

YOUNG PERSON'S FORUM

On the 3rd April we met online. There was a bit of a technical issue tonight and it took me a little while to sort this. It meant that a couple of you were in the meeting before I was, thank you for giving me the time to sort this out and get on the call with you all. There were only three of you tonight, this could be due to the school holidays.

I explained that although we had hoped to meet in person there has been a delay in the new office and we still didn't know if the office would be opening next week. Due to this we were not going to be able to meet at the office. We have agreed we will meet in person as soon as we can. I explained that we had hoped to meet the head of fostering when we met in person but she has offered to join us on line tonight. You all agreed that you would like for her to join tonight. I asked if you would like to tell me the questions you wanted to ask and I ask them for you, or if you all felt comfortable asking the questions and having a wee chat. You all said you felt comfortable asking the questions and having a chat.

I text Sarah head of fostering for her to join us. Sarah introduced herself and talked about all the good work you have all been doing in the forum. One of you took charge of asking the questions. The first question was around why is it harder for some people to get sleepovers?

Sarah responded explaining, overnight stays or sleepovers have been talked about for around 20 years and there shouldn't be barriers but it depends on your own personal circumstances. For some children we need to get consent from parents (or social workers) for various things such as sleepovers as well as holidays. Police checks might be needed. And Sarah explained that if her children want to go for a sleepover at a friend's then she would want to know the person that was going to be looking after them, meeting with them first, and she would want to make sure her children were going to be safe. Sarah explained all parents and foster carers have to do the same, they have to know you are safe. This involves knowing the adults and knowing where you are, knowing the house rules are similar to your own house rules and things like this. Sarah asked if you all felt that answered the question?

One of you said that you felt it did, you talked about if you had only stayed somewhere for a short time your parent/carer might not want you going for a sleepover. We explored this being around building relationships and getting to know each other.

We then moved on to talk about age restrictions. The idea of being 17 and not being able to play age 18 games was mentioned by one of you.

Sarah mentioned the PEGI age ratings and that the age category on games and films can be quite broad and you could have discussions with your parents/carers and social workers around your own circumstances and what is appropriate for you to play or watch and why.

One of you mentioned that the older generation grew up with books and having to go to arcades to play games. Now gaming is easier to access and you have head phones to chat to friends as well as mobile phones. You mentioned that some people can become addicted and they need help with that because that wouldn't be good for them. You talked about the amount of time people spend on games can be a problem. You talked about structuring time works well for you and it means you have time for everything. You went on to say that you (you are 15 years old) think guns and violence would be ok to play but that gambling and nudity wouldn't be ok. You did say it would all depend how mature the person was.

Sarah said you are talking about two sides, the social side is one part and the content is another part. Sarah mentioned that there are websites that can help parents/carers to understand more about games and age restrictions. Sarah asked if you would be interested in doing a bit of training even if just to the staff around technology and what it means for your generation.

A couple of you agreed that you would be interested in doing something like this. Later in the call we explored this, two of you would like to help do this, one of you is happy to talk in front of people the other wants to do the slides.

One of you went on to talk about if parents/carers keep you away from games its going to make you want to play it more. You mentioned that all your friends will be playing it. You also mentioned that having a phone is a necessity in life now. You did say that you are aware it can come with risks such as bullying, addiction and gambling.

One of you raised that you had another young person come to join your family. At the time he came to join the family you were told he would be staying for two months and two years later he is part of your family. Your question was why were you told one thing and then something else happened. We explained that we did not know anything about your own home, Sarah mentioned that sometimes plans can change for a number of reasons. We acknowledged that there was learning for us from this conversation as we need to make sure you know plans might change if someone joins your family. We also said that we would ask Heather, your parents social worker to have a chat with you about this as she will know the details.

Sarah asked if there was anything else you all would like to talk to her about and you all agreed there was nothing else. We said goodbye to Sarah and thanked her for joining our call.

I asked if you would all mind giving me feed back on a form that we have been talking about asking all young people to fill in. I explained this was about us knowing what was

important to the person filling in the form and to help us know what they needed help or support with to achieve, what they wanted to achieve. I then shared my screen to show you all the 'MY Plan' document. We went through this bit by bit.

The first question you felt did not tell you what information the adults wanted. It needs to be narrowed down with direct questions.

You felt the front page should have something like 'tell me 10 interesting things about you?'

How am I feeling question you felt should maybe say 'is there anything that worries you?'

Dreams and future you felt were to alike.

The last question you felt was confusing and should maybe say something like 'Who can help me achieve my goals?' 'How my parents help me' Or 'How I will get help to do this'

Thank you for all of this feed back these suggestions are great!

Before finishing up I showed you all the leaflet that two of you will hand out during the young people's movie club next week. These leaflets are to invite others to attend the young people's forum. You all agreed that you were happy with the leaflets.

Thank you all for being part of today's chat and I look forward to seeing you next month.