

Edition 3: 2023

We will keep the promise

Hey Everyone,



Welcome to the 3rd edition of CrossReach's Promise newsletter which provides our readers with an update of the changes and improvements that CrossReach is making to #keepthepromise. In this edition we are focusing on love, and understanding when we get the conditions right, loving relationships can flourish in our services. The Promise is very clear in its vision for all children to grow up "so that they are loved, safe, respected and can realise their true potential" and that we must care in a way that "gives children every possible chance to experience love in their lives". CrossReach echoes this desire as it is our mission to support people to achieve the highest quality of life which they can achieve at any given time. We are also guided by our ethos in that we show the practical side of our Christian faith by reflecting Christian love to those we support, through our leadership, management and working relationships. I hope you find the links and resources informative and provide you with a moment to reflect and consider how your practice allows love to grow and flourish. Thanks to all those who contributed, it's greatly appreciated.

Thanks a million,
Ruth

Highlights from the Promise Engagement Team



Our focus has been on transitions improvement, and we are underway with plans to provide a transition flat for a young person to move in to with the support of the team around them, while retaining their current home as a safety net to move back to if they are not quite ready for independent living. We are pleased to be collaborating with a housing association and are hopeful for progress in the future. Alongside this, we are finalizing plans for a transition project to enable young people to develop the necessary skills for independent living. We hope to begin this in May with the aim of all our young people leaving us feeling prepared for life and ready to chase their dreams!



We were really excited to join Glasgow Clyde College for their Promise Event, celebrating and sharing what organizations are doing across Greater Glasgow & Clyde to ensure they are Keeping The Promise. It was an incredible event and so well put together by Joe Gibb and the students, inspiring the sector's future workforce with workshops and keynote speeches.

Our family inclusion officer Kerry gives us a peek in what she's been up to

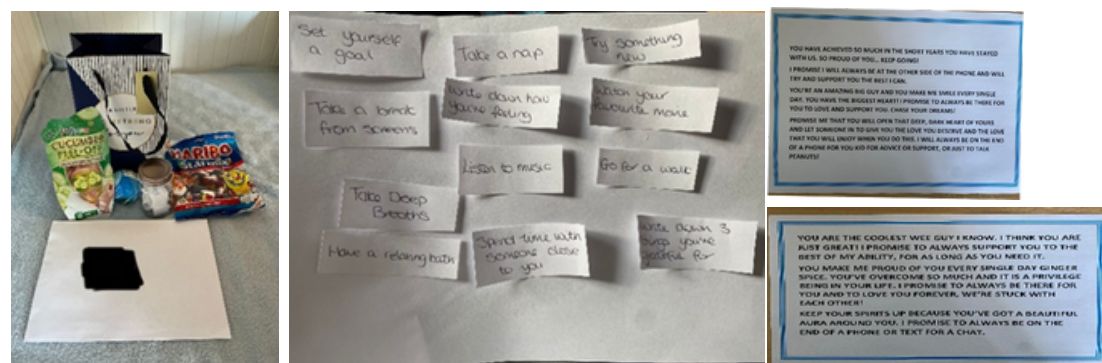
It has been a busy few weeks gathering up my findings from our young people, their families and our workforce on how well we support our day pupil families and how we, as a service, can improve on this. After meeting with colleagues and sharing the data gathered, we have now made a plan of how to move onto our next phase and will be hosting an 'open day' for our families, giving them the opportunity to come into school, meet their child's key team and meet other parents and carers for a tea, coffee and a chat. This will also give the families an opportunity to meet and share their experiences in a safe and supportive environment and hopefully lead to discussions on how to continue supporting them.



