**The Children and Social Work Bill**

**REPORT ON**

**SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENT 57 ( c )**

October 2016

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### Children and Social Work Bill [HL] 2016-17 for the United Kingdom Parliament Publication: HL Bill 57(c) Amendment for Report LORD RAMSBOTHAM LORD HUNT OF KINGS HEATH

### LORD WARNER

### Page 2, line 13, at end insert— “( ) A local authority in England must, in carrying out functions in relation to the children and young people mentioned in subsection (2)—

### (a) undertake a screening of the children and young people to identify any neurodevelopmental disorders or neurodisability needs, as listed in subsection (3);

### (b) ensure that those working with the children and young people are trained in awareness of neurodevelopmental disorders and neurodisability needs; and

### (c) ensure appropriate support is provided for those of the children and young people mentioned in subsection (2) who have neurodevelopmental or neurodisability needs.”

### Page 2, line 24, at end insert— ““neurodisability” includes— (a) intellectual disabilities; (b) specific learning disabilities; (c) communication disorders; (d) attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD); (e) autism spectrum disorders (ASD); (f) traumatic brain injury (TBI); (g) epilepsy; (h) foetal alcohol syndrome

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# Summary

A central objective of the Children and Social Work Bill, currently progressing through the Lords, is to improve decision-making and support for looked after and previously looked after children.

Lords Ramsbotham, Hunt of Kings Heath and Warner tabled an amendment (57 (c)) that would set a new requirement for Corporate Parents to screen for neurodisabilities and to provide informed support to looked after children and previously looked after children with neurodisabilities.

The authors of this report are both parents of neurodisabled teenagers in the care system and strongly support Amendment 57 (c). They contacted a wide range of charities and individuals to invite them to comment via an online form. The questions are reproduced below and the responses form the body of this report.

**The Need**

More than 60% of children in the Care system are recorded as having Special Educational Needs, (SEN) many with a neurodisability such as ADHD or an Autism Spectrum Disorder \*yet the health checks they are offered are not robust enough to ensure their disabilities are consistently identified in their first looked-after-child health check to inform decision making.

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| **Case Study 1: North Yorkshire County Council** **‘No Wrong Door’ Innovation Project**  North Yorkshire County Council employed in-house speech therapists (Communication Support Workers) as part of its ‘No Wrong Door’ Innovation Project. They have played a bigger role than the team was expecting, with a very high number of undiagnosed learning difficulties uncovered in children who had not been assessed or had been waiting for an assessment.  Therapists discovered that the proportion of Looked After Children with a speech, language and communication needs was 67%. Identified needs included poor comprehension, vocabulary delay, memory and processing difficulties and pragmatic problems. The identification of these needs enabled the Communication Support Workers to work with the young people, and their carers, family and key workers to highlight the best way to communicate with each individual young person. Therapists have been paid for in part by the pupil premium.  <http://springconsortium.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Storyboard-North-Yorkshire-County-Council.pdf> |

Responses within this report, voice widespread concern among experts by training and/or experience that far too often:-

* Decisions made about looked after and previously looked after children with neurodisabilities are uninformed. Difficulties understanding the child/young person mean their wishes, needs, and how their disability affects them are not fully taken into account in decision-making.
* Fundamental aspects of good care are not tailored for neurological difference, including social work practice, communication styles and mental health support if needed.
* Long-term harm may be caused to looked after and previously looked after children with neurodisabilities in particular by inappropriate placements including institutional care.

One respondent (45) commented:

***“ Without the right understanding of the way in which people think and react to others it is very easy to harm children, young people or adults with conditions like autism.”***

and another (12) :

***“it's very important that the people that are looking after these children have an understanding of their conditions because children are too vulnerable to have to deal with an adult's ignorance that however well meaning, can cause serious damage not least to a child's self esteem’’*.**

\*https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/outcomes-for-children-lookedafter-by-las-31-march-2015

**Support for the Amendment**.

There is widespread support for this Amendment. Many organisations confirmed their support including the 29 on the attached list. In addition to this report, the National Autistic Society (NAS) and Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) have prepared briefings on the proposed Bill amendment.

Individual stakeholders replied including:

Academics from University Departments with a specialism in Social Care Research and Practice

A member of a Children in Care Team

A member of a Clinical Commissioning Group

A member of a Health & Well Being Team (CAMHS) HMYOI and Secure Training Centre

A member of a Forensic CAMHS Team

Teachers and a School Nurse

Social Workers working with the ASD looked after cohort.

A Trade Union neurodiversity champion

Many people provided comments and personal stories. Other than correction of minor spelling errors and removal of identifying names and locations, responses are unedited with the exception of two (nos. 10 and 21) that were abridged.

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| **Case Study 2 : Hackney Children’s Services**  The local authority has developed an exemplary clinical service, which comprises clinicians from a range of backgrounds and offers direct work, consultation and training to staff and carers.  It runswithout a waiting listand provides support to children whose cases are open to children’s services, including children looked after placed out of area.  By involving health and other relevant professionals in initial strategy discussions decisions are informed by their knowledge and insight of the child and their family. The clinical service also undertakes specialist assessments and a comprehensive range of specialist therapeutic individual and group work.  The service routinely and systematically collects outcome data and service user feedback to ensure that it is measuring effectiveness. It is having a positive impact, evidenced through a reduction in difficulties that children exhibit at the conclusion of the intervention, overall satisfaction feedback from service users and positive feedback from the judiciary, which identifies the service as a strength.  <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/local_authority_reports/hackney/052_Single%20inspection%20of%20LA%20children%27s%20services%20and%20review%20of%20the%20LSCB%20as%20pdf.pdf> |

This amendment if accepted will ensure that the relatively expensive and intensive education, health and care services for looked after children and former looked after children are better targeted to give better outcomes. It will also improve the chances of care leavers, who may also be young parents, being able to safely care for their children by making it an explicit requirement that they have access to assessment for neurodisabilities and associated support where necessary. This is likely to have a long term benefit in breaking what can be a devastating cycle of care experienced young parents with neurodisabilities see their own children in turn enter Care.

