

YOUTH VOICES

In this issue: Who are we? | What are we asking for? | Games!

Our Asks

1.

We ask that the UK government **co-design** policies aimed at preventing povertyism within children's social care **with** young people with lived experience.

2.

When it is safe and appropriate, we ask that the UK government chooses **kinship care** as the more compassionate and advantageous way forward instead of pursuing contested closed adoptions.

3.

We ask that the UK government look for ways to **support families** whenever possible, **leaving separation of a child from their family as a last resort**.

4.

We ask that professionals and alternative care providers are **held accountable with clear processes** that allow children, young people, and families to take action if they are being mistreated by professionals and alternative care providers.



Who are Youth Voices?

Started by ATD Fourth World and Teen Advocacy, Youth Voices is a project that originated from the need of children and young people with lived experience of poverty and social service interventions to have a say in the conversations concerning their lives. These children and young people have been silenced by systems for too long, which is why all aspects of their work is thought out, researched, planned, written and edited by people with lived experience of poverty. This includes everyone from young activists with lived experience, to academics with lived experience, to practitioners such as youth workers and social workers with lived experience. This makes our work invaluable as we believe that effective social change can only come when people with lived experience are part of the conversation. Youth Voices' vision is of a world where the views of children with lived experience are valued and respected by all adults, and where teens get a say about the trajectory of their lives.

The research and writing for our submission were led by:

- Summer Mayes, lived-experience member of ATD Fourth World and Youth Voices
- Aurelia Drayak, co-founder of Teen Advocacy and member of Youth Voices
- Kaydence Drayak, co-founder of Teen Advocacy, Youth Ambassador for the End Child Poverty Coalition and Project Officer at ATD Fourth World
- Tiegan Boyens, Youth Ambassador for the End Child Poverty Coalition and lived-experience member of Youth Voices
- Francesca Crozier-Roche, JNC Youth and Community Practitioner, visiting researcher at the University of Cambridge and lived-experience member of ATD Fourth World and Youth Voices
- Eva Carrillo Roas and Caitlin Sibthorpe, Project Officers at ATD Fourth World

Our journey to Geneva

Being in this room hasn't been easy for Youth Voices. This moment has been part of a three year process of training, outreach, research, and writing, and our group of young people with lived experience was trained in safeguarding and research ethics to conduct focus groups across England and Scotland. Because who better to talk to young people about their difficult experiences with social services and poverty than young people that have experienced it themselves?

They are here to represent children all over the UK that have experienced forced separations from their families. They are here to bring to the attention of the CESCR that children's social care in the UK subjects children in poverty to discrimination. They are here to say that poverty is NOT neglect, and that harsh interventions that sever family ties can damage their well-being and impact their identity.

Don't take their presence for granted, because it has come with a lot of effort and sacrifice.

Past Issues

December 2022

We collaborated with the End Poverty Coalition to write a submission for the examination of the United Kingdom's 7th periodic report to the CESCR PSWG list of issues.

March 2023

We addressed the pre-sessional working group of the United Nations Committee on ESCR.

May 2023

We spoke at the "Child's right to identity in family relations" symposium organised by Child Identity Protection.

April 2023

We shared our knowledge and experiences at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg as part of the European Youth ATD campaign.

December 2023

We launched our Human Rights resources that we developed in collaboration with the British Institute of Human Rights at the UK House of Lords.

August 2024 to January 2025

We co-produced our second submission to CESCR.

