

# Getting a Life

## Newsletter



Information for everyone working with and for disabled young people in transition from childhood to adulthood.

**Issue 9**

**July 2007**

Ever since the first issue of this newsletter was written in December 2004 there have been major policy developments to write about in every subsequent issue. And in this issue we write about possibly the biggest yet – the treasury’s spending review report, *Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families*. On page two you can read what the report says about transition. We think this is a really exciting and important report that has the potential to significantly improve the experience of transition for disabled young people.

The Council for Disabled Children, along with the Transition Information Network, have now completed all nine of the regional transition seminars that we wrote about in the last issue of GAL. On page four we have included a short piece about these seminars, including emerging findings.

As usual we have also included policy updates, and information about new publications, conferences and training.

Have a good summer.

All the best.

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## Aiming High for Disabled Children: better support for families

### 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review

*Aiming High for Disabled Children*, published in May this year, commits government to providing significant additional resources - £340 million – over the next three years (2008-11). This money should start to transform services across the country. The money is backed by a package of system reform measures, including:

- A new national indicator on disabled children within the local government performance management framework
- A 'core offer' for families with disabled children
- Work to improve data collection at a local and national level

Chapter one of the report sets the context for the review, which was part of a wider review of children and young people's services announced in Budget 2006. It sets out the policy initiatives the government has already put in place, but highlights that outcomes for disabled children are poor and that significant challenges remain. These include a lack of data, a focus on high cost crisis interventions and problems with co-ordination across agencies. The review addresses these challenges in the three themed chapters that follow – empowerment, responsiveness and service quality and capacity.

Chapter three, Responsive Services and Timely Support, sets out further system reform measures, including £19 million to develop a Transition Support Programme to help local authorities improve services for disabled young people in transition to adulthood, building on the success of Early Support.

The report states “transition planning and transition services need to be seen as a way to enable and support disabled young people to move towards and onto a new stage of life rather than from one service to another. Much good practice exists – but it needs to be pulled together and made consistent.”

“The Government will therefore initiate and develop a Transition Support Programme, underpinned by £19m of investment over the CSR, to be piloted initially and then rolled out across the country. This model should be based on the same principles as the early support programme, including transparency, coordination and support for parents, children and professionals. It should be based on the principle of enabling disabled young people to have choice and control over the support needed in their daily lives, and should be embedded as a new model of working for the years ahead.”

“This Transition Support Programme should include:

- a young person's information pack, including information on further education, training opportunities and work options;
- access to an advisor or key worker and advocacy and support;
- consolidation of the person centred planning process from age 14, with increased information for professionals, and coordinated and timely assessments based on the young person's aspirations, at key points to assist in the transition to adulthood, including signposting to future appropriate provision; and
- joint team working across agencies and with adult services to encourage a holistic approach, and choice and control for young people.”

To keep informed about developments around Aiming high visit [www.ncb.org.uk/cdc](http://www.ncb.org.uk/cdc), [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk) and [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk).

## Machinery of Government changes

### New departments

Three new departments were set up by the Prime Minister on 28 June 2007. They replace the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk>) is responsible for improving the focus on all aspects of policy affecting children and young people. It takes on pre-19 education policy responsibilities from DfES. Ed Balls is Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (<http://www.dius.gov.uk>) brings together functions from the former Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), including responsibilities for science and innovation, with further and higher education and skills, previously part of DfES. John Denham is the first Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (<http://www.dberr.gov.uk>) brings together functions from DTI, including responsibilities for productivity, business relations, energy, competition and consumers, with the Better Regulation Executive, previously part of the Cabinet Office. It leads on making sustainable improvements in the economic performance of the regions. John Hutton is the Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

### Ministerial Team Responsibilities:

Minister of State for Schools and Learners – Jim Knight.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners – Andrew Adonis.

Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families – Beverley Hughes.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children, Young People and Families – Kevin Brennan.

