

bright spots

Snapshot 2018



OUR LIVES BEYOND CARE

Care leavers' views on
their well-being in 2018

Dr. Claire Baker, Linda Briheim-Crookall,
Levana Magnus and Professor Julie Selwyn

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Background

The Bright Spots Programme helps local authorities better understand the well-being of their children and young people in care (aged 4-18) and care leavers.

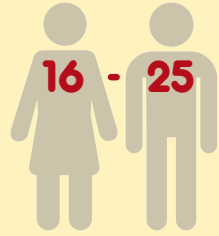
Currently official statistics provide only a partial picture of children in care and care leavers' lives. Data focuses on areas such as where children live, how many moves they have and how they are doing in terms of education and employment. None of this information tells us about the experience of care and leaving care from young people's own viewpoints: are they happy, safe and feel they are doing well?

The **Bright Spots programme**, developed by Coram Voice and the University of Bristol, directly addresses these gaps in our knowledge. Coram Voice (with funding from Coram-I) created a new set of care leaver well-being indicators to allow services to design their work around what young people say is important to them. The indicators are measured by the online survey ***Your Life Beyond Care (YLBC)***. YLBC complements the existing survey for children in care ***Your Life, Your Care (YLYC)***.

The survey tools are strongly evidence based. They were developed with children and young people and have been carefully tested and piloted. The design process involved workshops with 170 looked after children and care leavers, literature reviews and cognitive interviews. We also included the perspectives of professionals and policy-makers.

Understanding and responding to children and young people's voices and experiences are the foundation of high-quality services. But local authorities can struggle to engage a wide range of young people. Even where participation is strong, often only a minority of children and young people inform service development in their authority (e.g. through care leaver groups or ambassador roles). Our YLYC and YLBC surveys offer local authorities the opportunity to hear from their young people on a larger and more systematic level than ever before.

**Survey
age
group**



To date, the surveys have been used in **28 English** and **6 Welsh** local authorities.

Whilst the findings of the surveys are important for each individual authority taking part, by aggregating the results across local authorities we deepen our understanding of looked after childrens' and care leavers' well-being. We have already published two national reports detailing the findings from our children in care surveys in 2015/16 and 2016/17. Both *Our Lives, Our Care* reports are available from www.coramvoice.org.uk/brightspots.

We are particularly excited to be able to share here the first insights from our care leaver survey - *Your Life Beyond Care*.

**This snapshot summarises the findings
from the responses of**

474

**16-25 year
old care
leavers**

**who completed the survey in 6 local
authorities in England - an overall
response rate of 30%.**

Findings from the children in care survey, *Your Life, Your Care*, are published separately.





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Bright Spots Snapshot 2018

OUR LIVES BEYOND CARE

This snapshot gives a much needed insight into how care leavers really feel about their lives. It is based on a large survey of care leavers' views on their well-being and pulls together what 474 care leavers from 6 English local authorities told us through the *Your Life Beyond Care* survey in 2017/18.

Findings for children in care are published in '*Bright Spots Snapshot 2018: Our Lives, Our Care*'.

Our surveys are the only ones to capture 'subjective well-being' - how children in care and care leavers feel about their relationships, the support they receive and how things are going - based on research and what young people said was important.

Do you know how your care leavers are doing?

Taking part in the Bright Spots Programme is leading to change in local authorities, as they respond to what their young people say. We have worked with over 30 local authorities so far.

Join us now to get a unique insight into how your young people feel about their lives.

Get in touch with **Coram Voice** on **brightspots@coramvoice.org.uk** or go to **www.coramvoice.org.uk/brightspots** to find out more.