TRANSITION PLANNING – LEAVING A RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

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Residential Reception of Children and Youth in Danger - Concepts, Practice, and Intervention

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Introduction

The effective transition for young people out of a residential care home, or any care situation is vitally important to their future. Unfortunately, many young people across the world do not have positive transitions. Osborn and Bromfield (2007) argue, research shows,

> …that young people leaving care are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups.

Young people leaving residential care are among the most vulnerable (Macdonald and Millen, 2012). It needs to be recognized that there is a significant difference between leaving a care home, and also leaving the legal care of the state, or not. If the state maintains a legal responsibility the change may not be so challenging to manage. This chapter is mostly concerned with young people who are leaving a residential care home and the care system at the same time.

One of the main reasons is lack of planning. The research of Hannon et al. (2010), found that the quality of plan for a young person's transition from care is one of the major determinants of the outcomes achieved. Another important factor is the quality of statutory provision to provide ongoing support, especially when the young person may now be an adult. There are many other reasons, which this chapter will refer to. As a result, many young people flounder when leaving care and are vulnerable to such adversities as homelessness and crime. The prison populations in many countries are disproportionately represented by adults who have been in the care system. The Prison Reform Trust (2016) in the UK found that while less than 1% of the general population had been in care, over 50% of the prison population were care leavers. Sadly, this pattern is not an isolated one. Policy Matters (2011) in the USA claim that up to 30% of foster care youth are homeless within 2 years of leaving care, and a similar number will be in prison at some point in their lives.

Fenton (2015, p.291) in Ireland, argues that it is not so much that young people leave care, but that care leaves them,

> With regard to the term 'care leavers, the reality for many of these young people is that care leaves them regardless of their ability to function without it, and often within what should be a managed process but in reality becomes an event over which they have little or no control…After care for these young people really means that care has gone, posing the question – what and who is left after care has gone.

The Beginning of Placement and Transitions
The beginning of a young person's placement in a residential care home is also an important transition. How this is managed will have a significant influence on the eventual transition out of care. Department of Communities (2010, p.19) argue that it is the whole pathway of care that is important to the final transition out of a care home,

> Transition planning will be strengthened through the complete pathway of residential care, including entering care, placements and interventions, placement changes, exiting from care and post-care support.

At the beginning of the placement, it needs to be clear, what the purpose of placement is and what the likely transition is expected to be at the end. Many factors will influence this, such as the age of the young person, the relationships with family, and the duration of the placement. Some placements may last several years, and others may be shorter. For many traumatized young people, the purpose of placement is to enable recovery from trauma so that positive developmental pathways can be achieved. For those whose development has been less disrupted, perhaps the aim is to provide a period of stability so that work can take place with the family, so the young person can return 'home'. The younger the child is when placed the more time there is to work on the impact of trauma and achieve major transformation. These factors will also be influenced by statutory law. For instance, in some countries, there is provision to support young people until the age of eighteen. In others, it has been extended up to twenty-one, and in Portugal up to twenty-five. Stein (2015, p.201) concurs,

> As the international review edited by Stein and Munro (2008) shows, there are significant differences in the way that different countries support the process of transition from leaving care, ranging from including specific regulations for care leavers to just transferring them to social services for adults.

Whatever the plan is for the young person, it must be understood by everyone at the beginning of the placement. Without this, there is a risk of confusion during placement, and an unplanned ending. It needs to be clear what the primary task of placement is and how it will be known when this is achieved. Therefore, another important part of placement is an ongoing assessment and planning. This should be an inclusive process, ensuring the young person, his or her family, social worker and any significant others are all on the same page. Unfortunately, sudden endings of placement often happen due to a lack of clarity and agreement. While a clear agreement at the beginning is vitally important, so is ongoing communication, review, and agreement throughout placement.

How the transition into the home is managed is extremely important. It will be the first experience of the young person with the new placement. He/she will be very anxious even if this is not apparent. The following practices are ideal, though may not always be possible.

