



Action for Children: Children's Rights & Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) Statement

Action for Children as an organisation.

Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care, ensuring their voices are heard and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives. We run 90 services across 30 of the country's 32 local authorities in Scotland, our 850 staff support, care for and love more than 25,000 children, young people, and their families.

Our services provide support for some of Scotland's most vulnerable children and young people, and their families, who face real difficulties and multiple challenges in their lives. Our services cover a broad range of needs including: housing support for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; investing in communities; family support including working with 'new Scots'; provide residential and short breaks and support for young disabled people. We also provide mental health and wellbeing support, offer employability and training opportunities; support foster carers and young carers; deliver youth justice programmes together with running family prison visits and support care experienced students.

What is a CRWIA?

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) is a process to identify, research, analyse and record the anticipated impact of any proposed law, policy, service or other measures on children's human rights and wellbeing. These impacts can be direct or indirect; short, medium, or long-term; they can also be positive, negative, or neutral. A CRWIA covers all children up to the age of 18, this includes individual children, groups of children and collective children services.

Why have Action for Children invested in CRWIAs?

Article 4 of the UNCRC requires governments '*to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the UNCRC*'. To deliver on Article 4 the Scottish Government committed to CRWIAs via the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which embeds UNCRC rights in Scottish legislation. As an organisation we support Scotland fully implementing the UNCRC, to this, requires all of society having a collective responsibility and shared ownership to protect and progress children's rights. Therefore, CRWIA's should not be limited to solely the Government and its agencies producing them, Action for Children is committed to this undertaking.

We believe respecting and supporting children requires having the knowledge, awareness and understanding to prevent harm and actively protect children's rights, as set out in the UNCRC. CRWIAs should act as a guide for policymakers and others to assess their laws, strategies, policies, and the services they provide to relate to their obligation to respect the rights of children. Producing a CRWIA will enable all of us to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts on children before a policy, law, strategy, or service is implemented.

CRWIAs can help us all champion the interests of children, as well as challenge us to think about what more we can do to place children and young people at the centre of our decisions.

How will CRWIA impact Action for Children's work?

Action for Children works strategically and collaboratively to realise our bold and ambitious vision that every child and young person in the country should have a safe and happy childhood and the foundations they need to thrive.

We have campaigned and welcomed the incorporation of UNCRC into Scottish law and look forward to the impact this will have on all aspects of children's lives.

Action for Children want to promote the use of CRWIA assessments as another tool we actively use to consider and review the impact of our decisions on children's rights and their wellbeing. We know that children are not a homogenous group, as such we cannot ignore the intersectionality of their protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Equality Act. However, we are also not limited to these for example it is also right that we consider the impact of a young person's socioeconomic and cultural background as well as the characteristics of the child's parents, family, or guardians when we conduct a CRWIA. Whilst all such children or groups of children will not be impacted by every policy or service, it is important to have knowledge of children's diversity regarding the decision and design process. Conducting CRWIA will further advance our working practices regarding participation of the identified children and groups of children, in order to allow their views to feed into our impact analysis.

Through our work, we interact and have partnerships with different sectors who do directly and do not directly have involvement in children support services, but whose decisions can have a significant impact on children lives, we will campaign and provide better information to these partners to improve children's life chances and opportunities.

Action for Children activities and impact on UNCRC articles:

As stated, Action for Children deliver a board and varied support provision for children, young people, and their families. As such our strategic direction is anchored to three pillars namely: Best Start in Life; Safe & Stable Home; and Mental Health & Chance to Thrive.

Best Start in Life: By making sure children get the right support in the early years of their lives – via our services and campaigning. Our early intervention services will give young children the best possible start.

Safe and Stable/Loving Home: By supporting and stepping in early to help parents and carers and working to keep families together. We'll increase investment to provide safe and loving homes for children and young people with complex needs. We'll also find secure foster and adoptive homes for children and young people who can't live with their birth families.

Good mental health and the chance to thrive: By having positive conversations about mental health and emotional wellbeing and giving children and young people the tools to build resilience following the pandemic. We'll also support young carers so they have a happy childhood and help young people to find work.

We are recalibrating these pillars to encompass the following four core service areas and these will be reflected in our future CRWIA.

