



SIRCC 2020 Online | A conversation

Transcript

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(SG) Simone Gillespie

(LS) Hello everybody and welcome to our webinar, our conversation this morning. I'd like to say a huge thanks to Rosie and Sheila for joining me this morning, to begin to think about the power of everyday and the extraordinary ordinary.

You might notice that we've got a wee empty box on our screen this morning. We were hoping that Simone Gillespie would join us. But in true style, with our current circumstances, the technology is not supporting us today, so we're hoping that she'll come along when she can and we will welcome her when she's able to join us.

So we thought we would start our virtual SIRCC this week with the theme of the conference that had been planned in June, really beginning to think about practice and what high quality practice looks like in residential care. Really wondering what happened during COVID and what did we see in terms how people were able to adapt, to ensure that ongoing high quality care for children and young people and so that they could feel loved and feel secure in their homes. We thought that we would, the theme for the conference was really intended to really drill in to that detail of the practice and begin to identify those things that people could develop and build on across Scotland in the everyday of practicing in residential houses.

So we thought we would invite folk that we would be able to have an interesting conversation with us, Rosie, Sheila and Simone, to really drill into a bit of that - and that's what we're going to do for the next wee while.

A bit of housekeeping: it won't be interactive, as in taking live questions from the audience, my chat show skills aren't quite developed well enough to do that. So, Michelle McCue is going to help us a bit with that. So if you have any questions or any comments, and they really are all welcome, if you could send them in the question function that you see (it should be on your right hand side) and we'll mop them up and try and respond to them certainly at the end. If I'm smart enough, I might be able to pick up some as we go. We would be really keen to hear what people's thoughts are about - what is it about the power of every day that can really help children grow and develop? And what is it that we mean when we begin to think about that extraordinary ordinary practice as we go through the session.

We are really happy to be joined by Rosie and Sheila, and hopefully Simone. This is a conversation; we don't plan on doing any PowerPoint, or any presentations as part of this. We really want to use the opportunity and create a nice safe space for us to talk about those things that people in this space understand and can think about as we go on. So you won't be seeing any slides or any high density content. It really will be about that conversation around the practice.

We're really curious and hopefully by the end of it the morning we will have had some conversation around what does it take to support that type of practice? Strong statements in The Promise from the Independent Care Review about how to develop and support staff so that they can "step in and stay put" - I think such a brilliant phrase - and one certainly that the residential sector has been talking about for a long time, about how they can be supported to step into relationships with children and young people and stay around for them over a long time.

So we want to think about what is the enabling context that makes that happen as we go forward. So I'm going to ask my delegates to introduce themselves a wee bit, and then we'll kick off with the first question. I've asked Michelle to catch me on the chat if I speak too quickly, so I'm going to try and speak more slowly. Making sure that I'm understood, because I can get

a wee bit nervous, so that's my fessing up, up front as we start the conversation. So Rosie, do you want to just give yourself a wee introduction before we step in?

(RM) Hi, Good morning everybody. My name is Rosie Moore. I have recently joined the CELCIS team back in April, an interesting time to start a new job, with a focus on policy and participation after my time at the Independent Care Review. It's great to be here, thanks.

(SE) Hi everybody, I'm Sheila Erskine and I'm a service manager at Action for Children and I'm responsible for three residential houses up in Moray.

(LS) Brilliant, thank you. So we haven't rehearsed anything - that's important for people to know. We really did want to let the conversation take us where, wait and see where the conversation took us.

But our first question that we wanted to think about was what does extraordinary ordinary practice look like? What does the practice that really supports children to do well? What does it look like when we see it? And I wondered if Sheila you could start to help us think a wee bit about that, in terms of when we see that practice going on, what does it look like?

