

Age 12+

# ChatterBox

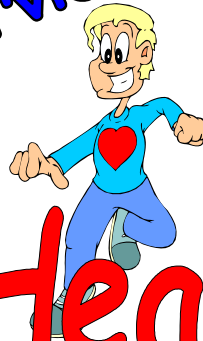
Issue 9  
May 2006

The newsletter for looked after young people in South Tyneside

ChatterBox is for looked after young people aged 12 and over in South Tyneside. It is also for the children of foster carers. To receive your own copy of ChatterBox write to us (our address is on the back page) and we will add you to our mailing list.



Interview with the Director of Children's Services!

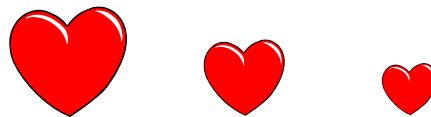


Find out what the Director thinks about the services you use!

# R U Healthy?



Do U think U R healthy? Find out inside!



Don't forget to enter the competition to win more prizes — well done to James who won last time and received £10!



South Tyneside Council



# What's Inside?

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## Lee's Letter!



Hi everyone.

Welcome to the new edition of ChatterBox newsletter. I hope you will agree with me that issue 9 is jammed pack full of interesting articles, funny jokes and puzzles!

Make sure you read the article about young people's participation on the opposite page and also check out the results of the R U healthy survey.

On page seven there is some information about what happened when a group of looked after young people went to visit the Director of Children and Young People's Services and what he said to them.

Finally, thanks for sending in all your articles and bits of information PLEASE keep them coming!

## Send us your stuff!

Why don't you *send 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!

## Young People's Participation - making it REAL!

If we asked you the question "what does participation mean to you?" then we would probably get a thousand different answers! So we thought we had better explain what we think Young People's Participation is about!

Youth Participation is a phrase that is often used but it is often not used properly. In the past, asking young people what they think has been considered enough to satisfy social care inspectors. But we think that there is a world of difference between *consultation* (asking young people what they think) and real, meaningful youth participation (young people getting involved in making decisions).

In South Tyneside we think (and social care inspectors agree) that we are good at finding out what young people think but we want to improve the way that we help you to get involved in how decisions are made. For instance we would like more of you to be involved in your review meetings — this might mean going along to them or it might mean making sure that the other people who go to them know what you think and what you would like to happen.



That's why we have introduced Viewpoint for some young people and why we hope to be able to offer this to everyone who has a review. But we also want you to get

involved in reference groups (these are small groups where young people can come along and have their say about particular issues).

If you would like to get more involved in how decisions are made then please get in touch with us (using the address and numbers on the back page) and we will let you know what groups or projects you can get involved in. Or you can check out the DoUCare website for more info about what groups you can get involved in - [www.doucare.co.uk](http://www.doucare.co.uk)



## Viewpoint update

Hello everyone—Kathleen here!

Just thought I would to update you all on the progress of our Viewpoint project. Some of you will have read about Viewpoint in the last newsletter or you may have used it yourself. We've been visiting young people in their placements all over the country and have clocked up a lot of miles! So far we have seen over 80 young people and helped them fill in their viewpoint questionnaire in time for their review.



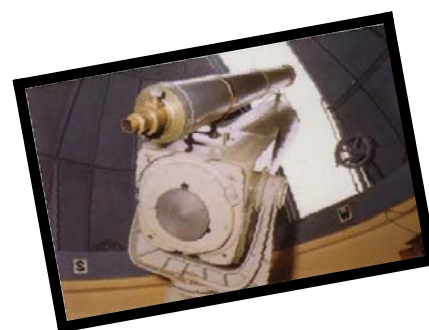
Viewpoint Screen shot

At first we were just visiting the young people who didn't live in South Tyneside (but who are looked after by South Tyneside). But in February we included all of the young people who live in a children's home in South Tyneside as well.

Nearly all of the young people have enjoyed using Viewpoint and think it has helped them to say what they want about how they are being cared for. This month we will be asking some young people if we can come along to their review meeting to see how their questionnaire is used within the meeting. **Look out for more information soon!**

## Wednesday activities group

The Wednesday activity group still meets at The PLACE on a Wednesday from 4 till 5.30pm. Over the last few weeks we have been doing all sorts of activities such as making "doughy face splats!", cooking, photography and a visit to the Planetarium! This is what some of the young people had to say.....  
 "I like the group because we go on trips", " I like cooking things then eating them!", "I like talking and having fun with other young people!"



