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# Youth matters

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# Youth Matters

Presented to Parliament by  
the Secretary of State for Education and Skills  
by Command of Her Majesty










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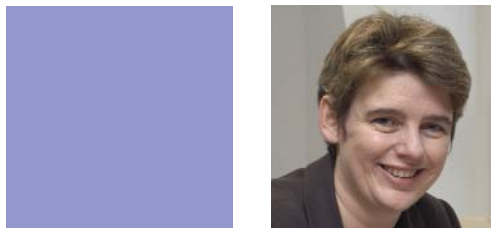
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# Foreword



Life for teenagers is full of opportunities, and most take full advantage of them. New opportunities are opening up all the time driven, for example, by developments in technology and communications. Yet young people often feel that there is not enough for them to do outside school, college or work. Some are not able to benefit fully from all the opportunities available to them because they come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Others choose not to make the most of these opportunities and can get into a downward spiral of anti-social behaviour, crime and drug-taking.

We hope that young people and their parents will welcome our proposals. We plan to give them more say in the way local services and activities are provided and to increase their choice. Through opportunity cards and opportunity funds we will put spending power in the hands of young people, and give them influence to shape the activities available locally.


The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will inspire young people on to sporting success and be a beacon to draw them into a diverse range of sporting, volunteering and cultural activities. But with new opportunities will come a new emphasis on young people's responsibilities. It is wrong that young people who do not respect the opportunities they are given, by committing crimes or behaving anti-socially, should benefit from the same opportunities as the law-abiding majority. So we will put appropriate measures in place to ensure they do not.

We also want to make sure that all young people are given the best chance in life to succeed – by improving their qualifications, getting better jobs and making positive contributions to their local communities. We are making changes to the way in which support for young people is organised locally – for example, by giving Local Authorities more flexibility in

the way they use their resources to provide support and other services for young people. This reflects our wider reforms of the public sector – removing duplication of services and increasing effectiveness and efficiency. Our proposals also recognise the importance of teenagers enjoying good emotional and physical health, which are inseparable from learning and achievement.

Of course, Government cannot make these changes alone. We will depend on the support of a number of partners, particularly Local Authorities, children's trusts and organisations which currently provide services for young people at both local and national level. And of course young people themselves and their parents will need to be fully involved in deciding how the proposals can be implemented.

Together, we can make a significant difference to the lives of young people and to the communities in which they live. This paper is a major step towards doing so.



RUTH KELLY  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION  
AND SKILLS

# Executive Summary

## Context: Young People and Services Today (Chapter 1)

1. The teenage years are an exciting time, full of learning, new opportunities and new experiences. Young people are enthusiastic, creative and open to new ideas. Most enjoy their teenage years to the full.

2. Changes in the economy, society and technology mean that young people today have more opportunities than previous generations and most take full advantage of them. They work hard and succeed at school, going on either to study at college or university or to find a job. The majority have good relationships with their parents and a strong commitment to their friends and local communities. The internet and mobile phones have revolutionised the way young people live and the way in which they communicate and get information. Technologies such as MP3 are transforming the way they access music.

3. Young people also often have great commitment, caring passionately about the issues of the day such as climate

change and making poverty history. Many get involved as volunteers and help in the community where they live.

4. Typically, it is when we are teenagers that we are most alive to exploring new ideas. New experiences, travel, taking risks and having the opportunity to be responsible for their own decisions all widen young people's horizons.

5. The teenage years are also a time of transition and many young people face difficult challenges – relating, for example, to study, money, employment, health, self-esteem and relationships. Some young people, including disabled young people and those who are homeless, may face barriers in accessing education and leisure, and teenagers from some ethnic groups have to face prejudice.

6. Most young people deal successfully with these challenges and make the transition to adult life without experiencing serious or lasting difficulties. A minority of teenagers, however, can face more serious problems. They may have differences with their parents, which may



lead ultimately to leaving or running away from home. They may have health problems which can affect their ability to learn and to achieve. They may become disengaged and disaffected at school, sometimes dropping out completely. Smoking, alcohol and drug habits are also often formed in the teenage years.

7. A minority of young people can get involved in behaviour that is a serious problem for the wider community, including anti-social behaviour and crime. The Government is clear that when this happens we need to respond firmly.

8. This paper is therefore not just about providing more opportunities and support to young people, it is also about challenge. We need to strike the right balance between rights and responsibilities, appreciating the enormous contribution that young people can make while expecting them in return to appreciate and respect the opportunities available to them.

9. Our approach recognises that parents are the strongest influence in young people's lives. However, publicly funded services also have a key role to play. Services for teenagers need to expand opportunities for all young people while helping to tackle the range and complexity of problems faced by the minority who are at risk. We need to provide the right mix of challenge and support to young people who are involved in anti-social behaviour and crime, and to their parents. We need to respond to young people as they are today, with their greater expectation of

autonomy and control, not as young people were a decade ago.

