

Getting a Life

E-Newsletter



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

Issue 17, 2010

Welcome to the latest issue of *Getting a Life*, produced by the Transition Information Network (TIN). As usual this issue includes policy updates from the government and a list of consultations, news, resources and events.

In this issue we include an update about Year 3 of the government's Transition Support Programme, which aims to raise the standards of transition provision for disabled young people and is part of the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme. The National Transition Support Team (NTST), based at the Council for Disabled Children along with TIN, is working with the National Strategies and the Child Health and Maternity Partnership to coordinate the delivery of the programme. When the programme was launched in 2008, the government set a target that by 2011 all local areas will have a transition process in place which meets minimum standards or beyond. As a result of the work so far, currently 143 local areas out of 152 are meeting minimum standards and some are going beyond the standards to produce innovative work that transforms the lives of disabled young people. You can read more about these developments on page 2.

As always, if you have any news, resources or examples of good practice that you would like to share, please do contact us.

Kind regards,

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Aiming High

- Transition Support Programme
 - Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better support for families
- Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities

Transition Support Programme

Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC), launched in May 2007, is the government's transformation programme for disabled children's services. AHDC is jointly run by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health. One of the issues identified in AHDC was that more work was needed to improve and co-ordinate services for disabled young people in transition to adult life. To address this, the government announced the Transition Support Programme, which would aim to raise the standards of transition in all local areas. The Council for Disabled Children and partners, including National Strategies and the Child Health and Maternity Partnership, are working as the National Transition Support Team (NTST) to support the delivery of the Transition Support Programme.

If you would like to receive updates, about the Transition Support Programme, email tsp@ncb.org.uk with 'TSP Updates' in the subject line.

For further information visit: <http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk>

Funding and support

Notice of funding and support for Year 3 of the Transition Support Programme was sent to all local areas in England on the 18 February 2010. Funding allocations for local areas can be found on the Every Child Matters website in the 'summary allocations 2008/11 SSEYCG and AHDC grant' document.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/research/publications/surestartpublications/1925/>

Year 3 Development Stages ('offers of support')

In Year 2 of the Transition Support Programme, local areas were provided with an 'offer of support'. For Year 3, all local areas will be viewed within a four stage development area model. This model will provide a further stage of development which represents excellent support at transition being provided. During Year 3 local areas will be supported to reach this stage of development going well beyond good practice and embedding sustainable, high quality services for young people at transition.

http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/TSP_Year3_Development_Stages.pdf

Key statistics from Year 2 Self Assessment Questionnaires

The second year of the programme saw a real improvement in the quality and level of support at transition across the country. Key statistics from the Year 2 Self Assessment Questionnaires (SAQ) and the Named Advisor support shows that:

- 143 local areas now meet minimum standards. This is an increase from 108 local areas meeting minimum standards in Year 2.
- In Year 2 44 local areas were not meeting minimum standards. This is reduced to 9 local areas in Year 3.
- 151 out of 152 Year 2 SAQs were returned.

- 99% of local areas have demonstrated improved family and young people engagement in the transition process.

Further analysis of the Self Assessment Questionnaires can be found in the Year 2 SAQ summary report.

http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/resources/self_assessment.aspx

Innovation and Outcomes Fund

As well as the main TSP funding, all local areas have the opportunity to apply for additional money through a new fund called the Innovation and Outcomes fund. This creates an opportunity for every local area to apply for up to £20,000 to undertake work above and beyond that set out in their Transition Development Plan.

http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/resources/innovation_outcomes_fund.aspx

New resources

NTST have launched three new resources: 'How to develop a transition protocol', 'How to involve disabled young people in Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities' and 'Taking Part: A guide for young disabled people aged 12 to 25' (an easy read guide for disabled young people about how they can participate in local youth services).

<http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/resources/toolkits.aspx>

Online discussion forum on transition

The NTST website includes an online discussion forum for people to discuss the Transition Support Programme and issues to do with transition. It is easy to register and add posts and is open to anyone with an interest in issues effecting disabled young people.

<http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/forum/>

Download the full update about Year 3 of the Transition Support Programme

http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/Year3_TSP_Update.pdf

Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better support for families

Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC), launched in May 2007, is the government's transformation programme for disabled children's services. AHDC is jointly run by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health.

If you would like to receive a monthly e-bulletin with all the latest AHDC news, please email the AHDC implementation team on ahdc.implementation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

For information and updates about AHDC:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/ahdc/AHDC/>

AHDC stakeholder event

The AHDC Stakeholder event, organised by DCSF and DH, took place on Tuesday 8 December. The event focused on the disabled children's services national indicator and the participation of parents, children and young people. More information and presentations from the day are available to download.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00630/>

(DCSF, 8 December 2009)

DCATCH funding £12.5 million

DCSF have announced that parents with disabled children will now get better support to help with childcare following a £12.5 million cash boost. The cash injection will fund the national roll out of the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare Programme (DCATCH). The 142 local authorities who were not part of the DCATCH pilots will each receive at least £59,000.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0003

(DCSF, 29 December 2009)