Follow the link to find out more detail:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/whoswho/ministersresp.shtml>

### News Item from Every Disabled Child Matters campaign website on the 11 July 2007

In his first statement to the House of Commons yesterday, the **Rt Hon Ed Balls MP**, the new Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, repeated his commitment that his department would be 'the Every Disabled Child Matters department'. This followed a number of questions and comments from backbench MPs relating to disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEN) in response to the statement.

The Secretary of State responded to a question by **Michael Gove**, Conservative MP for Surrey Heath and the new Shadow Children's Secretary about assessment and provision of services for children with SEN by reassuring him: 'Our Department is not only the 'every child matters' Department, but the 'every disabled child matters' Department'. He stated that **Lord Adonis**, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners would meet him to discuss the issue he raised further.

Read the full story here:

[http://www.edcm.org.uk/Page.asp?originx\\_9633np\\_27254664360010f57c\\_20077113328g](http://www.edcm.org.uk/Page.asp?originx_9633np_27254664360010f57c_20077113328g)

Or: <http://snipurl.com/1o5q9>

## Regional Transition Seminars

In the past six months, TIN, with the Council for Disabled Children, has run nine regional seminars on transition. The aim of the seminars was to identify key regional leads to work in partnership and bring together professionals from social care, health and education, working in transition services to:

- Highlight cross government commitments to high quality, young people centred services on transition.
- Raise awareness of regional support, available networks and expertise.
- Showcase local good practice, including the development of person centred transition reviews in each region.
- Ensure the development of effective multi agency transition protocols.
- Embed transition practice at a regional level and look at how regional structures can support developments in transition services.

Initial findings from the seminars:

There are a range of successes that were demonstrated in many areas across the country.

- Many areas have developed multi agency transition protocols and these are starting to improve transition for young people and their families.
- Transition workers, with various different titles and based in any of the agencies, are helping to coordinate services in many areas.
- In many areas multi agency transition teams have been, or are currently being created. The make-up of the teams varies and they are either co-located or virtual.
- Person centred transition reviews are starting to have a real impact in most areas, with parents and young people reporting that they feel more involved in the transition planning process.
- Some areas have developed data sharing protocols that are improving their planning of services.
- Many areas are producing information for parents and young people in a range of formats. In many areas advocacy, in the form of groups attended by young people or an advocacy worker are enabling young people to have their say throughout transition. Advocacy is also being recognised as essential in helping young people to express their views when they differ from their parents and professionals.

There are also other examples of good practice that are making a big difference to young people in some areas. These include initiatives such as:

- Named youth officers linking in to transition team to help to include young people in youth/play and leisure commissioning facilities.
- Travel training for young people to help them increase independence and access the local community.
- Regular transition workshops with professionals, young people and families.
- Young people's involvement in quality checking.
- Positive risk taking policy – based on wide consultation.
- Good practice by health, such as a worker for young people who meet Continuing Care criteria, funded by health (PCT) developing individual care packages and supports the move into adult services.
- Developing independence training as part of the 'extended day curriculum' linked to transition.

A full report with further information and learning from these seminars will be posted on the TIN website. [www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk](http://www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk)

## Policy update

### **Care Matters: Time for Change**

The Care Matters: Time for Change White Paper sets out the steps the Department will take, together with local delivery partners, to improve outcomes for children and young people in care. The white paper makes it clear that “Care is not just for children who stay for a long time. Most children return home from care within a year. Care can also help some families of children with a disability, who may need a ‘short-term break’.” The white paper also recognizes that: “Some disabled children living in education or health settings can be quite vulnerable. We need to know that all children in these settings are safe”.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/timeforchange/>

### **NSF Development Initiatives**

Linda Massie has been appointed as the NSF Development Initiatives Project Manager. 18 projects have been approved for a total of £2.5million funding from the CAMHS Grant 2005-2007. The projects have been set up to improve mental health services to children and adolescents and focus on key areas of the Children’s NSF:

- Services for 16/17 year-olds
- Services for young people with complex needs (including conduct disorder)
- Services for children and young people with learning disabilities
- Mental health promotion and early intervention
- Culturally competent services for black and minority ethnic families and asylum seekers

The role of the Project Manager is to monitor progress of the projects, identify key learning points including cross-cutting issues, analyse the formal project evaluations and disseminate findings through a summation report and a national conference and any other relevant method.

