



Policy & Research Briefing

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A short guide for Trust partners on what's new in policy and research

Dear Colleagues

The summer break is in full swing and I hope everyone is enjoying a care free summer and making the most of all the opportunities available across the city. Recently almost 1,000 young people aged 13 – 19 were partying at the PlymYouth Fest at Saltram. There were numerous live bands, a climbing wall and an open mic marquee, as well as advice and guidance from Youth Service staff who were on hand. The rain held off until the close of the festival and young people have said that they enjoyed the event and would like one next year. For families and children Play Day on the Hoe was well attended and a brilliant opportunity for families to come together and children to enjoy free play.



For all of us across the Trust there is the less fun but very necessary planning and discussion in relation to budget pressures. A Performance and Finance Report will go to cabinet this month outlining the budget pressure we are experiencing. Departments are now drawing up robust action plans to address the in-year pressures and additional savings target. Cross departmental teams are being tasked with looking at how we can become more efficient and improve performance now and in the longer term. We are still in a period of significant and relatively rapid change and there are likely to be further national announcements. I am sure our dynamic and dedicated attitude in Plymouth will enable us to adapt and move forward with these changes and continue to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

We recently paid tribute to the work of our dedicated school governors at the 11th annual School Governor Awards on 28 July 2010, the Lord Mayor, Councillor Mary Aspinall, presented the awards at the ceremony which was held in the Council House. These awards were an acknowledgment of the many years of volunteer work carried out by the governors. 18 governors received awards for 16 to 30 years service; the level of dedication is phenomenal so a big thank you and well done.



With Best Wishes
Bronwen Lacey
 Chair of the Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust Executive

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Focus on: 'Inclusion' - disabled children and families

Disabled children and their families often face social and physical barriers to enjoying opportunities their non-disabled peers may take for granted. Sometimes additional support is needed to ensure disabled children and young people do not miss out.

Children with complex needs face the greatest barriers to inclusivity because they and their families are reliant on many health and social care services and support. A different perspective argues not that some children have complex needs but that some children need a complex response.

The term 'inclusion' is used a lot in relation to service provision but what does it really mean?

What is an inclusive provider?

In relation to disabled children and young people it is interpreted in many ways. It can be used in a way to mean the service 'accepts' disabled children, when actually they may be accepted but can they actually make use of any of the facilities? Often little or no resources or support is provided to enable their participation in activities.

Positive inclusion falls into two main categories:

1. **Active inclusion:** Provision that is designed and resourced to facilitate disabled children's participation in mainstream activities and promotes interaction between disabled and non disabled children.
2. **Opportunity inclusion:** Provision for disabled children or young people that allows them to enjoy the same activities and opportunities as non disabled children.

Broadly speaking inclusion means:

- Using buildings and facilities that are accessible;
- Having trained staff in mainstream and community settings who have good disability awareness and positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Ensuring that activities are affordable;
- Providing families with multi agency information about activities available.

There is clear evidence that poverty and disadvantage consistently compound the difficulties faced by disabled children and their families and therefore make some activities even more inaccessible.

Financial barriers to inclusion

Families with disabled children will often experience financial difficulties. This is due to a combination of the extra costs of raising a disabled child and the difficulty of holding down a job, as well as caring. The current economic climate and recent recession is very likely to have compounded problems for those suffering financial difficulties. A recent report from Contact a Family '*Counting the costs 2010, the financial reality for families with disabled children*' investigates the impact of the recession on families who were already vulnerable to experiencing financial difficulty.

Key findings from the survey of over 1,100 families with disabled children show:

- Almost a quarter (23%) are going without heating. This is up from 16% in 2008.
- Almost three quarters (73%) are going without leisure and days out. This is up from 55% in 2008.
- More than a third (34%) have fallen behind with repayments, mostly for credit cards or loans.
- More than half (51%) have borrowed from family or friends to keep financially afloat or pay for essentials. This is up from 42% in 2008.
- Almost 90% said that financial worries had a detrimental impact on their family life.

