

Draft Action Plan for Looked After Children/Youth Homelessness 16+

2011-2014



INTRODUCTION

The Looked After Children/Youth Homelessness 16+ Sub Group reports to, and is mandated by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP). The Sub Group has been charged by the CYPSP with drawing up a plan for integrated commissioning of supports and services for this group of children and young people, which will improve their outcomes. The work is Northern Ireland wide. Membership of the Group consists of representatives from the Statutory, Voluntary, and Community sectors. Current membership can be found at Appendix A. The participation of children and young people and their parents in all stages of the process is paramount.

The following draft action plan sets out how this Sub Group will contribute towards the implementation of the Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan. This overall plan sets out that all CYPSP planning work will contribute towards a shift to early intervention, and to integration of resources from all possible sources in order to improve outcomes for children and young people.

This action plan is one document in the suite of action plans, which make up the NI Children and Young People's Plan. The Looked After Children/ Youth Homelessness 16+ Sub Group will collaborate with the other Regional Sub Groups, the CYPSP Groups and the 5 Outcomes groups in order to implement the overall Plan.

The Plan is therefore a live document – at any one time the latest version of the overall Plan and the Action Plans of all of the planning groups will be available on our website, at www.cypsp.org.

The group has identified a range of quantitative information. Given the range of indicators that could be used for any outcome, the group has decided to prioritise a number of key indicators that will enable them to monitor progress against the outcomes over time. The quantitative indicators are either, currently collected and available to the group, or identified



by the group as not readily available but useful information that they wish to collect as part of their ongoing work.

The group is also aware that the timeframe for the action plan is 2011-2014. Through an extensive outcomes based planning process, the group has identified many key issues for children and young people. However given the short time frame, many of the actions are short term and realistic in nature, with a view to address long term issues.

The Children (NI) Order 1995 states that a 'looked after' child is one 'who is in the care of a Trust or who is provided with accommodation by a Trust'. Looked after children can live:

- in a residential home
- in a residential school
- in a foster placement
- in a family placement with a relative or occasionally at home
- in jointly commissioned young adults supported accommodation that comply with DHSSPS standards and are subject to regular inspection by RQIA

The needs of Looked After Children are complex and diverse. There is much ongoing work addressing these issues. This sub group provides an overarching regional forum for this work and the action plan is designed to reflect that.

Outcome

Healthy

All looked after children and young people should expect to be healthy

What do we know about children and young people...

Quantitative Information

- % of Children and Young People with a health assessment and plan (CHS)
- % of Looked After Children not using drugs or alcohol
- % of Looked After Children who do not self harm (DSF10.4.14)
- % of young care leavers who are pregnant / young parents
- Number of children under 5 years old with health assessments and plans (CHS)

Qualitative Information

Promoting the quality of life for looked after children and young people (NICE Public Health Guidance 28 (NICE/ SCIE, Oct 2010))

CASI Key Messages – 5% of 12-18 year olds felt they needed help for drinking too much, 6% for drug/substance misuse

SCIE Research

Mind Your Health Study, physical and mental health of looked after children in Northern Ireland (QUB/ OFMDFM)

Responding to the health needs of looked after children, young people and their carers- views of young people, foster carers and practitioners regarding services to meet the health needs of looked after children and young people (PHA, 2012)

What we will do

We will ensure that looked after children benefit from a range of health interventions and supports that will promote their physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing

Outcome: <i>Healthy</i>					
Actions:	Implementation Milestones	Lead person/other groups	What difference will it make to children and young people	Other outcomes	By when
We will ensure that the health and wellbeing needs of looked after children are identified and responded to in partnership with them and their carers, and that health assessments and plans informs inter-agency care plans	Regional guidance, standards and documentation to support looked after children health assessments and plans are developed and implemented	LAC Health Needs Group	Looked after children will benefit from meaningful health plans that ensure sensitive, informed and timely health and wellbeing services.	ELA, LSS, EEEW, CPCS, LSRR	2014
	Looked after children contribute to and have access to their health plan in an age appropriate manner	LAC Health Needs Group		LSS, LSRR	2014
	A health and wellbeing perspective is included in preparation and education programmes available for those caring for looked after children	LAC Health Needs Group	The health needs of looked after children will be responded to by carers who are supported and informed.	LSS, LSRR	2014

Outcome

Enjoying, learning and achieving

Children and young people will be able to make the most of educational and non-educational opportunities

What do we know about children and young people...