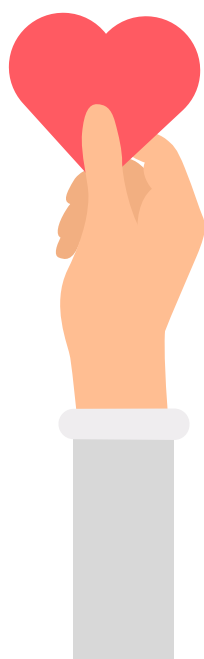
Spotlight on Good Practice: Love in action

Care Day 2023

One of our residential services celebrated #Careday2023 with these fabulous self-care packages which highlight to our children and young people everything that we like, admire and love about them. These included a jar of self-care suggestions for when they're unsure of ideas on how to practice self-care and was a great way of showing our young people just how much we love them. It also gave our teams time to reflect on how lucky we are to have the opportunity to journey alongside our children and young people.



Impactful Moments



Big moments they impact us; and over time, they define us. But small moments can create a big impact—and it's the collection of these small moments that truly define a culture.

Walking out of his home one morning a young person was pretty chuffed with his outfit for the day. Decent shorts, socks pulled right up and matching top. A look of Blink182 you might say. The adults were horrified as it was a cold, dreich day. 'You'll freeze oot there, it's baltic'. But he chose not to take the advice of the adults around him and away he went to school where he'd be indoors in the warmth of his classroom...in his shorts and t-shirt. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be as the fire drill went off and the whole school was sent packing outside. He turned round to the adult and said, 'I'm freezing – it's so cold'. The adult stood there and thought 'Aye well I thought you might be and I tried to tell you'. The adult had two choices: use power and judgement over the young person or show him love and acceptance. And this is what the adult chose to do as they unzipped their jacket and wrapped it around the young person for a coorie in.

And so, no matter how easy it is to say, 'I told you so', be the person who opens up your heart (and your jacket) to love in the smallest and biggest of moments.

An Interview With: Hazel Glen



Hazel Glen is a Service Leader at one of CrossReach's residential services for Children and Young People. The service which Hazel provides leadership and guidance for, Rockwood, was rated a '5' or very good at their most recent care inspection. The inspector said that relationships really were an area of strength and that interactions between staff, children and young people were friendly, loving, and respectful, with lots of laughter. We asked Hazel about how love is felt and experienced at Rockwood.

How do we ensure care is a loving experience for our children and young people?

For me, how a young person experiences care can be mostly attributed to how adults around them support, care, and nurture them. I feel that the adults at Rockwood are genuinely here for the same purpose, of wanting to ensure that the children we care for grow up feeling loved, nurtured and respected. They collectively have the view that when they come to their work they don't actually come into a place of work but into a family home. And not to sound cliched but walking into Rockwood, you do feel a sense of belonging and connection like you do with your immediate family. I think it's also important that we respect how people choose to show and receive love. For some of our young people a high five and side cuddle would be too much whereas for others cuddles and kisses on the forehead are a part of our everyday interactions. I often think that we have been presented with a gift when supporting children and young people here at Rockwood as we can help children and young people view the world not through a lens of fear and panic but through a lens of care and love.

What do you think contributes to young people experiencing love?

It's our entire ethos and values which in turn lends itself to our organisational culture where relationships and relationship development are central to everything we do. Unfortunately, there isn't a step-by-step recipe in how to create the ultimate culture in residential childcare; but we do know what helps and that's things like ensuring our practitioners are supported to attend to and reflect how their practice is working towards our overall ethos and values, ensuring that there are opportunities to learn and ensuring that we are truly listening and responding to the voice of children and young people even when this can be incongruent with our own belief system.

How do you think attitudes towards love have changed in residential childcare?

I'm so proud of the fact that not only as an organisation, but as a nation, Scotland is committed to ensuring that all children and young people grow up loved. It wasn't in the not-so-distant past that it was felt that 'If you had telt a wean that you loved them that you could be sacked'. That had a lot to do with the fact that our services were much bigger and operated at more of an institutional level. However, you don't know what you don't know and now in terms of knowledge and understanding we know that for relationships to develop and for young people to feel truly connected with the adults who are supporting them, that the physical environment needs to feel safe. For children and young people this is in much smaller spaces where adults can attune to their needs and desires. This transition and movement has been at times scary. In order for adults to be able to offer genuine and authentic care, nurture and love we need to be willing to be vulnerable and vulnerability for adults who have at times been told to shield themselves from the pain of supporting children and young people who have experienced complex trauma is terrifying. That doesn't mean we shouldn't do it, but a change that significant requires time and patience.

