

A Young Person's Guide to changes in CLA, Fostering & Independent Futures

Islington has been doing research and talking to lots of children, young people, parents, carers and social workers to find better ways of working. This is what we learned:

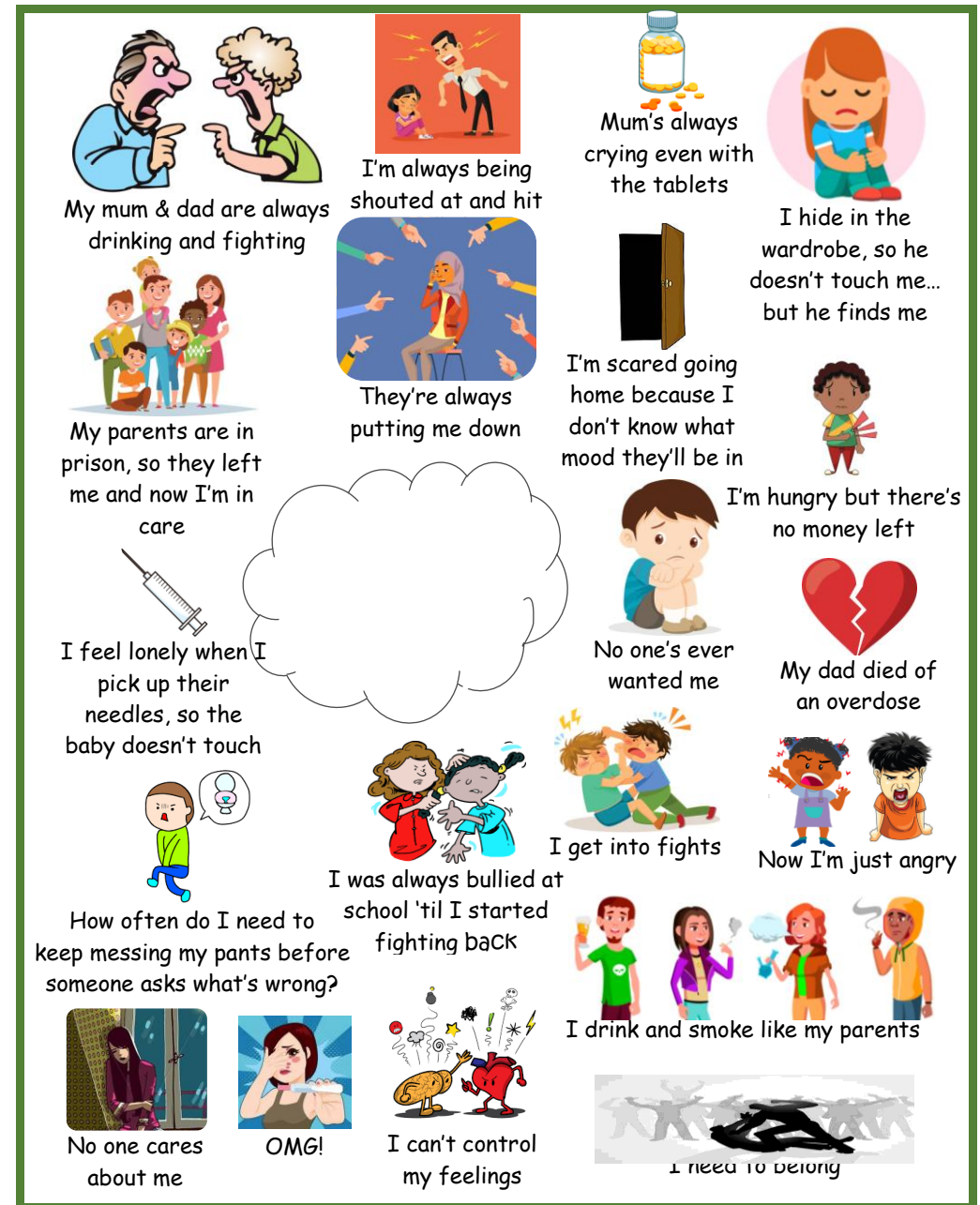
- Social workers should spend more time with children, young people and families, getting to know them and helping them sort out their problems.
- We should build on people's strengths
- We should help people find motivation and hope to *want* to change self-destructive behaviour (not because the social worker said they had to)
- We should spend more time reflecting on why people behave the way they do, not judging. Children and young people often express their feelings through behaviour and adults need to understand what they are "telling" us about their experiences.