10. This paper seeks views on how to reform services in England to meet these challenges. While it focuses on teenagers, some of the proposals it contains are also relevant to young people who are slightly older than 19 or younger than 13. The document starts from an understanding that, while existing services – Youth Services, Connexions, mainstream services, and a wide range of targeted support programmes – have made a crucial contribution, they do not amount to a coherent, modern system of support. There is much that is good about services for teenagers, but there is a lot that could be better. In particular:

- services do not always meet the needs of individual young people;
- the various organisations providing services and help for young people do not work together as effectively or imaginatively as they should, with the result that money and effort are wasted;
- not enough is being done to prevent young people from drifting into a life of poverty or crime;
- services are failing to exploit the full potential of the internet, mobile phones and other new technologies; and
- teenagers and their parents do not have enough say in what is provided.

## Vision, Challenges and Principles: Our Approach to Reform (Chapter 2)

11. This document offers for consultation a new strategy for providing opportunities, challenge and support to young people. Our vision is to see services integrated around young people's needs helping all teenagers achieve the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes to the greatest possible extent.

12. The proposals aim to address four key challenges:

- how to engage more young people in positive activities and empower them to shape the services they receive;
- how to encourage more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities;
- how to provide better information, advice and guidance to young people to help them make informed choices about their lives; and
- how to provide better and more personalised intensive support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble.

13. Our approach to reform is based on six underpinning principles:

- making services more responsive to what young people and their parents want;
- balancing greater opportunities and support with promoting young people's responsibilities;

- making services for young people more integrated, efficient and effective;
- improving outcomes for all young people, while narrowing the gap between those who do well and those who do not;
- involving a wide range of organisations from the voluntary, community and private sectors in order to increase choice and secure the best outcomes; and
- building on the best of what is currently provided.

## Empowering Young People: Things to do and Places to go (Chapter 3)

14. Hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London will provide a tremendous incentive for all young people to participate in a whole range of positive sporting, volunteering and cultural activities.

15. Teenagers, their parents and communities all want more positive things to do and better places to go for young people. And when young people are involved in activities and are busy they are less likely to drift into trouble, cause a nuisance or commit crime. But currently up to a quarter of young people do not take part in any form of positive activities, most often because they are not interested in what is available.

16. Our first challenge is to put young people themselves in control of the things to do and places to go in their area.

We don't want government agencies second guessing them. So we propose to put buying power directly in the hands of young people themselves in two ways:

- First, we will support Local Authorities to develop and pilot 'opportunity cards'. These cards would provide discounts on a range of things to do and places to go and could also be topped up by young people and their parents with money to spend on sports and other constructive activities. Subject to piloting, we will establish a national scheme to support the roll-out of local opportunity cards. Central Government will also top up the opportunity cards of disadvantaged 13-16 year olds. This subsidy would be withheld from young people engaging in unacceptable and anti-social behaviours and the card suspended or withdrawn. Over time, we could expect to see Local Authorities choosing to fund sports and other constructive activities for young people by topping up their opportunity cards. Top-ups could also be used to reward young people for volunteering or for making progress in improving their situation.
- Second, we propose to provide an 'opportunity fund' in each Local Authority to be spent on local projects that young people want – for example, providing a youth café or running a sports league. Local Authorities, building on existing practice, may adopt different approaches, but the key aim is for young people themselves to decide how the fund can be spent.

17. Local Authorities, working through children's trusts, have a key role to play in commissioning and providing activities and facilities for young people. To help ensure that activities are of a more consistent quality and that they meet the needs of young people we propose:

- to legislate to clarify Local Authorities' duty to secure positive activities for all young people;
- to provide statutory guidance for Local Authorities setting out a new set of national standards for the activities that all young people would benefit from accessing in their free time. This would include:
  - access to two hours per week of sporting activity;
  - access to two hours per week of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups or classes;
  - opportunities to contribute to their communities through volunteering;
  - a wide range of other recreational, cultural, sporting and enriching experiences; and
  - a range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time;
- that each Local Authority, working through children's trust arrangements, should, within existing resources, develop an annual local offer to communicate clearly the national

standards to young people and the range of activities available locally.

**18.** We propose to establish a line of capital funding of £40 million over two years from April 2006 to enable Local Authorities to develop, in conjunction with young people, new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities. We want them to think creatively about what is available for young people locally, with a particular focus on facilities in deprived neighbourhoods.

**19.** Through extended services, schools will have an important part to play in delivering the local offer. We will provide additional central Government support to increase sporting opportunities for older teenagers and those not in school by investing in a network of local youth sport development managers. We also want to explore the scope for giving more young people the opportunity to take part in summer residential events.

**20.** We want young people to have more influence over what is being provided in each locality. They should have more opportunities to be involved in the planning and delivery of services and more opportunities to express their views during local inspections.

#### **Young People as Citizens: Making a Contribution (Chapter 4)**

**21.** The second challenge is how to encourage more young people to volunteer and become involved in their

communities. The new body being established to implement the recommendations of the Russell Commission on volunteering will be tasked with achieving a step-change in the level of volunteering by young people.

**22.** In addition, we want to promote peer mentoring, sustained civic service and a stronger culture of volunteering in schools, colleges and universities. We will also explore in pilots the impact of different types of rewards in encouraging young people to volunteer. We are particularly interested in extending the idea of earning points or credits to be exchanged for a choice of reward.