Individual budgets pilot - quarterly report

The DCSF have published the first *Individual budgets: Evaluation and challenge/support quarterly report* (November 2009) and a *DCSF individual budgets: Evaluation and challenge/support evaluation briefing note* that provides background information about the evaluation component of the research. For more information, go to the 'Individual Budgets' page.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/ahdc/individualbudgets/individualbudgets/>

Parent participation grants for 2010

Grants for parent forums in England working to improve services in their local area under Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) have now been confirmed for 2010. Together for Disabled Children (TDC), a partnership between Contact a Family and Serco to develop parent participation forums under AHDC, has announced that grants of £10,000 will be available in each local authority area for Phase 3 of the programme. They will shortly be publishing the application forms on the TDC website, along with a new set of criteria and guidance on how the grant can be used. **The closing date for applications is April 30th.**

<http://www.togetherfdc.org/Topics/PPFundingandGrants.aspx>

Short breaks consultation

DCSF have launched the *Consultation on Draft Regulations, and Associated Statutory Guidance, for Local Authorities to Provide Short Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children and Young People*.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/ahdc/shortbreaks/shortbreaks/>

(DCSF, 1 February 2010)

Year 2 disabled children's services national indicator

The disabled children's services national indicator results have been published. The national indicator is based on parental satisfaction of services provided to disabled children.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/ahdc/nationalindicator/nationalindicator/>

(DCSF, 15 December 2009)

Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities

Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities (AHYP) was launched in 2007 alongside Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC). AHYP sets out the Government's plans to help all young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to take part in enjoyable and purposeful activities in their free time. Although AHDC focuses on disabled children and young people, it is essential that all local developments around AHYP also consider and include disabled young people.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/Youth/aiminghigh/aiminghigh/>

New guidance for local authorities on publicising Positive Activities

DCSF Information and signposting project: Sharing the learning includes practical step-by-step guidance for local authorities on fulfilling their duty to secure access to, and publicise, positive leisure-time activities for young people.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/publications/sharingthelearning/>

(DCSF, December 2009)

Social-media toolkit published

DCSF have created a set of materials to help youth workers and youth-project managers communicate and collaborate with young people through social media and inspiring video content. For more information, see the Engaging through social media page.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00676/>

(DCSF, February 2010)

Youth guides on transition and positive activities

The National Transition Support Team has launched two new resources to support disabled young people to take part in AHYP developments in their local area. '*How to involve disabled young people in Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities*' and '*Taking Part: A guide for young disabled people aged 12 to 25*' (an easy read guide for disabled young people about how they can participate in local youth services).

<http://www.transitionssupportprogramme.org.uk/resources/toolkits.aspx>

Policy Update

News from the Department for Children, Schools and Families

Ed Balls statement on short breaks

All local authorities will be required to provide short breaks for parents and carers who look after a disabled child, under plans announced by Ed Balls and Diana Johnson. DCSF has launched a public consultation which, if agreed, will require all local authorities to provide short break services for parents who care for disabled children.

The consultation period will last until **26 April 2010**. Final guidance and regulations should be published in September 2010.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1688&external=no&menu=1>

A press release about the consultation can be found here: <http://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/ifi/DNWA-82JDEH>

(DCSF, 10 February 2010)

Home-educated children with SEN - Guidance letter to Local Authorities

Following the Badman review of Home Education, the DCSF has published a guidance letter for Local Authorities on their duties in meeting the special educational needs of home-educated children.

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=14700>

(DCSF, February 2010)

Lamb Enquiry Implementation Plan

This document sets out a range of measures that will be taken across government to improve parental confidence in the special educational needs system. This includes launch a new helpline for parent of children with SEN or disabilities and improving training for school staff and leadership

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/downloads/8623-DCSF-ParentalConfidence.pdf>

SEN and Disability: understanding local provision in prevalence, service provision and support

The aims of this study were to explore why there was variation in the way local authorities provided for special educational needs and whether and when this variation amounted to inequitable provision.

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/DownloadHandler.aspx?ProductId=DCSF-RR211&VariantID=Special+Educational+Needs+and+Disability%3a+Understanding+Local+Variation+in+Prevalence%2c+Service+Provision+and+Support+PDF&>

(DCSF, February 2010)

Support for All: the Families and Relationships Green Paper

This Green Paper sets out a wide range of measures to support all families as they bring up their children and help families cope with times of stress and difficulty. The proposals recognise that while all families need some help, there are families in our society with complex needs and others who require additional - and sometimes non-negotiable - support.

Proposals in the Green Paper include:

- extend the offer of key worker support to families with disabled children aged 0–19, starting with an initial period in 2010–11 to test out how best to provide this support, with a view to rolling this out more widely through a national programme;

- fund specialist relationship counselling services for families with disabled children and increase support for the Contact A Family helpline.