It is hoped that the most successful projects will continue into mainstream services and the learning can be used to influence policy development and implementation. Linda can be contacted at [linda.massie@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:linda.massie@dh.gsi.gov.uk).

### **Making It Better: For Children and Young People**

Clinical case for change Report by Sheila Shribman, National Clinical Director for Children, Young People and Maternity Services

Children, young people and their parents need to be fully engaged in making informed choices about their care and in planning of services. Those with long term conditions in particular benefit from having their hospitalisations minimised where possible and their support in the home or community enhanced by the reorganisation of service delivery.

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_065036](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_065036)

Or: [http://snipr.com/making\\_it\\_better](http://snipr.com/making_it_better)

### **You’re Welcome quality criteria: Making health services young people friendly**

You’re Welcome Quality Criteria set out principles that will help health services (incl. non-NHS provision) become young people friendly. It covers areas to be considered by commissioners and providers of health services. Content is based on examples of effective local practice.

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT\\_ID=4121562&chk=NqnrFt](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4121562&chk=NqnrFt)

## **National Assembly for Wales Equality Committee to discuss Government response to review on services for young disabled people March 2007**

The National Assembly for Wales has reported that its Equality Committee is to hold an extra meeting on March 8th, 2007 to discuss the Welsh Assembly Government's response to its review of services for young disabled people - "Why is it that disabled young people are always left until last?" Gwenda Thomas AM, Chair of the Committee, said she hoped review would encourage other policy and decision-makers in the future to see the benefit of working directly and appropriately in partnership with young people when developing policies and delivering services.

[www.assemblywales.org/newhome/new-news-second-assembly.htm?act=dis&id=43982&ds=4/2007](http://www.assemblywales.org/newhome/new-news-second-assembly.htm?act=dis&id=43982&ds=4/2007) Or: <http://snipr.com/equalitycom>

## **Single inspectorate for children and learners launched**

1 April saw the launch of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills ('the new Ofsted'). Established by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and taking on functions of other inspectorates such as the Commission for Social Care Inspection and HM Inspectorate of Court Administration, the new Ofsted's responsibilities include:

- the registration and inspection of arrangements for the social care and support of children and young people;
- the inspection of all maintained and some independent schools.
- Joint Area Reviews and Annual Performance Assessments of local authorities' children's services
- the inspection of teacher training; and
- the inspection of further education, all publicly-funded adult education and training and some privately-funded training provision.

The post of the Children's Rights Director (CRD) will transfer from the Commission for Social Care Inspection to Ofsted. A new inspectorate has published its Strategic Plan for 2007-2010

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070001](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070001)

## **New centres for excellence in FE teacher training (May 2007)**

New networks of training centres for further education teachers, tutors and trainers, with a mission to improve the quality of FE teacher training, have been announced by Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education Bill Rammell. The networks or Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) will be fully operational across the country by this September. They will provide training, professional development and self improvement programmes for all colleges and training providers.

[www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2007\\_0073](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0073) Or: [http://snipr.com/ex\\_centres](http://snipr.com/ex_centres)

## **More proportionate inspections for FE colleges**

From September 2007, further education colleges will be subject to an inspection system that is even more proportionate to risk.