(SE) I think it looks very different for everybody and maybe, not so much maybe what it looks like, but maybe what it feels like for our children and young people. It's almost like glitter, I think. Have you ever had that situation where you accidentally spill a packet of glitter and you're picking it up for months to come and it kind of just sticks everywhere. I think that the kind of everyday magic - that power of the ordinary - it is a bit like glitter. It's with you everywhere, all the time. I think it's about people recognising when our young people are needing, whether it's a bit of time, a bit of time out, being able just to connect over the most ordinary things can have the most extraordinary outcomes. Never has the therapeutic value of a cup of tea or coffee round the kitchen table been so apparent or real.

I think over the last few months - I'm quite sure everybody's budgets have taken a bit of a hit - but you know what? I certainly don't mind our hospitality bit of the budget taking a hit. That tells me that folks are sitting together, talking, connecting, and it's about reassuring our young people when we're looking after them that we're there for them and that to me, is what the power of the ordinary feels like and looks like.

- (LS) I love this idea of glitter and that idea that it doesn't, it's not just in that one moment, that you see it happen that it's appearing as folk go through their ordinary day - which appears like an ordinary day, you know, breakfast, lunch, dinner, school, that kind of thing. These things are being scattered and sprinkled as folk go. It's such a lovely image about what's going on in terms of some of those conversations or those activities.

You said something about some of the things that you would see as being opportunities to think about time in that extraordinary practice, and I'm wondered if folk were looking in and hearing you say "a cup of tea" - can you say a wee bit more about that about what that, what's so special about those types of interactions in that type of practice?

- (SE) I think it's important that, you know, it lets young people know that you're thinking of them. If somebody remembers, and everybody does, if you remember what your best friend takes in their tea or their coffee or how they like their hot chocolate made, It isn't just about that cup of tea, it's about how it makes the young person feel. It helps them feel that as somebody supporting them, you know what they like. That tells them that you're interested in them, and if you're interested in them and showing that you care and it's about showing how we care for everybody. It's not just about how we care for our young people, actually, it's about how we care for ourselves and each other. In terms of food, which is certainly a particular interest of mine and the therapeutic value of food, it's just phenomenal.

The research shows that that you can achieve huge outcomes thinking about the most everyday items in our lives: how we think about food; how we use food; how we shop for it; how food is prepared and in the residential house;

getting young people involved in the Sunday dinner and those kind of rituals, if you like; how we celebrate birthday and Christmas. It's all part of the kind of fine tapestry of life in the residential house, and you can hang such a lot on the littlest things. It's remembering that, you know, somebody likes Hobnobs and not Rich Teas, that's like really important - 'cause if you can remember that, you'll remember the really important things that somebody wants to talk to you about, and that tells the young people that we care. And that for me is really, really important.

Our young people need to feel valued and they need to feel that it's authentic, that it's true that. The staff that are looking after them for - whether it's, you know, one night, one week, one month, one year - it doesn't matter - you have to feel that genuine loving care. And yes, I used the word love, 'cause I think we can love our children and our young people in in our care. I certainly do and I know that's something that we like to encourage and support. We all need to feel loved and valued. So why shouldn't our young people in care feel that they are loved and valued too.

(LS) It's such a strong statement that you're making about what that looks like, what people experience when people hold that in mind, when people remember those details (I'm a Rich Tea person, by the way). But those things that you're really identifying is that they're not, they're not obscure concepts. These are things that you know are described easily in terms of "it's important", that you're able to hold in mind that young person through remembering things that are important to them, from biscuits to what kind of cake they would want from their birthday - you know that kind of thing. Through those acts, that's a way of showing love and showing that you care and it's such a, you know, a clearly articulated example through those acts and showing how you feel about children that you're responsible for and in your care. Rosie, do you want to come in here a wee bit?

(RM) Yeah. Everything that Sheila said, I think is absolutely spot on and for me, what I found really interesting during all of this is the extraordinary ordinary looks, like Sheila said, is the really normal small acts that I think everyone in the sector just does naturally.