- There is the opportunity for the young person to meet key people from the home before moving in. For example, the home manager and the person who may be his keyworker.
- There is the opportunity to share information with the young person about the home and for him/her to ask questions. It will be helpful to talk about daily routines, etc. If can be very helpful to do this with a child-friendly introduction booklet. It will give the young person something to think about afterwards and ask further questions.
- A visit or two before moving in can help. Maybe the first visit to join the home for a meal and the second for an overnight stay. It will also help if he/she can be shown his/her room and around the home. Depending on the age of the young person and suitability, it can help if some of this is done by one of the young people living in the home.
- Ask the young person about his/her interests, any hobbies, favourite meal, etc. Include the favourite meal on the meal plan soon after arrival.
- Ask about any worries and preferences on daily routines, such as, how to be put to bed and woken.
- On arrival make sure the young person can be given undivided attention. Help him/her unpack. Talk about personalizing his/her room, shopping for personal needs, such as toiletries, clothes and anything, else.
- Introduce the young person to everyone, young people and staff. According to the young person's needs, give plenty of time for settling in and not having to do too much at once. For example, some young people may need a few days to settle into a new home before going to a new school.
- Make sure the young person has one person who is focused on him/her. Part of this person's role is to ensure the young person feels thought about and has someone to go to with any questions and worries.

Working with Transitions
Change can be very difficult for young people who have suffered trauma and adversities. Many transitions in their life may have been unplanned, abrupt and traumatic. Transitions, in their nature, bring the unknown into sharp focus. The big transitions in life can be as daunting and anxiety-provoking as they are exciting. This is especially so for people whose sense of security and safety is vulnerable. Moving to a new home is often cited as one of the most stressful life events. And that is for positively functioning adults who have a good support network. For young people in the care system, leaving home often happens in relative isolation and distressing circumstances.

The way the home manages transitions and understands the needs of these young people is very important. Transitions are a change, the ending of one stage of life and the beginning or move into another. Transitions need to be thought of not only in the big changes but all the transitions that take place in the day-to-day life of the home. For example, the transitions from night-time to bedtime; from bedtime to sleeping; from sleeping to waking; from home to school; and so on. How young people and staff join and leave the home is particularly important. It provides a model of how transitions are managed. How transitions are thought about and planned needs to be embedded in the culture of the home. If there is general

sensitivity to the issues involved in transitions, this will be reflected in the way a young person eventually leaves the home.

As said, transitions can evoke excitement and anxiety, hope and fear. This is true both for the one who is leaving and those who are being left. Parents can be happy for their child who is leaving home and at the same time worried. It's a big step into the outside world. A great opportunity and a risk. Those who are being left need to be able to recognize their fears and worries. The 'letting go' might not be easy and can include a great sense of loss. Both the leaver and the left may feel ambivalent about the change. One young person, who was leaving his care home, summed this up when he was asked how he felt, by replying 'hip-hip, boo-hoo'. It is how these feelings are managed that is an integral part of the work. It is important for there to be time and space to acknowledge and work through the feelings involved. This is true for all the young people and adults involved. Department of Communities (ibid, p.86) refer to literature emphasising the importance of this,

> Stein (2008, p.40) highlights the importance of gradual transitions from care allowing for psychological adjustment space. Literature indicates that combined "in-care supports" and "adequate preparation", including transition planning, will improve outcomes for young people (Mendes and Moslehuddin, 2006, p.122)........Milligan and Stevens (2006, p.81) note that well planned emotional support in advance of and during the transition are as important for outcomes as practical issues and resources, and this must involve listening to the views of young people.

Returning to the issue of the home's culture. The way that feelings are worked with is of central importance. In a poor-quality culture, there may be little space to think about feelings, to reflect upon and discuss painful issues. This can sometimes happen in residential care as a defence against the distressing and potentially overwhelming nature of the work. Sometimes the work with a young person may be so difficult that those working with her, unconsciously or even consciously promote a premature ending of her placement. It may be that the work is too difficult and risky. But it could also be that with more opportunity for discussion and support the work would be possible. On other occasions, a staff team may find it difficult to let go. They may be so worried about what could go wrong that this gets in the way of a positive transition. A young person will benefit from her concerns about the future being appropriately recognized, and at the same time, a belief in her ability to manage herself and make a successful transition. Hannon et al. (ibid, p.101) explain the value of this process,

> Anthropological research also suggests that young people tend to deal with change by using a transition phase – known as the 'liminal state' or opportunity to 'space out'. This liminal state provides a time for freedom, exploration, reflection, risk taking and identity search, which is critical to the promotion of resilience in adulthood.

