



ChatterBox

Issue 4 The Newsletter for Looked After Young People in South Tyneside

**Young Peoples
Engagement Team
April 04**

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What is ChatterBox?

Hi there - Welcome to the fourth edition of the ChatterBox newsletter! ChatterBox is the Newsletter for Looked After Young People in South Tyneside Aged 12 and Above. It is also for young people who live with a Looked After young person for example if your parents are foster carers. We hope you enjoy reading

this issue of your newsletter as it's packed full of exciting stuff!

Chatterbox is produced by the Young People's Engagement Team (Lee and Jo) but the newsletter is designed by a group of young people called the "ChatterBox Editors Group".

See inside for what this group does!



So send in your articles now - see inside for more details!

Don't Forget To Enter The Competition On The Back Pages To Win More Prizes! Well Done to Alan who won the last competition!

ChatterBox Editors Group



This group is made up of Looked After Young People and meets up before every issue of ChatterBox is produced and helps to decide what will be going in to it. The Young Peoples Engagement Team also receive loads of stuff from you guys and the editors help to select what we put in.

There is always a reward trip after each editors meeting - **last time we went to the Bowling Alley in South Shields!** Anyone can come along to the editors group - the next one will be in July - just let us know if you are interested in coming by ticking the box on the competition sheet. Listen to some of these comments from some of the young people who came last time :

"I like being involved in the editors group because it helps other Looked After young people know what's going on and gives people a chance to show off their work."

"I would tell other young people to come along to the editors group because you can have a say in what goes into the newsletter and because you get to go on trips!!

"I like being able to see my work and ideas printed for everyone to see"

"I liked spending the voucher that I won for the last competition!"

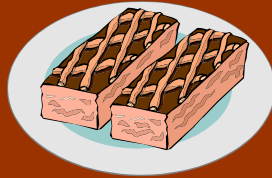
Send Us Your Stuff!

If you don't want to come to the editors group (or can't because you live outside of the borough) then you can still be involved by sending us your stuff through the post or by email. We want things like poems, jokes, stories, what you think about being "Looked After", funny things that have happened to you - anything that you want to send in really! And remember that if you have **something printed in the newsletter** then you can win **up to a £5 voucher**. Our address is on the back page so make sure you don't forget!

Cookery!

Donna has sent us these recipes for the tastiest snacks your taste-buds have ever tried! Why don't you give them a go and cook them!

Chocolate Brownies



Ingredients:

- 100g Butter
- 75g Milk Chocolate
- 150g brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 100g Self Raising Flour
- 1 tablespoon of vanilla essence

Method

1. Melt the chocolate and butter by placing them in a bowl over a pan of hot simmering water.
2. Whisk the eggs, vanilla essence and sugar until thickened and increased in volume.
3. Slowly mix this into the chocolate by gently turning it with a spoon, do the same with all the flour.
4. Pour the mixture into a small greased tin (you can grease a tin by getting some butter and brushing the inside of the tin until it has a light covering) and bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes on a medium heat.
5. After the brownies are cooked let them cool down and cut them into small squares (or big squares if you really like them!

ButterFly Cakes

Ingredients:

- 100g Margarine
- 100g castor sugar
- 100g Self Raising Flour
- 2 eggs



Butter Cream

- 50g Margarine
- 100g Icing Sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla essence

Method for butterfly cakes

1. Mix together the margarine and sugar until light and fluffy.
2. Beat in the eggs one at a time, adding a little flour with each.
3. Gently spoon in the remaining flour.
4. Half fill the paper cases with the mixture.
5. Bake at 190C for 20 minutes.
6. When cold cut a slice from the top of each cake and cut this in half.
7. Put a little butter cream on top of each cake and arrange as "wings" on top.

Butter Cream

1. Mix the margarine and sieved icing sugar and vanilla essence.
2. Beat until light and fluffy.

DO U CARE? WEBSITE—HAVE YOU CHECKED IT OUT?

The image shows a screenshot of the Doucare website with several callout boxes pointing to different parts of the interface:

- Do U Care? Logo:** Points to the cartoon characters and the 'DOUCARE?' logo.
- Message boards— you can ask questions or send messages to your mates or other Looked After children:** Points to the 'MESSAGE BOARDS' button.
- You can send in your own experiences of being in care and read other peoples!:** Points to the 'REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES' button.
- Read jokes!:** Points to the 'JOKES' button.
- Play Online games - Pac Man is great!:** Points to the 'GAMES' button.
- Get help if you have trouble sleeping!:** Points to the 'DREAMS' button.
- This is where all the text appears:** Points to the main content area containing a 'WELCOME' message and introductory text.

The website content includes a navigation menu on the left with items like 'Information', 'Real Life Experiences', 'Childrens Rights', 'Sport & Leisure', 'Message Boards', 'Games', 'About This Site', 'Contacts', 'Henry', 'Hillary', 'Harriot', and 'Legal'. The main content area features a 'WELCOME' message, a 'How we use Cookies' link, and text stating: 'This site is aimed at "Looked After" young people and those with experience of Social Care and Health services. It should also be helpful for finding out what it is like to be "Looked After" in South Tyneside. We hope you find the information on this website useful and we hope you can relate to the three characters Henry, Hilary and Harriot. We also hope you find this site easy to use, and above all, helpful in knowing more about your own...'. The right sidebar contains buttons for 'JOKES', 'GAMES', 'DREAMS', 'CHILDRENS RIGHTS', and 'CONTACTS'.

www.doucare.co.uk

The website for all Looked After children and young people in South Tyneside - You need to regularly check this site out as it is being updated all the time!



