

Nominet REACH

DIGIWISE

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- ***Elevating young peoples' voice to influence the services affecting their digital access.***
- ***Purpose of the report is to develop a policy / best practice document for children looked after and children leaving care online access.***
- ***Care experienced young people have invaluable insight which is currently under-used in relation to digital and online safety policy development.***

Progress so far

- a) Employed and trained a care experienced apprentice training in Impact Measurement and Management.
- b) Steering group formed inclusive of young people representation and developed action plan with progress milestones. Established the project name '**Digiwise**'.
- c) Designing and implementing consultation for young people with care experience.
- d) Hosted a series of consultation workshops, focus groups and events capturing young peoples views.
- e) Consulted with 35 young people within quantitative surveys, 5 young people within qualitative 'deep dive' surveys and multiple others within focus groups and workshops.
- f) Promoted recognised CPD programme of learning for foster carers, residential workers and social workers.
- g) Promoted the adoption of the UKCIS Digital Passport for children and young people in care.
- h) Developed with young people a smartphone holder for all care experienced young people with QR code for a quick and easy access to resources.

Survey findings overview

- Most of our young people are exposed to some form of adversity in online spaces, these issues are far reaching and usually involve social media.
- Young people want data plans!.
- That internet speeds are slow and could be better across all settings.
- There is limited evidence of consistent approaches and overall effectiveness of acceptable use agreements and use of online safety contracts in care homes.
- Young people want quick and easy access to reporting and support mechanisms, with tools to enable their fast access when faced with crisis.
- Lack of consistent guidance on appropriate filtering on both foster home broadband, mobile phone providers and settings on applications with the concept of “safety gates” being employed.
- Educating young people through workforce development programme such as the ‘Fostering Digital Skills’ programme.
- That we need to educate young people on the risks of being online along with practical tips on how to keep social media accounts safe including how to block, report and delete.

Recommendations

- Take all necessary steps to ensure harmful content such as violent, graphic, sexual, hateful and extremist content is minimised and filtered at source within all settings, through the use of various “safety gates” on networks and devices.
- To ensure that our workforce and professionals, carers and residential staff have the skills, knowledge and skills to support young people to gain all of the benefits to being online, whilst still managing their risk.
- Being able to offer age appropriate, high quality education, interventions and conversation starters when they are needed.
- Offer quick and easy access to resources and support for our children and young people.
- Consideration to the adoption of the governments UKCIS Digital Passport and the role it can play in building collaborative approaches to digital resilience in care between carer and child.
- The existing policy *Short breaks and residential services Wi-Fi & Internet use policy* is in place but will be reviewed in light of this research and national guidance.