It could be argued that the transition from the home is the endpoint of many transitions throughout the placement, and the beginning of many more to come. Just as in childhood, how we manage one transition and practice it repeatedly, prepares us for how we manage change and transitions throughout our life. 'Parents' must always be aware of how much the child is ready to manage. To do this the 'parents' need to manage their anxiety. They need to allow a level of separation that is healthy for the child's development. Naturally, this changes as the child develops. Therefore, those in a 'parenting' role must have a good understanding of ordinary child development, and a realistic assessment of 'their' child. Achieving this is challenging work with young people in the care system. The levels of vulnerability and risk are high. Also, if trauma has impacted development, there is a need to see beyond the young person's chronological age. For example, a child may be twelve but has functioning closer to that of a much younger child. The reality that a traumatized young person may have a short time to catch up in their development can cause problems in transitions. Anxiety about how far the child is behind can cause a wish to move things more quickly than is helpful. While future transitions might be important to keep in mind, we also need to just 'be' with the young person, where she is now, and move with her at her own pace. These matters are so challenging to work with, that high-quality reflective practice, supervision, consultancy, and training are necessary.

The Importance of Relationships
Transitions happen within a context of relationships. It may be that a transition is primarily about a change in relationship(s). A young person moving into care may be leaving their family. Family members may be involved in the transition or they may be separated from it. The transition into care is different for each young person and it is important to understand the history that has led to it. This includes not only the events but also the feelings and views of all those involved.

Once in the new placement, new relationships will begin to develop. In the healing of trauma, just as in ordinary development 'it takes a village to raise a child'. Or as Perry and Szalavitz (2006, p.231) said,

> What maltreated and traumatized children most need is a healthy community to buffer the pain, distress and loss caused by their earlier trauma. What works to heal them is anything that increases the number and quality of a child's relationships.

If a young person has suffered complex trauma from an early age, she is not likely to have internalized a secure attachment. The need for a positive attachment may be the most important task of the placement. Establishing positive attachments may need to happen so that the young person can fill the gaps in her development. This can raise anxieties for those working with the young person. It may seem unhelpful to establish attachments, knowing that they will be 'broken' in the future. This is a genuine challenge in the work. However, we know that without attachment all other aspects of development are compromised. Attachment is a key factor in the growth of resilience. Schimmer (1999) refers to the protective and supportive connections as "inoculations against adversity" (in, Cook et al., 2003, p.21). Van der Kolk et al. (2007, p.432) elaborate further,

Emotional attachment is probably the primary protection against being trau-
matized. People seek close emotional relationships with others in order to help
them anticipate, meet, and integrate difficult experiences. Contemporary research
has shown that as long as the social support network remains intact, people are
relatively well protected against even catastrophic stresses. For young children, the
family is usually a very effective source of protection against traumatization, and
most children are amazingly resilient as long as they have caregivers who are
emotionally and physically available (Van der Kolk et al., 1991; McFarlane, 1988).

So, for young people who have been deprived of attachment and connection and may even
have found relationships to be a cause of trauma, there is an urgent need to provide healthy
relational opportunities. This will help provide the inner security which is necessary for
managing life's challenges and transitions. Therefore, it is especially important to know from the
beginning of placement what the young person's relational needs are. For instance, are there
existing positive relationships, which can be built upon? How much of a need is there for new
attachments? As said, the culture of the home will give constant messages, conscious and
unconscious about the way relationships are valued. These messages might come from: how
young people are welcomed into the home; how birthdays and other personal events are
acknowledged and celebrated; how a young person's family are involved during placement; how
young people and staff leave the home – the traditions and rituals around these events; how
much attention is given to planning transitions; how connection and contact are kept with those
that have left; alongside all the daily interactions that take place. How all these issues are
managed, gives young people a message about their importance in the present and the future.
By the time a young person is ready to leave and make her transition, she will already have seen
many examples of how it can work. A planned transition in a strong culture should not come as
a shock. Stein (2015, p.190) states that,

> A correlated review of 92 international studies of children in care identifies
> placement stability as a key mediator for a wide range of adult outcomes including
> physical and mental health and employment (Jones et al., 2011).

