children's hearings scotland

Easy Read

What we have done this year

2025 to 2026



Easy Read

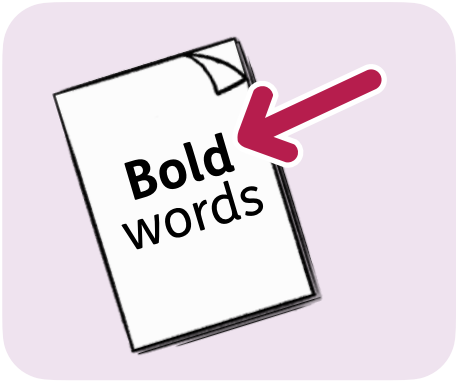


This is an Easy Read version of some information.

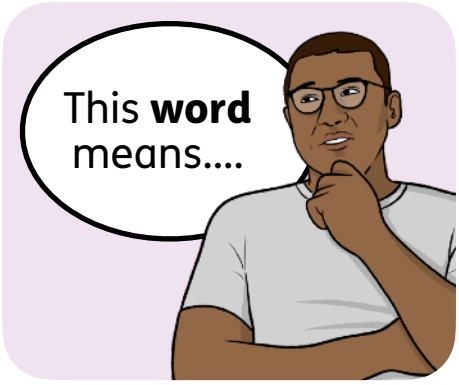
It uses easier words and pictures.



Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are **bold** to show they are important.



We explain bold words if they are hard to understand.

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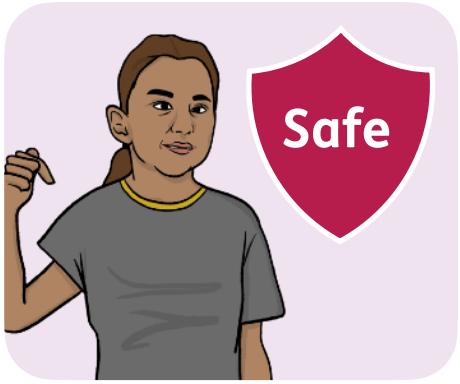
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About this booklet

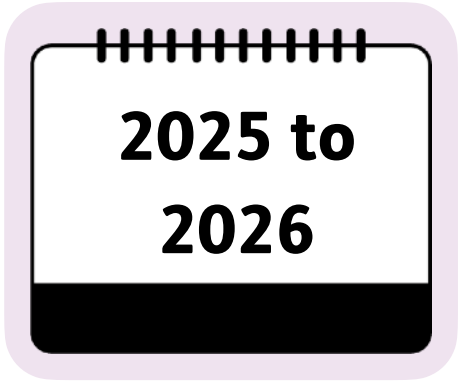
This booklet is from **Children's Hearings Scotland**.



We are an organisation that makes sure children and young people feel safe and respected at **children's hearings**.



A **children's hearing** is a meeting to help a child who needs extra support.



This booklet is about the work we have done over the last year, from 2025 to 2026.

About children's hearings

A children's hearing is a meeting between:



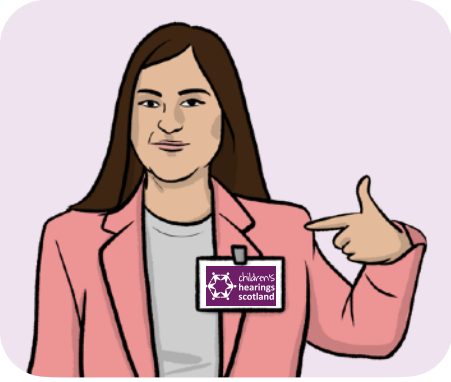
- A child or young person.



- Adults who care for and support the child or young person.



- 3 **Panel Members** - these are the people who will listen to everyone at the hearing's views and make decisions.

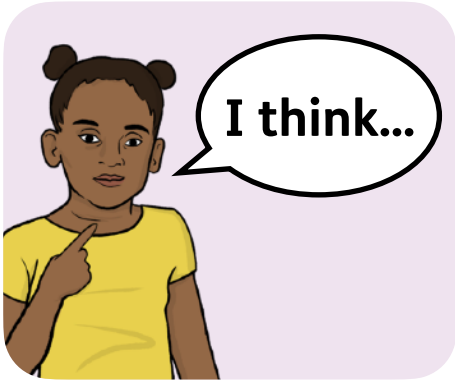


We are in charge of hiring, training and supporting Panel Members.



1 of the Panel Members will lead the hearing.

They are called the **Chair**.



The child will get the chance to speak and be heard at the hearing.



The child does not have to speak if they do not want to.



