

Policy Review of Children and Young People: A Discussion Paper

Budget 2006 announced that the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review would be informed by a series of policy reviews, one of which was a review of children and young people.

A discussion paper, published on 9 January 2007, reports on the evidence that has been gathered to date to inform the Review of Children and Young People. It also provides a discussion of the issues and challenges raised by that evidence. A young people's version of this discussion document will also be made available.

The Review will continue to build on the analysis set out in the discussion paper. It will report in spring 2007 to inform and influence the outcome of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

The Review addresses four main areas:

1. *Preventing problems or intervening as soon as they are identified is essential to sustain children's life chances. The Review identifies a number of areas where more can be done:*

- the framework in which public services operate could place more emphasis than it does currently on rewarding or incentivising support which is preventative; in particular
- more could be done to build children's resilience

to poor outcomes in key areas, including enhancing educational attainment and building social and emotional skills; and

- parents and communities are vital to create a supportive environment in which children and young people can develop; more can be done to build their capacity to fulfil this role.

2. *Young people continue to be exposed to new or changing influences as they develop towards adulthood. This Review identifies a number of areas where further progress needs to be made to achieve more participation from young people in activities which boost their resilience to poor outcomes, including:*

- continued work to reduce barriers that currently stop some young people participating in any positive activities;
- raising the standards and consistency in the quality of what is made available at local level; and
- building on existing good practice, to involve young people in the

design and decision-making processes behind their provision, working with adults and communities;

3. *Disabled children* The Review has found many approaches, both national and local, which are improving the support available for disabled children and their families. However, responsiveness to need is not a universal experience, good practice needs to be spread, and more needs to be done to:

- develop a clearer and more coherent understanding of the disabled children population at local level, combined with a stronger evidence base on interventions to improve outcomes for disabled children. In particular the role of earlier intervention to prevent outcomes from deteriorating;
- allow disabled children and their families to influence the way services are delivered in their local area; and
- ensure public services cooperate appropriately at local level to deliver effective packages of support.

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4. *Families caught in a cycle of low achievement*

Research carried out for this Review identifies a small minority of families with multiple problems leading to particularly harmful outcomes for the children in the family, family members and potentially the wider community. Key challenges identified include:

- improving coordination of public services, particularly links between services for children and for adults, to address the root

causes of problems in these families;

- ensuring services are able to engage effectively with these families through building their trust, where this is a barrier to engagement, and ensuring services can balance support and sanctions to gain optimum engagement; and
- providing sufficient support and motivation to front-line professionals to engage in what are often

extremely challenging circumstances.

The Review will continue to build on the analysis set out in the Discussion Paper document. Further information, including a list of respondents and their responses, can be found at:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_csr07/reviews/cyp_review/cyreview_index.cfm

The Key Indicators Graphical System (KIGS)

The latest version of KIGS, including on-line help and a training guide was released at the beginning of January 2007.

As responsibilities for social services have been split between children's and adults' services, separate versions of KIGS have been provided for these client groups. There is also a third version which concentrates mainly on the PAF indicators. Indicators are split into themes and an Excel spreadsheet can be downloaded containing all data.

The earliest year of data is 1998-99, the first year that all 150 councils came into existence. These changes have led to a reduction in the number of indicators in each version of KIGS.

Registration for KIGS is free and accessible at www.drfoosterintelligence.co.uk/registration/kigstool/Default.aspx?ProductCode=KIGSTool

Further information is available at support@drfooster.co.uk

Feedback on the system is welcomed by Jeff Palmer, Social Care Product Manager, Dr Foster Intelligence jeff.palmer@drfooster.co.uk

Dr Foster Intelligence is a partnership between the Information Centre for Health and Social Care and Dr Foster Holdings LLP - Ed