To view the full report, follow the link: <http://www.cafamily.org.uk/pdfs/CountingtheCosts2010.pdf>

What are we doing to include disabled children, young people and their families in Plymouth?

In recognition of the breadth of the inclusion agenda across the Children and Young People's Trust and following consultations with a wide range of stakeholders last summer, Services for Children and Young People have developed an, Inclusion Policy. The policy outlines the values and principles of inclusion that all strategies, plans and activities across the City should adhere to. There are also key strategic developments underway in Plymouth to improve support and services for children with disabilities. These include; citywide strategies looking at disabilities generally, palliative care and learning disabilities.

The Joint Commissioning Strategy for Disabled Children and Young People 2010-15 will be published for consultation this Autumn so watch this space!

The results of the tenth annual Families and Children Study (FACS) have been released

This report provides a useful national snapshot of the situation of families with dependent children in 2008. The survey involved interviews with nearly 6,000 families, with information on their almost 11,000 children being used in the analysis. The 2008 FACS is the last in a series of ten annual surveys to investigate the circumstances of British families with dependent children.

This report is in two parts. The first part of the report focuses on the circumstances, lives and conditions of families, and topics covered include: family characteristics, health, education, work, income, benefits and tax credits, social capital and material deprivation. The second part of the report focuses on the circumstances, conditions and lives of children, and topics covered include: child characteristics, health, schooling, children's activities, and childcare.

Some key findings include:

- A quarter of the families surveyed were lone parent families
- Lone parent families were more than three times as likely to live in social housing.
- The majority of one parent families only had only one dependent child
- Mothers who worked or who lived in owned accommodation had the highest alcohol consumption

To view the full report, follow the link below:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep656.pdf>



ContactPoint – No More!

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced that ContactPoint will be switched off at noon on 6 August 2010. From that date no users will be able to access the system. The database will be destroyed using Government approved security standards and processes.



There are activities taking place within Plymouth Services for Children and Young People to ensure the safe and secure retirement of the service. All system connections are now disabled and secure access tokens, which provided an extra level of security, are being retrieved.

Experience has shown the value of a quick and reliable means of discovering whether another professional has worked with a child. Work continues in developing the scope for a national signposted system, which would focus on helping a strictly limited group of practitioners to find out whether a colleague elsewhere is working or has worked with the same vulnerable child.

The ContactPoint project has raised awareness around information and data sharing. There is recognition that the development and nurturing of a local information sharing community is essential in early intervention and protection of children and young people.

Support for the adoption and use of the Common Assessment Framework will continue as well as support for other information sharing activities across the children and young people's workforce.

Research in Practice (RiP) launch their NEW website

RiP provides a range of resources which are free to access. They include:

- **A wide range of publications** and products designed for different practice audiences
- **The website**, supporting resources and information for evidence informed practice
- **A Learning Programme**, including a series of conferences, case studies, research support, workshops and e-learning

The NEW website means there is no longer a generic shared login. **All users will need to register themselves** and then they can login whenever at anytime. The registration is simple and the website address is still <http://www.rip.org.uk/>. Click on the *login* button and then chose the *create an account* button and follow the instructions on the screen.

If you have any problems or for more information please contact Abigail.jago@plymouth.gov.uk.

Survey of School Libraries shows a big gap between the best and the rest

There is a growing gap between the best services and those where resources and management support are failing, according to a new Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) School Libraries Group report. The national survey of UK school libraries has just been completed.

The report '*School Libraries in the UK: a worthwhile past, a difficult present – and a transformed future?*' concludes that the vision and support of senior management is vital to success. It is crucial that school management recognise the difference that a good school library can make.

To view the full report, follow the link below http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/5718/School_Libraries_A_Plan_for_Improvement.pdf

POLICY

NICE public health guidance

A range of public health guidance has recently been published. Reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes for our children and young people and families is a priority for the city and a key part of the Plymouth Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011.

The publications are useful not only to health professionals but also those in LAs, education and the wider voluntary and community sector. They are also of use to people who are affected themselves by these issues.

