

NORTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

20 JULY 2009

Integrated Youth Support Update July 2009.

As IYS enters its second year it has been useful to reflect on the developments over the last 12 months and to reflect on the learning. In some areas of work there were significant challenges, in others progress has been slow but productive and in others there have been positive outcomes. The following is a summary of some of these.

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).

Feedback from schools and colleges on delivery of IAG and Careers, Education and Guidance by our contracted provider igen is currently being collated and evaluated. Initial feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the service although there are concerns over the confusion regarding the changes from one provider to another and that the Connexions brand becoming less prominent.

The Connexions team working out of the IYS hubs carried a number of vacancies for much of the year and this impacted on all aspects of work including tracking young people.

It was unfortunate that despite a huge effort from all staff we did not meet our Local Area Agreement (LAA) target for NEET and those young people that were recorded as 'not known' remained high. A multi-agency group was formed to address this and a detailed action plan was produced. The implementation of this plan combined with having a fully staffed workforce has resulted in excellent progress. At the end of June NEET was 4.1% and the not knowns were 1.5%.

The provision of impartial IAG is gaining in importance with its inclusion in the 14-19 reforms and in particular its relevance in helping young people and their families to make informed choices about their learning options. As we move towards all young people remaining in learning until they are 18 years old this requirement will become more pertinent.

The Connexions vacancy service 'Get Connected Now' has been established with Connexions teams working with employers to source and match job vacancies. The website www.getconnectednow.co.uk links to many other websites that are relevant to careers, education, training and work.

An IAG strategy group has been formed with representatives from different service areas in CYPS, other partners and providers. A strategy has been produced and an action plan will be established to identify the key areas for development to ensure that the Local Authority and the Children's Trust can evidence the application of good quality IAG.

For the future...

- To review the national IAG strategy (due for release in Autumn 2009) and ensure that North Yorkshire has a structure and mechanisms in place to implement it.
- To allocate IAG services in schools and colleges based on a formula linked to cohort, NEETs, attainment levels and SEN.
- To engage with the 14-19 consortia in allocating additional IAG provision to support priorities as defined within the 14-19 plans.
- Refresh the Connexions brand so partners and young people recognise it as a point of contact for IAG.
- Ensure that there is access to appropriate IAG for young offenders and young people with LDD in the IYS hubs.

Targeted Youth Support (TYS)

TYS is work in progress. It was unlikely that the implementation of a reform programme that was aimed at providing early identification and intervention for our vulnerable young people would be without its teething problems. That was one of the reasons why there was no high profile publicity for the referral process – instead we chose to implement it through localities and learn from the process.

This has been beneficial as it has enabled us to reflect on the learning and to modify the referral process to best meet the requirements of the young people and practitioners. Referrals are now being received through the IYS hubs and young people are being supported by TYS practitioners.

For the future...

- To ensure that TYS is linked to the developments with schools related to the management of behaviour and inclusion including the Pupil Referral Service.
- Increase publicity about TYS.
- Seek further involvement from partners in delivering TYS to include the involvement of different staff in the TYS practitioner network.

Youth Crime Prevention.

The prevention arm of the Youth Justice Service (formerly the YOT) is now managed by IYS. Resources to support this work increased as a result of additional funding being made available from the CYPS. The teams are working as part of TYS to support those young people on the edge of crime or at risk of offending and their contribution to the development of such initiatives as the restorative justice programme (see below) has been important.

IYS have been working closely with the police and colleagues from the YJS and Children's Social Care in establishing and implementing a restorative justice programme. This is aimed at reducing the numbers of young people that are criminalised and provides Police Officers with alternative options for dealing with low levels of crime or anti-social behaviour. The programme started in Scarborough and it is being rolled out across the County. Early indications suggest that this initiative is having a positive impact on what have previously been high numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system.

First time entrants are described as the offenders per 100,000 of the population. North Yorkshire has been set a target of 1500 per 100,000 by 2011 and recent reports indicate that we are already exceeding this. This does not mean that we can become complacent as there will be much to do to improve the prevention activity and to maintain the progress that has already been achieved.

For the future...

- Refresh the youth crime prevention strategy to reflect changes in national and local policies.
- Incorporate TYS referral into the exit planning for young people from the YJS with the aim of reducing re-offending.

