

Continuing Care&CO

CONVERSATION OPENERS

ABOUT

This tool was created to support practitioners, individually and in groups, reflect on their views and values when continuing to care for young people who are leaving care (Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, 2014). Produced by Iriss, it has been developed by people who care for, and support, young people with experience of leaving care.

To learn more about this conversation tool — ideas, evidence and stories on how relational-based practice can be supported — visit: iriss.org.uk/careco

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Practitioners are more confident to discuss continuing relationships with young people leaving care/other colleagues/partners
- Practitioners and teams have increased capacity for reflective practice about continuing relationships
- Practitioners, teams and organisations have increased awareness of, and are

better able, to articulate their cultures, attitudes and values around continuing relationships, boundaries and risk

- Practitioners, teams and organisations have increased awareness of how they enact, enable and disable relational-based care, and how they can better support this practice

GUIDANCE

This tool comprises nine themes, each with a set of related questions:

- Your views
- Your boundaries
- Your practice
- Feeling safe
- Expressing yourself
- Culture
- Lending, gifts and money
- Time
- Technology and social media

The tool is flexible and can be used in a variety of ways, for example, by individuals, in one-to-one or group supervision, or in learning and development sessions.

There are no right or wrong ways to use the cards, however, there are three simple steps you can follow:

1. Choose a question (or questions)
2. Use the questions to prompt thinking and/or group discussion
3. Decide how you/your organisation will action the learning from your reflections and conversations

To support your reflections, you may want to consider your own, your team's and your organisation's:

1. Choice of question(s)
2. Approach to relational-based practice
3. Learning

Depending on how you want to action your reflections you may want to have a pen and paper, or perhaps an audio recorder, to hand.

If you have learned something new:

1. What needs to happen to enable this learning to become part of your practice?
2. What needs to happen so you can be better supported to practise this way?

IMPACT

It is important for us to understand the impact of our tools so we can:

- Enhance the capacity and capability of the social services workforce
- Support positive outcomes for people who use Scotland's social services

We invite you to share your answers to the reflection and actions questions in this survey: iriss.org.uk/surveycareco

This information will be kept anonymous and be used to inform our strategy for developing tools.



improving lives through
knowledge, evidence and innovation

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



What is a relational boundary? Do you think relationships should be managed and boundaries set?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



What do people bond over? (For example, shared interests, similar ways of communicating, sharing emotional moments together...)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



What are your expectations about the length and continuity of relationships with young people?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



People use the term 'grey areas' in relation to their relational boundaries. What are 'grey areas' and how do you negotiate them?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



What is your duty as a professional when continuing relationships with young people?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



What does an interdependent relationship look like?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



What metaphors would you use to describe your preferred relational boundaries? (For example: solid like a rock or fluid like water?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR VIEWS

relationships, bonding, grey areas



When it comes to continuing relationships, what in your view are the differences between professional, personal and private boundaries? What is your 'alcohol boundary'? (For example, would you respond to a young person if they contacted you after you had drunk a glass or two?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Are there any circumstances in which you would talk to young people about your experience of sex?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



What does being 'private' mean to you?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Would you answer questions from young people about your previous experience of drug use?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Have you ever developed a 'special relationship' or a particularly close relationship with a young person?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



If meeting a young person in your own time, would you smoke or drink with, or in front of, them?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



How much personal information is it appropriate to share with young people? Is this similar to the personal information you share with you own children, nieces or nephews?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Do the young people you work with know where you live?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Is it ok to share information with young people about what you do in your time off or on holidays?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Do the young people you work with know any members of your family?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



What does 'being personal' mean to you?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



How do you manage to convey the professional and personal aspects of your role?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Would you say that you love any of the young people you work with?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



What are your preferences about where you spend your time with young people? (For example, in your home, in a cafe, in a meeting room?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



How do you manage young people's expectations of your relationship with them?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Do you believe that young people in long-term placements need to feel loved or liked by their carers?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



What does 'being professional' mean to you?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR BOUNDARIES

professional, personal, private



Are there questions or topics you find difficult to broach with young people? (For example sexuality, identity, politics or moral issues?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance



What are good ways to develop and continue a relationship with a young person?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance



What are your organisation's policies around taking photographs of young people and recording precious moments? Do these support the way you would like to practise?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance



What would happen in your organisation if a young person wanted to change worker because they were not happy with the relationship?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance

How does legislation support and enable you to practise continuing care?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance

Does your organisation have policies that restrict continuing relationships with young people? Could these policies be influenced or changed?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance

How do the policies and guidance that frame your work support and enable the continuation of relationships? If they don't, how could they be influenced to change?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance

Flexible working practices (shift, working from home, hot desking) may hinder practitioners' ability to share information with colleagues about relationships that continue with the young people they care for. How could this barrier be addressed?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance



Would you like your organisation's policies to be clearer?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance



If a practitioner is ill for a period of time, what contingencies are in place to ensure the young people they continue to have relationships with are informed and supported?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

YOUR PRACTICE

legislation, policies, guidance



How do you reflect on the development of your relationship with a young person? Are there other ways you could do this? What might be the benefits of doing this differently?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



What should be in place to ensure you feel safe and supported when supporting young people as they leave care?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



What worries you the most about continuing a relationship with a young person after they leave care?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



Do you ever feel anxious about the possibility of false allegations being made against you? In what situations?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



How would you respond if you saw a colleague with a young person and were not aware about any agreed arrangement for them to be in contact?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



How can flexible relationship boundaries be kept safe?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



Do you believe relationships with young people need to be evidenced or documented?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



Do you need to document informal contact? If you do, what do you record?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

FEELING SAFE

evidence, anxiety, support



Of the young people you currently work with, do you have a favourite?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Should workers always use 'side hugs' if they give a young person a hug?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Do you think it is helpful to tell a young person that you are angry with them?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Should 'horse play' or play fighting between practitioners and young people always be avoided?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Is crying with a young person when you feel sad for them likely to be helpful or unhelpful?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Do you feel that you love young people you work with, and how do you express this?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



How do you support young people to feel that you really care and are not just at work to be paid?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Would you wear a badge (or similar) that highlights your political/religious preferences and/or sexual orientation?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

love, hugs, emotions



Are there situations where you would not share something a young person has told you with other practitioners?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



Who is responsible for the relationship between you and a young person as they leave care? Should this responsibility be made explicit? How can this responsibility be modelled to be understood?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



Who do you most often talk to about your relationships with young people? When do you have this kind of conversation, and why do you choose these people/this time?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



Do your relationships with young people come to an end? If so, when and how?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



What do you think about the terms 'exiting a service' and 'ending a relationship'?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



What are your organisation's expectations about continuing relationships with young people?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



Does your organisation support and enable you to continue relationships with young people? If so, how?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



Is gender important to continuing relationships? What age/gender balances do you consider to be appropriate? (For example, what do you think about a 40 year old man continuing a relationship with an 18 year old woman?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

CULTURE

who, when, how



Is there a shared understanding of the different perspectives about continuing relationships in your team?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

GIVE & TAKE

lending, gifts and money



Would you be happy to lend a book, CD or DVD to a young person? How would you feel about borrowing one from a young person?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

GIVE & TAKE

lending, gifts and money

Do you ever buy gifts for young people on their birthday or at Christmas?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

GIVE & TAKE

lending, gifts and money

Would you accept a Christmas gift from a young person or a parent?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

GIVE & TAKE

lending, gifts and money

What do you spend your own money on when in the company of a young person and what expenses do you claim back?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

GIVE & TAKE

lending, gifts and money

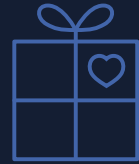
Would you ever lend or give money to a young person?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

GIVE & TAKE

lending, gifts and money



How would you respond if a young person gave you a gift you suspected was stolen?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



What messages should you give to a young person about your availability?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



Do you ever spend additional time with a young person or a group of young people when you are not on shift or at work?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



How realistic is it for practitioners to have time to continue relationships with young people?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



When is it appropriate to be supporting a young person who no longer accesses the service you provide?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



Would you ever invite a young person to spend time with your friends and family?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



Would you invite a young person to go away on a short trip or holiday with you?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



If you were going to a football match or music event in your own time and knew a young person you work with who would be interested in going, would you invite them?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



Are you flexible about your working hours so you can be available for important occasions? (For example, a birthday celebration, Children's Hearing, review, or school meeting?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

TIME

hours, availability, flexibility



Would you send a text to a young person while you were not at work — at a time that this contact might be welcome or helpful? (For example a birthday, a job interview or a difficult time?)

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability



If you stay in contact with a young person using Facebook, what are your expectations of this contact?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability



Under what circumstances would you give out your personal phone number?

CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

Would you connect with a young person on Twitter or Facebook? If so, what are your expectations about your relationships with them (and others) via this technology?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

How can we negotiate issues of vulnerable young people putting themselves at risk via new technology?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

Would you consider accepting a friend request from a young person you worked with?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

Would you be happy to be part of a closed Facebook group for workers and young people or young people who have moved on?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

What would you do if a young person had your personal number and called you late at night? Do you answer? What if it's your work phone?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

What are your organisation's policies on engaging with young people via social media?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

What may happen to your relationship with a young person if you need to block them from accessing your Twitter or Facebook account?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS

COMMUNICATION

technology, social media, vulnerability

What impact do educational and generational differences have on the use of social media as a way to keep in touch?



CONTINUING CARE & CO : CONVERSATION OPENERS