#### **Supporting Choices: Information, Advice and Guidance (Chapter 5)**

**23.** The third challenge is to provide better support to young people as they make decisions about their careers, education, health and other issues. Difficult transitions have always existed, like that from primary to secondary school. Recent 14-19 reforms mean that young people now face increasingly complex decisions as they approach the age of 14. Those decisions can have a dramatic effect on young people's future wellbeing and on their ability to contribute to wider society and the economy. It is in all of our interests to help them make the right choices.

**24.** We must therefore provide good, impartial and accessible advice which is free from stereotyping. In some circumstances – for example on health

issues – advice should be confidential. It must be provided in a way which recognises how young people live their lives today. That means, for example, taking full advantage of new technology.

25. We propose clear minimum expectations of the information, advice and guidance (IAG) that each young person and their parents should receive. These would be:

- at age 11-12 (year 7): an introduction from a variety of people, including other pupils, to what is on offer within secondary school;
- at age 13-14 (year 9): support in considering post-14 choices and a personal session with an adviser if they or their parents need or want it. This will complement plans for a local 14-19 learning prospectus;
- throughout the teenage years: better help to think through post-16 options, personal social and health issues and career choices;
- an easy-to-access, innovative and independent ICT service through which young people can access national and local information from a variety of sources, including through an easily navigable website, online advisers and a helpline.

26. We want to explore how we might give further impetus to the quality and impartiality of IAG by expressing these expectations in a set of quality standards, on which we will consult.

27. We believe that schools and colleges should be accountable for ensuring the wellbeing and maximum progression of all their pupils and students, including those with severe and complex learning difficulties.

28. To support this and to reflect the wider reforms of services for children and young people set out in *Every Child Matters*, we will devolve responsibility for commissioning IAG and the funding that goes with it, from the Connexions Service to Local Authorities, working through children's trusts, schools and colleges.

29. In devolving funding, we will aim to ensure that young people have a better service linked to the school curriculum and to pastoral care; that services are efficient and cost-effective; and that high-performing Connexions Services are preserved. In most cases, we would expect to see children's trusts, schools and colleges agreeing on new arrangements for commissioning IAG locally. But where schools and colleges believe that local provision is poor, they should have the right to commission the service directly. Following a phased approach from 2006, we would expect these new arrangements to be in place by 2008.

30. Local Authorities would be responsible for commissioning IAG for young people who do not attend a school or college. There will also be times when young people want to seek confidential information and advice – perhaps on physical, emotional and mental health

issues – from a trusted adult who is not linked to where they live or where they are studying.

### All Young People Achieving: Reforming Targeted Support (Chapter 6)

31. The fourth challenge is to provide more tailored and intensive support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble. Problems multiply if they are not addressed and the risk factors involved in many poor outcomes – such as being out of education, employment or training, offending and being victims of crime, teenage conceptions or substance misuse – are often the same. Support services need to meet the overall needs of individual teenagers, rather than approaching them piecemeal.

32. Young people at risk of poor outcomes should therefore receive, via someone they know and trust, an integrated package of support which meets their needs.

33. We want every young person who needs support in a number of overlapping areas to have a nominated lead professional who will be a single point of contact and make sure support is provided in a co-ordinated, convenient and integrated way. We will move towards a clear and simple assessment process so that neither young people nor their family have to retell their story many times to different people. We will also make it easier for young people to access services by

encouraging co-location in schools, voluntary drop-in and health centres, youth facilities and advice shops.

34. We propose to merge a range of existing Government funding programmes which currently focus on specific issues, so that Local Authorities working through children’s trusts can use the funding more flexibly to tackle the needs of young people in a holistic way. We will ask Local Authorities, working with local partners, to use this new flexibility to take the lead on teenage pregnancy and tackling the number of young people not in education, employment or training, while contributing to further progress in dealing with drugs and youth crime, in keeping with their existing duty under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. We expect this to lead to frontline youth support teams focused on prevention and effective early intervention; a step change in the extent to which professionals who support young people engage with parents; and clearer and simpler routes for schools to use when they have pupils with severe problems.

### A Reformed System: Delivering the Proposals (Chapter 7)

35. We will give Local Authorities working through children’s trusts the necessary responsibility, resources, authority and incentives to lead the way towards a more responsive and integrated service for teenagers and their parents.

36. Having a single body responsible and accountable for youth policy and the *Every*



*Child Matters* outcomes in each area will enable integrated planning and commissioning of the full range of services for teenagers from universal activities through to more specialist and targeted support. This will lead to an integrated youth support service, focused on and structured around young people's needs and involving a wide range of providers, including voluntary and community organisations.

37. We need universal and targeted services to work closely together to provide integrated support for young people. These changes will therefore be made in the context of wider reforms to universal services including schools, for example the new Leadership Group on Pupil Behaviour and Discipline.

38. We will support this by merging funding streams and developing together with the inspectorates a single revised system for performance management.

39. The service most affected by these reforms is Connexions. Connexions has pioneered innovative approaches to supporting young people, especially those at risk – for example through the role of the Connexions Personal Adviser and by listening to teenagers and involving them in devising their own package of support. Now in the light of wider *Every Child Matters* and 14-19 reforms, it is important that we integrate Connexions with a wider range of services at local level. We will encourage Local Authorities to retain the Connexions brand and would welcome views on the range of services it might cover.

