The Fostering Communities programme

Putting co-production into practice with young people: Children looked after reviews

Including the young person's self-assessment traffic light tool for children looked after reviews

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Contents

		Page
1.	**Introduction**	03
	About The Fostering Network	03
	The Fostering Communities Programme	03
	About the authors	03
2.	**The purpose of this guide**	04
3.	**What is co-production?**	05
4.	**What might co-production look like in practice in children's services?**	06
5.	**What are the benefits of co-producing with young people?**	08
6.	**When can co-production happen in children services?**	08
	Co-production across the project cycle	08
	Example of co-production across a fostering service training project cycle	09
7.	**What kind of organisations or services are best suited to co-production?**	09
8.	**How to make a start with co-production**	10
9.	**Implementing co-production in a children looked after review**	10
	How children looked after reviews can be driven by co-production	11
10.	**Co-producing a children looked after review**	12
11.	**Young person's self-assessment traffic light tool**	14
12.	**Additional supporting resources**	22
13.	**How The Fostering Network can help**	23
14.	**Your feedback**	24

1. Introduction

About The Fostering Network

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity. We are the essential network for fostering, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of fostered young people. We support foster carers to transform young people's lives and we work with fostering services and the wider sector to develop and share best practice. We work to ensure all fostered young people experience stable family life and we are passionate about the difference foster care makes. We champion fostering and seek to create vital change, so that foster care is the very best it can be.

We have been leading the fostering agenda for more than 40 years, influencing and shaping policy and practice at every level. As a membership organisation we bring together individuals and services involved in providing foster care across the UK. We have approximately 60,000 individual members and nearly 400 organisational members, both local authorities and independent fostering providers, which cover 75 per cent of foster carers in the UK. Our views are informed by our members, as well as through research; in this way we aim to be the voice of foster care.

The Fostering Communities Programme

Fostering Communities is a national programme led by The Fostering Network in Wales and funded by the Welsh Government from 2020 – 2023. The programme supports children looked after and their foster families throughout Wales, by improving wellbeing outcomes for children and increasing the competence, confidence and motivation of the fostering workforce.

The programme is underpinned by a fostering community shared power model, built around workstreams and interventions, which will aim to improve wellbeing in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Also embedded within Fostering Communities is a co-production approach, which means working equal partnership with foster carers and fostering services to plan and deliver the programme. (Further details of The Fostering Communities programme are available upon request.)

This guide forms part of this co-production approach.

About the authors

Maria Boffey is the head of operations for The Fostering Network in Wales. She has a wealth of experience across fostering, including in the engagement of both young people and foster carers.

Since joining the Fostering Network in 2002, Maria has developed, managed, and delivered many programmes, training courses, workshops, consultations, academic research and events for practitioners, children, young people, and foster carers.

She is the editor of The Fostering Network in Wales's highly acclaimed young people's magazine *Thrive,* as well as co-author of *Men Who Care: Experiences and reflections of male foster carers*. She has written several guides, including *Don't You Forget About Me: A guide to developing a peer support group for the sons and daughters of foster carers* and *Men Are Good Foster Carers Too: Supporting male foster carers and inspiring confidence*. She co-authored the book *Building Relationships Through Storytelling* with Dr Steve Killick. Maria also co-authored the chapter about online safety in *Safer Caring: A new approach* (Slade, 2012) with Dr Sangeet Bhullar. She is the author of *Fostering in a Digital world* (2013).

Maria was a key contributor to the creation of *The Skills to Foster*™ training programme for foster carers. She has also played a role in the development of the When I am Ready scheme, and the National Fostering framework development, as well as a
member of a number of Welsh Government working groups.

Alain Thomas is the principal consultant at Alain Thomas Consultancy, which was established to provide support to organisations involved in community development and social welfare. Alain has extensive experience of delivering research, evaluation, organisational development, and training services to public and third sector organisations across different contexts and cultures in Wales, other parts of Europe and the developing world.

