

“I know that I am not the perfect parent but my kids do ok...



...they get a lot more than I did when I was a kid. The main problem is Liam...he is not a bad kid but he just seems to cause problems between me and Steve all the time, so he is better off out of the house because those two can't stand the sight of each other...but even when he is out of the way, he still brings trouble to my door with the police and the ASB team as the neighbours are always complaining about him. He's nearly 16 now and it's time he stood on his own two feet...sorted his own life, he has got lots of older mates with places of their own, so he won't end up on the streets. He's got a lot more going for him than I did at his age – he knows where I am if he needs me.

My other two – Shireen and Lewis are doing just fine. The problem is that people keep poking their noses in to our business – neighbours, school and probation. Yes, they have missed some time off school and they don't always make it to the school trips but so what? That school is rubbish anyway and all the teachers look down their noses at us because some of them know me from when I was a kid and remember me being taken into care...and you see we won't have our kids being pushed around and we tell them to stand up for them selves with the others...if school don't like it then that's tough. School are always saying that Shireen has got nits and that she is passing them on to the others, but how do they know it is her? I have done her hair loads of times and she just keeps getting them again so I don't bother now...we can't afford to keep buying the lotion.

I don't go down to the school much because I like to keep myself to myself. My mum made the mistake of telling our business to the school and the social workers and it didn't do her any good – I ended up in care as a kid and I don't have anything to do with my family now.

Steve and I have our tough times and sometimes I push Steve too far – but we are as bad as each other, especially when we have had a drink.

Steve brings in a bit of extra money doing the taxiing, but we are broke most of the time and we just can't afford that expensive stuff that kids want these days. The house is a mess – I know, but when you can't afford to do it up, what is the point in keeping it nice – I just can't be bothered...

I used to go round to the local community centre once a week for a coffee when the kids were younger, so they could play with the other kids but I stopped once they were both a full time school. I know that they do courses down there but it is not for me... I would feel daft going there on my own now...I would love a job but who would employ me? I wouldn't know where to start.”

Fiona Evan's story

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