**Why don't you come along on a Wednesday at 4pm? Give us a ring on 424 4633 for more details!**

## Health survey feedback — results R in!

In the last issue of ChatterBox we sent out an "R U Healthy ?" survey to find out what you thought about health and to see how healthy you thought you were! Lot's of you sent your forms back and were entered into our competition to win a portable cd player! Well done to Gemma who won it! You can find a summary of the results below.



53% of you thought you were fit and healthy but 6% of you thought you were unhealthy



56% of you said you were 'happy' most of the time but 20% of you said you were 'sad' most of the time



16% of you said you exercised a lot but 10% of you said you did no exercise at all - everyone else was somewhere in the middle!



70% of you said you didn't smoke but out of those who did 20% said they smoked up to 10 cigarettes per day



80% of you said that you didn't drink alcohol but out of those who did 25% said they drank between 10 and 20 units per week (1 pint of lager = 2.5 units)

The most popular people who you said you would talk to about health issues were: carers, friends, school nurse, matrix worker, parents and key worker.

Your ideas for improving services included;

- producing a booklet about staying healthy and keeping fit,
- more information and advice about drinking alcohol and it's effects,
- more information about how to exercise and where to go,
- more information and advice about mental wellbeing.

All the answers that you gave will go into a report for the Looked After Children's Health group. This group is made up of doctor's, nurses, and staff from children's services. The group is looking at how it can help to improve the health of looked after children.

If you have any health concerns please contact Janet Campbell, LAC Nurse, on 283 1380 or email [Janet.Campbell@stpct.nhs.uk](mailto:Janet.Campbell@stpct.nhs.uk)

## Complaints and Advocacy

**Do you want to complain or make a comment about the help you get?**

If you are unhappy about something and would like to talk about it, or if you are pleased about something, we are here to listen.

### What can I complain about?

- Being unable to see members of your family
- How you are cared for
- The place where you live
- Not being able to attend a meeting
- Decisions being made about you when you are not involved
- Other things you may be worried about



### How do I complain?

- You could tell a member of your family or your carer
- You could tell your Social Worker or someone you trust
- You could talk to a member of staff where you live
- You could fill in a complaints form and send it to the Complaints Officer (you don't need a stamp) or email her at:  
[socialcare&healthcomplaints@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:socialcare&healthcomplaints@southtyneside.gov.uk)
- You could telephone the complaints hotline number which is **0800 180 4520** (freephone except when using some mobiles)



**Remember that any young person who wants to make a complaint has the right to have an advocate (someone who acts on your behalf) - and they will help you to make the complaint. You can contact NYAS on 0800 616101 to speak to someone about getting an advocate.**

Your problem may be sorted out by just talking to someone. But if not a person will be asked to look into your complaint and they will want to talk to you about your concerns and will then let you know what happens.

We also want to hear about the good things that have happened. For example you might be happy with a particular service or want to tell us about your carer or Social Worker. To pass on a compliment you can tell the complaints officer by using any of the methods listed above.

## Young people interview the Director

### Young people ask the Director about advocacy

The Director for Children and Young People's Services is called Kim Bromley-Derry and three young people from the Wednesday activities group went out to see him and asked him about **advocacy** and all the new changes. This is their report. The questions are in red and his answers are below.



The young people with the Director

#### What do you think about Advocacy?

"Young people need both people of their own age and adults that they can talk to and support them and also help and assist them when they need it. Advocates are one way to do this, in fact advocacy is probably one of the best ways to do that. The most important thing is that young people have someone that they can talk to, someone that they can trust and someone that can help them to get things done."

#### Do you think all looked after children should have access to an advocate?

"Definitely, every young person should have someone that they can talk to; a parent, a carer or an advocate. Any looked after person that needs something done should have access to an advocate".

#### Do you think it's good that advocates help to build young people's confidence?

"Definitely! It's one of the things that advocates should help with. Everyone needs help with their confidence now and then - even I do sometimes - so certainly for young people it's good to have someone to help with this."

#### Do you think it's best to take children away from their families?

"I think there are some young people that it's right for them to have a bit of time out from their family—for whatever reason, it could be for a whole load of reasons. But I think generally I'd like to see most children with their families or going back to live with their families if they can."