Participatory approaches underpin all of Alain's work and he has a particular interest in how they can be applied to a wide range of processes including research, evaluation, public engagement, organisational development, and facilitation. He is on a personal mission to increase awareness and usage in Wales of these intuitive and effective methods which originated in the developing world.
As an associate of The Fostering Network, Alain has facilitated numerous consultations to review strategic planning and evaluate fostering initiatives and, as an author, he has contributed to a huge number of fostering reports, guides and resources.

2. The purpose of this guide

Co-production is gaining attention in response to the current challenges in the delivery of public services. In 2013, the Welsh Government confirmed that co-production should be a necessary part of both the design and delivery of all public services.

Co-production supports the delivery of person-centred care, putting people at the heart of all decisions, as equal partners in planning, developing and assessing care, and in meeting their needs.

Co-production is one of the main principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It means working with, and involving, individuals, their family, friends and carers to make sure their care and support is the best it can be. There is an 'easy to read' guide here, and information about the main principles underpinning the act can be found here.

This guide aims to support managers and social care practitioners in the further implementation of the 2014 Act, in putting co-production at the heart of practice, alongside the young people who are looked after.

It focuses on:

- Co-production within the children looked after review process. It is hoped that this might encourage Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), managers, practitioners and foster carers to pilot co-production as part of the review process, before rolling it out across other areas of their work and practice.

- Providing a simple traffic light assessment tool to enable practitioners and young people to assess how well they are co-producing together.

The guide will be relevant to all foster carers, IROs, managers and practitioners who support young people who are looked after, and those involved in promoting young people's participation in all services which have an impact on their lives and their families.

It will also be of particular interest to social workers by posing key practice questions:

- Am I/Are we co-producing with young people?
- Are young people sufficiently involved in taking decisions about the services that affect them?
- Am I/Are we constantly learning how to improve our co-production practice?
- Are my/our practice and organisational arrangements modifying significantly to support the principles of co-production and embed them throughout all the services?

3. What is co-production?

The Co-production Network for Wales defines co-production in the context of public services in this way:

'An asset-based approach that enables people providing and people receiving services to share power and responsibility and work together in equal, reciprocal and caring relationships.'[1]

The New Economics Foundation, which has been developing co-production-based approaches with the public sector for over a decade, defines co-production with young people as:

'*Delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours. Where activities are co-produced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change'*[2]

[1] Co-production Network for Wales. *What is co-production?* https://copronet.wales/ (Accessed 26 February 2021)
[2] New Economics Foundation. *Participation and co-production policy context, children and young people now.* Derren Hayes. Available from https://www.cypnow.co.uk/Other/article/participation-and-co-production-policy-context (Accessed 26 February 2021)

Co-production is a step forward from current practice; it focuses on the needs of the young person and recognises their voice, their strengths, resources and personal qualities. Co-production is focused on delivery of person-centred care, which prioritises putting people at the heart of all decisions as equal partners.

'Co-production takes a slightly different tack to normal engagement practices. It focuses less on identifying and responding to a child's "need" or "problem" in favour of a reciprocal approach, which builds on a child's interests, knowledge, experience, skills and support network.'

'A co-production approach sees young people as having their own valuable perspectives, knowledge and skills. It is fundamentally different from the traditional position of seeing young people as (some might say) passive recipients of services.'[3]

4. What might co-production look like in practice in children's services?

Co-production in children's services has been described as:

'Doing things "with children" as opposed to doing things "to children" or "for children". It is a strengths-based approach, which recognises that all children, young people and their families have their own set of skills, knowledge and experiences which they bring to the table.'[4]

Children and young people then do not just 'take part' or 'be present', but they are in partnership, their 'voice and control' is central to decisions and actions. Co-production means that they will have a real say in decisions about their own lives, be involved in the process of designing the best services for all, and able to express their opinions on the quality of services provided.

Managers, policy staff and commissioning staff within each of the children's services in Wales will have a policy with regard to young people's participation. The basis of this guide is for practitioners and foster carers to consider the involvement of the young people they look after in their care plan, reviews and services.

