**Supporting Young People Leaving Care**

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**Background & Why It Matters**

When young people age out of the care system—typically at 18—they face uniquely steep challenges. Many enter adulthood with limited support networks, unstable housing, and minimal access to education or employment. This steep transition often hinders their ability to thrive independently.

**The Numbers (UK Statistics)**

* In 2023, **13,112 young people in England** turned 18 and left care—an increase of 4% since 2020 [Home For Good](https://homeforgood.org.uk/statistics?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* Care leavers are vastly overrepresented among the homeless—accounting for **25% of adults experiencing homelessness**, even though they make up a fraction of the population [Home For Good](https://homeforgood.org.uk/statistics?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* Many are not in education, employment, or training (NEET): **39% of 19–21-year-old care leavers** are NEET, compared to just 13% of their peers [Home For Good](https://homeforgood.org.uk/statistics?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* Only **9% of care leavers** enter higher education by age 19—far behind the national average of 47% [Home For Good](https://homeforgood.org.uk/statistics?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* Housing outcomes remain poor—**7% of 17-year-olds**, **3% of 18-year-olds**, and **6% of 19–21-year-olds** live in unsuitable accommodation [Home For Good](https://homeforgood.org.uk/statistics?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* Transitional youth programs (e.g. “Staying Put”) remain underused: around **two-thirds of eligible 19-year-olds** are not living with their foster carers, and only **30% of local authorities** offer a “Staying Close” scheme [UK Parliament Committees](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/137330/html/?utm_source=chatgpt.com).

**Local & National Resources to Access**

* **Care Leavers Programme (UK Community Foundations):** A £3.6 million match-funding initiative over three years supporting young care leavers across 17 English regions—offering mentoring, housing support, and financial guidance [UK Community Foundations+1](https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/our-impact/our-current-partnerships/the-care-leavers-programme/?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* **Buttle UK:** Offers grants to help children and young people in difficult circumstances—especially care-experienced youth navigating early adulthood [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buttle_UK?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* **The King’s Trust (formerly Prince’s Trust):** Acts as the UK’s leading youth charity—empowering young people through training, mentoring, and entrepreneurial support. Over 125,000 ventures launched by young people to date [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Trust?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
* **Action for Children:** Delivers direct support for care leavers including counselling, housing advice, mentoring, and educational assistance [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_for_Children?utm_source=chatgpt.com).