# Question Set

Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after-children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Do give us your opinion if you would like to….

Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?

Q3 If you are from an organisation or charity, please give it’s name.

Q4 Your Name

Q5 Please provide a contact email if you would like to hear what happens.

Q6 Finally, if you have a personal story you would like to share with us, please tell us here (Please say if

you don’t want us to use it –we would only do so anonymously of course)

# Responses

## Neurodiverse Adults

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Response |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes. I think that it's very important that the people that are looking after these children have an understanding of their conditions because children are too vulnerable to have to deal with an adult's ignorance that however well meaning, can cause serious damage not least to a child's self esteem. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes based on my childhood and how adults treated me and my brother.  I saw that, for example, teachers without an understanding of ADHD took their ignorance out on my brother. It seemed to them that their inability to teach him was seen almost as an insult and instead of looking to find new ways to teach and communicate with him they just took their frustration out on him. Most advice given to my parents about my brother was that all his problems came from their lack of discipline.  I remember the school denied that there was a problem with me because I was a calm, obedient child. While the other children would be writing in sentences, I would have to walk up the room to the teacher's desk and ask her how to spell every word. She would only help with one word, so I'd be walking back and forth while everyone else was writing away at their desks. Sometimes I wouldn't go up, I'd lay my head on the desk and try not to cry. I felt so angry and stupid but with my ASD there were many times in my childhood where adults would take my lack of facial expressions as if I were lacking in feelings and they did not have any patience or understanding with my sensory issues.  (133) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Absolutely yes, this is vital. Sometimes children are wrongfully taken into care by the state because they have undiagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism (including PDA) and ADHD that has been misunderstood or misrepresented as neglect or abuse. Sometimes parents are blamed for their children's behaviour that is an undiagnosed condition and the parents and children are not supported and cannot cope, so end up forced to give the child up.  Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes. I would go even further in saying that before it gets to the point of court ruling, the child is assessed for neurodevelopmental conditions.  As a parent of two autistic children and as an autistic adult myself, in our dealings with social services we suffered complete discrimination, misrepresentation and misunderstanding. It resulted in me being falsely accused of causing my children's anxiety, even in the face of professional reports stating the source of anxiety was school and the fact that 70-80% of autistics have co-morbid anxiety. For some families this kind of issue can cause things to take a turn for the worse. In running a Facebook community and website I have come across a significant amount of autism parents (some of whom are also autistic themselves) for whom this has happened. This has meant erroneous child protection plans and tragically in some cases, children being taken and forced adopted. It is a scandal of huge proportions. If an undiagnosed autistic or ADHD child is misdiagnosed as having attachment disorder, or their traits are misrepresented, they will lose out on crucial support and this will negatively impact their life outcomes, often massively. There needs to be cast iron categorical legislation in place that cannot be interpreted arbitrarily, that protects these children's rights and needs, and those of their parents. Children do not exist in a vacuum, good parents are an absolute necessity in a child's life.  (09) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes including dyslexia and autistic spectrum disorders. I'm always shocked working as a health visitor about the lack of knowledge and understanding of this topic with my colleagues. If you can get the environment right for someone who is ND it makes such a huge difference to their lives.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes but please mention dyslexia as well and the need not just for support but reasonable adjustments in their environment/ educational setting.  I'm a health visitor but I also teach about neurodiversity within the trade union movement. I also developed the X neurodiversity project which looked at supporting adults in the workplace who are ND.  I was in the bottom sets for everything at school and was told that I was thick and wouldn't achieve much. I knew that I wasn't but just didn't understand what was being taught, nothing sunk in. I feel very angry and struggled with depression as a teenager, I had low self esteem and felt a failure. I left school with no qualifications, but had my heart set on being a nurse, I was very stubborn and determined that I wanted to prove everyone wrong. I went to night school to gain my qualifications needed. It was a struggle but I taught myself how to learn, I had a different learning style to most of my fellow students. Later in life after passing my nursing and my health visiting, gaining two degrees, as well as a teaching qualification and various diplomas, I've learnt that I'm dyslexic and dyspraxic. Now everything I suffered in school makes sense. If only the support had been there for me at school, my childhood and teenage years might not have been so dark. I don't understand why it wasn't picked up, at 15 I could hardly write!  (77) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes!!!!  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes.  I've had quite a few support workers during my time at college, and nearly every year I have a battle to make sure my needs are being met. All of the problematic support workers have shown little to no knowledge of autism, often telling me they can't work in a way that helps me because "no one really thinks like that".  I've had support workers scream at me for having panic attacks or shutdowns because of their refusal to relay instructions in a way that I understand "You're old enough to learn how to understand the instructions". Last year we had issues with a support worker who often remarked that "no one really understands how autism works so how am I meant to offer support" and completely ignored my needs and requests for help because "you talk a lot so you're practically normal" and assumed I was just being lazy when I didn't understand the lesson. I've managed to get a few really good support workers now (including autistic support workers!) but getting help when issues come up is really difficult now. No one believes any fault lies with the support workers.  Why would they be in the support/carer profession if they didn't know how autism worked? They cannot be clueless like this when they're working with autistic kids.  I get the blame and I've been branded a difficult student who doesn't get along with anyone. Even issues that are completely unrelated to my support get ignored if my name comes up because it's just me not getting along with anyone again.  This probably wouldn't have happened if I'd had support workers who knew at least the basics of autism from the start. If they had to show proof of understanding it would be much better instead of everyone assuming they must understand if they're supporting.  (63) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? I agree.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? I agree/  As someone with ADHD (which I did not know about until I was in my mid-teens, and struggled with as a result), this is important to me. If it helps just one child, it's worth it.  (68) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes, as an autistic person I feel that there should be a much wider understanding and acknowledgement of neurodivergence than there currently is.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (69) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, because if they are not aware of the conditions the child has and the traits associated with the conditions they will not be able to understand the child as well and therefore will be less able to care for them.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes.  I am autistic and it is shocking how little the various kinds of helpers I have had throughout my life seem to know about autism and other disorders.  (72) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes.  I think it is very important for people to be aware of the different kinds of neurodivergence.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes, I think it is a good idea.  I am autistic and from my experience its very important for people to be aware of neurodivergence otherwise both parties could end up hurt.  (89) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Of course Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes, I am autistic and it’s important people understand how I may differ from others so I and they can be as comfortable as possible when interacting.  (126) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes definitely. Making professionals and even ordinary people more aware of the wide spectrum of ASD means signs of these will be spotted from the start of their life and education, this in turn will mean quicker help being available, which will only help children in the long term. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  I never realised, obviously because I’ve never tried, quite how hard it is to explain to someone in words what PDA is and how I, as an individual, struggle with it. I’ve heard many anecdotes of when I was a child and mum found it easiest by making simple demands such as ‘put your shoes on’ ‘brush your teeth’ into a game. A command that you hear every single day, affected me as a child so much that I’d refuse to function when being told what to do. The technical way to explain PDA is that 'we have high anxiety when we feel we are not in control'  Unlike other diagnosis in the Autism Spectrum, those with PDA find it easier to socialise and I’m fortunate enough to agree with this. Although it was an area that I once highly struggled in, an area that meant when I started high school I would make friends and fall out with them in one term, which also lead me to knowing the whole year group; however, by year 9 I did finally have a stable group of friends. Now, I’m certainly not saying I’m out partying every weekend but now with a stable group of friends, I am able to enjoy myself while in town or at someone’s house with them, this skill would’ve developed so much sooner than my 14th birthday if the recognition and support was easily available.  To sum up PDA as much as is possible: it's really hard. Really, really hard. Especially when the support you get seems invisible and every time you're fighting for help you seem to get ignored because 'you look fine and don't throw a fuss in the classroom’.  ADHD is nothing like PDA, as PDA is nothing like AS, these diagnoses shouldn't all be put down to ‘Autism’ because that means so, so, SO many different behaviours and attitudes, not to mention the different ways to help.  Luckily enough I had the support behind me that I needed to keep me strong through the years and years of school that I cannot explain to you how much I hated, if I hadn't had the family I did I would've dropped out many moons ago.  If this form means that someone, somewhere down the line can get the help I didn't would mean the world to me.  From someone who’s fought all their life to get things that others found so easy. From someone whom knows the barriers that PDA and other Autisms can set. From someone who was told they would never talk, to someone who’s got an A in English Literature and English Language. From someone that wants to help the future. Please consider the help people struggling with Autism, aware or not, so desperately need.  (132) |