Teenage Pregnancy.

Identifying teenage pregnancy rates is frustrating as it relies on national data that is usually 1-2 years old. Despite many efforts to acquire real-time data on live births to teenagers we still do not have a reliable system for gathering this information and using it to inform plans. The most recent data indicates a slight rise in the pregnancy rates with some areas having a greater increase than others, in particular in Richmondshire and Selby.

There is a county teenage pregnancy strategy which identifies activity to prevent pregnancies but also to improve the sexual health of young people and to provide support to young parents including education and support to reduce second pregnancies.

The success of this aspect of IYS's work is reliant on a close working relationship with the commissioners in the PCT to ensure that the right level of service is being commissioned, with the providers to ensure that we work in partnership and co-ordinate activity to avoid duplication of support and with other colleagues especially those working in Children's Centres.

For the future...

- Continue to develop joint work with the Children's Centres including the support provided to young parents.
- Introduce health drop-ins at the IYS hubs and evaluate to assess whether they are being used and valued by young people.
- Work with commissioners to define the level of sexual health services required for young people in schools and community settings including that available to the 16-18 year olds.

Substance Misuse.

The provision of substance misuse services (including alcohol and illegal drugs) for young people requiring intensive and specialised support is closely monitored by the National Treatment Agency on behalf of the DCSF. This includes the requirement for each Local Authority to produce an annual needs assessment and Specialist Treatment Plan.

In North Yorkshire we have incorporated the intensive support and treatment provision into a broader Young People's Substance Misuse Strategy which also addresses the needs of young people in the universal settings and at the early intervention stages. Most of the work undertaken at the universal level is covered by schools and youth service provision and relates to the awareness raising, education and signposting to sources of information and advice.

For some young people their substance use (in North Yorkshire this is predominantly alcohol and cannabis) may be starting to have a negative impact on daily activities and at this stage they require more targeted interventions and support to minimise harm. This support is often provided by trusted adults in the universal settings as mentioned above or by practitioners who are working as the young person's lead professional /key worker, for example through TYS.

In partnership with Teenage Pregnancy there have been 4 IYS Advisers (Risky Behaviours) appointed to work with schools in communities where there are higher levels of risk taking behaviours resulting in teenage pregnancies or substance misuse issues. These posts are being managed by the Consultant (Risky Behaviours) in the Quality & Improvement service area in the CYPS. The aim is to establish a relationship with a couple of schools to support the formal and informal education that is available to young people.

For the future...

- Further research in Catterick/Colburn where there is anecdotal evidence to suggest an increase in substance misuse problems which is putting pressure on the existing service providers.
- Training of front line staff to enable them to effectively support young people at the targeted level of need.
- Evaluate whether the use of the IYS Advisers has been successful in supporting schools in their policy development and provision of IAG on risk taking behaviours.

Participation

To demonstrate that IYS is able to 'practice what it preaches' it provides training and work opportunities for young people. IYS employs six Young People's Development Workers to work in each hub area. The Young People's Development Workers not only support the involvement of young people in IYS but

contribute to meeting other priorities set within the Children and Young People's Plan for engaging with young people.

Along with other young people they have developed a hub assessment tool which has been used in to assess the level of satisfaction with the services being provided through the hubs including the provision of IAG. Results revealed that young people are generally happy with the services but the survey has helped to identify areas for improvement. These will be included in individual hub development plans.

IYS contributes to the wider North Yorkshire Voice, Influence and Participation (VIP) strategy group but to ensure that there is a consistent approach to participation the YPDW have contributed to the establishment of an IYS Participation Strategy.

Training related to the 'Effective Engagement of Children and Young People in Service Delivery' is being delivered to practitioners across the county. The YPDWs have devised the training and are delivering it in partnership with other members of the VIP group.

For the future...

- Appointment and induction of 6 new YPDW to commence in post in September.
- Increase work and training opportunities through the appointment of 4 Apprentices.

For further information on any of the items above or for copies of the following:

- NEET strategy
- Information, Advice and Guidance strategy
- County Teenage Pregnancy Strategy
- Young People's Substance Misuse Strategy
- Crime Prevention Strategy
- IYS Participation Strategy

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