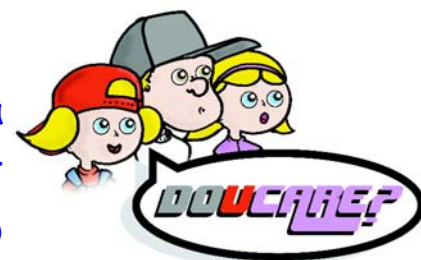
#### Do you know that there are some Social Workers with bad communication skills?

"When I was training to be a social worker they told me that the only skill that you really need is to be able to talk to people and if you're working with young people then you should be able to talk to young people. If someone isn't able to talk to young people then we should be doing something about that. So it's the kind of thing that you should be able to tell us through advocates."

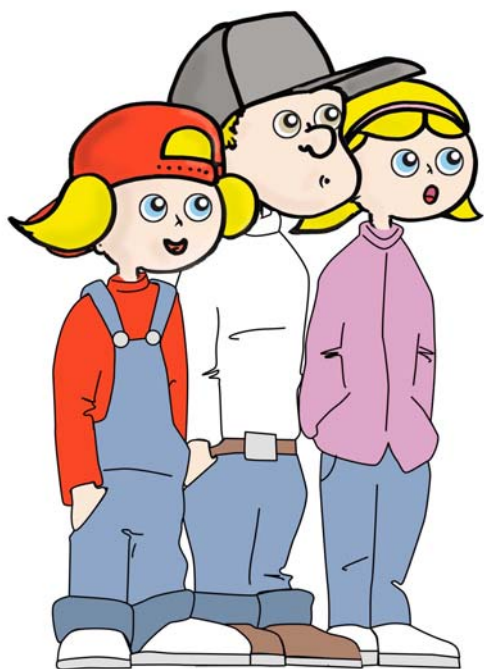
The young people asked him lot's more questions and you can find out what else he said in the next edition or by looking on the DoUCare? website under 'activities group'.

## DO U CARE? WEBSITE!

The DoUCare website is the place to go for information about being looked after, having a social worker or to find out what different people's jobs are, there's also info on things to do and a section on other young people's experiences.



Our DoUCare? characters are of course called Henry, Hillary and Harriet!



**Competition winner!!**  
Well done to Reece who won the character competition!



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!

[www.doucare.co.uk](http://www.doucare.co.uk)

## Keeping children safe

### Local Safeguarding Children Board is launched!

Keeping children and young people safe is really important. To help us do this the new South Tyneside Local Safeguarding Children's Board was launched on 1 February 2006. Staying safe is one of the 5 areas that the government says all children need. It includes a wide range of issues such as accidents, racism, crime and safe care as well as child protection.

The Board will replace the existing Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) which is only responsible for child protection. The changes are part of the Children Act 2004 (a government law). The job of the LSCB will be to organise and keep a check of what is done to promote the welfare of children in the area and keep them safe.



Winning logo by Emily McNally  
Aged 11

As part of the launch the winner of the competition to design a new logo was announced. The competition was organised by Helen Quick from South Tyneside's Children's Fund. There were 101 entries to the competition covering a wide range of approaches and issues relating to safeguarding. However, it was Emily McNally aged 11 who came up with the winning logo (see picture).

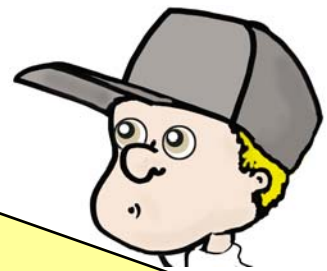
**We have a number of pens, pencils, and other little goodies to give away! If you would like a goody bag please write in and let us know!**

## Leaving Care Service drop in

**When? Thursdays 4 - 6pm**

**Where? Leaving Care Service ,  
Edhill Avenue, Simonside**

**Who's it For? Young People over the age  
of 15!**



## South Tyneside has MAXimum success!

Last year more people than ever made use of their MAX cards!



As you probably know the old MAX card scheme finished at end of March but don't worry — the new scheme started the next day on April 1st!

You should already have received your new cards and booklets but here's a few figures to show how successful last years scheme was!

