

Rights!

The Missing Piece to Childhood Adversity

This resource, designed by young people, is for MSYPs to raise awareness of a right-based approach to tackling childhood adversity. We want MSYPs to be calling for strong rights protection as a shield to childhood adversity.



FOREWORD



Bailey-Lee Robb @BaileyLeeMSYP
MSYP for C&Wdenbeath 2017-21 • SYP Trustee • ACE Activist

After seeing the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences being so prevalent in my constituency and beyond, from increased drug and alcohol misuse to a drastic spike in mental health issues over the years in teenagers, it was clear to me that not many people were aware of what ACEs or Childhood Trauma was, or the very real health and developmental impact it has on a child before they become 18.

This resource has been developed as a result of one of my members motion action points, which was to work with relevant stakeholders to develop an awareness toolkit. My aim is to equip all MSYPs in awareness of ACEs to use in their own areas or to develop their understanding

a little more and if this resource helps at least one person do this, then it has accomplished its purpose. I look forward to you all shouting about it and using it in your local areas.

@Ulgrid Juliet Harris

Director of Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognises that all children should grow up in an 'atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding'. It sets out everything the government should put in place to prevent and mitigate the impact of trauma on children.

The UNCRC includes the right of all children to be protected from violence, abuse and neglect as well as the right to receive support to recover from traumatic experiences. More broadly, it addresses the wider aspects of a child's life that can impact on their experience of trauma, such as the right to be listened to and taken seriously, as well as rights to housing, food, clothing and healthcare.



This rights-based approach is essential if we are to address many of the root causes of trauma. It includes children in active conversations about their own wellbeing and ensures they are treated with dignity, respect and feel valued. Whilst it may never be possible to eliminate traumatic experiences from the lives of all children, taking a rights-based approach to trauma creates the supportive and empowering environment in which loving and nurturing relationships thrive.

FOREWORD

Bruce Adamson @Bruce_Adamson
Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Dear Human Rights Defenders, this resource is a powerful tool to raise awareness of the importance of taking a rights-based approach to tackling childhood adversity. It talks of rights protections as a shield. That shield will be strengthened in Scotland when the Government incorporates the UNCRC into domestic Scots law, giving you and other children and young people the power to get justice for human rights breaches, which we know can be the case when children experience trauma.

Taking a rights-based approach can contribute significantly to creating an environment where children and young people's needs and views are valued. It empowers children and young people and decision-makers by developing the capacities of public bodies to fulfil their obligations. It creates space for you and other children and young people to claim your rights.

Use this resource to continue to defend your human rights and the rights of others.



@ryanmcs Shane **Ryan McShane**
Who Cares? Scotland MSYP 2017-19 • Activist

Who Cares? Scotland has the view that Adverse Childhood Experiences are important to acknowledge because many who have care experience will suffer life-long trauma. Adversity often is the reason why young people are brought into care. Recognising this, we feel that entering care adds to our childhood adversity as our care system isn't providing the loving, secure and respectful care it was designed to.

Care, should be the end of the the adversity, creating the opportunity to thrive even if this happened in our younger years preventing us from an easier childhood.

We want to see the toolkit used to prevent and mitigate the lasting damage of Adverse Childhood Experiences.



AWARENESS

Childhood adversity means any bad experience growing up which creates harmful amounts of stress. This can affect you, your health, your behaviour and your learning - now and throughout your life journey.



Adverse Childhood Experiences are closely linked with your rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), as shown by the article numbers beside each ACE on this page. Find out more about the UNCRC here:

www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrc

JAMES' STORY...

James Docherty
ACE's Activist
@Prev_Justice



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The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE's) study is glaring in its findings that certain adverse childhood experiences are a major risk factor in the leading causes of illness and breakdown in human relationships. We are all in agreement that it is every child's right to be nurtured and loved in this world. It is also every child's right to be involved in the decisions that are made over or in their lives. If a child has never been included or empowered in these decisions, then their dignity and respect has been denied.

The favourite food of ACE's is "shame". It's what keeps us separate (Disconnected) and feeling isolated. Shame thrives in secrecy, and has people thinking it will be worse if anybody knows! It took me a long time to work out the difference between guilt and shame. Guilt is – "I've done something wrong", and shame is – "I am wrong", there is something fundamentally wrong with me, I am flawed and broken as a human being.

The cure for this wounding is honesty, love and connection. The minute we feel safe, drop our armour, get honest and vulnerable with people who get you, love you and understand you, we build our immunity to shame and start to recover from adversity. Honesty really is a prerequisite to healing. But honesty does not happen unless people feel safe, loved and respected. It's for that reason I say that wounding that occurs in early relationships must heal in relationships, and it's fundamental that it's a safe, nurturing, trustworthy, empathetic, unconditional loving relationship.

That's equality and empowerment,
that's adults keeping their promises.

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What can I do?

Get involved in our 'Missing Piece' jigsaw campaign!

SYP will help you sign a template letter with a jigsaw piece of the Awareness page to your local MSP or VolOrg CEO at SYP70 in October 2019.

This will raise awareness among decision-makers about the rights-based approach to tackling childhood adversity.

Invite them to place their missing rights jigsaw piece to the childhood adversity jigsaw the week before the 30th anniversary of the UNCRC 13th-20th November 2019.



Bob MSYP
@BobMSYP

Following

Hey @MSP/VolOrg CEO name, I've just sent you the missing piece to our jigsaw on childhood adversity. Please swing by the @OfficialSYP office by #WorldChildrensDay on 20th Nov to add your rights-based piece. 📢 #SYPrights #ACEAwareNation

4:30 PM - 02 Nov 2019

14 Retweets 63 Likes

MSYPs can also...

- 1) Call on adults to speak with children and young people about childhood adversity and ask them what they need.
- 2) Call for education for children, young people and adults about rights, childhood adversity and trauma, and where to get help and support when needed.
- 3) Write a blog, article for a local newspaper or do something in school, college or university about the rights-based approach to tackling childhood adversity.
- 4) Look out for local adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) hubs, start discussions in organisations you have connections with and take part in the conversation on social media.
- 5) Call for incorporation of the UNCRC by 2021 to make rights protection in Scotland as strong as it can be to tackle childhood adversity.

HELP AND SUPPORT

Everyone experiences childhood adversity differently and it's OK to ask for help. You can do this in person with someone you trust, or anonymously through some of the following helplines. You have a right to support and recovery, and to be included in discussions about you. You are not alone and help will make you stronger.

Speak to a – Teacher, Youth Worker, Support Worker, an Adult you trust or a friend.

Childline, 0800 1111.
Childline.org.uk, Free 24-hour helpline for children and young people in the UK.

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, 0800 019 1179 or Text 0770 233 5720. Free Confidential advice and support around your rights.

Samaritans, 116 123, Samaritans.org, Free 24-hour helpline / Emotional support for anyone feeling down, experiencing distress or struggling to cope.

Breathing Space, 0800 83 85 87, breathingspacescotland.co.uk, Free, confidential service for any individual who is experiencing low mood and depression, Friday to Monday.

YoungScot, 0808 801 0338. Info line which is free and confidential phone service. It has information on a range of topics including mental health.

Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs, 08080 101011. If you are concerned about someone's alcohol or drug use contact us today on our free and confidential helpline. Available 9am-11pm Monday to Friday and as a call-back service on weekends.





**This resource was created by Bailey-Lee Robb MSYP,
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With thanks to:

Bruce Adamson, CYPCS

Juliet Harris, Together Scotland

Ryan McShane, Former MSYP - Who?Cares Scotland

James Docherty, ACEs Activist



**The Scottish
Government**
Riaghaltas na h-Alba