1. Supporting families to make sure children and young people get the best start in life;
2. Caring for children and young people to give them a safe, stable and loving home;
3. Supporting disabled children, young people and their families;
4. Building children and young people's emotional resilience to help them overcome challenges

List articles

Given the breath of work Action for Children undertake we promote and enable the following UNCRC articles:

Article 2 (non-discrimination)	Article 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance)	Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)
Article 3 (best interests of the child)	Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse, and neglect)	Article 33 (protection from drug abuse)
Article 6 (life, survival, and development)	Article 20 (children unable to live with their family)	Article 34 (protection from sexual exploitation) Article 35 (protection from trafficking)
Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)	Article 23 (children with a disability)	Article 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration)
Article 13 (freedom of expression)	Article 25 (review of treatment in care)	Article 40 (juvenile justice)
Article 14 (freedom of thought, belief, and religion)	Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)	Article 42 (knowledge of rights)

Conducting CRWIA

Our senior leadership, wider staff team embrace and live a rights-based approach which is rooted in the ethos of the UNCRC, the Independent Care Review/Promise and our own stated values of being Passionate, Ambitious, Collaborative, and Inclusive. As an organisation we are also signatories to the Scottish National Trauma Training Programme Leadership Pledge. We are active members of Together the (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) and Children in Scotland, the national agency for voluntary, statutory, and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families. Staff will also undertake the Scottish Government UNCRC training tool on an annual basis.

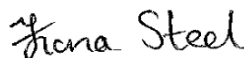
Action for Children first and foremost treat people as individuals, they are at the heart of what we do. We ensure the best interests of the child is paramount.

We have and will continue to invest in a training programme to ensure our staff have the knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC. This includes rolling out a national CRWIA factsheet, producing UNCRC and Wellbeing checklists and having key staff as CRWIA champions for other staff to turn to for advice and support. We also have a staff network of Promise Champions who supports all colleagues to develop and oversee the systems, processes, culture and practices are in place to keep the promise to improve the outcomes for children and young people who we support, care for and love. Keeping and delivering the Promise goes hand in hand with children's rights and wellbeing.

Our senior leadership team will be primarily responsible for producing our CRWIA, by its very nature this process will include ongoing participation and gathering the views and thoughts from our staff and the young people we support. We will endeavour to provide a feedback loop to young people regarding the impact of their participation.

We want to ensure all Action for Children policies, strategic direction, and services, take account of the UNCRC. We have produced a simplified organisational-wide CRWIA and will produce an annual review by December 2024.

Action for Children



Fiona Steel, National Director for Scotland, scotland@actionforchildren.org.uk (December 2023)

Three pillars

Best Start in Life: By making sure children get the right support in the early years of their lives – via our services and campaigning. Our early intervention services will give young children the best possible start.

Services linked to this: AB56 Futures; Western Isles and Clydebank, Dunbartonshire Perinatal & Infant Mental Health Fund

Safe and Stable/Loving Home: By supporting and stepping in early to help parents and carers and working to keep families together. We’ll increase investment to provide safe and loving homes for children and young people with complex needs. We’ll also find secure foster and adoptive homes for children and young people who can’t live with their birth families.

Services linked to this: fostering, adoption, residential care, housing support, intensive family support and short breaks for children with disabilities.

Good mental health and the chance to thrive: By having positive conversations about mental health and emotional wellbeing and giving children and young people the tools to build resilience following the pandemic. We’ll also support young carers so they have a happy childhood, and help young people to find work

Services linked to this: mental health support, young carers services and youth employment support.

Simplified Stages 1 and 2

Policy/Service	Overall aims	How does policy/service affect CYP	What is the impact	Which CYP	CRWI A Yes/No	Rights supported	Will different CYP be affected	Which aspects of wellbeing are enhanced by policy/service
Best Start in Life	To ensure children get the right support in the early years of their lives – via our services and campaigning. Our early intervention services will give young children the best possible start.	Aims to create a positive impact by ensuring that children’s needs are met in the early years phase of life. We also invest in campaigning and advocacy to ensure that funding and service provision is directed to securing support toward children’s early years.	Children will have the best start in life. Families will stay together and children will have their needs met. Where additional support is needed this is provided. The ultimate impact will be to help Scotland’s collective goal to live in a country where no child or young person is in care, as they would be living safely and happily with their birth parents and families. Of course,	0-5 years old. Through dedicated project support to pregnant mums, mums of pre-5, provision of range of family centre groups and activities.	YES	Article 3; 6; 12; 13;14; 18; 19; 20; 23 and 3-all positive	Yes. Those children who need support or those children whose parents are accessing support through our support services.	Children will be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active respected, responsible, and included. For example, our Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (PIMH) service supports mums during pregnancy and in first two years to promote good maternal health and wellbeing contributing to a healthy pregnancy and good parental bonding at

