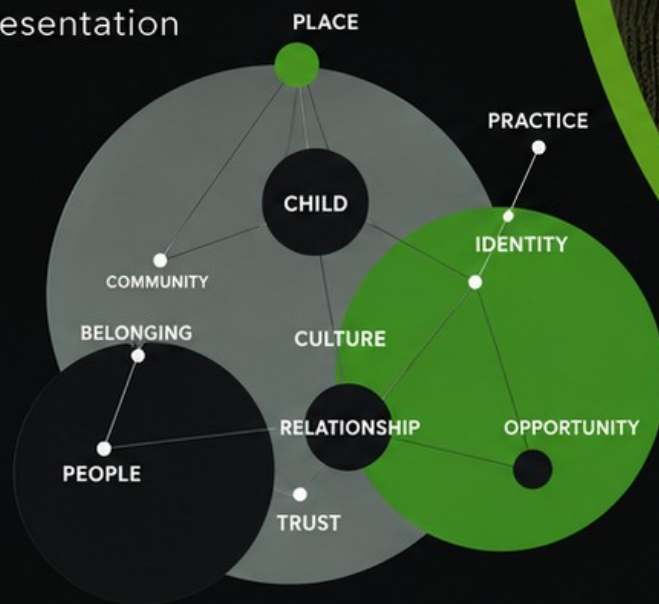


Reimagining Children's Social Care

Integrating Community, Culture and Practice

Visual summary of the report and presentation



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About this companion

How to use the visual summary

- 1 This companion is designed to sit beside the full Churchill Fellowship report, not replace it.
- 2 The visual pages give a quick route into the argument; these notes add the context needed for readers who are new to the work.
- 3 The central message is that safeguarding must be joined with culture, community and relationships if children are to thrive long term.
- 4 Readers can use it as a briefing document before reading the full report, or as a handout after presentations and stakeholder meetings.

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Why this matters

Children need more than safety to thrive.



Safety is essential, but children also need identity, belonging and stable relationships.



Global Majority children are over-represented in care and often experience poorer outcomes.



There are not enough Global Majority foster carers to meet current need.



Community, culture and mentoring should be part of care, not an add-on.



“

A child should not have to lose their culture to be safe.

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Why this matters

The image sets out the urgency; this page explains the practice issue.

- 1 A child can be physically safe and still feel disconnected from who they are, where they come from and who they belong to.
- 2 For Global Majority children, culture is not a separate “nice to have”. It shapes identity, confidence, relationships and how they make sense of care.
- 3 The current system often records ethnicity, religion and language, but does not always translate that information into practical everyday support.
- 4 The report argues for a shift from “we have noted this child’s background” to “we have planned how this child will remain connected to it”.

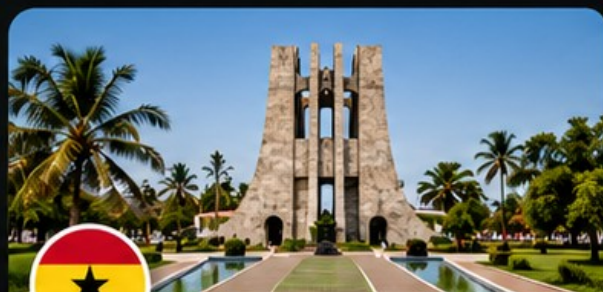
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What the Fellowship looked at

Four countries. Different approaches. Shared purpose.

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GHANA



Community and kinship.

Care is rooted in extended family networks and community responsibility.



UNITED STATES



Strengths, mentoring and cultural competence.

Focus on the individual within their community, with strong emphasis on mentoring, lived experience and cultural competence.



NETHERLANDS



Prevention, family-led planning and identity research.

Early help, strong municipal integration and research into identity to support belonging and resilience.



UNITED KINGDOM



Strong safeguarding, but too much pressure on process.

A robust safeguarding system, but concerns about procedural drift and the impact on relationships and professional judgement.



