtle towards B-day the UK Government is busy issuing 'technical notices' which gently imply crashing out of the EU could constitute a once-in-a-generation economic and social disaster. Given this risk, we think it might have been sensible and politically courageous to a) introduce legislation so young people across the UK could be involved in a decision with consequences that will impact them most, and b) set up a formal structure so they could influence government, negotiations with the EU, and the Brexit outcome.

Of course, neither happened. But the toxic effect of Brexit on our collective sense of security feels real and makes our call more urgent: 16- and 17-year-olds must be able to vote in all UK elections and referendums. The Enfranchisement and Education Bill seeks to reduce the voting age to 16 in all parliamentary and other elections. First presented in July 2017, as this magazine went to print the second stage debate was scheduled to be held in Westminster at the end of October.

Why support it, and this call? Because evidence tells us that voting early lays down a lifelong pathway of political participation (new research from Elias Dinas of Oxford University is just one example). Because political parties should be compelled to design policies for young and old. But most of all because of what the Brexit experience tells us about a failure in democracy.

Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament Jack Norquoy expresses the problem well. He tells us: "We find ourselves in the absurd situation where if you are a 16-year-old living in Dumfries you hold the right to vote in all Scottish and local elections — but if you are 16 and live 30

miles down the road in Carlisle you hold no such right. It is a glaring constitutional and rights injustice that millions of 16- and 17-year-olds are denied the right to vote in UK elections and referendums. Voting should not be a postcode lottery. It is a civil rights issue."

In January the Scottish Youth Parliament launched its Brexit Manifesto 'Rights Outright', calling on all UK and Scottish decision-makers to defend the rights of young people as part of the Brexit negotiations. It sits alongside Children in Scotland's and Together's (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) efforts to learn from young people on Brexit. In June we established a children and young people's Panel on Europe to provide advice on EU withdrawal to the Scottish Government (see left).



Our participation work on Brexit is not about being pro- or anti-. It's about what is in the best interests of children and young people. And we know not all share the view that leaving the EU is an act of self-harm. One young person told the youth-led My Life My Say (MLMS) movement of their hopes that it would be "an opportunity for this country to get rid of some regional inequalities ... and rebalance the economy".

Other voices across the UK point to what exclusion from the Brexit process feels like, having once been promised to be listened to. Also speaking to MLMS, a young person from Carmarthenshire in Wales said: "We are always used as ammunition. Every government, every political campaign says that their policies will make young people happier and give them a better life, but as soon as young people actually speak up and respond to that in any way then we are just shut out."

Evidence on where the majority of young people's views lie seems clear. In August, Professor John Curtice of Strathclyde University reported that, taking an average of three recent polls, 82 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds with a voting preference said they would vote Remain in a second referendum.

Political parties often think they lead on social change, not the public. But actually, it's the other way round. Young people and those advocating for them will drive voting reform.

We want that to come as soon as possible. Because, as one of our members put it when asked about Brexit's impact, ultimately "the ballot box is all that counts".



Professor Brigid Daniel is a qualified social worker, author and founder of the Scottish Centre for Wellbeing and Child Protection. She is Dean of the School of Arts, Social Sciences and Management at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

In 2002 a review of child protection reported with a title based on the observation of a young person: "It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright."

This was 16 years ago. Now, in 2018, to what extent have we embraced this sentiment?

Today, after more reviews, far too many children in Scotland are still experiencing abuse and neglect. Many children's circumstances end up being investigated by the child protection system and often they are put into care. We are neither preventing child maltreatment, nor providing enough of the kind of support to keep children safely at home.

The young person who said this put into one short sentence what academics have been trying to say, with thousands of words, for years. The only way to solve child abuse and neglect is for everyone to understand that we can all be part of the problem and part of the solution. We cannot provide effective protection for children if we focus only on investigating individual cases once things have gone wrong.

