

What to ask before your interview:

- Where and in what format will your interview will be shared (print, online, social media, TV etc)
- What the 'angle', or 'tone' of the piece is - eg. is it a celebratory piece/does it focus on hard topics/is it in response to something political. How does your voice/story fit into this narrative?
- Whether the journalist could give you an example of the type of questions they might be asking
- Who else is being interviewed? Are you the only care experienced voice? Are they talking to charities/government spokespeople/local authorities?
- What other pieces has the journalist written/produced that are similar to this.
 - You can ask the journalist this forthright, but you can also search their name with the keywords 'social care', 'foster care', 'children's homes' etc, to see what other stories are out there
 - This will not only give you an idea of their experience reporting on care issues, but will also give you an insight into their style, and maybe questions you can expect

Advice for during the interview

- Make sure you're comfortable
 - Wear an outfit that makes you feel at ease and is appropriate for the temperature (you don't want to be thinking about how cold/hot the room is while you're speaking).
 - Don't worry about dressing smart, this isn't a job interview, it's a conversation.
 - Have some water nearby and find out where the nearest bathroom is.
- If you don't want to answer a question - you're absolutely fine to say, "I'm not comfortable talking about that right now", or "I'd rather not answer that question". Don't feel bad, because a good journalist will have other routes they can go down.
- If you're doing an interview without a journalist present (eg. typing answers to questions which have been sent to you) - feel free to share your answers with a trusted friend if you want to chat through what you've written before returning. Sometimes it helps to have a conversation to get your words onto paper.

What to ask after your interview:

- When will the piece be published/broadcast? Can you see a draft before it goes live?
 - Some publications won't let interviewees see pieces before they go live due to company policy however, it's always okay to ask, especially if what you've spoken about is a particularly sensitive topic.
 - Ask the journalist to send you a copy/link of the piece as soon as it's published.
 - Make sure you have the journalist's best contact info - whether it be their company email or work phone, so if when the piece goes live you do spot an error, you can contact them immediately to have this changed.

Self-care before and after your interview:

- Nerves are completely natural, especially when talking about personal experiences, so on the day of your interview, plan a favourite playlist to listen to/feel-good show to watch, to get yourself into a relaxed headspace.
- For after your interview, plan an activity with friends or arrange to see someone so you can take your mind off of (or chat to your friends about) any difficult things discussed in the interview. If you can't see anyone, plan something nice for yourself eg. a bubble bath, watching a film you've wanted to see for a while, make your favourite dinner etc.
- If the topics spoken about during your interview were triggering/brought up unwanted feelings, here are some numbers of organisations you can call, if your normal support circle isn't available
 - **0800 1111: Childline** (up to 19th birthday)
 - **0800 023 2033: Become** care leaver charity
 - **0800 528 0731: Help at Hand** Children's Commissioners team
 - **0330 107 7540: Who Cares Scotland**
 - **0808 800 5792: Always Heard** Coram Voice helpline
 - **0800 6895652: CALM** (campaign against living miserably)

If you need urgent help, you can find your local **NHS mental health phone line** below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>