

# **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND MUSIC MAKING**

## **AN EVIDENCE REVIEW**

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Many thanks to all of those who contributed to this review.

Through their routine reporting of activity to Youth Music:

- Youth Music Action Zone funded partners
- First round Sing Up Beyond the Mainstream partners

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By participating in an interview exploring their views and experiences of delivering and supporting music-making projects targeted at looked after children:

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## Executive Summary

This report explores the outcomes that can be achieved through music-making projects for looked after children, and the barriers and facilitators to the effective delivery of these projects. While the findings are primarily based on evidence gathered from Youth Music's funded partners who have delivered work for this group of young people, they also draw on the limited published evidence base available.

The poor outcomes experienced by children who have been in care when compared to their peers are well documented. They are apparent across a range of areas in their lives, including: educational achievement; employment status; contact with the criminal justice system; mental health well-being; experiences of homelessness; and substance misuse. The factors that contribute to these poor outcomes are complex and reflect looked after children's pre-care and care experiences, as well as their personal needs. Alongside a range of other activities and interventions, music-making has been identified in both government and other published evidence as having a role to play in meeting these young people's needs. The findings of this review provide further evidence of this.

Analysis of the collective experiences of Youth Music funded partner's to date shows that engagement in high quality music-making projects has the potential to deliver on a range of outcomes which can support the development of looked after children's resilience when dealing with the barriers they face as children in care. Three sets of outcomes were identified; social and personal development outcomes; music-making outcomes; other educational outcomes.

1. Music-making can contribute to the development of a wide range of social and personal development outcomes for looked after children.

Among those identified were:

- Improved negotiation skills and co-operative working developed through group work;
- Learning to trust peers by relying on and supporting others in the course of the project;
- Developing both a capacity to express themselves and a stronger sense of self awareness through music-making, particularly by writing lyrics;
- Increased levels of self-discipline and a sense of responsibility for their actions;
- A sense of achievement attained through developing new music-making skills, the production of high quality musical outputs and performing;
- A positive sense of belonging and shared identity with other young people in care, which supported their understanding of the context in which they were living;
- Making friends through a positive activity;
- Developing positive relationships with adults (music leaders and carers) who modelled constructive ways of both working with others and dealing with conflict, and who live a life engaging in a positive activity such as music-making;
- Having the opportunity to have fun and 'escape' their problems through a positive activity;
- Cutting across all of the outcomes was increased confidence, both on a personal and skill-based level;
- Increased self-esteem and sense of self-efficacy.

2. Young people developed a range of music-making skills across the projects, including: DJing; lyric writing; music technology; music production; performance and stage techniques; performing in a collective (band or choir); playing a musical instrument; singing; song-writing; and, writing compositions. Some continued to make music after the project. While before they may not have been able to access a 'mainstream' project for one of a variety of reasons, after the targeted project the barriers had been removed and their options of progressing musically opened up.

3. Two other educational outcomes were also identified:

- Looked after children developed a range of potentially transferrable skills through projects, these included: dance; video making; camera use; computer skills; and graphic design. Participants for whom English was not their first language improved it through writing lyrics and engaging with music leaders and other young people through English.
- Where young people engaged well with a project, this could contribute to their improved engagement with learning and in turn education. By developing the skills to learn music-making these could then be applied to other educational settings. These included learning to 'push through' the frustrations and setbacks of learning a new skill; turning up on time; and trusting and working with an adult.

Collectively these outcomes reflect the development of skills that can help build looked after children's resilience, which in turn could help to narrow the gap with their peers in other areas of their lives. For example, learning to engage positively with an adult within an educational setting, developing the self-discipline to turn up to sessions on time, and being able to work within a group are all critical skills needed to engage in school. There is evidence of some young people progressing to 'mainstream' projects that they had not previously felt equipped to access suggesting that participation had helped develop the skills necessary to bridge the gap with their peers.

Positive outcomes were also identified for the adults involved in the delivery of these projects. Music leaders found the work rewarding and challenging, and felt it had a positive impact on their professional development. For carers it was a new way to engage and communicate with their young people. It provided an opportunity to gain insights into the needs and skills of their young people, which could then be used to inform their care plan. Overall, it supported a social pedagogical approach to working with their children in care.

Delivering music-making projects for looked after children was perceived to bring with it a high level of responsibility. Projects needed to take account of the vulnerability of many of the participants and ensure the projects were of the highest quality to deliver on the best outcomes possible. A range of facilitators to effective delivery were identified, these included:

- Partnership working with Children's Services and carers at all stages of the project was critical;
- Creating a physically and emotionally safe environment in which young people felt accepted, nurtured, and that they were not being judged by others;
- Taking a child/young person-centred approach to project delivery in which young people influence the project's content and its desired outcomes, and their specific needs are met;
- Having a long-term plan for young people's progression so that the project does not mirror both the lack of consistency and instability that characterise the lives of many children and young people in care;
- Having appropriately skilled music leaders whose skills should include excellent music leading skills, an understanding of the issues children in care face, an ability to manage groups in a fair way so that every young person's voice is heard, and realistic expectations of the outcomes that can be achieved;
- Training for music leaders and carers – training for music leaders on the needs of looked after children and for carers on the benefits of music-making;
- Having mechanisms in place to overcome barriers to retention;

- Providing the opportunity to produce a tangible output such as a CD/DVD, a performance, or an award had a range of benefits including: providing young people with an opportunity to receive affirmation; providing a medium in which young people in care's voices could be heard by the carers and senior members of Children's Services; and an opportunity to challenge negative assumptions about children in care.

Overall the review found that participation in high quality music-making projects could have a positive impact on young people in care. While it impacted them directly by developing a range of skills necessary to support their resilience, the findings suggest it also impacted on them indirectly by supporting better care plans by improving relationships and understanding of their needs among their carers and Children's Services staff.



# Section 1 - Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Working with 'Children in Challenging Circumstances' is one of Youth Music's Strategic Goals for 2010-15 under which looked after children have been identified as a specific 'Focus for Action'. Youth Music has worked with many looked after children over the past ten years, in particular through its Youth Music Action Zone (YMAZ) programme. Therefore it was decided to carry out an evidence review to provide a synthesis of what is known about the value of delivering music-making projects to this group and issues surrounding this work. This report presents the findings of that review.

## 1.2 Methodological Approach and Limitations

The review draws on evidence from four main sources: published articles; government reports and those from other key organisations; reports from Youth Music's funded partners; and interviews with a small sample of stakeholders (see Appendix A for a full description of the methodology).

There are a number of limitations to this review that should be noted:

- It is based in part on the self-evaluation and monitoring reports from funded partners.
- Young people were not directly consulted as part of data collection. Instead their views have been filtered through project reports or interviews with stakeholders.
- It is not an evaluation of the projects and therefore does not explore which projects worked well, for which young people and why. Nor is it a practice guide on how to work with looked after children. Instead it focuses on answering the question 'why do music-making with this group' and draws out some of the key issues identified in doing so.
- It is based on reports of activity completed up to the end of 2008/09. A description of current Youth Music funded projects for looked after children is available in Appendix B.

## 1.3 The Report Outline

This report is divided into four sections. This introductory section is followed by Section 2 which describes: the profile of looked after children in England and the issues they face; and the available evidence on the outcomes of music-making activity for looked after children. Section 3 forms the main body of the report and presents the findings of a review of Youth Music funded work with these young people to date. It explores the outcomes achieved through this work and the key barriers and facilitators to delivering on them. It also includes a number of thematic case studies based on projects. The final section, Section 4, discusses the implications of these findings within the broader context of work in this area.

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, 'looked after children' are also referred to as 'children in care'



## Section 2 - Looked After Children

### 2.1 The Context

The term 'looked after children' was introduced by the 'Children Act 1989' and refers to children and young people under the age of 18 who are under the care of a local authority, either as a result of a voluntary agreement with their parents or as a result of a court order. On the 31st of March 2009 there were 60,900 looked after children in England (55 per 10,000 children under 18 years old), a number which has remained consistent since 2002 but is 5,000 more than in 1999. This group includes young people from a range of age groups and ethnic backgrounds (see Box 1).

#### Box 1: Profile of looked after children in England

On the 31st of March 2009 there were 60,900 looked after children in England of whom:

- 57% were male, 43% female;
- 21% were aged 16 years and over, 41% were 10-15 years old, 17% were 5-9 years old, 16% 1-4, and 5% were under the age of one;
- the majority (76%) were White, 8% were of Mixed ethnic origin, 7% were Black or Black British, and 8% were either Asian, Asian British or from another ethnic group; and
- 3,700 were unaccompanied asylum seeking children, 87% of whom were male and 33% of whom were under the age of 16.

Source: Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), 2009.

When considering the reasons why young people are taken into care it is clear that by the time this happens many will have already had experiences that could have had a profound effect on their development. They do not tend to be taken into care because of their own behaviour: the majority (61%) are taken in because they are experiencing 'abuse or neglect'; 11% because of 'family dysfunction'; 9% due to 'absent parenting'; another 9% because they come from a 'family in acute distress'; 4% because of a 'parent's illness or disability'; and 4% because of the 'child's disability'. Finally, only 2% are taken into care because of their own 'socially unacceptable behaviour' (DCSF, 2009).

Once under the care of a local authority, looked after children are placed in one of a number of care settings including foster placements, children's homes, secure units, hostels and residential care homes. In March 2009, the majority (73%) had been placed in foster care, compared to 10% who were in either a children's home, a hostel or a secure unit (ibid). Their time in care tends to be characterised by multiple placements of varying lengths, which can create instability in the young people's lives and can have a particularly negative impact on their participation in education and educational attainment (DCSF, 2006). Research carried out by young people with looked after children (Get the Life You Want, 2009) found that short term placements impacted negatively on their ability to make friends, form strong relationships and engage in education.