And what I've found, personally, I think most people have found during COVID is when you have that stripped back, you actually re-realise the importance - like Sheila said - in how therapeutic something as simple as a cup of tea can be and nobody could have planned for what we've all been through this this year.

And it's just been really, really good I think, and quite refreshing that... I think sometimes, it can be so fast paced and so quick changing in the world of residential care that we forget about, just the small things and how much they mean because it's just a part of everyday life. And having that removed, it's been nice to really cherish actually the real difference that our hug or a cup of tea, or just sitting less than two feet away from someone watching their favourite TV programme, actually, how important those things are, and they've become so ordinary in such a part of really good practice that we've forgot at the minute that... We forgot that. In some ways,- as challenging as it's been, it's been so nice to really remember how much we... It's been so nice to really remember how much we value just that social connection.

We talk so much and relationship based practice is so important - it always has been and always will be - but I think sometimes we can get caught up in some of the complexities of what that means and forget and under value that the real sort of connection that we can have with each other over the really small ordinary stuff.

So yeah, I think as challenging as it's been, we've really all learnt to value absolutely everything that we're doing with each other. So it's been so good to highlight some of the real human connection that that we all have missed during this, as well. It's been really challenging but really eye opening at the same time.

(LS) It's really interesting the idea you're putting forward, about that it's almost a period of rediscovery. Things that we knew and understood and sometimes we see some of our evidence or our theory. But what we're seeing - because there's a business being taken out of environments at the moment - because

we've got no choice but to stay put - that reconnecting, and that almost consolidation of what that daily practice looks like. That real importance of time, patience, tea, you know food, whatever that might look like for that individual, or that environment, and that real focus on what that looks like for children and young people in the houses.

So it's really, you know, what that's meant in terms of COVID, the opportunities that it's presented is what you're talking about, Rosie in terms of people being able to really stop and think about it.

So when that's happening - what happens? So the glitter's been sprinkled, we're seeing folk really paying attention to things that to other people might seem just well, that's just part of life, and yet we know there's something particular that residential carers have to be able to do in order to be able to stay in and on that moment.

But what do we see happen when it's being done well? What happens for children and young people? So sprinkle the glitter. What happens? What do we see? Or what do they tell us that that means to them in terms of that availability, that stopping, that slowing down, that paying that particular attention? What do they tell us it means to them, do you think?

(SE) I think what they tell us is that they start to have a sense of themselves, that that glitter gets absorbed. It's that positive reinforcement, relentlessly positive about being encouraging and supporting any young person to be whoever they want to be. That, kind of, reaching for the stars, being aspirational and helping them realise their ambitions because everybody has their own personal goals.

We can't all get to the moon, but we can get to a few stars along the way and I think for a young person, as it would for anybody, it helps them think, "do you know what, here I've got some good ideas! I can be me. I can be who I want to be" because Sheila thinks this or Rosie told me that, or Lorraine made me a cup of tea when it really mattered. So I think it helps shape their true sense of self-worth, and particularly in adolescence, that's so important

'cause we're supporting young people, and as they're transitioning into adulthood - and beyond - and it's such an important time for everybody in their adolescence that kind of gaining a sense of identity - Who am I? How do I fit in to this world? If your world up till now has been a bit fractured and not quite what you would hope or want for yourself or for other people, and particularly for, I think for young people who may have been separated from siblings and family members, how disempowering must that feel to not have those key people round about you at this most important time in your life, socially, psychologically, emotionally.

So I think we owe it to our young people, to make sure that they absorb that sparkle and glitter and then go on to be who they want to be, feeling comfortable in their own skin. Gosh, that's a tall order! How many of us truly are comfortable in our own skin? I mean, it's a tall order for any of us, and more so for, I think, for our young people who need a bit of an extra helping hand.

So that's why it's so important, I think, that not only do we need to make sure that young people absorb the glitter and we all have a responsibility to make sure that our frontline residential workers, those people who are caring for the young people, they also need to feel the glitter too - that's so, so important.