			we recognise that there will be times when care is needed. And as such when that care is needed children and families will be listened to and meaningfully involved in decision-making about their care. We want all those involved in care and support properly listening and responding to what children want and need.					birth. Increasing parent understanding of babies needs and development and how to support this and nurture their child.
Safe and Stable /Lovin g Home	We will support and step in early to help parents and carers, to keep families together. investment to provide safe and loving homes for children and young people with complex needs. We'll also find secure foster and adoptive homes for children and young people who can't live with their birth families	Where possible children and young people are supported to live at home. Where children and young people can't live at home, they live within a family environment. Where foster care is not an appropriate option, we ensure children and young people live safely in our children homes. Where families need additional supports to stay together, we provide overnight short- breaks. Where young people are homeless and or need support to maintain housing this support is also provided. We ensure children and young people maintain contact with their immediate and extended families. That they also have access to education; training and	Children and young people will live safely at home and in the community. Children and young people have positive relationships with their parents/carers. Children and young people have positive life chances and opportunities. Children and young people are supported in ways tailored to their individual needs.	0-26 years old. Children and young people living at home whose parents require support. Children and young people living at home who receive support through short breaks. Children and young people in foster care; residential homes and housing support accommodation. Children and young people who are young carers for a family member. Children and young people at risk of criminal exploitation or in conflict with the law.	YES	Articles – 2; 3; 6; 12; 13; 14; 18; 19; 20; 23; 25; 30; 31; 33; 34; 35; 39; 40; 42	Yes. A range of children and young people will be positively affected by the delivery of our services. Those who we directly support and other young people indirectly. For example, our work with young people at risk of criminal exploitation via our 'Serious Organised Crime Early Intervention Service'. The service provides an early intervention approach to identifying young people (aged 12 to 18) who are considered to be at risk of progressing to involvement in organised crime and to work with them in	Children and young people will be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, active respected, responsible, included. Examples – Our Family Support can and does help in the following issues: Parental separation; parenting skills and relationships, children exposed to trauma; homelessness; bereavement / loss; domestic violence and abuse; drug and alcohol misuse; parent-child bonding and attachment; mental health and wellbeing issues; supporting child's development; behaviour and social interaction; establishing routines; nutrition and healthy eating and cooking skills;

		various social inclusion opportunities.					<p>pursuing an alternative path. The service also supports the families and siblings of these young people.</p>	<p>education and learning; finance and debt; language barriers; caring responsibilities; disabled family members and children with additional support needs</p> <p>Our fostering services have a robust approach to recruitment, assessment, supervision and 24/7 support for foster carers. We have processes in place to ensure the matching of foster carers and children/young people takes account of the child's views and wishes.</p> <p>Our short breaks offered to benefit the whole family through improving relationships, creating space, and giving capacity to care. This helps children reach their full potential .</p> <p>Short breaks are vital, they provide families with a break from their caring responsibilities. It can enable families to get a break and spend time with other family members, time to have leisure and rest. Short breaks are also beneficial to the disabled young person it provides them with opportunities to experience new social</p>
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								<p>and leisure activity within the community, offers them time to spend with peers and to develop relationships with others.</p> <p>We work with young people who have experience of the criminal justice system and support them on release from prison. We also offer community based diversionary activities and help to address offending or anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Often those children and young people who most needed to be lifted out of trouble and adversity were the ones least likely to receive effective help and support.</p> <p>We continue to be concerned that young people with the highest and most complex needs seem to be the most vulnerable to being involved in the adult criminal justice system.</p>
Good mental health and the chance	By having positive conversations about mental health and emotional wellbeing and giving children and young people the tools to build resilience following	Children and young people have emotional support and are equipped with the tools and techniques needed to overcome challenges in their lives. Young people are supported to achieve in	The impact of mental health problems on young lives is significant. Children and young people with mental health issues are more likely to have negative	0-26 years old. Children and young people who are supported with their emotional wellbeing at home, in the community	YES	Articles – 2; 3; 6; 12; 13; 14; 18; 19; 20; 23; 25; 30; 31; 33;	A range of children and young people will be positively affected by the delivery of our services. Those who we directly support and other young people indirectly. E.g	<p>Children and young people will be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, active respected, responsible, included.</p> <p>Action for Children offer a full spectrum of support</p>