Once in care the state takes on parental responsibility for these young people, with local authorities acting as their 'corporate parent'. However, when we consider the body of evidence on the outcomes experienced by looked after children, concerns are raised for their well-being and life chances. On 30th September 2009 there were 43,200 children who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months by English local authorities, the outcomes for whom included:

- only 15% obtained at least one GCSE or GNVQ at grades A\* to C, compared to 70% of all children- the gap between the two groups has been widening over the last five years;

- 27% of those who were eligible for full-time schooling had a statement of special educational needs, compared to 2.7% of all other children.
- 8.7% had been convicted or were subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year, compared to 3.5% of all children (DCSF, 2010).

This picture is repeated throughout the body of evidence on the outcomes for looked after children, for example:

- 45% have been found to have a diagnosable mental health disorder, compared to 10% of the general population of children and young people (McAuley & Davis, 2009);
- 35% of care leavers have experienced homelessness (Dixon, 2008);
- 23% of adult prisoners have been in care (Social Services Inspectorate research as cited in DCSF, 2007);
- they are four times more likely than their peers to smoke, use alcohol and misuse drugs (cited in DfES, 2007, p. 90);
- they are more likely not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) as compared to young people as a whole. Due to timing and definitional differences the figures are not strictly comparable but according to figures published in 2009, 31% of former care leavers were NEET compared to 17% overall for young people of a similar age (DCSF, 2009).

The factors that contribute to these poor outcomes are complex and reflect looked after children's pre-care and care experiences, as well as their personal needs. For example, it is well documented that children in care are much more likely than other children to have experienced risk factors that may predispose them to the development of mental disorders. Indeed, these risk factors, such as having experienced neglect or abuse at the hands of a parent, are often the reasons why they have entered the care system (Richardson and Lelliott, 2003; McAuley and Davis, 2009). It is beyond the scope of this review to provide an in-depth exploration of why these outcomes occur and indeed why not all looked after children and care leavers suffer short or long-term adverse consequences. However, the outcomes outlined above evidence the challenges that they face and support the view that looked after children are among the most vulnerable members of society.

The previous Government had stated its commitment to improving outcomes for all children living in the UK. The 'Every Child Matters' agenda aims to provide all children, irrespective of their circumstances, with the support they need to be: healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and, achieve economic well-being (DfES, 2004). However, when considered alongside the outcomes for looked after children outlined above significant challenges remain for government and others responsible for their care. In response, the last decade has seen a number of government legislation and policy initiatives directed at children in care. These have focussed on improving the quality and stability of placements for children in care, and the outcomes for individual children- narrowing the gap between them and those in the general population. 'Care Matters: Time for a change' (DfES, 2007) - the Government's White Paper on children in care - is explicit in its commitment to improve their outcomes, support improvements to the care system to be able to meet children and young people's needs, and to have the child's voice at the heart of the care system.

*"[Children and young people in care] want to succeed in education, enjoy a wide range of positive activities and make a successful transition to adult life. First and foremost, those in care are children and young people. We must have high ambitions and expectations for them. We must help them to reach their potential by providing excellent parenting, a high quality education, opportunities to develop their talents and skills, and effective support for their transition to adulthood."* (DfES, 2007, p 5).

This has led to a focus on addressing the gap between looked after children and other young



people, and music-making has been identified as having a role to play in doing so. The importance of creativity for children in care in general has been recognised and supported through government policy. While it is unclear what the new Government's approach will be, music was identified by the previous Government as having a role in delivering on better outcomes for these young people. Providing wider access to positive leisure activities (such as music-making) was noted in 'Care Matters' as one of the measures being undertaken to promote their health and wider well-being. It was also noted as one of the activities that could promote a social pedagogical approach within the care system.

## 2.2 The outcomes of music making for looked after children - published evidence

The benefits of music for children and young people are well documented in published literature. Hallam's review (2009) provides a detailed analysis of peer-reviewed evidence of the outcomes of music (including music-making) on the intellectual, social and development of children and young people . Evidence of positive outcomes was identified in relation to:

- perceptual and language skills;
- literacy and numeracy;
- intellectual development;
- general attainment;
- creativity;
- social and personal development; and
- physical development, health and well-being.

While an evidence base exists for the value of music-making for children and young people, the current review has not found evidence that looks specifically at the associated outcomes for looked after children (see Appendix A outlining the methodological approach). This is not to suggest that children in care do not experience the same or similar benefits rather that it has not been a focus of published academic papers.

<sup>2</sup>It is beyond the scope of this review to recount in detail the findings of this review but it is highly recommended and is available at [http://www.ioe.ac.uk/Year\\_of\\_Music.pdf](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/Year_of_Music.pdf)

However, more general mention of the benefits of music-making for looked after children, alongside other positive recreational activities, was found in the literature. This was mainly associated with the development of their resilience. The concept of resilience is a common one within the care sector. In its simplest terms, it describes “a set of qualities that helps a person to withstand many of the negative effects of adversity.... Bearing in mind what has happened to them, a resilient child does better than he or she ought to do” (Gilligan, 2000).

There is a wide range of qualities associated with resilience that develop through a young person’s life, including: self esteem; self-efficacy; initiative; faith and morality; trust; attachment; a secure base; meaningful roles; autonomy; identity; insight; and, humour (Maclean, 2003). Involvement in recreational activities (such as music-making) has been found to help develop children in care’s resilience (Gilligan, 2008). While not specifically focused on music-making, Gilligan’s work (2008) shows that recreational activity can do this in a number of ways, for example: offer children in care opportunities to develop a “precious sense of mastery” in certain spheres of activity; broaden their social networks; cultivate a set of social roles that may enhance their health and well-being; and, develop positive and important social relationships with peers or adults.

A number of the qualities of resilience mentioned above and the outcomes noted in Gilligan’s work reflect those outlined in Hallam’s paper (2009); in the final section of this report the implications of this will be considered alongside the findings from the review of Youth Music’s evidence.

There is also a dearth of ‘grey literature’ on this topic. An evaluation of a music and theatre initiative (Salmon & Rickaby, 2008) was carried out as part of the National Children’s Bureau’s work on ‘People with Passion’ (Chambers, 2008). The musical was the story of a young person in care and performers included both looked after children and others not in care. While not just related to the music-making, it found that children in care who had taken part developed: performance, communication and team-working skills; heightened self-awareness which had impacted positively on their abilities to co-operate and be tolerant of each other; friendships and social connectedness; and, increased confidence and pride in their activities.

While there is little published evidence available on the outcomes associated with music-making for looked after children, there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise among Youth Music’s funded partners and others who are working in this area. The following Section presents the findings from a review of the evidence available from Youth Music’s funded partners.

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<sup>3</sup>There is a body of evidence on the use of music therapy with looked after children but that is not within the brief for this review due to the specific delivery contexts associated with music therapy.

## Section 3 - Review of Youth Music's Evidence

This section draws on the knowledge and expertise of Youth Music's funded partners to explore three key areas:

- the kinds of projects funded partners have run to date and the profile of the young people taking part;
- the outcomes achieved through this work for the young people, carers and music staff/ organisations; and
- an overview of the barriers and facilitators to delivering on these outcomes.

The focus is on those findings related to working specifically with looked after children. As mentioned before, it is based on an analysis of monitoring and self-evaluation reports, independent evaluation reports and interviews with a sample of those working in this area from both the music and care contexts (see Appendix A for a description of the methodology). Where quotes are used, they have been taken directly from one of these sources - where possible these are attributed to the relevant anonymised stakeholder, otherwise they are noted as coming from a 'report'; terms that appear in parenthesis recurred in a number of different sources of evidence.

### 3.1 Youth Music Funded Projects

#### 3.1.1 Project profile

Youth Music has funded a wide range of projects that have worked with looked after children. These projects have varied in terms of their funding structure, length, content, and target audience.

- While some were funded mainly by Youth Music, others had more complex funding structures involving a number of partners including, local Children's Services, educational trusts, and other creative arts organisations.
- Projects varied in length from being delivered intensively over a number of days, to weekly sessions over a period of months.
- Project content varied and included a broad range of music-making activity. For example, there were multi-media projects involving dance and video, and those that only involved music-making. They covered a range of activities, including music technology, instrumental tuition and singing.
- Children in care are a diverse group of young people who live in a range of different settings (see below). Projects reflected this. They could be open to all looked after children in a particular locality, open only to those from some care settings, or be just for those living in a particular care setting.

#### 3.1.2 Project participants

The diversity in projects is mirrored in the profile of participants. They ranged in age from 5 to 18 (and up to 25 where they had special educational needs). They included young people in foster care, short and longer stay children's homes, residential care homes for young people with disabilities, unaccompanied minors seeking asylum living in semi-independent housing, and recent care leavers also living in semi-independent housing.

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<sup>4</sup> The focus of this review was on projects targeted specifically at looked after children. However, Youth Music also funds 'mainstream' projects in which looked after children will participate.

As described in section 2.1 looked after children can face a wide range of challenges. This is reflected in the Youth Music evidence reviewed which considered the experiences of children in care who had taken part in Youth Music funded projects. They faced challenges to do with the reasons why they were in care and their experiences since entering the care system.

These included:

- being physically, emotionally or sexually abused by their parents or carers;
- being separated from their siblings;
- experiencing family bereavement;
- having drug or alcohol-related birth defects;
- having a lack of knowledge and understanding about why they were in care;
- instability in terms of moving regularly within the care system;
- uncertainty about their future;
- a lack of control over how decisions are made about their lives;
- having learning or physical disabilities - where this was the reason they were in care these could be particularly severe.
- being 'avoided' or 'feared' by young people not in the care system; and
- adults judging them according to negative stereotypes of children in care conveyed through the media.

These experiences were reported to have impacted detrimentally on young people's social, physical and emotional well-being. Effects included: a lack of confidence in themselves and others; difficulties with trusting others; loneliness; abandonment; guilt; disempowerment; confusion; anger; and disengagement. In the context of the current review, these were identified as presenting a barrier to children in care accessing 'mainstream' music-making opportunities, potentially leading to difficulties in their engaging with projects, and causing some to withdraw from elements or the whole of a project.