Number of people getting Max cards in South Tyneside = 1,424

Number of Max card visits from South Tyneside = 654 people

Number of Max card visits to Temple Park/Hebburn baths (up to Sept 05) = 3,359 people

Number of places that accept Max Cards - 59 in North East

Look out for the new posters that will tell you where Max cards are accepted!

## What you told us about...

In the last edition of ChatterBox we asked you how you thought we could improve this newsletter - this is what you told us.....

### Why do you like this newsletter?

"Because you can win vouchers and prizes", "It's interesting", "It tells you about things", "The jokes are funny", "It's good to read", "It has got fun things in", "I like the puzzles", "Lot's of information", "Because I like to read".

### What can we do to improve it?

"Include a health issue in each edition", "More puzzles", "Stuff about movies and music", "Things to do."

### What kind of articles should we include in the newsletter?

- 80% of you wanted reviews of books, games, films or music.
- 50% of you wanted information about being looked after.
- 90% of you wanted help/advice/problem page.
- 40% of you wanted information about what's happening in the area.



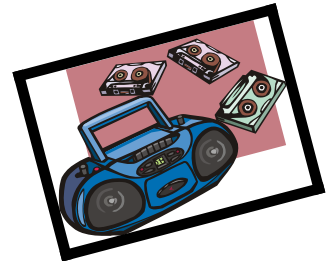
**Make sure you tell us what all your favourite things are this time! See competition entry form for more details**

## What do you do?

We have been trying to find out what you like to do in your spare time and what hobbies you have:

In the last newsletter you told us you:

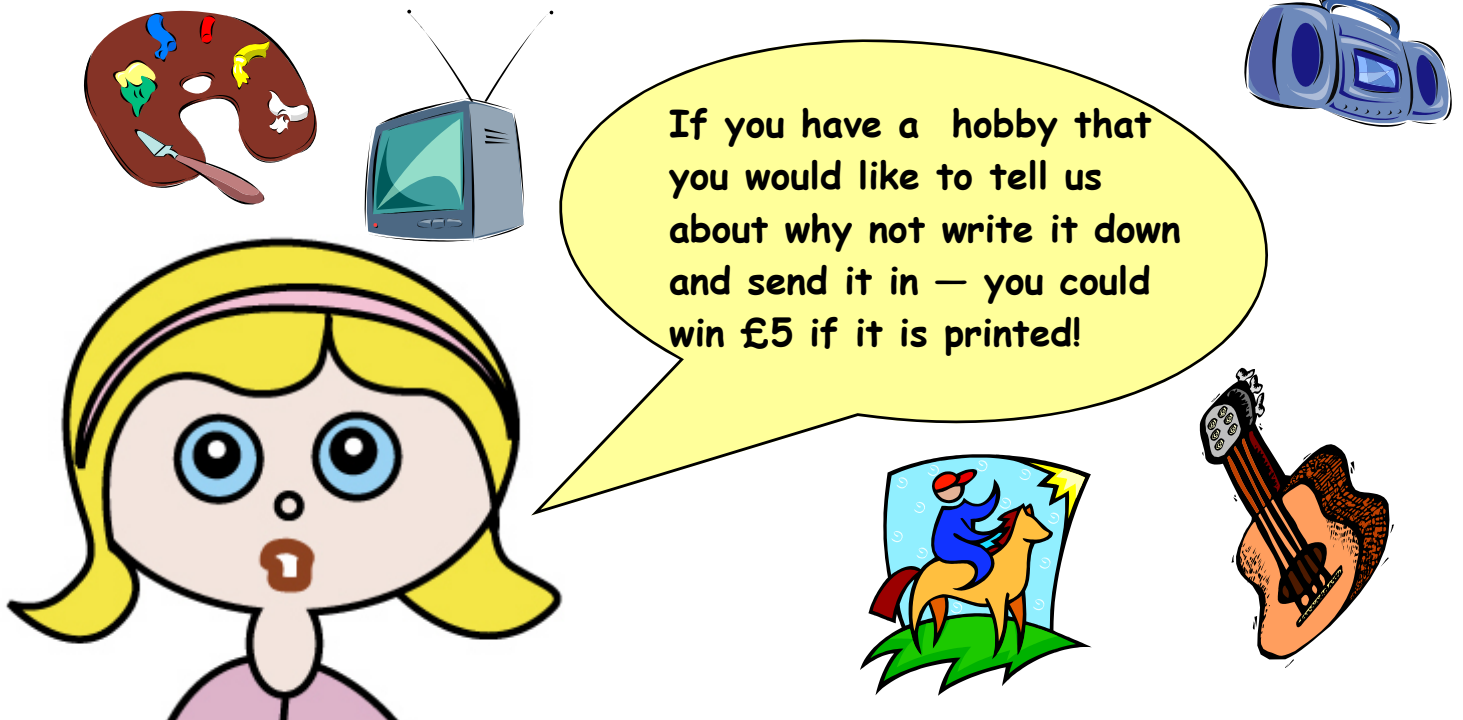
- Went to the gym
- Did farming
- Play music
- Play on Playstation
- Watch TV
- Went to the cinema
- Play football
- Watch videos/dvds
- Going out with mates
- Sing