## Parents / Carers / Relatives

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| --- | --- |
| ID | Response |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes my son is about to leave a CAMHS unit and cannot return home. Social Care will be finding him a suitable place,. but they do not understand the complexities of autism and have twice referred him to the police when he was suffering acute anxiety. I am so scared that he will be removed from our care into something inappropriate.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes. My son (17) has Asperger syndrome and mental ill health. My husband also has Asperger syndrome and my younger son (15) almost certainly has Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). We have struggled with the dynamic between the boys and we are now entering the second Child Protection Plan.  My eldest was put on Section and sent to a CAMHS unit because a member of Social Care heard him talking about hearing voices and killing people, so she called the police. My son described his brother's behaviour as 'abusive' and now supported accommodation is being sought. However, without a carefully designed programme of support, my son will simply slip back into depression.  I have no faith that social workers have sufficient knowledge of autism to find him an appropriate place.  My youngest son is on the edge of care and no-one will consider the possibility that his failure to engage is compounded by autism.  (40) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Most definitely agree.  I am a parent of a child with Aspergers and have been a foster carer for the last 3yrs, usually caring for children with complex needs due to my experience.  There needs to be more involved than just keeping them safe by putting them into care. It would greatly help the child and those who care for him/her if those with the purse strings had some awareness of such conditions.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (90) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Definitely YES. This should include staff in courts and Cafcass also. Courts and agencies should also be made aware of the common wordings of diagnosis reports so they understand why, when dealing with a Spectral condition like ASD, the diagnosis wording may seem like an assessment only "suggests" that a child "would fit the criteria" of the condition, when the consultant writes the diagnosis this way as Spectral conditions are not definitive as each diagnosis is unique to the individual, and likely to be ever changing as it is a developmental disorder. It still means the child has Autistic Spectrum Disorders. People dealing with children with ASD or similar need Substantial training in the complexity of the conditions, not just a fleeting overview. They need to understand how the various sensory and communication disorders affect someone individually to be able to understand how that individuals processing fits within the spectrum and hence what to look out for in detail. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  In court the opposing barrister in a family dispute case tried to use the consultant's wording in my son's actual diagnosis report as if the assessment might only "suggest" he was autistic, rather than accept what two consultants had explained was an actual diagnosis and the wording was typically used by them and the reason for this was due to ASD being a spectral disorder. The wording was "[The child] presented difficulties in the areas of.....which may be suggestive of a diagnosis of ASD" and "From the current information available to us, including questionaire and reports from school, history from both parents, and ADOS-2 assessment and clinical observation, it was felt that many of [the child's] difficulties would fulfill criteria for a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder."  The Judge and barrister then joked that "That's the problem with doctors they like to sit on the fence rather than fall one way or the other.", referring to the fact it would be easier for the court if the wording looked or was more definitive to make their determinations easier.  It should not be that agencies and those dealing with children with Neurological difficulties take the easy path because they or resources available to them are not of the necessary standard to fully support the child's needs. This needs to change, as effectively this lack of knowledge, resources or time causes the very people who are supposedly there to help a child and defend his welfare to break the law in not being able to appropriately safeguard the child.  (141) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes, I worked with looked after young people, many of which come to our home with behavioural problems associated with ADHD etc. More understanding of these conditions is needed by all professionals who work with LAC.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Absolutely  (80) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, they should have a complete understanding and knowledge on "hidden" disabilities.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes totally - every child needs to be understood and cared for. My youngest son has ASD and trying to get the help he deserves and should be entitled to, is like a minefield and a constant battle. All children deserve the right to be understood and cared for. Anything to help a child with an "unseen and hidden disability" is a great thing in my book.  (15) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, absolutely; we had very little support before our son's diagnosis, there was no automatic assessment whether he has ASD.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (16) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? I agree. It is imperative.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Agree. I am a parent of two young people with neurodisability it has been extremely difficult to advocate for them, I do not think any young person could self advocate and if they have a neurodisability that is not recognised or understood by those acting loco in parentis their life chances will be very seriously compromised.  (20) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Absolutely agree.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Totally agree. My two boys were diagnosed with ADHD late. When my eldest went to secondary school his behaviours changed and became difficult. With love and eventual support from CAMHS and medication he has matured and settled again. ASD and ADHD are challenging conditions. With information and support parents, carers and professionals can help children and young people. With Government backing this process can be easier.  (24) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  I do think they should have more understanding of ASD and ADHD  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes I do. My grandson has autism and you have to fight for everything including getting him into the right school.  (27) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  I totally agree. I have a child with autism and couldn’t imagine the pain children would suffer without the right support and care from trained, knowledgeable people. It’s vital.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Totally  (34) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes. - Without assessment their needs are not listed and social workers and fostercare do not see what the problem is. It is a brilliant idea. I have personal experience of this with my son.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Totally 100%  (39) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes I do, because how can they reach a decision about their care if they don't understand the children in their care?  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes I do.  My great nephew has autism, he is a lovely boy but he does need to be taught by someone who has the knowledge and the understanding of his condition and can bring out the best in him.  (43) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD Yes. I do believe there should be an understanding of these conditions to help carers, whether family or paid, to identify early 'trigger' behaviours, and enable an informed approach eg before child has to deal with a full blown 'melt' etc  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes. Implementing this amendment, and its action, would ensure that neither the child nor the 'carer' will feel overwhelmed with behaviours and feel they are being fully supported.  I first suspected my infant grandson had difficulties, when his focus on tasks at 8mths, was significant. ie emptying a tub of blocks and replacing them one at a time, even crawling after a 'lose' block, before emptying again. I have found that I have had to rely on the internet to give me ideas (on top of that from his parents, of course) on how to identify 'triggers' and not to overwhelm or 'stifle' him.  (64) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes they should  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  No really because they do their job wrong. The always take off the innocent families and leave the abusers.  