A set of principles for co-producing with children and young people has been formulated by Boingboing resilience CIC and the University of Brighton:

It is asset based (or strengths based)

A co-production approach sees young people as having their own valuable perspectives, knowledge and skills. It is fundamentally different from the traditional position of seeing young people as (some might say, passive) recipients of services. Instead, it values them as equal partners in the design, commissioning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of services.

[3] New Economics Foundation. *A guide to co-producing children's services.* Jody Aked and Lucy Stephens. Available from https://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/d745aadaa37fde8bff_ypm6b5t1z.pdf (Accessed 26 February 2021)

[4] Tony Bovard (2017) *Beyond engagement and participation: user and community co-production of public services*. Public Administration Review. September-October pp 846-860. In Anna Wright Co-production in Children's Services A think piece. ADCS Virtual Staff College.

It builds on people's existing capabilities

Co-production with young people also means building on the skills and strengths young people have, rather than imposing staff expectations of what is required. It

means changing staff members' thinking about planning, commissioning, delivery and review of services, so that it provides opportunities for young people to grow their capabilities. It actively supports young people to put their skills and life experience to work, for their own benefit and the benefit of their peers in the community.

It is based on reciprocity and mutuality

This means offering a range of incentives for young people to work in reciprocal relationships with staff and with each other. It relies on clearly outlined mutual responsibilities and expectations, which are regularly revisited and reviewed. Essentially, it means that young people are valued and receive various benefits from being involved and that it is clear what these benefits should be.

It values and enables peer support networks

Engaging peer and personal networks alongside staff, as the best way of transferring knowledge. Young people who 'own' a service, because they are directly involved in its planning, commissioning, delivery or review can be the most effective promoters, recruiters and deliverers of the service.[5]

Co-production has similarities with 'engagement' and 'consultation', but there is also a fundamental difference. In a traditional consultation process or review, the final decision about what happens next lies within the fostering service. In co-production, young people are centrally involved, their views and experiences are equally valued alongside those of social care practitioners, and the final decision about what happens is taken jointly, by practitioners and young people working in partnership in a relationship based on trust, respect and mutual understanding.

The results of this co-production process are:

- Young people feel more empowered.
- Practitioners are motivated from the very start to enable young people to define the shape of services.
- Young people receive training and support in key skills such as communicating effectively in formal settings, negotiation and using social media safely.
- Practitioners and young people meet regularly, personal relationships develop and respect for each other grows.
- Practitioners and young people come to realise the unique perspectives contributing to produce the best services.

[5] Anne Rathbone, Sunita Pallan-Jhalli, Hansa Clay, Raymond Codner, Tara Bourne, Samantha Gregory, Francesca Turner, Emerson Morris (2018). *All together now: a toolkit for co-production with young people for use by Wolverhampton service providers, commissioners and schools*. HeadStart Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, UK: City of Wolverhampton Council. (Accessed 26 February 2021)

- The values of co-production are aligned with social work and other professional caring practices.

5. What are the benefits of co-producing with young people?

Co-production involves the re-balancing of responsibilities and recognising the wishes and feelings of the young person as the driving force defining their Care and Support Plan or Pathway Plan.

The development of co-producing services with young people will require an investment of time and patience, while everyone involved is learning new skills.

Co-production of care services with young people will help them to be more independent, confident and in control of the services they use. Their involvement will develop and deliver better care services.

Additional benefits of co-production are further highlighted by Boingboing resilience CIC and the University of Brighton:

- *Whether you are a school, a service provider or a commissioner, involving young people in co-production leads to services and support that are more suited to their needs and, therefore, will have more impact and be better value for money.*

- *Co-production with young people gives staff a sounding board to challenge their assumptions and ideas and can help them see how little things can have big impact in real-life situations.*

- *It gives a more up-to-date picture of current needs and priorities which, amongst young people in particular, can change at a fast pace.*

- *Young people will have their voices and opinions heard and their skills are often strongest where adult skills are weakest. For example, young people may have expertise in digital media, social media, or performance, which are lacking in adults working alongside them.*

- *It can empower young people to take control in their own lives (which is shown to be significant in promoting good mental health) and to use other services and support systems more effectively to meet their needs.*[6]

6. When can co-production happen in children services?

Co-production in children's services can happen at each stage of a project cycle. This includes commissioning, design, delivery and management, and evaluation.

