

# KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER

for the **out of area placement** of a young person who is at risk of harm beyond their family home



When young people are exploited or experience significant physical or sexual harm in their local area professionals may want to move them out of their home area for their safety. This is a significant step to take, and can impact a young person's physical safety, emotional wellbeing and their relationships, in both negative and positive ways.

Because of this, researchers at University of Bedfordshire have spoken to young people, parents and professionals with experience of this type of intervention. They told us that:

Young people and parents need **consistent support** throughout the process



An **ongoing relationship** between young people and their families, needs to be facilitated



**Shared decision-making** is key. Young people and parents need to be involved and informed, and partners need to be on the same page



The placement needs to be **a fit** for the young person



**Planning** is key – both before a relocation and to assist transitioning out of it



A young person's **education** can be severely disrupted if not considered at all stages



Professionals involved in relocations, including those running placements, need **experience of supporting adolescents** and responding to extra-familial harm



Based on these themes we have produced info-sheets of things for young people, parents and professionals to consider when a move is on the table.

## TERMS OF AGREEMENT

for using the **THINGS TO CONSIDER** info-sheets

When using these info-sheets with young people and parents it is essential that:

- 1 Both young people and parents have a professional that they can speak to who they trust
- 2 That all professionals involved in the relocation process have reviewed the info-sheet for professionals and are actively considering all points that it raises
- 3 That professionals involved in the relocation ensure there is a mechanism for young people and parents to participate in the decision making process

# THINGS for Professionals TO CONSIDER



You're a professional who is worried that a child is unsafe in their local area. Your concerns are so significant that you are considering moving them out of the area for their own safety. This is a significant step to take and can impact a young person's physical safety, emotional wellbeing and their relationships in both negative and positive ways.

Because of this researchers at University of Bedfordshire have spoken to young people, parents and professionals with experience of this type of intervention. What they shared told us a lot about the conditions in which a relocation might work – and those in which is likely to make things worse. We have produced this info-sheet based on what we found, to highlight key things for you to think through with your colleagues, a young person and their parents, if a move is being considered – to make sure if used it is used to best effect.

## NETWORKS OF SUPPORT



- a** Out-of-area moves seem to work best when a young person is provided with consistent, and sometimes wraparound support, during the process from professionals they know and trust. Will this be possible with the move you are considering?
- b** The risks that this young person faced may still be there once they are moved – could these risks be impacting their parent and/or siblings? How will the parents in question be supported during and after the move has taken place – and by who?

## FAMILY – CHILD RELATIONSHIPS



Both young people and parents have described how important it is to maintain their relationship during a move.

- What support can you put in place to facilitate this and what type of contact are you considering?
- Will it be possible for the young person to visit their parents, siblings or peers?
- Will conversations they have be private or monitored?
- Has this been clearly communicated with young people and their parents?

## DECISION-MAKING



- a** How are you involving young people in the decision around the move? Have you kept them informed and how have you sought their views on both the proposal to move them and what would help them settle in a placement?
- b** Moves like these can be traumatic for parents. How are you supporting parents to be alongside you in reaching a difficult decision to move their child away from the family home; is it clear that the influence they have over risks beyond their front doors is often limited?
- c** Do you have shared agreements across your partnerships that support decision-making in these cases? It is critical that social care, police, health and education have a shared view on the conditions in which relocations work and those in which they don't.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING



Any move is likely to disrupt a young person's education, at least in the short term.

- What is the plan for mitigating this?
- How will they be supported to remain in education or training while placed out-of-area?

## PLANNING



- a** Is a move being considered as a last resort? If so have you exhausted all other options to create safety around the child where they are? If you have, what steps will you take once the child has been moved to make it safe for them to return?
- b** If you don't think it will ever be safe for them to return have you discussed this with them and their parents?

## PLACEMENT TYPE



We know that placements aren't always available when you need them. Nonetheless when looking for a placement :

- How will you know whether this will meet the needs of the young person you are supporting?
- What would help them feel happy and safe while there?
- How do their parent(s) feel about it and have they had the chance to visit?