"This is the key to thinking about children in public care- they are so not the authors of their fate but they live out that story. It's a tragic story, there aren't that many happy endings in that story.... They have that curious blend of having some adult experiences within a child's body, which should never have happened, but they have a child's responses to a world that doesn't reflect their biological growth" (programme director).

*"Children in care can be both resilient and fragile in equal measure"* (project lead).

Not all looked after children face the problems outlined above, and the tendency to generalise about children in care was sometimes criticised by carers and music staff. They were also frequently described as adaptable, resilient and intelligent. Recognising the diversity within this group was perceived to be important. While the complex needs of these young people highlight the need to work with this group, it also means that working with such a potentially vulnerable group comes with a responsibility to ensure the project was of the highest quality and had the resources needed to meet their needs.

### 3.2 What are the outcomes achieved by music-making projects?

While the focus for this review was on the outcomes of music-making for looked after children, outcomes for both their carers and those delivering the projects have also been identified. It is not suggested that all projects have produced these outcomes, indeed at least one project was reported as having achieved few, if any. Instead these should be considered to be the kinds of outcomes that can potentially be achieved through delivering high quality music-making projects for children in care. They are based on the collective experiences of the diverse range of projects supported to date and are focused on outcomes identified as being of particular significance for this group.

# Thematic Case Study 1

## Music Wise - One Voice Choir

Music-making can have a positive impact on relationship among carers, and between carers and their young people.

The One Voice Choir in 2007/08 was run as part of Music Wise, the name of the YMAZ programme in Norfolk delivered by Community Music East. This project was set up with the Corporate Parenting Team at Norfolk County Council Children's Services for children to sing together and work with their key workers, carers, parents and families. The project was found to have a number of positive outcomes including improved relationships both amongst carers and between carers and their young people. Feedback from the key worker at the Corporate Parenting Team illustrates this:

"The choir really has been a success in so many ways - not only did we manage to make a performance at the Education Matters conference - which is about raising the achievement of looked after children, but in November we performed at the Celebration of Achievement for looked after children.

The main achievements of the choir have I think been twofold - for staff/carers it has been an opportunity to all work together - without hierarchy and boundaries which normally separate us in Corporate Parenting - and to actually take part actively in the philosophy of Corporate Parenting; and for the children and young people - interacting with carers and staff in a 'normal' way, again, without boundaries and power issues which can so often separate our looked after children from social workers, managers etc.

Many of our looked after children have suffered terrible traumatic experiences, which can leave them with difficulties in concentration, in relaxation and trust. The Choir has offered the opportunity for us - adults and children, to experience these aspects, and so many of us have learned to relax more in each other's company. The choir has helped us to work towards Enjoying and Achieving and Making a Positive Contribution."

### 3.2.1 Outcomes achieved for looked after children

Three sets of outcomes for looked after children were identified in the evidence:

- social, personal and emotional development outcomes;
- music-making outcomes; and
- other educational outcomes.

#### 3.2.1.1 Social, personal and emotional development outcomes

The power of music-making to contribute to young people's social, personal and emotional development is well documented (see Hallam, 2009). The findings from the current review suggest that similar outcomes can be experienced by children in care. Many of these outcomes are inter-related but for presentational purposes they are explored individually below.

##### a. Team working skills

Children in care sometimes have problems working within a group. This was attributed to a lack of opportunity to learn the necessary social skills in the 'usual' ways, such as through positive family relationships or friendships. Group work within music-making projects provided an opportunity to develop these skills. Common themes were that in the course of the project young people had 'pulled together', they had learnt to share, negotiate, empathise, listen to other people's points of view and make decisions on a group basis. Being part of a band provided a valuable opportunity to develop these skills - they had to negotiate what the group would perform, who would play what instrument and in which formation. The experience fostered co-operative working for them to achieve their joint goal- as noted in one project while young people come to the project as an individual, when playing in a band they had to "learn to come together and adapt to fit with each other"(programme director). In another project, participants specifically acknowledged in their introduction to a performance of their work the collaboration necessary to produce the work and expressed appreciation to the project staff who had supported them in working in this way.

##### b. Trusting peers

A lack of trust in others was commonly cited as something experienced by children in care. By learning to rely on and support others in the course of a project, this could help develop trust between participants. For example, when struggling with some of the activities they were described as 'looking after each other, encouraging and urging each other to do it' (New Roots- Alyson interview). In another project it was reported that "[the participant] has involved herself fully in group discussions. She has gone from struggling alone with writing to asking for help and discussing her ideas" (programme director). Mutual support developed as projects progressed and was referred to as particularly evident at end of project celebrations when young people were coping with nerves and the excitement of performing. Building trusting relationships with adults involved in the project is discussed below.

##### c. Self-expression & self-awareness

Making music was described as providing looked after children with a valuable opportunity to express themselves and develop a stronger sense of self-awareness. It was identified as a core element of this work and one that set music-making apart from other 'leisure activities'. For example, playing an instrument enabled young people to express emotions such as anger in a positive channel - *"I think it's a great opportunity to really get out your aggression, especially on drums... it's all really exciting"* (project participant).



Cutting across many of the projects was the finding that lyric-writing was a powerful tool for self-expression and to build self-awareness. It provided children in care with the opportunity to draw on their own experiences, explore their feelings and express themselves through a medium which tended to be new to them. It gave children in care 'a voice of their own' and the space to articulate feelings and issues that were important to them. Furthermore, they reflected on their experiences and by providing a forum in which to discuss these, it helped develop an understanding and awareness of the challenges they faced. This was particularly useful where young people found it difficult to express themselves through other mediums- "[writing lyrics] helped her to talk about the difficult topic of going into care fairly easily" (project lead). It also helped carers and other adults understand the issues children in care face (see below and section 3.3)

*"It helps them develop awareness of who they are and what they've been through. It's an expressive tool as well- some of them can't articulate how they feel on a day-to-day basis but can say it through a song" (programme director).*

#### d. Self-discipline and responsibility

Being part of a group and engaging with the creative process was found to help young people learn self-discipline and develop a sense of responsibility for their actions. Behavioural difficulties of varying levels were mentioned in a number of reports but it was found in some cases that as projects progressed young people developed the self-discipline to address their behaviour. Their patience and concentration levels grew as they practiced and 'stuck at' the creative process, learning their new skill. They also learnt to accept other people's views rather than 'kick off' when their suggestion was not adopted by the group. All of these helped young people increase their self-discipline and, in turn, improve their own behaviour.

Their sense of responsibility to others in the group also developed. Where participants were divided into small groups to carry out tasks that would feed into the work of the large group, this fostered both co-operative working (as discussed above) and a sense of responsibility among participants. They knew that if they did not complete their small-group task then the whole group would be held back. Their timekeeping also improved where they understood the consequences for the group of not all members arriving or returning from breaks on time.

#### e. Achievement

Opportunities to 'achieve' were reported to be too rare in the lives of children in care. Many have a fractured experience of education and their separation from their family mean that they may identify themselves as a "failure" (Stafford et al., 2007). There appeared to be an assumption among some carers and young people themselves that this would also be the case for the music project. However, as evidenced throughout this section, there are numerous examples to show that this assumption was wrong. Young people learnt new music-making skills, produced high quality musical outputs (see Section 3.2.1.2) and did well-received performances.

*"Actually seeing the song as one piece gave a lot of the young people a sense of achievement as they/their ideas had been involved in that" (carer).*

Where young people had an opportunity to perform it celebrated these achievements, compounding the sense of affirmation- "when doing the showcases it's palpable the sense of achievement" (programme director). Accreditation, certificates, CDs or DVDs of their music, and other meaningful awards or outputs in making concrete these achievements was noted as particularly important for this group. The importance of these outputs is discussed in section 3.3.

*"By succeeding at something they didn't think they could succeed at some of our participants find that their negative assumptions about themselves and their abilities are at least challenged" (project lead).*



f. Sense of belonging/Shared identity

While looked after children are far from a homogenous group, they will have a number of shared life experiences associated with being in care. By providing them with an opportunity to discuss and share their experiences, this was perceived to have helped them develop a sense of belonging and a shared identity. As discussed above many of the projects involved writing lyrics, which in some cases was done as a group. Where they drew on their own experiences of care and knew other participants were also in care, this often led to broader discussions about their lives. For example, how long it had been since they had seen a parent, how many houses had they lived in over the last while, and how they got on with their social worker and foster carer. In an environment where looked after children often felt excluded and 'different' from their peers, the experience of having 'fitted in' and feeling that they 'are not alone in the care system' were highly valued. A Children's Service worker reflected on the value for a couple of younger participants who had recently been taken into care, were not yet comfortable in their placements and were feeling "very at sea"- by spending time with other children in care they were able to feel a shared experience of being in care and a "sense of belonging".

Another Children's Service worker commented that some children and young people see the value in not having to explain themselves or their circumstances. Beyond the commonality of not being able to live with their parents, these children and young people recognised their diverse experiences and circumstances without feeling the need to focus on them or share information. In these situations, the commonality alone leads to a tacit understanding between the children and young people creating a positive environment without the need for further disclosure.

<sup>5</sup> An article was co-authored by John Stafford of soundLINCS and was submitted as part of the evidence to be considered for this review.

## Thematic Case Study 2

### Lyrics and self-expression- Cre8tiveVocals

Cre8tiveVocals was run by Brighton & Hove Music, Arts and Study Support (MAS) in partnership with Rhythmix and Brighton & Hove Music Trust as part of the Sing Up Beyond the Mainstream programme. A focus of this project was encouraging young people in care to use the medium of lyrics to express themselves. All of the participants made choices about what their song would be about and what genre and nature of music they would work with. Their music leader considered it important that they had ownership of their singing journey, as much of their experience is based on situations in which choice has been taken from them. The experiences of the two following young people illustrate the ability of young people to express themselves through their lyrics.