<p>e to thrive</p>	<p>the pandemic. We'll also support young carers so they have a happy childhood and help young people to find employment.</p>	<p>education, training, and employment. Children and young people are able to build and sustain positive relationships.</p>	<p>life experiences early on, that can damage their chances as they enter adulthood.</p> <p>Building mental health and wellbeing resilience will increase children's positive life chances and opportunities. Increasing their inclusion.</p> <p>All children and young people have unique potential and that they should receive the support and opportunities they need to fulfil it, irrespective of their background or identity. Our employability services provides that support.</p>	<p>and in school through one-to-one counselling, one to one support, Blues groups.</p> <p>Young people who receive support to achieve in employment, training, and education to reach positive outcomes.</p>		<p>34; 35; 39; 40; 42</p>	<p>our heritage and inclusion work promotes positive approaches to young people from different racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>Indirectly other young people through building capacity of other professionals – e.g. teachers to offer low level support to young people.</p>	<p>regarding mental health and wellbeing. Ranging from prevention and early help through to more intensive support and targeted 1:1 counselling for children and young people in greatest need.</p> <p>Roots of empathy offers a whole classroom approach to building resilience, empathy, and positive self-regard in children.</p> <p>Our emotional wellbeing services offer one to one counselling and group-based CBT therapy to young people to enable them to build their emotional wellbeing, achieve in education and maintain friendships.</p> <p>Our STAY service offers support to young people who have been looked after previously who are attending college and may need additional support to promote emotional wellbeing and or support any other issues or challenges.</p> <p>Our Positive Changes project, funded by Cashback for Communities, provides intensive one to one</p>
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								<p>mentoring and group work activities to those young people furthest from the workplace and provides follow up support to progress towards and then sustain positive destinations. The model offers needs led and tailored support, with flexibility for longer term journeys if required. We support vulnerable young people aged 14-24 take their first steps towards employment. Our aim is to improve confidence and resilience and support young people to make positive changes to their lives. A big part of that includes building support networks around them.</p>
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Simplified Stage 3

Policy/ service	Are changes needed to support rights or mitigate against negative impact	How do we know/evidence? The evidence base may include demographic information, academic research, service monitoring/inspection reports, service evaluation reports, user surveys, etc	CYP views	Monitor, review updates on actions taken highted in red.
Best Start in Life	<p>Yes: We want to do more to ensure the views, needs and wants of under fives are captured to develop co-production with these children. This would result in for more targeted services. While we already ensure that we care and support under fives within or family support services, we know that targeted services and expansion of existing services could make a big difference to under-fives.</p>	<p>The Scottish Government recognises the importance of early years hence their baby box offer to all parents in Scotland. https://www.parentclub.scot/baby-box</p> <p>This is also coupled with the Government childcare provision to funded early learning and childcare (ELC) to three- and four-year-olds and eligible two year olds. This entitlement stands at 1,140 hours a year https://www.gov.scot/policies/early-education-and-care/early-learning-and-childcare/</p> <p>Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1991, specifies that Children ‘have the right to give your opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously ‘</p> <p>Children are under five, those who speak English as an additional language and those with speech or other developmental delay or disability may not communicate verbally, but they are able to voice their wants, interests, likes and dislikes through gesture, action, body language, signing or through drawings and paintings.</p> <p>There is a wealth of guidance and evidence on the importance and the</p>	<p>Action for Children invest in time and safe spaces to host young people meetings including one to one sessions so that we can continually assess how the service is for those young people. We have aimed to include young people in all aspects of our service delivery.</p> <p>Staff also undertake a comprehensive support needs assessment to identify the needs of the young person in a holistic way. This determines how the service can best meet these needs. Each young person has an individual plan which they can see and establish if their plan is being met.</p> <p>Our services have an internal audit system based on a child and family centred approach. This audit is based on what our young people and their families feel about the service. It is used to measure changes and explores how the service may need to change including referencing the points the young people and families raise. We carried out observations these are child centred to the individual needs of the child.</p> <p>We also conduct a 360-feedback system within our service teams which is then used by the senior management team to access the staff and service. These 360 feedbacks include views from parents and</p>	<p>Voice Action for Children are committed to children and young people’s engagement and participation in decision making. Children and young people have a right to influence decisions which are made on their behalf and we will support them to do this.</p> <p>This is especially true of children who are under 5, we know this age group can sometimes to forgotten when it comes to listening to them. It may take extra time and thought to put in place mechanisms and working practices to gain these children’s views but we will set out to do this.</p> <p>Action for Children will get better at designing ways to record these views and show how these views led to service delivery change.</p> <p>We are committed to understanding the impact that our services have on the lives of the children, young people, and families that we work with. We already continually examine and look for ways to implement procedures and protocols that will measure and monitor how our services meet the needs of children, young people, and families. We want to put young people at the heart of service design and delivery, we have developed co-production working practices and ensure young people have a strong voice regarding their service, after all they are the experts regarding themselves.</p>

