1

00:00:01,000 --> 00:00:05,000

Opening credits

Next Steps: Supporting our care leavers

Insights from casework practitioners

NSW government logo

2

00:00:05,000 --> 00:00:08,000

About Engaging Young People

3

00:00:08,000 --> 00:00:16,000

Lisa I think the hardest thing about engaging

young people is actually getting other people

4

00:00:16,000 --> 00:00:21,090

to see the young person for who they are and

not see the behaviours. Just remember these

5

00:00:21,090 --> 00:00:26,949

are kids and sometimes their behaviours aren't actually things that they re in control of,

6

00:00:26,949 --> 00:00:29,029

and to give them that grace.

7

00:00:29,029 --> 00:00:34,720

Kate The complexity of all the different issues

and the different circumstances that the young

8

00:00:34,720 --> 00:00:41,239

people are facing, you really have to be guided

by them and be so flexible in your approach,

9

00:00:41,239 --> 00:00:44,969

there can t be a one stop fits all young people.

10

00:00:44,969 --> 00:00:52,219

Vincent Adaptability, being willing to move

your goals, what you want to achieve. If a

11

00:00:52,219 --> 00:00:55,019

young person doesn't want to meet you in an

office then you go and meet them outside.

12

00:00:55,019 --> 00:00:58,510

If a young person doesn;t want to talk to

you but wants to play basketball, you go and

13

00:00:58,510 --> 00:01:02,300

play basketball. You adapt to what their particular

needs are.

14

00:01:02,300 --> 00:01:08,380

Nakita Getting on their level, speaking in

their language to make them feel comfortable,

15

00:01:08,380 --> 00:01:11,900

cos that's what we want, to make them feel

comfortable, not scared of us, letting them

16

00:01:11,900 --> 00:01:13,630

know that we are here to support them.

17

00:01:13,630 --> 00:01:18,340

Lisa They need people who are going to be

positive and are going to believe in them,

18

00:01:18,340 --> 00:01:22,159

not people who are going to get caught up

on the rollercoaster with them.

19

00:01:22,159 --> 00:01:26,040

Vincent Listening to what they say to you,

making sure that you re checking in with them,

20

00:01:26,040 --> 00:01:30,409

that you re actually doing what they want,

and working with their carers, working with

21

00:01:30,409 --> 00:01:34,909

their family, working with their friends.

Try to get as many people involved as possible,

22

00:01:34,909 --> 00:01:37,439

to try and get the best goal for the young

person.

23

00:01:37,439 --> 00:01:40,820

Darren Get in with these kids at an early

enough stage to show them that really life

24

00:01:40,820 --> 00:01:44,970

isn't as bad as what they ve seen, expose

them to some good people and put some good

25

00:01:44,970 --> 00:01:45,970

supports around them.

26

00:01:45,970 --> 00:01:49,189

Vicky We make time for our own kids and these

kids aren't any different. They re in our

27

00:01:49,189 --> 00:01:53,469

care and we ve got to make sure that we treat

them the same was as we would our own kids.

28

00:01:53,469 --> 00:01:56,951

Simone The pull of their family is always

going to be the most important thing. So if

29

00:01:56,951 --> 00:02:03,009

you can find people who care about that child,

who can form meaningful relationships beyond

30

00:02:03,009 --> 00:02:07,909

your time and their time in care, that is

going to be the most important thing for them.

31

00:02:07,909 --> 00:02:12,940

Because isolation is really, really toxic

for young people and then you think about

32

00:02:12,940 --> 00:02:17,870

how compounds if that isolated teenager then

goes to have children of their own and then

33

00:02:17,870 --> 00:02:22,290

they become the isolated families that we

get reports on all the time.

34

00:02:22,290 --> 00:02:24,550

Good Leaving Care Planning

35

00:02:24,550 --> 00:02:30,980

Lisa The biggest challenges with preparing

young people for leaving care are the fact

36

00:02:30,980 --> 00:02:35,819

that we don t have a crystal ball and you

can't see exactly what s going to happen five,

37

00:02:35,819 --> 00:02:42,430

six years down the track for this young person.

So you want to take into account as many possibilities

38

00:02:42,430 --> 00:02:43,430

as you could.