The Panel Members will listen to what everyone says at the hearing.



Then the Panel Members will make a decision about how to help the child.

How we supported children this year



We did lots of work to support children and young people this year.

Children's rights



Rights are things that every person should have by law.

For example, the right to be respected and the right to be safe.



This year, we wrote a report about how we help protect children's rights.

Experts by Experience

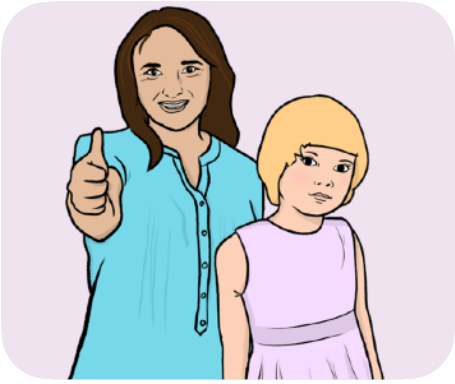


Experts by Experience is a group of 10 young people who have had children's hearings in the past.

We call the young people our **Experts**.



We set up the Experts by Experience group in April 2025.



Our Experts help us understand how to support children and young people in the best way.

This year, our Experts:



- Talked to people in the **Scottish Government**.

  The **Scottish Government** is the group of people in charge of Scotland. They make decisions about how Scotland is run.



- Helped write some new rules for Panel Members.



- Ran a meeting to help Panel Members include children and young people in hearings.



- Helped us find new Panel Members.

Saying hello before hearings



This year, we made a new rule called **Chair Greeting the Child**.



Before every hearing, the Chair says hello to the child or young person.

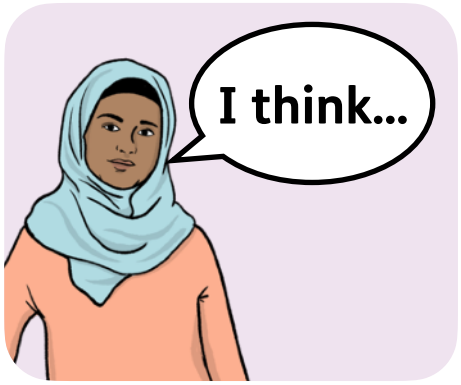


This helps children feel less worried about their hearing.

Listening to children and young people



This year, we set up a new group called the **Participation and Feedback Delivery Group**.



This group helps children and young people tell us what they think about hearings.



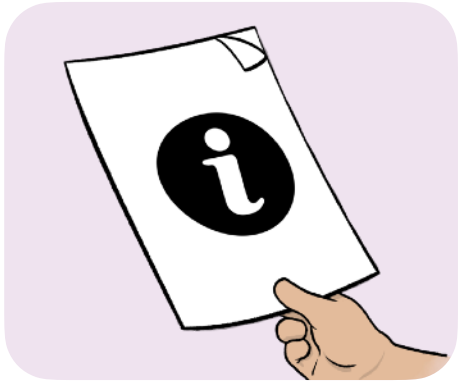
We listened to what children and young people said to help us make hearings better.

Making hearings better



We worked hard to make children's hearings better this year.

This year, we:



- Got better at collecting, sharing and using information about hearings.



- Talked to lots of different people to help us understand how to make hearings better.



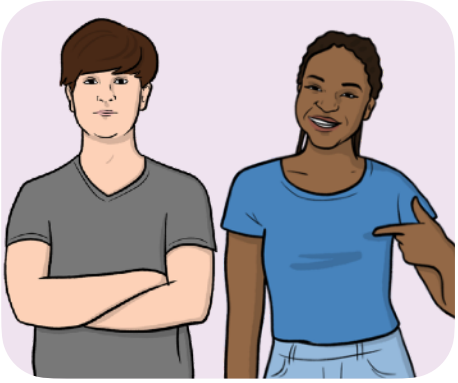
Our **Panel Practice Advisers** gave a lot of advice and support to Panel Members.

Panel Practice Advisers are people who make sure Panel Members do their jobs well.

Guides



This year, we shared 2 new guides for Panel Members. The guides were about:



- How to make decisions for older children.



- How to make decisions for very young children and babies.

How we supported volunteers this year



Volunteers are people who give their time to help us without getting paid for it.



All of our Panel Members and Panel Practice Advisers are volunteers.



We are in charge of hiring, training and supporting all volunteers.

We did lots of work to support our volunteers this year.