(LS) It's such a, it's such an interesting thing. The thought that through that daily practice folk are having to really hold in mind strong hopes and ambitions for the young people that they're living alongside.

That idea that through those every day, tiny interactions is one of the ways that we're fulfilling that that dream for them, that they can be comfortable in their own skin, that they can make their own... whether it's, you know, spaceman or painter, it doesn't really matter what that might look like and how, through those interactions, and that consistent practice because we think that you've got, you know ambition and we know, and certainly young people have told us that the folk that are extraordinary ordinary to them are the people that have just stood right beside them, no matter what might be

going on for them. That thing you were talking about, the complexity of their life sometimes, with family or 'systems', but that that importance that somebody stands alongside you, holds that hope that belief about them, and at the same time you know can be with them when they are sore and in pain. Rosie, were you going to come in there?

(RM) Yeah, I think one of the things that I heard so much from young people, from my time at the Review, was actually what they really value was the small things and also that sense of normality, and not feeling different from sort of their non-looked after peers - in relation to paperwork and shift turnover and all of these things. And actually in the moments in between where that's not happening, that's not visible. Young people that really do feel safe and held and supported and loved, kind of forget for a bit that they're looked after because that's their home, it's just their home to them.

Hearing reflections from young people about - that we'll all be aware of what that can feel like - when there is the bureaucracy and the paperwork that comes, as it as it should to some extent, with residential childcare. But what's really interesting - I'm calling the opportunities that I'm talking about during COVID "the rainbows in the rain", COVID has been an absolute downpour - but actually there's been some really, really good stuff happening. To some extent, that no policy no protocol, no risk assessment would have planned for this and how this just came and caught us all off guard and we had to just manage as best as we could which would look different for all of us.

But, actually, taking that away and not having a rigorous risk assessment to fall back on "what happens if there's a world pandemic in the house with our kids". We've had to resort back - quite a lot to some extent - to just be in genuine, authentic, caring - "well, this has happened. Let's try and get through it together". The bonds and the relationships that that's brought people even closer, I think, because it's something that, we've all got in common. This has been challenging for everybody in different ways, but in a lot of similar ways, and I think having that lack of preparation - as stressful and scary as that is - has actually created so, so many little bubbles of genuine love and commitment and care for each other.

There's so many stories - or rainbows in the rain as I call them - that have come out of no amount of planning, no amount of thinking, how to handle this. It's just happened and it's it is really beautiful actually, just, just seeing that happen.

(LS) Even just hearing you say that, "How do you write a risk assessment for a world pandemic?" It's such a... Well we'd better forget about that and get down to what's really important. That's what you're talking about, how that's what is really important. But have you got a particular example in mind of something you've heard, that's happened in any practice or any of the settings, or any of your rainbows that you can think of that come to mind when you think about what people have been able to do?

(RM) Do you know what? Yeah, some of the ones that I personally find are my favourite are examples of what I would genuinely call the extraordinary ordinary. It's nothing huge and it's nothing completely tongue in cheek or unorthodox, but it's stuff that perhaps maybe wouldn't happen as the norm across all of all of residential child care sector.

So, for example, certain staff members who said: you know what? Because we can't go in and out, I'll move in, but I've got a dog. So actually, can I please bring my puppy in? And before that wouldn't have been OK. Certain, not all, but certain homes might say, "Oh, we're not allowed dogs", and you know, risk and what that looks like. But in this situation, stuff like that to some extent kind of has to go out the window a little bit and it strips it right back to just common sense decisions. I can't remember the lady's name - but there was a lady and she moved in. She had a little dog and she was there with the kids for about 3 weeks. The kids loved it and they've never really had a pet before, in this particular home, and the dog was running around. I was following it on Twitter and the dog ended up chewing one of the sofas and it was like this big hilarious thing, trying to get a new couch.