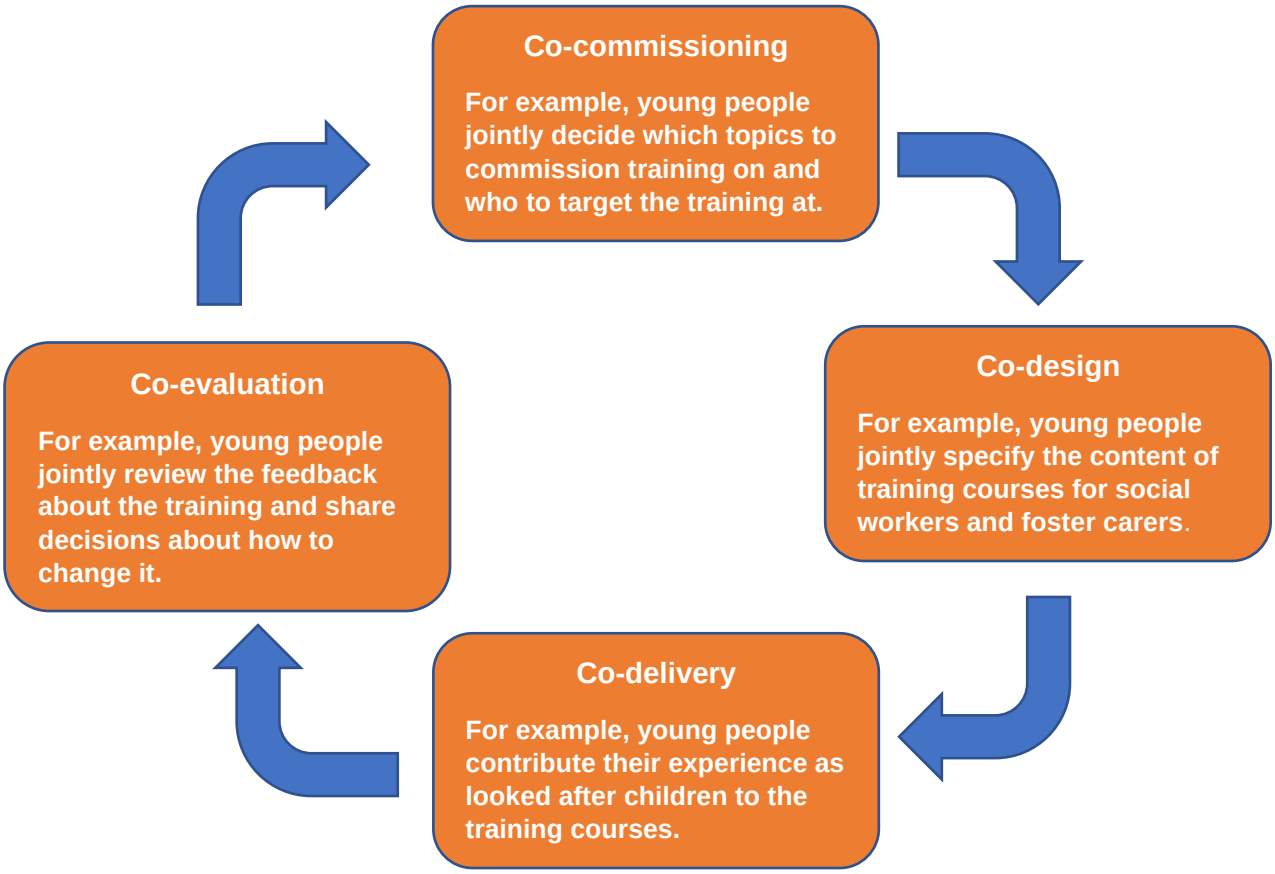
Co-production across the project cycle

[6] Anne Rathbone, Sunita Pallan-Jhalli, Hansa Clay, Raymond Codner, Tara Bourne, Samantha Gregory, Francesca Turner, Emerson Morris (2018). *All together now: a toolkit for co-production with young people for use by Wolverhampton service providers, commissioners and schools*. HeadStart Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, UK: City of Wolverhampton Council. (Accessed 26 February 2021)