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/CM-7787.pdf>

(DCSF, January 2010)

News from the Department of Health

Adult social care eligibility criteria

This guidance is issued under section 7(1) of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and replaces Fair access to care services - guidance on eligibility criteria for adult social care which was issued in 2003. This guidance will need to be applied from April 2010.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_113155.pdf

(DH, 25 February 2010)

Autism Strategy is launched

The first strategy to help adults with autism in England live independently has been launched by Care Services Minister Phil Hope. The strategy sets a clear framework for all mainstream public sector services to support adults with autism and is backed up by the Autism Act 2009, the first ever condition specific legislation. The autism strategy includes:

- A new National Autism Programme Board to lead change in public services set out in the strategy
- A programme to develop training with health and social care professional bodies – £500,000 investment is also announced today because better recognition and awareness in frontline public services is critical to giving adults with autism the support they need
- Autism awareness training for all Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment Advisers
- Guidance on making public services accessible for adults with autism, like improving buildings, public transport and communication
- A clear, consistent pathway for diagnosis.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_113440

(DH, 3 March 2010)

Healthcare for people with learning disabilities: recommendations of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

These letters from David Behan and Anne Williams to strategic health authority chief executives and directors of adult social services set out the action needed to respond to the recommendations of the 'Six Lives' report, which highlighted failings in health and social care services that led to premature and avoidable deaths of people with learning disabilities.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_111562

(DH, 27 January 2010)

NHS to provide more care at home

Measures include providing more services at home for children and young people who have acute or long-term conditions or disability or palliative care needs.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/clientmicrosite/Content/Detail.aspx?ClientId=46&NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseId=411346&SubjectId=36>

(DH, 18 February 2010)

Valuing Employment Now – Guidance Letter

Letter from the National Director for Learning Disabilities to Directors of Adult and Children's Social Services and Chief Executives of Local Authorities, Trusts and SHAs. This is an update on the Valuing Employment Now resource pack and a reminder of the business case for investment in supported employment.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_111308.pdf

(DH, January 2010)

News from the Office for Disability Issues

Right to Control Trailblazers announced

The government has announced the eight local authority areas that will test the Right to Control, the government's strategy to give disabled people more choice and control over support they receive from the state. They are: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and Sheffield City Council, Essex County Council, Greater Manchester (includes Manchester City Council, Oldham Council, Bury Council, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council and Trafford Council), Leicester City Council, London Borough of Barnet, London Borough of Newham, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council, Surrey County Council (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council). Trailblazer authorities, which include Jobcentre Plus, will continue working with disabled people and service providers in their area, to decide how to test the Right to Control. Trailblazers will start before the end of 2010. ODI has also launched a consultation on the regulations which govern the Right to Control Trailblazers and the consultation closes on **19 May 2010**.

<http://www.odi.gov.uk/working/right-to-control.php>

(ODI, 25 February 2010)

Roadmap 2025

In December, ODI launched 'Roadmap 2025', which highlights 14 key themes that disabled people identified as essential to delivering the vision of disability equality. It includes information about what government departments have achieved on disability equality and what they plan to do next. Copies of the full 'Roadmap 2025' document are available on request from odi.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk, or download your copy:

<http://www.odi.gov.uk/research/annual-report.php/>

News from the Department for Work and Pensions

Improving progression to unsupported employment: A review of strategies developed by Workstep providers

This report evaluates the strategies and practices of Workstep providers aimed at moving adults with significant physical, mental and personal barriers into sustainable jobs and identifies barriers to progress. Case studies illustrate effective practice.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Improving-progression-to-sustainable-unsupported-employment>

(DWP, 4 February 2010)

Parliamentary

Children, Schools and Families Bill

The Children, Schools and Families Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 19 November 2009. The Bill will reform schools and wider children's services through providing guarantees for parents and pupils setting out what they can expect from a 21st century schools system.

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/childrenschoolsandfamilies.html>

Equality Bill

Many of the changes made during Lords Committee stage involved disability:

- requiring schools to provide auxiliary aids for disabled pupils, where reasonable;
- making clear that costs of reasonable adjustments cannot generally be passed on to a disabled person;
- making it unlawful to ask job applicants disability and health questions before job offers, except in prescribed circumstances;
- strengthening the protection for disabled people taking or being awarded qualifications;
- making clear the need to take account of disabled people's disabilities in the public sector Equality Duty;
- increasing the potential number of wheelchair-accessible taxis.

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/equality/stages.html>

Young people not in education, employment or training

Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee. Uncorrected transcript of oral evidence given on 8 February 2010. Includes a discussion about the number of young people with learning disabilities who are NEET.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmchilsch/uc316-iii/uc31602.htm>

(8 February 2010)

Other Policy News

Care Quality Commission – the state of health care and adult social care

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. Their first annual report to parliament on the state of health care and adult social care says that people need health and social care services that are more joined-up and person-centred.

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/stateofcare.cfm>

(Care Quality Commission, 9 February 2010)

Conservatives publish draft manifesto for schools

The Conservative Party has published their draft manifesto for schools. It includes proposals for a range of reforms including more selective recruitment of teachers, introduction of a 'pupil premium' and allowing all schools to be more independent of local and national government control. It also says "Because the most vulnerable children deserve the highest quality of care, we will call a moratorium on the ideologically-driven closure of special schools and end the bias towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools."

<http://issuu.com/conservatives/docs/draftededucationmanifesto>

Integrating Health and Social Care Budgets: A case for debate

This paper opens a debate around the prospects for a more innovative, more responsive model of public services for groups of users with complex needs. It recognises that there are two different approaches to integrating budgets – an ‘individually-centred’ approach and a ‘system-centred’ approach – and argues that the best way to create a more responsive and financially effective service model is to combine the two.

http://www.ippr.org/members/download.asp?f=%2Fecomm%2Ffiles%2Fhealth_budgets.pdf

(Institute for Public Policy Research, January 2010)

Inquiry into disability related harassment – Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Commission is undertaking an inquiry into disability related harassment and how well this is currently being addressed by public authorities. They have drafted terms of reference for the inquiry and are now consulting on these.