My nephew had suspected autism and Z county social services wouldn't let us get him diagnosed instead they made up false accusations and allegations to take him away and put him up for forced adoption when he was very happy with staying with us.  (48) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Absolutely. I would think that all those in care should be looked after by adults who are knowledgeable about difficulties such as ASD and ADHD. Without parents fighting to recognise and have diagnosed difficulties that their children have, who else do these children have?! It's shocking to know that those in care are not with knowledgeable and passionate members of staff on these matters. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes. My son has ASD and possibly ADHD. What would he do without my support and confined fight for provision of the resources he needs and responds to. He'd have been labelled as naughty and relegated.  (93) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes it's paramount as otherwise causes more difficulty and the views of the child are often misunderstood Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? It should be updated. My nephew has ASD and had to spend time in foster care. The current system let him down very badly and has taken over 2 years with a psychologist’s help to undo all the damage plus caused an eating disorder.  (115) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? As a guardian of a looked after child I believe that it is imperative that social workers are experienced. My little girl was recently diagnosed with ADHD. No support from SS. Social worker at the time was inexperienced causing a host of issues that we are all living with. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? I do. It is much needed. SS needs to take ownership from the diagnoses of children in their care. We have experienced no support with our daughter who was a looked after child. I am her guardian. She was never issued a social worker but had to share one with her mother who had mental health issues. Her needs were never met. She was diagnosed with ADHD at 8 years old but had been displaying behaviours from 2. Social services need the training and they need to support guardians.  (99) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Absolutely. I can better deal with my daughter since getting diagnosis and help!Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes. I am a parent of a child with ADHD. I struggled for years with a daughter who had outbursts, couldn't stay in friendship groups and who couldn't cope. I knew there was something wrong, but it took nearly 4 years to diagnose that she had ADHD and extreme anxiety disorder. This only happened because she couldn't cope any more, and a few days after turning 12 she admitted to holding her knife against her throat. How many children are labeled as trouble, or have such low self esteem that they try to end their own life so young?. How many children could get the help they and their carers need in order to function! Stop labeling children as problem children and start helping them earlier!  (95) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes. I have a son with ASD and ADHD. It was impossible to understand his behaviour prior to knowing his diagnosis as without knowing its motivation it was incomprehensible. When behaviour is derived from anxiety or a need to be active, helping to curb unhelpful behaviours requires a completely different skill set to caring for a neurotypical child.Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (101) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes I agree. I think it's essential. I could not possibly take care of my child as well as I do and minimise his anxieties to the extent I do without having undertaken significant research and study into how he understands the world around him and how he connects with everyone.Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Absolutely. My son is 8 years old. I knew there was something different about him compared to his brothers and his peers from a very young age. I embarked on a 4 year journey trying to get help from health professionals and teachers and very few of them understood, recognised or had knowledge of how to "reach" my son. He has ASD, ADD, learning disabilities, sensory processing disorders, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and some other physical disabilities. It took over 4 years to get a full diagnosis and another 2 years to award him a place in a special needs educational setting. He has thrived since being there because the staff know how to "reach" him and he is finally learning and developing socially. None of this would have been possible if the staff weren't trained. Their training is invaluable. It opens up opportunities for the people in their care to develop beyond all current expectations. ALL people have potential somewhere within but it takes adults with specialist training to open up those possibilities amongst people who are otherwise going to probably struggle with everything in life. My son used to struggle, and sometimes he still does but he also has abilities we never knew existed which are amazing and now we celebrate - and so does he.  (105) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Having a child with ADHD is absolutely and completely consuming to the whole family and we have had a lot of support from professionals to help us all cope and understand this condition which has been paramount in helping us all get on with our extremely challenging lives. Without the professionals help , understanding , support and intervention , our lives would be very different and doesn't bear thinking about.Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Completely (108) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Not every child presents stereotypically. Complex cases often don't. It's important to look underneath the behaviours.. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes.  My 19 yr old son went into care under s20 for 3 months ... he was 14, very bright yet had violent outbursts In care he was permanently excluded from school - we had to fight to get him back home ...  we were under CP and I was accused of FII ... shortly after our daughter was diagnosed with ASC age 19 at The Maudsley... our son remains undiagnosed and is about to be assessed at The Lorna Wing Centre ...  (136) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Absolutely as so many adults have gone through life with behavioural difficulties & not aware & getting early help to prevent disastrous events. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes I’m the mother with a teenager with ASD.  (98) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes Social worker assessed my 14 and 16 yr olds. She went back after 1hr session and reported that they both had severe learning difficulties, Neither have, they just have Aspergers and did not understand her 'open' questions. She had no idea how to communicate with them. Both are highly able academically.  (122) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes. Without a Proper understanding of what the need of the child is, Social Service will be doing the kids a disservice. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes. So then the need of each child will be tailor made; and not generalise. I am a carer who gets help from a wonderful charity  (123) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes it is very important. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes strongly. I know of two children in foster care who both had ASD conditions (in my opinion). I felt very sorry for them and their carer, as they did not seem to realise the special support that these children needed. Eventually the placement broke down and I think the children felt very abandoned by their carer and the system.  (125) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes I would like those professionals supporting children and adults to have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD & ADHD  Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  I’m a parent. A lot of things have happened, so many problems where professionals do not understand the disability, and do not look at individual needs; so many offer a "tick the box" assessment, to follow a protocol, and if an individual does not sit within a criteria, there is no support service offered. ~IQ has been used as a measuring tool, avoiding looking at ability to understand language and meaning. ~ASD was put into criteria for mental health, and Council tried to send people to mental health unit, "treat" them for ASD, and discharge at the end of a few weeks. ~Often we have been given outdated and inappropriate information. ~Gender inappropriate services and support. Females do not all wish to play football or socialise by playing computer games. ~If another illness is diagnosed, then this complicates services, and services stop. (129) |