Child Z was 15 and living in foster care. While for the first three sessions of the project he was on time, he was always about an hour late or early for subsequent sessions and he was quite challenging to engage. Eventually he told the Singing Animator that his carer was no longer bringing him and he now needed a series of two or three buses to get to the project. Despite this barrier he attended all the sessions which according to his social worker "clearly demonstrated" how much he enjoyed the project. Although he did not seem verbally expressive he wrote a song about missing his Mum (see below). However, he chose to record a version of Michael Jackson's 'She's out of my life' for the project's CD rather than his own song. His comments about the project included: "I always enjoyed it"; "I would like to do more"; and, "I liked that I was able to choose which songs we did".

Lyrics to child Z's song about missing his mother:

*I can remember a place  
I was touching your face  
But you never came back  
And I was left alone-ee  
This is what you did to me*

*All alone just waitin'  
Just waitin' for you  
To ring and say  
You'll be here*

Child X was 9 and attended a mainstream school. She was described as a very bright, self-contained child who enjoyed light banter but found it hard to hit the right note when singing. When the venue for the sessions changed from a small, dark basement in the school with a window that just showed children's feet in the playground to a light, quiet room at MAS, this was seen to have a very positive impact on the young person. The Singing Animator said that "while we were warming up X asked me if I had any children - my response was that I felt too much of a child myself to have any. X then revealed the shock and anger she still felt as being taken away from her family in the middle of the night with no warning. In that session X also decided that she would write a song. The piece is about X nurturing her hamster- and how much her hamster loves X and her smelly socks". She also wrote a song about her mother, the lyrics of which are reproduced below.

Taking part in the project was perceived to have had a positive impact on the young person, as reflected in the feedback received from her carer: "When X came to us two years ago we privately described her as 'tone deaf'! She had no opportunity to explore music at all, and given her story of deprivation and loss, we were sure she'd had no reason to want to sing. She is now showing great improvement and loves to sing along to herself. Her confidence has improved enormously and she is very proud of the lovely CD that you made together".

Source: Cre8tiveVocals final report, September 2009.



g. Making friends

Taking part in a group project meant young people could make friends. As discussed above, friendships were sometimes grounded in their shared experiences of care. Reports of participants being eager to see others in their group and developing strong links over the course of the project were common. Given their sometimes limited opportunities to make friends due to instability in their placements, among other reasons, being able to make friends through a positive activity was highly valued. These friendships appeared to form in both short and longer term projects.

h. Positive relationships with adults

Participants sometimes developed positive relationships with music leaders and carers involved in the project. Looked after children were described as having been consistently let down by adults and also being acutely aware that most adults responsible for their care were paid to do so. Opportunities to develop new positive relationships with adults were welcomed.

Music leaders: Music leaders tended to be described as positive role models for these young people. A Children's Services worker described how the "relaxed, respectful and positive way" that music leaders had interacted with other adults involved in the project and the young people themselves, provided a positive behaviour model for the young people to follow. This was considered particularly important in terms of modelling constructive ways of dealing with conflict. Another benefit was the context in which the relationship developed. Young people were being taken 'at face value' by the music leaders – their views were being formed based on the young person's music-making and engagement with the positive activity rather than on information in their 'case file' history. They also provided a sometimes rare opportunity to engage with an adult through a positive activity, which was not linked specifically to their care status. Some music leaders were described as 'inspirational' for young people having shown them how they could live a life engaging in positive activity.

Where these relationships developed it was noted that clear boundaries needed to be maintained between what was appropriate for a music leader to discuss with the young person and what would need to be referred onto a social worker or other carer. Furthermore, a suitable 'exit strategy' had to be developed and communicated to young people through which it was made clear when the project would end and whether they would continue to have any contact with the music leader. This was considered essential to avoid the relationship with the music leader mirroring other relationships with adults in their lives where they had been let down (see section 3.3).

Carers: Some projects involved carers in the music-making process. In some cases this was reported to have improved the relationship between the looked after children and their carers. Music was a 'leveller' and allowed young people to express themselves. This facilitated communication between the two individuals and encouraged understanding, which in turn could lead to improvements in young people's care more generally (see below). (See also Norfolk Choir Box for illustration of this outcome).

i. Having fun and providing an escape

Music-making was fun and offered young people an opportunity to enjoy themselves and a temporary escape from their problems. It was highlighted that many looked after children do not have opportunities to play as children, and activities that enable this help their development. There was a fun atmosphere in projects, described as one in which there was 'a bit of a laugh' and "good jovial banter".

Singing and playing an instrument offered some young people an 'escape' from their problems. Music leaders were keen for this to remain the case and were reticent about formalising an activity

that offered these young people such a 'refuge'. For example, it was reported that "for three pupils in particular said that singing is a huge solace in their life and seem to use it as a retreat when they are anxious, upset or overwhelmed. It seemed vitally important not to take away that sense of sanctuary by putting them into a conventional pattern of achievement and therefore potential failure" (project report).

*"When I played it was like all my [bad] feelings faded away on one play of the bass [guitar]"*  
(participant feedback).

#### j. Building confidence

Cutting across all of these outcomes was the finding that taking part in music-making projects could improve looked after children's confidence, both on a personal and skill-based level. There were many references to young people who at the start of the project were very withdrawn and shy but as the project progressed they 'came out of themselves'. This was illustrated in a variety of ways- for example: young people who would not say anything in front of the group initially, performed solo in front of them by the end; young people initially hid behind their hoodies and had hands covering their face, but later displayed more relaxed body language.

#### k. Building self-esteem and self-efficacy

Building self-esteem was a recurring theme within the evidence. Furthermore, there was evidence of young people's feelings of self-efficacy being developed. As with 'building confidence' these outcomes cut across many of those already discussed in this section. Their self-esteem was seen to have developed as a result of the various outcomes already discussed. As they developed new skills, felt more confident within a group, received affirmation from others, and learnt to trust both their peers and adults working on the project, they also started to feel better about themselves and develop an increased sense of self-worth. Furthermore, while the lyrics they wrote often reflected difficulties in their lives they also provided the opportunity to tell the story about how they "pick themselves up and carry on" and how they are "not victims all the time", which can help develop positive feelings of self-efficacy (Children's Services worker).

#### l. Better care

Taking part in a project was perceived to have a potentially positive impact on young people's experience of care. First, people's perceptions of children in care were challenged. A Children's Service worker explained that they were often seen as "problems to be managed" but by being exposed to them as "a creative being" a more holistic approach to meeting their needs could be supported. Second, insights into young people's skills and new areas of interest could be fed back to carers and used to inform their Personal Education Plan .

*"Any comments made on an individual plan [which would inform a Personal Education Plan] might present a unique insight into their abilities, interests and potential which are not being observed and captured in other parts of their lives"* (project lead).

Third, it was suggested that by helping to improve communication and understanding between carer and young person, projects could help stabilise young people's placements.

### 3.2.1.2 Music-making outcomes

Young people developed a range of music-making skills across the projects, including:

- DJing;
- lyric writing;
- music technology;

- music production;
- performance and stage techniques;
- performing in a collective (in a band or choir);
- playing a musical instrument;
- singing;
- song-writing; and
- writing compositions.

Participants included those who were developing an interest in music-making for the first time and those who were building on a previous interest. While reports on the quality of music varied, they were often highly complimentary, with one project lead describing the outputs from some of his sessions as “outstanding”.

Some participants were reported to have continued to progress with their music-making after the project. This included playing in a band, continuing to practice themselves without other support, receiving private 1-1 tuition, joining music-making activities in their school, and joining



other (non-looked after children targeted) projects in their community. Behavioural difficulties and issues such as a lack of confidence had prohibited some looked after children from taking part in ‘mainstream’ music-making activities. However, once their confidence had been developed through a targeted project, ‘mainstream’ options opened up. For example, a young man had been playing the drums in his school but had been asked to leave due to behavioural difficulties. After he had taken part in a targeted project in which he had the opportunity to express himself, develop his skills and explore his feelings of anger he re-engaged with the school group. Others had not felt confident enough to put themselves forward for local projects but once they had developed their skills in the ‘safe’ environment of a targeted project they felt better able to apply (see section 3.3.2 for a full discussion on the safe environment of a targeted project).

Project leads tended to work with carers to signpost young people who wanted to continue their music-making and this was seen as an important part of any project. However there were a number of practical barriers to progression for this group that will be discussed in full in section 3.3.5.

### 3.2.1.3 Other educational outcomes

#### a. Transferrable skills

Young people developed skills other than just music-making ones in the course of some projects. For example, where they were multi-media they learnt how to use videos and cameras or to dance. Skills could also be transferable to other educational settings, for example the computer skills learnt through music technology were reported to support their use of computers more generally, the same with design skills learnt through making a CD sleeve.

Participants who did not have English as their first language could improve it through the project. This happened through conversation with the music leader and other participants and was evidenced in their use of English in their lyrics. (See Box example from Pathways to independence.)

<sup>6</sup>The Personal Education Plan forms part of a looked after children’s care plan.

## b. Engagement with learning

As mentioned before, overall looked after children tend to have had a fractured experience of education. The evidence suggests that where a project can support the outcomes outlined above, it has the potential to contribute to young people's improved engagement with learning and in turn education. Projects encouraged them to learn new skills and 'push through' the associated frustrations and setbacks. Furthermore, they helped them improve their concentration, and learn to trust and engage with adults in a learning environment. By doing so this provided an opportunity for other carers or workers to support young people in their education. In some cases this was to re-engage with them, for example an Education Plus co-ordinator involved in a project said that "their self-confidence starts to come through, they trust adults again and it makes them feel good, which enables us to re-engage them and work towards getting them back into education". This is further evidenced by young people's progression to 'mainstream' music projects, as outlined above. For others it was more about encouraging them to remain engaged "when sessions go well the consequent lift can carry participants through the rest of the week at school" (teacher's feedback via project report).