As well as the key relationships within the home, especially between a carer and young person,
there are many other important relationships. The home may be within an organization that has
other homes. This can help provide a wider sense of community with shared events, like when
a large family gets together to celebrate a special day. If the home has a group of young people,
this will provide the opportunity for positive peer relationships. The ability to develop healthy
peer relationships has been identified as a key factor in the achievement of good outcomes in
the long-term (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000, p.165). It can vitally important to maintain the
relationships and attachments that are formed during placement, through the transition out of
the care home (Hannon et al., ibid, p.214). This would usually be guaranteed for young people
leaving a family home. Wade (2008, p.49) also concludes, that contact with residential carers
post-placement, "helped to ameliorate the risks of social isolation and strengthen young
people's skills."

The Involvement of the Young Person's Family
Residential care for young people has often failed to effectively involve the family of a young person during placement. It can be felt that the young person's family is a hindrance to the work rather than an integral part of it. There may be cases, where a young person is at risk with some family members. In other cases, the involvement of family members may be challenging and disruptive. However, the Department of Communities (ibid, p.70) state,

> … evidence from literature indicates, family integration into the therapeutic work in residential care is an essential element of family work that prepares young people "for what is for most the inevitable return to kin" (Hillan 2008, p.12) and assists young people to make sense of the past so movement forward can occur (Stein 2008, p.38).

This is evident in research over the years in many countries. Clough et al. (2006, p.36) confirm,

> This argument is well supported by research findings (for example, Millham and others 1986), which confirm that children who are enabled to maintain and develop such contact are likely to have better outcomes than those whose contact is much less.

Most young people who leave care are likely to return to their family of origin in some way. This can vary from living with them to living in the same area and being in contact. Tilbury and Osmond (2006) claim that research shows this is the case for around 85% of 'care leavers'. Bullock et al. (2003, p.28) state that, "… paradoxically, the family from which the child has been removed ends up as the most likely source of permanence." In most cases, a young person's family is likely to have a significant impact on her long-term well-being. Even if family relationships are not positive, we should do whatever is possible to help them develop and improve. This is most likely to be achieved if the family is involved in the placement from the beginning. It may be possible to encourage responsibility by working with the family in a way that is inclusive, respectful and empowering. How this is done must also be based on an appropriate assessment of the young person's needs and what is likely to be helpful. In the most difficult cases where it is not possible to involve the family, it is still important to help the young person work through feelings and develop strategies for managing the situation.

Education and Learning
The education of young people in care is a key factor in successful transitions. This can be considered in the formal sense of schooling, and how a person learns in a more general sense. Department of Communities (ibid, p.78) claim,

> Educational achievement can be one of the most positive ways for young people to overcome their adverse life experiences and is a protective factor that increases resilience (Gillian, 2000, Martin and Jackson, 2002). Educational success prior to the

transition into independent living has also been found to correlate with positive outcomes (Stein, 2006).

A home for young people must place a significant emphasis on supporting their education. This means showing an interest in, encouraging and supporting schoolwork, passing exams, etc. It also means creating a culture where there is an emphasis on learning from experience. A young person who has developed a good capacity for solving problems, and continuously learning will be well-equipped for making successful transitions. It is important to provide learning experiences in daily life. This might be on everyday matters, such as how to plan a weekly budget for food, how to shop and cook meals. For older young people, this will extend to matters like how to open a bank account and how to access services.

There is a balance to be struck, between developing the more general skills, such as managing feelings and relationships, and the more specific life skills such as how to cook a meal and keep a home clean. Stein (2015, p.192) claims,

> Evaluations of good practice over many decades highlight the importance of: a holistic approach, attaching equal importance to practical, emotional and interpersonal skills; assessment; involving young people fully; providing opportunities for risk taking; the gradual learning of skills; continuity of carers; and carers being trained to assist young people.

It is important to remember that learning takes place on different levels. There is the formal aspect of learning and that which takes place through everyday experience. An effective home for young people is one that reflects a way of living that is functional and a good role model for future life. One of the arguments against the larger institutional type of homes is that they don't prepare young people for the transition. The way of life in these homes is too removed to provide a helpful model of how to live in the outside world.

An important part of learning is how positive transitions can be made. This may be by introducing changes, during placement that help a young person manage a new situation. For instance, how to use public transport. There may be a transition from doing things with an adult to doing them on one's own. Assessment of the young person's development will indicate what kind of transitions she is ready for. In the process of managing new experiences, mistakes will be made and can be learnt from.