## Health Professionals

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| ID | Response |

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| 1. NHS Foundation Trust - Forensic CAMHS Team | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (23) |
| NHS Trust, Health & Well Being Team (CAMHS) HMYOI and Secure Training Centre | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (25) |

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| 1. Health Trust | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes. I have historically fought to have school age children assessed who had slipped through the net when avoiding services but not always having the support of the Social Worker.  (46) |
| 1. NHS | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes - it is vitally important that those caring for and supporting young people with ASD or ADHD have had sufficient training to understand their disorders.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes  (54) |
| 1. NHS | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Particularly Social workers who think they know health related matters and do not acknowledge they have little or no training.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes I have numerous examples of professionals again particularly Social workers who think they understand neurological development and don't.  Getting funding for families is hard particularly if the young person is a parent.  The inability to understand how people function with these conditions can mean babies are removed because professionals don't know how to adapt their approach.  (82) |
| Clinical  Commissioning Group | Q1 -Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes - but adequate funding and training is necessary for follow on and intervention services too. Lots of children are already identified with these issues by paediatricians but there are then limited services to refer children to after diagnosis.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes (83) |
| 1. NHS | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Developmental trauma often results in similar effects. Those caring for looked after children should have knowledge of this.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  I'm not sure why this is being seen as social work responsibility. Looked after children's health teams need to include well-trained paeds, psychologists, nurses, social workers and very importantly occupational therapists with knowledge of sensory development.  (85) |
| 1. NHS | Q1 : Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes although screening for attachment disorder should also be undertaken as it can mimic ADHD and ASD.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes  (86) |
| 1. School Nurse | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes definitely. These vulnerable young people need their needs met.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes. I have frequent difficulties referring children and young people for assessment of neuro disability. There should be accessible pathways to met needs.  (87) |