Our Practice Model is called Motivational Practice (MP). At its heart is skilful, "relationship-based practice". **Why are relationships important?**

- Spending time with someone we trust and like makes us feel happy, safe and calm.
- Our early relationships are the building blocks of who we grow up to be as adults
- When bad things happen to children with people they should be able to trust (parents & carers), we call this having Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs can hurt a lot and make kids feel scared, angry, upset, confused and more.
- The good news is that children and young people can recover and repair the hurt. What makes the difference is having a relationship with someone you learn to trust and talk to; someone who understands you.

Find out more about ACE's on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHgLYI9KZ-A>



My mum & dad are always drinking and fighting

I'm always being shouted at and hit

Mum's always crying even with the tablets

I hide in the wardrobe, so he doesn't touch me... but he finds me

My parents are in prison, so they left me and now I'm in care

They're always putting me down

I'm scared going home because I don't know what mood they'll be in

I'm hungry but there's no money left

I feel lonely when I pick up their needles, so the baby doesn't touch

No one's ever wanted me

My dad died of an overdose

I get into fights

Now I'm just angry

I was always bullied at school 'til I started fighting back

How often do I need to keep messing my pants before someone asks what's wrong?

I drink and smoke like my parents

No one cares about me

OMG!

I can't control my feelings

I need to belong

Someone noticed my mum not coping and helped her get better

The police talked to me and were kind

My teacher asked me what was wrong

WE DIDN'T REALISE WE WERE MAKING MEMORIES. WE JUST KNEW WE WERE HAVING FUN

My foster carer reads me a bedtime story

I know my Nan loves me

The social worker found my dad

Resilience, Recovery, Repair

I talked to my social worker about what happened to me and he helped me realise I wasn't a bad person

I like to cuddle

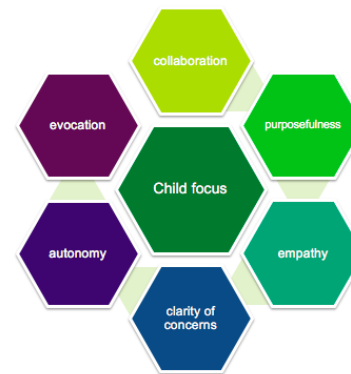
We've got our degrees

I haven't repeated the pattern with my kids

I like to chill out with friends and have fun

Stop kids growing up with ACES

Islington's Motivational Practice Model:



Keeping a child focus is at the heart of everything we do

Empathy: understanding what's going on for you

Collaboration: working with children, young people and families, listening and helping people have a say (at the right level for their age/development). Feeling empowered in this way is important for people who have felt over-powered by people who have abused them.

Evocation: help people find motivation and hope to *want* to change

Autonomy: having rights to make your own decisions means learning to take responsibility for the outcomes.

Purposefulness: every session should have a purpose, even if that's just to hang out and have fun

Clarity of concerns: we should be clear about what we're thinking and planning, even if that means having tricky conversations with you

Changes in CLA, Fostering & Independent Futures

Independent Futures will now work with young people from the age of 16 to 25. The reason for this is so young people can start learning skills to become independent well before the time they move out on their own

CLA & Fostering will work more closely together to help foster carers and family carers understand children' and young people's behaviour and needs, for example, "why does she spend all her time shut in her room?" We want carers to learn how they can help children and young people repair the harm from early trauma - neglect, loss and abuse (ACESs).