

THE BIG QUESTIONS

What you told us
about what matters

February 2021



The
FOYER
Federation

THE BIG QUESTIONS is our bi-annual survey of young people living in Foyers and supported accommodation services around the country.

Thank you to everyone who answered the survey and shared their thoughts. We received 100 responses from 10 Foyers: Braintree, Bridge, CHADD, Coops, Crewe YMCA, Enfield, Heather Court, Ravenhead, Swan House, Verve Place.

Now we want to tell you what we learned from what you said, and what we're going to do with the information.

If you have any feedback or comments, let us know by emailing kate@foyer.net or texting 07904 662 046.



YOU SAID: "Mental health is the biggest challenge facing young people today – and it's getting worse."

In our last survey at the start of 2021, young people told us that mental health was the biggest challenge they faced. Since then, the situation has gotten worse.

- 83%** said mental health is the biggest challenge for young people today – up from 80% last time
- #1** Mental health is the number one worry for young people today
- 79%** of young people say their mental health has been negatively affected by the pandemic – up from 72% last time
- #1** The number one wish for young people in the coming year was better access to mental health services

OUR RESPONSE:

Several services are part of a programme called **Connecting Minds**, which focuses on taking personalised approaches to young people's mental health. **Seeking funding to run more programmes to support young people's mental health is a priority for us this year.**

We are also hoping to co-run a campaign with young people focused on mental health as part of our Power Pioneers programme.

We will take the information we collected from the survey and include it in our applications for funding to support our cause and show funders how important this is to young people.



YOU SAID: "I tell my Foyer my ideas but it takes a long time for things to change/things don't change often."

We were pleased to see that the number of young people who think their Foyer doesn't want to listen to their ideas has gone down to zero. This is a really positive result.

But the number of young people who think change takes too long or that nothing much changes is 38% – up by 14% since early 2021.

26% of young people told us that they don't want to share their ideas with their Foyer – up from 19% in early 2021.

On the positive side, that means that 74% of young people DO want to make change happen in their Foyers – and 43% are even interested in taking a leadership role, whether alone or in a group. Young people taking the lead is powerful and can transform the way things work – so this makes us excited about the future.

OUR RESPONSE:

Sometimes when you don't see a change or don't hear about something for a long time, it's because the member of staff you spoke to needs to pass the message to someone else to have the idea approved. If they don't hear back for a long time or the answer is no, they might not share that with you. We will continue to encourage staff to keep you in the loop – even if there's no news. We'll also keep sharing ways Foyers might involve young people in the way the Foyer runs.

This year, we will be working with up to 7 Foyers on projects that grow youth leadership and involvement in their services. We'll share the ideas and learning with every Foyer in our network.

YOU SAID: "This is when I feel powerful."

85% of young people who responded were able to think of at least one time in their lives when they feel powerful. This might be feeling powerful in yourself, in your Foyer, with your friends, or somewhere else in your community.

If you're one of the 15% who can't think of a time they feel powerful, perhaps some of these responses will give you some ideas of where your feeling of power lies.

"Listening to rap music."

"When I'm put in charge of something."

"When I've done my hair and makeup and feel good about myself."

"When I accept help."

"I like to box in the gym to get anger out."

"When I'm able to set a goal and reach it."

"When I finish a shift at work."