Call **4**

To end abuse and neglect, live what we know: it's everyone's job to make sure children are alright

By Brigid Daniel

The biggest barrier to reform is the tendency to seek an individual to blame. It is easy to label someone a 'bad parent'. It is much harder to take a look at society and recognise that the way we organise our economy harms children in the first place and fails effectively to make up for harm after the event.

Children living in poverty are more likely to come into care than their affluent peers. Poverty undermines parenting and exacerbates the factors like substance misuse that are associated with maltreatment. But we tend to blame individuals for their drug use, we even blame people for being poor in the first place. There is huge public outrage when a case of child abuse is reported – and rightly so. But where is the outrage about the high numbers of children living in poverty and the lack of support for people who desperately need them? This individualisation of what a social problem is means that parents who struggle are stigmatised.

The building blocks are in place to tackle the causes of abuse and to provide non-stigmatising support for parenting. There is a range of policies aimed at tackling poverty, substance misuse and mental health issues. However, it is still easy for the more affluent to

distance themselves from such initiatives. We have to move to a position where the general public is better educated about the links between poverty, associated social problems and child maltreatment.

With Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) we have a framework that has the potential to deliver exactly the kind of holistic support

"GIRFEC has stumbled because it assumes parents can ask for help"

that is needed. It is an optimistic model premised on the model of the people of Scotland accepting collective responsibility for the wellbeing of every child. It is informed by parents' views that it is difficult to know who to turn to for help, hence the emphasis placed on ensuring that health visitors and teachers are available as sources of advice and guidance. However, it has stuttered because of the culture of blame and stigma which makes it hard for people to ask for help. We need the public to understand that any parent may need some additional help at any time and there is no shame in seeking support.



GIRFEC has stumbled because it assumes that parents can be signposted to resources – an unfounded assumption at a time of cuts. We need greater empathy for the plight of those who are feeling the rough end of social inequalities and a greater willingness to share our resources fairly.

In summary, we need to ensure greater buy-in to the message that it is, indeed, everyone's job to make sure that children are alright.

"...take all appropriate measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation..."

– Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read John McKendrick on why child poverty is everyone's business > **Call #2, page 38**



Members of the Changing our World group, from left Evie, Mhairi, Nina, Finlay and Ellie discuss their contribution to the 25 Calls campaign

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”**

By Changing our World, Children in Scotland's young people's advisory group (above), with responses from Mary Glasgow and Denise Coia (right)

Progress won't be possible without young people's direct involvement

With their call, the Changing our World group is telling us loudly and clearly that new approaches are required to improve the mental health of young people, writes Denise Coia. To give the right response, we need to understand the modern experience of growing up in Scotland, the opportunities and challenges that brings, the pressures children face, and how they deal with them. Fortunately, this generation of young people is more open about mental health and seeking help.

I have spoken to a number of young people with mental health problems over the past few months. They say they don't want to be told a service is not suitable for them and then 'signposted' elsewhere. It's difficult enough to find the courage to ask for help without having to navigate a maze of services, tell your story several times and face rejection. They don't want to enter any wrong doors when they seek help. While it is good we are taking a rights-based approach to offering services, children and their families report a disconnect between what is promised and what is delivered.

That's why in June 2018 the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport joined with local councils to set up a taskforce to make recommendations on young people's mental health services and take a new approach. Effective change is not possible without the direct involvement of young people, so the taskforce is co-chaired by a young person, and young people are involved in all of its work. It is amazing how willing young people have been to share their experience – good or bad – to make things better for others.

The taskforce knows we need to focus on prevention and intervening, if required, as early as possible. This means providing information about maintaining good mental health, support in schools, and access to interventions locally. But developing good mental health is not always about seeking a service response. Understanding our unique emotional response and having someone support us through a difficult period may be all that is needed. Other young people with serious mental illness may require more rapid access to specialist services and follow-up by community services.

