



INTRODUCTION



- All children have the right to say what they want and have this taken seriously when people are making decisions about their lives.
- The Children's Commissioner (NICCY) wanted to find out if children in care are getting the chance to do this, so we did this review.

HOW DID WE DO THIS?

- We sent a questionnaire (which is like a long letter with a list of questions) to:



- The people in charge of the Trusts;
- Children and young people;
- Mums and Dads;
- Foster parents and staff from children's homes.
- We also talked to groups of children and young people, carers and social workers.

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?



- Nearly everyone we talked to said children should be involved in decisions about their lives.
- They also said that children should have more say as they get older.



- Most 5-11 year olds were happy with how much their social worker involves them in decisions about their lives, but some children wanted to have more say in things like:
 - How often they saw their family and friends;
 - Choosing where they live; and
 - What they get to do.

- Lots of things make it hard for children to tell others what they think and want. For example:
 - They might not know their social worker very well because they have had so many different ones.
 - Their social worker might be too busy to spend enough time with them.
 - Different people can want different things for children and argue about this.



- Children might not know that they are allowed to tell people what they want.
- Meetings can be scary for children.

THINGS COULD BE BETTER FOR CHILDREN IF:

- Meetings were more friendly.



- There were other less scary ways that children could be involved.
- There were better forms for children to say what they like and don't like about their care.
- Social workers were able to spend more time with children.
- Every child had an adult who was in charge of making sure they were treated well.

WHAT NOW?

NICCY is asking the people who make important decisions about children's lives to listen to what children and adults have told us in this review.



We want them to think about what you have said and to look at how they can make things better for children and young people in care.

If you have any questions, you can get in touch with us:

By phone: 028 9031 1616
By e-mail: info@niccy.org
Or by our website: www.niccy.org

"HAVING YOUR SAY"



Children Being Part of Decisions About Their Care.