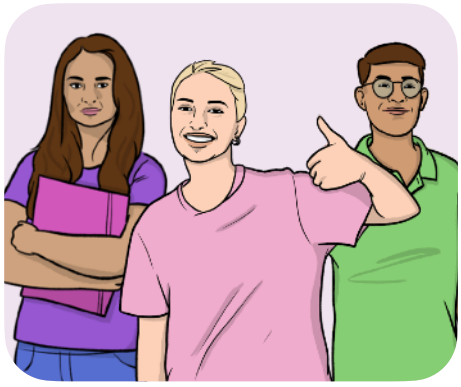
Recruitment



Recruitment is when we try to find new volunteers to work with us.



This year, we ran some online meetings about what it is like to volunteer with us.



Lots of young people helped us to decide what questions we should ask in Panel Member **interviews**.



An **interview** is a meeting to see if you are right for a job.



Young people told us they wanted us to ask people how they would help children who are **homeless**.



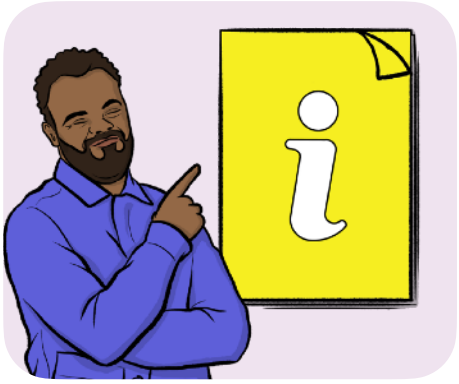
Homeless means you do not have your own place to live.



We now have lots of new Panel Members and Panel Practice Advisers.

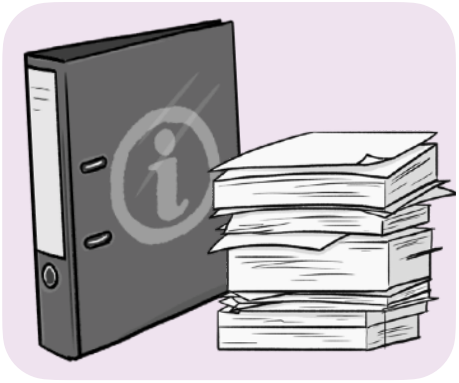


We are training lots more people to become Panel Members.



We also made new welcome booklets with information for our new Panel Members and Panel Practice Advisers.

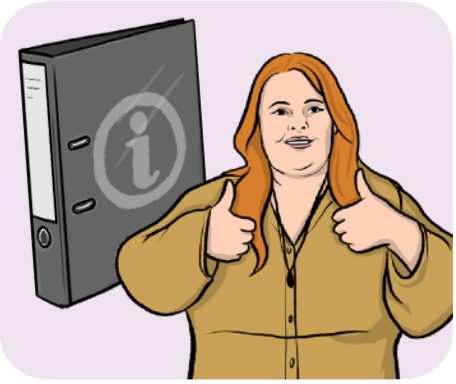
Hearing Information Packs



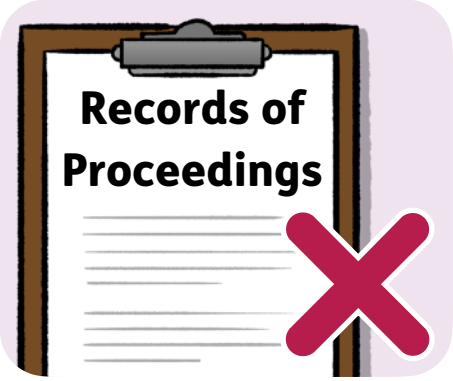
A **Hearing Information Pack** is a set of documents with information about a hearing.



Panel Members said that these documents were too long and difficult to use.



So we decided to make hearing information packs shorter and easier to use.



We stopped using long documents called **Records of Proceedings.**

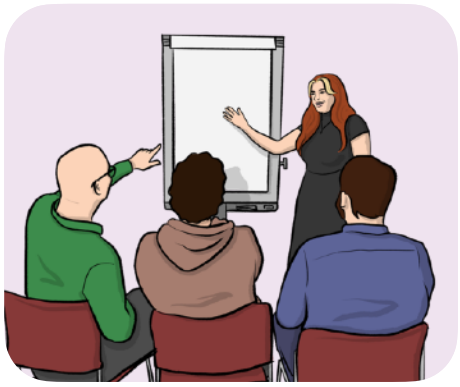


These documents often included information that children found very upsetting.



Instead, we started using shorter documents with less upsetting information.

Training



Every year, we give our staff and volunteers lots of training to help them do their jobs well.

This year, we:



- Started giving all Panel Members training on how to be a panel Chair.



- Trained staff and volunteers on how to support people who have been through **trauma**.

