# Practising with care in mind: Learning from professionals and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

**Training 3: Professionals’ and practitioners’ perspectives of UASC’s care of each other**

**Authors**

Sarah Crafter (The Open University)

Evangelia Prokopiou (University of Northampton)

Brandon’s Quote:

‘Informally, I mean, not really, because they’ll be looked after by us, so we wouldn’t approve young people to look after…it’s more indirectly through mentoring and… you more often find that once they start going to school, and going to the [name of charity], they just end up associating with other young people from their country, and they develop kind of informal support networks that way. So yeah, I wouldn’t say caring, it’s more informally supporting each other, just through peer mentoring really. …I wouldn’t say caring for… well, caring for each other in the sense that they’re looking out for each other, but not taking on a caring role, you know, doing the caring in a sense that we associate with a social work perspective.’

Lauren’s Quote:

‘[I think that]…the structures of care from the state, so social services, and all of those places that unaccompanied minors receive care from, I think often cloud and make less visible the practices of care that happen between friendships and peer groups. And I think that some of those practices of care are some of the most meaningful and sustaining forms of care in these young people’s lives.

So when I talk with my refugee colleagues who are now kind of early 20s….things like doing translation or interpreting, or spending an hour on the phone with the Jobcentre for a friend, interpreting for them, or filling out someone’s driving licence application and taking it to the Post Office, and doing all of that labour was not identified and recognised as care…I mean, something that happened, again, from my housing memories, is people having friends to stay, and kind of hosting people. That, for me, culturally, I understand that within a framework of care, and providing. And things like those advocacy examples around driving licences and stuff, I understand that as offering care to a friend or a family member. I think, instead, sometimes those behaviours and those actions are not allowed, so they’re seen as bad things, or they’re seen as stuff to hide, where naturally, what’s happening is this kind of inter-relational mutual caring relationship being developed. But often we just don’t know how to talk about them, but they’re really, really meaningful…

**Acknowledgements**

This free training program and the associated research was made possible from funding provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC – ES/S001980/1). We would also like to thank all those who gave their time to participate in our study. We also extend our thanks to Dr. Deborah Hadwin for providing her social work expertise and providing feedback.

This content is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 licence. You are free to use, adapt and re-use this material as long as you credit The Open University, CCoM Project, appropriately and license the material under the same terms. For more information visit **http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/**