## Teachers

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| ID | Response |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Wholeheartedly-society at large must do an enormous amount to achieve this and, however overstretched, social services should lead from the fore.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  I am a teacher and a mother of an ASD child in X. The complexities of conditions such as ASD and ADHD are extremely difficult to truly understand without direct experience and the lack of knowledge in all public sectors, including health, is frightening.  I say this as a mother, professional and member of society at large. It is just too easy to blame family circumstance and, in doing so, pass the buck from social care to education to health without anyone really supporting the child with practical strategies and understanding.  Currently I know of foster carers and adoptive parents who are incredible and those less so. I know of none who feel they were in any way prepared for the issues their children display. I have sat in review meetings where social workers have glossed over factors such as ADHD as an 'educational issue'.  I am an educated, experienced professional yet struggle to support my own ASD child. Whilst this may make the issue sound insurmountable and I am far from having all the answers we must try.  If we do not help those children at greatest need by educating ourselves thoroughly then we disgrace ourselves as a community. Strong I appreciate but I truly believe this.  (81) |
|  | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes. Teachers and school staff have so much vital information that is not listened too or understood by both health and social care professionals.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes.  It is not just down to social care... health professionals appear to have ridiculously high thresholds for accepting referrals and do not take on the views of school staff if they differ from those of parents or carers, who are often in denial or don't have the capacity to understand the needs of their child and the help they can access. All three areas of health, social care and education are woefully underfunded and unless this changes I am afraid the change to the law will have little impact 'on the ground' if not properly resourced.  (57) |

## Social Worker / Family Support / Youth worker

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| ID | Response |
| HCPC social worker | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes. However, it really concerns me that you are only seeking for social workers to be observant of these disabilities once the child is in the care system.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Is the Social Work bill going to address the currently poor linkage between the social care/education and health systems and the fact that social workers don't appear to be familiar with key aspects of the Child and Family Act 2014?  I am on a Parent Advisory committee for the x Autistic Trust. I am a parent, but I am also a HCPC social worker. I have lived and worked both in the UK and in Y and I have experienced services for my son in both places. It really concerns me that you are only seeking for social workers to be observant of these disabilities once the child is in the care system. I am sure that the poor understanding by social workers of these conditions prior to children and young people entering care contributes to the numbers entering care to begin with. eg. neurological conditions are insufficiently understood and not taken seriously within preventive services, such are Early Help and Child in Need.  Parents are blamed for symptoms/manifestations of these conditions in their children and, rather being offered suitable support services that address these conditions, parents are assumed to be incompetent and put on extremely belittling "parenting courses" and given no practical support whatsoever. Many times, these young people and their families need access to appropriate support that would prevent situations where the children need to go into care.  I have been pleading with social care to encourage/support access of my son to appropriate therapy and schooling that would help him develop and become a happier person. This falls on deaf ears. There is no interest in developing appropriate services for young people with high functioning ASD.  There is a view amongst social workers, certainly in X that where children have neurological disability that isn't intellectual or physical, and regardless of psychological/mental health issues, they don't require social care intervention at all, regardless of lack of extended family/networks/mainstream community services to provide assistance.  Whilst I appreciate there are resource constraints, assessments have been carried out very poorly and with a clear lack of understanding of the condition, even (if not, especially) by the Children with Disabilities Team. Even worse than the extremely unwilling to providing access to appropriate support (ie. support that my son would actually engage with), has been the belittling attitudes, the imposition of highly inappropriate services (eg. Stronger Safer Families, which is a program developed for a totally different cohort of families - those who are poorly educated, don't value education, are chaotic etc).  The clumsy and misguided imposition of such inappropriate programs and interventions exacerbates difficulties rather than addresses them. This particular program also denigrates the capability of the parent and consequently undermines parental authority not just with the young person (who with ASD is especially needy of a strong parental relationship and respect for the parent) but also with any external agency the parent has to deal with the "assistance" of such a program. There does not seem to be any concept by social workers of partnering with parents whose children have these conditions.  The relationship is not mutually respectful. I have been shocked and dismayed and the experiences we have with social care to date in the UK have weakened rather than strengthened us as a family and my son is not getting access to the therapy he needs, nor to services that will help him develop his social skills and self confidence and independence (in a healthy way).  When I sought for support for his social isolation in the school holidays, we were offered foster care because it was easier than providing an appropriately tailored service (I turned it down).  There is clear resentment in the system at the apparent high cost of providing individual services, but individual services are only needed because mainstream services are inadequately inclusive, and thought is not given to running group programs for specific cohorts (that would also help them make friends and develop their social skills).  ASD kids are inappropriately bundled together with young people with intellectual disability. This is inappropriate if they do not have an intellectual disability. They have different learning needs, different psychological issues. Inappropriate bundling is very harmful to their self-esteem and beliefs about capabilities. Likewise, there is very inappropriate "bundling" in education settings.  My son, who is highly intelligent is being given a school curriculum for a young person with far more restricted academic ability. His life choices are being severely limited. My son's story is not very different from those of many others I've heard in X (at various support groups etc I've been to). I feel that there is a role for British social workers to advocate on issues such as this, but they don't.  There does not seem to be very much care in the system at all about these young people. It is very ironic that social care may only begin once families have broken down altogether and the young person goes into care.  (35) |
| Children in Care Team | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, It is essential. Often we are addressing difficulties whose origin is the unmet needs of children with ASD  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes, I do.  I am a Senior Social Worker in the Child in Care Team. My main interest is the ASD cohort as my own child was suspected ASD and he needed a very different approach to parenting and behaviour management. I have learnt a lot about sensory issues dealing with my child and I find this now informs my assessments with YP in care. However, in 4 years I have had 1 day's training in Autism and for this I had to gatecrash a course for the Disability Team SWs. It is essential to train social care staff and foster carers to address issues from the start. Currently a lot of provision is dependant on diagnosis and the CIC have to wait their turn with the rest for an ASD assessment by the local CAMHS team (in our area very stretched).  (36) |
| Home-Start team | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes, professionals must have a good understanding of how conditions can affect a child's behaviour, ability to understand and how that can impact on the decision making.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes I fully agree with the amendment.  (58) |
| Youth worker | 1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes, There are just so many young people whose underlying difficulties prevent them from accessing appropriate support and as a result reaching their potential within their given community. Support and understanding would be so beneficial.  (118) |