Participants varied in the extent to which they experienced any of these outcomes. However, the point was made that for many of these young people what may appear to be only a small change can be a massive change. For example it was considered a "massive success" (Children's Services worker) where a young person had managed to attend the sessions of a singing project. While they did not sing or say anything until the fifth session, they then said 'hello' to another participant. It was argued that while expectations of what looked after children can achieve through these projects should remain high, they should also be realistic and grounded in the context in which these young people are based.

### 3.2.2 Outcomes for carers

Supporting a music-making project can be time consuming for carers. However, the evidence suggests that they also benefitted from being involved in the project in three main ways. First, engaging in the project enabled them to get to know their young people better. A recurring theme was that it was a positive and fun environment in which opportunities arose for carers to communicate with their young people in a different way and for them to see a very 'different side' to each other. It helped carers see young people's potential as an individual and to work with them in a more creative way outside the project.

Second, where other carers were involved in the project they got to know each other. The music-making was a 'leveller' and it allowed them to engage in a non-hierarchical environment.

Third, carers in some settings received training in music-making or (in one case) its associated accreditation. Feedback on training in music-making was generally positive in that carers enjoyed the experience and learnt new skills. Where they were trained to monitor the Arts Award, this added to their skill base and fed into their creative interests.

A Children's Service provider noted that these outcomes complement a social pedagogical approach to care, which is being encouraged throughout the care system. Social pedagogy is an approach described as "the point where care and education meet- providing nurturance, socialisation, upbringing, education in its widest sense and supporting child development" (Chambers, 2008). While the term may not have been specifically used by others in this review, descriptions of carer's practice would suggest that it would be reflected in their work.

## Thematic Case Study 3

### SoundProof Plus- Make Some Noise

Music-making provided a positive outlet for young people to express negative feelings such as anger.

The SoundProof Plus programme run by Make Some Noise as part of the YMAZ programme, delivered a variety of music technology workshops within care settings across Staffordshire. B is a young person in care who began attending the project in early 2008. He had been through a really traumatic experience, which has left him with a massive anger problem. He was a keen budding rapper who was really keen to learn how to write his own beats and record his vocals.

At the beginning of the project, he was interested in copying other artists' beats. However, once copyright principles and the benefits of original creation were explained, he soon began working on his own ideas (although his music leader supported him to progress to this by doing a version of a 50 Cent tune).

MC B's rapping style was emulating American 'gangsta hip-hop'. His lyrics would be about driving cars and using guns and he would deliver them in an American accent. When he was challenged about this (through asking if he could drive, if he owned or used guns or if he was American) his response was defensive and there was a "make or break" moment. This proved to be the turning point, and MC B has been developing his own style that reflects his life as a teenage lad from his own locality.

MC B's care workers have reported that his participation in the project has helped him find a new voice to express himself. They say that B's angry outbursts (that would involve smashing up furniture) are much less frequent as a direct result.

Nearly a year on from the project B was studying with a local arts organisation to further his knowledge of music technology. He had achieved his Bronze Arts Award and was working towards his silver. He was saving up for his own laptop and software so he could make music in his own time. He had written and recorded several songs that illustrate his rapid development as a lyricist, rapper and producer.

Source: Adapted from case study by Si Waite (artist), published in the Sound Proof evaluation report by Dr. Ornette Clennon, and with permission from Make Some Noise.

### 3.2.3 Outcomes for music leader/music-making organisation

Music-making staff identified three particular benefits to working with children in care. First, it was a personally and professionally rewarding experience. They recognised the challenges looked after children faced and when a project managed to facilitate positive outcomes for them it was described in terms such as “incredibly rewarding”, “life changing” and “a blessing and a very humbling experience” (music leaders).

Second, they developed new skills. For example, some projects provided specific training for music leaders on the issues faced by looked after children (see section 3.3.6). At an organisational level it helped develop a new area of expertise and presented opportunities to expand the areas in which they worked.

Third, programme directors said they felt working with looked after children improved an organisation’s and individual music leader’s practice across the board. The range, diversity and sometimes intensity of issues faced by children in care required the highest quality of delivery and response. It therefore better equipped them to deal with other groups of young people experiencing challenging circumstances, such as those who have been bereaved.

The outcomes experienced across these stakeholder groups will not have been experienced by all those involved across projects. However, they illustrate the potential of high quality music-making projects delivered to maximum effect.

### 3.3 Barriers and Facilitators to Delivering Outcomes

While an exploration of what kind kinds of projects lead to which outcomes for which young people is beyond the scope of this review, issues were identified that acted as either barriers or facilitators to effective delivery of these projects. It was reported that much of what makes for a successful project for looked after children is the same as that which works when working with children and young people per se. However, there were some issues of specific importance for this group, which are outlined below.



## Thematic Case Study 4

**'Progress may be slow but persistence can pay off.'**

As part of the YMAZ programme at SoundWave a project was delivered in a special school for young males with extreme behavioural difficulties. Their experience in doing so illustrates both the challenges of working in this setting and the positive outcomes that a patient and flexible approach to delivery can achieve- this is reflected in the story of one of the participant's journey.

Young person B (YPB) was 17 years old and living in residential care during term time while returning to his family elsewhere during school holidays. He did engage in the project's initial sessions and was generally disruptive. However a breakthrough was achieved when he was offered the opportunity to record himself rapping. Alongside his friend, they recorded and refined their own original lyrics over a pre-existing backing track. This showed the music leader that YPB could be engaged with, and that he had a fairly high level of skill within his chosen genre. However, it also showed how much he needed to be the centre of attention, and to be in control.

Over the several months following music leaders attempted to maintain his engagement, and to challenge and extend him musically. This had very mixed results. He was easily engaged when he had a high level of autonomy to shape the session's activity – essentially using the project as a series of recording sessions with the project leaders as producers. Within this frame of reference he has been able to produce work of fairly high quality. However, his musical interest had not yet extended beyond a very narrow sub-genre, and anything which did not involve standing at the mic and rapping was likely to lead to a rapid disengagement. He also remained challenged by group working and tended to crowd out the other participants.

Progress in the project could at times seem slow. More often than not a breakthrough one week was followed by a set-back the following week. Musically some progress was made, and YPB was more equipped to critically evaluate his own work and to refine it. The project lead felt that ultimately the principle benefit of the project was likely to be in giving YPB a bit of space in the school week in which to express himself - a creative outlet as "he certainly has a lot that he wants to say to the world".

The project lead drew out four key lessons he had learnt from delivering this project:

- Perseverance – just keep being there, wait for them to be ready to engage, and give generously when they do.
- Don't expect miracles – progress with this client group is not linear, so don't take the set-backs personally.
- Keep talking – get as much support as you can from colleagues, staff, and partners. A different perspective is always very valuable, and staff who are with participants day in day out will spot things you don't.
- Be prepared to abandon your plans instantly – and come up with something else! Sessions can be blown off course by so many different factors, so cultivate your resourcefulness.

Source: Adapted from a case study submitted by SoundWave. It has been anonymised to protect the identity of the young person.

### 3.3.1 Partnership working with children's services and carers

All projects needed to be delivered within a context of partnership. Without the support of young people's carers and the relevant services it was reported that projects would probably never have happened. Even if they had, their impact would have been limited. Commitment from carers was essential to their effective delivery. It was widely recognised that those working in this sector are extremely busy and are dealing with many competing demands on their time and other resources. Therefore engaging with the 'right' people within local services and building their understanding of the benefits of music-making for their young people, and how these were aligned with local strategic priorities, were critical elements of any project. Support was needed at all stages of project delivery and from all areas of services, including senior and middle management in Children's Services, their operational staff, carers in residential settings and foster carers. Key players varied depending on the structure of local care services, the project's target group and setting. However, in each case having the 'buy in' of management and those responsible for the day-to-day care of the young people was essential.

**Project set up:** Projects needed partners' support by committing the necessary resources to the project at the outset and facilitating the recruitment process. In all cases resources committed included staff time, and in some it was also in the form of funding. Overall partners were responsible for recruitment as music organisations were not generally allowed to contact young people directly. Even where music organisations could contact young people or their foster carers directly, having the local authority "badge it up" (Children's Service worker) was considered important. While a detailed exploration of recruitment strategies was beyond the scope of this review, where a selection had to be made partners reported that they would base this on a number of criteria, including: whether the young person expressed an interest in music-making; whether they had recently participated in other activities; and whether there were any particular behavioural or other issues that may prevent them (or other participants) from engaging in the project. In one area efforts were also made to use projects as an opportunity to bring together siblings who had been separated when taken into care.

**Project delivery:** Partners had a key role to play in facilitating young people's access to the sessions and their participation in them.

First, in terms of access, carers were responsible for organising transport to the project. Where participants did not live in close proximity to each other, this presented logistical and financial challenges. Their encouragement for participation, at least initially, was also seen as important. Where carers did not consider participation to be a priority for the young person, did not understand the value of the project for them or did not think their 'non-musical' young person would be able to engage with the project these could all act as barriers to young people taking part.

Second was the carer's role in facilitating participation once young people were at a session. The role of carers varied depending on the project. This ranged from there being a couple of carers on-site to provide pastoral support, to there being a high ratio of carers to participants and who were involved in the whole creative process. Their roles included supporting the music leader in dealing with behavioural difficulties, supporting young people through personal issues that may arise from their participation, and facilitating their participation more generally. Where young people had particular physical or learning difficulties, carers provided them with on-going support to participate. Even where participants had no such difficulties, carers' input was considered invaluable. They knew the young person extremely well and their on-going support and engagement was perceived to contribute greatly to the positive outcomes for the young people. Furthermore, as mentioned in section 3.2.2, it could benefit their relationship with the young person through the principles of social pedagogy.