The roots of co-production start with its adoption in each of the Regional Partnership Boards and by the Corporate Parenting Panel of each local authority in Wales. All other agencies will also be expected to adopt co-production values and practices. With this stamp of authority and leadership in the multi-agency environment, co-production becomes embedded in all planning, design, implementation and delivery of services as illustrated below.

Example of co-production across a fostering service training project cycle

The following diagram demonstrates how co-production with young people can influence training for foster carers and social workers.



7. What kind of organisations or services are best suited to co-production?

Some organisations and services have found it relatively easy to implement and embed co-production, while for others it will involve cultural and organisational changes, including additional support, development and training.

Clearly affirmed leadership commitment is a necessary starting point. Research has suggested that if the following characteristics are present in an organisation or service, they will be more likely to be successful in implementing co-production:[7]

[7] Paper for the IRSPM Conference, Prague 2013. *Embarking on the social innovation journey: a systematic review regarding the potential of co-creation with citizens. W. Voorberg, V Bekkers, L Tummers.* Available here https://www.researchgate.net/publication/ (Accessed 26 February 2021)

- A positive culture in the organisation, for example, one that supports strength-based working.
- A positive attitude by staff towards the engagement and participation of children, young people and families.
- Clear incentives towards co-production.
- Policies that support co-production, for example, in performance management and staff competencies.
- Financial support.
- Good information-sharing.

8. How to make a start with co-production

Anna Wright suggests three broad approaches to introducing co-production into an organisation:[8]

- To adopt co-production as an overall strategy with the intention that all services should be co-produced.

- To take an incremental approach, setting co-production as a direction to work towards but accepting different services will progress at different speeds through a ladder of involvement (for example, information, consultation then co-production).

- To pilot co-production in a specific service area and learn from it.

The remainder of this guide is shaped by the belief that it may be easier for such organisations and services to start with a small-scale pilot before embedding within the whole organisation and moving onto a broader roll-out of co-production practices throughout all the services.

This next section will describe the implementation of co-production with young people in the specific setting of a children looked after review. The final section of this guide sets out a self-assessment checklist for use in that setting.

9. Implementing co-production in a children looked after review

A children looked after review is a statutory responsibility that a local authority must undertake, as determined by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Wales) Regulations 2015. Part 6 sets out the general duty of the responsible authority to conduct reviews at specific timescales

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) will engage with the young person in order to help them to prepare for their review. Together they will both consider who the young person wants at the meeting, where it is held and who can hear their personal information. Consideration will also be given to the role of the young person's advocate in the review.

[8] Virtual Staff College. Co-production in Children's Services: A think piece. Anna Wright. Available here https://thestaffcollege.uk/wp-content/uploads/co_production.pdf (Accessed 26 February 2021)

To prepare for the review, a social worker will update the Care and Support Plan to include a holistic health and development overview; training, education and employment; victim of trafficking or unaccompanied asylum-seeking status; support available from parents and other connected people, and post-18 living arrangements.

The views of family and professionals supporting the child/young person will also be included in any recommendations.

Co-production can overcome many of the current challenges in the review practice. These include:

- Professional views being presented in a clinical manner and being prescriptive in nature.
- Assumptions that ‘we know what is best’.
- Only a pre-determined set of subjects being discussed.
- Electronically populated documents that pre-determine the review meeting agenda.

As a result of these and other obstacles, young people sometimes choose not to participate, or reluctantly attend their review. Without their contributions, the review process ultimately results in their wishes and feelings not being taken into account or being acted upon.

