

Be inspired!

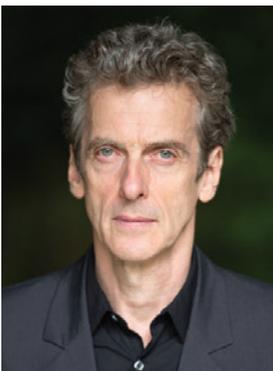
There are around 70,000 children currently in the care system and who, for a variety of reasons, sadly cannot live with their birth parents, sometimes for a short period, sometimes for much longer.

Understanding what that means is hard. But on a most basic level it means that children cannot be with their families, or those they might expect to feel secure and safe with. Instead, they may find themselves dependent upon the support of professionals and strangers often at a most vulnerable and pressurised time of their lives.

The life experiences of these children and young people can be hard for them to recall, make sense of and express.

For many, writing is an effective and therapeutic way of expressing challenging emotions and experiences, as the submissions to Coram Voice's writing competition have revealed, some of which are included in this selection. This rich collection of poetry and prose is a testament to the creativity and remarkable talent of its contributors. They speak of a range of feelings about leaving the familiarity of family and home, starting afresh, dealing with changes, being "lost and found", feeling loved, and what being in care has meant for them.

I had the pleasure of supporting the Voices competition in 2017 and it was a truly inspiring occasion. It is impossible not to be moved and humbled, not only by the creative talent and spirit of resilience of the writers, but also by the courage they display by sharing their personal experiences with the public.



I hope that this selection of entries from the first two Voices competitions will help encourage even more children and young people to share their stories and allow us all to gain a small but powerful understanding into their experience of the care system.

Peter Capaldi

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