

## Supporting Care Leavers with Training and Employment

Hopefully you have already completed the training module: [Awareness of Care Experienced Young People in the Workplace Webinar](#).

If not, it is recommended you access this short module first on POD:

<https://barnsley.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=2486>.

Young people leaving care need a good role model and mentor. They want someone who is patient, caring, and compassionate. Someone who believes in them, sees their strengths as well as understands their challenges, sticks with them through thick and thin. Someone they learn to trust through a nurturing relationship.

Is this you? If it is your skills could make a real difference to someone's life and bring you a great sense of achievement.

This leaflet will help you to think about issues that may arise, why and how you can respond in a supportive trauma informed way.

Good luck and thank you for taking this wonderful opportunity to be a guide to success.



### What skills & attributes can care leavers bring to the workplace

As well as the usual attributes such as energy, fun, enthusiasm, new ideas, and being tech-savvy care leavers may have enhanced skills due to their life experiences such as:

- Resilience
- Resourcefulness
- Adaptability
- Problem solving
- Persistence



*"An individual who is care experienced and supported can move from surviving to thriving."*

### Before they start

Remember care leavers may not be living with an adult who can encourage and support them with this big step. If the following haven't already happened and you are able within time constraints:

- Call them to introduce yourself, tell them you are looking forward to meeting them and invite them to have a short visit.
- Check they know what to bring, what to wear, where to go and who to ask for on their first day.
- Have a chat about what to expect on their first day and try to allay any fears.

**This will help to reduce worry & anxiety about the unknown which can sometimes feel overwhelming.**

### First few days

The basis of trauma informed working is trusting relationships. **So, although there will be induction processes to adhere to make sure relationship building is your priority!**

- Increase the induction period if you can so you can take your time, break things down and repeat them if needed (*taking information in is difficult with increased anxiety*).
- Give or direct them to any written resources or pictorial information so they can return to this if required.
- Check in with them at the end of each day to discuss any worries and give feedback (*prevents worries escalating*).
- Don't forget to let them know your looking forward to seeing them again tomorrow (*increases self-worth and feeling valued*).

Avoid asking about personal circumstances or history of care as not everyone wants to discuss this but ensure they know they can approach you for support if they wish.

Having attitudes and values such as active listening, showing respect, ensuring dignity, and acting on any concerns will help you to provide a good experience.



**PACE is a useful concept to promote positive engagement and help others to feel safe.**

**Playfulness** – this is the lighter side of life, something we all need! It can diffuse a difficult or tense situation and give hope. However, it is not making fun of someone, and it can be hard for those with adverse child experiences to understand some banter and sarcasm so avoid this.

**Acceptance** – is unconditional positive regard. You are accepting thoughts, feelings, and perceptions without judgement. You may not agree but accepting *their* experience is what is important. It doesn't mean accepting inappropriate behaviours but accepting the motives behind it. *'It must be hard if you feel I'm always getting on at you.'*

**Curiosity** – shows you don't know best, but that you genuinely want to understand so you can help and get the best out of someone. It can pull them out of a fear or anger state into a place where new possibilities can arise. *'Tell me about what gets in the way of you getting here on time.'*

**Empathy** – Empathy is about putting yourself in someone else's shoes and allowing yourself to feel what they must be feeling. It gives us a sense of compassion for the person and their feelings. It communicates understanding and creates safety. *'You look worried, I'm guessing you're afraid of doing it wrong'.*

**Don't worry you probably have a lot of these skills and qualities already. If not like everything it takes practice. Young people don't expect you to be perfect but appreciate you trying to connect with them in an understanding way.**

## Ongoing Support



Have realistic goals and break them down into manageable steps.

Explore strategies that will support organisation skills & timekeeping.

**This will prevent overwhelming them, support them to be in control and help to make success feel possible.**



Provide regular constructive feedback that accepts mistakes, gives clear guidance, instils self-belief and conveys optimism that they can do it.

Make them feel valued and part of the team.

**These will build confidence, self-worth, acceptance & a sense of belonging.**

If they don't turn up to work check in with them – if they are worried about something they may avoid it rather than discuss it, or there may be other problems that you can direct to other services or support.

Gently challenge them to continually move forward and develop, show them what could be in the future!



*"The support I get at work makes a massive difference to me. It means I can manage what's happening at home with a job that I really enjoy."*



## How do I report concerns?

If you have doubts or concerns that a young person is being abused:

- Call the police and/or ambulance if the young person is in immediate danger
- Discuss with your line manager
- Access further guidance and support from [Report child abuse - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- [Report abuse of an older person - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- Speak to your local Social Care services

**Failure to report concerns could lead to the young person being at further risk.**