

Appendix 2

A simple guide to Youth Support

There are 9 key elements which the government wants local authorities and their partners to develop and deliver in an integrated way, to provide support, guidance and opportunities to and for young people.

In no particular order, these are:

1. Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS)
2. Targeted Youth Support (TYS)
3. Reduction of those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
4. Information, Advice and Guidance
5. 14-19 Diplomas
6. Positive Activities
7. Volunteering
8. Youth engagement, participation and empowerment
9. Workforce development

Each of these is linked with several or all others. Each element's success depends on the success of other elements and none should be developed in isolation.

As examples:

- 14-19 changes will require a different approach to IAG, development of the workforce, and will contribute to a reduction in NEET.
- Integrated Youth Support must include targeted work, needs effective IAG, needs young people to have a say in the services offered, will use Positive Activities and volunteering to engage and develop young people, and so on.

Each of these will also contribute to all indicators in the new Youth and Education Public Service Agreements (PSAs).

There are several other elements which can also be considered as important parts of youth support, eg Common Assessment Framework (CAF), extended services in schools, Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and Respect, so this list is not comprehensive.

A summary of these elements.

1 Integrated Youth Support (IYS)

This is the co-ordination and integration of all youth support activities to enable agencies to work together better, reduce duplication and avoid gaps in provision. To allow this to happen there must be more sharing of information and data, and a willingness from agencies to work together, and in some cases to commit resources. Targeted Youth Support is an important part of Integrated Youth Support.

Connexions Partnerships have been working to create integrated and targeted services and have much to offer to ensure effective delivery in each LA area. Connexions' funding will be routed through Local Area Agreements in all LA areas by April 2008 (it has already happened in some areas) and local people must decide how to utilise Connexions Personal Advisers and other Connexions' services. Where decisions have not been implemented, the local authority must have a plan.

Maintaining the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) is essential, and the government is keen that the Connexions' brand should be maintained.

2 Targeted Youth Support (TYS)

An essential part of Integrated Youth Support is the targeting of certain young people for a more intensive level of support, usually as a multi-agency approach. Targeting can be done by theme (eg drugs, teenage pregnancy), location such as deprived areas, or for other reasons like transition phases. Where, who and how targeting is done in any LA area is the decision of local partners. An important part of targeting is to seek the views of young people about what is needed.

Targeting is common practice for Connexions and other agencies, but LAs are being given extra support from Government Office and TDA to ensure they will embed YYS effectively as part of integrated youth support arrangements.

3 Reduction in NEETs

Also as part of IYSS, Children's Trusts are increasingly recognising NEETs as the responsibility of all agencies at all ages, and are writing strategies which reflect this.

4 Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

The Youth Matters Green Paper suggested that consortia of schools could apply to provide IAG, and DfES (now DCSF) recently published new Quality Standards for IAG. Impartiality is essential.

Good IAG has always been very important but the new 14-19 Diploma offer will require a different sort of guidance at different age points to that provided for the past 10 years.

5 14-19 Diplomas

Diplomas are being introduced to encourage more young people to stay in learning. These diplomas are being developed with employers and contain a greater practical element than purely academic qualifications, but should be equal in status. They will be delivered by consortia of schools and colleges so pupils will receive the necessary lessons. This means that there are logistical difficulties to be overcome in moving pupils between schools.

Employers will be involved to deliver a work based element. Local authorities must ensure that the environment is appropriate to enable Diplomas to develop.

Diplomas are a very different approach and some of the issues to be tackled are:

- Working out how to deliver the curriculum and the practical and applied options;
- Developing strong partnerships;
- Transport;
- Sharing information;
- Workforce development (teachers and admin);
- IAG and motivating young people;
- Employer engagement.

Five Diplomas will be available in certain areas from September 2008; 14 diplomas will be available everywhere by 2013.

6 Positive Activities

The Education and Inspection Act 2007 explains the duty on local authorities to provide opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities such as sport and art. They must also publicise what is available.

Positive activities are important to engage and develop young people. Youth Services are a main organiser and deliverer, but positive activities are available through many organisations.

7 Volunteering

The government sees volunteering as an important opportunity to develop and engage young people. It has set up a national volunteering agency called V which sets quality standards and has responsibility for Millennium Volunteers. This is run by Cabinet Office. Many volunteering opportunities exist through Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Princes' Trust and others.

8 Youth Engagement, Participation and Empowerment

In March 2005, the first Children's Commissioner for England was appointed, to give children and young people a voice in government and in public life. The Commissioner pays particular attention to gathering and putting forward the views of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and promotes their involvement in the work of organisations whose decisions and actions affect them

The Government has stated its commitment to involving young people and their parents in the planning and design of services, and expects each LA area to have processes in place to do this. There is also a desire to engage more young people in democratic processes.

Youth Opportunities and Youth Capital Funds are examples of significant amounts of money (£6.4m in the West Midlands) which put young people at the centre of the process as applicants, decision makers and participants, with no adult interference. The only rule is that the funds must be used to achieve one or more of the Every Child Matters outcomes.

9 Workforce Development

With all these changes, it is essential that the workforce is developed, and more good quality people are attracted in. An aim is to create a flexible workforce and breakdown language barriers through greater common training and development for different disciplines. The Children's Workforce Development Council has been created as the Sector Skills Council.