Quantitative Information

- % of young people continuing in Further or Higher Education post 16 years (DSF)
- % of children in Foster Care benefiting from Fostering Achievement Programme
- % of children and young people suspended or expelled (ELBs)
- % of looked after children in education other than at school (EOTAS)
- % of looked after children subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs whilst attending school
- % of looked after children finishing compulsory education with qualifications and achievements

Qualitative Information

Fostering Achievement Reports

CASI reports (sample size- 121) a significant number of participants reported experiencing disruption due to changes in care placements and school placements. 25% of participants over 12 years old had been out of school for more than 3 months. Of these, 55% reported that they were helped back into education

All looked after children of statutory school age, including children and young people in Secure Accommodation and in Custody should have a PEP by 01st June 2013

`A PEP should be completed for all looked after children and young people admitted to care at the 3 month LAC Review, 6 month LAC Review, and at 6

(PEPS)

monthly intervals thereafter to coincide with all LAC Reviews`

`It is vital that sufficient time is allocated for the completion of the PEP particularly a first review when vital information is gathered`

(Regional Guidance (NI) for Personal Education Plans for Looked after Children/Young People (PEP) December 2011)

What we will do

- Facilitate and support staff and carers to embed a culture of high aspirations for Looked After Children who will proactively encourage and advocate for looked after children / young people throughout their educational experiences.
- We will produce financial guidance so that looked after children and young people are aware of support available in pursuing further education

Outcome: <i>Enjoying, learning and achieving</i>					
Actions:	Implementation Milestones	Lead person/other groups	What difference will it make to children and young people	Other outcomes	By when
Facilitate and support staff to embed a culture of high aspirations for Looked After Children that will proactively encourage and advocate for looked after children / young people throughout their educational experiences.	Monitor progress of implementation of PEP across the region	CYPSP LAC Sub Group			2014
	Evaluate the implementation of the following areas from Care Matters in Northern Ireland – A Bridge to a Better Future: (March 2007) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked after Children – A Dedicated Educational Support Service • Foster Carers and Key Workers – Engagement with Learning and Schools • Sharing information about a 	CYPSP LAC Sub Group	Looked after children are encouraged and supported to achieve within educational settings that is equal to the best of their peers	H, EEEW, LSRR	2014

<p>We will produce a financial written document so children and young people are aware of support available in pursuing further education</p>	<p>Child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal access to learning opportunities and additional support • Progression (16+) <p>To achieve this we will undertake a scoping exercise to establish what information is available and what systems need to be set up in order for the above evaluation to be carried out.</p> <p>Produce a written document in partnership with FE and HE providers to include a schedule of financial supports and information on student support</p>	<p>CYPSP LAC Sub Group</p> <p>CYPSP LAC Sub Group</p>	<p>With an understanding of financial support available, looked after children can better pursue further education opportunities</p>	<p>H, EEEW, LSRR</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>2014</p>
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Outcome

Living in Safety and with Stability

The safety and stability of children and young people in care will be the responsibility of everyone in the community

What do we know about children and young people...

Quantitative Information

- % of Looked After Children in unregulated placement (DSF 10.4.9)
- % of Looked After Children who have 2 or more placements moves after becoming looked after (DSF 10.3.9)
- (CDT Re: number of moves)
- % of looked after children in inappropriate placements (DSF 10.8.23)
- Number of looked after children entering the criminal justice system (DSF 10.4.11/ 10.3.29)
- % of looked after children on the Child Protection

Qualitative Information

Evaluation from GEM Scheme

CASI: 80% of participants report feeling completely safe in their placement. 23% had changed placement once or twice in the previous year and 31% had been in their placement for more than 5 years.

register (DSF 10.3.11)

- Number of looked after children subject to a dual process

What we will do

- We will ensure that looked after children and young people are placed appropriately in the right placement to meet their needs
- We will promote arrangements for the safety of all children and young people in care

Outcome: <i>Living in Safety and with Stability</i>					
Actions:	Implementation Milestones	Lead person/other groups	What difference will it make to children and young people	Other outcomes	By when
We will ensure that looked after children and young people are placed appropriately in	Action plan to increase permanency of placements which includes the following:	HSCB HSCT	Appropriate placements will reduce the risk of disruption which will create stability for the child or young person	H, ELA, EEEW, LSRR	2014
	Review regional policy on permanence	RAFT			2014

