

## Care Leavers Voice

### **What were the main problems that Affected Care Leavers during Lockdown?**

*Not being able to go out, not being able to see people, not always being able to see our social worker or personal advisor face to face, isolation. Lack of stability, not seeing the forum members face to face, constantly working through screens. Too much reliance/interaction with technology. More expensive bills as at home all of the time. Mental health suffered. Young parents juggling childcare, education, work and training.*

### **What areas of help were needed most e.g. finance, mental health?**

*Mental health, finances, shopping for food, nappies, wipes, toilet roll, toiletries and cleaning items.*

### **Did any face to face meetings take place or was technology used in the main for contact?**

*Both. Mainly technology. Interaction with participation team mainly. Trust staff made an effort to keep in touch.*

### **How successful were you in being helped with problems...any examples?**

*We informed staff of what support was needed and staff responded accordingly which felt like a success - my PA was easy to get hold of. Regular wellbeing checks. The Trust worked with SMBC to provide food parcels when needed. We received laptops which were delivered by Trust staff.*

### **Can you make a couple of recommendations on how we can continue to help care Leavers cope with the effects of Lockdown?**

*Support in general with consistent communication. For PA's to continue to ask questions regarding general needs, children's needs, mental health support, medical support. Mental health training for staff to be able to recognise and support people who are suffering from mental health issues. Counselling training for staff to support young people even better. Support specifically for care leavers with increased bills. Resolve digital poverty.*

### **Comment**

It needs to be remembered that some Care Leavers had young children and their problems were exacerbated by Lockdown. These parents suffered from lack of support, particularly with childcare and access to play groups and nurseries and even family members. A number of these children will not have reached their milestones. This will need to be monitored.