		<p>why and how to include under-fives in services https://birthto5matters.org.uk/promoting-voice-and-inclusion/</p>	<p>agencies as to how the service is meeting their child's needs.</p> <p>We hold end of stay questionnaires for young people, again this allows for honest and frank feedback about how the service was for that young person and asks what could have gone better and what do they think we could do to improve the service for future people who may use that service.</p> <p>We have invested in the Mind of my own app. This app allows children and young people to share their thoughts, views, and opinions both informally to their worker and formally for reviews . Its immediacy enables young people to share as and when they want to. We will endeavour to enhance this provision. Mind of My Own is one way in which we encourage young people to have their voice heard and express their views.</p> <p>This feedback ensures that services will respond appropriately and act if required and that information feedback to the young person.</p>	<p>We have invested in Staff Promise Champions: This network supports all colleagues to develop & oversee the systems, processes, culture & practices are in place to keep the promise to improve the outcomes for children and young people who we support, care for and love.</p> <p>Action for Children has developed a conversation tool to capture young people's views - political and personal. Staff gently guide a conversation with young people through a series of questions whilst protecting space for young people to raise any other issues. Young people's feedback has been very positive and staff leading on this work</p> <p>This tool we made sure bespoke accessible materials where available to capture under 5 voices and views:</p> <p>Through this work under 5s have told us about their love of animals and what is good and bad about their neighbourhood.</p> <p>Changes: Regarding animals we have set in place measures to see how we can meet the needs of those who want access to animals. Services will be highlighting their good working practice on this area such as farm visits, therapeutic pets, and sharing this with all services. This will show all services can see how easy it is to provide access to animals. We will also share and review what our animal policy including easy to use risk assessment sheets.</p> <p>Under 5s have also taken part in a recent Art competition to depict what is good and bad about their neighbourhood. This will be used to tease out the issues and we will use this information to find calls for action which councillors, MSPs and other decision makers can do about the local area.</p>
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<p>Safe and Stable/Loving Home</p>	<p>Yes: We have and will continue to review the language we and others use.</p>	<p>We know that the language we use regarding and toward children can have a positive or negative impact.</p> <p>This was highlighted by The Promise report. Which stated that the language of care is stigmatising for children.</p> <p>We note that other organisations have looked into this issue the following report aims to change the way professionals talk about Children in Care</p> <p>The feedback directly from the children and young people we support, care for and love stated we all need to use less jargon, even simple terms for us like using ‘siblings’ might not be appropriate. Some children have pointed out to us they didn’t understand that term, and why didn’t we just say brothers and sisters?</p> <p>So instead, we should use the terms they understand. Young people have told us that their records and paperwork of their life journey seem too clinical and unloving, they want to have records that they can relate to and identify with.</p> <p>We are also striving to ensure more young people involved in staff interviews and recruitment.</p> <p>The importance of keeping brothers and sisters together comes from a</p>	<p>Action for Children invest in time and safe spaces to host young people meetings including one to one sessions so that we can continually assess how the service is for those young people. We have aimed to include young people in all aspects of our service delivery.</p> <p>Staff also undertake a comprehensive support needs assessment to identify the needs of the young person in a holistic way. This determines how the service can best meet these needs. Each young person has an individual plan which they can see and establish if their plan is being met.</p> <p>Our services have an internal audit system based on a child and family centred approach. This audit is based on what our young people and their families feel about the service. It is used to measure changes and explores how the service may need to change including referencing the points the young people and families raise. We carried out observations these are child centred to the individual needs of the child.</p> <p>We also conduct a 360-feedback system within our service teams which is then used by the senior management team to access the staff and service. These 360 feedbacks include views from parents and agencies as to how the service is meeting their child’s needs.</p> <p>We hold end of stay questionnaires for young people, again this allows for honest and frank feedback about how the service was for that</p>	<p>Language</p> <p>We will engage our young people on use of language and co-produce agreed approaches in terms of language, recording and assessment. We will monitor implementation through case file auditing. We will monitor implementation through feedback from YP. We will collate any feedback that comes through inspection. We will incorporate evaluation of this in our independent peer evaluation of children homes.</p> <p>We are committed to understanding the impact that our services have on the lives of the children, young people, and families that we work with. We already continually examine and look for ways to implement procedures and protocols that will measure and monitor how our services meet the needs of children, young people, and families. We want to put young people at the heart of service design and delivery, we have developed co-production working practices and ensure young people have a strong voice regarding their service, after all they are the experts regarding themselves.</p> <p>As mentioned above our Staff Promise Champions and conversation tool help with to identify how our services meet the needs of children, young people, and families and what issues they care about.</p> <p>Through the conversation tool, young people brought up the issue of, Activities and experiencing a ‘first’, often little things like their first swimming session, first bowling trip on going to cinema. While AfC has an enrichment fund, we know this hasn’t been accessed by a broad cohort as possible. First</p>