40. Managing the transition to these new arrangements will be complex. It will be important to maintain a focus during an interim period on the effective delivery of key objectives by services affected by the changes, such as Connexions Partnerships and Youth Services. Subject to consultation, and the success of pilots, we intend that the reforms proposed in this document should be completed by April 2008.

### Having Your Say: Consultation Arrangements (Chapter 8)

41. The consultation period for these proposals will run until 4 November 2005. Final decisions will be made after that. We want to hear the views of all concerned – Local Authorities, schools and colleges, Connexions Partnerships, Youth Services, the private and voluntary and community sectors, the health sector, the wider community and particularly young people and parents.

# 1. Context: Young People and Services Today



## Summary

Young people today have more opportunities than previous generations. Most teenagers take advantage of this and make the transition to independent adulthood successfully. Standards of educational achievement are rising and a higher proportion of young people are in education and training than in 2002.

Yet in other areas there is little improvement or even poorer outcomes. This is the case, for example, with some aspects of teenagers' health such as drinking, sexual health and obesity. A minority of teenagers face serious or multiple problems and some become involved in anti-social behaviour and youth crime.

Government, working with the voluntary sector and parents, must provide the right mix of challenge and support for teenagers in these situations. As well as schools and colleges, four other groups of services have important roles to play, but they are not yet fully meeting young people's needs:

- Youth Services can make a crucial contribution, but they are not doing this everywhere;
- Connexions aims to support and guide all young people, with a focus on those most at risk, but it needs to 'go local' to reflect wider reforms of services for children and young people;
- other mainstream services, such as health, often do not focus sufficiently on young people's particular needs; and
- targeted support programmes help those most at risk, but they are too often fragmented and there is not enough focus on prevention.

Overall, today's system of support for teenagers is not sufficiently focused around the needs of the individual. It is too variable in quality and there is too much bureaucracy and duplication.



42. This first chapter sets the scene for our proposals by exploring how today's teenagers are doing and analysing the services currently available to them.

## Young People Today

### *Most young people are doing well*

43. Most young people today enjoy their teenage years and make the transition to adulthood successfully.

44. The great majority of young people are taking advantage of the expanding opportunities that changes in society and the economy are providing. The internet, mobile phones, digital TV and games consoles have transformed the way they use their leisure time. Texting and chatrooms are for many an essential means of communication. The web is today's newspaper, gossip column and encyclopaedia all rolled into one.

45. Today's young people are:

- learning more – 53.7% of pupils in England now achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C<sup>1</sup>, and the percentage of 16-18 year olds in learning had increased to 75.1% by 2003<sup>2</sup>;
- enterprising – 15% of 16-18 year olds in England are thinking about starting

their own business and another 5% are already engaged in some form of entrepreneurial activity<sup>3</sup>;

- contributing – 45% of 16-24 year olds participate at least once a month in informal volunteering – the highest level for any age group<sup>4</sup>.

46. In recent years some key outcomes for teenagers have shown marked improvement:

- smoking among young people aged 11-15 years has fallen from 13% in 1996 to 9% in 2004<sup>5</sup>;
- between 1998 and 2003, the under-18 conception rate, while high by international standards, fell by 9.8%<sup>6</sup>; and
- levels of drug use among 11-15 year olds have fallen slightly since 2001 while use of serious drugs has remained stable<sup>7</sup>.

### *Young people face challenges in growing up*

47. However, the teenage years are also a time of transition and challenges – these can relate to a wide range of issues including study, money, employment, self-esteem, health, housing, parents and relationships. These challenges may be greater for young

1 DfES (2005) SFR 01/2005

2 DfES(2005) SFR – *Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16-18 year olds in England: 1985 to 2003 (Revised)*

3 *SBS Household Survey of Entrepreneurship 2003*, NOP, April 2004

4 Munton, T and Zuruwan, A (2004) *Active Communities: Headline Findings from the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey*

5 NatCen and NFER (2005) *Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England in 2004*, Headline Figures (revised 15 April 2005), Department of Health, London

6 Dennison, C (2004) *Teenage Pregnancy: An overview of the research evidence*, Teenage Pregnancy Unit and Health Development Agency; DWP (2004) *Opportunity for All: Sixth Annual Report*, DWP, London

7 NatCen and NFER (2005) *Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England in 2004*, Headline Figures (revised 15 April 2005), Department of Health, London

people who have disabilities, for those with special educational needs (SEN), for those who are homeless or who are in care and for teenagers from some black and minority ethnic groups.

**48.** Research shows that disabled young people have lower levels of satisfaction with their lives than non-disabled people of the same age<sup>8</sup> and are less successful at making the transition to adult life. In addition, fewer than one in eight children with SEN reach the expected level in English and Maths by 14, and only one in twenty achieves at least 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE/GNVQ<sup>9</sup>. Almost a quarter of young people with SEN or disabilities while at school are not in education, employment or training by the age of 19<sup>10</sup>.

**49.** There are significant differences in educational attainment across different ethnic groups. Some groups, including Chinese, Indian and Irish pupils, are consistently above the national average at all ages, while others, including Black-African, Black-Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Gypsy Roma pupils and Travellers of Irish heritage, are consistently below the national average<sup>11</sup>.

