

## **Barnardos 'Best Choice' Programme**

Coping with adolescence can be difficult – especially if you have no one to turn to. Young people can often feel marginalised and neglected by the institutions and communities that surround them, leaving them uncertain about options for their future. Confused and bewildered, they suffer in silence and can drift into bouts of depression. Some even contemplate suicide, become involved in crime, or dabble with the dangers of prostitution. Sadly for many, dependence on drugs and alcohol seems their only escape from it all – because they are unaware that there are services to help them through these tough times.

The **Barnardos Best Choice** programme supports these young people in crisis by challenging the systems that fail them. Barnardos knows it is essential for young persons in this age group to form and develop positive habits and attitudes towards lifestyle choices – drugs, alcohol and sexual activity. Barnardos **Best Choice** programme is there to ensure young people know they have a choice, and encourages them to make the right choices for their future.

Part of the Best Choice programme also focuses on helping young people make the progression from primary to secondary school. Barnardos help them understand the importance of education and continuing with school. By helping young people interact socially - in the classroom, in the playground and learning new sports and hobbies, we help them develop their own personal interests, giving them a healthy outlook on life and the ability to reach their full potential.

***When we help young people make positive choices, we open opportunities for a brighter future.***