

WHAT IS COMFORT CASES & WHY WAS IT CREATED?

Comfort Cases UK is a small charity located in Borehamwood in Hertfordshire, and they operate with about 150 partners in local authorities, police forces, and other small organisations that supports children during transitions in their care journey. The reason why Comfort Cases was created is due to the fact that approximately 80% of children that go into care or move around care say that their belongings get put in bin bags, which are typically used to contain and store rubbish, and this makes most children feel like they are worthless, like rubbish, and disposable, which affects their self-esteem. Therefore, to prevent this from happening, Comfort Cases provide children with brand new rucksacks filled with all the age appropriate essential items that a child might need for their first night in a home that's unfamiliar to them. In these backpacks, Comfort Cases provides children with a warm blanket, a brand new pair of pyjamas, a toiletry set, activity books, reading books, and a teddy bear that can offer them support and value at a really difficult time.

WHAT IMPACT DOES COMFORT CASES HAVE ON YOUNG CHILDREN'S LIVES IN TERMS OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL IMPACTS?



"WE'D LIKE TO HOPE THAT IT MAKES THEIR TRANSITION INTO CARE, A BETTER ONE, KNOWING THAT THEY'RE LOVED, THEY'RE SUPPORTED, AND THAT PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THEM, THAT AREN'T NECESSARILY DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH THEM."

SARAH JACOBY, CEO AND FOUNDER OF COMFORT CASES

Comfort Cases believes that every child deserves to feel loved, valued, and cared for, no matter their situation, and that kindness shouldn't be limited by where someone lives. It recognises that going into care is often not just one difficult moment, but a series of unsettling changes, with many children moving multiple times and having to face "first nights" over and over again each one bringing uncertainty, fear, and a lack of control. These experiences can have a real impact on a child's emotional well-being, making it harder for them to feel safe, build trust, and develop confidence in themselves. Comfort Cases responds to this by giving children their own personal belongings—often the first things they've ever truly owned—which can offer a sense of comfort, stability, and reassurance during such overwhelming times. Protecting each child's dignity is also at the heart of what Comfort Cases does. By making sure nothing is branded, children aren't singled out or labelled as being in care, and can simply use their belongings in everyday life, just like any other child. In this way, Comfort Cases aims to help children feel not only supported, but respected, included, and reminded they matter.

by Kiana Jenabzadeh

WHAT DO THEY PUT IN THE BACKPACKS?

These backpacks are care packages designed for children and young people entering or living in care, and everything inside them is chosen based on feedback from the children themselves rather than assumptions. Each pack includes a rucksack, a blanket and pyjamas hand bowed like a gift, basic hygiene items like shampoo, soap and a toothbrush, and simple activities such as colouring materials for younger children or word searches and journals for older ones. They also include a cuddly toy for comfort, and a book when appropriate, although alternatives are sometimes used because reading levels and book topics can vary widely and may not always be suitable for every child's situation. Instead of relying on traditional books alone, they now include more accessible activities like word searches so everyone can take part regardless of reading ability. Each pack also contains a small information card with important support contacts such as Childline, plus a way for young people to give feedback, because the whole idea is to provide comfort, practicality, and dignity while making sure the contents are actually useful and appropriate for the people receiving them.

HAS THERE BEEN A MOMENT WHERE YOU HAVE SEEN THAT COMFORTCASES HAS REALLY MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE?



One memorable story where comfort cases made a difference was when a local authority was giving out rucksacks made by Comfort Cases to children going into the care system. Once child receiving a rucksack was a 17 year old boy, and as soon as he opened the bag and saw Barry - the cuddly sloth - he tossed him to the side. Later on he was questioned about why he did that and he said that he was too old and did not want a cuddly toy. The social worker replied by saying to him that he would give Barry to someone else instead, however the 17 year old boy refused to give Barry to the social worker, as he secretly loved Barry.



by Kiana Jenabzadeh

HOW HAS THE ORGANISATION GROWN SINCE IT STARTED?

Comfort Cases originally started in the playroom as the current staff had full time jobs elsewhere! There was limited space and they were only able to send out 20 cases, as they also had jobs elsewhere. They would always try to find people that would want their cases, and in their first year, in total, they sent out four hundred and fifty one cases.

Last year, Comfort Cases sent out just under 7000 cases. Therefore, in four years, not only have the number of people that Comfort Cases support grown, they also work with lots of different types of organisations. Within local authorities, they work with early help, fostering, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, edge of care, residential care, police forces, homeless organisations, and National Health Service that deal with mental health for looked after children. Therefore, not only has the number of children and young people that they support completely changed. And they have gone from working in a playroom to then having a safe store where we kept all of the things and they would pack a whole month's order in one weekend

WHAT ARE MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH COMFORT CASES?

"Personally, I have been volunteering with Comfort Cases for the last few months, and it has been such an inspiring and fun journey for me. It has been really eye-opening to understand what many children have to go through, and it helps to know that I can make a difference, and you can too."

Either by fundraising, volunteering or just raising awareness, and either way this can significantly improve a child's life."



HOW CAN PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY MEDICAL STUDENTS, HELP SUPPORT CHILDREN IN CARE?

As a small organisation, Comfort Cases relies on awareness to grow support, reach more people, and secure vital funding. This year, the fundraising target is £350,000, which is essential to continue and expand their work.

To build a strong community, we must support the dreams and growth of our small charities.

Comfort Cases UK is more than a charity. They are national community of foster friendly businesses, caring individuals, and professionals who believe that children deserve to be treated with dignity and love, no matter how they started life. Every post that you like, share, follow or comment spreads awareness and helps build a network of comfort and love. Medical students and others in caring roles are in a strong position to help raise awareness, especially when they may encounter vulnerable children. Showing compassion, asking questions, and recognising situations where support is needed can make a difference.



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