Some organizations have the benefit of having different homes for young people at different stages of development. These may include reception homes for young people who need a high level of protection and stability; homes that are focused on developing autonomy; homes for semi-independent living; to supported living in the local community. This can enable transitions to be made within the supportive context of the organization. A young person may make the move from one kind of home to another but remain within the wider context. This means that there can be a more gradual process of change. Connections are more easily kept through transitions as the young person moves from one home to another.

Building Community Networks

Usually, when a young person leaves a family home, she will be making a transition into a community. The preparation for this takes place long before it happens. One of the failings in the history of residential care has been to do too little preparation. It can be felt that the young person needs protecting from the external community and it from her. There may be an excessive focus on risks. Again, assessment is important in understanding what a young person is ready for. Her interests are also important to consider. The community is a resource for building relationships, connections, and pursuing interests. There may be many possibilities available in the local community. It is important that the residential home is fully aware of everything available, and that links are made where possible.

It has been shown that the number one factor which influences health and well-being is social integration (Pinker, 2017). For young people who do not have strong family connections, community connectedness can be even more important. If a young person is going to leave the home and transition into the local community, building helpful connections can happen long in advance. Joining clubs, activity, and volunteering groups may provide connections that continue. Even where a young person is going to transition into a different locality, these experiences will help build confidence and knowledge. So, making those steps to connect in a new community will not be so daunting.

As well as using the local community for connection and following interests, it is also important to know what kind of support is available. What kind of groups are there to support people with different needs? Where might a young adult go if she needs help with something? What services are available and how can they be accessed? This is so important, that some residential care organizations have a worker who especially focuses on developing connections and networks in the local community. Specialist leaving care services may also be available and can be very helpful, as Stein (2018, p.142) explains,

> In the UK and some other European countries specialist leaving care teams have been introduced to respond to the core needs of care leavers for assistance on their main pathways to adulthood, including accommodation, education, employment and training, finance, health and well-being and personal and social support. In the main, individual support is provided by a personal adviser and formalised multi-agency agreements are in place so that young people can access the pathway services identified above.

Young people leaving care will benefit especially from help with finding suitable accommodation. 'Care Leavers' can have significant problems with finding suitable housing. They may need practical and financial assistance to find suitable accommodation, just as a young person leaving a family home usually has. Community services for young parents are also important to connect with, as there are high rates of teenage pregnancies among 'care leavers' (Stein, 2015, p.198).

Ongoing Connection and Support

As Fenton's comment suggests, the term aftercare could be perceived as being unhelpful in the sense that it implies care is now in the past. Living in a care home may be in the past, but the act of caring should not end when a young person leaves the home. Any young person who leaves their family home, and who has not suffered significant adversities, nevertheless needs ongoing supportive care. This might be represented by being able to go back home at the weekend with a bag full of washing. It might be to turn to the parents in a time of need or distress. The period from adolescence to adult maturity is an up-and-down journey, with many challenges. For young people who have been 'in-care' things can be far more difficult. There may be a genuine vulnerability to adversity, that requires additional support. A 'care-leaver' may also experience stigma and discrimination, which cause difficulties in relationships and employment. Where a young person is leaving care, Hannon et al. (ibid, p.15) found that a young person's readiness correlates strongly with age,

> Looked-after children who leave care early, for example at 16, tend to do less well than those who leave care later. Evidence suggests they have a higher instance of substance abuse, homelessness, unemployment and poor educational outcomes. Young people doing well with their careers tended to have left care later.

They also found (ibid) that being in training, education, and employment are associated with positive outcomes.

Zelechoski et al. (2013) argue that there should be a continuum of care during the transition and after. Rather than provide a different service for the 'care leaver' they suggest making some of the therapeutic services of the care home available in the new situation. Stein (2018, p.144) makes the important point,

> The best way to ensure that young people remain in touch after they leave care is to provide high quality care whilst young people are in care and support during their transition from care. If young people have had a bad experience of care and transition, they will leave as soon as they can and will want nothing more to do with a system that they see as failing them. It is also very helpful to have contingency systems in place that young people know about so they can get in touch when they fall on hard times.

