



National Corporate Parenting  
Training Programme  
Evaluation

**NATIONAL CORPORATE PARENTING  
TRAINING PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Background**

- 1.1 Since 2010 the Scottish Government (SG) has been funding Who Cares? Scotland to develop and deliver a national corporate parenting training programme. The aim of this programme is to raise awareness among corporate parents about their responsibilities so they can improve the support they give to young people in and leaving care. This training course is due to complete in March 2013 and there is the potential for a second phase of the programme.
- 1.2 The SG commissioned an independent evaluation of the National Corporate Parenting Training Programme, with a focus on the impact of the programme to date.

### **Methodology**

- 1.3 Two strands of research were conducted: qualitative face-to-face or telephone discussions with individuals in Glasgow, Dumfries & Galloway, Edinburgh and Renfrewshire who had participated in the programme. This was supplemented by a national short online survey. The research took place between December 2012 and February 2013. A total of 25 individuals took part in the qualitative work; and 54 individuals responded to the online survey.

### **Motivations and expectations in attending the training**

- 1.4 There is widespread acknowledgement of the importance of corporate parenting and for Elected Members, council staff and others to have a clear understanding of their role as corporate parents. That said, in some areas, a significant number of Elected Members have not yet undergone this training.
- 1.5 There is a need for a clear lead from the Chief Executive's office to encourage attendance at training sessions. There were some calls for mandatory attendance for all Elected Members.
- 1.6 In general, those who attended the training sessions did so because of an interest or involvement in Looked After Children, although some also attended because of an involvement in the training.
- 1.7 For individuals with some prior knowledge in this area, the training reinforced learning. Those attending and with little or no prior knowledge, felt they had learnt a lot.

### **Recall of the training**

- 1.8 Recall of the training was limited for some respondents who had attended training almost two years ago.
- 1.9 The purpose of the training was perceived to be to raise awareness of the issues facing looked after children and the role played by corporate parents. The training was seen as having achieved this aim.
- 1.10 The two elements of the training programme recalled universally by respondents were the presentation by a care leaver employed by Who Cares?

Scotland, and the film clips of discussions with young people. Recall of other elements of the training was higher among those who had attended training more recently.

1.11 Almost all the online survey respondents felt the training reflected local issues and priorities.

### **Impact of the training**

1.12 The findings of the online survey show that awareness of their role in corporate parenting increased due to the training, the highest level of increase was among Elected Members. A large majority of these respondents also felt the information covered by the training was just enough. Qualitative respondents also found the training useful and most perceived this to be most useful for Elected Members or individuals with little or no knowledge or experience of corporate parenting.

1.13 Key elements of the training were the presentation by a care leaver and the video clips that were shown. Many of the respondents were previously unaware of the issues facing looked after children.

1.14 The provision of examples of good practice, illustrated by case studies, is also perceived to be an important element of the training programme. Respondents want to know what works elsewhere and whether it can be applied in their own area. Who Cares? Scotland are perceived to be in an ideal position to provide this information as they can provide a national picture.

1.15 The training is perceived to fit with national policy. While not all respondents were au fait with the names of initiatives such as the Changing Lives Agenda, they were aware of – and agreed with – the principles on which these are based.

1.16 The training is seen to:

- Increase awareness of the issues and challenges faced by looked after children.
- Raise awareness of the corporate parenting responsibilities of respondents and their organisation.
- Help craft a culture around the need to normalise experiences for looked after children.

1.17 The training has had a number of impacts and these include:

- Formal and informal sharing of information with colleagues, although there is little sharing of information outwith their own area.
- Higher levels of advocacy and support for looked after children.
- Help for looked after children in accessing training / modern apprenticeships.
- Annual award scheme.
- Development of in-house materials and training sessions.
- Involving more community partners in corporate parenting.

- 1.18 The online survey shows that some of those who have not yet changed their practice, intend to do so.
- 1.19 Some non-Elected Members had received training on corporate parenting from other sources, although this was seen as complementary to the training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.

### **Who Cares? Scotland**

1.20 Most of the qualitative respondents viewed Who Cares? Scotland positively, in terms of the content of their training, the way it is delivered and the presenters. Respondents identified a number of key advantages to Who Cares? Scotland in their delivery of the training programme and these included:

- Offering flexibility in their delivery of the training programme.
- Offering a national perspective and providing both local and national data.
- Being in a good position to provide details of good practice, case studies and exemplars; and to discuss how these could be applied or modified in other areas.
- Having the ability to tap into established networks with looked after children and care leavers to include their views in the training.
- Being unbiased and independent, and experts in corporate parenting and the issues facing looked after children today.
- Providing additional publicity / training materials.
- Getting involved in further post-training work.

### **Future delivery**

1.21 Almost all of the qualitative respondents participating in this evaluation felt there was value in this training and that it should continue to be delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.

1.22 These respondents perceived Elected Members to be a priority audience for this training, although a wide range of other audiences were also noted by both qualitative and online respondents. These included:

- Staff within the police and fire & rescue services.
- Teaching and support staff, particularly those involved in pastoral care and guidance, in schools who may have very little contact with looked after children but who nonetheless need to be able to understand the issues relating to them.
- Staff within further and higher education, particularly those involved in pastoral care and guidance, who may have very little contact with looked after children but who also need to be able to understand the issues relating to them.
- Students training to become social workers / teachers.
- Individuals on the periphery of social work / education / healthcare who might occasionally come into contact with looked after children e.g. GPs.
- Foster parents / potential foster parents.
- Community partnership groups.
- Third sector / voluntary groups who have an involvement with children and young people e.g. those offering children's community services.
- Employers.

- 1.23 Respondents identified a number of elements they perceived to be essential to the training and these included:
- Information tailored to their local area and set in the context of national information.
  - Inclusion of a looked after child; ideally one from the local area.
  - Provision of good practice, case studies, exemplars, with critiques / suggested modifications.
  - Updates on any changes in the area of corporate parenting.
- 1.24 While the depth of coverage was perceived to be right for Elected Members and those with little or no experience of corporate parenting, there were some suggestions that the depth of information is not enough for individuals already working with looked after children. These individuals would welcome more in-depth training, including more information on good practice and case studies.
- 1.25 There is a need to ensure flexibility in the delivery of this programme because of the logistical issues facing Elected Members in attending training sessions. There is also a need for data to be up-to-date and continually updated.
- 1.26 There are some suggestions for additional roles that could be adopted by Who Cares? Scotland and these include:
- Setting up events across local authorities, for example, sharing good practice events.
  - Adopting an intermediary role, helping councils and partner organisations to network.
  - Setting up a central web-based resource identifying examples of good practice and case studies, along with ideas for how good practice can be adapted or improved upon.

## **Conclusions**

- 1.27 Corporate parenting was seen as an important issue by respondents participating in this evaluation and respondents were positive about the Corporate Parenting training programme delivered by Who Cares? Scotland. Most of those who have attended the training are positive and there is a perception that the training should be rolled out to a wider audience in a second phase.
- 1.28 Results from the qualitative research and the online survey show there have been a number of positive impacts of the training to date, and the online survey shows that awareness of different aspects of corporate parenting rose after the training had been delivered.
- 1.29 There are a number of key elements to be incorporated in this training programme, including the personal experiences of a looked after child, the provision of local and national data and examples of good practice and case studies.
- 1.30 One key advantage for Who Cares? Scotland is their capacity to provide a national overview, and there were some suggestions that Who Cares? Scotland

could adopt a proactive role in facilitating networking opportunities and running conferences / meetings across local authorities. This is of particular relevance, given that there appears to be relatively limited sharing of information to date.

- 1.31 Qualitative and quantitative respondents were positive about this training and felt this should continue to be delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.
- 1.32 In summary, the evidence gathered in this evaluation notes the importance of tailoring training to the needs of the audience. If training is to be extended to a wider range of individuals, their informational requirements will need to be considered. There is also a requirement for continued flexibility in terms of when training is delivered and for working closely with LA contacts to ensure training delivered meets the needs of those who are attending.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Background

- 1.1 There are over 16,000 children and young people being looked after by local authorities in Scotland. This includes children and young people who live at home with parents under supervision, and those who live away from home with foster or kinship carers, in residential care homes, residential schools or secure units.
- 1.2 Corporate parenting is described as: “The formal partnership needed between all local authority departments and services and associated agencies, which are responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children and young people” (We Can And Must Do Better: Scottish Executive, January 2007).
- 1.3 The Scottish Government (SG) is committed to ensuring that corporate parents are provided with the necessary help and advice to ensure they can meet the needs and aspirations of the children they look after.
- 1.4 Since 2010 the Scottish Government has been funding Who Cares? Scotland to develop and deliver a national corporate parenting training programme. The aim of the programme is to raise awareness among corporate parents about their responsibilities so they can improve the support they give to young people in and leaving care.
- 1.5 To date, Who Cares? Scotland have delivered 66 training sessions to over 1,300 participants, including over 400 Elected Members and over 70 health board directors. This training course is due to complete in March 2013. There is the potential for a second phase of this training programme which, if commissioned, would have a focus on officials within the wider public sector (eg those in the police, health services, voluntary agencies).
- 1.6 The Scottish Government commissioned an independent evaluation of the National Corporate Parenting training programme, with a focus on the impact of the programme to date. Specific key objectives for the evaluation were to:
  - Evaluate the impact of the training programme on attendees in terms of any increase in awareness of their role as corporate parents, their responsibilities and duties as corporate parents, and their understanding of the experience of looked after children in their area.
  - Assess the impact of the training provided; its value / usefulness; changes within their organisation as a result of the training.
  - Explore how the training has been used in their area and what changes this has brought about to looked after children in their area.
  - Ascertain how well the training programme has delivered on the expected outputs and outcomes.
  - Consider the overall impact of the programme.
  - Consider the perceived value of a second phase of the programme, together with how it would be delivered, who it would be delivered to and what it would cover.