Young people's progression: Supporting young people's musical progression was another key role for partners. This was both during the lifetime of the project and beyond. This included buying or organising access to an instrument; providing a place for young people to practise outside the sessions and beyond; and giving them the encouragement to keep progressing. It was also noted that they needed to work with the project lead on the 'what next' plan so that signposting could be acted upon (see section 3.3.5 for discussion of 'what next plan').

At each of these three stages, a partnership approach was perceived to benefit greatly from a shared understanding of the benefits of the project for the young people. While some partners, at least initially, considered it to be a 'fun' activity, where its full value for both young people and their carers was understood this could add to the stability and success of the project. For example, mid-way through one project social worker time was withdrawn from the project and the level of activity was reduced. Middle management at the Children's Service was under pressure to deliver on group work outcomes for the young people. While this was a key element of the project, it had not been understood at the management level where the project was seen as 'just a leisure activity'.

A range of activities could help develop this shared understanding, including:

- music organisation attendance at key meetings with senior and middle management at Children's Services or other organisations;
- partners' attendance at showcase performances or exposure to project outputs such as DVDs and CDs;
- projects contributing to Personal Education Plans; and
- the project's impact being recognised through partners' staff development.

Engaging partners and developing their understanding of the value of music-making was reported to be time consuming. However, this initial investment was perceived to pay off in terms of ensuring effective delivery of appropriate projects.

*"Getting the care workers on board is vital, they know the young people and their encouragement or lack of it can make or break a project"* (programme director).

### 3.3.2 Creating a safe environment

The importance of providing a safe and secure environment for looked after children was emphasised by both carers and music leaders- this refers both to their physical and emotional safety. Without this they felt that participants would not have the opportunity to benefit from the full range of potential outcomes outlined above. While this is important for all projects with young people, it was considered particularly so for looked after children because many will have experienced unsafe environments in the past.

Safe physical environments included venues where: other uninvited people (both adults and young people) could not observe their music-making, as confidentiality was an important concern; and those to which they could travel without worrying about meeting adults with whom they were not supposed to have contact (for example a parent).

Environments that were safe emotionally were those in which young people felt accepted, were nurtured and were not judged by others. They needed to feel that they could take risks and try things that they may not initially be familiar with or be able to do. It was argued that the nature of music-making projects can put young people in a potentially vulnerable position- it requires them to open up emotionally, explore their feelings and express themselves. If they do not feel completely safe to do so then they will not be able to engage in the full creative process. It was within this context that the advantages of having a specifically targeted project for children in care become clear. Young people liked being in an environment with other looked after children. This enabled them to talk

about their lives openly and receive support from others based in the same context. Looked after children were perceived to have high levels of self-awareness and knew that their lives and needs were different from other children, so to pretend that they were not by not having some targeted projects was considered counter-productive. They were often seen as providing the necessary support for children in care to 'catch up' in terms of feeling able to move into mainstream projects (see section 3.2.1.2).

*"It's like the pieces of a jigsaw, they come along and they start to feel comfortable and secure, then their confidence starts to build and then comes trust"* (programme director)

*"We have seen dramatic changes and improvements in individual self-confidence and self-esteem as the children feel supported and safe within their group environment and grow together"* (report by project lead organisation)

The skills of the music leader and other project staff were at the core of creating this safe environment, as well as there being a child/young person-centred approach to delivery.

### 3.3.3 Appropriately skilled music leader

Achieving good outcomes for participants was seen to be largely dependent on the skills of the music leader. While working with looked after children required the same set of skills required for working with all young people, there were some elements noted as particular to working with this group. It was highlighted that while this work can be immensely rewarding, it can also be challenging due to the issues these young people face and the associated effects (as discussed in section 3.1.2). The 'right kind' of music leader was perceived to have a number of particular qualities within this context:

- To have an understanding of the issues looked after children face. While they do not necessarily need to know detailed information about each participant's background, an understanding of the general context and structures in which children in care live and the issues they face will help them to engage and support these young people and to deliver an appropriate project.
- They needed to be able to empathise, not sympathise, with the young people to support them in exploring and expressing their thoughts and experiences.
- To be flexible in their practice so that the focus was on delivering a project that matched the needs of the young people rather than a predetermined set of deliverables.
- To be confident to experiment and work outside their comfort zone, as many of the young people would be doing the same.
- To be skilled at dealing with conflict-resolution, to ensure that it was dealt with in a constructive and thorough manner.
- With the support of carers, to be confident in dealing with behavioural difficulties.
- To have an ability to manage groups in a fair way so that every young person's voice is heard and none of them are left out or remain 'unheard'. It was argued that no young person should be let down by the project by not being supported to engage- music leaders needed to ensure that the project did not mirror the "let-downness" (programme director) experienced in the rest of their life.
- To recognise their own limits and the boundaries of their role, and to recognise when to call in 'the experts'.
- To be patient and nurture children in care, recognising that it may take more time to facilitate their creative expression than is the case with other young people.
- To have realistic expectations of outcomes. To recognise that what might be seemingly small changes can be a massive achievement for the young person.

## Thematic Case Study 5

*'Music-making can re-engage young people and inform their care plan.'*

Young Person A (YPA) was a teenager living in sheltered accommodation. He had moved away from the town in which he had been living because he was in trouble with the police and his gang. His key worker in Children's Services had found him difficult to engage with and they had little information on his interests. Disruptive and violent behaviour were noted as a particular challenge when working with this young person.

When he first met with a leader from the music project, they spoke about what music he liked. He disclosed that he had written some lyrics about his past. The lyrics tended to focus on positive messages such as 'don't get into gangs' and 'don't carry a knife'. He was given an opportunity to perform and record his work and this was deemed a great success. His key worker was greatly moved by his ability, creativity and eloquence.

As mentioned above, the young person's file originally had very limited information about his interests. This changed as a result of the project. It now has a vast amount of information covering his interests, likes and dislikes, fears, hopes and aspirations. Furthermore, his key worker has reported that the barriers to communication have been largely removed. While he is no longer involved with the music project his key worker has said that they have used this experience as a catalyst to build on his development.

Source: Adapted from a case study submitted by a Youth Music funded partner. It has been anonymised to protect the identity of the young person.

### 3.3.4 Child/Young person-centred practice

Taking a child/young person-centred approach had particular value for working with looked after children. First it helped create the safe and secure environment discussed above. Second, it encouraged them to take risks that they felt comfortable with that could result in their learning new skills, and in turn a valuable sense of achievement. Third, by ensuring that young people felt they had choice in terms of their participation and the content of the project, this was perceived to be an empowering experience for a group of young people who could often feel disempowered by their experience of being in care.

Creating a child/young person-centred approach was supported in a number of ways of working, three of which were noted in particular. First, taster sessions could be particularly beneficial. Projects varied from those where young people arrived at the first day of the project without knowing much, if anything, about the project, to those that held taster days so that young people could self-select for participation. Where taster sessions were held they enabled young people to meet music leaders and possibly other looked after children who may be taking part before actually committing to the project.

Second outcomes for the project should be agreed between the project lead and young people, and that these would include individual outcomes. This helped distinguish the project from school where there may be a set of expected standards and young people would feel set up to fail.

Third, that the right balance of information exchange would be established between the music leaders and carers. Projects varied in terms of the extent to which this happened. Where reflected upon, a limited exchange from carer to music leader appeared to be preferred. This would be limited to specific issues that may impact on the young person's capacity to engage with the project, and information about their musical interests. The advantage of this approach was that young people were taken 'at face value' and were not judged on their previous behaviour. This was perceived to add to the feeling that music was a 'leveller' and their relationship with the music leader would be different from that with other adults in their lives. However, this was dependent on carers being involved and providing appropriate support where necessary. As discussed in section 3.2.1.1 above where music leaders provided feedback for young people's care plans, this was perceived to have benefits for their general care.

### 3.3.5 Having a long-term plan- supporting young people's progression

*"A key feature of working with this client group is sustainability and facilitating progression, if not we are reinforcing their life experiences that people come and go and that people just leave. We can't lift their hopes that way [and leave], it's just not an option" (programme director).*

Children in care are vulnerable to a lack of consistency and stability in their lives and the need for music-making projects not to mirror this was emphasised in the evidence. When working with looked after children there needs to be a commitment to provide on-going support for music-making for those who want it. Projects need to be well planned and include a clear 'what's next' plan. As discussed in the context of the role of partners above, five forms of support were identified- young people needed access to: instruments or other equipment; a place where they can practise; tuition; performance opportunities; and, support and encouragement to keep playing.

Some projects had bought equipment for care settings and trained staff to play. This was thought to help create an environment in which music-making would continue to be supported. It was noted that the 'what next' plans do not necessarily need to be delivered within a children in care specific context, and the evidence highlighted the progression between making music within a children in care specific context and,

once the young person feels ready, a 'mainstream' context. Targeted projects were thought to help improve young people's confidence to be able to sign up and engage in mainstream activities (see section 3.2.1.2)

Barriers to supporting progression were identified: a lack of planning on the part of the project; the cost of tuition and equipment; inconsistency in staff for both partners; and the instability in looked after children's lives in terms of moving placement to another area.

### 3.3.6 Training

Training for music leaders and carers was perceived to support effective delivery. For music leaders it was training that developed an understanding of the needs of looked after children. In some cases the feedback on such training was extremely positive and music leaders said they found it "useful" and "moving" and had a clearer understanding of looked after children and the impact that music-making could have for them.

Training for carers was either formal music-making training just for carers and more informal 'training' that happened organically as carers supported their young people through the project. The positive outcomes of this training were discussed in section 3.2.2.

### 3.3.7 Retention

If young people do not sustain their attendance at the project then they will not benefit from the potential outcomes- retention was identified as a major barrier to delivery for some of the projects. A number of factors were thought to impact on young people continuing to engage with the project, many of which have been mentioned previously:

- Young people will not keep going to a project that does not interest them at least some of the time- they will "vote with their feet" (programme director).
  - Lack of carer commitment can mean they are not brought to the project.
  - In a context where they are facing a range of different challenges the project may be of low priority for them and their carers.
  - Regular changes in placement may mean they leave the area or their new carer will not facilitate their participation.
  - They may be dealing with particular problems and feel unable to attend.
  - Attendance may be withheld by carers as a form of discipline for bad behaviour.
- Having a child-centred project that matches the needs and interests of young people and an understanding among carers of the value of participation were both considered to have a positive impact on retention.