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legislative-framework/formal-inquiries/inquiry-into-disability-related-harassment/>

Every Disabled Child Matters

Every Disabled Child Matters is a campaign by four leading organisations working with disabled children and their families: Contact a Family, Council for Disabled Children, Mencap and the Special Educational Consortium. Find out more about the campaign at www.edcm.org.uk

Every Disabled Child Matters launches Constituency Pledge

40 organisations from the disabled children's sector urge prospective MPs to sign up to prioritise disabled children and their families

The Every Disabled Child Matters campaign (EDCM) is calling on all political candidates to sign up to a Constituency Pledge. If candidates are elected to represent their constituency as an MP, the Constituency Pledge will commit them to meeting with local disabled children and their families, visiting the services they use and to raising issues of concern to them in Parliament.

The EDCM Constituency Pledge has been endorsed by 40 organisations from the disabled children's sector and MP's giving early sign up include: Danny Alexander MP, Ed Balls MP, Annette Brooke MP, Tom Clarke MP, Phil Hope MP, Joan Humble MP, Diana Johnson MP, Norman Lamb MP and David Laws MP.

The five commitments of the EDCM Constituency Pledge for prospective MPs in England are:

1. Meet with disabled children, young people and their families to discuss key issues of concern to them
2. Raise these issues of concern, and promote rights and resources, for disabled children, young people and families from my constituency in Parliament
3. Visit local services for disabled children and their families on a regular basis
4. Support measures to transform services for disabled children and their families, such as the Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) programme in England
5. Find out how funding is being used in my constituency to improve services for disabled children, young people and their families

There is also an EDCM Constituency Pledge for UK Devolved Nations - an alternative version for MPs in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This Pledge has been endorsed by Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance Northern Ireland, Disabled Children Matter Wales and For Scotland's Disabled Children.

Alongside the Constituency Pledge, EDCM has also launched a 'Campaigning Toolkit' to help supporters to engage their local candidates in a debate on issues for disabled children.

Christine Lenehan, EDCM Board member and Director, Council for Disabled Children, said: 'Disabled children aged 0 –16 are the fastest growing group amongst the population of disabled people. However, despite recent funding and policy focus, disabled children and their families still face unnecessary barriers in accessing the services and support they need to lead ordinary lives. If services for disabled children are to be transformed, every MP in the country must be committed to promoting rights and resources for disabled children and their families in their constituency. We urge every prospective MP to sign the EDCM Constituency Pledge in the run up to the General Election.'

The EDCM Constituency Pledge and logos of endorsing organisations can be downloaded at: www.edcm.org.uk/electioncampaign

Information about the EDCM Constituency Pledge for UK Devolved Nations can be found at: www.edcm.org.uk/nationspledge

A list of candidates who have already signed is at www.edcm.org.uk/ppcs and quotes from those that have signed is at www.edcm.org.uk/quotes

The EDCM Campaigning Toolkit for supporters can be downloaded at: www.edcm.org.uk/campaigntoolkit

Consultations

Consultation on Draft Regulations, and Associated Statutory Guidance, for Local Authorities to Provide Short Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children and Young People

All local authorities will be required to provide short breaks for parents and carers who look after a disabled child, under plans announced by Ed Balls and Diana Johnson.

The range and type of short breaks has grown with the support of the Aiming High for Disabled Children funding. To build on this progress, the Department for Children, Schools and Families has launched a public consultation which, if agreed, will require all local authorities to provide short break services for parents who care for disabled children.

The consultation period will last for 12 weeks from **1 February until 26 April 2010**. Final guidance and regulations should be published in September 2010. The consultation can be accessed via the DCSF website at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1688&external=no&menu=1>

A press release about the consultation can be found here: <http://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/Ifi/DNWA-82JDEH>

(DCSF, 10 February 2010)

Equality Bill Codes of Practice consultation – Equality and Human Rights Commission

This phase covers three aspects of the Equality Bill - employment, equal pay and services, public functions and associations. The new Equality Bill is the most significant piece of equality legislation for many years. It will simplify, streamline and strengthen the law. It will give individuals greater protection from unfair discrimination and will make it easier for employers and companies to understand their responsibilities. It will also set a new standard for those who provide public services to treat everyone, with dignity and respect. EHRC are producing draft codes for the Equality Bill as the Bill continues its passage through Parliament.

There are three separate consultations on the draft guides:

1. Employment – please note chapter 4 is now called Putting Equality Law into Practice
2. Equal Pay
3. Services, public functions and associations

The consultation closes on **Friday 2 April 2010**.