"I was put in foster care at a young age and was separated from my brother and sisters.

I missed my mum as well and I couldn't understand why we had been taken away from her.

As time went by I became more and more resentful towards the social workers and the other people that I figured out in the end were only trying to help.

My life became easier as I became older and was able to understand the situation in which I went into care more and more. My social workers have helped me sometimes, and even though most of the time you may feel that the social workers don't care, they really do so don't give up and keep trying."

Have You read any of the Real Life Experiences on the website? Are they similar to your life or are they totally different?

Why don't you log into the site using your Username and Password that we sent you and then you can write your own experiences onto the site!

If you don't have a username or password yet then please give me a ring on the number on the back page and we will make sure that you get one!

Make sure you keep checking the site for new stuff and Look Out for the DoUCare? Super Competition which is coming soon!



Watch out for the NEW DoUCare? pages from The PLACE! Soon you will be able to contact your teacher or mentor, get help with home work, and find out information on SATS, GCSE's and revision!



If you get stuck on this quarters competition—you can also find some clues to help you on the site!

A Bit About Bullying!

Bullying is horrible. It's not only done by kids but adults too. It's frightening and takes all your confidence away and self esteem. It makes you feel you don't want to go out or meet people or sometimes even live. But you don't have to put up with this anymore, there are people who can help you, but you have to tell someone. **Tell your teachers, social workers or foster parents keep telling people until somebody listens to you.** Once you have told someone you will be

able to stick up for yourself and tell the bullies to leave you alone. It takes a lot to do this and you will be terrified inside but the most important thing is that you don't hurt yourself - as the people you leave behind will be devastated and all of them will say 'I wish I knew you were having problems I could have helped'.

By Nikki

Residential Reference Group

The Young People's Engagement Team are organising a new group for Young People who live in a residential children's home. There are three residential units in the borough - Henderson Road, Whiteleas Way and Lanark Drive. The new Reference group will be for young people who are living or have lived in one of these homes to get together and discuss how things could be improved. It will only be a small group with 8 young people being the maximum but you will meet up with the Young people's Engagement Officer and the Residential Service Manager. The group will have 2 main aims: 1. **Give the young people who live in residential units a say in how they are run.** 2. **Provide a place where young people can meet up face to face with the manager of the service to discuss how things can be improved.** The young people will also be paid £10 for each meeting that they attend! Contact Lee on 424 4633 for more details!

Health And Fitness Activity Day 14th April—Temple Park Leisure centre

Did you come along to the Young People's Health and Sports Activity Day on the 14th April 04 at Temple Park Leisure Centre? If you didn't then you really missed out! This day was designed especially for young people

like you and aimed to give you the opportunity to try out different sports and health activities FOR FREE! The types of things going on were: Football competitions, basketball coaching, use of multi-gym and weights, Keep fit



classes, Aromatherapy, head massage, beauty and nail therapies! So there was plenty to keep people busy! Look out in the future for more Activity days!

Review Managers

Hi! We are the Independent Review Managers who are based at the Children's Standards Unit, at Chichester House, and we want to tell you about what we do.

When you are "looked after" and living with foster carers, relatives, or in one of our Children's Homes, your social worker will be arranging meetings, to check that everything is being done to make sure that you are being well cared for.

The meeting will check how you are doing while being "Looked After". These meetings are called Reviews, and the first one happens within 1 month of you living in your new home. The second Review will be 3 months later, and if you are still with your foster parents, or in the Children's Home, they will be every 6 months after that.

At the Review Meetings will be people who know you, and are involved in your care. This might include your parents, carers, a teacher, a school nurse, and also your social worker.



Back row: Graham, Shirley, Jan,
front row: Carole, Vicky

Your Review Chair (that's one of us) will come along to your Review to make sure everyone has their say, and that good decisions are made about your care.

Did You Know?....A new policy is being developed by Social Care and Health to make sure that you are involved in all the decisions that are made about you!

You are the most important person to be at your Review, and your social worker and carers should give you lots of help to be there, or to make sure that your views are heard. We like to come and meet you just before your Review so that you can tell us what you want to say. We know that this can sometimes be hard for young people during the meeting.

You can fill in a booklet called the Consultation Paper, to tell the people at the meeting what you want to say. If you have access to Viewpoint, this is another way that you can tell people what you think, and what your views are about your future. You can also talk to your social worker about other ways of writing down what you want to say.

We are always looking at ways to make Reviews better for young people, and Lee Taylor, Young People's Engagement Worker, is soon to be asking for your views on this. Please let him, know if you think there are ways that Reviews could be improved.

Jokes



Here are some jokes sent in by you guys!!



Q: David's father has three sons :
Snap, Crackle and _____ ?

