Parenthood for Young People In and Leaving State Care in Wales

Dr Louise Roberts RobertsL18@cf.ac.uk



Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre

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Background to the research



- Idea for the research came from young people engaged with Voices from Care
- Widespread recognition from practice settings that this was a challenging area of practice.





Background to the research

- Young people who have lived in foster, residential or kinship care are more likely than the general population to become parents at a young age.
- Emerging international evidence suggests that young parents in or leaving state care are more likely to experience compulsory child welfare intervention and more likely to become separated from their children.







The Research Plan

Stage 1: Scoping research: interviews with care-experienced parents

Stage 2: Review of international literature including risk and protective factors, outcomes and effective interventions

Stage 3: Survey of LAs in Wales to establish current numbers of care experienced parents, support service provision and child / family outcomes

Stage 4: Prospective study of 15 pregnant young people / couples over 12-18 month period. Stage 5: Review findings and support service provision with third sector and local government representatives



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Alice's Story





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Stigma



Discrimination



Support



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Stigma

I was scared that it [care history] was a stigma that was in my mind that I was adamant that if you had been in care your child would be taken away from you, they would look at you and think you can't look after that baby and you didn't deserve that baby.





Discrimination



Once they [Children's Services] found out I'd been in care that was it, they went back pulled up all the files, read them all seen what had happened ... they read those records some of which had been written ten years previously. They judged me and used it against me.





Support



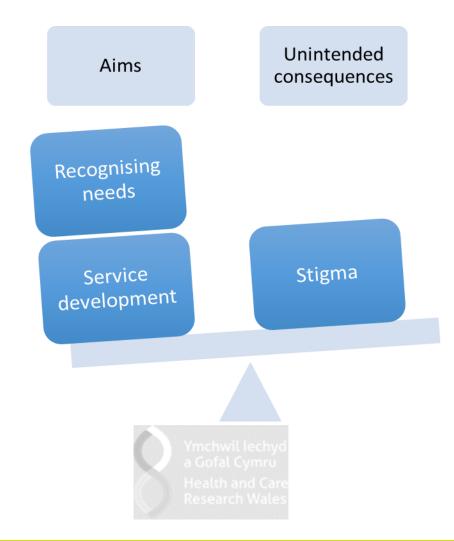
My family were meant to have [child's name] every other weekend just to give me a break. But she didn't stick to that.

I went into a mother and baby placement. I didn't like it, it was like living in the Big Brother house ... they were over you 24/7. If I went anywhere in the house with the baby I had to take the baby monitor with me. The foster carer had to have the other one.





Finally ...





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