	<p>Yes: Foster care support to ensure brothers and sisters stay together</p>	<p>wealth of evidence namely and directly from the young people we support.</p> <p>For example, a review of the evidence on the circumstances and experiences of siblings in the 'care system', and the factors which promote or inhibit relationships authored by Claire Baker, Dawn Griesbach, Jennifer Waterton</p> <p>Can be found from pp. 1451–1513 here</p> <p>While the 2016 'Sibling Relationships in Adoptive and Fostering Families: A Review of the International Research Literature', by Christine Jones is available via this link to the report</p>	<p>young person and asks what could have gone better and what do they think we could do to improve the service for future people who may use that service.</p>	<p>step we are working with fundraising colleagues to booster this fund. This includes young giving example of what 'first' activities they would like to do. We have hosted a staff focus group to find out what other funds services can tap into. Services are also sharing info about access to leisure passes etc, sporting funds to share ideas with all services.</p> <p>Secondly the issue of the Cost of living was made by young people: as such AfC are reviewing and uplifting our allowances rates including any pocket money and clothing fund uplifts that young people can access form us.</p> <p>Young Ambassadors (YA)</p> <p>As part of our Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy "Nothing About Me, Without Me" The YA plays an integral role in representing Action for Children and amplifying the wider views of the young people we support, helping us drive forward our Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy, "Nothing About Me, Without Me." The young people have an important role, as their views and lived experiences will help to inform, shape and influence decision making at a strategic level.</p> <p>The YAB is split into two age groups: 13-16 and 17-25 and meets on the last Monday of each month and the following Saturday for a recap session</p> <p>Scotland has 8 young ambassadors</p> <p>Language training for all staff, this is achieved via a train the trainer model to ensure we have as wide a staff coverage as possible.</p> <p>'Getting it Write' is our training programme on language , Recording Assessment and Analysis. This started 2022 when our Promise Coordinator conducted various focus groups with young people</p>
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				<p>across Scotland to discuss their views, feelings, and opinions on the way we do recording at Action for Our Coordinator also completed 1:1 work with young people around this; the information gathered has then been collaborated towards creating a training module which all staff in Scotland will complete, which goes into detail about how we should be recording. The training was first delivered to all Registered Managers and Support Workers with a train the trainer model; so that they can take it back to the teams within their service.</p> <p>As stated this training was co-designed with children and young people across Action for Children's Scotland services. 'Getting It Write' aims to provide practitioners with an understanding of how the language we use in our records can impact those we support, provide opportunity for professional reflection and analysis and refresh our understanding of why we keep records of support.</p> <p>Changes: Young people will better understand the records that Action for Children produce and maintain of their lives. Staff will better understand how they can involve YP to be involved in case recording where YP wants to. YP will feel further loved and cared for through the language that their support staff use whilst speak and writing about and to them.</p> <p>We avoid jargon and acronyms as records should not exclude non-specialist readers.</p> <p>For example, young people said they don't like the term siblings, we make sure we say brothers and sisters, we don't call a young person's 'home', a 'unit' or 'placement', or 'work' we call it what it is the young person's home. Its not 'respite' instead we use short breaks.</p>
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Monitor our foster offer

We will conduct an annual review of the number of siblings we support and also the overall number of siblings we have referred to the service. We will track outcomes relating to sibling contact. We will monitor how many new carers approved to offer a sibling placement. Utilising our CHARMS data. CHARMS is a comprehensive and user-friendly system designed specifically for fostering, adoption, residential and other children's services. It is a complete database system for care providers.