At the MAX card Fun Day you told us you enjoy.....

- going to youth club
- playing with pets
- horse riding
- playing football
- looking at the stars
- playing instruments
- doing arty things
- riding on trains
- going to the seaside
- playing out
- skate boarding
- watching Sunderland
- watching Newcastle
- playing with friends

Thanks very much for sending us all this information about what you like doing! We will be using it to help us plan future activities and trips.

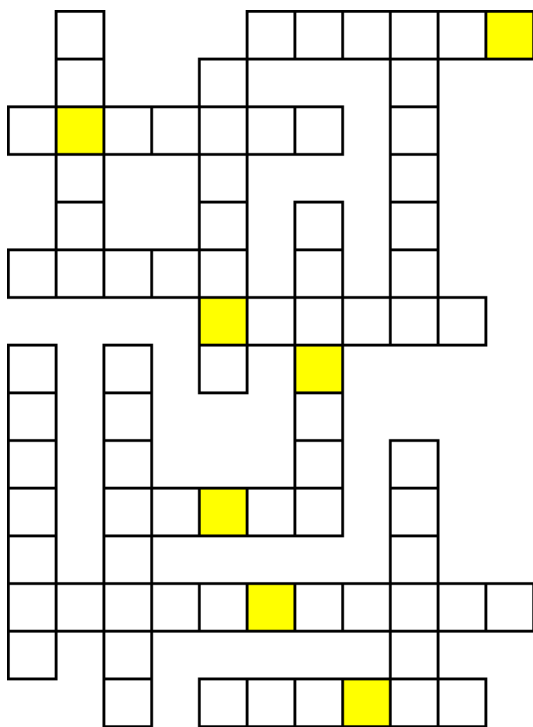


# Puzzles and fun!

Answers can be found  
on Page 15!

## MYSTERY- WORD

Can you enter the words correctly into the grid? The letters in the shaded boxes will spell out the name of the mystery word.



- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 5 letter words | 7 letter words |
| INDIA          | AUSTRIA        |
| AUSTRIA        | BELGIUM        |
| BELGIUM        | ENGLAND        |
| ENGLAND        | FINLAND        |
| FINLAND        | GERMANY        |
| GERMANY        | 8 letter word  |
| 6 letter words | PAKISTAN       |
| POLAND         | 11 letter word |
| SWEDEN         |                |
| TURKEY         |                |
| FRANCE         |                |
| NORWAY         |                |
- \*Clue\* the mystery word  
is another country!

Can you identify which countries the following eight flags belong to?



1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



8. \_\_\_\_\_

### True or False?

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Mickey Mouse has the middle name of Fauntleroy? | 2. There are 27 bones in a normal human hand? | 3. In the "Harry Potter" books, Hedwig is a house elf? |
|--|---|--|

# Competition

To enter the competition just answer these three landmark related questions!

Which of these famous landmarks is not found in New York city?

- Statue of liberty
- Empire state building
- Eiffel Tower

What is the name of this famous landmark?



- Tyne Bridge
- Leaning tower of Pisa
- Taj Mahel

Where in the world can this famous bridge be found?



The bridge can be found in.....

**Remember you can win £10 for entering!**



# 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?

My favourite TV program is.....

My favourite music is.....

The TV show I hate the most is.....

The music I hate the most is.....

If I could be any animal in the world I would be a .....

The person I would like to meet the most is.....

Please use this space to write or draw anything else that you would like to send us.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Post this sheet in the **FREEPOST** envelope provided before June 20th 2006 to enter the competition.