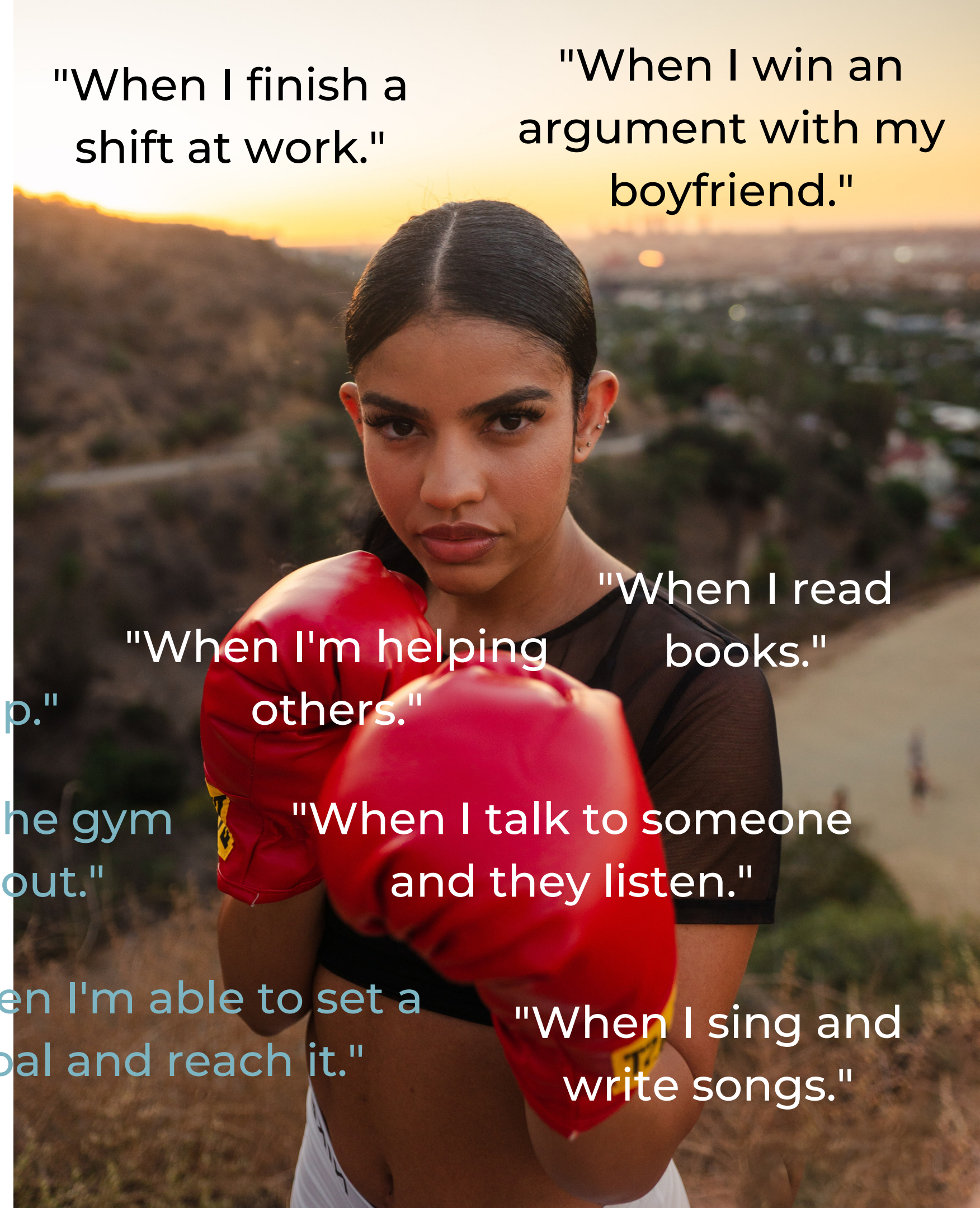
"When I win an argument with my boyfriend."

"When I'm helping others."

"When I read books."

"When I talk to someone and they listen."

"When I sing and write songs."



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We want young people's voices and experiences to influence everything we do at the Foyer Federation. Responding to our surveys is one way you can do that. We share the results (anonymously) with our Trustees, and with the managers and staff in your services so they can respond where you live.

The staff in your Foyer will be able to tell you all the ways you can currently get involved and make your voice heard in the Foyer. If you want to suggest something but don't know how, they can let you know. If you want to get involved in leading change, ask the staff how you might be able to do this.

You can find out about ways to get involved with the Foyer Federation by visiting our website, www.foyer.net, and looking at our programmes. Share your ideas with us or ask questions by emailing Kate at kate@foyer.net or texting her at 07904 662 046.