We seek regular placement feedback from young people at the annual review of the foster carer. We will seek ongoing feedback from YP through regular meetings and participation activity.

Update: We have invested in changing on foster care provision. We are happy to report we have recently placed two siblings with a carer, potentially on a long-term basis. Increasing our capacity in this area is very much part of our ongoing development plan, both to reflect the Promise, recent legislation and uphold children's Rights. Due to the enhanced nature of our service, it was fair to state we didn't receive a high number of referrals for sibling groups but these are increasing as local authorities are struggling to recruit. We have developed carer recruitment to increase the number of carers who could/ or have the capacity to look after more than one child. At present we have sibling groups within the service who are with different carers and our carers very much support these children to maintain relationships with their brothers and sisters.

<p>Good mental health and the chance to thrive</p>	<p>Yes: the Expansion of mental health services.</p>	<p>Need for more mental health provision</p> <p>We already knew about the importance of mental health and wellbeing provision for young people. However, covid has uncover complex and different mental health issues and wellbeing issues for children. We need to ensure we can meet these needs.</p> <p>House of Commons, The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) report found that the covid-19 pandemic intensified known risk factors for child mental health disorders and disrupted support structures. POST report</p> <p>While according to The State of the World's Children 2021; On My Mind: promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health – UNICEF's most comprehensive look at the mental health of children, adolescents and caregivers in the 21st century – even before COVID-19, children and young people carried the burden of mental health conditions without significant investment in addressing them.</p> <p>Our own evidence we collected during the pandemic showed.</p> <p>Children from low-income backgrounds, with less than half displaying the behaviour and emotions expected at their age</p>	<p>Action for Children invest in time and safe spaces to host young people meetings including one to one sessions so that we can continually assess how the service is for those young people. We have aimed to include young people in all aspects of our service delivery.</p> <p>Staff also undertake a comprehensive support needs assessment to identify the needs of the young person in a holistic way. This determines how the service can best meet these needs. Each young person has an individual plan which they can see and establish if their plan is being met.</p> <p>Our services have an internal audit system based on a child and family centred approach. This audit is based on what our young people and their families feel about the service. It is used to measure changes and explores how the service may need to change including referencing the points the young people and families raise. We carried out observations these are child centred to the individual needs of the child.</p> <p>We also conduct a 360-feedback system within our service teams which is then used by the senior management team to access the staff and service. These 360 feedbacks include views from parents and agencies as to how the service is meeting their child's needs.</p> <p>We hold end of stay questionnaires for young people, again this allows for honest and frank feedback about how the service was for that</p>	<p>We will monitor and track outcomes relating to emotional wellbeing across all of our service delivery.</p> <p>We will monitor outcomes and impact of Blues in pre and post questionnaires</p> <p>We will track the reach of our mental health service offer across the country.</p> <p>We will look to examine ways to expand our services, taking into account the impact covid has created or heighten like dealing with death of a loved one, increase in anxiety in mixing with others etc.</p> <p>We are committed to understanding the impact that our services have on the lives of the children, young people, and families that we work with. We already continually examine and look for ways to implement procedures and protocols that will measure and monitor how our services meet the needs of children, young people, and families. We want to put young people at the heart of service design and delivery, we have developed co-production working practices and ensure young people have a strong voice regarding their service, after all they are the experts regarding themselves.</p> <p>Post Covid: We know that mental health problems don't discriminate and affect all ages. Studies have shown that 75% of adults with lifetime mental health problems first experience symptoms by the age of 18. We know that covid lockdowns and emerging from these placed a great deal of stress and</p>
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		<p>LGBT+ young people struggling with their identity</p> <p>Young people with experience of care with local authorities reporting increased self-harm and suicide attempts</p> <p>These were the key findings via our 'Roots evidence paper: Roots of Empathy (RoE) in light of the Pandemic; August 2021; by Dr Briega Nugent.</p> <p>This report available upon request</p>	<p>young person and asks what could have gone better and what do they think we could do to improve the service for future people who may use that service.</p> <p>We have invested in the Mind of my own app. This app allows children and young people to share their thoughts, views, and opinions both informally to their worker and formally for reviews . Its immediacy enables young people to share as and when they want to. We will endeavour to enhance this provision. Mind of My Own is one way in which we encourage young people to have their voice heard and express their views.</p> <p>This feedback ensures that services will respond appropriately and act if required and that information feedback to the young person.</p>	<p>emotional pressure on families and young people especially when returning to school.</p> <p>Examining our Blues Programme (which is a 6-week Cognitive Behavioural Group Depression Prevention programme for 13–19-year-olds that actively engages students with depressive symptoms or at risk of onset of major depression):</p> <p>This is now available in 52 secondary schools across Scotland.</p> <p>Overall 81% of Young people showed an increase in confidence pre to post intervention. Often schools will say to us that they are surprised by some of the names they see on the list of young people eligible to be invited along to Blues, which we think is what makes the screening process so integral.</p> <p>Spotlight on Inverclyde to give a flavour of the mental health situation. A whole year group are given a presentation followed by completing the CESD (Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale) questionnaire, which determines whether the programme is appropriate for them, based on whether they score over a threshold.</p> <p>TOTAL CES-D's (questionnaires) completed by pupils: 41% scoring over the threshold and invited to take part in programmes Of 288 pupils invited to take part 75% began the programme (215 pupils)</p> <p>58.6 % of pupils participating showed an improvement in their score after taking part in the Blues Programme.</p> <p>Scores varied across schools with the highest improvement being at 73%, and the lowest 43%.</p>
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				<p>these differences. An independent evaluation of Action for Children family support services found that: ‘families reported significant changes to their child’s behaviour, to routines and boundaries and experienced more positive family relationships which had improved family life, parental stress and anxiety’. The evaluation highlighted the importance of having of a relationship-based and people-centred focus. This is vital in securing positive outcomes.</p> <p>Action for Children know the emotional wellbeing of children and young people should be just as important as their physical health.</p> <p>The greatest opportunity we have from improving children’s mental health is by investing in early and effective services and making them more accessible. This would also ensure shorter waiting lists for further specialist intense support.</p> <p>Our staff state that learning to really listen to what people say can help identify signs of early mental health and wellbeing concerns. the importance of people listening and having a safe space to talk through issues.</p> <p>For young people they valued being listened to rather than people jumping to solutions or trying to help too much. For example, a young person told us ‘Often I don’t need answers or solutions to ‘fix’ my problems; sometimes I just want someone to really listen to me. It feels good knowing I have someone who is there and interested in what I have to say.</p>
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Reflections on UNCRC and Action for Childrens Rights based approach

