

# Report of 2nd Online Care Leavers' Café 28.02.2021



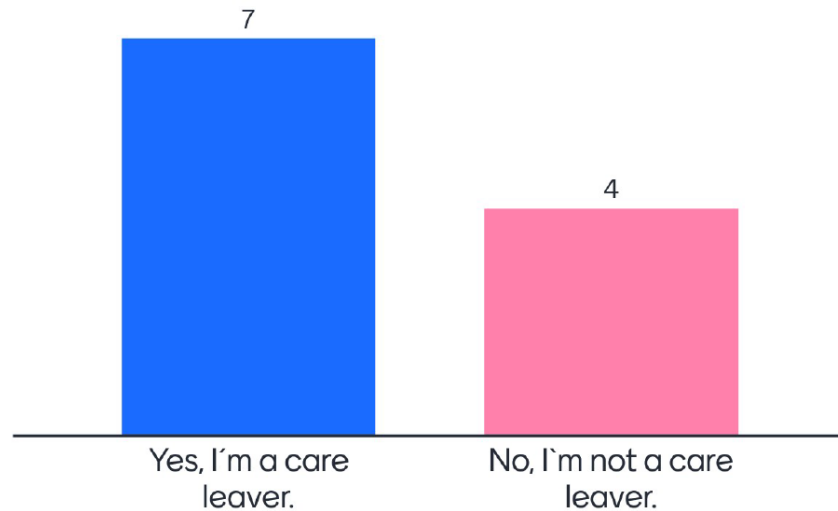
The 2nd Care Leavers Café was hosted by Keska Kenya – a care leaver network from Kenya. The most active part was taken over by Ruth from Keska.

Here are some information about the participants:

## What's your name (first name)?



## Are you a care leaver?



Where are you from? Please write the english name of your country.



First there was a n introduction tot he topic by Ruth. After that the care leavers discussed the topic in smaller groups in breakoutrooms. After that they discussed their points in the plenum. Here are the most importance points of the plenum-discussion about the topic „My voice, my audience!“:

- The **WHY** and **WHAT** of any story is important.
- Care Leavers must be aware of the pressure felt during story sharing – can learn from each other,
- One must ask 'how much am I willing to let others enter my life, my home'
- One must know if one is feeling appreciated while sharing the story – if the why is wrong, must not share – if the story told to bring change, must be aware that it takes time
- Engaging Care Leavers must be careful and meaningful.
- Consent given today is not consent given tomorrow – my voice – my audience must be clear - One must define this clearly. When giving consent for an individual event if should not be taken as consent for other following events.
- Strategic planning on follow up for Care Leavers who appear on different forums/platforms.

- Care Leavers want to know what happened after their needs declaration, most of the times there are no feedbacks and continuity.
- Often financial payment is an incentive for Care Leavers but one must be careful- Care Leavers must know the risks associated before sharing their story
- We must block all ways of exploitative story sharing, objectifying children in care as well as outside care
- There is no way to rush a flower to bloom – so the process of preparation is equally important – let no one rush as CL – both the flower and the blooming process are important and to be valued
- Often storytelling can be overwhelming, traumatic and if not prepared, can be painful – CL must have the skill to give the story a purpose and a perspective
- Advantages and disadvantages of story sharing must be assessed – for example, sharing the story while applying for the scholarship is easy as the **WHY** is established and the audience is clear – similarly, peer to peer story sharing is good as the why and what is clearly established and can be a relieving and healing experience
- Interviewers (media or any get together) should be empathetic and careful when asking questions and addressing Care Leavers.
- Sharing with media can be risky as audience and control not established clearly – example – an audience on seeing a TV show called the CL as 'Hey care leavers' and not by her name – can lead to stigma- media often wants to dramatise and this can be difficult
- Be careful of what you are putting on social media.
- When giving consent for sharing personal stories on social media. It should be thought properly and just not go like that. This information on social media can easily be accessed by the future employer, this could make us vulnerable and exploitative. We do not want our bosses to know everything about us. (are you okay with your boss knowing all about your life story) (secondary trauma).
- Sharing anonymous stories can be a good strategy as it is a safe way and even as it allows one to accept the past it gives the power to change the future
- Often stereotypes are created when we say children in care get negative experiences – of growing up in care is not good – this creates barriers in employment for CLs
- Storytelling should never be at the expense of personal well being/ Storytelling should not be at the cost of your well being.
- Accepting the past leads to self-acceptance and mental well being. But be careful of your audience.
- Most of the care leavers want to be recognized as themselves and not as a Care Leaver they want to be known as an individual / Some of the care leavers do not want to refer as care leaver because they want to change their identity and not talk about their past everywhere they go.
- The focus should not be on pitying and sympathy but on the strengths of Care leavers and their resilience.
- Not all the care leavers have trauma but some do and for them, there should be SOP for referring to a mental health specialist.
- Storytelling must not be a business

During the care leavers breakoutrooms the professionals also had an discussion about the topic - the most important point:

Each care leaver has different pain points so there should be a category for different care leavers. Refine terminology for categorising care leavers is quite important for the care workers in communicating and addressing their challenges and needs.

At the End Martine shared a Cooperation document with the group. The global care leavers community can create their version (their language, their needs):

**SAMENWERKEN 2.0**

Het JWB is het grootste platform voor jongerenraden uit jeugdhulp. Binnen het JWB bespelen jongeren zelf welke punten er op de agenda staan. Ons doel is om met onze stem de jeugdhulp in Nederland te verbeteren.

**JEUGD WELZIJNS BERAAD.**

Wij hebben ALLEMAAL directe ervaring met jeugdhulp.

Wij spreken namens een grote achterban, 25 jongerenraden zijn lid van het JWB.

Zorg voor wisselende werkvormen (niet alleen zitten en praten) en een goede gespreksleider.

Dank ook aan onze agenda's. Plan dus liever geen bijeenkomsten onder schooltijd.

Als wij komen meepraten of denken. Lopen we vaak inkomsten van een bijbaan mis. Compenseer dit!

Wij spreken vanuit onze ervaring met jeugdhulp. Het delen van ons eigen levensverhaal is niet vanzelfsprekend.

Wij participeren alleen op een duurzame manier (met terugkoppeling). Geen eenmalige plofparticipatie dus...

**JEUGDHULP KAN NIET ZONDER JOUW MENING**

## CO-OPERATION 2.0

We speak on behalf of a lot of children and youth in care. 25 youth councils are member of the JWB.

**Think about different interactive working methods (not only sitting and speaking) and organize a good moderator/facilitator.**

Also think about our agendas. Don't plan meetings during school time.

**If we join meetings to think along with you we miss our usual income of side jobs. Compensate this!**

We speak as care experiences persons, but sharing our life story is not obvious.

**We only participate in a sustainable way (with feedback about the effects of our participation). No one night stands ;-)** (joining a single meeting & never hearing anything about effects afterwards)