## Charity/Organisation/Academic

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|  | Comment |
| 1. Adoption | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? I fully agree that all those working with children, and especially looked after children, should have training in respect of various neurodevelopmental disabilities, especially FASD which are far more common than ASD or ADHD  Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes but would want point h) to read:- (h) foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) including:- i) Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) ii) Alcohol Related Neurodevelopment Disorder (ARND) iii) Alcohol Related Birth Defects (ARBD)  I deliver training, primarily to foster carers but also SW's and other professionals, and it is clear that, whilst there s an awareness of ASD and ADHD (although not as much training as there could be) there is a real ignorance around FASD (which is more common than the others) and especially around ARND which 90% of foetally affected children have.  (01) |
| 1. Disability | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, absolutely. Having a trained & skilled workforce is vital if we are to give looked after children the best chances in life.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (02) |
| 1. Disability | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  It is essential that all Social Workers supporting children should be trained in ASD and ADHD. Far too often children with ASD, ADHD or other Neurodevelopmental disorders are not given the support and understanding they need when placed in care (either temporarily or permanently) because of a lack of knowledge of their Social Workers and Care Workers.  If children were given early diagnosis and early intervention by health, education and social care; the numbers of disabled children entering the 'care' system would be reduced. For those children who do become 'Looked After' by Social Care, they need their social workers and care workers to be knowledgeable, understanding and trained in their particular difficulty ie their Neurodevelopmental disorder.  (03) |
| 1. Disability | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? There is a huge need for professionals to understand that autistic brains work differently, and that lies behind autistic life experiences and behaviours. We all need to understand what this means and how to work with it effectively to help the children to grow and thrive, not face a lifetime of mental health issues due to mistreatment as children through misunderstanding autism.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (04) |
| 1. Social Inclusion | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill Yes Failure to recognise these conditions will put children and young people at risk of inappropriate or inadequate care.  (05) |
| 1. Disability | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (07, 13, 59,) |
| 1. Children | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, 'corporate parents' should be as well informed of these conditions and others, such as type 1 diabetes found in children, as a child's natural parents.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes, children with these conditions, and their parents have been very poorly supported by authorities. It is high time this was addressed.  (18) |
| 1. Children | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? I absolutely agree.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (19) |
| 1. Adoption | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes, a thorough assessment by a multi disciplinary team will be important to ensure the appropriate placement and support is put in place.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (33) |
| 1. Disability | Q1: NA  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (49) |
| 1. Social Inclusion | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? This is a very important dimension of good support. Without the right understanding of the way in which people think and react to others it is very easy to harm children, young people or adults with conditions like autism.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes, this seems very sensible.  I have supported many people to leave institutional care to live in the community. Many people are harmed by institutional life and many have cognitive conditions which need to be carefully understood. People who are often labelled as dangerous, unloveable or difficult are actually struggling to cope in environments that are not adapted for them. Institutional and care environments have the most difficultly adapting - yet they are we send those young people who are struggling or who seem 'difficult'. This is an ongoing issue of human rights and abuse which has not been addressed by public policy makers.  (45) |
| 1. Disability | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes, it is imperative that they do. You cannot support those with a diagnosis or ADHD or autism without a basic understanding of the conditions.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes. I believe that some children being taken into care could well be neurodiverse. It is also possible that their parents/guardians could be. Screening would ensure appropriate support, and placement, of these children.  (51) |
| 1. Academic   Social Care,  Professor | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes it is essential if they are to provide help matched to their needs  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (08) |
| 1. Academic   Social Care,  Professor | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes- in my experience, this is at present deficient  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes  (11) |
| 1. Disability | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? We agree  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  We agree  (52) |
| 1. Disability | Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD?  Yes It is vitally important that social workers have the training and experience necessary to support these children. We also find that lack of knowledge about Down's syndrome is of concern.  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill?  Yes  (75) |
| 1. Social Inclusion | Q1: Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes  Q2: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (78) |
| 1. Disability | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? YesQ2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (110) |
| 1. Disability | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Absolutely agree. This issue extends to those agencies involved in assessments for statutory benefits.Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Absolutely. (111) |
| 1. Social Inclusion | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes absolutely Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes absolutely For the past 10 years our charity has provided support to vulnerable and disadvantaged children aged 11-19. In this time we have come across children and young people with neuro-disabilities who have been placed in the care of the local authority. These young people have frequently been failed because the local authority has failed to facilitate a prompt and appropriate diagnosis, has been unable to provide professionally qualified staff or resources to access the needs of the children and young people and/or their adopted families and been quick to label the children as naughty or uncontrollable.Our small voluntary organisation has striven to offer support to these young people and their families. We would like to share with you a recent personal story of A aged 14. A was taken into care at birth. She was placed with her adoptive family who have struggled to access support and resources to meet her needs.A was latterly diagnosed with Attachment Disorder and ADHD. She is a very vulnerable young person who is easily led, has no sense of danger, struggles to maintain friendships and manage her anger. Social workers and teaching staff have struggled to deal with her. She has not been in main street education due to being excluded.Her adopted family struggle to cope on a daily basis. Resources are limited and inadequate.Our small charity received a referral from Social Care for support for A. As a small organisation with access to professional youth workers and highly trained volunteers we put together a package of support for A both one-to-one and group support and advocated for the family with its EHC application for A to be given specialist schooling. This support should have been provided by the local authority. A's family have written to our charity to say "*Just writing to let you know that A has been accepted into the specialist boarding school and starts in September. Also we would like to thank you and the team for taking A into your charity. We have struggled to find any other venue in the local area which is able to cope with A and her Attachment Disorder and ADHD whilst she is mixing with other children her own age. Finding yourselves as a source of respite for us and source of safe social interaction and learning for A has been of great help to us over the past few months and particularly over the summer holidays. We know that A is safe when with you (not how we always felt when she was in mainstream education). But just as importantly A really enjoys it and is always asking when she can come back to your charity*. "All children such as A should have access to appropriate diagnosis and support. The government should not be dependent upon charity (we are a voluntary sector organisation and do not receive public funding) to support those with complex mental and emotional health needs.(112) |
| 1. Disability | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Absolutely (113) |
| 1. Disability | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (117) |
| 1. Disability | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (134) |

