

#IfYouCareYouCan - Children's homes staff create first ever sector-led, national recruitment campaign to promote careers in residential childcare

Tuesday 21 March, 2023

The first ever sector-led, national recruitment campaign of its kind aims to urgently inspire more people to discover the rewarding roles and "life-changing" career opportunities in children's homes at a time when a staffing crisis is seeing some of our society's most vulnerable children and young people without access to the specialist care and support they need.

The sector-led #IfYouCareYouCan campaign, through films and online content, provides rare insight into what it's like to work in children's homes and residential childcare settings, the emotionally rewarding nature of the work and inspiring stories of staff from a wide range of backgrounds who found their dream job in the sector.

The Residential Childcare Careers #IfYouCareYouCan campaign and careers website highlights that well-paid, entry level roles, varied working hours and "life-changing" career progression opportunities are available in residential childcare - with training and personal development provided as you work and no formal qualifications required to get started, all it takes is the right personal qualities including patience, resilience, and a caring nature.

Campaigners aim to spread awareness via press and social media channels and the good will of partners, with a Campaign Toolkit to provide assets that partners and supporters can use to spread the word and help the 'urgent search for life-changing people'.

There has been no national recruitment campaign promoting careers in residential childcare for more than 30 years. While the government has recently pledged £20million in funding to address recruitment challenges in foster care and invested hundreds of millions in the adult social care workforce, children's homes have been described as social care's 'forgotten sector'. Residential childcare providers and sector experts say there is no more time to wait to address the staffing crisis which is already causing some of society's most vulnerable children and young people to have no access to a suitable children's home placement.

The campaign involves providers across the public, private and charity sectors and is facilitated by The Children's Homes Association as part of a collaborative initiative to address the workforce crisis in residential childcare. The campaign will work to support all providers of residential childcare in England and Wales as part of a longer-term strategy to raise awareness and improve outcomes for children and young people by strengthening the workforce needed to provide their care.

West Sussex County Council were one of the first local authority children's homes providers to get involved with the campaign. Lucy Butler, Director of Children, Young People and Learning at West Sussex County Council said:

"There is a real need to inspire more people to discover careers in residential childcare. We hope this innovative campaign will shine a light on the rewarding work that residential childcare professionals do, and on the amazing career opportunities that exist in this sector for people from a wide range of backgrounds:"

Merseyside charity Nugent's Head of People, Hetal Mainwaring, made the following comments after posting jobs on the campaign's job board:

"It is wonderful that we have a centralised and national platform to promote residential childcare careers. Sharing the rewarding and inspirational work that is undertaken by professionals working in residential childcare will support recruitment and retention. This will support to highlight that we offer long-term employment prospects, with opportunity for promotion and progression as well as job security."

Director of The Mulberry Bush School, Lee Right, said:

"The ongoing work by CHA (The Children's Homes Association) to ensure that the excellent and essential work of the residential childcare sector is recognised nationally is incredibly important to every children's home. The recent campaign and website designed to help these homes recruit staff during these exceptionally challenging times is welcomed by everyone at the Mulberry Bush."

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Mark Kerr, Deputy CEO of The Children's Homes Association said:

"Every stakeholder in residential childcare is acutely aware of the need to encourage more amazing, caring people into roles and careers in children's homes and other residential childcare settings. Without a national effort to raise awareness, there will continue to be vulnerable children and young people across the country without access to residential care and therapeutic support when they need it most.

"That's why our sector has pulled together to create this authentic and inspiring campaign.

"We hope #IfYouCareYouCan will get the support necessary to reach every individual with the personal qualities it takes and inspire them to discover rewarding career opportunities in residential childcare, or transfer their professional skills to this sector.

"Any individual, community or organisation can make a difference by supporting and promoting this urgent search for life-changing people."

Peter Sandiford, CEO of The Children's Homes Association said:

"We will continue to work across all sectors with all those involved in the delivery of exceptional residential childcare provision, to ensure that vulnerable children and young people - those in our society who are rarely able to make their own voices heard - are cared for by a valued, vibrant and rewarded workforce. Because life-changing residential childcare is made possible by great people, not by bricks and mortar alone."

ENDS**Notes to Editors**

- To view the campaign and careers information website please visit residentialchildcarecareers.co.uk
- To view the Campaign Toolkit and Media Galleries and download imagery, films and content please visit: <https://ifyoucareyoucan.prezly.com/>
- To access the campaign on social media please visit [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#)
- The Children's Homes Association (CHA) is the not-for-profit membership body for providers of residential childcare across the public, private and charity sectors and across England and Wales. We provide knowledge, expert guidance, resources and day-to-day support to our members as we work together to deliver exemplary residential childcare. We work directly with local and national government, regulators and allied public services, consulting on policy and changes within the sector. We ensure that the voices of our members and the residential childcare sector are heard, through consultations, government responses and liaison with the media.
www.the-cha.org.uk
- The Children's Homes Association's most recent annual State of the Sector survey of residential childcare providers indicates that 75% of providers continue to be experiencing severe recruitment challenges that impact their ability to meet demand for placements or to create new provision in response to the needs of children and young people in England and Wales. In 2022, the same State of the Sector survey had already recorded the highest ever increase in similar recruitment challenges.
- For further enquiries please contact media@the-cha.org.uk

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