How children looked after reviews can be driven by co-production

For a review to be co-produced with a young person, these things would need to be in place:

- The young person confirms the location and venue where they feel they would be comfortable and safe. (Many reviews take place in schools but this can single out the young person as being ‘different’.)

- The young person confirms who they would like to be at their review and, conversely, if there is anyone they would not like to be present. If this person has to attend, it will be agreed with the young person for them to be present for a limited time within the review.

- The fostering service devises young people-friendly methods of enabling them to lead how the review takes place.

- The meeting content and agenda order are confirmed by the young person, with the guidance of their Independent Reviewing Officer.

- The Independent Reviewing Officer will discuss with the young person who will chair the meeting. The young person could consider acting as the chair themselves.

- The young person could use social media to help them to engage in the process and to conduct the review (as long as everything conforms with confidentiality, safeguarding and data protection requirements).

- ‘Young people-friendly’ versions of the main documents are produced.

- It will be agreed with the young person beforehand that any information such as reports and feedback from the review would be provided in the way that they request, such as email, text or in writing.

During the review, the following areas must be discussed and, where appropriate, the relevant plan is updated and amended:

- Follow up on actions from the last review.
- Any proposed changes of the Care and Support Plan.
- Contact arrangements.
- Placement Plan, Health Plan and Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Significant events or changes since the last review, including whether they would have any effect on the stability of the young person’s foster home.
- Complaints from, or on behalf of, the young person, parent or foster carer.
- Pathway Plan and progression for moving into independence (where appropriate).
- Confirmation (or not) that the current foster home remains the most suitable place for the young person.

10. Co-producing a children looked after review

Stages in a children looked after review	**Practice which is not co-production compliant**	**What co-production will look like**
Notification that a review is to be held.	Standard invitations are sent out to designated invitees.	Young person asked who they would like at their review, and invitations sent in the name of the young person. Others could be sent a request for a written report.
Venue identified for the review to take place.	Young person’s social worker determines where the review will be held.	Young person to decide where their review is to be held.
Advance preparation for the review is undertaken and feedback forms sent out for completion.	Feedback forms sent out and asked to be returned electronically or by mail, with no face-to-face discussions being held.	Young person decides how they would like their feedback to be shared.
Feedback is collated and returned.	Each individual completes their feedback independently and then returns it to the young person’s social worker.	Appropriate person, such as the foster carer, the young person’s social worker or Independent Reviewing Officer having a face-to-face

		discussion with young person about their wishes and feelings and how they will be shared.
Young person's social worker's report is produced and distributed in advance.	Young person's social worker completes review documents in isolation, and they are subsequently signed off by their manager.	Young person involved in the production and content of each of the areas of the report and agrees the content or registers any areas of disagreement. The young person is consulted and confirms their views and input.
Interaction with the Independent Reviewing Officer.	Independent Reviewing Officer is often not introduced or is not able to speak to the young person until 10 minutes before the review.	Independent Reviewing Officer would introduce themselves to the young person at an earlier stage. They would also confirm the actions of the above report have been carried out, and then have a discussion about the order of the items of the review meeting and any special requests.
Review is held, and the meeting agenda worked through in a standard order.	The review form is pre-populated from an internal service IT system which in turn determines how the review will be conducted.	The young person would be advised about the sections that need to be covered, and they can then choose the order in which they are discussed.
Standard minutes are sent out to everyone who was invited to the review.	Pre-populated list of people who will be sent the review is determined by the young person's social worker.	Young person would be able to state who gets all, or only the relevant section of the minutes, subject to meeting regulatory requirements.
Next review date is set.	Date to suit the Independent Reviewing Officer or young person's social worker is agreed.	Young person will offer their date suggestions first.

11.

Young person's self-assessment traffic light tool

Rate your review

This form is for you to fill in after your **review**.

It will tell us how much of a say you had in planning your review, how it was run, who attended and what was written about you.

REMEMBER …

Your review is an important meeting where **YOU** can talk about what has been happening in your life and make future plans.

