

THE CURRENT POLICY ENVIRONMENT

-IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY AND YOUTH WORKERS

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A Joke

- ✘ How many youth workers does it take to change a light bulb?



- ✘ "The light bulb doesn't need changing: it's the system that needs to change."

Change

- Context
- Policy and legislation
- Structure
- Attitude
- Accountability
- New friends
- Ethics and values

CONTEXT

- **Society** - changing expectations and make-up
- **Communities** - safety and cohesion
- **Economy** - realities of a post-industrial economy
- **Government** - overarching priorities impacting upon youth provision
- **Young people** - changing issues in the 21st Century

Society

- An ageing population
- Greater ethnic and cultural diversity
- Expectation that the state will provide
- ‘Broken Britain’ and the demise of the nuclear family
- Good citizenship versus the cult of the individual
- Liberty versus security
- An unsure future for us all

Communities

- Breaking up of traditional communities
- Safety in our neighbourhoods
- Getting rid of the neighbours from hell
- Regenerating disadvantaged areas
- Greater community participation in decision-making

Economy

- Post- industrial economy
- Rise of the service economy
- Globalisation
- Skills deficit
- Post credit crunch and the global recession

Government

- Restructuring the welfare state
- Enforcing social inclusion
- Immigration
- Europe
- Getting the unemployed back to work
- Redeveloping our inner cities
- Re-shaping education
- Dealing with crime

Young People

- Education

- Schools as more than delivery agents for the national curriculum
- Increased choice
- Increased competition

- Health

- Physical
 - Obesity crisis
 - 'Cotton wool' kids
- Mental
 - Growing recognition of teenage mental health as an issue
- Sexual
 - STDs and the 'Post- HIV' world
 - Relationships

Young People

- Employment
 - no more jobs for life
 - Portfolio careers
- Internet generation:
 - a innovative means of communicating or a new form of isolation?
 - new technology and the rise of social networking
- Cult of the celebrity
 - The X factor factor
- Expectations versus reality
 - The 'me' generation

Young People

- Drugs
 - General acceptance of casual drugs use
- Crime
 - Victim and perpetrator
- Political disaffection
 - Campaign politics and the mainstream
- Safeguarding
 - Am I a child or an adult?
- Sense of identity

