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Care and Coronavirus: Perspectives on Childhood, Youth and Family

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For our families

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Elaine Chaplin, a dedicated advocate for the well-being of young minds, intertwines her passion for early years and mental health in her impactful work. With a background in early years education, she creates narratives that delve into the delicate nuances of early childhood development and its profound connection to mental wellness. Elaine's commitment to fostering resilience and nurturing the emotional growth of children is evident in her works. As an educator, and mental health ambassador, Elaine Chaplin leaves a memorable mark on the intersection of early childhood and mental well-being.

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Lucy Grimshaw is an Assistant Professor of Social Policy at Northumbria University in the Department of Social Work, Education and Community Wellbeing. Lucy is a Social Scientist whose research examines intersectional inequalities in urban spaces, communities and institutions underpinned by feminist critical pedagogy and employing participatory methods. Recent research projects have focused on children's sense of place in relation to local heritage and inequalities amongst staff and students in higher education institutions.

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Andrew James, Ciara Waugh and Zodie are Board Members of Our Hearings, Our Voice; an independent children and young people's Board for the Children's Hearings System. It exists to ensure that the voices of children and young people are included in decisions about meaningful change within the Children's Hearings System and to ensure that any proposed changes are implemented in a way that does not disadvantage the Rights and participation of children and young people. Since becoming Board Members Andrew, Ciara and Zodie have played an active role in trying to improve the experiences of children and young people coming to Hearings. Information about the range of work that Andrew, Ciara and Zodie are involved in can be found at www.ohov.co.uk

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Athenkosi Mtumtum is a HPCSA Registered Counsellor and Co-Founder of Sizakala Wellness Counsellors in South Africa. Her passion for philanthropy has its origins in the belief of the innate resilient spirit we all possess. She believes that the act of empathy shown in our interactions with others serves as a subtle reminder to people in need of their resilience. This reminds them that even though they may be victims of circumstances, the will and power to overcome their challenges rests within them. Since her B-Psych Honours (2012) completion Athenkosi has acquired a BA Honours in Community and Health Psychology (2017).

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Cuong Nguyen was living with Fiona Ranson when COVID first appeared in the United Kingdom; he is Fiona's foster son and was a care leaver, still living with her at the time. In this chapter he reflects on how COVID impacted on his time at home. Cuong was attending college and had a part time job, which both came to a halt during COVID. He recalls monitoring responses from elsewhere in the world and comparing these to what was happening in the UK, which made him more anxious about Covid. Later he returned to work, where there were robust COVID measures in place.

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Fiona Ranson fostered young people who were unaccompanied and seeking asylum in the United Kingdom (known as UASC). The young people were in her care and remained in her care as 'care leavers' during COVID. Having previously worked as an education improvement adviser with responsibility for the achievement and provision of ethnic minority children in schools, including those seeking asylum in the UK; Fiona undertook her PhD in Northumbria University where she examined experiences of care of UASC, via participatory arts based research with carers and carried out a policy review.

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