What changes do you think we need to make both at an organisational level and across the sector so that loving relationships are able to flourish for children and young people who experience care?

That's tricky to be honest. I think CrossReach is already in the midst of a huge journey of change from when I first started working here and we can already see the impact of those changes. For example, the fact that we can openly show our affection and care towards the children and young people we support, well you can see it almost immediately with the smiles on their faces and their interactions with us. The fact that our practice model embraces P.L.A.C.E as an attitude of being and that all our interactions and relationships should be characterised by these

An Interview With: Hazel Glen



components (Play, Love, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) is so helpful in ensuring that young people experience adults around them as loving. Personally, I want the children and young people we support to never have to ask themselves if they are good or worthy enough of love because they will be experiencing care and love in every interaction they have with us.

“ Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path. ”

Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead*

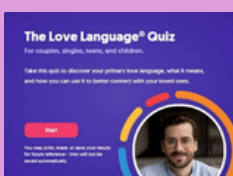
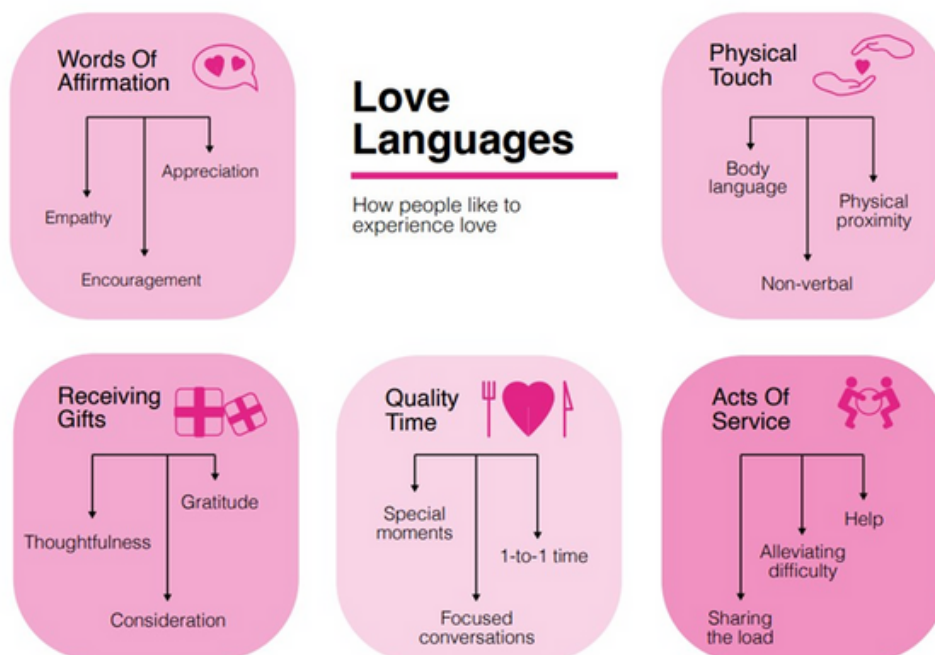
Here's what one of our young people said about love



'For me love is about being able to spend time with people in here and talking about stuff when I'm upset. I love the fact that the staff here are different and that helps me to cope. I have never fallen in love so I don't know what that feels like, but I do know what self-love is as I love going to the gym and I love how this feels as it makes my day worthwhile. I of course love my family but that's a different type of love'.

What does love mean to you?

Due to the complex nature and subjectivity of love it can sometimes be difficult to discuss. Love can be shown and experienced in a myriad of ways and just as everyone has a unique personality, so is their expression of love. Gary Chapman, unpacked this idea in a series of books and notably the 5 love languages which refers to the five ways we want love to be shown to us and the ways that we show others love.



