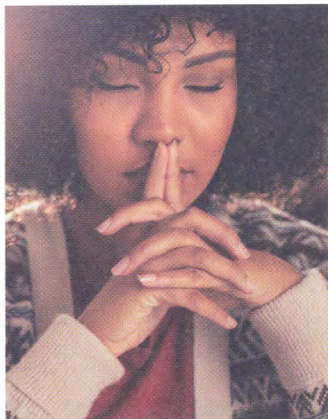


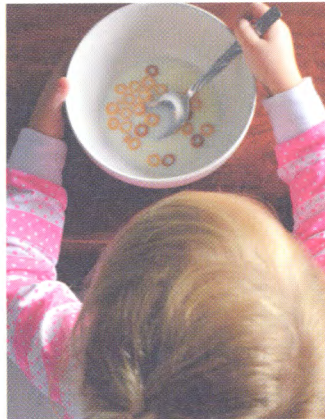
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**SHAHID NAQVI**



## If you really want to level up listen to social workers

Prime minister Boris Johnson has frequently stated his desire to level up. Perhaps he could start by listening to the concerns of social workers.

For this, after all, is a profession that knows more than most the everyday struggles faced by people and communities. It is also a profession with the skills to work with people and communities to help overcome some of their issues, while also able to highlight the inequalities and social injustices behind them. It is a profession that should be supported by government.

Sadly, however, too often the reverse seems true. Statutory social work departments are over-stretched and under-resourced. In some cases, that can lead to those with the very skills, commitment and desire to help becoming exhausted and leaving social work. This makes little sense, particularly amid so much talk about making society fairer and more equitable.

In their response to England's Independent Review into Children's Social Care's interim report, both BASW England and the Local Government Association stress the importance of understanding the context social services are delivered in, including lack of resources and staff, a blame culture and years of cuts to services. So, over to you Mr Johnson...

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