39

00:02:43,430 --> 00:02:49,360

Peter It s really important to be on top of

what that young person is entitled to in terms

40

00:02:49,360 --> 00:02:54,390

of health, education, aftercare services.

So that s I think your responsibility as a

41

00:02:54,390 --> 00:02:55,900

caseworker to know that.

42

00:02:55,900 --> 00:03:00,250

Liz Getting to know the young person and making

individual plans for that young person, that

43

00:03:00,250 --> 00:03:03,980

meets that young person s needs is the most

essential thing and having all those things

44

00:03:03,980 --> 00:03:08,500

in that Leaving Care Plan and letting that

young person know that after care that someone

45

00:03:08,500 --> 00:03:10,540

is still there and available for them.

46

00:03:10,540 --> 00:03:16,299

Vincent Just the importance of starting the

conversations early and understanding that

47

00:03:16,299 --> 00:03:22,740

the preparations starts from 14, 15 and 16

and it s ongoing, it s not just one meeting

48

00:03:22,740 --> 00:03:25,209

or two meetings it s an ongoing process.

49

00:03:25,209 --> 00:03:28,970

Vicky You want to incorporate some of the

things that they are really good at. For example

50

00:03:28,970 --> 00:03:33,030

some kids might be really good at sport. So

you want to make sure that that s something

51

00:03:33,030 --> 00:03:39,260

to do with their leaving care, so whether

it s a sporting club or piano or whatever

52

00:03:39,260 --> 00:03:42,849

it might be that they re interested in, we

want to make sure that we are garnishing that

53

00:03:42,849 --> 00:03:45,560

interest and keeping that going into their

future.

54

00:03:45,560 --> 00:03:50,150

Darren So I think having everyone s interaction,

everyone s involvement. If you put a plan

55

00:03:50,150 --> 00:03:55,540

together that has everybody's opinions involved,

then people are more likely to own that plan,

56

00:03:55,540 --> 00:03:58,800

because they re a part of it, they re part

of the decision making and they ll help it

57

00:03:58,800 --> 00:03:59,800

move forward.

58

00:03:59,800 --> 00:04:04,080

Chris I think it;s highly unrealistic to expect

that these young people leaving care will

59

00:04:04,080 --> 00:04:10,670

have the full set of living skills needed

and to be able to negotiate the wider community.

60

00:04:10,670 --> 00:04:15,670

Vicky We do have kids who do stay on with

their carers after the age of 18 and that's

61

00:04:15,670 --> 00:04:20,329

the ideal goal. We'd love to be able to

see them as actually part of the family, that's

62

00:04:20,329 --> 00:04:22,930

what they should be.

63

00:04:22,930 --> 00:04:25,530

What can make a difference

64

00:04:25,530 --> 00:04:32,820

Kate For me it s definitely, number one, is

being flexible. It s being open to look at

65

00:04:32,820 --> 00:04:38,100

new ways of dealing with young people. It's

being open to look at new ways of doing

66

00:04:38,100 --> 00:04:43,900

things. They re the expert in their lives

and we really need to support them and guide

67

00:04:43,900 --> 00:04:46,000

them but not lead them.

68

00:04:46,000 --> 00:04:50,830

Simone Don t underestimate the value of praise.

They still need your praise even if they are

69

00:04:50,830 --> 00:04:55,940

18 and out in the world and coming back to

you. It s really important to praise them

70

00:04:55,940 --> 00:05:00,470

and be specific about that praise that you

give them and really encourage them, because

71

00:05:00,470 --> 00:05:02,870

you might be the only person who s doing that

in their life.

72

00:05:02,870 --> 00:05:08,720

Vincent People will understand if you re honest

with them and be realistic. Don t make promises

73

00:05:08,720 --> 00:05:11,069

or say you re going to do something that you

know that you can't do.

74

00:05:11,069 --> 00:05:14,930

Chris I know that we live in a world where

things come up and you might have to cancel,

75

00:05:14,930 --> 00:05:20,160

but for a very vulnerable young person to

have a meeting cancelled or for it to be overlooked

76

00:05:20,160 --> 00:05:26,229

or forgotten can be really kind of awful experience

and they may not re-engage with you again.