This report presents the findings from a qualitative and online quantitative evaluation carried out by Why Research between December 2012 and February 2013.

## Methodology

- 1.7 Two strands of research were conducted: qualitative face-to-face or telephone discussions with individuals who had participated in the training; and a short online survey. The qualitative work took place between December 2012 and February 2013. The online survey was conducted in January 2013. Copies of the topic guide and online questionnaire have been appended to this report.
- 1.8 **Qualitative** research took the form of focus groups, mini-focus groups, face-to-face in-depth interviews and in-depth telephone interviews. A number of local authorities were approached with a request to participate in this evaluation. These were selected to provide a geographic spread and ensure a mix of city, urban and rural authorities. Of the eight who were contacted, four were unable to help with this evaluation; either because of time restrictions or because the training had taken place prior to the last election, where significant numbers of Elected Members who had attended the training were then not re-elected. Four different local authority areas were selected: Glasgow; Dumfries and Galloway; Renfrewshire and Edinburgh. Who Cares? Scotland provided copies of the training materials used for reference as prompts during the face-to-face discussions.
- 1.9 The Scottish Government facilitated contact with the person who had organised the Who Cares? Scotland training in each area. These contacts either provided the names of those who had attended corporate parenting training sessions to Why Research for recruitment, or arranged discussions for the researchers with Elected Members, partners and others who had attended the training.
- 1.10 The original plan was to include a small number of non-attendees (Elected Members and others who had **not** attended the training) in the overall sample to provide a comparator group. However, because in most instances lists of attendees were not directly available to Why Research, it was not possible to make contact with non-attendees to recruit them to attend discussions.
- 1.11 The following table shows the sample of qualitative respondents:

**Table 1.1: Qualitative sample**

Area	Training session(s) held	Elected Members	Others
Dumfries and Galloway	March and May 2011	5	7
Glasgow	May and June 2011	6	-
Renfrewshire	2011 and November 2012	-	4
Edinburgh	2011 and December 2012	-	3
<b>Total Number of respondents</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>

- 1.12 The **quantitative** research was conducted by way of a short online survey. Contacts in every area in which training had taken place were asked to

disseminate the link to the survey to those who had taken part in a training session.

1.13 Questions were mainly closed, tick box, questions, although respondents were given the opportunity to comment further on the training if they wished to do so.

1.14 A total of 58 respondents replied to the survey; however 4 of these had not attended a training session and therefore did not continue through the survey. Table 1.2 shows the profile of the 54 respondents who had attended one of the sessions and who completed the questionnaire in full.

**Table 1.2 Quantitative sample**

Area	Elected Member	Senior staff	Frontline staff	Other	TOTAL
East Renfrewshire	-	-	-	1	1
Edinburgh	3	4	1	2	10
Fife	3	1	-	-	4
Glasgow	5	-	-	-	5
North Ayrshire	-	-	-	1	1
North Lanarkshire	-	2	-	-	2
Renfrewshire	-	1	-	2	3
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	1	-	-	-	1
NHS Fife	4	4	-	1	9
NHS Highland	2	-	-	1	3
NHS Lanarkshire	-	1	-	-	1
NHS Lothian	-	3	2	1	6
NHS Shetland	-	1	-	-	1
Other (e.g. CELCIS or one of Scotland's colleges)	-	1	-	6	7
<b>Total Number of respondents</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>54</b>

1.15 Respondents in the „Other“ group in the table above include central government staff and staff from colleges or from other agencies such as Skills Development Scotland.

1.16 Respondents participating in the online survey were also asked their role in relation to looked after children and the majority were at a strategic or policy level. A full breakdown was:

- Policy context: 26
- Strategic / financial decision making / planning: 17
- Point of contact decision making / planning: 1
- Face to face / frontline involvement: 3
- Other: 7

1.17 Most online respondents (43 from 54) remembered the sessions as lasting between one and two hours or two to three hours. Most (45 out of 54) felt the time commitment was just enough, although two felt it was too much and five not enough. Two respondents did not reply at this question.

1.18 The following chapters present the findings from the qualitative interviews and the online survey and examine the motivations and expectations of those

attending the training sessions, views of the training, the impact of the training and future delivery of the training programme.

## **2 MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS IN ATTENDING THE TRAINING**

### **The Importance of Corporate Parenting**

2.1 All the qualitative respondents acknowledged the importance of corporate parenting and felt it is important for Elected Members (EMs), council staff and staff within partnership organisations to have a clear understanding of their role as corporate parents, what this entails and the issues likely to be facing looked after children. While the training was aimed primarily at EMs, one council employee commented,

“We expanded our training session to Community Planning Partners as well as Elected Members because we felt the corporate parenting was more than just about the councillors being trained. It’s everyone’s responsibility and we wanted to bring in partners who had never been trained in corporate parenting. We wanted to raise awareness amongst our partners that it’s equally their responsibility as well.”

2.2 From the discussions to date, it would appear that it is important for there to be a clear lead from the Chief Executive’s office to encourage attendance at corporate parenting training sessions. Respondents in each participating local authority noted their councils place importance on corporate parenting. That said, attendance at some of the training sessions was lower than originally expected. One respondent commented that corporate parenting reaches across all departments of their authority, as well as having support from their Convenor. This means corporate parenting has a Council-wide agenda.

2.3 There were some comments during the discussions that the small numbers of Elected Members and staff attending training sessions suggest that a significant number of individuals placed less importance than is ideal on their role as corporate parents. However, one respondent, who had commented on the relatively low numbers of EMs attending the training sessions they had run, felt this was attributable to „training fatigue“ rather than a lack of interest in corporate parenting itself. They noted that EMs have a lot of calls on their time and may often have to make choices about which meetings to attend.

### **Motivations to attend the training**

2.4 All the EMs who attended a training session chose to do so because corporate parenting was an area they were interested or involved in; for example, involvement in the social work committee or the education committee. They wanted to keep up to date with any information about looked after children, obtain ideas about good practice and what is being implemented (and works) elsewhere. They felt they should learn all they could about corporate parenting and looked after children.

2.5 Some respondents in Dumfries & Galloway commented that the training session was not very well attended. They were aware that all EMs had been invited to attend but only a small number turned up on the day. Those who did

attend felt it should be compulsory for all EMs to attend a training course like this, within a few months of being elected.

- 2.6 Council staff and staff from partnership organisations had mixed reasons for attending the Who Cares? Scotland training. Some attended because of a desire to gain information on corporate parenting and their role in providing corporate parenting to looked after children in their area. Some other staff attended primarily because they had been involved in the set-up of the training, and / or were there to help answer any questions and / or give a presentation on the day.

### **Expectations from the training**

- 2.7 Across all those attending, previous knowledge of corporate parenting and issues relating to looked after children varied. Most of the EMs and a small number of council staff and community partners had little or no knowledge of this group. Some of the council staff and community partners already worked with looked after children and had a relatively good understanding of the issues they face. Some of the non-EMs did not expect to learn much on the day as the training was targeted primarily at EMs.
- 2.8 There were some comments that there should be separate training for EMs and for other staff: "I think for Elected Members it should be at a separate session, because our responsibilities are different from staff."
- 2.9 While numbers attending may have been lower than expected, the qualitative findings show that some of the council staff and community partners came along to the day expecting to learn something that could be shared with colleagues. Those who attended because they had been involved in the set-up of the training, and / or were there to help answer any questions and / or give a presentation on the day generally felt their existing awareness and understanding had been reinforced, rather than extending their knowledge of corporate parenting.

In summary, there is widespread acknowledgement of the importance of corporate parenting and for Elected Members, council staff and others to have a clear understanding of their role as corporate parents. That said, in some areas, a significant number of Elected Members have not yet undergone this training.

