



LEAVING CARE

Hi! We are happy to share this fourth project newsletter with you. In this issue, you can read about the Call to Action, which was launched following the “Be the Change” conference as well as our autumn advocacy and sustainability activities. Happy reading!

THE CALL TO ACTION ON LEAVING CARE

The content of this Call to Action comes from what we have heard from young people with care experience as well as from the professionals working with them. A draft was prepared before the conference “*Be the Change! Partnering to improve the transition from alternative care to independent living*” and was adapted based on the feedback received by participants and the conclusions that came out of the different discussions that took place in Bucharest on 12 and 13 June, 2019. The Conference gathered over 150 participants from across Europe. This included government officials, high-level representatives of key international organisations, NGOs and 30 young delegates. We were impressed by the strong commitment to the Call to Action and look forward to working on its realisation together. Below are the three calls, which are further detailed in the full document [here](#).

Action 1: Realise Care Leavers’ Rights in the Law - at EU, National, Regional and Local Levels

Action 2: Realise Care Leavers’ Rights in Practice

Action 3: Allocate Adequate Funds for Realising Care Leavers’ Rights (in legislation and in practice – at EU, national, regional and local levels)



Photographs by Goldenpics Romania

Co-funder



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About the project:

Leaving Care – An Integrated Approach to capacity building of Professionals and Young People aims to embed a child rights based culture into child protection systems which improves outcomes for children and young people in particular in the preparation for leaving care. Project partners include FICE Austria, SOS Bulgaria, SOS Estonia, SOS Hungary, SOS Italy, SOS Romania and FONPC.



Stay in touch!
train4childrights@sos-kd.org

ADVOCATING FOR CARE LEAVERS

During the *Be the Change* conference, care leavers called for more support in the transition to living independently and to have a say in all decisions affecting their lives. “Young people do need help to overcome the trauma of their childhood, but they also need adequate measures that are taken before they leave care. For example, to help young people financially, find a place to live and help with educational advice,” said Simeon, a care leaver from Bulgaria. Others noted the importance of self-organisation to empower each other. “We have many resources, each of us has their education and skills that we can use and share,” said Robin from Germany. “Older care leavers can train younger ones and be role models,” he added.

These ideas, together with the findings from the scoping exercise conducted at the start of the project will form the basis for the national recommendations, which will be developed in each partner country during the autumn. The recommendations will be formulated on how to bring the project outcomes to the next level and ensure that child rights, with a particular focus on leaving care, form part of the training of all caregivers and other professionals working in alternative care.

The ultimate goal is that care professionals in each participating country are trained on how to embed a child rights-based approach to their work to improve outcomes for children and young people when they leave care. More specifically, recommendations should help decision-makers and influential key-stakeholders in the national child protection systems to identify the measures to be taken to ensure that all professionals involved in the direct care of children are trained in leaving care and are able to implement the learnings in their places of work.

WHAT'S COMING UP

In an effort to strengthen the sustainability of the “Prepare for Leaving Care training, five of the largest project countries are organising **national Training of Trainers (ToT)** during the autumn to ensure that more Master Trainers are able and available to train care professionals after the end of the project. Together with young people with alternative care experience, the National Master Trainers in each project country will train a group of 6-12 national trainers. These participants have been carefully selected to guarantee maximum impact. In this regard, participants of the national ToT will largely comprise child protection and child care experts from key institutions within the national child protection system.

Furthermore, during the next half year, care leavers (members of the national Young Expert Groups and users of the Youthlinks platform) will be invited to a national face to face meeting in order to strengthen their networks and build an alumni group. Hopefully this will be the start of **national alumni networks** that can bring the challenges and needs of care leavers to the attention of policy makers.

Quotes from young people with care experience who attended the “*Be the Change!*” Conference

I want to emphasize that many times the laws and budgets of governments do not cover our needs and for this reason and many other this project and your participation is so important.

Alexandra, Spain

My personal goal is to make the care leaver network stronger in my country. This is why it is important to me to advocate because I can help other children. I really enjoy taking part in leaving care advocacy and training activities. I would like to do more.

István, Hungary

Wishing you all a colourful autumn!