Children's Rights can seem remote, out of touch and academic, for too many children these rights seem far removed from their everyday lives. We know that these rights should be practical, tangible and act as a catalyst to bring about positive changes to young people's lives. Children and young people should be valued and respected as right holders. That is why Action for Children have spent years in campaigning and advocating for Scotland to Incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law.

In December we were pleased MSPs voted unanimously to pass the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill. It was previously passed in March 2021, but after a challenge from the UK Government, the Supreme Court ruled that it went beyond Holyrood's powers, and the legislation became the first to be 'reconsidered' by the Scottish Parliament.

In passing this bill, Action for Children believe it will give children and young people the confidence of knowing their rights are protected not just by warm words but by the strength of law.

From this point our focus will be on working collaboratively with our local services and all local authorities in Scotland to identify, reflect and act on how we and government can ensure every single right is made a reality.

We will continue to offer people the appropriate support and care that meets their needs, gives due value to their choices, and keeps them protected from danger. We continually review and assess our services and support provided by encouraging those that have used and are current using that support to give constructive feedback.

We strive to ensure there is mutual learning, understanding and respect, we do not judge, and we ensure that everyone's personal story is validated and recognised.

We create safe spaces that treats people with dignity, allowing privacy but also allowing freedom of expression and speech. For example, in Orkney we have created an after school safe place on a Friday.

We are transparent and welcome co-design, we ensure people that use our services have the right to obtain information about themselves.

We ensure we communicate using communication methods and language of the choice of the individual.

We want to empower and give individuals the skills, tools and knowledge to create and build lasting loving and stable relationships.

We invest in staff who individuals can trust and relate to.

Link to UNCRC articles: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/01/Summary-of-the-UNCRC.pdf>

Wellbeing Indicators

- **Safe:** Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
- **Healthy:** Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare and support in learning to make healthy, safe choices
- **Achieving:** Being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.
- **Nurtured:** Having a nurturing place to live in a family setting, with additional help if needed, or, where possible, in a suitable care setting
- **Active:** Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.
- **Respected:** Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them.
- **Responsible:** Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, and being involved in decisions that affect them.
- **Included:** Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities, and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.