Just that really ordinary stuff that probably might not have happened, or might not have happened as quickly, but just turned out to be great. And

some of the stories and pictures of them all, you know, going out and walking this dog and the dog getting full of mud and jumping all over the house. It was just, it was just really nice to see and actually how much all of those kids, and all of those workers, just really appreciated having a big messy dog in the house, which has never been done before. It's just been great. Nothing huge, nothing massive, but just little stories like that.

(LS) And even the way that you've described that, the idea that previously there might have been folk that were thinking "Oh, is it, you know, the right thing to do" and yet what you're saying is folk saying "what needs to happen": "I need to move in, that's that right now and I'm able to do that but puppy's got to come" - and all the all the positive things that came from that in terms of - I've got a wee hankering every time people talk about getting a puppy, Rosie and I'm not that much of a dog person. But even just the way you've described it, you know like this messy puppy and almost that really warm, helpful distraction of this wee dog being around people.

Are there examples... one of the things that we've heard a lot even just through some of our contacts is folk really thinking about what kind of additional commitment that being prepared to make during COVID, and you've given a really good example of that. And again, that folk have been able to, depending on their own circumstances, about how they work, what kind of days they work, how they work shifts and folk really putting themselves out there on that, kind of, frontline to make sure that kids feel safe and healthy and all that and responded really well to that. We know that what's happened as a result of that is kids feeling more, feeling a bit more settled at times, feeling happier knowing that they've got the same person morning and night, that kind of stuff. We know that residential staff work really hard, without a pandemic, but it's interesting that how prepared people have been at times to step into that.

Sheila have your got any examples of, come to mind, when you think about how folk have adapted or changed during COVID, to adapt to what's going on?

(SE) I mean I would certainly echo what Rosie said. The residential staff, you know very much... it was almost like the invisible cloak and Harry Potter, they put, they just kind of enveloped their house and everybody was... that became the bubble. And everybody just all pulled together.

Goodness, I can't count how many extra hours people did, believing, you know, that if they were there and they needed to be there for young people, then that's what was important.

I think I was particularly struck by the efforts that one of my managers and her staff team did as they helped one of our young people have a lockdown birthday. They made it so, so special for the child. It was just lovely and, well you know, it is really important. I mean, all our birthdays are important and we do like to celebrate in style I have to say. You always know when there's a birthday on, there's banners and all sorts and cakes and gifts. And it's just like the whole shebang for any of the young people in our houses.

I think during the height of lockdown, when our wee chappie had his 6th birthday, it was such a good day and staff who were on their day off came in and it was like a whole garden party, I believe, you know. It was all kind of all out for folks.

I think that that's the bit that makes the difference that people will come in on their day off to see, for example, a young person on their birthday, or if they know that somebody's got to make a phone call to a family member, and maybe, you know, it doesn't always go well. But if you're the person that the young person connects with best, then they'll come in on their days off or work their shifts round about it so that they can be there and be the kind of trusted person on hand to see that that video call with Mum, Dad, whoever goes well.

I think it's those little things that, you know, when it comes to writing reports and benchmarking outcomes, you know I keep saying, "OK, somebody want to tell me how you measure happiness"? What do you do? Do you have a smile in the scale of 1 to 10? Or you know, how do you? I mean, I have a

huge amount of time and respect for our colleagues in the Care Inspectorate, and I'm certainly not suggesting that we shouldn't be regulated, but you know, there's a fine line between getting it right on outcomes and how do you measure happiness? How does it feel for our young people? That's what's important. Risk temperatures are important too...

(LS) It links so nicely to that point that Rosie made earlier about the idea that has COVID led us to refocus into those things that need to happen.

You know, how would you, do we measure daily interactions? How do you measure? Yet what we hear are really strong stories from practitioners but also from children about what made a really big difference for me: getting that puppy in the house does a different thing for me than anything else would; that's the first time that I've ever been able to stay with my pain on my birthday, but at the same time celebrate. So that idea that this might be tricky today, if I let you phone my mum, but I can still celebrate, and didn't get overwhelmed by the joy that people were showing for me and on me.