There is a need for a clear lead from the Chief Executive's Office to encourage attendance at training sessions. There were some calls for compulsory attendance for all Elected Members.

By and large, the Elected Members and other individuals who attended this training, did so because of an interest or involvement in Looked After Children; although some respondents attended because of an involvement in the training.

For individuals with some prior knowledge in this area, the training reinforced learning. Those attending with little or no prior knowledge, felt they had learnt a lot.

### 3 RECALL OF THE TRAINING

- 3.1 Some of the qualitative respondents had been to training as far back as early 2011, and Renfrewshire and Edinburgh were the only areas that had training more recently in 2012. Thus, some respondents were being asked to recall something that was relatively historic and, perhaps not surprisingly, recall of specific elements of the training was relatively low.
- 3.2 All those who attended the training remembered having done so; and its format as well as some specific elements of the sessions were recalled spontaneously. Most qualitative respondents remembered that the training had been delivered by Who Cares? Scotland. A respondent from Glasgow commented:
- “I thought it was quite effective because, despite the time lapse I remember bits of it very well”.
- 3.3 Recall that the training session had been delivered by Who Cares? Scotland was high among those who responded to the online survey. These respondents were asked „Did you attend a Corporate Parenting training session delivered by Who Cares? Scotland?“, and 52 said „yes“. Two respondents recalled attending a corporate parenting training session but were not aware it was delivered by Who Cares? Scotland“ and four respondents said they were unable to attend the training session.
- 3.4 Across the qualitative respondents, there were two elements of the training sessions that stood out. The first was the young person who helped deliver the training from Who Cares? Scotland and who had himself been looked after. This presenter was able to talk from a personal perspective of someone who had direct experience of corporate parenting in two or three different local authority areas. His element of the training was described as „powerful“ and „thought provoking“ and was viewed by all as a very positive element of the training session. As one Glasgow EM put it:
- “We get papers sent to us, telling what“s going on in care homes and so on, but if you see a human being telling you about their lives it makes all the difference.”
- 3.5 Given the unanimous recall of the care leaver employed by Who Cares? Scotland who presented part of the session, it is perhaps not surprising that his part of the presentation was most highly regarded. However, while appreciating that it is not always possible to find a local young person who is willing to participate in a presentation, some respondents would have liked to hear from someone who was from their own area, rather than a different local authority. While they noted the points he was making and felt it was a powerful message, they felt that some of the issues he had faced in Aberdeen and Ayrshire were different to those facing looked after children in their own area.
- 3.6 The other element remembered by most of the qualitative respondents was the video / film clips they were shown. This contained interviews with looked after children, where they considered a wide range of topics including managing finances, moving to their own accommodation, education and the police. In

areas where the training was tailored to the area, the video was also described as a powerful element of the training.

- 3.7 While the presentation delivered by Who Cares? Scotland delivered statistical information in terms of the numbers of looked after children, many respondents did not remember this, although some spontaneously commented that they would like to be provided with more detail and figures, particularly at a local level. In Glasgow, EMs felt that it would be useful to see local and national statistics “comparison statistics would be useful”.
- 3.8 This view was also backed up by results from the online survey. Respondents were asked „Did you feel that the training reflected local issues and priorities?“ and 16 said „Yes, completely“, 33 said „Yes, to an extent“, three said „no“ and two did not reply.
- 3.9 In Glasgow, there had been some discussion about the wording of a pledge which Who Cares? Scotland suggested could be signed. Respondents were mainly happy with this part of the session and reported that the pledge had been signed at a public event. This pledge set out how EMs could become more effective corporate parents and to ensure they give looked after children and young people a fair chance in life. Examples of three of these pledges are provided in an appendix to this report. Several local authorities have given similar undertakings and these pledges include objectives such as listening to young people, combating myths around looked after children, promoting positive outcomes and providing quality services.
- 3.10 Among the qualitative respondents, the highest recall of other elements of the corporate parenting training session was from respondents in Renfrewshire and Edinburgh who had attended recent training sessions. These respondents recalled:
  - The introduction where there was information on the different types of looked after children
  - Provision of the definition of corporate parenting
  - A quote from Socrates noting the problems of the „youth of today“
  - Statistical information on the national and local perspective
  - Some examples of good practice.
- 3.11 Across all respondents, the purpose of the training was seen as being to raise awareness of the issues facing looked after children today and the role played by corporate parents. Positively, the training was seen as having achieved this.
- 3.12 EMs in Glasgow reported that the sessions had sparked discussions about whether the EMs needed to know the names of every looked after child in their ward or whether “you have to be aware of the strategic and policy making position that you’re in”. While this discussion is still on-going, EMs felt that just by having the discussion it has served to increase awareness of the looked after children in the area and of EM’s responsibilities.
- 3.13 One key question asked by Who Cares? Scotland when talking about the life of a looked after child and the issues facing them was “would this be acceptable if

this was your child?” Respondents felt this was a thought provoking question because it moved the issues of looked after children to a more personal level and made them consider the points being made in relation to what they would want for their own child.

In summary, recall of the training programme was limited for some respondents who had attended training almost two years ago.

The purpose of the training was perceived to be to raise awareness of the issues facing looked after children today and the role played by corporate parents. The training was seen as having achieved this aim.

The two elements of the training programme that were recalled universally by respondents were the presentation by a care leaver and the film clips of discussions with young people. Respondents would like to hear more from looked after children in their own area. Recall of other elements of the training was higher among those who had attended more recently.

Almost all online survey respondents felt the training reflected local issues and priorities.

## 4 IMPACT OF THE TRAINING

- 4.1 In order to understand the extent to which the training helped to raise awareness of their role in corporate parenting, all respondents participating in the online survey were asked to give a rating for this before and after the training. This was based on a scale of one to ten where one meant "very little understanding" and ten meant „complete understanding“.
- 4.2 The average rating of awareness before the training was **5.69** and this rose to **8.12** after the training. Table 4.1 shows Elected Members are the sub-group with the highest level of change before and after the training. Least levels of change were from frontline staff, which is perhaps not surprising given that these individuals are likely to be working with looked after children and already have an understanding of corporate parenting responsibilities.

**Table 4.1 Changes in average awareness of role in relation to corporate parenting before and after the training**

Area	Elected Member (Base: 18)	Senior Staff (Base: 18)	Frontline staff (Base: 3)	Other (Base: 15)	Overall average (Base:54)
Before training	5.11	5.94	7.33	5.73	<b>5.69</b>
After training	7.73	8.40	9.00	8.10	<b>8.12</b>
<b>CHANGE</b>	<b>+2.62</b>	<b>+2.46</b>	<b>+1.67</b>	<b>+2.37</b>	<b>+2.43</b>

- 4.3 In terms of the information covered, almost all of the online respondents (48 of 54) said it was just enough; two respondents said it was too much, three said not enough and one did not reply to this question.
- 4.4 Most of the qualitative respondents felt the training was useful, although the general consensus was that it is most useful for newly elected EMs and other individuals who have little or no knowledge of corporate parenting, their responsibilities as corporate parents and the many issues impacting on looked after children. Some of the non-EMs already working in this area felt the training did not provide enough depth of information, albeit some felt the training was worthwhile, even if its primary role was seen as reinforcing existing knowledge and understanding. One individual in a community planning partnership noted,

“I think their general awareness raising approach was good. They are letting people know about the issues. It was a very powerful presentation.”

- 4.5 One council official also noted that this training helps to reinforce and sustain knowledge of, and involvement in, corporate parenting. In Glasgow, one EM commented “It has been effective in raising awareness and at the time it was useful, but in the committees I’m on it’s not been an issue”. Nevertheless, all respondents felt that the training was very useful and suggested that it should perhaps be mandatory for new EMs. One commented:

“I think this should be one of the mandatory training things that all Elected Members should have to go to. Because we are responsible for those young people .... perhaps every three years there should be

refresher training to bring us up to date with any new legislation, any changes, and also new trains of thought that are possibly coming through, and to get other young people again to come in and speak to us to see if there have been any differences during that time.”

### **Use of looked after children as part of the training**

4.6 We have already noted that recall of the looked after children who constituted part of the presentation was universal among qualitative respondents. In Dumfries & Galloway and Glasgow one care leaver had presented part of the training, although in Renfrewshire and Edinburgh, the training had involved a care leaver from Who Cares? Scotland who had experience of care in other local authorities and a looked after young person from their own area.

4.7 This element of the training was praised for bringing a very powerful message and being thought provoking. One EM commented that what particularly stuck in the memory was the presentation and DVD:

“The young man that came and spoke to us, very much from the heart, and was asking us to listen to his experience because he felt that he could reflect the views of many young people that were going through the system. For me that was one of the things, that he was asking „please listen to what was being said“ and that actually the young people that are in our care know better than we do and that we should be listening to them and changing the way that we deliver some of the services to them.”