While we are increasingly aware of mental health issues facing young people, some find it hard to speak up, either because they are unable to or because they are frightened or ashamed. For example, children who have experienced abuse in early childhood, who may end up being in care or living in poverty. Such children require additional support to enable them to access opportunities available to other children in Scotland. All young people have a right to thrive and good mental health is essential to fulfilling that ambition.

A truly rights-based approach to children's emotional wellbeing is needed

Twenty-five years ago mental health issues were highly stigmatised and little understood, writes Mary Glasgow. In my early career as a social worker, I worked with many children who were terribly distressed as a result of adverse experiences.

A few would be referred to child and adolescent psychiatry but most would be referred to the Children's Panel to look at the child's or their parents' behaviour. There was little focus on understanding what had happened to cause the distress and little time to help to address it.

Today, children and young people are experiencing increasing levels of stress caused by pressure on family relationships, achieving at school and the relentless focus on the self through social media. Thanks to campaigns like 'See Me' and the political and media focus on waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, we have much better awareness of the needs of children and young people. Children's mental health tops the Scottish Government's agenda: a taskforce has been set up (see left) and the First Minister has committed to an ambitious programme for young people's mental health backed with record investment. This is welcome and heartening.

“Move on from a medicalised approach to prevent more crises”

But a truly rights-based approach to children's emotional wellbeing would go much further, taking into account the science that confirms what some believe we always intuitively knew – that we are all shaped by our earliest relationships and experiences. Physical and mental health are inextricably linked, so we must take a more holistic approach to building healthy bodies and minds.

Crises will only be prevented if we move away from a predominantly medicalised understanding of mental health based on responding when it is compromised. We need a broader approach to policy and support which starts by building strong, healthy relationships around children and supports emotional literacy and resilience, enabling children to understand, name, express and regulate their emotions.

Children have a right to support which recognises the stresses of the modern world and strategies to manage the toxic stress to which they can be exposed. Support to the whole family to recover after traumatic and stressful events, mindfulness and yoga in schools, less focus on exam results and help to manage social media can make a real difference.

Rather than starting from an idea of 'mental health' as something that needs to be repaired or recovered, we need to radically reframe our understanding. We must take action to build and protect emotional wellbeing from a child's earliest years.



Denise Coia is Chair of the Scottish Government's Taskforce on Children's and Young People's Mental Health and Convenor of Children in Scotland's Board



Mary Glasgow is interim Chief Executive of Children 1st.

children1st.org.uk

“...the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation...”

“... take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse...”

“...the child should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding...”

– Article 24, Article 39 and Preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read Amy Woodhouse on why 'a more equal society is a mentally healthier society'
> **Calls round-up, page 42**

Call 2 Make it your business

By John McKendrick



Professor John McKendrick is Co-Director of the Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit at Glasgow Caledonian University

"We look for solutions from government and blame parents ... is there another way?"

"...the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development..."

Including "nutrition, clothing and housing".

– Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about changing attitudes to poverty
> Call #1, page 41



Loss of the village

Those of a certain age are prone to lament the demise of community and neighbourhoods where the welfare of children was the responsibility of parents, friends and wider family. Times certainly have changed, often for the better, but in some respects for the worse. Without doubt, our lives are more complex, faster and inter-connected. And these changing times have spurred a paradox with regards to tackling poverty – if we yearn for times when everyone was more concerned for the welfare of others, why then are we content to attribute the primary responsibility for tackling child poverty to government?

What Scots think – tackling child poverty is the business of government ... but parents are largely to blame

Every few years, the British Social Attitudes survey asks the people of Scotland (as part of its wider study) to identify who is responsible for tackling child poverty. The results are broadly stable through time.

A few years ago, I posed the same question with a few additional options to a representative sample of more than 1000 adults in Scotland. Around three quarters of people in Scotland think that the national government (both UK and Scottish) has a responsibility for tackling child poverty, with around two-thirds thinking the same for local government.

No other response gets majority support, although just under half of us think that parents have a responsibility, around one third think that both the voluntary sector and friends/relatives have a responsibility, and around one in five think that business has a role to play.

