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The Government's ambition, as set out in the Children's Plan, is to make this the best place in the world to grow up. We want all our children and young people to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy life and achieve well at school, to make a positive contribution to society and to be happy and successful in their later lives.

The role of Children's Trusts is to turn this vision into reality. Children's Trusts are the local partnerships which bring together all the key agencies responsible for services for children, young people and families in a shared commitment to improving children's lives. They play a crucial role in bringing together all the services needed to ensure that children and young people have their needs met.

Much good work has been done in the five years since Children's Trusts were introduced, but it is clear that there is further to go. That is why the Government recently introduced legislation (via the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009) to strengthen Children's Trusts further, mainly by extending the number of Children's Trust partners, putting the Children's Trust Board on a statutory footing and giving the Board responsibility for preparing and monitoring the implementation of the local Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). These reforms are due to come into effect next year, with the new jointly owned CYPPs in place by April 2011.

We have prepared revised statutory guidance (and associated regulations governing the CYPP) to support the introduction of these reforms. The new guidance – which we plan to publish in final form in March 2010 – will replace the existing guidance documents on Children's Trusts and the Children and Young People's Plan. In order to ensure that the final regulations and guidance are as robust and helpful as possible, we are consulting widely on the draft versions we have prepared. The consultation will run until 29 January 2010.

I very much hope you are able to take the time to read the draft guidance and regulations and respond to the consultation questions. I am sure your comments will help us produce a better product.

*Yours sincerely,
Dawn Primarolo*

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department for
children, schools and families