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/portal/site/Internet/menuitem.75d4ee5e2788f064728a0d8308c08a0c/?vgnextoid=eae12eacbd252110VgnVCM1000003507640aRCRD](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/portal/site/Internet/menuitem.75d4ee5e2788f064728a0d8308c08a0c/?vgnextoid=eae12eacbd252110VgnVCM1000003507640aRCRD)

Or: [http://snipr.com/inspect\\_fe](http://snipr.com/inspect_fe)

## **Education – young people in custody**

House of Lords debate initiated by Baroness Massey of Darwin. She said "The Youth Justice Board reports that around 150,000 children and young people under the age of 18 enter the youth justice system each year, and about 70,000 of those are of compulsory school age. About half are underachievers, a third need help with literacy and numeracy, and 15 per cent have a special educational needs statement, in comparison to 3 per cent of the general population. Some 60 per cent have difficulties with communication, 83 per cent of boys had

been excluded from school and 41 per cent were aged 14 or under when they were last in school. That set of facts presents a challenge for any system of education, and I am aware that there are dedicated people who are attempting to better the lot of young people in custody, but those damaged youngsters need intensive efforts and urgent help”.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200607/ldhansrd/text/70508-0012.htm#07050836000001>

### **Our Health, Our Care, Our Say – One Year On: Research Report**

This is a report of an event that took place on 27 March 2007, when 90 people met Patricia Hewitt, Secretary of State for Health, to hear what has been happening across health and social care since the publication, in January 2006, of the white paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services'. The NHS Teen Life-check pilot in particular was singled out for praise.

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[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_074521](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_074521)

Or: [http://snipr.com/our\\_health](http://snipr.com/our_health)

### **Revised Code of Practice for Providers of Post-16 Education and Related Services**

Full participation in society for disabled people can be encouraged by providing effective ways of obtaining higher and further qualifications. The revised Code of Practice, concerning new duties upon providers of post-16 education and related services which came into force on 1 September 2006, is now available. You can download a free copy of the Code from the DRC website at

[www.drc-gb.org/the\\_law/legislation\\_codes\\_regulation/codes\\_of\\_practice.aspx](http://www.drc-gb.org/the_law/legislation_codes_regulation/codes_of_practice.aspx)

Or: [http://snipr.com/c\\_o\\_pp16](http://snipr.com/c_o_pp16)

### **The Disability Agenda**

The Agenda is run by the Disability Rights Commission and sets out what they believe are the chief public policy challenges for the coming decade and the action required to meet them. The latest live discussion on The Agenda was with Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State for the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills. This is your opportunity to ask him about Government policy around post-16 education and training and, in particular, how we can best ensure that disabled people can access the education, training and other opportunities which will enable them to develop the skills necessary for employment and life as active citizens. Read the discussion here: <http://www.disabilityagenda.org/>

**Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Going Forward – Implementing the vision of Through Inclusion to Excellence.** The national strategy for LSC funded provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the FE system: 2006/07 to 2009/10  
Published in October 2006. Download a copy of the report here:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/publications/recommended/Learning-for-Living-and-Work.htm>

Or: <http://snipurl.com/1o5u7>

Link to your regional LSC website to read a copy of the regional implementation plan for Learning for Living and Work. <http://www.lsc.gov.uk>

## Get out and GOJO over the summer!

This summer the Disability Rights Commission launched GOJO, a new campaign to help young people get the best out of public transport and be more independent.

The campaign is encouraging young disabled people across the country to 'Get out and GOJO' over the summer armed with a series of accessible event and listings guides produced by the Disability Rights Commission.



The event guides, which feature special offers, access information, detailed listings and interviews, are being distributed as part of GOJO's campaign to encourage young disabled people to use public transport to get out and about over the summer.

The new regional guides are packed with ideas and suggestions of what to do and have free and discounted ticket offers - including free bus travel passes from NCT and First South Yorkshire, discounted cinema tickets from Vue and restaurant discounts from Frankie & Bennys.

The guides can also be found on the GOJO website, [www.mygojo.co.uk](http://www.mygojo.co.uk), which is full of hints and tips on how to make a journey, competitions, new video clips from Abnormally Funny People and a 'beat yourself against the clock' game. The website has already received more than 250,000 hits since its launch in May.

DRC Chairman Sir Bert Massie said: 'GOJO is all about increasing the confidence of young disabled people to use buses, trams and trains. Our event guides have some really good deals and suggestions on how to get out and about this summer. We hope they'll inspire young people to take control and be more independent.'