So that real, you know, how do we get into really thinking about what doing well looks like for staff when it is quite a difficult thing to quantify in that kind of way. Yet we hear really powerful stories around some of this. Wish I'd been at that birthday party!

(SE) It was a great birthday party. And I'd had made sure there was Rich Teas for you.

(LS) A Party Ring, if it's a party. I can be flexible if there's a party. A Party Ring is fine as well.

So one of the one of the things that's come up in the chat interestingly, is the idea that we're really recognising that folk have been able to really think a lot about what that extraordinary ordinary practice looks like and what is it that people are doing in those daily interactions. A real acknowledgment in this conversation about that's the practice, that's the thing that makes the difference. Those daily interactions, really tuning in to what kids need, paying attention, holding them in mind all the time. You both talked about that. It's

not just when I'm here standing in front of you. Strong examples - when we were talking a lot about love, as part of the Care Review, about what love looks like and such a, what a powerful message this is from the Care Review. You know it might feel like a big word but when we're drilling underneath it, it's these things that are showing love.

Somebody's asked in the chat about "what about the outside world". One of the bits of outside world being education and saying, well, you know what what's been happening during lockdown and how have children been supported to think about the learning and what advice would we be giving people during this kind of time so that people can learn more about that practice, those daily interactions - some of their externals -but also what could other people be doing to support residential practice so that we do focus in on those things being really important?

I think that's a bit of a big question. I didn't know if you had thoughts about, what should we be asking of others in their daily practice that helps residential practitioners stay in and on those moments that are important. Has anything sprung to mind? If I've wandered from that question, you should tell me.

(RM) For me, loads spring to mind, but the two big ones that I'm thinking about is (A) the Digital Divide, which I don't need to speak to a lot, a lot of us will be aware of that. So there is that just the basic making sure that the kids that you're supporting as a teacher or a residential worker have access to it.

But also I think valuing that learning doesn't necessarily mean, you know maths, English, science. Different kids have responded to this so differently. Not being in school, not being with their friends - be they looked after kids or not. And actually some of the real, real learning and development and achievements - yes, they've been doing homework and following work that's been emailed out by teachers for the full extent, to some extent, anything great- but actually some of the real, real achievements (especially for our kids) I think have been about having the time to sit and learn to cook or knit or take photographs or whatever it is that we've been doing, and it's there's so many different examples that have come out of what people have been

doing. Or even just, emotional learning. We have such a focus I guess on school and in a non-pandemic situation it's that Monday to Friday, 9 to 3, which is important, but actually, so is having the time to learn about different things.

Learning how to, I don't know, bleed a radiator. Things around the house, which is just as useful if not more useful than learning Pythagoras or algebra. Real life skills and not usually having the time or the space to sit and just do stupid things like that, that are really so valuable.

So for me, I think it's about - and a lot of teachers have been fantastic - but understanding that no, this particular kid might not have done everything that was sent out, but actually what they have learned has been huge and what they have achieved and the skills they've developed in any way during lockdown, is just as equal, if not in some cases even more important. And that comes down to the people who spend the time with, and a lot of the time has been, that's been the workers that have sat and held that space. Some of the ways in which kids have developed just emotionally, socially - they've just flourished, they've thrived in what is really, actually a genuinely challenging situation.

Some of these kids have come out and achieved so much. Learning, for me, is not just about, you know, sort of school subjects. It's a lot wider than that. So I think value in that is important, and really celebrating those achievements with the young people. It might not be in maths, but you know what, it might be in learning to cook.

(LS) So there's something about residential staff and education staff being able to get alongside each other and understand those things that are happening for children all the time. Can we support their learning? Can we support their development in other ways too? And how those things sit alongside each other, and what residential staff are able to do.

Sheila, what about you? What would you be looking for, of any external partners to support all the residential staff? What do you think we could be asking all of them?