Different systems. **Shared lesson: relationships, culture and community improve outcomes.** ”

What the international learning adds

The visual compares countries; this page draws out the transferable lessons.

- 1 The Fellowship did not look for a perfect system to import. It looked for mechanisms that could be adapted to the UK context.
- 2 Ghana shows the value of extended family, community responsibility and practical support before crisis becomes removal.
- 3 The United States shows the role of strengths-based practice, cultural competence and long-term mentoring relationships.
- 4 The Netherlands shows both the promise of family-led, locally integrated care and the risks when prevention is expected to work without enough resource.

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Five key findings



01

Relationships are the mechanism, not the extra.



02

Community is an under-used resource.



03

Cultural identity is a developmental need.



04

Strengths-based practice changes what professionals see.



05

Mentoring bridges the gap between placement supply and identity need.

“

*Children do not need more services around them.
They need the right people for long enough.*



”



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What the findings mean for children

The image lists the findings; this page explains their effect on the child's experience.

- 1 Relationships are the mechanism because children heal, trust and build identity through consistent people, not through services alone.
- 2 Community is an under-used resource because the people and places that hold culture are often outside formal care planning.
- 3 Cultural identity is developmental because a child's understanding of who they are changes as they grow, ask questions and encounter difference.
- 4 Mentoring matters because it gives children a trusted adult who can help translate culture, heritage, belonging and lived experience over time.

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Principles for reform



01

Statutory safeguarding is the floor, not the ceiling.



02

Community is infrastructure.



03

Cultural identity is a planned outcome.



04

Relationships are protected assets.

“

*The capacity to change outcomes already exists.
The reform is in how we use it.*

”



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How the reform principles should be read

These principles are not slogans. They are design rules for a better care system.

- 1 Safeguarding remains the foundation. The report does not argue for less protection; it argues that protection should lead to lasting wellbeing.
- 2 Community infrastructure means services should not only refer to communities when there is a crisis. Community partners need funding, roles and standards.
- 3 Cultural identity as a planned outcome means culture should be assessed, reviewed and acted on with the same seriousness as other care outcomes.
- 4 Relationships as protected assets means continuity should be designed into the system, not left to individual goodwill or chance.

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The WHOLE™ Framework

The WHOLE Framework makes identity needs visible, actionable and measurable at matching and every review.

HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

Knowing, valuing and celebrating who they are.

FOOD, HAIR AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

Access to familiar food, cultural practices and everyday rituals.



LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Home language, dialect and cultural ways of communicating.

FAITH, PLACE AND BELONGING

Connection to faith, community, place and a sense of belonging.



GREEN = NEED IS
BEING MET



AMBER = SUPPORT
AND PLANNING NEEDED



RED = URGENT
ACTION NEEDED



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What the WHOLE Framework changes

The image shows the tool; this page explains why the tool matters.

- 1 The WHOLE Framework turns cultural identity from a general concern into a structured assessment and support plan.
- 2 It helps practitioners identify where a child's needs are already being met, where support is partial and where urgent action is needed.
- 3 The key change is accountability: every amber or red area should lead to a named action, an owner and a review point.
- 4 Over time, the framework can also create evidence about which types of cultural and identity support improve children's outcomes.

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BFCA Connect

People. Culture. Community. In Your Pocket.

A digital platform that helps children, carers and professionals find the right support, rooted in community and culture.



A digital map of community and cultural resources.



Peer support for carers.



Cultural mentors matched to children.

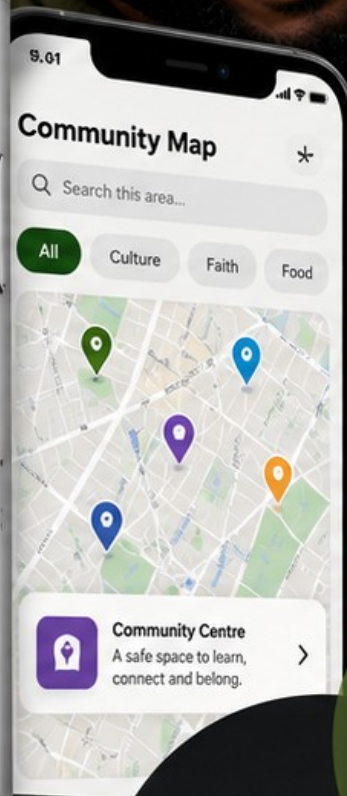


Practical help with hair, faith, language, food and community spaces.

