Press Release

2 October 2026

Avanti West Coast campaign highlighting crisis of runaway children scoops two awards

- *'Your Presence Is Presents Enough' campaign tops two categories at Creative Moment Awards 2026*
- *Campaign delivered with UK charity, Railway Children, to raise awareness of vulnerable young people at risk on rail network*
- *Five-minute film highlights passenger's role in spotting runaway children*

Avanti West Coast has won two Creative Moment Awards for a campaign aimed at raising awareness of vulnerable young people on the rail network.

Centred around a powerful five-minute film to help passengers spot the signs of a runaway child, the '*Your Presence is Presents Enough*' campaign, was named 'Creative Auto/Transport Campaign of the Year'. Delivered in partnership with UK charity, Railway Children, the short also won the 'Creative Film of the Year' category at the Creative Moment Awards 2026.

The annual awards celebrate exceptional creative work across the PR, advertising, marketing and communications sector.

Judges praised the campaign, developed in partnership with creative PR and communications agency, Mischief, as 'very striking with brilliant assets and results' for emphasising how everyone can help protect vulnerable children, especially at Christmas.

The judges said the film keeps audiences 'engaged' and its positive ending provides a 'sense of hope' and 'reinforces the message in a memorable way'.

Premiering on Avanti West Coast's YouTube channel in December 2025, the feature was designed to encourage passengers to take notice of their surroundings. It was purposely five minutes in length to reflect the rate at which a child runs away in the UK.

It was written and directed by BAFTA breakthrough writer and director, Daisy-May Hudson, who worked with youth ambassadors from Railway Children to bring the voices of lived experience, so it was rooted in real stories.

Throughout the festive travel period, announcements voiced by the film's child actress were played at stations across the West Coast Main Line, featuring the call to action, advising what to do and who to contact.

Messaging was amplified through signage on benches at Crewe and Stockport, posters onboard trains and at stations, as well as social media and out of home advertising.

Following the four-week campaign, 91 percent of passengers said they are now more likely to look up and recognise the signs of a vulnerable young person. While 83 percent are more likely to report a child at risk*.

Prior to the initiative, nearly four in five adults (78 percent) admitted they couldn't confidently spot a runaway child.

Vicki Hamilton, Social Media Marketing Campaigns Consultant at Avanti West Coast, said: "We're proud our safeguarding campaign and the film at the heart of it, has been recognised by the creative industry for being memorable and engaging.

"The festive period is one of the busiest times on the railway, but it can also be a time when people are distracted. This means vulnerable children go unnoticed, so it's vital passengers know the signs to look out for and how they can help keep young people safe. Working with Railway Children and Mischief, we wanted to create a powerful campaign that would help people recognise a vulnerable child and give them the confidence to act. We're pleased it has made a genuine difference by raising awareness of an important issue and helping more people to know what to do if they have concerns."

Chloe August, Director at Mischief, said: "We are incredibly proud of this campaign and the results it has achieved in raising awareness of vulnerable young people who use the rail network. It has been a true joint effort between Avanti, Railway Children and Mischief and the campaigns success is testament to it being recognised by the wider creative industry."

Suzi Lawrence, Head of Marketing and Communications at Railway Children, said: "We're delighted to see this campaign recognised with these two awards. This campaign demonstrates the powerful impact that can be achieved when organisations come together to tackle an important issue – one that for Railway Children is fundamental to our work. We're incredibly grateful to Avanti West Coast for their commitment to safeguarding vulnerable young people and for using their voice, platforms and reach to raise awareness about issues that often goes unseen.

"Every year, vulnerable children and young people who are frightened, alone or at-risk pass through the rail network. By taking this message directly to passengers through

trusted railway channels, the campaign has helped raise awareness, spark conversations and give people the confidence to act if they spot a child who may need help."

To watch the film, visit: https://youtu.be/qBFYL-A1IFQ

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**Survey carried out by Savanta – between January and February 2026, with a sample of 550 UK adults who were shown the campaign.*

About Avanti West Coast

Avanti West Coast, operator of intercity rail services on the West Coast Main Line, is a joint venture between FirstGroup and Trenitalia, delivering a cleaner, greener railway that drives the West Coast forward. Avanti West Coast serves key UK cities, including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow as well as North Wales.

We're on a mission to be the transport of choice – connecting customers and communities along the West Coast. Our award-winning Pendolino refurbishment programme transformed the UK's hardest working fleet with all 56 of the iconic trains providing best-in-class comfort.

Our Evero fleet, which offers more seats, improved comfort, and a substantial cut to carbon emissions, was introduced in June 2024 and is the result of a £350m investment in sustainable travel. Built by Hitachi, the 23-strong fleet, consisting of 10 seven-carriage electric trains and 13 five-carriage bi-modes, serves routes from London to the Midlands, Chester, North Wales and the North West.

We want to make a positive difference to the people and places we serve – helping to drive economic growth, green travel, and break down barriers. Our efforts to contribute to society and enable people to benefit from the opportunities rail offers through purpose-led initiatives including Feel Good Field Trips and award-winning female driver recruitment campaign has seen us create over £1billion in social value impact.

We're tackling climate change wherever we can, from reducing energy and water use to training drivers in eco-driving techniques and sourcing food and drink from local suppliers. Our goal is to be net zero carbon by 2031. We're on track.

For the latest news, visit the Avanti West Coast Media Centre: https://newsdesk.avantiwestcoast.co.uk/

Press Office: 0845 000 3333

About Railway Children

WEST COAST PARTNERSHIP

AVANTI WEST COAST

Railway Children is an international charity committed to safeguarding children at risk of life on the streets across the UK, India and Tanzania. Every year, thousands of children run away from home or find themselves alone on transport networks where they are vulnerable to exploitation, violence and abuse. Many are escaping poverty, conflict, or neglect – but the streets often bring greater dangers.

Our unique focus on transport networks allows us to intervene early, protect children and reunite families. Whether it's helping a child before they run away, supporting them through their time on the streets or rebuilding a safer future with family or alternative care – we're there at every step.

We also empower local communities and transport staff to recognise and respond to child vulnerability. And we use evidence from our frontline work to influence government agencies and civil society to shape better child protection policies globally.

With over 30 years of experience, Railway Children has already changed thousands of lives. We are change leaders and champions for children connected to the streets. Now, we're scaling up that impact – developing proven, replicable models that can protect even more children around the world.

Because we believe in a world where every child can thrive away from a life on the streets.

Railway Children | Protecting Vulnerable Children Worldwide