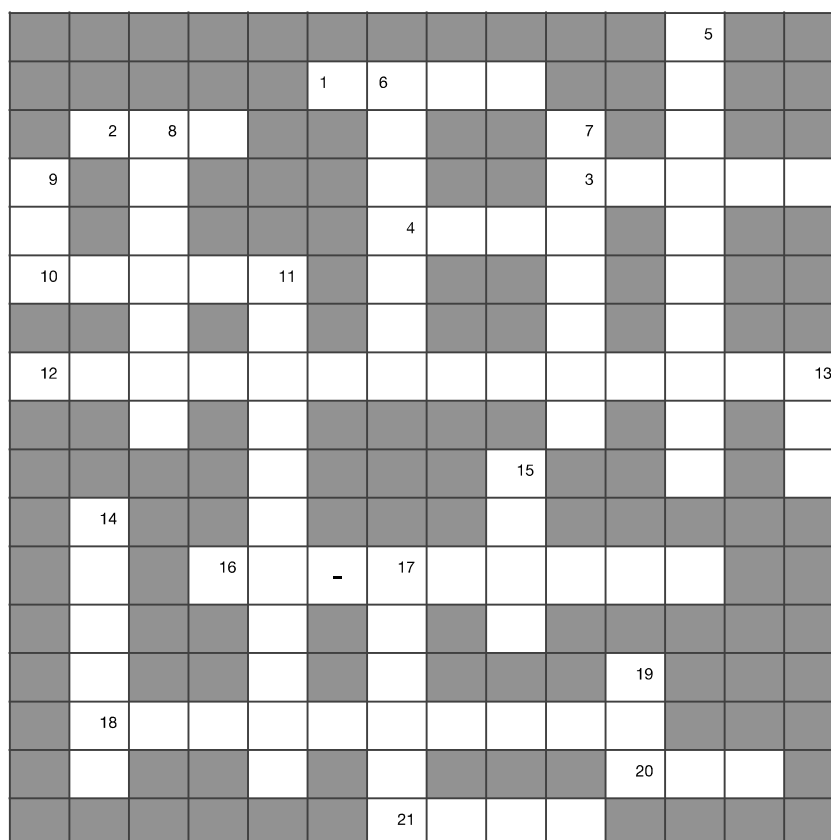
January 2025

We were granted funding from The Equality and Human Rights Commission to come to Geneva as speak to the CESCR.

CROSSWORD

Fill in the white squares with words that answer the given clues, using the numbered grid as a guide. Words intersect at shared letters, helping you solve connected clues. Use your knowledge of the Youth Voices ESCR submission to complete the puzzle!

See overleaf for answers.



Across

1. Includes the rights to adequate housing, social security, education etc...
2. We want to ___ forced closed adoptions.
3. Possible courses of action; Youth Voices have many.
4. A detailed proposal for doing or achieving something.
10. To push back change; making change late or slowly.
12. The condition of being responsible; something the UK government needs to take.
16. Participatory method of policy production; what we'd like the government to do with lived experience individuals when designing policy.
18. The knowledge or skill acquired by living.
20. When do we want change?
21. To be at the head; people with lived experience should ___ action.

Down

5. Negative attitudes and behaviours towards people living in poverty.
6. What families going through the care system need from the government.
7. The type of care we wish to prioritise over pursuing contested closed adoptions.
8. Poverty is not ___.
9. Fourth World organisation.
11. Who are we?
13. As it stands, has the UK government been violating human rights?
14. Which article concerns itself with the right to an adequate standard of living?
15. Separation of a child from their family is the ___ resort.
17. The refusal of (rights).
19. Which article declares that "the widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family"?

Sudoku

Fill the 9×9 grid so that each row, column, and 3×3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 without repetition.

	9	7		8				4
					7	1		
3		2						6
		9						
6			1		2			
	3		5	9				2
			8	7			3	5
		3	2		6	9		
8	5		3					

Word soup

Find and circle hidden words in the letter grid, placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

A	D	G	J	L	D	W	R	A	D	V	O	C	A	T	E
Q	E	T	U	L	T	X	E	T	N	O	C	N	P	M	N
S	F	H	I	Y	F	A	M	I	L	Y	J	L	O	K	X
C	B	H	M	O	N	Q	R	K	Y	U	I	H	B	Y	C
A	C	C	O	U	N	T	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y	T	
C	H	A	J	T	K	L	M	H	T	N	S	U	P	R	T
T	F	R	A	H	E	X	P	E	R	T	S	M	I	E	L
T	Y	E	M	P	O	W	E	R	O	G	E	H	T	V	E
S	U	P	P	O	R	T	I	D	I	G	T	A	I	O	L
R	I	H	U	M	A	N	R	I	G	H	T	S	O	P	A
P	T	O	X	V	I	N	O	I	S	S	I	M	B	U	S

Crossword answers:

Across

1. ESCR
2. End
3. Ideas
4. Plan
10. Delay
12. Accountability
16. Co-design
18. Experience
20. Now
21. Lead

Down

5. Povertyism
6. Support
7. Kinship
8. Neglect
9. ATD
11. Youth Voices
13. Yes
14. Eleven
15. Last
17. Denial
19. Ten