4.8 In Renfrewshire in particular where two looked after children had been involved in the training, this was particularly praised for the debate it raised about the experiences of these two young people and the way in which this provided information on a personal level. As one respondent noted,

“The human element was a key focus for me and the film clips were important. They had a care leaver from Who Cares? Scotland who presented .... and a local young girl who was looked after. They debated with each other. It was good as they were sharing their own experiences in a public arena. It was good having a bit of both. The audience were captivated by that and it generated a lot of discussion.”

### **Use of video / film clips**

4.9 Almost all respondents recalled being shown videos or film clips of interviews with looked after children and this was seen as another powerful element of the training session. Some respondents commented that hearing about their experiences directly from the young people themselves brought these points across more strongly. One respondent recalled a care leaver who had moved into new accommodation and was having to take responsibility for managing a household budget, paying bills, understanding household appliances and so on. This respondent commented

“We wouldn’t expect our own children to be able to move out of a residential unit and into a home of their own at 16 and be able to cope,

so why do we expect it of a looked after child? If anything, they are more vulnerable than some 16 year olds and we need to ensure they are properly prepared for changes and that the support is there to help them”.

4.10 An EM commented,

“I remembered the film about the youngsters, and particularly the bit about girls going into housing on their own; taking up tenancies and having to cope with that and being on their own.”

4.11 Another EM commented about the sharp disconnect between being considered a child and then suddenly at the age of 16 being told „you“re on your own now”.

4.12 An individual from a community planning partnership noted that they had not been aware of many of the issues facing looked after children today and the level of support they needed: “the fact that you are hearing directly from a looked after child reinforces the awareness raising message that they are bringing to us”.

4.13 One senior council official noted that the biggest impact was in dispelling the myth of why young people are in the situation they are in and that there can be diverse reasons for this; as well as the duty that they and colleagues have in protecting, supporting and advocating for young people.

### **Provision of good practice**

4.14 Qualitative respondents were interested in hearing about good practice elsewhere, what works and what does not work and what might be relevant to their own area. Case studies illustrating the good practice are also perceived to be an essential element of the training programme<sup>1</sup>. Respondents who had attended training sessions in 2011, felt there had been little delivery of good practice, case studies and so on, although this may be partly due to when the training was delivered as respondents from Renfrewshire had a better recollection of some examples of good practice as part of the training session. One example mentioned by two of the respondents was from Inverclyde Council which has introduced a Children’s Champion Scheme that has now been adopted across some other local authorities.

4.15 While some qualitative respondents recollected examples of good practice, some would have liked to have more examples provided. Who Cares? Scotland is seen to be in a good position to provide examples of good practice across local authorities in Scotland because it is a national organisation with contacts across all local authority areas. Additionally, respondents felt that a national organisation should have a good understanding of what is working in other areas and how this might be modified or applied in other local authorities.

4.16 While there were a couple of comments that what works in one local authority will not translate to another, most respondents felt that good practice can work

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<sup>1</sup> At all training sessions, local officers have delivered a presentation on their own good practice. At training sessions prior to December 2011 no examples of national good practice were delivered.

across different areas, albeit that slight changes to its application may be required.

- 4.17 Where information on good practice is delivered, this is sometimes shared formally with colleagues and sometimes informally with colleagues, although some respondents had not shared this with anyone. A small number of respondents noted that they had run training sessions for colleagues or had informal discussions about good practice and what might work in their organisation. There were also some who were keen for Who Cares? Scotland to deliver further training in their area.
- 4.18 While there is a degree of formal and informal information sharing within local authorities, there appears to be very little contact with individuals in other local authorities, so there is little sharing of information across different areas. So, Who Cares? Scotland are perceived to be important in that they offer a national perspective and can provide examples of good practice that otherwise would not be readily available.
- 4.19 A very small number of senior council officials noted that sharing good practice is something that might be discussed with colleagues in other authorities. In Glasgow, EMs thought that good practice is shared amongst staff across various local authorities, and that it would also be useful if this could happen with EMs; there was a suggestion that Who Cares? Scotland could facilitate this. In another area, a respondent noted that senior staff attending the training have shared what was learnt with colleagues, so that for example, their housing department now gives more consideration to looked after children when they are moving into their own accommodation.
- 4.20 In relation to whether EMs across local authorities should share good practice, one commented: "I think it could and should be. For politicians it's a little bit more tricky. Anything that helps us ask officers awkward questions."

#### **Fit with national policy and national initiatives**

- 4.21 Most qualitative respondents did not recall whether the presentation included information on national policy or national initiatives such as GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) or the Changing Lives Agenda. However, most qualitative respondents were aware of the fit between national policy and the issues raised in the training session. Certainly all were aware of GIRFEC, and supportive of initiatives that help improve the lives of Scottish people, although some were unaware of the names of other initiatives. So for example, in theory all qualitative respondents were supportive of the Changing Lives Agenda but were not necessarily aware of this by name.
- 4.22 One EM felt that the balance was good: "I felt it put what we were doing in the national context. It did talk about national initiatives but not overly so. Naturally as local councillors our focus is on the locale but we need to understand that we are working within parameters set by the high heid-yins."

## After the training

- 4.23 For the qualitative respondents who came to the session knowing little or nothing about corporate parenting, this training did (at least to an extent):
- Increase awareness of the issues and challenges faced by looked after children.
  - Raise awareness of the corporate parenting responsibilities of respondents and their local authority / health board / community partnership / organisation.
  - Help to craft a culture around the need to normalise the experiences for looked after children.
- 4.24 In Dumfries & Galloway and Glasgow there was less of an impact in terms of highlighting good practice, and some respondents would have liked more of a focus on what is working well in other areas and how this might be applied in their own area. However, some EMs said they have given more consideration to changes in policy as a result of this training, or requested information on looked after children and what was being done in the area to help improve their lives. A senior council official noted that EMs had shown a much higher level of advocacy for these children than they would have done previously.
- 4.25 One respondent in Dumfries & Galloway noted that they had held a series of discussions with looked after young people to ascertain what help was needed in helping to find employment. A system had then been instigated whereby they were able to help set up interviews for modern apprenticeship applications; another noted that the local police and fire & rescue services had provided work experience for looked after young people.
- 4.26 Respondents in Glasgow reported that they had introduced an annual award ceremony for looked after children and care leavers. In addition, an EM also commented: “For me it was about the destinations of the children that were in our care and whether, where they were going. As a result of some of the discussions that we had at the committee meeting and then with the leader of the council it was decided that more places on our modern apprentice scheme would be made available to our young people in care, so that those numbers were increased to give them a better opportunity to get into employment. Because some of the statistics that were coming through in relation to the destinations we were quite concerned about.”
- 4.27 Some respondents in Renfrewshire have delivered training sessions internally to colleagues which have been very useful. One noted,
- “I have also talked to some colleagues about their role as corporate parents and slowly the message is getting through. The presentation from Who Cares? Scotland did flag up that there are quite a lot of issues and they must be aware of them.”
- 4.28 Respondents in Edinburgh noted the importance of including young people in their work so that their views can be incorporated in any planning. Additionally, existing networks have been utilised to ensure greater involvement across a wide range of partner organisations.

4.29 A respondent from a further education college has identified looked after young people and care leavers within his college so that they can be offered help and support (financial, emotional etc.) when needed.

4.30 Respondents participating in the online survey were asked: „Since the training, have you put anything that you learned into practice?“ As can be seen in table 4.2, 20 said they had, 20 said „Not yet, but intend to in the next 12 months“ and 14 said no. This pattern was the same across all respondent sub-groups.

**Table 4.2 Whether put training into practice**

Area	Elected Member (Base: 18)	Senior Staff (Base: 18)	Frontline staff (Base: 3)	Other (Base: 15)	Total (Base:54)
Yes	6	7	1	6	20
Not yet	6	8	1	5	20
No	6	3	1	4	14

4.31 Online respondents were given the opportunity to expand on their answer to this question and 25 chose to do so. The main themes to emerge from comments were:

- Eight commented on changes to, or proposed changes or other impact on, policy, practice or priorities.
- Six said in-house materials in relation to corporate parenting or further training to be delivered in-house were being developed.
- Five said the training had raised awareness.
- Four respondents said they were looking into improvements such as communication channels with looked after children, additional funding, developing local performance indicators.
- Four commented that they had not yet had a chance to put training into practice.
- Three commented on involving partners.
- Two commented on other areas they would like covered or which they intended to explore further.

4.32 Encouragingly, when asked if they had shared their experiences informally with colleagues, a majority of online respondents said this was the case.