Interestingly, when the same Scots are asked to identify the main reason for child poverty, very few attribute it to the factors which are within the realm of government, for example 'social

benefits not paying enough' or 'because of inequalities in society' (which could in theory be tackled through progressive taxation). Rather, we Scots are more likely to blame parents on account of perceiving them to be troubled (suffering from alcoholism, drug abuse or other addictions) or by not achieving in the labour market.

So, we look for solutions from government and blame parents ... but is there another way?

Extending professional reach

"Local strategies will not achieve their ends if no attempt is made to grasp ownership among the wider population"

headway in overcoming the barriers faced in schools by children experiencing poverty.

However, there is another initiative that has received much less attention but is equally deserving of praise. A few years ago, the EIS teachers' union published *Face up to Child Poverty* a short booklet for union members that concisely described the nature of six problems (hunger, school uniform, equipment, homework, school trips and fundraising activities) and offered succinct advice on what they could do as part of their everyday work to ameliorate, avoid or eradicate a poverty-related problem.

The Attainment Challenge has emphasised the importance of our education system in tackling disadvantage and enabling all of our children to realise their potential. High profile initiatives such as free school meals for Primary 1-3, breakfast clubs, the Pupil Equity Fund, raising the allowance for school clothing grants and the excellent work of the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in scrutinising the cost of the school day are all making

to tackle child poverty



Tackling poverty must be systemic and systematic. However, there is also a pressing need for actions that seem incidental, and which are rooted in interpersonal interaction and everyday contexts. Much progress could be made in improving the lives of Scotland's most disadvantaged children if other professional groups followed the lead of the EIS and practitioners acted on the good advice therein.

Making an impact locally

On 18 December 2017 the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 received Royal Assent, making the historical commitment to 'eradicate' child poverty in Scotland by 2030. This due process followed the passing of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill on 8 November 2017, with 115 MSPs voting in favour and none against.

Most significantly, each local authority and each relevant Health Board must prepare a local child poverty action report, as soon as is practicable after the end of each reporting year (31 March).

This should comprise (in relation to tackling child poverty): any measures taken during the reporting year; any measures that it proposes to take; any income maximisation measures supporting pregnant woman and families with children; and any measures taken that impact on the household income of those comprising children with protected characteristics.

This has the potential to be a game-changer. However, these local strategies will not achieve their ends if no attempt is made to share (or grasp) ownership among the wider population and interest groups. A local strategy that is a showcase and blueprint for the good work of local authorities is interesting and valuable, but also insufficient.

Local strategies need to belong to everyone and we need to ensure that professions,

communities and interest groups are as central to these 32 strategies as local authority/NHS departments and budgets.

Everyday impacts every day: the way ahead for tackling child poverty in Scotland

What I am suggesting amounts to a cultural change. Some might argue that these are difficult to achieve, but we have had one already – we now accord responsibility for tackling child poverty to the disconnected apparatus of government, whereas once it was viewed as the responsibility of close-knit communities working collectively. Things are not so good now that we should continue on regardless and things were never so good that we should aspire to return to the past. Rather, Scotland's children deserve a better future and we need a third dimension that builds on both the interventions of government and everyday community support.

This means all of those who engage with children should be thinking about what they can do to ameliorate or even tackle poverty through their everyday interactions with children experiencing poverty, be they butchers, bakers or candlestick makers (and, of course, caterers, doctors, youth workers, shop assistants, teachers, bus drivers, and so on). We also need to hold government to account. It is laudable that the Scottish Government has committed the nation to eradicate child poverty by 2030. It is exciting that Scotland's 32 local authorities (alongside their NHS partners) will be developing their own action plan to tackle child poverty locally.

But it will be shameful if we don't all contribute to capitalising on the opportunity that presents to realise a child poverty-free Scotland within a generation.