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legislative-framework/equality-bill/equality-bill-codes-of-practice-consultation/#1>

Law Commission – Adult social care

The law commission is making proposals to clean up the law around social care and is consulting on these proposals. They include the following regarding transition:

- Provisional Proposal 11-1: We provisionally propose that our future adult social care statute should apply to those aged 18 and above, and the Children Act 1989 (and the CSDPA 1970) should apply to those aged 17 and below.
- Provisional Proposal 11-2: We provisionally propose that local authorities should have a power to assess 16 and 17 year olds under our proposed adult social care statute and young people aged 16 and 17 (and their parents on their behalf) would have a right to request such an assessment.

Closing date for responses: **1 July 2010**.

http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/current_consultations.htm

Leaving Care Consultation - DCSF

DCSF consultation on the *Planning Transition to Adulthood for Looked After Children* Guidance and on the amended Children (Leaving Care) (England) Regulations 2001.

Deadline for responses: 25 March 2010

<http://leavingcareconsultation.dcsf.gov.uk/>

Physical and emotional health and wellbeing of looked-after children and young people: consultation on the draft guidance - NICE/SCIE

The Department of Health asked NICE and SCIE to produce joint public health guidance on improving the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of looked-after children and young people. The guidance is for all those who have a direct or indirect role in, and responsibility for, promoting the quality of life of looked-after children and young people.

Deadline for responses: 5pm Wednesday 14 April 2010

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=folder&o=47410>

Support for All: the Families and Relationships Green Paper - Consultation

This Green Paper sets out a wide range of measures to support all families as they bring up their children and to help families cope with times of stress and difficulty. The proposals recognise that while all families need some help, there are families in our society with complex needs and others who require additional - and sometimes non-negotiable - support.

Proposals in the Green Paper include:

- extend the offer of key worker support to families with disabled children aged 0–19, starting with an initial period in 2010–11 to test out how best to provide this support, with a view to rolling this out more widely through a national programme;
- fund specialist relationship counselling services for families with disabled children and increase support for the Contact A Family helpline.

Some of the policy proposals can be implemented straight away; others are for consultation or will take longer to put into place.

Consultation closing date: **Wednesday 21 April 2010**

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1685&external=no&menu=1>

Trailblazer regulations

The Office for Disability Issues has launched a consultation on the regulations which govern the Right to Control Trailblazers. Trailblazer authorities will be responding to this consultation. ODI would also like to hear from disabled people and their organisations, voluntary organizations, service providers and their representative bodies.

The consultation closes on **19 May 2010**.

<http://www.odi.gov.uk/working/right-to-control.php>

What the Equality Act 2010 means for you as an education provider – Equality and Human Rights Commission

Deadline for responses: 17 March 2010

http://ehrc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/equality_bill/educ_provider

What the Equality Act 2010 means for you in education: a guide for students, pupils and parents – Equality and Human Rights Commission

Deadline for responses: 16 April 2010

http://ehrc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/equality_bill/educ_user

News

Council for Disabled Children to research participation

NCB will lead exciting new research in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children, the Alliance for Inclusive Education (Allfie), and The Children's Society on the participation of disabled children and young people in services and matters which affect them. The new three-year project, supported by the Big Lottery Fund, will involve disabled children and young people as young researchers and advisors.

http://www.ncb.org.uk/cdc/latest_news/news_jul-dec_2009/cdc_to_research_participation.aspx

Counting the Costs – Contact a Family survey for families

Contact a Family is conducting a survey *Counting the Costs 2010* of families with disabled children about their finances. The survey will help them to raise awareness of the money worries specific to families with disabled children.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T2S2ZZF>

(Contact a Family, 22 February 2010)

Disabled children lack support for mental health

A new survey by children's mental health charity YoungMinds shows a third of parents with disabled children don't get the support they need for their children's emotional or mental health problems.

http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/news/news_archive/2010_news/february_2010/8_feb_10_young_minds_survey.aspx

(8 February 2010)

Great Ormond Street Hospital research into autism and transition

Great Ormond Street Hospital is conducting research into the transition needs of children with autism spectrum disorders going from primary to secondary school. They have created an online questionnaire which allows people from across the UK to answer questions about transitions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. They are keen to get views from everyone; those with ASD, their families and professionals dealing with this issue.

http://www.ich.ucl.ac.uk/gosh/clinicalservices/autism_services/Autism%20and%20Education

Making Ourselves Heard

Making Ourselves Heard is calling for organisations and individuals to join its network. MOH is part of the Council for Disabled Children and aims to ensure that the **voices of disabled children and young people are heard** and they are supported to participate in decisions about their lives. Members receive regular email bulletins and the opportunity to share examples of good practice. Please contact Pamela Shaw on pshaw@ncb.org.uk

http://www.ncb.org.uk/cdc_moh

National Skills Forum - Doing Things Differently: Step Changes in Skills & Inclusion

Following a series of roundtable discussions and an open consultation, the National Skills Forum and Associate Parliamentary Skills Group launched on the 3rd February 2010 the final report of their inquiry into skills and social inclusion. The report focuses on the impact of skills policy on three disproportionately excluded groups: offenders and ex-offenders; people with disabilities; and black and minority ethnic learners. In bringing together the skills and equalities agendas, this report recommends ways in which better access to skills and training

can create a more inclusive labour market, bringing economic advantage as well as helping to create a fairer and more mobile society.