## RELEVANCE



Both young people and parents have described how important it is for practitioners and carers involved in these types of moves to understand both adolescent development and extra-familial harm.

- Is this the case with the move that is planned?
- Do the carers involved have experience of working with young people – including those who were relatively safe with their families?



# THINGS for Parents TO CONSIDER



Professionals are worried that your child isn't safe in your local area. Because of this, they are considering moving them out of the local area for their own safety. Having your child moved into another area is a very difficult thing to go through. It is a significant step for professionals to take and can impact your child's life and yours in a range of ways.

Because of this researchers at the University of Bedfordshire have spoken to young people and parents with experience of this type of intervention. Based on what they have told us we have produced this info-sheet highlighting some things you might want to think through or ask a professional about when a move is on the table.

What **support** have you had to date, and what might you need going forward?



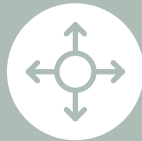
Ask your child's social worker whether there is someone who can support you **emotionally**, or advocate on your behalf during this period of time?

How would you like to **keep in touch** with your child once they have moved? Could they **come home** to visit you for example, or will you speak to them on the phone.



**Discuss your options** with the social worker, and the carer involved, to share your wishes and any occasions where they might change?

Moving someone away from their family is a big decision to make.



It's important that you don't feel **alone** in the process, and that you have professionals working alongside you at this difficult time. Ask your child's social worker to keep you involved in and **informed of decisions** that are made, and share your views with them.

You may also want to do the same with the foster carer or worker who is managing the residential setting where your child is living.

The **area** where your child is unsafe may still be unsafe after they have moved. Is this impacting how safe you feel at home or in your community? Or how your other children might be feeling?



It is important to share these feelings with someone.

Sometimes a move has to happen to **protect** your child. Do you know if this is a permanent move or is the hope that it will be short term?



It is worth asking your social workers what the professionals involved are **planning**, so that you can **be involved** in this decision and know what to expect before the move takes place.

What type of placement would you want your child to live in? Are there certain things that are important to you, and your family – **any traditions**, or ways of sharing thoughts and feelings – that it would help others to know about to help the placement feel like home for the time your child is there?



These types of moves often happen when professionals feel like there are **no other options left**; do you feel that way too? If you think an alternative hasn't been tried please inform your child's social worker.



# THINGS for Young People TO CONSIDER



Professionals and your parents or carers are worried that you're not safe in your local area. They are considering moving you out of the area for your safety. This is a significant step to take and can impact your life in a range of ways.

Because of this, researchers at the University of Bedfordshire have spoken to other young people who with experience of being moved in these circumstances. Based on what they have said there are a few things you might want to think through or ask a professional about before you are moved.

Are there any workers that you **trust** or get on with at the moment? Do you want to **keep in touch** with them when you move?



If you do, ask your social worker how you can contact this worker and how often you might get to see them.

Do you want to have contact with your **parents, carers or siblings** while you are away?



If you do, talk about this with your family and ask your workers how they'll support you to make this happen.

These types of moves seem to work best when you are involved in, and **kept in the loop** about, the decisions people are making and why they are making them.



Has anyone asked you for views on this move? Ask your social worker how they'll keep you **informed**, and who you can go to if questions come up along the way.

Moves often happen when professionals think this is the best way to **keep you safe**.



They seem to work best when all other options have been tried.

Do you think there are **any alternatives** to you being moved at the moment – and if you do, have you been able to share those ideas with your social worker?

What are some things that help you feel **safe and happy**?

You could think about whether those things will be available in the place that you're moving to.

There might be **activities** you want to continue or that you've wanted to try.

You might be the only young person in the home you are moved to, or you might be with some other young people.

Some of these things might help you feel happy and others might worry you.

**Share these with your worker** so they can consider them when finding you a place to move to.