“

Connection is infrastructure for **belonging**.

07



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What BFCA Connect adds to the model

The platform is infrastructure, not just a directory.

- 1 BFCA Connect makes community capacity visible so that carers, professionals and children can find culturally relevant support more easily.
- 2 Its value is strongest when it is linked to care planning: the app helps turn an identified need into a practical connection.
- 3 Examples include cultural mentors, peer support, hair and skin care knowledge, faith communities, language resources and local activities.
- 4 The report positions BFCA Connect as part of a wider care infrastructure that helps the household around the child, rather than leaving the household to carry everything alone.

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Building formal villages

A planned support network so every child can belong, thrive and reach their potential.

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A PLANNED SUPPORT NETWORK

A formal village is a planned support network around a child.



FIVE BUILDING BLOCKS

It includes people, places, practices, services and accountability.



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Community organisations need funding, safeguarding support and clear referral routes.



BETTER VALUE FOR CHILDREN

This approach is cheaper and faster than crisis-led alternatives.



*It takes a **whole community** to raise a child.*

– African Proverb



What a formal village means in practice

The image introduces the idea; this page explains the commissioning shift.

- 1 An informal village is whatever support happens to be available. A formal village is deliberately built, funded and connected to the child's care plan.
- 2 Community organisations need more than goodwill. They need safeguarding capability, governance, insurance, data protection and clear referral routes.
- 3 This approach recognises Black-led and community-rooted organisations as care infrastructure, not optional extras or short-term projects.
- 4 The shift is from asking communities to help for free to commissioning them properly for the expertise and relationships they already hold.

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What needs to change first

Six priority actions to start now and build lasting change.

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1



Make cultural identity a named outcome.

Legislate or update guidance so cultural identity is a core care outcome.

2



Publish care outcomes by ethnicity.

Require transparent data on placement stability, wellbeing and identity by ethnicity.

3



Strengthen kinship care with parity, prioritisation and induction.

Give kinship care equal status, prioritise it and provide proper induction and support.

4



Commission cultural mentoring alongside placements.

Fund community organisations and cultural mentors as a core part of care.

5



Test targeted recruitment for culturally matched carers.

Implement and evaluate targeted approaches to recruit more carers from diverse backgrounds.

6



Create a national knowledge function on good practice and recognition.

Capture, share and celebrate what works across the sector.



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Measure culture. Fund community. Protect relationships.

How the recommendations work together

The six actions are strongest when treated as one programme of change.

- 1 Naming cultural identity as an outcome creates the policy space for identity work to be measured, inspected and funded.
- 2 Publishing outcomes by ethnicity makes disproportionality visible and helps services understand where change is most needed.
- 3 Kinship care, targeted carer recruitment and cultural mentoring address different parts of the same placement sufficiency problem.
- 4 A national knowledge function would prevent every area having to learn separately and would give strong practice a route to recognition.

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What happens next

Turning insight into action for lasting change

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“ *The work continues.* Together, we can build a care system where every child knows who they are and where they belong. **”**

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What happens after the report

The visual sets out the direction; this page explains the immediate priorities.

- 1 The next phase is about turning the report from evidence into action with local authorities, fostering providers, universities and community partners.
- 2 The strongest starting point is practical testing: use the WHOLE Framework, link it to BFCA Connect and measure what changes for children and carers.
- 3 Independent evaluation is important because culturally responsive practice needs to move from moral argument to evidence that commissioners can use.
- 4 The long-term aim is a care system where children do not have to lose culture, identity or community connection in order to be safe.

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