The event guides feature national listings information as well as regional information for the cities and wider regions of Manchester, Nottingham, Exeter, Newcastle and Sheffield.

The campaign follows changes to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) introduced in December 2006, which gave disabled people the right, for the first time, to fair treatment on public transport. It also comes as more than £600million has been spent by transport providers to make vehicles more accessible to disabled people.

GOJO launched in May with stand-up comedy gigs on buses. Video clips featuring the gigs by Abnormally Funny People have received nearly 1,500 viewings on video site You Tube [www.youtube.com/gojovids](http://www.youtube.com/gojovids)

<http://www.mygojo.co.uk>

### **BLOGS**

**(Short for weblog – a weblog is a journal (or newsletter) that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption)**

Two blogs we would like to recommend:

#### **Joshua Muggleton**

Joshua is a student. His blog is all about his life with Asperger's Syndrome.

<http://jmuggleton.blogspot.com/>

#### **Not a barrel of laughs: a transition diary, of sorts**

Written by Honeysuckle, offering a parent's eye-view of the transition process

<http://notabarrel.blogspot.com>

#### **Simon Stevens**

Simon Stevens is chief executive of Enable Enterprises, which he started in 1998. Having cerebral palsy, Simon has always defied conventions...

<http://www.simonstevens.com/blog>

**JUSTDIFFERENT** was started in 2006 to make a positive difference to the lives of disabled and non-disabled people. JustDifferent provide innovative, exciting and educational workshops, seminars, training programmes and presentations on disability and difference. All their training is created and led by disabled young adults.

<http://justdifferent.org/>

#### **Media Box**

Mediabox offers three different types of grants ranging from £100 to £80,000 to create and distribute youth-led media projects that express young people's ideas and/or views in a creative way, using their preferred media platform.

[www.mediabox.co.uk](http://www.mediabox.co.uk)

**make school make sense for me** children and young people with autism speak out

Add a case study example

First published 2006 by The National Autistic Society

393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG

[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

#### **New Flickr Group - Disability Arts Around the Globe**

We've just set up a group at Flickr to share photographs of everything to do with disability & the arts from anywhere in the world. All we need is YOUR input!

Festivals, gigs, clubs, performances, artwork... it's up to you really. Hopefully we'll also get some discussions going

<http://flickr.com/groups/ndaf/>



The Transition Pathway is a pack of accessible guidance and tools which can be used by anyone with an interest in supporting young people (age 13 – 25) in the transition to adult life. It provides a firm foundation to person-centred transition planning.

It consists of four key tools which all link together:

- The Transition Pathway - Guidance and tools
- The Big Picture - Guide for young people
- “My Life, My Future” -Template for individual transition planning workbooks
- CD - containing all tools and templates

It is written in an easy to read and visual format, following a 5 stage transition process:

- Getting ready
- Making the transition plan
- Planning ahead
- Leaving school
- Moving on

The Transition Pathway pack was runner-up in the 2006 Books for Teaching and Learning Award, and is being widely used to support person-centred transition planning.

For more information, take a look at the website: [www.transitionpathway.co.uk](http://www.transitionpathway.co.uk)

or email Chris Sholl and Fran Dancyger at: [transitionpathwaypartnership@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:transitionpathwaypartnership@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Assistive Technology (AT)**

AT is any product or service designed to enable independence for disabled people. MERU provides custom-made items that are not available commercially. MERU design, develop and manufacture a huge range of different tailor-made items for their young clients. These include special seating, ergonomic desks, learning and leisure toys and mobility aids. They are also sometimes able to adapt commercially obtained items to make them suitable for a particular child or young person to use.

Example: Stacey

Stacey uses a communication aid, which needs to be positioned just above her lap for her to be able to use it comfortably. Sometimes, though, it gets in the way of other activities, such as eating or writing, and she previously had to rely on other people to move it for her. MERU created a specialised metal bracket that is attached to Stacey's wheelchair. This holds the communication aid directly in front of her, and now she can pull it towards her or push it away at will. It also features a detachable hinge, so the communicator can be completely removed when required.