(SE) You develop patience. Building relationships takes time. It's not a quick fix. I think we need to just let our young people grow and heal and recover. It's about being there for the long haul, it's that stickability. That bit that it doesn't matter through thick and thin. I get it's really hard for our education colleagues, for example, if young people don't conduct themselves in a way that's helpful in a classroom. But having that stickability - through thick and thin - in all arenas of their life, whether it's their social worker, their teacher, their residential worker, that nobody gives up on them. That we're all in it together for as long as it takes, no matter the challenge. I think it's not easy at all. But if there was some way that we could develop that stickability for everybody.

But I fully understand that that's hard for educational colleagues, when they've got a classroom of 30 odd kids and somebody's - because they themselves are struggling - make it difficult for others to learn. I don't know that I've got an answer, but I certainly think that if a young person felt that there was stickability from everybody, that that might help.

(LS) There's a really strong theme in what both you're saying is understanding that child, and during that time in their life and in asking all the adults to be able to get into that space. You know, and Rosie, understanding, you know, it might be learning about radiator bleeding. If there are lessons on that I would like them. But that leading to other things, that other thing you were saying Sheila about really can we stay? Can we stick in for this child at this point, whatever, whatever that looks like?

I've got a flashing thing on my screen. I think it might be somebody telling me we've got 9 minutes left - which doesn't feel as if we should only have 9 minutes left.

(SE) Good show.

(LS) Yeah, it's flown in. One of the questions I had was, there's such a strong message in The Promise about - and I think it's been well received by the residential sector - that we need to support residential staff in being able to be the best they can be. Not all children would be in residential care, but there are some children that residential care is the right thing for them at that time.

What we also know is that some children and young people have told us it's not always been the best experience for them. It's not been the best experience for every child.

That's really important, I think, for us to reflect on what we've caught this morning about what's worked really well for kids, and how staff are able to step in in the way that they have. It's a real moment, I think you said that Rosie, it's a real moment to stop and think, what do we know now as a result of this COVID pandemic? What have we understood about how important that - we knew before - but have really brought into sharp focus about those relationships, and those interactions, about those rituals.

I suppose the question I've got is that what do staff, or would do workers need to be able to do that all the time, every day and every setting. We've had that debate in the residential sector for a long time; you know, is it training? Is it inspection? Is it regulation? Is it qualifications? Certainly The Promise says we need to be thinking about good quality supervision, coaching. You know that the reflective supervision are absolutely key.

What do you guys think that people need? There's a strong theme of nurture - and you brought that up Sheila, about kids needing nurtured and looked after as do staff. So what kind of things do you think the residential childcare community needs to be able to really stay on this trajectory for children and young people getting opportunities to flourish?

(RM) For me, I think the things that you mentioned there are important. Supervision, coaching yes, but it's not a blanket approach for me. It's not a

case of saying right, do you know what would benefit every resi worker would be an hour of supervision a week. It might be, it might not be, and that things that I think it's down to having a really good manager. Really good management team to have those individual conversations with workers and staff.

For me, I think it's about - and COVID has really highlighted this - one of the things that we heard throughout the Review, from young people and from residential workers, was about having a little bit more autonomy to make everyday decisions. And that fits in really, really nicely with the theme of extraordinary ordinary. Also COVID has shown that actually certain things cannot be planned for and you cannot assess them.

I'm not one for saying that risk assessment should be out of the window at all -there is a place for them. However, I think before COVID I was of the view that we could strip it right back, and COVID has highlighted that - and some of the great stuff that we've spoken about in today's conversation and wider has been made by residential workers that don't have a policy to go off, that don't have an example to lookback and go that worked, that didn't. They've had the autonomy to make everyday decisions based on nothing but their relationship with those children and their understanding - look how well it's worked, look how well. There's been challenges and things have gone wrong, of course they have, because no-one's been in this situation before, but actually when you strip back all of that, oh when this happens, we do this, and let's assess that - we've had none of that for COVID, none of it at all. And yet there is so much brilliant stuff going on right across Scotland. And all that has come down to is the knowledge and the wisdom, common sense, and the love that's come from resi workers.