Hannon et al (ibid, p.103) point out that, "A rapid break with carers, change of home and living alone may well trigger or exacerbate underlying mental health problems." They recommend that, targeted emotional and mental health support should be a priority after 'leaving care'. Similarly, Furnivall et al. (2012, p.39), referring to the transition, state,

> For some of them this represents another separation from important attachment figures and this can undermine competence and equilibrium if the transition is not organised in such a way as to maintain real connectedness and the opportunity to continue to use place and people as a secure haven.

Stein (2015, p.193) argues that rather than allow the necessary space for young people to go through a transition many young people leaving care are faced with the expectation of "instant adulthood".

However, working out what the nature of future connection and support will be, can be a very complex matter. One of the key issues is everyone who is involved, agreeing what will happen. In some cases, a social worker's involvement may change when the young person reaches a certain age and is no longer in the legal care of the state. When this happens there may be no statutory obligation to the young person. The home the young person is leaving may have little resources available to carry out ongoing support. The home may be unclear exactly whose responsibility it is to keep in contact. What happens if a worker who was most involved with the young person also leaves the home? There may be conflicts with the young person's family, especially if they have not been involved during the placement, which makes ongoing contact difficult. If the ending of placement was not worked through sufficiently, there may be difficult unprocessed feelings for all involved, which get in the way of supportive contact. This might lead to a more abrupt kind of ending rather than a supportive transition. Stein (2015, p.192) argues,

> The empirical testing of 'focal model of adolescence' shows that having the opportunity to deal with interpersonal issues, spread over time, is how most young people cope successfully with the challenges of transition into adulthood (Coleman and Hendry, 1999).

One of the ways of approaching the transition is to consider what kind of ongoing connection and support, would be ideal for a young person leaving any home. The following come to mind,

- Plenty of time to prepare and plan.
- The young person being fully involved in the planning and having choices. This is especially important for young people who had no control in traumatic situations.
- Clear communication and appropriate involvement of relevant others, such as family.
- Being clear who will be responsible for what.
- Having as much information about the new situation as possible.
- Agreeing what is expected after the move, with the young person's needs being the key part of this.
- Being able to return to the home to stay, if things are very difficult in the new situation. Hanon et al. (ibid, p.101) refer to research that found, "88 percent of leavers felt they should have had the option to return to supported accommodation if a move to independent living was not successful."
- Being able to ask for financial assistance where there is a serious difficulty.
- Being able to return to the home for visits, for an evening, for a meal, to say hello, etc.
- Being invited to events at the home when appropriate.
- Being remembered and thought about.

- Being able to make a call for a chat.
- Being able to have some time with an adult from the home in a time of crisis.

All the above would be considered normal to offer a young person leaving a family home. The fact that some of the points are often considered impossible to offer for young people 'leaving care', highlights the disadvantages they face. If we are clear about what would be ideal, we can aim towards that within the reality of our situation. This reality might include legal issues, as well as issues to do with resources, and what is practical. Stein (2018, p.138-139) affirms from international research what young people leaving care want,

> Young people want both practical and personal support in preparation for moving, at the time of moving on from care and when they have moved into their accommodation, including when they get into difficulties. They welcome the support of an individual personal adviser - 'someone for me' - who will involve them and negotiate with the wide range of agencies who provide the services young people need. Increasing the awareness of civil society of the needs of care leavers is important in both reducing misconceptions and stigma, and also in providing increased career and leisure opportunities.

Before the transition happens, it is helpful to have something written down clearly so that everyone is clear and committed to what is agreed. Without clarity and appropriate support, there is a significant risk that young people 'leaving care' fall into gaps. A good example, of a needs assessment for leaving care, has been developed by Stein and adopted in England. This format can be adapted to different localities and be developed in terms of detail.

Conclusion

The transition for a young person out of a care home is critical to their long-term well-being. The history of how this is managed across the world leaves a lot to be desired. However, the problem of what happens during and after the transition is likely to be influenced by everything that happens from the beginning of the placement. The general practice and culture of the home can be viewed as preparation for the transition and future. As discussed, many key factors can be protective and correlate positively with achieving good long-term outcomes. The day-to-day living experience and the therapeutic work that takes place, alongside thorough planning is the main preparation for a positive transition.