Follow the links below to the most recent publications:

NICE Guidance – Interventions for weight management before, during and after pregnancy

<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/13056/49926/49926.pdf>

NICE guidance - quitting smoking in pregnancy and after

<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/13023/49345/49345.pdf>

NICE guidance – alcohol use disorders preventing harmful drinking

<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/13001/48984/48984.pdf>

NICE guidance – Prevention of cardiovascular disease

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=13024>



Re-engaging young people in education, employment or training



This report from the Audit Commission focuses on how councils and their partners can use limited resources to provide more effective support to young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), or are at risk of becoming NEET.

It is based on the findings of new research looking at the records of 24,000 young people in ten areas across the country. This report includes recommendations for LAs, schools and Central Government, as well as a series of questions to help commissioners and members of 14-19 partnerships, children's trusts and local strategic partnerships to explore local issues affecting young people and how to help them. It argues that successful programmes share three common elements: they target responses to local circumstances; they support pre-16s on the edge of becoming NEET and they support post-16s with interventions tailored to meet their specific needs.

This report is accompanied by other useful documents including:

- Benchmarking tool to assess performance against other areas
- Predictive model of the characteristics of NEET young people

Further targeted reports will be available in September

To view the full document, follow the link below:
<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/againsttheods/Pages/default.aspx>

Violence against women and children: Improving your care, a young person's version

The Department of Health has produced a leaflet to tell young people what the Government is doing about the problem and where to get help, particularly for those affected by it. The leaflet is short and presented in a way that is accessible to young people. The leaflet outlines the changes that are planned to services in response with consultation with young people. It provides a useful list of contacts for young people who may have been affected by violence or may know someone who has been or is at risk and they can go to these places for advice.

To view the leaflet, follow the link below:
http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_117564.pdf

Care system better than failed family reunification

DfE guidance on repeated attempts to return children in care to their birth parents must be strengthened. The 'In loco parentis' report found that numerous attempts to reunite children have a negative impact on their mental health and well being and their future stability. The report suggests a cap should be added on the number of attempts made to reunite children with their families. It includes a series of recommendations intended to promote permanency (where appropriate), stability of good quality placements and continuity of support within the system. The report concludes that the additional cost to LAs of poor care journeys could be around £32,755 per child per year.

Follow the link below to view the full report:
http://www.barnardos.org.uk/in_loco_parentis_-_web.pdf

Research & Consultation

An evaluation of recent reforms to youth support services in 11 local areas

Since 2007 there has been considerable focus on 'reforming' youth support services. Ofsted evaluated 11 LAs to see what impact and progress their reforms had made on outcomes for young people. Findings include:

- Although still evolving, targeted support was, in most instances, creating more options for vulnerable young people.
- The priority given to targeted support for a minority of at risk young people had often undermined the contribution which universal youth services had made to young people more generally.
- The most responsive local areas had ensured that the voluntary and community sectors were involved in strategic planning.
- In most of the LAs visited, the targeted support for young people older than 16 was not as good as for those below that age.
- The broad scope of 'positive activities' was one of the reasons that authorities had made slow progress in gathering accurate information on take-up of activities.

To view the full evaluation, follow the link below:
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Supporting-young-people-an-evaluation-of-recent-reforms-to-youth-support-services-in-11-local-areas>



Safeguarding young people: responding to young people aged 11 to 17 who are maltreated



Over the last decade there has been a number of serious cases of maltreatment of young children. Research had not acknowledged the likely difference between the risks faced by young children and those faced by older young people in the 11-17 age band.

Views and consultation made directly with young people, policy makers, practitioners and practice managers are included in this research.

Recommendations include:

- Guidance on 'what to do if a friend is being abused' needs to be developed to support young people in advising their friends and also provide information about how young people can access help.
- Simple and clear information about the safeguarding process needs to be made available to young people who come into contact with children's social care services.
- Initiatives such as safeguarding forums held in schools, or the use of safeguarding mentors in secondary schools may help young people to identify who to speak to and support them to disclose abuse.
- Young people who have been maltreated need a consistent professional with whom they can build a relationship with and contact when they need to.