"It will be shameful if we don't all contribute to the opportunity to realise a child poverty-free Scotland within a generation"





Richard Wilkinson is Professor Emeritus of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham, Visiting Professor at the University of York, and co-founder of The Equality Trust

Call **2**
cont.

Interview by **Chris Small**. A longer version will be available on our website in November.

Richard Wilkinson will be speaking at Children in Scotland's annual conference on 7 November (see page 33 for more details).

"Will the rich carry on with the system as it is, or do we force a more fundamental sharing?"

Richard Wilkinson, co-author of *The Spirit Level* and *The Inner Level*, tells Children in Scotland how inequality impacts all of us – and how to counter it

Our young people's advisory group chose access to mental health support as their top priority (see page 36). Why is this such an urgent issue?

It's extraordinary how recent discussion of the scale of mental health issues has focused almost wholly on access to services rather than on the appalling increases in levels of mental stress. Services merely pick up the pieces after the damage. Although people often blame social media, it's only the messenger. The truth is that as inequality makes societies more antisocial, we use social media more hurtfully than we would in an egalitarian society.

Key to these problems is the way inequality increases the importance of social comparisons, making us all more worried about how we are seen and judged. As a result, some withdraw from social contact, finding it too stressful. Others big themselves up by using consumerism to boost their image and flaunting their status and successes.

What inequality does is make status and class more important. It ups the stakes on the idea that some people are worth more than others intensifying our doubts about self-worth.

How does discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, age and sexual orientation figure in producing poorer wellbeing in young people?

They're spin-offs of the same issues. Given that there is this huge differential in how much people are valued, no one wants to belong to a group seen as inferior. Whether it's class accents, skin colour, religious affiliation or gender identity, when any of these become markers of inferiority or low social status, they attract stigma and discrimination. We must reduce that stigma by making sure there isn't a huge differential in how people are valued (See Call 1, right). We must make sure the social ladder is less steep.

Do you think we should be concentrating policy efforts more on achieving equality of outcome or equality of opportunity?

Equality of opportunity and equality of outcome are not things we can change independently of each other. If you want to improve equality of opportunity for children, probably the most important thing you can do is reduce inequality of outcomes among parents. Parents always pass on their advantages or disadvantages to their children.

Downward social prejudices increase in societies with bigger income differences, making it harder for children to move up. We need to shift towards a society where social position is not the thing you judge people by most. It's often claimed that children from poor backgrounds have a poverty of aspiration.

But we looked at data on this and found it tended to go the opposite way; children's aspirations – at least for money and fame – were higher in more unequal societies. We need to value and respect a greater range of occupations.

What do you think about automation and its impact on young people's employment over the next 25 years?

It's a crucial challenge - but the hope that the economy will create enough jobs to fill the gap is really only the hope that we carry on as we are. I would much rather we brought on automation as fast as we can, and that we used it to reduce the workload to give us a society with much more leisure so we had time for each other.

That goes with the need for universal basic income of some form. If people had more free time and some financial support independently of work, we might all become part of a sharing economy. That's what human interaction ought to be about.

Are you optimistic about the future for young people?

Much depends on responses to climate change. The environmental movement increasingly regards greater equality as a necessary precondition for sustainable wellbeing. If we go on as we are, we won't save ourselves from the profound decline in the quality of life climate change will bring. But it's clear there is another path, through greater equality to sustainable wellbeing.

Will the rich carry on with the system as it is and use their money to protect themselves while the rest of the population goes to the wall, or do we force a more fundamental sharing? It's not simply a matter of tightening

our belts and trying to live the same rather unsatisfactory lives, it's about finding new ways of improving the real quality of life, improving the social environment and reducing stress levels through greater equality.



Divine (left) and Somer photographed at the Scottish Parliament, September 2018. Picture: Andrew O'Brien

Call **1**

Change the language of poverty: Young people deserve dignity, not stigma and discrimination

By Josh, Rebecca, Divine and Somer

The GKexperience is a Youth Work Charity founded on the belief that young people are brilliant and that they all deserve the same opportunities in order to enable them to reach their potential.

thegkexperience.org.uk

Possibilities for Each and Every Kid (PEEK) was established in 2000, and has been operating for 18 years as a children and young people's provider supporting local youngsters across the North East of Glasgow.

peekproject.org.uk

"...the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity..."

– Preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Read more about changing attitudes to poverty and reducing inequality

> Call #2, page 38

My name is Young Person X.

I live in Possilpark in a two-bedroom flat with my five brothers and my mum. There are always people fighting outside, running deals and causing trouble. I struggle at school, I am bullied for where I come from and for my poverty. My life is a struggle.

We are young person X. This is not our story but it is one that people tell about us and young people like us. They may mean well, but it causes us problems, enforcing stereotypes, lowering our confidence and people's expectations of us.

My name is Young Person X.

I live in Possilpark in a two-bedroom flat with my five brothers and my mum. We are close. Despite some struggles I'm doing well at school, I have lots of friends and there's lots going on in my community. I play football, a musical instrument and have lots of opportunities to volunteer. My community has struggles but folk are welcoming and it is wonderfully diverse, with lots of opportunities to explore and play.

This is our story. We do not gloss over the struggles, but they do not define us. By having our story

told in this way we are affirmed and people's expectations and stereotypes are changed.

We need you, everyone in society, to think about how you use our story. We know this is not always easy. The media want to highlight the challenges, charities need to justify the great work that they do, and funders want to know that they are reaching those in need.

But we want you to focus more on the achievements and difference that can be made rather than the problems we face. Look for our strengths amidst the troubles rather than just the troubles. And where possible, allow us to tell our own story.

We know it is not always easy, but we believe another way is possible.

We believe this is a better way.

The GK Experience and PEEK work with and support the four young people who contributed our number one call. With thanks to them, to Andrew Tomlinson and Martin Johnstone from the Church of Scotland, and to Inspiring Scotland.

So, these are our calls... How do we achieve them?

By Amy Woodhouse



Amy Woodhouse is Head of Policy, Projects & Participation at Children in Scotland

“The gap between policy intent and policy implementation is a big problem in Scotland”

When you read our 25 Calls, you'll notice that a few themes loom large. If we are to ensure the best possible lives and futures for children and young people in Scotland, we must address these – but doing so will require substantial systemic change.

Creating a more equal society

Many of our calls look to a future Scotland where the circumstances into which children are born and raised don't predetermine their outcome and future. Where the gulf between the haves and have nots is reduced, to everyone's benefit, including in relation to income, education, health, access to the arts and nutritious food. The calls explore how we as a society make choices with equity in mind. Asking the question 'what will this do to reduce inequities?' should continue to underpin all our approaches to policy and legislative reform.

The importance of wellbeing and good relationships

We know that a more equal society is a mentally healthier society. But how we show that we care for all children and young people is a matter of individual interactions as well macro-level economics. A number of the calls talk about the importance of good relationships – between professionals and parents, between professionals and children, and between parents and their children. How we manage to do this, while under stress, being time poor and with competing demands is something that we all should have the opportunity to reflect on, whatever our role and position.

Evidence-based policy decisions

In Scotland we've seen some improvements in child-oriented policy and legislation in recent years. We now have a law with the aim of eradicating child poverty, for example. This should be celebrated. However, a common thread in our calls is the disconnect between national policymaking and local action; put simply, the gap between policy intent and policy implementation is a big problem here.

We question some recent choices in education policy and why, when there is good evidence that certain decisions would have a positive impact on child poverty, such as increasing child benefit, they have not yet been made. We want to know that decision-making at all levels is based on evidence. And where there isn't any, that evidence is sought, particularly from children and young people who are the end users of policies, services and interventions.

Rights-based approaches

We talk a lot about rights in these calls. Specifically, children's rights as outlined in the UNCRC and how we can uphold them. We know that children and young people still experience many barriers to accessing their rights in Scotland, and we are not likely to change this without directly involving them in decision-making at all levels.