[www.meru.org.uk/](http://www.meru.org.uk/)

## Conferences, seminars and training

If you would like to list event here please email Lucia Winters with details. Contact information on page one.

### **Benefits and support for disabled students in higher education.**

One-day courses in Manchester (25th September) and Leeds (20th November)

One of the main concerns for people who claim incapacity and disability benefits, is how their benefits will be affected.

This course is aimed at those who advise students in higher education, this one-day introductory course provides an overview of the benefits, loans and grants available to disabled students.

It provides practical ways to help students protect their benefit rights and maximise their entitlement.

The course includes:

- The benefit barriers to accessing higher education
- Disability Living Allowance and how it is affected by study
- Incapacity Benefit and what to do if it's reviewed
- How loans and grants affect income support and housing benefit
- Students and tax credits

Please contact the Disability Alliance for further information and a booking form.

[member.da@dial.pipex.com](mailto:member.da@dial.pipex.com)

**Phone:** 020 7247 8776

### **TIN seminar: Staying safe and being heard**

24 October 2007 Bristol

A seminar about advocacy and safety for disabled young people in transition to adulthood.

TIN seminars are for young people, parents and professionals. Further details will be posted on the TIN website as soon as they have been agreed.

[www.transitioninfonet.org.uk](http://www.transitioninfonet.org.uk)

### **The Transition Care Pathway**

ACT, the national charity for children's palliative care, has developed a resource to guide and support young people, families and professionals through the transition maze and help services to better support young people to adjust to, prepare for, and move-on to adult services. The resource, *The Transition Care Pathway*, emphasises the importance of empowering young people to take control of their lives as they enter their teenage years, and calls for an early collaboration of paediatric and adult services to improve the transition process. Endorsed by the Department of Health and Royal College of Nursing, *The Transition Care Pathway*, was launched by Ivan Lewis, MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health in London on Tuesday, 17 April 2007, at ACT's national conference: *Transition: Onwards and Upwards*.

The ACT conference also launched a trailer for a new DVD resource - "*Talk about change*", made by young people living with life-limiting conditions, and developed by award-winning filmmakers, The Kosh, in partnership with ACT. "*Talk about change*" is funded by BBC Children in Need. "*Talk about change*" is designed to raise awareness of the challenges young people face as they approach transition and become young adults. Young people speak out about their hopes and fears as they begin their journey into independence and adulthood and talk openly about both the excitement and new challenges that lay ahead, as well as their frustrations and fears. You can download a trailer by visiting:

[www.talkaboutchange.co.uk](http://www.talkaboutchange.co.uk)

Download the transition pathway here: <http://www.act.org.uk/content/view/58/1/>

### **Transition report and good practice guide**

Dimensions UK, a voluntary provider of support for people with learning difficulties, launched their transitions report (for parents and professionals who want an excellent overview of transitions in the sector to date) and transitions good practice guide written specifically for parents in April. To read about the launch and download the report visit:

<http://www.dimensions-uk.org/page/86>

### **Autism and Me, Rory Hoy, DVD, Jessica Kingsley Publishers**

Only people with autism truly know what it's like to be autistic - and even then, every autistic individual is unique! This award-winning short film by Rory Hoy, an 18-year-old filmmaker with autism, provides a privileged glimpse into his autistic world, letting us take a journey through his everyday experience and see it through his eyes.

In easy, accessible terms, Rory explains what having autism means for everyday functioning: what it's like, for instance, not to have the natural inclination to respond to someone who calls you by your name, or someone who waves at you; what it's like to take someone literally when actually they have used a figure of speech. He describes the confusion caused by high noise levels, crowded environments and even by his own emotions and physical sensations, as well as the security and comfort found in routines, forward planning and having thoughtful, calm and loving people around him.