  Trauma is how you feel after going through something very stressful or scary.

Listening to volunteers



This year, we had more meetings to check how new Panel Members were doing.



We listened to what the new Panel Members said to help us give them the right support.

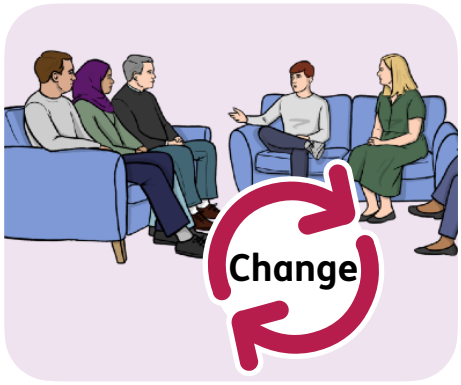


We hope that this will help more volunteers work with us for longer.

Big meetings



This year, we ran 2 big online meetings for all our volunteers.



At the first big meeting, we talked about some changes to children's hearings.



At the second big meeting, someone gave a speech about how to support children **in care**.



In care means you have been looked after by someone other than your parent.

For example, another family member or a foster carer.

Events



We ran lots of events to thank volunteers and celebrate their work.



38 volunteers were also invited to the **King's Garden Party**.

The **King's Garden Party** is a big event to celebrate people who have worked to help other people.

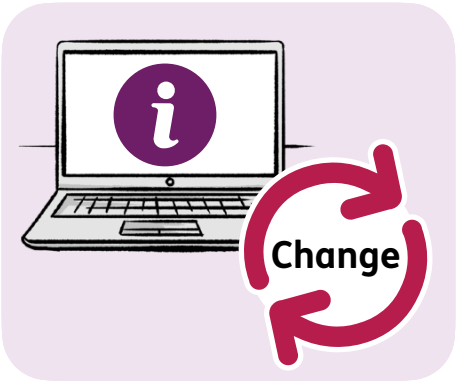


Lots of newspapers shared news stories about our volunteers taking part in this event.

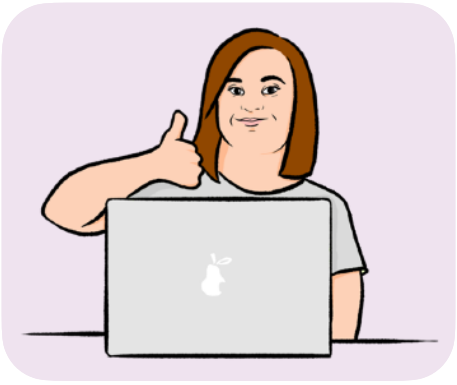
Community Hub



Our **Community Hub** is a website with information and support for our volunteers.



This year, we made some changes to the Community Hub.

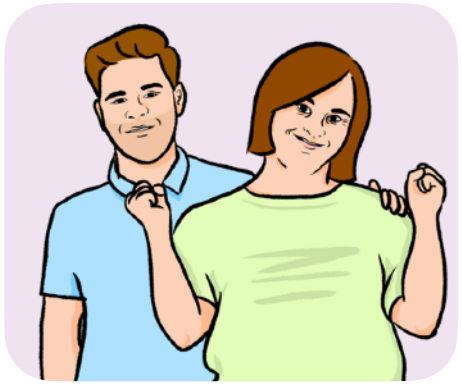


It is now easier for volunteers to find the information they need on the Community Hub.

Working together

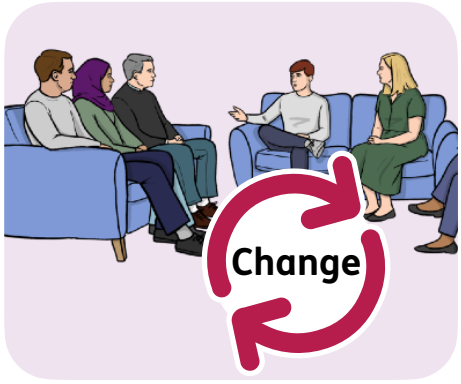


Some Panel Members and **social workers** went to meetings to understand each other better.



A **social worker** is a professional who supports people and families with problems in their lives.

How we made changes this year



This year, we helped make some big changes to the way that children's hearings work.

This year, we:



- Talked to the government about a new law which will support children in care better.



- Worked with a group called the **Hearings Redesign Board** to help people get ready for changes to hearings.



We also made some changes to the way our organisation works.



These changes will help us to follow rules that the government sets for organisations like ours.

Find out more

You can look at our website here:

www.chscotland.gov.uk



What do you think about this Easy Read booklet?

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www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey

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