Asylum support for children and young people living in Kirklees: Stories of mothers

YHRMP ID
372
Author(s)
Smith, Kate and Lockwood, Kelly

Aims

The report is based on a one-year pilot study by academic practitioners at WomenCentre, Kirklees, funded by the Nationwide Children's Research Centre. The research follows the 2013 Parliamentary Inquiry into asylum support for children and young people and looks at the themes arising from that inquiry in a local context. It aimed to gather accounts of asylum support from mothers of children and young people living in Kirklees, in order to develop localised recommendations about asylum support. The study aimed to take a women-centred approach to the research.

Methodology

- The study took place in Kirklees.
- At the beginning of the study a focus group was held with 7 mothers, and the results were used to inform the design of the study.
- The criteria for participation was mothers aged over 18 who had claimed asylum in the UK, who had children under the age of 18 living with them, and were or had been receiving Home Office asylum support. Women were recruited via local organisations.

Five mothers, with 13 children between them, participated in one-to-one in-depth interviews.

Key issues

The key themes arising from the interviews with the women were similar to those raised by the Parliamentary Inquiry. For example a major concern was not having sufficient money to fund essential items such as food and clothing. Those dependent on voucher payments were vulnerable to exploitation and abuse when attempting to exchange these for cash in order to pay for essentials such as bus travel. Other issues raised included access to health care and education, and low accommodation standards. Participants also talked about the effect of their situation on family life, for example how the stress of their situation affected their parenting. A further theme was that despite the adversity experienced by asylum seeking families, there were examples of resilience demonstrated by children who had adapted positively.

Recommendations

The researchers acknowledge that due to the small sample size the findings are not necessarily generalizable but do provide rich qualitative data. The authors presented the following recommendations made by the mothers they spoke to during the research:

- Asylum seekers should be allowed to work
- Section 4 support should be replaced with a cash-based system
- Asylum seeking families should have a choice about where they live

When decisions are made that affect children, their best interests should be paramount.

Web Link
http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/26170/
Migrant Group
Refugees
Topic
Children
Children and young people
NASS
Welfare entitlements
Women
Place
Kirklees
Year

2015
Resource Type
Report
Publisher
Women Centre, Calderdale and Kirklees

Source URL: *https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/research-entry/asylum-support-children-and-young-people-living-kirklees-stories-mothers*