**Table 4.3 Sharing experiences**

Area	Elected Member (Base: 18)	Senior Staff (Base: 18)	Frontline staff (Base: 3)	Other (Base: 15)	Total (Base:54)
Yes formally	3	1	1	2	7
Yes informally	9	13	1	11	34
No	6	4	1	2	13

4.33 In Glasgow, an EM had talked to many other colleagues: “I was actively encouraging others, or would say to other Elected Members, have you been to this training? I think you should go because the training is good. It certainly highlights again to you the difficulties some of our young people face and I was actively encouraging other Elected Members to go along to it”.

4.34 The results from the online survey also demonstrate that levels of awareness in relation to a number of aspects of corporate parenting have increased, with only very small numbers claiming that the training sessions had no effect on raising awareness of each of these issues. As Table 4.4 shows, almost all respondents claim their awareness has increased either a lot or a little in relation to:

- The issues and challenges faced by looked after children in their area
- Good practice in relation to looked after children
- The Corporate Parenting responsibility of their organisation
- Their own role in relation to corporate parenting

Table 4.4 Impact on awareness of ....

Area	Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change
The issues and challenges faced by Looked After Children in your area.	29	22	3
The Corporate Parenting responsibility of your organisation	22	26	6
Your own role in relation to Corporate Parenting	14	34	6
Good practice in relation to Looked After Children	27	25	2

4.35 While the corporate parenting training from Who Cares? Scotland was aimed primarily at EMs, qualitative respondents in other organisations such as NHS or council officials who attended the training felt they benefitted from it; and there were also some spontaneous comments that other individuals could benefit from this training. We have already noted that some of those who attended the training have subsequently shared this with colleagues. In Glasgow, however, the training was seen as of most use to EMs as staff had access to other forms of training.

4.36 Some of the respondents felt that the training is suitable for EMs or individuals with little or no understanding of looked after children, but that it lacks depth for individuals who already work in this area or have a good understanding of the issues they face.

### **Comparisons with other training on corporate parenting**

4.37 None of the EMs had received training on corporate parenting from any other sources, although some other qualitative respondents had. Some staff in Dumfries & Galloway (not EMs) had been to other sessions on corporate parenting, although these were people with looked after children. One of them commented on a previous training session from the Scottish Executive which he remembered as being called “Learning with Care” which he thought had been very good and pitched at his level of experience and involvement with looked after children; offering more depth than the training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland. That said, all the qualitative respondents felt that the training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland was pitched at the right level with the right amount of content for EMs.

4.38 Qualitative respondents in Glasgow commented that anyone who wanted more information had access to specialist staff within the Council. These

respondents also felt that an independent organisation was best placed to deliver the training.

“We’ve got good staff who could do this kind of thing but actually Who Cares? Scotland, because they are so day-in and day-out working as advocates to some extent, I just think they have that level of independence and they can come to us and it was kind of fresh”.

4.39 There have also been some other knock-on impacts from the initial training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland. Following on from this training, some respondents in Renfrewshire had joined a Corporate Parenting Group run by the authority in order to obtain further information and become more involved in this area. This group was seen to be different and complementary to the training offered by Who Cares? Scotland in that it provides a platform for meeting others involved in corporate parenting and provides opportunities to work with community partners.

4.40 Online respondents were asked „Have you received Corporate Parenting training from any other source(s)?” and ten said that they had. Most of these respondents said that the training had been delivered in-house. When asked how this training compared with that provided by Who Cares? Scotland, five said it compared favourably, four said „about the same” and one said unfavourably.

4.41 One or two respondents commented on meetings they had been to that had been run by CELCIS (Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland)<sup>2</sup>. In general, training run by CELCIS was perceived to complement training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland; Who Cares? Scotland provide training from a practical perspective while CELCIS deliver training at a more academic and statistical level. As one respondent noted,

“They (CELCIS) are quite good at giving you some statistics and that’s quite useful. CELCIS is more about statistics, they do lots of research and produce lots of statistics ... there was too much information there for me at my level .... But it’s useful to go along and see what they have to say.”

4.42 While not directly related to the training offered by Who Cares? Scotland, some respondents noted initiatives in their area aimed at improving the lives of young people that could be used as examples of good practice that could benefit looked after children. For example, in Renfrewshire there is an initiative called Fire Reach<sup>3</sup> which has been aimed at young people who are struggling at school. As one respondent noted, this type of initiative is likely to be used by looked after children as they are more likely to struggle at school.

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<sup>2</sup> CELCIS facilitates collaboration across partnerships to improve outcomes for looked after children through the provision of services to stakeholders at practice, operational and strategic levels.

<sup>3</sup> The purpose of Fire Reach is to provide training and development opportunities for young people, principally through Fire & Rescue Service related activities. Young people will be encouraged to make the most of their physical and mental capabilities to enable them to become more responsible, safer and caring members of their communities.

In summary, the online survey shows that respondents' awareness of their role in corporate parenting increased due to the training; the highest level of increase being among Elected Members. A large majority of these respondents also felt the information covered by the training was just enough. Qualitative respondents also found the training useful and most perceived this to be most useful for Elected Members or individuals with little or no knowledge or experience of corporate parenting.

Key elements of the training were the presentation by a care leaver and the video clips that were shown. Many of the respondents were previously unaware of the issues facing looked after children.

The provision of examples of good practice, illustrated by case studies, is also perceived to be an important element of the training programme. Respondents want to know what works elsewhere and whether it can be applied in their own area. Who Cares? Scotland are seen to be in an ideal position to provide this information as they have a national focus.

The training is perceived to fit with national policy. While not all respondents are au fait with the names of initiatives such as the Changing Lives Agenda, they are aware of – and agree with – the principles on which these are based.

The training is seen to:

- Increase awareness of the issues and challenges faced by looked after children.
- Raise awareness of the corporate parenting responsibilities of respondents and their organisation.
- Help to craft a culture around the need to normalise the experiences for looked after children.

The training has had a number of impacts and these include:

- Formal and informal sharing of information with colleagues, although there is little sharing of information outwith their own area.
- Higher levels of advocacy / support for looked after children.
- Help for looked after children in accessing training / modern apprenticeships.
- Annual award scheme.
- Development of in-house materials / training sessions.
- Involving more partners in corporate parenting.

The online survey shows that some of those who have not yet changed their practice intend to do so.

Some non-Elected Members had received training on corporate parenting from other sources, although this was seen to be complementary to the training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.

## 5 WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

- 5.1 In general, most of the qualitative respondents viewed Who Cares? Scotland positively, in terms of the content of their training and in the way it is delivered. There were comments from some respondents that Who Cares? Scotland is easy to approach, flexible and helpful. Indeed, one respondent noted that another training session is currently being planned for EMs. They are working in conjunction with the organisation to produce a condensed training session for EMs. In other local authorities, training has been delivered to EMs as an additional element on the agenda of its regular Council meeting.
- 5.2 Respondents rated the Who Cares? Scotland presenters highly, and were particularly positive about the inclusion of a care leaver as a presenter at the training.
- 5.3 Qualitative respondents noted a number of advantages in relation to Who Cares? Scotland delivering this training on corporate parenting. First and foremost, they bring a national perspective to the training that is not available within their local authority. While a key focus for respondents is the provision of local data, they also welcome national data and the provision of a national overview of corporate parenting. One respondent commented that not only do Who Cares? Scotland provide a national perspective but also the local view as they have contact with a range of different services and local service users which gives them a good knowledge of local issues in relation to looked after children.
- 5.4 Because Who Cares? Scotland has access to local authorities in Scotland, they are perceived to be in an ideal position to provide details of good practice, case studies and exemplars from other areas, and discuss ways in which this could be applied or modified in other authorities. Indeed, there were requests from some respondents for more coverage of good practice in other areas.
- 5.5 Who Cares? Scotland is also perceived to be in an ideal situation to introduce a young person to deliver some of the training session to provide their personal perspective as a looked after child. It was well received when the views of a looked after child from the local authority in which the training is being delivered were also included. Another advantage for the organisation is that they are independent and are perceived to deliver an unbiased training session.
- 5.6 Furthermore, because their role is to support looked after children, they are perceived to be an expert in the area of corporate parenting and the issues facing this group today. One respondent commented,
- “I certainly have got a lot out of what they offer and certainly some people [here] have thought it was fantastic. We’ve had a very unbelievably positive response from people here and if we were to do it again, I think there would be more people who would come along.”
- 5.7 Who Cares? Scotland have also provided publicity materials such as posters to some respondents to help increase awareness among others who have not attended a training session.

5.8 Anecdotal feedback suggests that the organisation also gets involved in additional work with local authorities as a follow on from the initial training. For example, a recent training session in Edinburgh has resulted in a request for help in developing a wallet card that explains Corporate Parenting for distribution to all council employees.

5.9 Who Cares? Scotland may also be undertaking other work in an authority such as offering advocacy services to children and young people. In one area, they facilitate a Young Person in Care Council which contributes to work being undertaken by the authority. As a council official noted, “they have contributed to the Plan by giving a young person’s voice to it”. So, their overall experience of working with young people is seen to be of benefit.