## Interest not stated.

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| ID | Response |
|  | Q1: Essential to have understanding of ASD  Q2: very much so yes,  shocked by the cruel and inept "social care" around ASD  (142) |
|  | Q1: I think it's ridiculous that people who are in close contact with children with these conditions are allowed to be so without sufficient knowledge and understanding of them.  Q2: Of course. It shouldn't have to be an amendment it should already be in there.  (67) |
|  | Q1: Yes. Having worked with children and young people who have been placed in care, I think it is imperative that if they are diagonised with the conditions above, there should be duty to assess for, provide interventions for and assess the outcomes of interventions.  Diagnosis is just the beginning. Educational settings are still not fully accountable for their provision in regards to EHCP fidelity. This amendment doesn't appear to mandate screening and interventions for Attachment disorder, Oppositional Defiant disorder/ Conduct disorder or Trauma.  These disorders can seriously and detrimentally affect the neurodevelopment of children in care. They are also diagnosed but not addressed with evidence based interventions.  Q2: Yes.  (32) |
|  | Q1: Yes, as they wouldn't be able to property care for the child if they didn't have the right information. It's better for education about these conditions to be mandatory than for a carer attempting to learn as they go.  Q2: Yes  (70) |
|  | Q1: This is essential in my view as behaviour that is related to a neurodevelopmental condition may be interpreted differently and they may not be supported in the right way.  Q2: Yes.  (06) |
|  | Q1: This is essential - how can decisions be made in respect of what is right for a child if the child is not understood?  Q2: Yes  (53) |
|  | Q1: Yes. Not understanding how the children in their care think and act and why they do so could lead to child cruelty, misunderstanding of the child, leading to them feeling alone and misunderstood and being mistreated. Children in care need to feel safe and understood. Care should make them feel more prepared for life, not just feel like no one can handle them.  Q2: Yes  (61) |
|  | Q1:Yes - and to understand that there is a massive range of severity and symptoms that affect the child's ability to cope and manage. And that the acting out might be a coping mechanism.  Q2: Yes  (85) |
|  | Q1: Yes, it is impossible to make good decisions about care without sufficient understanding of the child's neurotype.  Q2: Yes.  (71) |
|  | Q1: Definitely. The last thing an autistic child needs is a caregiver who knows nothing about autism.  Q2: Yes  (74) |
|  | Q1: Obviously?!  Q2: Yes. From personal experience of 'the system' I would have to say that perhaps if there were more (or even some) support for families with these issues, their children wouldn't have to go into care in the first place.  (42) |
|  | Q1: Yes, I think it is essential that caregivers and decision makers have a sufficient understanding of the above conditions and others that affect the children they are working with.  Q2: Yes  (21) |
|  | Q1: Yes, when the state takes on parental responsibility for children, it should ensure that all their needs are met.  Q2: Yes - this seems a very sensible measure.  (41) |
|  | Q1: I am shocked that this is only being addressed now!  Q2: Absolutely yes.  (28) |
|  | Q1: Yes Of Course.  Q2: Yes It’s a tragedy unfolding ...............the human cost is utterly dreadful ..........  (56) |
|  | Q1: Yes, they are well known disabilities and it is shameful that they are not taught about in more detail.  Q2: Yes  (62) |
|  | Q1: Yes; there's no point making decisions for someone if you're not fully informed about that person.  Q2: Yes.  (66) |
|  | Q1: Yes. I most definitely do. It is appalling that they do not already.  Q2: Yes.  (30) |
|  | Q1: Yes. And by "understanding" I mean proper acceptance, not cure-culture propaganda spread by organisations such as Autism Speaks.  Q2: Yes  (76) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? I think it is critical that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (138) |
|  | Q1: Of course. It is a no-brainer.  Q2: Yes.  (14) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes I agree it is essential due to the high numbers involved. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (139) |
|  | Q1: Yes, I agree.  Q2: Yes.  (17, 10, 102,109) |
|  | Q1: Yes  Q2: Yes  (12, 22, 26, 29, 31,37,38, 44, 47, 60, 65, 73, 91, 92, 96, 100,107, 114,119,120,121,124, 127,128, 131,140) |
|  | Q1: Yes I agree  Q2: Yes I agree  (50,116) |
|  | Q1: Yes - absolutely  Q2: Yes  (55, 79) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? DefinitelyQ2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (94,106) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Yes it's essential as without it placements are more likely to fail and the child will often be considered "difficult" When you know a child's diagnosis or tendencies the care provided for them can be tailored to suit their needs and promote understanding of themselves ... eg A child with Dyspraxia /ADD may think they are stupid. Carers may see them as clumsy ..lazy... Ignorant and no help be given :( wrong. Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes  (135) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? It is so important that these children are screened - if they are not diagnosed, this will severely impact on their life chances.Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (104) |
|  | Q1 Would you agree that those supporting looked-after children and taking decisions about their care should have sufficient understanding of conditions such as ASD and ADHD? Absolutely. This is should be a basic requirement. Otherwise symptoms of the condition are likely to be misinterpreted as bad behaviour.Q2 Do you agree with the proposed amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill? Yes (97) |