If you would like to learn what your own love language is, you can find out more here: <https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language/>

To find out more about how this framework was used to allow adults to think about their own values and core beliefs in relation to love, and the ways in which they could utilise it within a residential childcare setting read more here:



In this podcast, Oprah talks with Dr. Gary Chapman and explains how knowing your own and others' love language can transform your relationships.

Training Opportunity

MyBank Money House is a project in Glasgow which provides online and face-to-face training for young people aged 16-25, supporting them to manage their money and maintain current or future tenancies. They are SQA accredited and participants can achieve an SCQF Level 4 qualification in Personal Money Management on completion of the course. We have a group booking for CrossReach from 12-14th April which is available for care experienced young people past and present.



If you or anyone you know is interested in being a part of this, please get in touch with Kirsten.Callaghan@crossreach.org.uk



The Introduction to Framing and Framing Care Experience webinar will introduce participants to framing and how it can be used to improve the lives of people with care experience now and in the future. It will talk through the different methods for using framing and will explore insights from our body of research on care experience and child development.

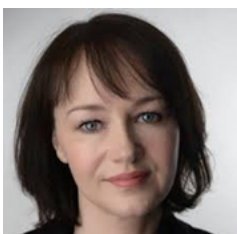
News and events happening across Scotland to #keepthepromise



Lots Done, Still Lots to Do: The Independent Care Review three years on

Three years on from the publication of The Independent Care Review, Fi McFarlane writes on what's been done— and what's still to do.

For Scotland to keep the promise, it needs to do data differently. Find out why through downloading The Promise Scotland's podcast.



Fiona Duncan offered some thoughts on how we really measure love and what it means for effort to #keepthepromise



More than just a bracelet: the use of material symbolism to communicate love

This article outlines the ways in which love between children and 'paid' adults has been conceptualised and understood and goes on to briefly explore symbolism and material symbolism and the role that these take in communication, internally with the self as well as externally to others and to the world around.



Legislating for Love

"We cannot command love, but we can and should aspire to it. We should name it as our aspiration and do our best to create the conditions in which it can be nurtured"

In this article The author examines what 'love' means in the context of residential childcare. She discusses issues of: personal and professional boundaries; power and abuse; people and systems; rights and expectations. She sets out a vision of what residential childcare might look like.



BBC Radio Scotland – love in Scotland's care system

The Independent Care Review's Love work group co-chair Rosie Moore spoke with presenter Sally Magnusson on BBC Radio Scotland to discuss the need for love in Scotland's 'care system' and to explain why the Care Review has a focus on love. Rosie was joined in the conversation by Aberlour Chief Executive SallyAnn Kelly, who talked about the charity's approach to love in residential homes



The Importance of Love within the Care System: Love should be a Right

The point I'm making? It's simple: love may be just a four-letter word to many, but to us? To children and young people growing up in care, it's everything. It's the one thing that can and does alter a young person's life'. Helen Johnstone wrote this piece in the hopes to open a conversation about the impact of love within the care system from the perspective of a care experienced person.



Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care Vol 15 No 3 Special issue: Love in professional practice

In this special issue, we open up a responsible and healthy discussion on love in professional practice, exploring the importance of love in children's lives and the complexity of what this means in a professional context.

This issue is guest edited by Mark Smith, Head of Social Work at the University of Edinburgh.



The Forum' Podcast

In STAF podcast 'The Forum' Pamela Graham who was then head of learning and development at STAF met with Joanna McCreadie (Seamab) and Rosie Moore, who co-chaired the Love work group at the Independent Care Review.



#keepthepromise

We hoped you enjoyed the latest edition of The Promise newsletter. Thank you for taking the time to read and helping CrossReach to #keepthepromise so that all children grow up loved, safe, respected and can realise their true potential.

THANK
YOU



The Church of Scotland
Social Care Council

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