<p>the right placement to meet their needs</p>	<p>Develop arrangements to monitor unplanned fostering placement disruptions and review patterns emerging in order to inform practice.</p> <p>Support the stability of placements by developing a strategy to enhance public awareness of children in care.</p>	<p>CYPSP LAC Sub Group</p>			<p>2014</p>
<p>We will ensure that young people living in care do not come to any harm from physical, emotional or sexual abuse,</p>	<p>All care staff and foster carers are trained to recognise risk factors</p> <p>Children and young people are supported to disclose or seek support when they do not feel safe</p>	<p>PHA,CYPSP LAC Sub Group and links to other voluntary and community groups</p> <p>RAFT , VOYPIC and other relevant voluntary organisations</p>	<p>A reduction in the number of disruptions</p> <p>Young People are better protected and feel safer</p> <p>Young people participate in their own protection and safety</p>	<p>H, EEEW, LSRR</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>2014</p>

<p>including sexual exploitation</p> <p>We will ensure that Looked After Children will not inappropriately enter the criminal justice system</p>	<p>Working collaboratively with the Early Intervention sub group and the CYP and Offending sub group to reduce number of LAC entering the criminal justice system</p>	<p>HSC Trust and YJA</p>	<p>Fewer LAC will enter the criminal justice system</p>	<p>H, LSS, LSRR</p>	<p>2014</p>
	<p>All relevant staff to adopt a problem solving approach , including restorative practice</p>	<p>HSC Trust and YJA</p>			<p>2014</p>
	<p>Ensure that comparable early intervention and prevention services are as accessible to LAC as they are to other children and young people</p>	<p>HSC Trust and YJA</p>			<p>2014</p>

Outcome

Experiencing Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

Children and young people will engage in pathways to further and higher education, prevocational and mainstream training and employment. They should live in affordable and secure households (at home in care, in foster care, residential care or independently). They should be helped to fulfil their potential in the adult world.

What do we know about children and young people...

Quantitative Information

- % of Looked After Children and care leavers who are economically active or in education or training aged 16 – 21+ (PMSI monthly returns) (DSF 10.4.10)
- % of 16 & 17 in care placements and in employment, education or training (DSF 10.4.10)
- % of care leavers who reside in suitable, affordable accommodation (DSF 10.4.09)

Qualitative Information

- Research evidences that young people leaving care have significantly poorer outcomes in education, training and employment compared to their peers. (*Stein, M, 2012*). CASI (Sample size-121) reported that 76% of participants were in education, training or employment.
- Young people need a secure and safe place to live in as part of leaving care and support with education, training and employment to help them sustain their accommodation. (*Morgan 2009 and Lindsay and Morgan 2006*)
- Encouragement, support, and having high aspirations for young people are important to supporting young people into and through

education, training and employment (*NCAS From Care2Work: Creating Opportunities and Raising Aspirations, 2010*)

- Young people need written information to understand financial entitlements and practical support to assist them with money management. (McCrea, R, 2008 – Evaluation of GEM Scheme; Morgan and Lindsay 2012)
- CASI (sample size- 121) found that 63% of participants over 16 currently receive help to manage money

What we will do

- We will ensure provision of age appropriate money management programmes to children and young people in care and to those who hold primary caring responsibilities to looked after and care experienced young people
- We will assist all young people with an experience of care to attain economic independence, by supporting them with appropriate careers advice, skills, educational and employment opportunities to help them achieve their career goals.
- We will work with NIHE and other voluntary accommodation providers to develop an appropriate continuum of accommodation for young people aged 16+ and those experiencing youth homelessness

Outcome: <i>Experiencing Economic and Environmental Wellbeing</i>					
Actions:	Implementation Milestones	Lead person/other groups	What difference will it make to children and young people	Other outcomes	By when
Provision of age appropriate money management programmes to children and young people in care and to those who hold primary caring responsibilities to looked after and care experienced young people	Complete a scoping of current programmes available on money management	HSC Trusts in collaboration with Social Security, Further Education and Higher Education colleagues	Young people are better equipped and informed about financial entitlements, source of financial assistance, money management skills and budgeting	H, LSS, LSRR, ELA	2014
	Delivery of agreed training programmes on money management / preparation for adulthood to young people in residential care				2014
	Delivery of agreed training programmes on money management / preparation for adulthood to those with primary caring responsibilities – kinship and non kinship carers, residential and 16 Plus staff				2014