This engaging, insightful and light-hearted film will be invaluable to people with autism, their friends and family, and to professionals working with them. A booklet explaining the film, also compiled by the author, accompanies the DVD.

<http://www.jkp.com/catalogue/book.php/isbn/9781843105466>

### **Mental health and emotional well-being of students in further education**

The Thomas Coram Research Unit has published the results of an exploratory study, funded by the Department of Health, looking at whether and in what ways Further Education colleges in England might best address the mental health needs of their students. The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services identified gaps in services for 16 and 17 year-olds. This study was carried out in recognition that the time of leaving school and entering further or higher education is likely to be particularly stressful.

Research questions included:

- What links have colleges developed with other agencies to assist with service provision for students who experience mental health difficulties?
- Are specialist services available to support students with learning disabilities and mental health problems?
- How can mental health promotion and service provision form part of a broader Healthy College Programme?
- Are professional development activities available for college staff to help them support students' mental health and emotional well-being?

The report of the study can be downloaded at

<http://www.ioe.ac.uk/tcru/Mental%20Health%20in%20FE.pdf>

### **Review of the Independent Living Funds**

**Melanie Henwood and Bob Hudson**

The Independent Living Funds (ILFs) provide financial support for severely disabled people to enable them to live independently in their own homes. The DWP commissioned this review of the role and contribution of the ILFs. The report makes 68 recommendations, including improving the workings of the funds and extending their scope.

Published 15 March 2007

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2007/independentliving/rilf-full.pdf>

### **Raising the achievements of children and young people with specific speech and language difficulties and other special educational needs through school to work and college**

Julie Dockrell and others for the DfES, March 2007

This report focuses on a cohort of young people with a history of specific speech and language difficulties (SSLD) as they finished Year 11 of compulsory education and moved into the first year of post-16 education, training and work. It is informed by previous phases of work with these young people (from Years 3 to 10) and provides a longitudinal study which examines developmental trajectories and identifies predictive factors over time.

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectid=14293&resultspage=1> Or: [http://snipr.com/raise\\_ach](http://snipr.com/raise_ach)

### **Growing into the role**

Go Gardeners is leading the way when it comes to helping young people with learning disabilities. Employees of Go Gardeners tend the green spaces of Ravenswood Village, a sprawling community of self-contained houses and flats for people with learning disabilities in 120 acres of verdant Berkshire. And the social enterprise company, which employs nine young men and women with learning difficulties, is providing a profitable solution to a growing problem that has massive social and economic implications. Read the full article, published in the Guardian on the 25 April.

<http://society.guardian.co.uk/socialcare/story/0,,2064500,00.html>

## **Young People Now**

Report on response to government consultation on the standards and information that the government provides for 11 to 19 year olds. Young people now have identified criticisms from four national guidance organisations during the government's consultation about their provision for young people that took place in March 2007. The National of Connexions Partners (NACP) has said that government guidance for 11 to 19 year olds is "seriously flawed and not fit for purpose". The institute of Career Guidance (ICG) criticised the "narrow understanding of diversity". Youth Access and Careers England also expressed concern over the amount of work that still needs to be done around informing young people appropriately. Youth Access director Barbara Rayment has said that "The standards have prioritised careers and learning, leaving the provision of advice and guidance on areas it defines as 'life issues' to a continuing postcode lottery".

[http://www.ypnmagazine.co.uk/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=full\\_news&ID=13544](http://www.ypnmagazine.co.uk/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=full_news&ID=13544)

Or: [http://snipr.com/y\\_p\\_n](http://snipr.com/y_p_n)

## **Narrowing the gap: Inspection of children's services**

This Ofsted report, published in April, consistently identifies disabled children as a group receiving 'weaker' services. They particularly focus on poor services at transition, lack of coordination of services, and lack of consultation opportunities for disabled children.

Full report at:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070041>

# **Council for Disabled Children**

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**The Council cannot take responsibility for any information in the publications and websites that are listed in this newsletter.**

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