Many of our calls are based on the direct perspectives and views of children and young people – what they feel they need, where they see things aren't working for them, and how they envisage things can improve. If, in this process, we can do our job to inform them, support them, and act on their recommendations, we may go some way to making their rights a reality.

Collaboration and common values

One of the major benefits of this project is the opportunity to work with so many of our members and partners – to learn from their expertise, experiences and passions, and support their priorities. It's important to us that the collaboration doesn't stop here.

These 25 Calls are Children in Scotland's joint mandate with our partners and we have a responsibility and commitment to pursue them. We may not be able to progress or achieve all of them. But with strength in numbers we are much more likely to achieve success than if each organisation works alone. So please read each contribution, think about which ones resonate with you, and support the #25Calls campaign where you can. Thank you.



Join us in **membership** and help change children's lives for the better

Access free training, exclusive content, and the chance to influence policy

Find out more: childreninscotland.org.uk/join



Road Safety Scotland Go Safe with Ziggy!: Ziggy's Sports Day

Road Safety Scotland (RSS) is delighted to announce a new addition to the 'Go Safe with Ziggy!' resource, the road safety learning approach for early level.

Part of this approach currently comprises six little storybooks for home, encouraging parents to take their children on a real learning journey with Ziggy. The stories bring **real-life road crossing situations** to life in an engaging way with the overall aim of encouraging parents/carers to set good examples for their young children, enabling them to get into good road safety habits that will last a lifetime.

The existing books are distributed to Early Learning and Childcare Centres (ELCCs) supporting the important school-home link and Big Book versions are also available for ELCCs for use in the classroom.

This new addition is called 'Ziggy's Sports Day' and was launched by Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson at the Scottish Learning Festival on 21 September 2018. Mr Matheson was joined by P1 children from St Albert's Primary School in Glasgow where they all enjoyed a reading of the new story (picture opposite). As well as meeting Mr Matheson, the children met Ziggy, the star of the show, and took him on a wee tour of the SLF!

The focus of the new book, 'Ziggy's Sports Day', is slightly different to the existing stories as it has been specifically developed to address the issue of **parental behaviour in the car** and the effect this can have on very young children.



The book will be distributed through P1 classes, once again supporting the important school-home link. As with the previous books, Big Book copies will be available from Autumn 2018 for all P1 classes for use in the classroom.

This book aims to help parents/carers realise that children will see – and be influenced by – their actions IN THE CAR. If they always drive too fast or shout at other drivers, their child will grow up thinking that this kind of behaviour is okay. Children copy their parents' behaviour in all other areas of life. So why should the car be any different?

Children start learning much earlier than many think:

- The portions of the brain which control vision, hearing and language all start developing before a child reaches 18 months
- By age four, a child's brain is 90% of its adult size
- By age five, 85% of our language is in place

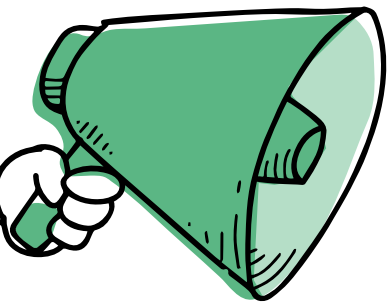
The key messages for parents/carers are:

- Switch your phone off whenever you're in the car, and keep stressing to your children that cars are no-phone zones. The last thing you want when they start driving is for them to think it's okay to make calls or text when they're behind the wheel.
- Be calm and courteous. Aggressive driving is dangerous driving. When we lose our temper, we lose concentration. Show your children how to rise above it by being calm. It's a lesson they can also take to other areas of life. The more children see positive behaviour towards others, the better.



www.roadsafety.scot

www.gosafewithziggy.com



25 calls for change

Our anniversary campaign brings together partners from across the sector to propose how children can experience equality and enjoy their rights. Take part, respond and help us achieve the change we want to see. [#25Calls](#)