<http://www.skillsandinclusion.org.uk/download-the-report.php>

(National Skills Forum and Associate Parliamentary Skills Group, 3 February 2010)

NDCS offers free training to make clubs more deaf-friendly

A new project set up by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) called Me2, is inviting representatives from all local youth and leisure clubs in England to a free training programme. The programme called Making Activities Deaf Friendly will help local clubs adapt their activities to ensure that deaf children can enjoy full access and are able to communicate effectively.

http://www.ndcs.org.uk/family_support/information_for_young_deaf_people/me2/

Prison Reform Trust launch report – Vulnerable Defendants in the Criminal Courts

'Vulnerable Defendants in the Criminal Courts' reviews the provision of support in the court system for adults with learning disabilities or learning difficulties. The second half of the report examines the situation for children. It concludes that despite defendants in both groups being known to be vulnerable, a lack of planning and support for their needs means they are routinely unable to understand and participate effectively in criminal proceedings. The report found that all children appearing in court are vulnerable by their young age, but many are doubly vulnerable because of mental health problems, learning disabilities, past abuse and because they have been in the care system. This is exacerbated by the lack of training that professionals working with child defendants - including the judiciary, lawyers, courts and Crown Prosecution Service staff and police officers - receive on child welfare needs and rights.

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/uploads/documents/courtreport.pdf>

(Prison Reform Trust, 1 December 2009)

Pushing for Change – encouraging disabled young people to become leaders

The Alliance for Inclusive Education is calling on organisations which are run by disabled people for disabled people to do more to encourage disabled young people to become leaders. Their Pushing for Change report found that disabled young people are interested in becoming leaders and championing disability rights, but don't always get support to do this.

<http://www.allfie.org.uk>

(Alliance for Inclusive Education, January 2010)

Research finds deaf children neglected by social services

Deaf children are being neglected by social care services despite their vulnerability to abuse and mental health problems, according to research conducted by Manchester University.

<http://www.ndcs.org.uk/document.rm?id=4669>

The Social and Economic Value of Short Breaks

This report published by nef consulting shows that substantial cost savings can be made to the State through sustained funding for short breaks for disabled children and their families.

Download the report: <http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/uploads/media/36/9163.pdf>

Download the policy briefing: <http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/uploads/media/29/9222.pdf>

(December 2009)

TreeHouse report shows inequality of autism services across UK

A report released by TreeHouse highlights the patchy picture of autism services for children across the UK. The report entitled '*Snapshot of children's autism services in the UK*' assessed local authorities across the country, reviewing data on diagnosis rates, how autism

is categorised, budget allocation, training provided for staff and how local authorities are working with parents to improve services. The results demonstrate the extent of variability across the UK in these areas.

<http://www.treehouse.org.uk/tell-autism/news/new-treehouse-research-unearts-stark-differences-childrens-autism-services>

(TreeHouse, November 2009)

Volunteer carers wanted for research project - carers of adults with epilepsy and learning disabilities

Naomi Beinart is doing research into the health and quality of life of carers of adults with epilepsy and learning disabilities. "I am studying factors that influence the health and quality of life of carers of adults with epilepsy and learning disabilities at UCL. Epilepsy disproportionately affects people with learning disabilities; however research has shown a lack of focus on the extra needs of adults with both epilepsy and learning disabilities and particularly the needs of their carers. This leads to carers suffering avoidable stress and affects their role as a carer. I will be asking carers what problems (e.g. health, social) the person they care for have that make their role as a carer more difficult; whether they themselves have any mental or physical problems as a result of this; and what strategies they use to deal with these problems. This information will be useful in developing strategies to improve the coping skills and resources available to carers, with the aim of improving their lives and the care they deliver. I will be using short questionnaires and may also wish to do a short interview with you if you have the time, but this is not essential. I should be able to do this by email and phone, but if you are Surrey or London based, it would be great to be able to interview you in person if you are available. Please feel free to call or email me at 0044. 7793 754742 and naomibeinart@gmail.com for more information or if you're willing to give me your details to do questionnaires / interview at a later date."

Funding

Family Fund grants for disabled 16 and 17 year olds

In April 2009, the Family Fund increased the age limit of their grants (previously up to 16th birthday). They now provide grants to families with severely disabled young people aged 16 and 17 (up to their 18th birthday) in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

<http://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

Funding for home technology

The Home Access programme has been introduced by the Government to help more low-income families get computers and internet access at home to support their child's learning. Families can apply for the funds from a central body or individual schools can become more involved by aggregating the funds and ordering the equipment for all their pupils who qualify. Assistive technology will also be available for children who need additional support.

http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=oe&catcode=ss_es_hom_02&rid=17232

Parent participation grants for 2010

Grants for parent forums in England working to improve services in their local area under Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) have now been confirmed for 2010. Together for Disabled Children (TDC), a partnership between Contact a Family and Serco to develop parent participation forums under AHDC, has announced that grants of £10,000 will be available in each local authority area for Phase 3 of the programme. They will shortly be publishing the application forms on the TDC website, along with a new set of criteria and guidance on how the grant can be used. **The closing date for applications is April 30th.**

<http://www.togetherfdc.org/Topics/PPFundingandGrants.aspx>

Opportunities for young people

NCB Volunteer Leadership Programme

Disabled children and young people are currently under represented in volunteering programmes. NCB are looking for disabled young people (16 - 25) to join their volunteer leadership programme from April 2010 - March 2011.