5.10 In Glasgow, the overall impact of the training was described:

“I dare say there were people before these courses who really wouldn’t have known what a corporate parent was. So if you get to the point that we understand that we have responsibilities, once you get to that point and people have got that in the back of their heads, it doesn’t matter if they have a day-to-day role or not, you’ve got that in the back of your head when you’re going about your business.”

In summary, most of the qualitative respondents viewed Who Cares? Scotland positively, in terms of the content of their training, the way it is delivered and the speakers.

Respondents identified a number of key advantages to Who Cares? Scotland in their delivery of the training programme and these included:

- Offering flexibility in their delivery of the training programme.
- Offering a national perspective and providing both local and national data.
- In a good position to provide details of good practice, case studies and exemplars; and to discuss how these could be applied or modified in other areas.
- Ability to tap into established networks with looked after children and care leavers to include their views in training.
- Perceived to be unbiased and independent; and an expert in corporate parenting and the issues facing looked after children today.
- Providing additional publicity / training materials.
- Getting involved in further post-training work.
- Their broader experience in their work with children and young people and the advantages this can bring to the perspective of corporate parenting.

## 6 OTHER COMMENTS

6.1 Online respondents were given the opportunity to provide any further comments or information or to expand on their answers and 24 did so.

6.2 Fifteen respondents provided positive comments on the session with seven of these again commenting on the involvement of young people in the presenting or in the videos.

“The ability to hear first-hand the experiences of young people, both those still involved and those who are now older, really brought the topic alive. Theories, policies and aims are all worthwhile but nothing can take the place of hearing from these youngsters. They were so good!” (EM)

6.3 Only two respondents made any negative comment; one who did not like training sessions in general and another who said: “We were a bit disappointed in the standard and professionalism of the training provided. The material used was out-dated and negative and did not represent the local picture. However, the DVD which was made was good and was appreciated .... too much time was taken with the national picture, this caused confusion for Elected Members. The feedback was much more positive from Elected Members when we did our own training with some local young people and our own staff.” (Senior Staff)

6.4 Most of the others commented generally on the training or on issues around awareness of looked after children in their area. For example:

“Unfortunately, as a Health Board Member, I find there can be a disconnect between awareness raising sessions such as this and strategic decision making in respect of policy and practice. Consequently I am not confident that, irrespective of the strengths or otherwise of the training provided, it will have much impact. This is an issue from many of the presentations we receive, not just that from Who Cares”. (Health Board Member)

“I have asked colleagues in a variety of departments, not only children and Families if they are aware that they are corporate parents and the response is typically that they did not know and don't know what it means for them as individuals”. (Senior Staff)

6.5 One qualitative respondent noted the impact of the personal approach adopted by Who Cares? Scotland. They had given consideration as to whether something like this training programme could be delivered by e-learning but on consideration felt this would be inappropriate because of the importance of the personal delivery by looked after children as part of the training programme.

6.6 Another qualitative respondent emphasised the need for Who Cares? Scotland to continue to deliver this training programme as local authorities do not have the resources to be able to deliver this training internally.

## 7 FUTURE DELIVERY

- 7.1 The first phase of the Corporate Parenting training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland will complete in March 2013, and the Scottish Government is currently considering the commissioning of a second phase of this training programme. If commissioned, this second phase of the National Training Programme would have a focus on officials within the wider public sector (eg those in the police, health services, voluntary agencies).
- 7.2 This chapter of the report outlines suggestions for changes to delivery of the training programme and ascertains which additional audiences would benefit from this.
- 7.3 Almost all the qualitative respondents participating in this evaluation felt there was value in this training and that it should continue to be delivered by Who Cares? Scotland . While there were suggestions from one or two respondents that this could be delivered by their authority, most respondents were supportive of the continued provision by Who Cares? Scotland because of the advantages outlined in the previous chapter. Furthermore, there were some queries as to whether local authorities have the resources to be able to deliver this training internally.
- 7.4 Training needs to be supported at a senior level in authorities and partner organisations. One or two respondents wondered if low attendance levels were partially attributable to a lack of support from senior staff.

### Audiences for the training programme

- 7.5 Given that there can be significant changes to EMs after an election, respondents continue to see EMs as a priority audience for the training and there were suggestions that this training programme should be made compulsory for all newly elected members within a few months of an election. Commenting on a lack of awareness among new councillors of their role as a corporate parents, an EM from Glasgow said: “I don’t think that as you come in as a new councillor that potentially you are aware of that”, they also said that “I think probably I would make it mandatory”.
- 7.6 While there was a preference for the training to continue to be delivered by Who Cares? Scotland, one respondent queried whether The Improvement Service<sup>4</sup> should play a role in facilitating attendance, given their involvement in other aspects of training for EMs.
- 7.7 Although EMs are still perceived to be a key audience for this training, respondents also suggested a number of other types of individual who would benefit from this training, and these included a range of people in within the wider public sector:

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<sup>4</sup> The Improvement Service was set up in 2005 to help improve the efficiency, quality and accountability of local public services in Scotland by providing advice, consultancy and programme support to councils and their partners. One of its roles is to provide learning and development opportunities to Elected Members, senior management and officers.

- Staff within the police and fire & rescue services.
- Teaching and support staff, particularly those involved in pastoral care and guidance, in schools who may have very little contact with looked after children but who nonetheless need to be able to understand the issues relating to them.
- Staff within further and higher education, particularly those involved in pastoral care and guidance, who may have very little contact with looked after children but who also need to be able to understand the issues relating to them.
- Students training to become social workers / teachers.
- Individuals on the periphery of social work / education / healthcare who might occasionally come into contact with looked after children e.g. GPs.
- Foster parents / potential foster parents.
- Community partnership groups.
- Third sector / voluntary groups who have an involvement with children and young people e.g. those offering children's community services.
- Employers.

7.8 Many online respondents felt that a second phase of the Who Cares? Scotland programme would be beneficial, not simply for themselves but also for others:

- Yes - for me (16)
- Yes - for colleagues (28)
- Yes - for my organisation (28)
- Yes - for partner agencies / organisations (22)
- Yes - for the Looked after Children in my area (15)
- No (5)
- Don't know (9)

7.9 Online respondents were also asked: „which types of staff / others within your area / organisation would most benefit from Who Cares? Scotland Corporate Parenting training“? The findings show that respondents felt the training would be helpful to a wide range of individuals.

- Elected Members (30)
- Directors / other strategic decision makers (29)
- Managers (30)
- Department staff (21)
- Front-line staff (24)
- Don't know (6)

### **Key elements of the training programme**

7.10 Respondents outlined a number of elements that they would like included in the training programme. First and foremost, local information is important, so any training offered needs to be tailored to each local authority area.

“If it's tailored to the city, it gives us a better feeling for it. If it's not tailored to the local authority it would maybe be a bit of, not complacency but maybe „that doesn't happen in our local authority“”.

- 7.11 Second, inclusion of a looked after child who can provide their perspective is a powerful element of the training. The training should continue to include a care leaver who can present their viewpoint and also include looked after children from the local authority where possible. Where this has happened, it was very well received and the debate between the two young people was praised for the level of information it provided and the amount of debate it encourage. Inclusion of a local young person increases the credibility of the presentation.
- 7.12 Respondents see the benefit of local information but also want this set in the context of national information. The provision of statistics is a useful element of the training programme, although it is important that these are up-to-date.
- 7.13 The provision of exemplars, good practice and case studies is also a key element for respondents who like to see what works in other areas and what might work in their own area. It is also helpful for Who Cares? Scotland to provide critiques on existing good practice and outline what works, what does not work, what might need to be modified and so on. Some respondents also requested regular updates on any changes affecting looked after children, although others said they already receive this. While there is a suggestion that some issues will be area-specific, there are also acknowledgements that many local authorities are likely to have to deal with similar issues.

### **Future training programme**

- 7.14 While the depth of information provided by Who Cares? Scotland is suitable for EMs and some staff with little or no knowledge of looked after children and corporate parenting, the findings show that the depth of information is not enough for individuals already working in this area. Those who have a looked after children background did not feel they learnt anything from the session, which was described as „basic“. However, they would welcome more in-depth training, particularly if this incorporates examples of good practice, exemplars, case studies and so on.
- 7.15 While qualitative respondents were aware of SG initiatives such as GIRFEC, Curriculum for Excellence and so on, there were some suggestions that there could be better links with these initiatives within this training. Not all EMs were aware of the Changing Lives Agenda or felt there was a fit with other training they get such as the Improvement Service training programme for EMs.
- 7.16 The delivery of training to EMs has specific logistical issues in that some EMs will have employment alongside their role as an EM; some will sit on a number of committees. Most EMs participating in this research commented on the difficulties of setting up training for EMs. Indeed, our experience of recruiting EMs to participate in this research supports the logistical difficulties of setting up a meeting that can be attended by a number of EMs. As such, consideration needs to be given as to the optimal time for delivery of training. We are aware of a recent training session that was appended to a council meeting attended by all EMs and this may well be one way to ensure higher rates of attendance from EMs. One respondent also commented on the need for a condensed version of the training programme for EMs so that this could readily be part of the agenda for a council meeting.