77

00:05:26,229 --> 00:05:30,979

So really just be trustworthy and be accountable

and be realistic.

78

00:05:30,979 --> 00:05:33,960

Darren Letting them know that we re going

to be there, continually there to support

79

00:05:33,960 --> 00:05:40,970

them and preparing them to make that next

step into that adulthood and letting them

80

00:05:40,970 --> 00:05:46,690

know that they re not going to be abandoned.

I think that it s that comfort, getting them

81

00:05:46,690 --> 00:05:47,690

to leave in the first place

82

00:05:47,690 --> 00:05:53,011

Lisa I think it s always important to have

a genuine interest in the young people and

83

00:05:53,011 --> 00:05:59,050

in the families that we re working with and

to go beneath the surface and to ask the hard

84

00:05:59,050 --> 00:06:05,330

questions and to explore things as much as

you can and to keep coming back to it if you

85

00:06:05,330 --> 00:06:06,930

still not sure what s really happening.

86

00:06:06,930 --> 00:06:13,330

Vicky To having those conversations about

the difficult questions and issues in their

87

00:06:13,330 --> 00:06:17,650

lives. So it might be past trauma, it could

be about what are their goals in the future.

88

00:06:17,650 --> 00:06:19,349

So it s about really having those conversations.

89

00:06:19,349 --> 00:06:23,970

Darren it s like you hear about people quitting

smoking, not many people can quit the first

90

00:06:23,970 --> 00:06:27,250

time, it might take ten attempts, but you

need to be there for them when they make that

91

00:06:27,250 --> 00:06:30,310

tenth or eleventh attempt that actually worked.

92

00:06:30,310 --> 00:06:32,710

Things to remember

93

00:06:32,710 --> 00:06:40,060

Darren The three things that every caseworker

should have in their tool kit. I believe patience,

94

00:06:40,060 --> 00:06:48,020

I believe the child s best interest and think

outside the square.

95

00:06:48,020 --> 00:06:52,010

Simone Persistence, teenagers are all about

persistence, you know. You re probably gonna

96

00:06:52,010 --> 00:06:55,310

get five fuck offs before you get a nice hello.

97

00:06:55,310 --> 00:07:01,500

Lisa It s important to remember the young

people that we re working with. And this isn

98

00:07:01,500 --> 00:07:08,979

t just a job, it s young people s lives that

we are interfering with for better or for

99

00:07:08,979 --> 00:07:14,450

worse and there s consequences to every decision

and every word that we share with these young

100

00:07:14,450 --> 00:07:18,020

people. And so it s important that we do the

best we can in the time we ve got.

101

00:07:18,020 --> 00:07:23,780

Nakita It s a great feeling, to know that

a child feels comfortable with you, to open

102

00:07:23,780 --> 00:07:27,280

up and talk to you, probably one of the best

feelings in this role.

103

00:07:27,280 --> 00:07:33,590

Vincent There s lots of disappointments. There

s maybe for every 100 disappointments there

104

00:07:33,590 --> 00:07:38,850

are 10 highlights, but the highlights are

the ones that you work for. The highlights

105

00:07:38,850 --> 00:07:40,041

are the ones that will keep you going through

the 100 disappointments. For me anyway.

106

00:07:40,041 --> 00:07:41,041

Closing credits

Thank you to the following practitioners from

107

00:07:41,041 --> 00:07:42,041

FACS and our partner agencies for sharing

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108

00:07:42,041 --> 00:07:43,041

Lisa, Caseworker

Kate, Caseworker

109

00:07:43,041 --> 00:07:44,041

Vicky, Senior Program Manager

Simone, Caseworker

110

00:07:44,041 --> 00:07:45,041

Peter, Manager Casework

111

00:07:45,041 --> 00:07:46,041

Vincent, Caseworker

Nakita, Caseworker

112

00:07:46,041 --> 00:07:47,041

Darren, Manager Casework

Liz, Future Planning Consultant

113

00:07:47,041 --> 00:07:48,041

Chris, After Care Caseworker

114

00:07:48,041 --> 00:07:49,041

All information correct October 2018

www.facs.nsw.gov.au/leavingcare

115

00:07:49,041 --> 00:07:49,541

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