Social workers have a responsibility for you to be part of the decisions that need to be made about your care and wellbeing. At times, you may disagree with them, but they **MUST** consider your wishes and feelings, and put your care and wellbeing before anything else.

If you are unhappy about something to do with your care plan, the placement arrangements or your review, you should talk to your social worker or your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). They are there to listen and should be able to give you information, advice and help.

You can fill in this form electronically or print it out. It can be found here.

The traffic light colour coding in the answer boxes below are as follows:

✗ **the Red box means that you feel you were not involved.**
✗ **the Amber box suggests that you feel you were not truly involved.** **However, there might have been reasons why it was not possible to take your views into account. It will be important to explore these answers further with your social worker.**
✓ **the Green box means that you feel your voice was heard.**

Put a tick against the box which best describes how you feel about your review and add a few lines to say why you feel like that.

How was my review?

Arranging the meeting

1. Did I get a say in when my review was to be held?

No, I was not asked what dates or times that I would prefer to meet.	I was asked about dates and times that I would prefer to meet, but my review did not take place at any of these times that I asked for.	Yes, I was asked what dates and times I would prefer. My review was on the date, and time that I suggested.

2. I was able to say who would lead my review.

No, I was not able to say who would lead my review.	I was asked who would lead my review, but they didn't listen to me.	Yes, I was asked who would lead my review and was listened to.

3. I was able to have a say about where my review would take place.

No, I wasn't asked where I would like the review to be.	Yes, I was asked, but in the end the meeting wasn't held where I wanted it to be.	Yes, I was asked, and the meeting was held where I wanted it to be.

4. I was able to have a say about who should attend and who shouldn't attend my review.

No, I wasn't asked about who was going to be there.	Yes, but some of the people I didn't want to be there were there anyway.	Yes, and only the people I wanted to be there were.

Writing the report about me

5. When the report was written about me, I was involved in deciding what went into the report.

No, I wasn't involved at all in writing the report.	I was asked how I felt about what was being written about me, but I don't feel I was listened to.	Yes, I was asked, and I felt that I was listened to.

6. If I strongly disagreed with something that others wanted to write about me, my opinion was also written in the report.

No, I wasn't able to say if I agreed or disagreed with what was being written about me.	I was asked if I agreed or disagreed with what was being written about me, but my replies were not always recorded.	Yes, I was asked how I felt about what was being written and, if I disagreed, this too was recorded in the report.

7. Someone checked what is in the report with me before it was signed off.

No, no-one checked with me before the report was signed off.	Someone did check with me, but nothing changed as a result.	Yes, someone checked with me, I felt able to suggest changes and I saw that they were written in the report.

8. A copy of the report was written for me that was easy for me to understand.

No, the report wasn't easy for me to understand.	No, they told me they would write a copy of the report that I could understand, but I never got one.	Yes, they did write a report that I could understand, and I was given a copy.

Did my Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) support me?

Top Tip: Read more about how your IRO can help you in this special edition of Thrive magazine. Read it here (page 4).

9. I met my Independent Reviewing Officer long enough before my review so that I could talk about how I wanted it to be.

No, I only met them just before the meeting.	I met with them long before the meeting, but we didn't really talk about whether I was happy with what was going to happen.	Yes, I met with them long before the meeting. They explained what was going to happen and asked me how I felt about it, and whether I would like to change anything.

Deciding who sees the things that were written about me.

10. I was able to have a say about the report that was written about me, and who could see certain parts of the report.

No, I wasn't asked about who I wanted to see the report.	I was asked about this, but I don't feel I was listened to.	Yes. I was asked about this and I felt people did their best to do what I asked.

What did you think about your review?

11. Overall, do you feel that you were asked how you wanted your review to be, that you were listened to and that people did their best to make the changes you wanted to see happen?

Not at all	Not really	Yes

12. If not, what are the reasons you were unhappy with your review? Make some suggestions in the box below about how things could change for next time.