- 7.17 There were also some suggestions that Who Cares? Scotland could set up events across local authorities; for example, in Glasgow, EMs suggested that the next phase of training might incorporate sharing good practice events or other opportunities to learn from other local authorities.
- 7.18 One senior council official suggested there needs to be more training on how corporate parenting fits in with other work being done and commented that it needs a higher profile. They suggested that Who Cares? Scotland could run a conference to enable delivery to a wider range of people in one location; they also noted the need to include other audiences. They also suggested involving other partner organisations in the training programme to demonstrate good practice they undertake and how this could apply to other areas. One respondent noted not only the need to share good practice but to benchmark this against indicators.
- 7.19 There were also suggestions that Who Cares? Scotland could take on a networking role; acting as an „introducer“ or intermediary between different organisations with an interest in corporate parenting. One respondent queried whether Who Cares? Scotland could provide a central resource on their website outlining good practice and case studies. This respondent is a member of a learning hub where they can access case studies by theme or by area and felt something like this could be very useful for the area of corporate parenting. Again, if this role is adopted by Who Cares? Scotland, it will be important that it is regularly updated and contains a wide range of examples of good practice; as well as suggestions for how good practice could be adapted or improved upon. As one EM commented,
- “We need to know what interventions are being used, what works, what is happening in different areas, and can this be translated to all areas? We need a format that includes background on how looked after children end up in care; need to consider attachment issues and behaviour.”
- 7.20 One respondent suggested the need to look at performance in relation to indicators. They noted,
- “What we want is more than just an information hub. We need to look at performance in relation to indicators. WCS could take a lead co-ordinating role. We want a forum where the information can be shared. It needs to be updated every year so we can get a sense across all 32 authorities on what their corporate parenting plans are.”
- 7.21 Some respondents commented on the need for any data or statistical information included in the training programme to be updated on an on-going basis.
- 7.22 There were comments on the format with some EMs suggesting that an auditorium or lecture style might be replaced with a more interactive format, two Glasgow EMs discussed this point: “I think maybe working with a small group, sitting round a table, encouraging a more conversational type “ – “yes, like a workshop almost” - “might be quite useful”.

7.23 One respondent noted the importance of keeping the momentum going as well as undertaking other work to help promote corporate parenting across a wide range of organisations. They noted the need to ensure this sustains and reinforces on an ongoing basis.

In summary, almost all the qualitative respondents participating in this evaluation felt there was value in this training and that it should continue to be delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.

#### **Potential audiences for the training programme**

Qualitative respondents continue to see Elected Members as a priority audience for this training, although a wide range of other potential audiences were also noted by both qualitative and online respondents. These included:

- Staff within the police and fire & rescue services.
- Teaching and support staff, particularly those involved in pastoral care and guidance, in schools and further and higher education establishments.
- Students training to become social workers and teachers.
- Individuals on the periphery of social work / education / healthcare who might occasionally come into contact with looked after children e.g. GPs.
- Foster parents / potential foster parents.
- Community partnership groups, e.g. those offering children's community services.
- Third sector / voluntary groups who have an involvement with children and young people.
- Employers.

#### **Key elements for the training programme**

Respondents outlined a number of elements that they perceived to be essential as part of this training and these included:

- Information tailored to their local area and set in the context of national information.
- Inclusion of a looked after child; ideally one from the local area.
- Provision of good practice, case studies, exemplars, with critiques / suggested modifications.
- Updates on any changes in the area of corporate parenting.

#### **Potential changes for a future training programme**

While the depth of coverage was perceived to be right for Elected Members and individuals with little or no experience of corporate parenting, there were some suggestions that the depth of information is not enough for individuals already working with looked after children. These individuals would welcome more in-depth training, including more information on good practice and case studies.

There is a need to ensure flexibility in the delivery of this programme because of the logistical issues facing Elected Members in attending training sessions. Thought needs to be given to the optimal time for delivery of training. There is also a need for any data to be up-to-date and continually updated.

There are some suggestions for additional roles that could be adopted by Who Cares? Scotland, and these included:

- Setting up events across local authorities, for example sharing good practice events.
- Adopting an intermediary role, helping councils and partner organisations to network.
- Setting up a central web-based resource identifying examples of good practice and case studies; along with ideas for how good practice can be adapted or improved upon.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Corporate parenting was seen as an important issue by respondents participating in this evaluation and respondents were positive about the Corporate Parenting training programme delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.
- 8.2 Elected Members have been very positive about the training and there is a perception that this should be made available, and possibly mandatory, to all EMs within a few months of being elected. While this first phase of the training programme was aimed primarily at EMs, some local authorities have also included other council staff and staff from partner organisations in the training. There is also a perception that the training should be rolled out to a wider audience in a second phase.
- 8.3 The training to date has had a number of key elements which have been praised by respondents. All recalled the presentation from a care leaver talking from a personal perspective about their experiences as a looked after child (described as „powerful“ and „thought provoking“ by many); and the use of film clips with looked after children discussing their views on various aspects of life such as education or housing. Recall of other elements of the training such as statistical data or good practice examples was not universal, although it needs to be borne in mind that some respondents had attended training almost two years ago.
- 8.4 Results from the qualitative research and the online survey show there have been a number of positive impacts of the training to date. These have included an increased awareness of the role played by corporate parents, and an increased understanding from respondents about their responsibilities and duties as corporate parents, as well as their understanding of the experience of looked after children in their area. The training has also helped to craft a culture around normalising the experiences for looked after children and young people. The online survey shows that awareness of different aspects of corporate parenting rose after the training had been delivered.
- 8.5 In terms of the content, respondents outlined a number of key elements to be incorporated in this training programme. These included the personal experiences of a looked after child, the provision of local and national data and examples of good practice and case studies. Where possible, the training should also include the views of a local looked after child.
- 8.6 One key advantage for Who Cares? Scotland is their capacity to provide a national overview, and there were some suggestions that Who Cares? Scotland could adopt a proactive role in facilitating networking opportunities and running conferences / meetings across local authorities.
- 8.7 Very few respondents had been provided with training on Corporate Parenting from other sources, although where information had been obtained from other sources, this was seen to enhance and complement that provided by Who Cares? Scotland. Indeed, some respondents suggested they could take on a more proactive role in networking across different organisations, acting as a facilitator or introducer.

- 8.8 While the Who Cares? Scotland training is widely praised, there appears to be relatively limited sharing of information to date. While some respondents have shared what they learnt with colleagues, there does not appear to be much by way of information sharing across local authorities. This is perhaps a role that could be adopted by Who Cares? Scotland in setting up conferences, providing examples of good practice on their website and so on. This latter point is important given the desire by respondents to see what works in other areas and what might work in their own area. It is also helpful for them to provide critiques on existing good practice and outline what works, what does not work, what might need to be modified and so on. There were also suggestions for Who Cares? Scotland to set up a database of good practice on their website that could be accessed by all interested parties, to run good practice events and to adopt an intermediary role in helping councils and partner organisations to network.
- 8.9 Qualitative and quantitative respondents were positive about this training and felt this should continue to be delivered by Who Cares? Scotland.
- 8.10 A number of additional audiences have been identified for delivery of this training programme, although Elected Members are still perceived to be a priority audience, particularly given the potential for significant changes to Elected Members at each election.
- 8.11 While the depth of coverage is perceived to be right for Elected Members and individuals with little or no experience of corporate parenting, there are some suggestions that the depth of information is not enough for those already working with looked after children. There is a desire for more in-depth training, including more information on good practice and case studies.
- 8.12 Given the wide range of audiences that could be included in this training, there is also a need to ensure flexibility in delivery of this programme, in terms of content and timing.
- 8.13 In summary, the evidence gathered in this evaluation notes the importance of tailoring training to the needs of the audience. If training is to be extended to a wider range of individuals, their informational requirements will need to be considered. There is also a requirement for continued flexibility in terms of when training is delivered and for working closely with LA contacts to ensure training delivered meets the needs of those who are attending.

## **APPENDICES**

# National Corporate Parenting Training

## Topic guide

Thank respondents for participating in the discussion. Reassure them that all views will be confidential and anonymous. Findings will be reported in aggregate form only. Remember to ask respondents to switch off mobile phones

The following topic areas should be used as a framework for discussion. All should be discussed at some point during the session.