**50.** Young people who are homeless or living in temporary accommodation can

also face particular difficulties. A survey found that 68% of homeless households believe their children were experiencing problems at school as a direct result.<sup>12</sup>

**51.** Some teenagers have health problems, including chronic clinical conditions such as asthma or diabetes. In the key areas of sexual health, obesity, alcohol, volatile substance abuse<sup>13</sup> and mental health, the health of adolescents is either worsening or static. This is in contrast to marked improvements in the health of younger children and older people over the last thirty years. Some young people get into bad habits such as binge-drinking or drugs. Young people are in fact the heaviest drinkers, and are more likely than all other age groups to binge-drink<sup>14</sup>. As well as harming their physical health, this can lead to violence and accidents.

**52.** Evidence suggests that at least 10% of young people have a diagnosable mental disorder<sup>15</sup>. Mental problems can interfere with young people's ability to learn, develop and maintain relationships and to deal with the difficulties they face.

**53.** A small minority of young people become involved in anti-social behaviour which is a serious problem for the wider community. 1,700 young people received

8 T Burchardt, referenced in *Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People* – Prime Minister's Strategy Unit

9 SEN strategy *Removing Barriers to Achievement*

10 Youth Cohort Study 2001, reported in the SEN strategy *Removing Barriers to Achievement*

11 *Race Equality in Public Services (2005)* Home Office

12 *Living in Limbo* (2003), Shelter

13 The Government will be publishing its Framework for Volatile Substance Abuse during July 2005

14 HDA report *Binge drinking in the UK and on the continent* (2004)

15 *The Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Great Britain*. Office for National Statistics, 2000 (Meltzer, Gatward, R, Goodman, R, et al. (2000))

an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) between April 1999 and September 2004 and 9% of 10-25 year olds reported that they had committed other types of offence<sup>16</sup>. The volume of anti-social behaviour and crime for which young people are responsible overall is significant – nearly one third of crime is committed by 13-19 year olds<sup>17</sup>.

54. Evidence shows that many of the risk factors identified above overlap – the same young people often experience a number of related problems. For example, one third of young offenders need help with reading and writing<sup>18</sup>, about one fifth of children and adolescents in families without a working parent have a mental disorder<sup>19</sup>, almost all juvenile offenders report having used an illegal drug in the past<sup>20</sup>, and teenage mothers are 50 per cent more likely to be depressed<sup>21</sup>.

### Services for Young People Today

55. Government funded services are not the only – or even necessarily the most important – source of opportunity, challenge and support for young people. Parents are the strongest influences on their children's lives. The voluntary and community sector also plays an important role independent of Government, often providing innovative ways of reaching

some of the most vulnerable young people who are at risk of being missed by other services. Faith, sports and other youth groups, scouting, guiding and other national youth movements and schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and Community Service Volunteers between them provide millions of opportunities for young people each year.

56. But public services do have a key role to play. It is important that they strike the right mix of support and challenge, particularly when teenagers are involved in anti-social behaviour and crime.

57. In the recent White Paper, *14-19 Education and Skills*, we set out the strengths and weaknesses of the education system and the measures we need to take to improve it. The changes recommended will help many teenagers. However, outside the education system there are four further services which provide opportunities, support and challenge. While there is much that is good about them – not least the skill and commitment of the many people who work in them – there is much that could be better.

### Youth services

58. Local Authority Youth Services are the only publicly-funded and nationwide service focused on the personal and social

16 *Young People, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour*, Home Office (2005)

17 Home Office Criminal Statistics, England and Wales, 2003

18 University of Oxford (2002) *Evaluation of ASSET*, YJB cited in Audit Commission (2004) *Youth Justice 2004* Audit Commission, London

19 Meltzer, H et al(2000) *Mental Health of children and adolescents in Great Britain*, ONS: Government Statistical Service, London

20 Youth Justice Board (2004) *Substance Misuse and the juvenile secure estate*, YJB: London

21 Analysis of Millennium Cohort Study by Mayhew, E and Bradshaw, J (2005) *Children's Health and development* in Dex, S and Joshi, H (eds) (forthcoming) *Babies of the New Millennium: babies of the 21st century*, London, Policy Press

development of young people. Youth work takes place in a range of venues, such as neighbourhood centres, youth clubs, schools, college sites and through detached or outreach work, or in specialist projects. The voluntary and community sector also delivers a large range of youth work activity, working closely with the Local Authority service in many cases. There are many examples of outstanding practice across the country making a dramatic difference to young people's lives.

59. There has been further progress to raise the quality and quantity of youth work through the Transforming Youth Work Agenda and the vision set out in *Resourcing Excellent Youth Services*. Where Local Authorities value and prioritise the Youth Service, it can be excellent. However, we know – not least from recent Ofsted inspections – that there are highly variable levels of provision and quality.

### Connexions

60. Connexions was established in 2001 with the aim of providing a comprehensive service to meet young people's needs for support and guidance through a Personal Adviser. The Connexions Service was designed to help all young people, with a particular focus on those at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET), or of being socially excluded. It has had a number of successes in providing better support for young people not in education, employment or

training. It has high levels of customer satisfaction and a strong inspection record.

61. Connexions' holistic approach – delivering tailored and integrated services to support the best outcomes for children and young people – is consistent with the fundamental principles of *Every Child Matters*. However, we believe that it is now time for the support and guidance services provided by Connexions to 'go local' so that they can be more fully included and integrated with the whole range of services for young people and their parents.