<p>Assist all young people with an experience of care to attain economic independence, by supporting them with appropriate careers advice, skills, educational and employment opportunities to help them achieve their career goals.</p>	<p>Maintenance of Regional Strategic Group – Care to Career – to support and drive the education, training and employment needs of care experienced young people through collaborative working by those bodies with lead responsibilities for improving outcomes for young people.</p> <p>The Group will engage with SSA/DSD representatives to examine Welfare Reform changes and consider potential negative impacts and update related financial guidance for care affected young people. Consideration will also be given to EMA entitlements.</p>	<p>DEL, HSCB, HSC Trusts, PHA, DENI, Fostering Network, VOYPIC, DSD</p> <p>CYPSP/LAC 16+ Sub Group</p>	<p>Young people may benefit from additional routes to employment as care leavers</p> <p>Measure the benefits of additional targeted employability support to young people to inform service improvements in education training and employment for the benefit of young people</p>	<p>LSRR, H, ELA</p> <p>LSRR, H, ELA</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>2014</p>
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	Complete evaluative work on current dedicated Employability Services for young people in and leaving care to assess effectiveness and impact	HSCB, HSC Trusts, DEL in collaboration with QUB		LSRR, H, ELA	2014
Develop a range of appropriate accommodation for Looked After and care experienced young people aged 16+, including those who are experiencing youth homelessness	Review current Commissioning Plan on Accommodation to Meet the Needs of care leavers / young homeless and identify gaps in the continuum of accommodation provision	CYPSP LAC Sub Group	Young people will benefit from a wider range of suitable accommodation options and will be afforded greater stability and security of living arrangements that prevent disruption, in turn positively impacting on education, training and employment	H, LSRR, LSS, ELA	2014
	Develop proposals that will eliminate the use of bed and breakfast arrangements	CYPSP LAC Sub Group			2014

Outcome

Contributing Positively to Community and Society

All looked after children should be supported to make a positive contribution in their day to day lives, to make informed choices and to take control of their lives. They should be supported to participate in their communities and have a say about the direction of service provision and in decisions that affect their future

What do we know about children and young people...

Quantitative Information

- % LAC involved in volunteering (CASI)
- % LAC involved in youth clubs, sports (CASI)
- % LAC who have not received cautions or been involved in criminal offences (DSF 10.4.11/ 10.3.29)
- % of LAC who benefit from advocacy services as individuals or groups (contract monitoring VOYPIC)

Qualitative Information

- Negative impact of young people and criminality
- Importance of LAC not being differentiated from the rest of the population
- Importance of community and a sense of belonging, Identity in addressing isolation, marginalisation
- CASI (sample size-121) reports that 51% of participants aged 16- 18 years old felt they could not talk to their personal advisor

What we will do

- We will support children and young people to proactively build positive relationships with their neighbours and communities
- We will ensure that mentoring is available to all looked after children and young people to develop citizenship and participate fully
- We will strive to promote the positive contributions that looked after children and young people make to society

Outcome: Contributing Positively to Community and Society					
Actions:	Implementation Milestones	Lead person/other groups	What difference will it make to children and young people	Other outcomes	By when
We will ensure that mentoring is available to all LAC to develop citizenship and participate fully	Map available mentoring services	Include Youth/VOY PIC / Extern	Ensure each young person has a significant positive person in their life and integrate into care planning	H, ELA, LSS, EEEW, LSRR	2014
We will proactively support children	Engage the youth service to explore how to enable young people to take up opportunities	CYPSP LAC Sub	Ensure more opportunities for young people to volunteer and contribute positively	H, ELA, EEEW, LSRR	2014

<p>and young people to be involved in their own community</p> <p>We will strive to promote the positive contributions that looked after children and young people make to society</p>	<p>within their community</p> <p>Undertake a campaign to promote a positive image of children in care and to challenge myths.</p> <p>Promote events opportunities to highlight positive contribution and achievements of looked after children</p> <p>Promote children and young people's engagement in communities, that is, youth clubs, sports, volunteering and</p>	<p>Group</p> <p>CYPSP LAC Sub Group</p>	<p>The contributions of children and young people are positively recognised, encouraging further participation and reducing negative stereotypes that may exist of children and young people.</p>	<p>H, ELA, LSS, EEEW, LSRR</p>	<p>2014</p>
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Outcome

Living in a society which respects their rights

The UN Convention for the Rights of the Child upholds that the state should ensure alternative care according to the best interest of the child. Looked after children must be informed of their rights and helped to exercise them. There must be a community of interest to advocate the rights of looked after children.

What do we know about children and young people...