A transition from a care home is most likely to be effective when it is considered from the beginning of the placement. It means working with the young person throughout the placement: to build up relationships, community networks and supports; develop a sense of identity, useful skills; and whatever will help increase resilience. And finally, it means a well-planned and gradual transition, with an appropriate level of ongoing support based on the young person's needs.

Appendix

In the UK and some other European countries there are Needs Assessment and Pathway Planning materials which are designed to involve young people in identifying their needs and planning for adulthood (see Appendix). There would be potential to 'localise' and 'contextualise' these through the involvement of young people and practitioners–a very worthwhile project! (Stein, 2018, p.144).

Needs Assessment and Content of Pathway Plans (England)

Need Dimensions	To Include
Health and Development	• Use of primary healthcare services. • Arrangements for the young person's medical and dental care according to their needs making reference to the health plan established within the care plan in place when the young person was looked after. • Access to specialist health and therapeutic services. • Arrangements so that young person understands the actions they can take to maintain a healthy lifestyle. • Opportunities to enjoy and achieve and take part in positive leisure activities.
Education, Training and Employment	• Statement of the young person's aspirations and career ambitions and actions and support to achieve this. • Access to careers advice. • Education objectives and support-continue to use the young person's Personal Education Plan. • Arrangements to support the young person in further education and/or higher education. • Support to enable suitably qualified young people to enter apprenticeships, make applications to university or gain necessary qualifications. • Arrangements for work experience, career mentoring or pathways into employment etc.
Emotional & Behavioural Development	• How the authority will assist the young person to develop self-esteem and maintain positive attachments. • Does the young person display self-esteem, resilience and confidence? • Assessment of their capacity to empathize with others, reason and take appropriate responsibility for their own actions. • Capacity to make attachments and appropriate relationships; show appropriate emotion; adapt to change; manage stress; and show self-control and appropriate self-awareness.

Identity	• How the authority intends to meet any of the young person's needs arising from their ethnicity, religious persuasion and sexual orientation. • How does the young person understand their identity stemming from being a child in care and a care leaver? • How the authority will assist the young person to obtain key documents linked to confirming their age and identity.
Family and Social Relationships	• Assessment of the young person's relationship with their parents and wider family. • Contact with family-carried across from care plan. • Young person's relationship with peers, friendship network and significant adults. Strategy to improve any negative features of these relationships. • How all these relationships will contribute to the young person making a successful transition to adulthood and how they will assist with integration into the community that they identify with.
Practical and Other Skills necessary for Independent Living	• The young person is adequately prepared with the full range of practical skills they will need to manage the next planned move towards greater independence. • The young person is prepared for taking greater responsibility as they are expected to manage more independently.
Financial Arrangements	• Assessment of care leaver's financial needs and their financial capability. Does the young person have a bank account, national insurance number, and appreciate the value of regular saving etc. Do they have access to financial support and adequate income to meet necessary expenses? • Pathway plan must include a statement of how the authority proposes to maintain a relevant child, the arrangements in place for the young person to receive financial support and contingency plans. • Statement of financial assistance to be provided to a former relevant child.
(Suitability of) Accommodation	• An assessment of the quality of accommodation where the young person is living/any accommodation under consideration for them to live in. • How far is this suitable to the full range of the young person's needs? • What steps might need to be taken to improve it?

Source: Prof. Mike Stein, INTRAC

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PATRICK TOMLINSON 2020

DEVELOPING PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS

TRANSITION PLANNING – LEAVING A RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

Patrick Tomlinson Brief Bio: The primary goal of Patrick's work is the development of people and organizations. Throughout his career, he has identified development to be the driving force related to positive outcomes - for everyone, service users, professionals, and organizations. His experience spans from 1985 in the field of trauma and attachment informed services. He began as a residential care worker and has since been a team leader, senior manager, Director, CEO, consultant, and mentor. He is the author/co-author/editor of numerous papers and books. He is a qualified clinician, strategic leader, and manager. Working in many countries, he has helped develop therapeutic models that have gained national and international recognition. In 2008 he created Patrick Tomlinson Associates to provide services focused on development for people and organizations. The following services are provided,

- Therapeutic Model Development
- Developmental Mentoring, Consultancy, & Clinical Supervision
- Character Assessment & Selection Tool (CAST): for Personal & Professional Development, & Staff Selection

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