Do you know young people who would benefit from the opportunity to lead a local project dealing with issues that are important to them?

Can you offer regular contact to support their involvement, including;

- Travelling with them to residentials
- Organising & facilitating regular meetings where the leaders provide each other with peer support around planning and delivering their projects
- Helping to collect evidence of their achievements
- Providing relevant local contacts to progress planning and delivery
- Assisting in budget management
- Providing transport to meetings
- Nominating leaders for awards
-

NCB are currently recruiting from the **East Midlands, West Midlands and the East of England**. Please contact **Geraldine Lowe at NCB** for further information on glowe@ncb.org.uk or 020 7833 6830. Deadline for applications is **31 March 2010** but if you miss the deadline, you can contact them to find out if there are any opportunities still available.

O2 offers young people grants for community work

Mobile phone company O2 has launched a £5m programme offering cash-in-hand grants for young people to make a difference in their local communities. The programme, Think Big, will enable 13-25 year olds to apply for a £300 grant to fund projects aimed at addressing local issues identified by the young people themselves. Projects that prove to be successful will be eligible for a further grant £2,500. The programme is being delivered in partnership with the National Youth Agency and UK Youth.

<http://www.o2thinkbig.co.uk/>

Youth4U – Young Inspectors web pages for young people are now live!

The Look Listen Change consortium is proud to announce that the BYC online space for the Youth4U – Young Inspectors programme is now live. The Youth4U - Young Inspectors Programme is an exciting programme that encourages young people from across England to get trained, inspect their local services and report back to local organisations on the things they think that can be improved about them. Have you ever thought your local youth club was too far away, or your library shuts too early or even you don't know where to find careers advice in your community? Well these guys are doing something about it, achieving an accredited qualification AND earning a wage along the way! Check out the programme and find out how you can get involved. You can take a look at what's going on, and if you are planning a similar scheme in your area there are resources and case studies of the Inspectors' experiences available to download.

<http://www.byc.org.uk/youth4u>

Resources

If you have any resources you would like included, please email Victoria on vwright@ncb.org.uk

I have a right to play out too!

The KIDS Playwork Inclusion Project (PIP) promotes inclusive play and leisure provision for disabled children. PIP has produced a new briefing '**I have a right to play out too!**' which focuses on practical examples and case studies of disabled children and young people accessing outdoor play.

<http://www.kids.org.uk/information/100428/100623/100836/briefings/>

Making Ourselves Heard - Exploring disabled children's participation

The Council for Disabled Children have recently produced a new publication called 'Making Ourselves Heard; exploring disabled children's participation.' The report is intended as a practice resource to explore disabled children's participation, outline the barriers and challenges to effective participation and highlight what is working well. For more information on how to purchase the book please go to:

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/resources/publications.aspx>

Mencap's Valuing People Now fact sheets

Mencap has produced several factsheets to help you approach your local Learning Disability Partnership Board on the key issues relating to 'Valuing People Now'. They cover key areas of VPN including one on transition and education.

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/page.asp?id=12861>

(Mencap, February 2010)

Parent Participation Guide

Together for Disabled Children (TDC), a partnership between Serco and Contact a Family, have just published the Parent Participation How to Guide. The purpose of parent participation is to enable parents to get involved in service planning and decision making so that services meet the needs of families with disabled children. The aim is to ensure resources are not wasted on services which parents and families do not take up. The guide is designed to help parents and professionals work together and is divided into 12 sections.

<http://www.togetherfdc.org/Topics/ParentParticipationHowToGuide.aspx>

(Together for Disabled Children, February 2010)

Promote the Vote

Promote the Vote is a website that includes information about how to vote at elections. The website is accessible to people with learning difficulties who cannot read through using video clips made by people with learning difficulties themselves. The website won the 'Doing Access differently Award' from Radar (Royal Association for Disability Rights) at the Radar People of the Year awards in November 2009.

<http://promotethevote.co.uk>

Transitions magazine

Transitions magazine emerged out of KIDS Young People's Inclusion Network (YP-in) and is aimed at and written by young disabled people. Every issue covers 3 main themes - Relationships and Sexuality, Identity and Independence. Email pip@kids.org.uk or call 0207 359 3073 for a free hard copy.

<http://www.kids.org.uk/transitionsmagazine>

Sentence Trouble - New guide to help communication in youth justice system

The Autism Education Trust has helped create a new guide for the youth justice workforce called *Sentence Trouble*, to help them communicate more effectively with young people, particularly those with communication needs. The AET has worked on this in partnership with The Communication Trust and the Dyslexia SpLD Trust. Around 60% of young people who commit offences have undetected communication needs, including autism and dyslexia, yet few staff that work in the youth justice system have the skills to adapt their own approach to communication. This means that many young people do not get the support they need to help them communicate effectively, meaning they are more likely to end up in custody or re-offending. *Sentence Trouble* is a detailed resource including practical advice on how to tell if a young person has communication needs as well as real life examples. It is written for everyone that works or volunteers in Youth Offending Teams, Secure Children's Homes, Secure Training Centres and Young Offenders Institutions. The project will also provide much needed training to youth justice workers across England on the issues of communication needs.

