

A message from



THE
ESSEX



Children in Care Council

Leaving Lockdown

So this whole covid-19 situation seems to be running its course. Cases are starting to decline and more and more people are venturing out into the wild and getting back to normal, back to their lives during this global pandemic... So why do I still feel so anxious? I'm going back to work soon and I'm getting back to "normal".

Maybe it's because this situation has become my new normal. Just when I am getting used to it everything is changing again and what's to say this won't happen again? A second wave is plausible so I'm also reluctant to let myself get settled back to life as it was before covid-19.

Maybe it's because I wonder if the reason the lockdown is lifting is because they need to get the economy back on its feet but I worry if it still isn't safe. Already my return to work has been pushed back two weeks and I'm not the only one in the same situation, friends have reported that their works are doing the same and even reporting the same uneasiness.

So what can we do to help ourselves in this time?

I myself have been playing a lot of video games with friends. This helps me forget about the situation however it's very important that you try and keep a routine, from what time you eat, to the time you sleep and wake up

Even though your return to the new normal may be pushed back, focus on getting ready for that date you have been given and if the date does get pushed back that's great! That just more time you have to get ready prepared. I understand this might mean another week or so in isolation but you have made it this far haven't you? We just have this one last stretch before normalcy starts to return to our lives.

We can start to see friends and family.

BBQs are allowed and shops are starting to reopen so even a little bit of retail therapy is on the horizon.

However, just because the lockdown is lifting, does not mean we can just ignore everything that just happened. Even though shops will be opening, remember they will have restrictions in place to protect the public and themselves.

Hands still need to be washed and social distancing is still likely to be in place and that's okay. This is to ensure that we can just get back to a sense of normal sooner than later

By Kaya, aged 21

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How have care leavers felt during lockdown?

The care leavers we have spoken to during LOCKDOWN have told us:

They feel supported

They generally feel well supported. They feel that people are regularly checking in with them to make sure they're okay and that they have someone to talk to if they are worried or have any problems.

Care leavers feel particularly well supported by their Personal Advisers, their social workers, members of the Involvement Service, accommodation support workers and by their family, friends and foster carers.

There have been difficulties

Some have found it difficult staying in, often feeling bored or lonely, not seeing family or friends. Their anxiety and stress has increased and parents of young children have found parenting more stressful during this time.

Some describe difficulties accessing health services, particularly for mental health needs, and support for universal credit

If you need more support:

If you are struggling emotionally, need someone to talk to or need advice or practical help please call your personal adviser or leaving and after care team. If you need help out of hours call the Emergency Duty Service on 0845 6061212.

The Involvement Service team members are always here to listen and help where we can. You can find out more about getting involved in the children in care council (we have lots of activities, even in lockdown!) please message us at involvement@essex.gov.uk

In crisis? Use the Shout Crisis Line for support in a crisis, Text Shout to 85258

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visit cicc.essex.gov.uk to find out lots more!

Things to do in lockdown:

Get creative with our "Expressive Self" online exhibition. Each month we are asking for online submissions of artwork, poetry, creative writing, lyrics, songs and each month we will host an online exhibition of children and young people's work on our website. This month's theme for Expressive Self is Our Happy Earth.

The COVID 19 Pandemic has had a positive impact on our climate; emissions have fallen and air quality improved, goats are exploring Welsh towns and turtles are having babies on Thailand's beaches again. Can you share your visual or written expressions of Our Happy Earth with us? Send us your expressions at involvement@essex.gov.uk



- Read a book. You can download the Kindle App for free and then read hundreds of books for free or cheap.
- Be read to. Audible has a free 30 day trial of audio books.
- Watch some Disney films. Disney Plus has a free 1 week trial.
- Become part of an online community; have a look for Coram Voice (www.coram.org.uk), Become Charity (www.becomecharity.org.uk), or Essex Youth Services (youth.essex.gov.uk)

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