

The residential child care community in Scotland is comprised of a workforce which is inspired, inspiring, and determined to develop and improve for the benefit of children and young people.

For over 20 years, the Scottish Institute of Residential Child Care (SIRCC) Conference, hosted by CELCIS, has been a staple annual event in the residential community's calendar in Scotland.

In 2023, as we reflected on what children and the workforce told us they need, against the backdrop of the impact of a global pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the ambitious aims of The Promise of the Independent Care Review, we wanted to take the opportunity to look at the aspirations, challenges and priorities for residential child care in Scotland. **The SIRCC conference has always been a place to connect and explore, and two decades on we wanted to pause, to create a new space to consider, imagine and aspire for the workforce and the children and young people we care for.**

CELCIS facilitated spaces for members of this community to talk with and listen to each other, collaborate, and think through the steps we might take together.

In a shared, reflective space, we asked members of the community to join and fully participate in one of four sessions. One was held in-person, with the other three being online. We created a space to identify what the need is now, informed and led by the experience and perspective of the community. This was the initiation of a process of community driven change supported by CELCIS.

Our attendees fully engaged with the process, creating a diverse body, with roles represented in frontline and independent practice and leadership, from local authorities, health and social care partnerships, education and independent residential child care providers.



Residential Child Care Engagement Sessions

Feedback
for attendees

**Community driven change,
supported by CELCIS**



As part of our session, we invited participants to be imaginative in considering what some of the future possibilities might be for this work together by asking them to finish the sentence, “Wouldn’t it be good if...”

The emerging themes identified centre around the strong appetite to have spaces to **Share**, **Learn** and **Innovate**.

Wouldn't it be good if...

- the residential child care community continues to grow and share together
- there were safe spaces to challenge existing conventions and assumptions about what we do, how we approach our work, and what works
- we had more events to share good practice
- there was an active commitment to transform the structural, systemic, and cultural issues that mitigate progress

SHARE

A strong appetite within the residential child care community to have the opportunity to connect and share more regularly and creatively.

What would it look like to create a space where the work force could build on our conversation so far which identified **stickability, determination perseverance, persistence, commitment** as high value characteristics of good quality practice?

LEARN

A desire for more opportunities for the workforce to continue to be invested in through learning and practice development.

What would an effective offer look like which supported the further emergence of good quality practice in the areas identified through our initial engagement sessions, including **critical use of self, positive role modelling, developmental awareness, psychological safety, self-awareness** and **reflection**?

INNOVATE

A strong desire to establish an innovative space which could consider the future developments and challenges within residential child care in Scotland.

How can the residential child care community continue to organise around creating spaces which nurture and elevate innovative thinking and practice, to sustain an environment where young people experience **love, hope, shared experiences, playfulness and creativity, humour, compassion,** and **encouragement**. These were foundational elements identified in the first phase of this work.

“Change doesn’t happen quickly. By definition, if it is deep change, if it is significant change, it’s not quick. It takes time, it takes patience, it takes people who are passionate for the long term.

But we do need to find ways to build momentum.”

Peter Senge

Founder

Society for Organizational Learning

NEXT STEPS

In the coming months, we will progress this work through **three** main strands of activity:

- Further analysis of the content from the initial engagement sessions
- Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders
- A second phase of engagement sessions for the residential child care community.



For further information get in touch at celcis.learning@strath.ac.uk.