

Welcome





Outline

- Introductions
- About Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS)
- About our volunteers:
 - What they do
 - How they are supported
 - Why volunteer with us
- Becoming a Panel Member – Autumn 2026!

Who is Children's Hearings Scotland?

We want to make Scotland the best place to grow up

We want better outcomes for children and young people

We want all of Scotland's children to be loved, cared for and protected – and their views heard, respected and valued



What is the Children's Hearings System?

Scotland's unique system of care and justice for infants, children and young people:

- exists to ensure their safety, protection and wellbeing
- children's rights are at the heart
- independent decision-making lay tribunal
- focused on the needs of the child, not their deeds
- decisions reached are legally-binding



What is a children's hearing?



Hearings



21,313
children's
hearings

1,843
pre-hearing
panels

23%
of hearings
were deferred

Child Protection Orders (CPOs)

Number of CPOs granted

503

Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs)

Number of CSOs made

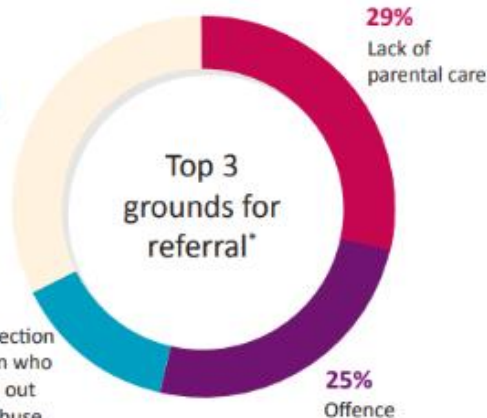
1,853

Number of CSOs terminated

1,960

32%
all other
grounds
for referral

14%
Close connection
with person who
has carried out
domestic abuse



of children were
referred on
non-offence
grounds



of children were
referred on
offence grounds

2

CSO
implementation
breaches

Children

9,789
children

referred in Scotland
in 2024-25

23%
were under 5
years old



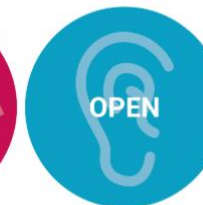
39%
were aged
5 to 11

38%
were aged
12 to 17



Role of the Panel Member

- Legal decision maker
- Providing good, robust decisions and reasons



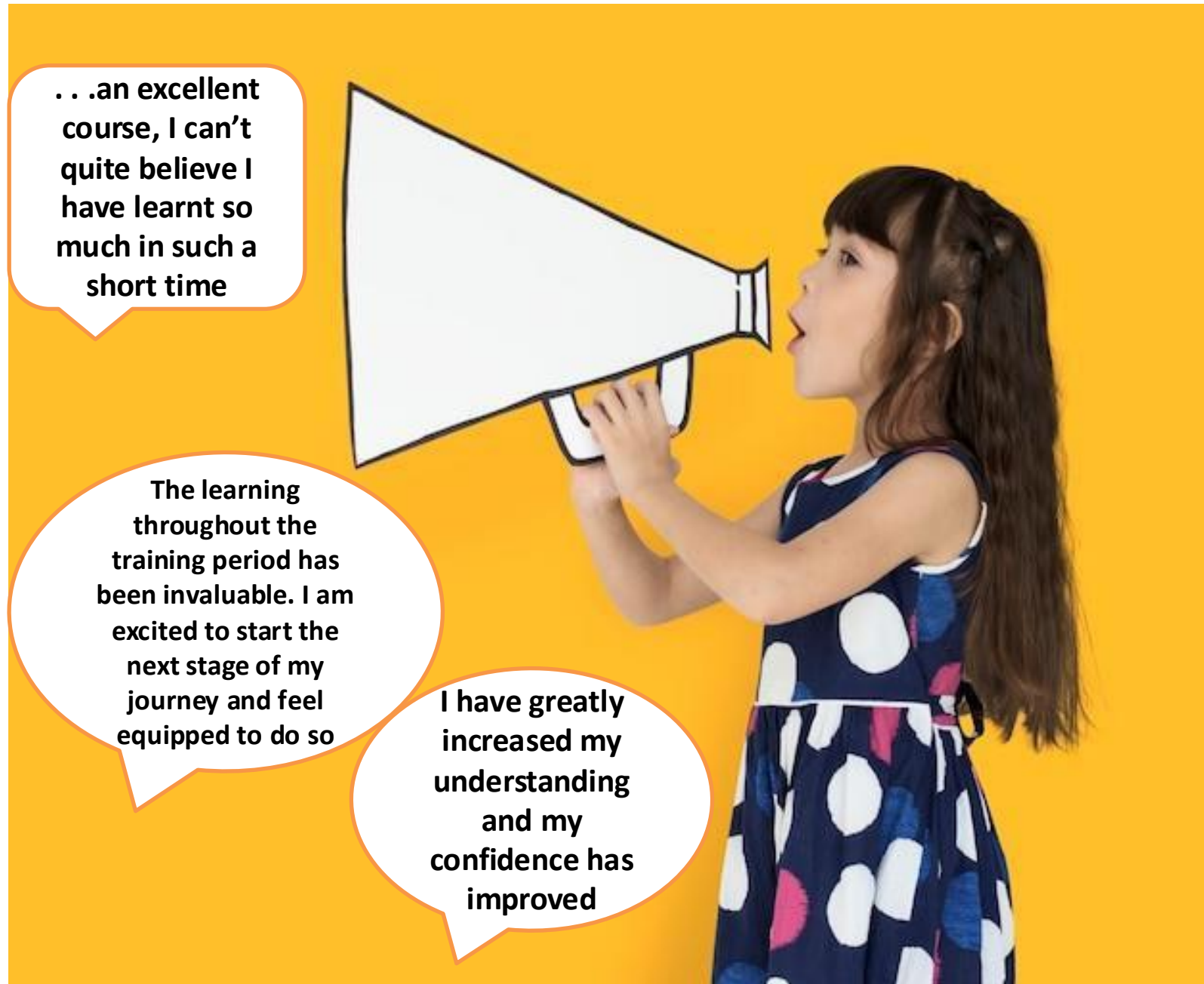
Role of the Panel Practice Adviser

- Quality assure practice, values and behaviours of Panel Members
- Skilled in evaluation and improvement
- Provide supportive feedback, helping embed a learning culture
- Help ensure hearings are fair, consistent & focused on children
- **Do not** take part in the hearing or influence decisions



But how to become a Panel Member...?

Pre Service Training



Pre-Service Course Programme

Day 1	Before the Hearing Following the process panel members go through from receiving the HIP to pre-hearing discussion