A: David!



Q: What kind of car does Luke Skywalker
drive?

A: a Toy-yoda.



Q: Why did the boy blush when he opened the fridge?

A: He saw the salad dressing!



Why did the turtle
cross the road?

A: To get to the Shell garage!



Q: If the red house is on the right
side and if the blue house is on the
left side where's the white house?

A: Washington DC!



ATTENTION - From The PLACE

Please REMEMBER these dates - they are very important for you!

YEAR 9 SATs = Tuesday 4th May - Friday 7th May

YEAR 11 GCSEs = begin the week of Monday 24th May



§ GOLDEN RULES FOR ALL EXAMS:

- ✓ Stay calm
- ✓ Get a good night's sleep
- ✓ Organise you pens, pencil, calculator etc.
- ✓ Be prepared
- ✓ Read all questions carefully
- ✓ Try and answer all questions.

If you need any help with revision or are feeling stressed
please contact us at "The PLACE", 4273490 or by email
the.place@s-tyneside-mbc.gov.uk



Results from Health Assessments Consultation

Before Christmas the Young People's Engagement Officer and the Looked After Children's Nurse visited the boroughs residential units to ask the young people about their experiences of LAC health checks and medicals. Every Looked After young person is supposed to have a health check when they are first Looked After and then once per year after this. The health check is there to make sure that all your health needs are met and that you are receiving the right medication if you need it.

This is what we found:

Nearly half the young people had not attended their last medical.

The overall opinion of the health check was low - 3 young people thought it was ok or all right the rest of the young people described it as a **negative experience**.

Most people said they would like the health checks to be **carried out by a same sex doctor**, to be more **convenient** i.e. in time and place and for the check to be **shorter**.

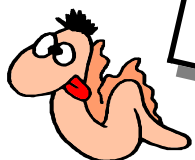
The reasons given for not attending can be grouped together into one category - **feeling uncertain and hesitant about the whole process**. Not knowing the doctor and being worried about what they might say were the most popular reasons for not attending. Five young people also believed that the health check was not important and so didn't attend.

The results from this project have been put into a report and also used to write an action plan for this year - let us know if you want to know more about what will be changing!

Poems - sent in by Chelsea and Bev

I saw a little worm
Wriggling on it's belly!
I watched it for a little while
squashed it with
welly!
Then
my

Ewie Guie was a worm
A mighty worm was he
He sat upon the railway track
A train he did not see
EWIE GUIE!



Little Arabella Miller
Found a woolly caterpillar
First it crawled upon her
mother
Then upon her baby brother
"Oh," said Arabella Miller
Take away the caterpillar



Do you like Creepy Crawlies?
Write in and tell us about what
you do if you see a creepy crawly!

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www.doucare.co.uk

Have you enjoyed reading this newsletter? We hope you have! We also hope that you will get involved in producing it. There are two ways that you can be a part of ChatterBox—send us all your stories, jokes, book reviews or anything else that you would like to see in the newsletter by post just use the stamped addressed envelope that came with the newsletter. Or even better—come along to the next ChatterBox editors group in July at The Place. You will have the chance to give us all your ideas, create articles, and put the newsletter together, as well as being able to come with us on our special ChatterBox trip! All you have to do is tell us you want to come along on the competition form and we will write to you and invite you!

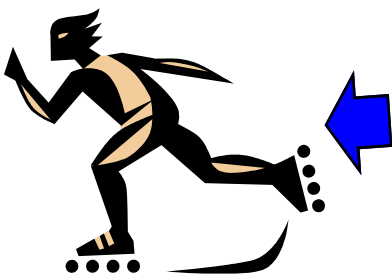
Now that sounds good!!

Young Peoples Engagement Team

The Young People's Engagement Team is made up of two people Jo Weston and Lee Taylor. We work with young people throughout the borough to help you have a say in how services are given to you. Jo works with young people who get help from the Drugs Action Team, the Health services and some Mental Health services while Lee works with young people who get help from the Council's Social Care and Health Department. We believe that if the help and support that you



get from the council is going to be the best and most useful possible then we need to listen to your ideas about how to make them better. So that means Lee is interested in knowing what you think about being looked after and what you think about having a social worker or a foster carer. If you want to talk to us about being Looked After or about anything else then please give us a ring on 0191 424 4633 or by email on ype.newsletter@s-tyneside-abc.gov.uk



GET YOUR SKATES ON!!! SEND IN YOUR WORK NOW! YOU CAN WIN PRIZES! WE WANT INFO ABOUT YOU, STORIES, JOKES, FAVOURITE BOOKS, FILMS, MUSIC, TV SHOWS!



COMPETITION ENTRY

To help us make this newsletter as good as we can please answer these quick questions before you send us your competition entry.

Did you like this newsletter?

Yes No

Why?

Would you like to come to the next Editors group and the reward trip?

Yes No

Have you used the Do U care? Website?

Did you enjoy using it?

Yes No Yes No

What did you think about the website?

What did you think should be added to the website?

Name _____ Tel _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

Post this sheet in the **FREEPOST** envelope provided before **15th June 2004** to enter the competition.