<http://www.ican.org.uk/communication%20trust/Youth%20Justice/Resources.aspx>

TreeHouse Annual Lecture – watch it online

A video of the TreeHouse Annual Lecture, which took place on Monday 23rd November 2009, is available to view online. Brian Lamb, who is leading the Lamb Inquiry into special educational needs and parental confidence, provided the keynote speech. The lecture also included discussion about the SEN system between parents, people with autism and professionals.

<http://www.treehouse.org.uk/promoting-change/events/treehouse-events/film-treehouse-annual-lecture-2009>

Conferences, events and training

If you would like to list an event please email vwright@ncb.org.uk with details.

TIN seminars

TIN seminar for young people about influencing government – 27 April 2010

The Transition Information Network (TIN) is holding a seminar for disabled young people on 27 April in the London. The theme of the event is how disabled young people can influence the government about the things that are important to disabled children and young people. Places at this event are limited. If you work with and support groups of disabled young people and would like further information, please email Victoria Wright on vwright@ncb.org.uk

Other events

Autism: Let's Talk – 22 to 26 March 2010

Dimensions are holding a series of events in celebration of World Autism Awareness Day (2nd April 2010). These events will share best practice around autism with families and professionals. Events will take place in Newcastle (22nd March), Sheffield (23rd March), West Bromwich (24th March), Bristol (25th March) and London (26th March). The event is free for families. All those attending will hear from inspirational speakers and will also get the chance to talk to staff from Dimensions and other organisations and find out just what support is available to them locally. There is a charge of £50 for professionals who attend. For further information: <http://www.dimensions-uk.org/autismevents>

'I JUST DON'T GET IT' - National Conference about young people and adults with Autism, Asperger syndrome and Mental Health issues - Tuesday 27th April 2010

Location: Stratford-upon-Avon. Cost: £195 per place (No VAT)
For more information or to book a place call 07748383023 or email hazelratcliffe_6@hotmail.co.uk or atkins862@btinternet.com
<http://www.ratcliffeconsultancy.info/>

Learning Disabilities: Valuing People Now - 22 and 23 March 2010

Capita's 2nd National Learning Disabilities Conference on 'Valuing People Now' – One Year On is being held on Monday 22nd March 2010 in Central London. There is also a half-day briefing on *Communicating with Service Users with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities* on Tuesday 23rd March 2010 in Central London. Capita's National Learning Disabilities Conference takes a holistic look at the progress made on Valuing People Now (VPN) since its implementation. It will also be showcasing best practice initiatives on delivering improved services for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers. http://www.capitaconferences.co.uk/fileadmin/user_upload/brochures/Learning_Disabilities_MKRG.pdf

Relationships and Sexuality Training – 29 March, 22 April, 28 April & 19 May 2010

KIDS have developed a new training course around Relationships and Sexuality. This day will not be about strategy, but based around a practical ethos of inclusion for staff that work with disabled children or young disabled people. The course is aimed at managers and practitioners working with disabled children and young disabled people aged from 8 – 25 years who have an interest in working around issues of Relationships and Sexuality in an empowering way. The first course will take place in **Bolton on 29th March 2010, West**

Midlands on 22nd April 2010 and two dates for **London on 28th April & 19th May 2010** at the cost of **£65** per person. Venue details TBC. Please contact Ria Patel for a booking form: ria.patel@kids.org.uk

Transition Matters: Driving up standards for young people who have complex needs and little or no sight in their transition into adulthood - 27th April 2010, RNIB, Peterborough

The conference focuses on the opportunities, pathways and choices in the transition to adulthood for blind and partially sighted young people with complex needs and their families. Keynote speakers include Helen Wheatley, Programme Director of the National Transition Support Team, Dr Janet McDonagh, Clinical Senior Lecturer, Institute of Child Health, University of Birmingham & Birmingham Children's Hospital and Dr Bryony Beresford, Senior Research fellow, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York. Cost: £130 (professionals), £60 (parents and young people). Contact Sona Molnarova on 0121 665 4235 or email: children@rnib.org.uk
<http://www.rnib.org.uk/transitionconf>

Young People's Health in the Media Conference – 23 March 2010

Bringing together professionals from the young people's health field, alongside key media players, the event will look at how young people access the media for health information, how the media can effectively promote your services to young people and how to use the media to convey positive health messages to young people. The Conference programme includes adolescent health specialist and media expert **Michael Rich, Harvard University** and representatives from **key media players** including the **BBC** and **ITV**. The conference will provide practical advice, insights and networking opportunities and will include important input from young people themselves focusing on alcohol policy, eating disorders and the wellbeing of Black and Minority Ethnic young people. Further details available from www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk



Register with TIN for free

Getting a Life is a policy e-newsletter that is sent to registered members of the Transition Information Network (TIN). TIN also produces a magazine called *my future choices*, for disabled young people, parents/carers and professionals.

If you would like to become a registered member of TIN and receive these publications and updates about our work, please contact us.

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The Transition Information Network and the Council for Disabled Children cannot take responsibility for any information in the publications and websites that are listed in this newsletter.