### Mainstream services

62. Mainstream services other than education, such as health services, play an important role. However, local Primary Care Trusts and Hospital Trusts have not always ensured that there are sufficient good quality health services – including mental health services for children and adolescents – to meet the specific needs of young people. The *Every Child Matters* reforms, the creation of children's trusts and the duty on public agencies to work together and co-operate are designed to address this issue. In each locality children's trusts will play a leading role in helping to co-ordinate and implement the national standards set out in the Government's 10-year programme for improving young people's health<sup>22</sup>. The standards set the norm for the services which should be provided for young people at different ages.

### *Targeted support programmes*

**63.** Since 1997, there have been a series of *targeted programmes* to provide additional support to young people facing a range of problems – for example Youth Offending Teams, Positive Activities for Young People, Positive Futures and the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. However, they have developed piecemeal over time and often several schemes focus different types of intervention on the same individuals.

**64.** Young people often experience a range of problems at the same time, and can therefore be in contact with a number of different services and professionals, from those with a broad remit like Connexions and social services to those that focus on particular problems, such as the Education Welfare Service and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Sometimes support from different programmes is well co-ordinated. But too often vulnerable young people and their parents have to tell their story several times to different professionals. Different agencies either do not talk to each other or fail to join up their response. There is considerable scope for moving towards a more coherent service.

**65.** The different priorities of individual programmes and services can also mean that interventions happen too late or are ineffective in dealing with the full range of young people's needs. That can mean there is not enough emphasis on prevention and on supporting young people to ensure

their problems do not become worse. This is particularly important because it may reduce the capacity of services to stop young people getting involved in crime and anti-social behaviour. Targeted programmes can be most effective when providing a route for young people back into mainstream services – for example, helping young people who have been excluded to return to school.

### *Today's system*

**66.** In addition to these specific issues there are a number of areas where system-wide improvement is needed.

**67.** Today's system does not take full account of the ways in which young people want to access services. Services are often not available at convenient times or in convenient places. Nor do they always take account of how strong the influence of other young people can be or of the need young people sometimes have for services that are confidential. Young people also have strong expectations of being able to access services using the latest technologies.

**68.** Existing services could do more to strike the right balance between challenge and support. For many young people receipt of services should not be seen as an unconditional benefit. Services too need to develop new ways of challenging teenagers who are engaged in anti-social behaviour.

### ***Examples of Targeted Support Programmes***

*Education Welfare Services* provide support for young people of school age, often following a referral from a school following unauthorised absences or other concerns. Work usually focuses on child welfare issues and parenting support programmes.

*Positive Activities for Young People* provides support for young people aged 8-17 who are at risk of committing crime, anti-social behaviour, truancy and exclusion. Young people are provided with support, guidance and opportunities to undertake positive activities including summer activity schemes.

*Positive Futures* is a national sports-based programme aimed at socially excluded young people. The programme helps young people aged 10-19 who are at risk of, or engaging in, anti-social behaviour to develop non-cognitive skills through sports coaching and volunteering. It also helps them to identify pathways to education, employment and training.

The *Teenage Pregnancy Strategy* is a multi-faceted approach which includes helping young people to resist pressure to have early sex, improving sex and relationships education, and providing access to effective contraception and sexual health services. Local co-ordinators provide a mix of targeted and universal support to young people and their parents.

*Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services* support the emotional and mental health of children and young people. Up to 2 million under-16s in England may require help at some time, of whom about half suffer from mental health disorders and a smaller number have severe mental illnesses.

The *Young People's Development Programme* is a three-year initiative funded by the Department of Health in partnership with the Department for Education and Skills. The aim is to address risk behaviour for young people aged 13-15 – especially in relation to teenage pregnancy, substance misuse and educational attainment. Subject to positive evaluation, the Department of Health would wish to encourage children's trusts to apply the approach of the programme more widely.

69. A further problem is that too often services fail to take proper account of the role of parents. Parents of teenagers often feel isolated, and find it hard to access appropriate information and support. Yet evidence shows that parents' influence is

key and both parents and teenagers want greater parental involvement. Whilst we have championed the development of improved support for parents through Sure Start and other initiatives, we know that there is more to do for parents of teenagers.



70. Young people with additional needs, including disabled young people, also find that services do not always meet their expectations or needs. The new duties which Local Authorities will have from 2006 under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people, including young disabled people, will provide a framework for addressing these concerns. The new duties build on authorities' existing duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 not to discriminate against disabled people in the provision of services and to plan to increase access to schools for disabled pupils.

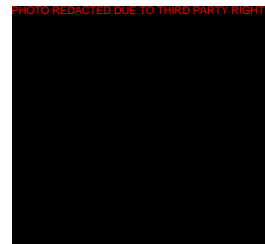
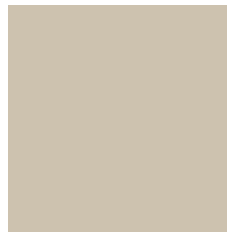
71. Finally, although the public, private and voluntary and community sectors all provide services for young people, public agencies are not being competitive or creative enough in commissioning innovative and high quality services and in ensuring that the taxpayer gets value for money. Not only does this lead to inefficiencies, but it also means that they are failing to deliver services tailored appropriately to young people's needs.