Day 2	Start of the Hearing Introducing the procedural expectations of both chair and panel members
Day 3	During the Hearing Focusing on the conversation, covering conflict, managing the room and questioning techniques
Day 4	Decisions and Reasons Bringing the hearing to a close, including the procedural expectations and writing up decisions & reasons
Day 5	Mock Hearings A day of practice for everyone involved, putting days 1-4 together and building confidence
Day 6	Assessment Day Trainees are assessed on our Panel Member competencies including Chair competencies
Day 7	Assessment Day Trainees are assessed on our Panel Member competencies including Chair competencies
Observation	Observing a real-life hearing is an important step for all trainees, this will happen after day 2 to make sure they have a realistic expectation of life as a panel member

Volunteering with CHS

Why apply?

- If you are passionate about upholding children's rights
- Make a difference in your own local community
- Use your skills and experience
- Learn new skills
- Provided with first class training to equip you in the role
- Improved decision-making, improved communicate with a range of people
- Flexibility – work around your availability for hearings rota

Support you will receive:

- Dedicated team of support, locally & nationally:
 - Policy and practice experts
 - Digital experts
 - Dedicated wellbeing support
 - Network of experienced Panel Members
- Continual learning opportunities
 - Training – at no cost to you



Our ask of you



- Passionate about listening to young people
- Making the best decisions possible for infants, children and young people
- Commitment to training
- Participating in hearings
- Engaging in learning opportunities
- Be available for two hearing sessions per month



How to become a Panel Member

- **August 2026:** Campaign launches
 - Application: [Panel Members \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://chscotland.gov.uk)
- **October 2026:** Interviews in own area
- **November-December 2026:** Confirmation & Induction
- **January – April 2027:** Pre Service Training
- **May 2027:** Appointment by National Convener
- **June 2027:** Join rota to participate in hearings



Thank you

If you have any questions, please contact us at

chsrecruit@chs.gov.scot