So actually, moving forward, do we keep some of that autonomy and that space to just be able to say, do you know what I really know this kid really well and I don't need a policy necessarily to tell me that, actually, what's right for this young person is X and that young person is Y because it's just that human connection that we all have in our personal lives as well, to be able to make judgments and decisions and support people.

Just stripping back some of the bureaucracy, I think, would just make it so much easier, would save time. Young people would feel more of that, that sense of normality that I was talking about before. It would save paperwork. It would save so much and it would just really allow just that, that love and connection to shine through.

(LS) I'm hearing a real word of caution from you Rosie that, you know, the end of the global pandemic, whenever that happens, we need to be careful that we don't go back to what we thought before. That we need to make sure that this learning about what has been really important, what have we been able to get to the nub of and not think that before it was the same.

I seem to remember last year you were on a plenary at SIRCC and Care Inspectorate promised us that day to cut down on the faffing, but we never we never defined faffing, but I remember that day. So you know that their heads, they are already with us. It's really, I think, an important message that we can really tune into those things that we've learned that are required, needed, by children and young people and their care, carers, and what things may no longer be needed, given what we've learned and understood.

Sheila what do you think? What do you think people would need?

(SE) I was reflecting a lot on what Rosie was saying there and I absolutely agree 100%.

I tell you who can tell us best - is the residential workers and the young people. I think there needs to be much greater focus on near practice research and we should be being led by the people who are doing the best job in the most challenging of circumstances. Our policy context and our risk assessments, or whatever else we need, should be being led by the young people and the staff at the frontline who are providing that absolutely fantastic care.

I think it's probably really difficult for people to understand sometimes, what it's like to do a shift in a in a house, understand what it's like to work in that residential life space. Actually, I do know that we work there, we live there too. That's what makes it different. It's not a job, it's our lives. It kind of impacts on everything that we do as our own individual people. I'm not just a residential worker. It's part of me, it is my being, it is who I am. I think that's a really strong identity that when you work in the sector that's, you know, you're really proud of the fact that you do it. And it is really difficult, I think, for other people to understand what it's all about.

But by jingo, come to our house, have a cup of tea with us, and learn from the people who do it best. And speak to the young people. And perhaps maybe I don't know if there's anybody in the audience there that's got any funding opportunities for research. This is a right good place to start coming out of the pandemic. There's bound to be lots of research opportunities. And actually, it's about putting residential care firmly on the map and saying actually we deserve to be researched as an arena because what we do is just darn fantastic and I think that helps celebrate and value our staff 'cause they need that. They deserve it.

(LS) I'm going to interrupt now, 'cause it's just gone eleven. I just can't believe how well, how nicely those two ideas fit together about that development autonomy for staff and how nicely that would fit with, that kind of practitioner led research and development and understanding, and that being a really hopeful way of thinking about where we could go next in residential care.

I think people might be disappearing. Can I just say thank you so much to the both of you? I could easily sit here for another hour. So I'll book you in for Tuesday if you don't mind, just for me.

It's just been a great conversation and I'm really sorry we've run out of time. If folk want to know a wee bit more, and hear a bit more than if folk could go to SIRCC web page on the CELCIS website that would be brilliant. Somebody who had hoped to join us who couldn't said a couple of weeks ago that he's

never been more proud than to be associated with residential care, and I think that's a lovely way to finish.

So, thank you very much everybody. I hope you're got all the questions on the chat, I have tried to wind them in as we went, but we'll certainly pick them up afterwards.

See if we had been at SIRCC, we'd all be having a wee hug now, so we might as well have a wee virtual hug and say cheerio.

(RM We'll go grab coffee.

Thank you, bye.