### ***Background information and warm up***

- What is their role within their health board / local authority / CPP; how long have they been in this role; in what ways has this / does this involve them in any dealings with looked after children / being a corporate parent

### ***Corporate parenting***

- Understanding of their role as corporate parents; what this entails; responsibilities etc
- What guidance / support / information would they have liked to have been available when they first took on this role
- What information / support / guidance has been obtained about corporate parenting and where from; how useful has this been
- Are there still any gaps in the information / support / guidance available to them and what are these gaps

### ***Prior to attending the National Training Programme (NTP)***

- When did they first hear about the NTP
- How did they become involved in this (invited by another / proactive request to participate)
- What was their understanding of what the programme would entail
- What were their expectations prior to attending the programme

### ***Attending the NTP / Assessment of activities***

*TRAINING MATERIALS WILL BE USED TO PROMPT DISCUSSION AT RELEVANT POINTS*

- What did participation in the NTP involve eg time commitment / training sessions / spreading the message to colleagues who weren't on the programme etc
- What were the various elements of the NTP (probing on induction resource / training events / training resources etc); how useful / informative / supportive was each and why
- To what extent were training material reflective of local issues and priorities
- How has what has been learnt been put into practice
- What was the most / least useful part of the training programme and why
- How has this training compared to any other training / information received in the past on corporate parenting

### **Project outcomes**

*RESPONDENTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A LISTING OF THE PROJECT OUTCOMES AND KEY ACTIVITIES ONCE THEY HAVE PROVIDED SPONTANEOUS COMMENT*

- To what extent did the NTP;
  - Increase awareness of the issues and challenges faced by looked after children
  - Raise awareness of the corporate parenting responsibilities of respondents and their local authority / health board / CPP
  - Highlight good practice and challenges to be faced
  - Raise awareness of and make links with national policy in Scotland and key initiatives on looked after children (eg link between NTP, GIRFEC, Changing Lives Agenda, CfE etc)
  - Craft a culture around normalising the experiences for looked after children and young people
  - Fit with other training eg IS training programme for Elected Members
- What is the overall impact of the training; does it represent value for money; would they recommend this to colleagues and why / why not
- Is good practice shared with other colleagues within authority / other local authorities

### **The future**

- Would respondents recommend that a second phase of this programme should be undertaken, why / why not
- Who should this be aimed at and why; who would benefit most from this
- What elements should a second phase of training comprise; how would this differ to the first phase
- What existing elements would they want to see delivered differently
- What would they do if they were in charge of programme delivery
  
- Any other comments

# NATIONAL CORPORATE PARENTING TRAINING PROGRAMME EVALUATION

This survey asks for your views on the Corporate Parenting training session(s) delivered by Who Cares? Scotland. The survey should take no more than 5 minutes to complete and all answers will be treated in the strictest confidence in line with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society. The report generated will not attribute any response to individuals but present the findings in aggregate form only.

This survey is being conducted by Why Research, an independent market research company, on behalf of the Scottish Government Children and Families Analytical Services Division.

At the end of each page, please check that you have completed all the questions you wish to address as there is no option to return to these at a later stage.

At the end of the survey there is an open text box where you can add any further comments or information you wish to provide, or expand on any of your answers to closed questions.

## Did you attend a Corporate Parenting training session delivered by Who Cares? Scotland?

- Yes
- I attended a Corporate Parenting training session but was not aware it was delivered by Who Cares?Scotland
- No - I was unable to attend

## Was the training delivered through a ...

- Local Authority
- Health Board
- Other (such as CELCIS or one of Scotland's colleges)

## Please select your local authority area from the following list:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aberdeen City       | <input type="checkbox"/> Edinburgh, City of | <input type="checkbox"/> Orkney Islands      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aberdeenshire       | <input type="checkbox"/> Eilean Siar        | <input type="checkbox"/> Perth & Kinross     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angus               | <input type="checkbox"/> Falkirk            | <input type="checkbox"/> Renfrewshire        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Argyll & Bute       | <input type="checkbox"/> Fife               | <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Borders    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clackmannanshire    | <input type="checkbox"/> Glasgow City       | <input type="checkbox"/> Shetland Islands    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dumfries & Galloway | <input type="checkbox"/> Highland           | <input type="checkbox"/> South Ayrshire      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dundee City         | <input type="checkbox"/> Inverclyde         | <input type="checkbox"/> South Lanarkshire   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East Ayrshire       | <input type="checkbox"/> Midlothian         | <input type="checkbox"/> Stirling            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East Dunbartonshire | <input type="checkbox"/> Moray              | <input type="checkbox"/> West Dunbartonshire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East Lothian        | <input type="checkbox"/> North Ayrshire     | <input type="checkbox"/> West Lothian        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East Renfrewshire   | <input type="checkbox"/> North Lanarkshire  |  |



Did the Who Cares? Scotland session change your awareness of your role in Corporate Parenting?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

How would you describe your awareness of your role in Corporate Parenting AFTER the training session, again using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is very little understanding and 10 is complete understanding:

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        | 6                        | 7                        | 8                        | 9                        | 10                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |

How long did the training session last?

- Less than half an hour
- ½ hour to 1 hour
- 1 hour to 2 hours
- 2 hours to 3 hours
- More than 3 hours

Thinking about the time commitment involved in the Who Cares? Scotland training, would you say this was:

- Too much
- Just enough
- Not enough

Now thinking about the information covered by the training session, was this:

- Too much
- Just enough
- Not enough

Did you feel that the training reflected local issues and priorities?

- Yes, completely
- Yes, to an extent
- No

Since the training, have you put anything that you learned into practice?

- Yes
- Not yet, but intend to in the next 12 months
- No

Please use the space below to expand on your answer.

PLEASE TYPE BELOW:

---

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Have you received Corporate Parenting training from any other source(s)?

- Yes
- No

Who provided this training?

PLEASE TYPE BELOW:

---

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How did the Who Cares? Scotland training compare?

- Favourably
- About the same
- Unfavourably

Please tell us the effect of the training session on each of the following:

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change
Your awareness of the issues and challenges faced by Looked After Children in your area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your awareness of the Corporate Parenting responsibility of your organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your awareness of your own role in relation to Corporate Parenting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your awareness of good practice in relation to Looked After Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you feel a second phase of the Who Cares? Scotland programme would be beneficial?

PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY

- Yes - for me
- Yes - for colleagues
- Yes - for my organisation
- Yes - for partner agencies / organisations
- Yes - for the Looked after Children in my area
- No
- Don't know

Which types of staff / others within your area / organisation would most benefit from Who Cares? Scotland Corporate Parenting training.

PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY

- Elected Members
- Directors / other strategic decision makers
- Managers
- Department staff
- Front-line staff
- Don't know

Have you shared any of the experiences / information from the Cares? Scotland training with others?

- Yes - formally through sharing good practice or other similar forums/meetings
- Yes - informally with colleagues
- No

Finally, please use the space below if you would like to provide any further comments or information, or to expand on any of your answers

PLEASE TYPE BELOW (Maximum 500 characters):

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**Many thanks for your time.  
Please press submit to send your views.**

## Example Pledges

### **EAST AYRSHIRE'S PROMISE**

#### **GIVE ME A CHANCE: BE FAIR TO A CHILD IN OUR CARE**

In East Ayrshire Council we are committed to the aims of the Who Cares? Scotland Anti-Stigma Campaign to give looked after children and young people a fair chance in life.

We will:-

- Listen to children and young people and work in partnership with them to increase opportunities for them to thrive.
- Combat the myths associated with children and young people in care.
- Promote a positive message of the achievements of children in care.
- Help to educate communities and workforces on the reasons for children being accommodated.
- Advocate for looked after and accommodated children and young people as children first.
- Find creative ways to include and support children and young people in their communities, including young people leaving our care;
- Support children and young people in fulfilling their potential.
- Continue to provide high quality services.
- Support the campaign through practical and material activities.

## **GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL OUR PLEDGE**

Glasgow City Council's elected members pledge to all looked after children and young people that they will ensure that:

- Has their best interests as a primary consideration in all actions concerning them
- Will listen to them and ensure their views are taken into account in all matters affecting them
- Will be ambitious for them, supporting their efforts to reach their potential, whether through education, training or employment
- Has a clear understanding of their overall needs
- Will provide care, a home and access to health and education and other public services to which they are entitled
- Will advocate their cause and endeavour to find solutions to problems on their behalf when necessary
- Will celebrate and share their achievements

## **ARGYLL & BUTE**

### **Argyll & Bute's Promise**

- Combat the myths associated with Children and young people in care
- Promote a positive message of the achievements of children in care
- Listen to children and young people and work in partnership with them to increase opportunities for them to thrive
- Advocate for looked after and accommodated children and young people as children first
- Find creative ways to support children and young people, including young people leaving our care
- Support children and young people in fulfilling their potential
- Help to educate communities and workforces on the reasons for Children being accommodated
- Support the campaign through practical and material activities
- Continue to provide high quality services



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