### 3.3.8 Performances, accreditation and other outputs

Projects tended to have at least one of the following 'outputs': a performance, a celebration event, an awards ceremony, a CD of young people's recordings, or a DVD of project activity. Across the board having a tangible output from the project was perceived in positive terms. It served a number of positive functions, many of which have already been noted:

- It provided an opportunity for young people to receive affirmation for what they had done.
- It provided a medium through which young people's voices could be heard by their carers and senior members of Children's Services.
- Where performances were in front of a wider public audience, for example at a local festival, this gave valuable performance experience and an opportunity to share the achievements of the young people.

- Irrespective of the audience, it helped challenge negative assumptions about children in care.
- Where carers were involved in the output it provided evidence of an environment where social pedagogy was supported by presenting a joint voice.
- It could generate support for future music-making projects, evidencing the benefits of music-making and how they link with Children's Services outcomes.

In some cases, formal accreditation formed part of these outputs. As children in care were often behind their peers in terms of academic achievement it was important that any accreditation did not mirror this and young people were not set up to fail. Accreditation awarded included: Arts Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award and awards from local authorities. These were perceived to have particular value for children in care. In addition to the positive functions noted above, they provided formal acknowledgment of their achievements; where they had not done well in formal education it provided a valuable formal recognition of their skills. In one case a programme director who was cynical of the value of accreditation in music-making per se, said that for this group her cynicism had "warmed" having seen participants' extremely positive reaction to their presentation.

*"Meaningful awards or certificates makes concrete the relationship between individual experience and notions of success and acceptance- and of course are useful in themselves" (Stafford et al, 2007).*

Working with children in care requires careful project planning and for a wide range of issues to ensure effective delivery. The issues outlined above emphasise the need for these projects to consider carefully the needs of these young people and how best to overcome the potential challenges they may face in benefitting fully from their participation.

## Thematic Case Study 6

**‘Projects can help young people make new friends and there is a need to tailor the project to take a child-centred approach’**

Unaccompanied minors seeking asylum are included in the Government definition of looked after children. Pathways to Independence is an organisation that supports these young people from when they arrive in the UK through their transition to independence. It linked up with a Youth Music funded partner to deliver a project for these young people. While this project demonstrated positive outcomes for sustained participants, it also highlighted the need for a child-centred approach in terms of delivering a music-making activity to meet the needs of the young people.

“The music project was a really positive activity for the young people at Pathways and those that took part got a lot out of it. We saw that the project brought people together from different backgrounds, built confidence and provided a fun, constructive activity for young people to take part in.

From witnessing several of the sessions and getting feedback from the young people that took part, the positive aspects of the project was in bringing young people together. It often happens that the refugee young people we work with tend to stick within cultural or national groups; however the music project was excellent in bridging those gaps and bringing people together from all backgrounds. There was a core group of four young people all came from different countries and perhaps wouldn't normally have become friends but through the project they struck a friendship and have kept in touch since.

For many of our young people, life is dominated by the uncertainty of their immigration status and worries about home; it was therefore great to have a fun, positive activity as a focus to their week. One young man is normally very shy and reserved and tends to stick with people from his own nationality. However at the music project he showed a side to him that we didn't normally see, he thoroughly enjoyed the singing and visibly grew in confidence as he sang in front of the others both in his own language and English.

A higher number of young people attended the first couple of sessions but then got a bit bored and these might have benefitted more from the interaction and confidence building the music project would provide but were put off. The music technology aspect meant that only one person could participate at a time so the rest were left waiting round. The more confident young people put themselves forward to get involved but those who were quieter or had poorer English needed more coaxing. Also, some young people have rarely used a computer so I don't think fully understood how what they were doing translated to the music produced.

As a lot of the music technology was so technical, the teacher had to do a lot of the work, it might have been good to find a medium that was a bit more immediate and that everyone could participate at the same time to prevent people getting bored. It would have also been good to do something more physical and active to keep young people busy and engaged.

The feedback from the young people was generally very positive, and they were disappointed when it came to an end. They really had a confidence boost attending a local awards ceremony for looked after children, one of those who attended said it was one of the 'best days of his life'. Some said they were disappointed they weren't able to do a performance; they felt they wouldn't have been ready to do one but they were still disappointed they didn't get to do it. Overall, the project was brilliant and the young people that took part really enjoyed it and benefited a lot from it.”

Source: Evaluation feedback written by Pathways to Independence following work delivered in partnership with Surrey County Council (Surrey Arts and Asylum Support Team) and Rhythmix.



## Thematic Case Study 7

### Supporting musical progression

Some young people wanted to continue to make music after their project had finished. For looked after children this required the support of both their carers and relevant music providers, as illustrated in the examples below. This project was run over a week and involved looked after children coming together to form a band and do a final performance of their work. A very positive working relationship developed between the music organisation running the project and their local Children's Services team. Children's Services staff perceived music-making to have a wide range of benefits for their young people and were supportive of their progression:

#### Jo

Jo had not been involved in music-making before the project. Her confidence and self-esteem improved visibly during the project. Her foster carers borrowed a guitar for her and bought her an amp. She was keen to have lessons but despite a request from her parents it was not possible for her to access these through the tuition service at her school. However, with support from the music organisation that delivered the project eight weeks of lessons were set up for her. Children's Services were paying for these but funding needed to be found for subsequent lessons. Jo subsequently signed up for a 'mainstream' summer project at the music organisation, and made valuable contributions to the organisation by discussing her experiences of the projects with its board of trustees.

#### Ben

Ben had not been in contact with the music organisation before the project, but had begun to teach himself to play the guitar. Following the project Ben continued his contact with the music organisation. He participated in a number of their 'mainstream' projects and became a volunteer on one. He also worked as a shadowing DJ artist and has won an award for his skills in this area.

#### Danny

Danny said he got a lot out of the project, that it had boosted his confidence and that working "as a family" had been an amazing experience. He described the project as "the best week of my life". He was moved away from the area a few weeks after the project. He was keen to continue to learn the guitar and was offered 1-1 lessons by a music leader from the music organisation who lived near his new placement. However, before these could start Danny was moved again. His key worker made contact with Danny's new foster carers who were keen to build on his enthusiasm and support his music-making.

#### David

David sang and played the guitar during the project and thoroughly enjoyed it. He was very keen to take lessons afterwards and was offered the opportunity to be part of a band within school. He did not want to do so despite it being led by the special educational needs co-ordinator who he knew well. It was thought that this was because he felt very self-conscious in front of others in school. His key worker discussed the options with the music teacher at his school and set up 1-1 tuition for David near to his placement. His guitar teacher reported that he was engaging well and working hard to improve his fine motor control. David saved up and bought himself a guitar, and his carer reported that he practices a lot at home. While Children's Services paid for the first eight lessons, funding needed to be found for subsequent ones.

Source: Based on notes from key worker in local authority and project lead at the music organisation.

## Section 4 - Discussion

This review shows that high-quality music-making projects for children in care can produce a whole range of positive outcomes. As the positive outcomes of music-making for young people in general are well documented elsewhere (for a review of this evidence see Hallam, 2009), this discussion reflects on two questions in light of the findings of this review. First whether looked after children appear to experience the same kinds of outcomes as their peers, and second whether there are particular benefits for delivering on these outcomes for looked after children.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the findings of this review suggest that children in care can experience a similar range of benefits from participating in music-making as their peers (as identified through the broader body of research on the impact of music-making for young people (see Hallam, 2009)). In particular there appear to be similarities in outcomes associated with young people's academic improvement, and their personal, social and emotional development.

Among young people in general, better academic achievement was an outcome for those learning to play an instrument and was linked to their having greater motivation more generally. Motivation is linked to self-perceptions of ability and self-efficacy and, when enjoyed, musical practice was found to increase and nurture motivation in young people and children (Hallam, 2005). Section 3.2 described how some looked after children's perceptions of their ability and self-efficacy had been positively developed in the course of the project. They developed a range of new music-making and other transferable skills, challenging their and others' perceptions of a lack of ability. In turn their self esteem, sense of self-efficacy and confidence had improved, which increased their motivation to (re)engage with education and other learning activities.

The findings related to the social, personal and emotional development of children in care also reflect those found in other studies reviewed by Hallam (2009), which include the development of:

- positive self-image, self-awareness and positive attitudes which all related to motivation and success;
- commitment, respect, responsibility and trust; and
- emotional intelligence and well-being, by providing a way for young people to express themselves.

While the findings suggest that music-making can have the same benefits for looked after children as for other young people, they also suggest that there can be particular benefits for looked after children. Looked after children are a diverse group but the challenges that many of them face (as reflected in the figures presented in 2.1 and the profile in 3.1.2) demonstrate that they are at a disadvantage in terms of their life chances when compared to their peers. The evidence shows that music-making projects can potentially contribute to a narrowing of this gap. As discussed in section 2.2 building looked after children's resilience can have a positive impact on their ability to cope with the challenges associated with being in care, and therefore on their life chances. Below are a range of personal skills and resources that have been identified as promoting resilience (see Appendix C for a summary of 'aspects of resilience'; Gilligan, 2008), and which are linked to findings from earlier in this review (see section 3.2.1.1).

- Trusting relationships with peers and adults – Children in care can find it difficult to develop trusting relationships for a variety of reasons, including repeated experiences of being 'let down' by other people, feeling that others do not understand the challenges they face by living in care, and only having limited opportunities to develop trusting relationships due to frequent changes in their placements. The review found that projects provide an environment in which they developed positive and trusting relationships with both adults (music leaders and carers) and peers.