# Puzzle Answers

## Flag Quiz

- 1. Japan
- 2. Czech Republic
- 3. Jamaica
- 4. Turkey
- 5. Greece
- 6. Australia
- 7. South Africa
- 8. Holland

## True or False?

- 1. False, Fauntleroy is Donald Ducks middle name!
- 2. True, There are 27 bones in the hand
- 3. False, Hedwig is an owl.

## Mystery Word



# Jokes

Why did Cinderella sleep on the fireplace? Because she slept like a log!

Why was Cinderella no good at football? Because she ran away from the ball!

What's black and white and red all over? A Newspaper!

Sent in by Bethany

What did the policeman say to his stomach?  
You're under a vest!  
Sent in by Sophie

Thanks to all you jokers out there for sending in your jokes! We had so many we had to keep some for next time!



There were two packets of crisps walking down the road. A car pulled up and the man in the car said "would you like a lift?" The crisps said, "no, we're Walkers!"

Knock knock,  
Who's there?  
Police?  
Police who?  
Poleese let me in!  
Sent in by Fise

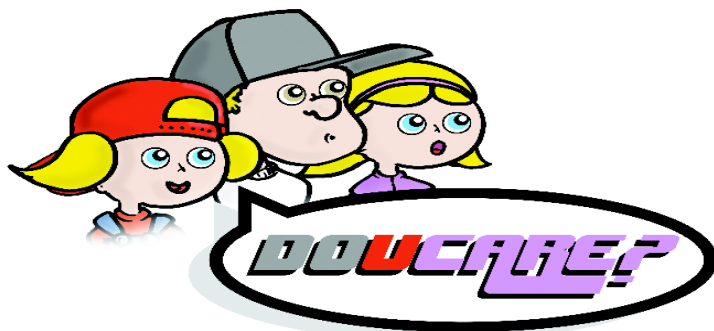
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**Check out the Do U Care?  
website for loads more information about  
being Looked After and other important  
information!**



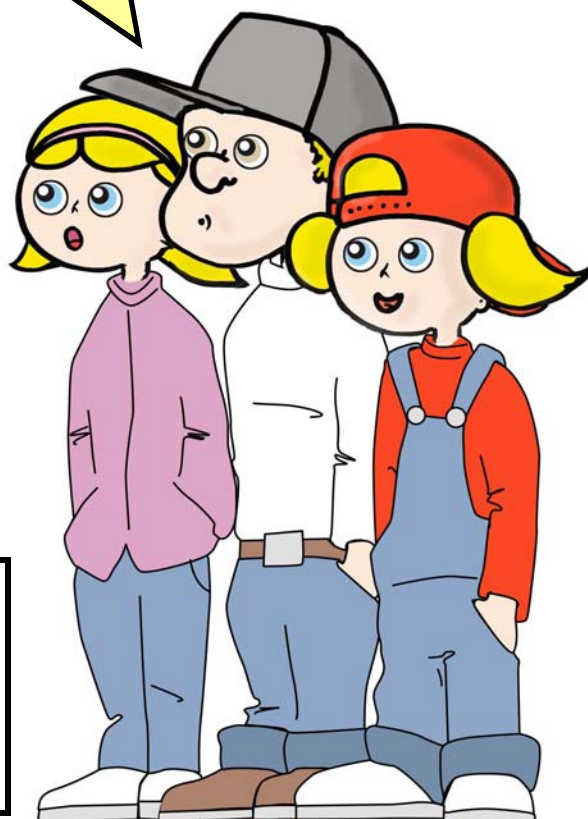
# Did YOU KNOW? [www.doucare.co.uk](http://www.doucare.co.uk)

Our government is signed up to a worldwide law called the "UN convention on the rights of the child". This means all young people have the right to expect:

- Whenever a adult has anything to do with you, they should do what is best for you.
- Any adults that make a decision that will affect you in any way, should listen to your opinion and the adults have to take it seriously.
- Not to be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good. For example if your parents are harming or not taking good care of you.

If you would like information about these or any other rights then please contact the Service Development team.

If you would like to receive any more copies of this newsletter — then please give us a ring on the numbers above and we will send one out to you!



If you know someone who would like this information in a different format, please contact the Communications Unit on 424 7385