Quantitative Information

- % of children and young people entering care receive information about the VOYPIC Advocacy & Policy service (VOYPIC)
- Number of children and young people using the VOYPIC advocacy service (VOYPIC)

Qualitative Information

- VOYPIC and Children's Commissioner reports relating to participation, decision making
- CASI (sample size-121) reports that 10% of participants were fully able to have a say about decisions about their future.
- Children's Commissioner Report on Care Planning
- CASI (sample size-121) reports that 62% of participants did not know what their care plan was and 38% said that no one talks to them about their care plan.
- Benefits of person centred planning in supporting user participation
- Monitor policy advocacy events e.g. at Stormont.

What we will do

- We will ensure the rights of children and young people who are looked after are upheld and promoted
- We will promote the engagement of LAC in the development of policies through service user forums

Outcome: <i>Living in a society which respects their rights</i>					
Actions:	Implementation Milestones	Lead person/other groups	What difference will it make to children and young people	Other outcomes	By when
Upholding and promoting rights	Provide every children entering care with the VOYPIC Care Pack.	VOYPIC	Looked after children and young people are informed of their rights and options available to them to exercise those rights through complaints, advocacy and representation. This in turn impacts positively on all other outcomes.	H, ELA, LSS, EEEW, CPCS, LSRR	2014
	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to pilot Children in Care Councils.	CYPSP LAC Sub Group			2014
	Confirm Trust arrangements in place for young person friendly information for Looked After Children on care arrangements,	CYPSP LAC Sub Group			2014

We will promote the engagement of LAC in the development of policies through service user forums	complaints, advocacy, representation etc e.g. VOYPIC brochures on complaints procedure				
	Map service user forums across the Trust, voluntary and community sectors	CYPSP LAC Sub Group	The right for children and young people to participate in decision making processes is realised, allowing looked after children and young people to positively influence issues that concern them, in turn, impacting positively on all their outcomes.	H, ELA, LSS, EEEW, CPCS, LSRR	2014
	Review Trust PPI strategies and ensure that user participation across LAC is addressed	CYPSP LAC Sub Group			2014
Ensure that local and regional policy developments have an engagement strategy agreed	CYPSP LAC Sub Group	2014			

Appendix A: Membership of the Looked After Children/Youth Homelessness 16+ Sub Group

Agency	Agreed Membership
Chair of LAC/16+ Sub Group– Tony Rodgers, Assistant Director of Social Care, Health and Social Care Board	
Statutory Sector	
Health and Social Care Board	Tony Rodgers, Assistant Director of Social Care Marian Hall, Children's Services Project Manager Una Lernihan, Social Care Commissioning Lead Deidre Coyle, Social Care Commissioning Lead
Department for Employment and Learning	Brian Patterson, Strategy and Equality Branch
Education and Library Boards	Anne- Marie Bagnall, South Eastern ELB
Public Health Agency	Una Turbitt, Safeguarding Children's Nurse
Health and Social Care Trust	Jacqui McGarvey, Assistant Director for Cared for Children, SEHSCT
Youth Justice Agency	TBC
Community/Voluntary/BME Sector	
Barnardo's	Stephen Knox, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Extern	Angela Devlin, Programme Manager for Children and Family Services
VOYPIC	Vivian McConvey, Chief Executive
Council for Homeless NI	Kathy Maguire, Youth Services Coordinator
Action for Children	Carina Boyle, Strategy Development Manager,
Include Youth	Paddy Mooney, Give and Take Scheme Manager
Staff In Attendance	
Maurice Leeson	Children's Services Planning Professional Advisor
Andrew Hawthorne	Children's Services Planning Support Officer

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

We would be very interested in your feedback on these initial priority areas as set out above. These will inform the action plan for the BME Children and Young People Sub Group. It is important to us to hear what you have to say about what the Group has planned to address for children and young people with disabilities across Northern Ireland.

We are happy to receive comments in any format. If you require this document in an alternative format (such as large print, Braille, disk, audio file, audio cassette, easy read or in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English please contact us at the details provided below.

Please return your response by TUESDAY 6th August 2013 to:

**Andrew Hawthorne
Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
Health and Social Care Board
12-22 Linenhall St.
Belfast
BT2 8BS
Telephone: 028 90553979**

Email: Andrew.hawthorne@hscni.net

Thank you very much for your response

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

NAME (if wishing to provide)

ADDRESS

(if wishing to provide)

TELEPHONE:

(if wishing to provide)

EMAIL

(if wishing to provide)

Text Phone:

Please select one:

I am responding from an organisation

I am responding on behalf of myself as a parent

I am responding on behalf of myself as a child or young person

I am responding on behalf of a group of children / young people