72. In summary, while there is much good work to build on, in today's system:

- services do not always meet the needs of individual young people;
- the various organisations providing services and help for young people do not work together as effectively or imaginatively as they should, with the result that money and effort is wasted;
- not enough is being done to prevent young people from drifting into a life of poverty or crime;
- services are failing to exploit the full potential of the internet, mobile phones and other new technologies; and
- teenagers and their parents do not have enough say in what is provided.

73. Against this background, and in the context of the *Every Child Matters* reforms, this paper sets out our proposals to ensure that all our services for teenagers are as strong as the best services are now.

## 2. Vision, Challenges and Principles: Our Approach to Reform



### Summary

Our vision for reform is to create an integrated system which is responsive to the needs of the individual, which supports all teenagers to achieve the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes, and which strikes an appropriate balance between supporting and challenging young people.

We believe that to do this, reform must address four key challenges. These are:

- how to engage more young people in positive activities and empower them to shape the services they receive;
- how to encourage more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities;
- how to provide better information, advice and guidance to young people to help them make informed choices about their lives; and
- how to provide better and more personalised intensive support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble.

The principles on which we have developed proposals to tackle these challenges are:

- making services more responsive to what young people and parents want;
- balancing greater opportunities and support with promoting young people's responsibilities;
- making services for young people more integrated, efficient and effective;
- improving outcomes for all young people, while narrowing the gap between those who do well and those who do not;
- involving a wide range of organisations from the voluntary, community and private sectors in order to increase choice and secure the best outcomes; and
- building on the best of what is currently provided.



74. This chapter sets out our overall vision for reform, the challenges that future services for young people must meet and the principles on which our proposals are based.

### Our Vision

75. We want to build on the ambition and the approach of *Every Child Matters* – a radical and far-reaching programme designed to ensure that all children and young people meet five key outcomes. These cover what young people themselves have told us matters most:

- being healthy;
- staying safe;
- enjoying and achieving;
- making a positive contribution; and
- achieving economic wellbeing.

76. Applying the principles of *Every Child Matters* in full to services for teenagers means planning and commissioning services in an integrated way – across the spectrum from universal activities to specialist and targeted support. Children’s trusts will lead this process in each area, leading the development of an integrated youth support service, with integrated governance, processes and frontline delivery.

77. We believe there will be a wide consensus that this vision for teenagers is

the right one and that the challenges and principles of reform set out below are the right basis on which to move forward.

### Key Challenges

78. Achieving this vision will mean meeting a number of challenges head on. The proposals in chapters 3-6 respond to four key challenges.

#### *Engaging more young people in positive activities and empowering them to shape the services they receive*

79. There are too few positive activities which are attractive for young people. This is a worry not only for young people but also for their parents and the wider community. First, evidence shows that a quarter of young people do not participate in positive activities. Young people who do not participate are more likely to come from disadvantaged groups<sup>23</sup>. Secondly, the right kind of involvement can make a significant contribution to improving outcomes and life chances, particularly helping with personal and social development<sup>24</sup>. Thirdly, and crucially for the wider community, there is evidence that being involved in positive activities helps prevent teenagers from being drawn into anti-social behaviour and crime<sup>25</sup>.

23 Park, Phillips and Johnson *Young people in Britain: the attitudes and experiences of 12-19 year olds* DFES 2004

24 Feinstein, L et al (2004) *Leisure Contexts in Adolescence and their effects on Adult Outcomes* Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning Institute of Education, University of London. Gaskin, K (2004) *Young People, Volunteering and Civic Service – A review of the literature* Report for the Institute for Volunteering Research

25 *Communities that Care, Risk and Protective Factors*, Youth Justice Board, 2005

### *Encouraging more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities*

**80.** Volunteering, being actively involved in a community, and taking or being given responsibility in an organisation broadens horizons, improves confidence and builds skills. That is the case for all of us but especially so for young people. Evidence shows that volunteering can make teenagers more employable by improving skills such as communication and team working<sup>26</sup>. Participation in international programmes such as the EU-funded European Voluntary Service (EVS) can also have benefits, particularly for disadvantaged young people. Many young people are already active citizens – they are willing to take action to get change and, despite low levels of voting after they turn 18, show high levels of interest in politics<sup>27</sup>. We need to convince young people that their contribution matters and to create the opportunities and the support to sustain their engagement.

### *How to provide better information, advice and guidance to young people to help them make informed choices about their lives*

**81.** All young people need impartial and good quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) to help them make key life choices. They often need help with decisions about learning and careers and also with life choices like health and

relationships. Most of the support young people need on these issues comes from their parents, their wider family and their peers, although public services like schools and Connexions also have an important role to play. However, the quality of IAG provided is variable and sometimes fails to meet young people's preferences or needs.

### *How to provide better and more personalised intensive support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble*

**82.** Some young people need intensive and tailored targeted support to cope with a wide range of problems. However, support is too often fragmented and there is not enough emphasis on prevention. Commissioning and delivery of targeted services needs to be brought together more coherently within children's trusts.