To view the full report, follow the link below:
http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/all_about_us/how_we_do_it/research/21486.html

Links between young people's relationships with their parents and their well being and self esteem

This research used the results of a recent survey with 11 to 15 year olds. Findings suggest that relationships with both parents impact on well being and happiness.

- In terms of relationships with mothers, it is the frequency of quarrelling (rather than frequency of talking about things that matter) that is most strongly associated with happiness and self esteem.
- In terms of relationships with fathers, it is the frequency of talking about things that matter (rather than frequency of quarrelling) that is most strongly associated with happiness and self-esteem.

To view the full report, follow the link below:
http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/resources/documents/Admin/21240_full.pdf

Review of early intervention

Early intervention can give children the social and emotional support they need to help them fulfill their potential and break the cycles of poor outcomes that can affect some of the most deprived communities.

This review will look at and recommend the best practice models for early intervention and advise on how these could be extended to all parts of the country. It will also consider how such schemes could be supported through innovative funding models, including through non Government funding.

The review will be carried out by the Social Justice Cabinet Committee, chaired by Rt. Hon Iain Duncan Smith.

For more information on early intervention, follow the link below to a previously written report on the benefits of early intervention
<http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/client/downloads/EarlyInterventionpaperFINAL.pdf>

Training and Events

Common Assessment Framework (CAF) TRAINING

The re-launch of the CAF process in Plymouth has proved very positive and the distance travelled for Plymouth regarding embedding the CAF process has been considerable. We have moved from a city with few assessments completed and very little practitioner confidence in the process, to a city where many agencies now use the CAF as an integral part of their day to day activities.

Training Update

We have now trained over 2000 practitioners across the city. The new training calendar is available and we are currently taking bookings up to December 2011. These include three additional courses which will start in September 2010

- CAF Refresher Training
- Chairing a CAF Meeting
- 'SMART' CAF Action Planning

If anyone is interested in training or would like to speak to Amanda Paddison (CAF Co-ordinator) to discuss a case or for further advice and guidance, please feel free to contact her:

CAF@plymouth.gov.uk

Tel: 01752 307160,

Mobile: 07774 336 579



National Events

What: Capita's 5th National Supporting Teenage Parents Conference - Attend to learn about working effectively with families at risk, hear guidance on engaging young families and share ideas for raising aspirations amongst young parents



When/Where: 20 October 2010 central London

Target Audience: Any professionals working in services that support young parents

Contact:

<http://www.capitaconferences.co.uk/public-sector-conferences/health-social-care.html>

What: Measuring Impacts and Outcomes - looks at moving beyond performance indicators to deliver services and looks at how to demonstrate improvements that make a real difference.

When/Where: 10 October 2010, central London

Target Audience: All those involved in performance monitoring and managing services.

Contact: To book a place, go to

<http://www.haymarketevents.com/conferenceDetail/485/practical-tools-measure-impacts-outcomes-effectively>

Useful Links

DCSF Every Child Matters

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/>

Care Knowledge

www.careknowledge.com

Department for Education

<http://www.education.gov.uk/>

Plymouth Parent Partnership

www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk

Safeguarding children

www.safeguardingchildren.org.uk

Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board

www.plymouthscb.org.uk

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk

NHS statistics

www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics

Children and Young People Now

www.cypnow.co.uk

Research in Practice

www.rip.org.uk

Service Directories

National Service Directories

<http://www.careknowledge.com/secure/contenttypes/doc.aspx?id=58466>

Plymouth Service Directory

<http://www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk>

Supporting People Service Directory

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/supportingpeopledirectory>

Parents Guide to Plymouth

<http://www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk/index.php?p=4>

Printing Schedule

For further information contact:

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To download previous Policy Briefs go to:

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/socialcareandhealth/childrensocialcare/pcypt/pcyptnews.htm>

Next Month's Issue	Submission deadline	Publication date
Issue 9	September	1 September 2010
		8 September 2010