- Self-discipline to comply with structure and ‘rules’ – Attendance at a project required young people to follow a certain level of structure. For example they may have had to learn to turn up on time, follow an agreed set of team ‘rules’, and deliver on allocated tasks within a given timeframe. While this proved challenging for some young people, there was evidence that in the course of projects they increased their self-discipline.
- Positive role models – Music leaders in particular were identified as providing positive role models for children in care. They modelled positive ways of working in a team, dealing with conflict and making a living through positive activities.
- An ability to make decisions –Where projects took a child-centred approach and encouraged team working this supported the development of decision-making skills. This could vary from which kind of music-making activity they wanted to engage in to what route their progression would take.
- Capacity to express emotions and thoughts – The creative process required young people to open themselves up to others and build capacity to express their emotions and thoughts. Looked after children may not have many opportunities to do this within a safe environment in which there is an inherent understanding of the challenges they face. Targeted music-making projects facilitated by skilled leaders provided such an environment.
- Sensitivity to other people’s emotions and thoughts – Working in a team with other young people in care encouraged participants to develop empathy with others. They learnt to be respectful of other people’s views and developed a shared sense of identity.
- Insight into their own life’s difficulties, personality, and behaviour – Children in care may have very few opportunities to talk about their experiences of being in care with others in the same situation. Making music, and in particular lyric writing, provided them with an outlet to express their feelings as well as an opportunity to reflect on their experiences. Working within a team encouraged them to challenge their own behaviour and learn how to work collaboratively.
- Control over their behaviour – Participants sometimes found working as part of a team and the learning process involved in music-making frustrating, which sometimes led to behavioural difficulties. However, with the right support from peers, music leaders and carers, young people could learn to control their behaviour.

- Able to recognise their achievements – Opportunities to achieve can be all too rare in the lives of looked after children. Projects provided them with an opportunity to explore their skills and contribute to the production of a positive output. A strong sense of achievement was reported where young people had pushed themselves creatively and had an opportunity to share this with others, for example through a performance or the production of a CD.
- A sense of responsibility (to self and others) – Learning to work as part of a team helped young people develop a sense of responsibility to themselves and others. They learnt about the ‘knock on’ effect for the rest of the team when they did not deliver on their tasks.
- A sense of self-efficacy - Looked after children can often feel that they do not have much control over decisions that affect their lives. Taking part in a project where they could influence its structure helped develop a sense of self-efficacy.
- Skills and persistence in solving problems/overcoming challenges – Learning to make music can be challenging. Participants learnt to ‘stick with’ the process and overcame barriers that arose.

Overall by supporting children in care to develop these skills, music-making projects provided them with an opportunity to bridge the gap with their peers. This is illustrated by the experiences of young people who progressed to ‘mainstream’ projects, which they previously would not have felt able to access. This is also evident in some participants (re)engagement in learning activities as discussed above.

By delivering on these outcomes, music-making projects also support Children’s Services and others responsible for the care of these young people in meeting their national and local strategic priorities. For example, by delivering on outcomes associated with the Every Child Matters agenda. There appears to be a need to increase awareness among Children’s Services of the potential for music-making to deliver on their agenda. Where this had happened, this was perceived to benefit the young people greatly.

In a context where social pedagogy is moving up the care agenda, this review has shown how music-making supports this way of working for both carers and music leaders. While practice was not always described in the evidence using the term ‘social pedagogy’, this was often what was being delivered. Carers were facilitated to interact with their young people through the creative process and develop holistic ways of working with them. Music leaders were also found to be taking a holistic approach to their work, using music as a tool to deliver on outcomes above and beyond developing music-making skills.

While reflecting on the collective outcomes achieved by projects to date, this report illustrates the potential for music-making projects with LAC. However, this is clearly dependent on projects being of the highest quality, being delivered with adequate resources, effective partnerships, being grounded in a clear understanding of the care system and the needs of looked after children, and having a firm commitment to the ‘what next’ plan. In a context where LAC have regularly been ‘let down’ by adults in their lives, these projects need to challenge rather than mirror that experience.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A - Methodology

There were four main strands to data collection:

### 1. A Review of Funded Partners' Routine Reports

The first step was to identify all Youth Music projects that had targeted looked after children specifically. Youth Music's database of core statistics from funded partners' end of project or annual reports was analysed. All projects that reported having worked with looked after children were saved as a separate data set. Only one project outside the YMAZ programme was identified as having worked specifically with this group (no additional information was made available on this project). The YMAZ programme was the main delivery mechanism for this work. All YMAZ interim and annual reports for 2007/08 and 2008/09 were searched and evidence of work specifically with looked after children was collected. This was coded into a thematic framework alongside other evidence sources to facilitate analysis.

### 2. YMAZ Follow Up

All YMAZs were contacted by email with a summary of what had been found in their annual reports on their work with this group. They were invited to complete either a project or individual case study template or submit any additional reports they may have to supplement this evidence. In total seven YMAZs submitted additional evidence. It should be noted that not all YMAZs will have responded as they will not have run projects that were just for looked after children.

### 3. Interviews with Stakeholders

Interviews were carried out with six stakeholders. Three YMAZ Programme Directors, two Children's Services staff and a key worker at an organisation working with unaccompanied minors seeking asylum were interviewed. These interviews explored their views of the value of music-making with looked after children and their experiences of having delivered this work. Respondents drew on all areas of experience of working with this group – therefore this was not confined to work funded by Youth Music.

Data from each of these three sources was coded into a thematic framework, developed in consultation with Youth Music. Thematic analysis was carried out across the data sources.

### 4. Literature review

A review of the literature on the outcomes associated with music-making was carried out. A search was carried out using an academic library database of journals. Searches were carried out using the following searches:

- Looked-after-children music making outcomes
- Children-in-care music making outcomes
- Foster-care music making outcomes
- Looked-after-children music making
- Children-in-care music making
- Foster-care music making

- Looked-after-children music
- Children-in-care music
- Foster-care music

None of these searches found articles that dealt specifically with music-making projects and the associated outcomes. Many addressed the use of music therapy with this group, but they were not considered relevant for this review due to the specific delivery contexts associated with music therapy. Others mentioned the music or music-making, alongside other leisure activities but did not look at the outcome specifically associated with music-making. However, a sample of articles that looked at how music-making (and other leisure activities) can increase children in care's resilience were consulted and are included in the review.

A 'Google' search of the same terms was also carried out with similar results. While there were a number of reports on using the creative arts with looked after children, only two reports that looked at the outcomes for looked after children from music-making were found. An evaluation of the City of One project (that was one of the projects used in the National Children's Bureau's report 'People with Passion' (Chambers, 2008)); and a second evaluation of a music-making project carried out by the University of Warwick. The former report is referred to in the report, whereas access still needs to be gained to the second report which is not available electronically.

### Methodological Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this review that should be noted:

- It is based in part on the self-evaluation and monitoring reports from funded partners.
- Young people were not directly consulted as part of data collection. Instead their views have been filtered through project reports or interviews with stakeholders.
- It is not an evaluation of the projects and therefore does not explore which projects worked well, for which young people and why. Nor is it a practice guide on how to work with looked after children. Instead it focuses on answering the question 'why do music-making with this group' and draws out some of the key issues identified in doing so.
- It is based on reports of activity completed up to the end of 2008/09. A description of current Youth Music funded projects for looked after children is available in Appendix B

## Appendix B - Current Youth Music funded projects

Youth Music continues to fund projects with looked after children, primarily through its Open Programme, Youth Music Action Zones, Youth Music Mentors and Voltage programmes. In 2009/2010 Youth Music supported 1,288 looked after children, developing their musical, personal and social skills across a range of settings.

Sing Up, the national singing programme, launched a new programme ('Beyond the Mainstream') in 2010, working exclusively with looked after children. Beyond the Mainstream is currently running seven delivery projects with primary school aged children across England, these are supported by a research and development project, a project focusing on workforce development and an external evaluation.

Using the information contained in this review Youth Music will maintain its focus on supporting looked after children through funded activity. In addition, Youth Music can now better understand the ways in which music projects affect the lives of children in care and, through this document, share this learning across the sector.

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### Appendix C - Resilience action model

The table below drew together the findings of an International Resilience Project which surveyed almost 600 children and their families in 30 countries. Grotberg found that the following aspects of resilience were relevant, to varying degrees, in all cultures:

Table: Promoting resilience – action model (adapted from Grotberg 1997) in Maclean (2003)

I have	I am	I can
<i>Trusting and loving relationships with others:</i> parents, siblings, teachers, friends.	<i>Loveable:</i> the child possesses, or is helped to develop, qualities that appeal to others.	<i>Communicate:</i> the child is able to express feelings and thoughts, and listen to those of others.
<i>Structure at Home:</i> Clear rules and routines, comprehensible and fair sanctions when breached, praise when followed.	<i>Loving:</i> the child is able to express affection to others, and is sensitive to their distress.	<i>Solve problems:</i> the child can apply themselves to problems, involve others where necessary, and be persistent.
<i>Role models:</i> parents, other adults, peers, siblings, who model good behaviour and morality.	<i>Proud of myself:</i> the child feels they have the capacity for achievement and resists discouragement.	<i>Manage my feelings:</i> the child knows and understands emotions, recognises the feeling of others, and controls impulsive behaviour.
<i>Encouragement to be independent:</i> people who offer praise for growing autonomy.	<i>Responsible:</i> the child accepts and is given responsibilities, and believes that their actions can make a difference.	<i>Understand my temperament:</i> the child has insight into their personality and that of others.
<i>Access to health, education and social care:</i> consistent direct or indirect protection for physical and emotional health.	<i>Hopeful and trustful:</i> the child has faith in institutions and people, is optimistic for the future and is able to express their faith within a moral structure.	<i>Seek out trusting relationships:</i> the child has the ability to find people – peers or adults – in whom they can confide and develop mutual trust.

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A company limited by guarantee  
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