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12. Additional supporting resources

Co-production Network for Wales
The Co-production Network for Wales has produced a number of resources on co-production. The information and downloads can be accessed here.

Children and Young People Now
The foundations for children and young people's participation in decision making over key aspect of their lives are contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which the UK Government ratified into law in 1991.

More information on participation and co -production can be found here.

New Economics Foundation
A guide for co-producing children's services by Jody Aked and Lucie Stephens can be found here.

Public Administration Review
(September – October pp 846-860: Tony Bovard 2017).
Beyond engagement and participation: user and community co-production of public services. Access article here.

ADCS Virtual Staff College
Co-production in Children's Services: a think piece by Anna Wright can be accessed here.

Boingboing and University of Brighton
All together now: a toolkit for co-production with young people for use by Wolverhampton service providers, commissioners and schools (2018) by Anne Rathbone and others can be found here

Public Management Review
Embarking on the social innovation journey: a systematic review regarding the potential of co-creation with citizens. Paper for the IRSPM Conference, Prague, April 2013. William Voorberg, Viktor Bekkers and Lars Tummers, can be found here.

Social Care Wales
Co-production is one of the main principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It means working with and involving individuals. Some helpful resources can be downloaded here

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)
SCIE has developed a useful online toolbox focusing on co-production and involving young people in developing social care.

Fosterline Wales factsheets and briefing papers
There are a number of helpful factsheets and briefing papers available on The Fostering Network website.

The factsheets can be accessed here.
The briefing papers can be accessed here.

Fostering Communities: Co-production in learning and development
As part of the Fostering Communities programme, we have developed two briefing papers which focus on engaging co-production in the development of learning and development opportunities, for fostering services and foster carers. The briefing papers can be accessed here – Introducing co-production at the evaluation stage of a project cycle and Co-production: Reflecting on professional learning and development for foster carers.

13. How the Fostering Network can help

The Fostering Network offers advice, information and support. Our expertise and knowledge are always up-to-date and available through our vital member helplines, publications, training and consultancy.

Advice
Fosterline Wales is delivered by The Fostering Network and funded by the Welsh Government. It is an independent and confidential advice line for the public on all matters related to fostering.

Call us on 0800 316 7664 from 9.30am - 12.30pm Monday to Friday.
If you call outside this time, please leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.

You can email us at:
fosterlinewales@fostering.net

Support and resources
Our website is an essential source of information, while our online community brings together foster carers for peer support and advice. You can login to share your experience and get advice from other foster carers. Our online community is a safe and secure area to discuss foster care matters.
thefosteringnetwork.org.uk

Training and consultancy
Wherever you are in your fostering career, as a foster carer, social worker or manager, The Fostering Network has a range of training designed to meet your development needs.

In particular, The Fostering Network can deliver specific in-service training and open courses on the following:

Fostering Co-production: **Working in partnership with children and young people looked after**
Aim This two-day course will provide practitioners with knowledge and skills to work co-productively with children and young people and review their systems to embed co-production within their organisational practices.
Objectives • Provide an overview of the Welsh context for co-production. • Discuss key issues in relation to shared power with children and young people. • Identify and practise core skills for working with children and young people. • Share examples of what works from research and practice. • Conduct an audit of current skills and organisational practice. • Design a model of co-production for your organisation. • Develop a process to embed culture change in your organisation.

As the leading fostering charity, The Fostering Network can draw on expertise from a range of fostering and co-production topics. We will work with you to create a package of consultancy to help your service achieve its aims and objectives.

For more information, please email Maria Boffey, Head of Operations in Wales, maria.boffey@fostering.net

14. Your feedback

The Fostering Network welcomes comments on any aspect of this guide which will inform our future work and further development of the Fostering Communities programme. We are also very interested in collecting examples of good practice.

Please email:

Maria Boffey
Head of Operations
The Fostering Network in Wales
maria.boffey@fostering.net

About The Fostering Network

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of fostered children to make foster care the very best it can be.

Contact

To find out more about our work in Wales, please contact:
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