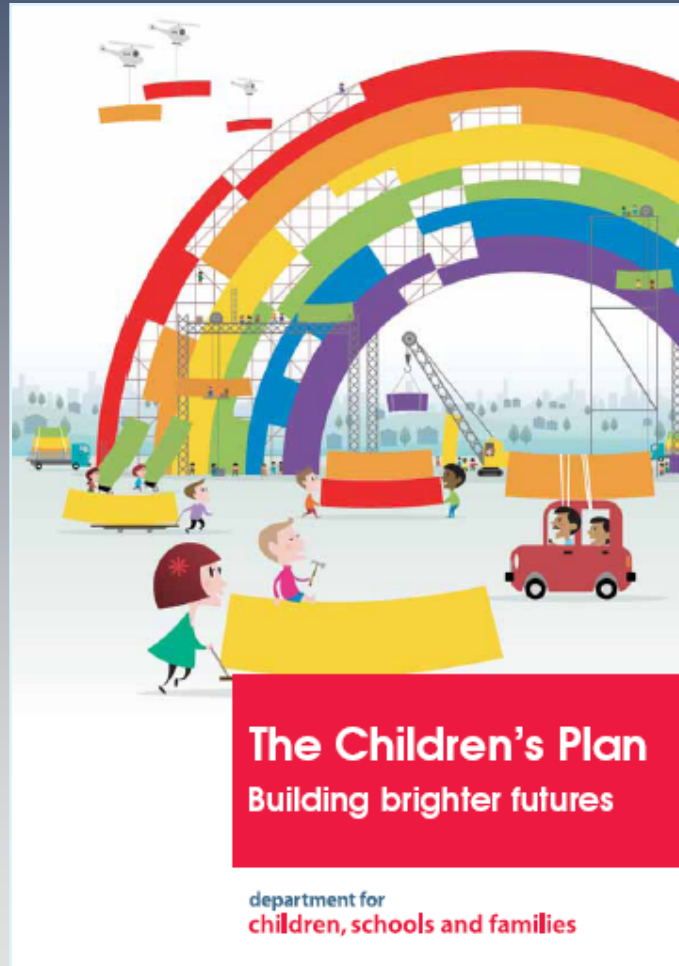
Youth Policy 1999-2007



Every Child Matters... five years on The Children's Plan, December 2007



Every child matters



Policies since the launch of the Children's Plan, December 2007

Building Brighter Futures:
Next Steps for the Children's Workforce

department for children, schools and families

National Challenge
A toolkit for schools and local authorities

National Challenge – Raising standards, supporting schools

department for children, schools and families

Youth Taskforce Action Plan
give respect, get respect – youth matters

A commitment from The Children's Plan
department for children, schools and families

The Byron Review Action Plan

June 2008

department for children, schools and families

Promoting achievement, valuing success: a strategy for 14–19 qualifications

department for children, schools and families

Delivering the Children's Plan
Schools' Role in Promoting Pupil Well-being – Draft Guidance for Consultation

department for children, schools and families

Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver

department for children, schools and families

Department for Communities, Transport and Local Government

Youth Alcohol Action Plan

department for children, schools and families

Home Office

Department of Health

Delivering the Children's Plan
Strengthening Children's Trusts: legislative options

department for children, schools and families

Fair Play
A consultation on the play strategy

A commitment from The Children's Plan
department for children, schools and families

Department for Communities, Transport and Local Government

Staying Safe: Action Plan

department for children, schools and families

Care Matters: Time to deliver for children in care
An implementation plan

department for children, schools and families

Policy and Legislation

- Every Child Matters, Youth Matters and the five outcomes
- Children's Plan (2007). Positive activities, the path to success and PSA 14
- Children Act and establishment of Children's Trusts
- Aiming High, Ten year youth strategy (2007)
- Education: -The five year strategy (2004)
 - Education and Inspections Act ,2006– positive activities
- Local government white papers: Strong and Prosperous Communities (2006); Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power (July 2008)
- The Charities Act (2006)
- Youth Taskforce
- Children's Workforce Strategy (2005) and establishing Children's Workforce Development Council in 2005
- IPPR report- Freedom's Orphans (2006)
- Lord Laming's report, *The protection of children in England: A progress report* (March 2009)

Structure

- Integrated service delivery: co-located teams, joint management structures
- Reshaping of local services
- Reform of local government
- Sharing resources
- Workforce development
- Commissioning
- Services to children and young people rather than a youth service
- Access to positive activities (yet to be defined)
- ‘Competent and confident’ youth services

Attitude

- Rise of youth work's profile – “a far better airing than ever before”
- Effectiveness in reducing offending behaviour - the Heineken effect.
- Youth work as a preventative intervention
- Recognition of a more professional service
- Need to be more professional
- More money for playing the game but, if we don't fit the bill are we.....integral or expendable?
- There is no divine right of youth work

Accountability

- Government- local and central
- Ofsted and Joint Area Reviews >Comprehensive Area Assessments
- Service users
- Funders
- Management information and managing information
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Commissioning and quality
- Baby Peter and Safeguarding

New Friends

- The voluntary sector/the statutory sector
- Other public services e.g. social services, youth offending, health, police, etc.
- Central government
- New training providers e.g. FE colleges, etc.
- Cultural sector
- Universities
- Private sector

Ethics and Values

- Our heartbeat?
- Defending good youth and community work, not accepting or defending bad youth and community work
- Needs led, not funding led
- Working to the needs of young people and communities
- Are our ethics and values constant?

Does this still apply.....?

- Youth work is a process of informal personal, social and political education, founded on a voluntary relationship with young people, that strives to challenge discrimination, develop understanding and empower individuals and groups.

Implications for Community and Youth Work Workers

- Working in youth services at a time of rapid change
- Working within an integrated framework
- Broadening accountability and relationship to central government agenda
- New partnerships, new demands
- Staff: fit for purpose, integrated and included
- CAF, casework and the role as a lead professional
- Information sharing and young people's rights

Implications (cont.)

- Relationship with other professions
- Relationship with schools
- Workforce development and the changing face of youth work training
- SAFEGUARDING
- Funding
- More regulation, less power?
- Operational concerns
- Strategic understanding

Something to bear in mind as a community and youth worker.....

- “If nothing ever changed, there’d be no butterflies”



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