### *Meeting these challenges*

**83.** Meeting these challenges is what this paper is about. It aims to build on the best of what is on offer now and on the contributions of all those who currently work so hard to support teenagers. It also recognises and responds to the increasing diversity of 21st century Britain and the changes that have happened in the last decades – changes which have affected families, education, technology, the economy and wider society.

<sup>26</sup> Institute for Volunteering Research (2002) *UK-Wide Evaluation of Millennium Volunteers*

<sup>27</sup> Electoral Commission, 2005

84. The paper should be read alongside other Government proposals and policies:

- *Supporting Young People to Achieve* sets out the Government's vision for a coherent system to provide financial support to young people, encouraging them to engage in education and training or to combine work with training post-16. Building on the analysis first set out in the Social Exclusion Unit report *Bridging the Gap*, it includes both short and long-term reforms designed to support young people's choices, ensure decent minimum income levels and improve access to financial support.
- The Public Health White Paper *Choosing Health*, and the *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services* include important policies and standards for improving the health of young people.
- The Social Exclusion Unit in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will produce a report later in 2005 looking at the transition to adult life for young disadvantaged people with multiple or complex problems.

85. Our proposals complement reforms to the 14-19 curriculum and qualifications. They are also closely linked to our plans to develop extended school services and they take account of the Russell Commission's proposals for a national framework for youth action and engagement.

86. The proposals in this paper will reinforce these wider policies by steering

young people towards the right study and employment options, encouraging healthy lifestyles, enriching the curriculum, incentivising volunteering and recognising their achievements.

### Our Principles

87. Our approach to reform is based on six principles:

#### *Making services more responsive to what young people and parents want*

88. Local involvement is about more than just consulting – important though that is. We must give teenagers and their parents a real voice in decision-making and, increasingly, put spending power in their hands. This will ensure that services improve and become more responsive to what local people want. We must adopt the same approach for parents as we move towards the provision of a local menu of information, advice and support that best meets their needs.

#### *Balancing greater opportunities and support with promoting young people's responsibilities*

89. We want a system in which young people have a clear expectation of the support and opportunities available to them, but also a clear understanding that these benefits are not unconditional – young people also have responsibilities. Involvement by some teenagers in anti-social behaviour affects the view the wider community has of all young people.

While this is clearly unfair to most teenagers, we cannot allow it to distract us from being clear that poor behaviour is not acceptable. We should outline what is unacceptable and – drawing on evidence of what is practical and what works – sanctions should be used in response to any breaches.

*Making services for young people more integrated, efficient and effective*

90. Our aim is a system that is more responsive to teenagers and which allows greater freedom for the frontline and more scope to innovate. We want joined-up services focused on and matched to individuals' needs. We need Local Authorities with the ambition to make a reality of the vision. As we cut duplication and merge funding streams, we want to encourage them to use funding flexibly and imaginatively and to free up resources to re-invest in local services and improve outcomes for teenagers.

*Improving outcomes for all young people, while narrowing the gap between those who do well and those who do not*

91. In line with *Every Child Matters*, we want a system that works for all young people. But we also recognise that some young people face particular challenges in accessing the services they need or in achieving the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes. This includes young people living in deprived areas and those who are homeless or in care or who have poor mental health. Many of our proposals are

intended specifically to improve the prospects of young people in these groups.

*Involving a wide range of organisations from the voluntary, community and private sectors in order to increase choice and secure the best outcomes*

92. The public sector alone cannot make these reforms happen. Outcomes and teenagers' life chances can be improved most where we take the best from the public sector, the private sector and the voluntary and community sector, each contributing their particular strengths. Choice for young people will help drive greater diversity in the system. We want to see children's trusts at the heart of these developments, orchestrating a mixed economy of services and opportunities for young people.

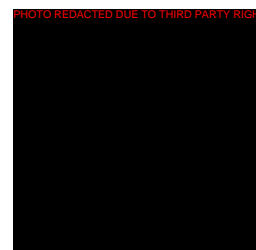
*Building on the best of what is currently provided*

93. There are many able and inspiring people working with teenagers and many excellent local services – in the voluntary, community and private sectors as well as the public sector. Improving services for teenagers depends on these people and we need to build on their strengths and commitment. So where public services for young people are strong and successful, they should thrive and grow. Where local voluntary bodies or private sector providers are strong, they should do likewise. And where what is available is weaker it must be improved or replaced. With all the changes we make, we are clear that we must manage transitions carefully – not

disrupting services or the work of those on whom teenagers depend. We will introduce reforms with care, with consultation and with the needs of the workforce in mind.

**94.** The following chapters take each of the four challenges in turn and detail how, informed by the principles set out above, we propose to respond.

### 3. Empowering Young People: Things to do and Places to go



#### Summary

All young people should have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of positive activities in their leisure time. We want more young people to take part in these activities by empowering them to shape what is on offer. We want to put them in control of the things to do and places to go in their area and give them greater choice over the activities in which they participate. We need to focus particularly on young people who are disadvantaged or who are not currently participating in positive activities.

We therefore propose to put buying power directly in the hands of young people themselves by:

- supporting Local Authorities to develop and pilot ‘opportunity cards’. Cards would give young people discounts on activities and could be ‘topped up’ by young people, parents and Local Authorities with money for young people to spend on their choice of sports and other constructive activities from a range of accredited providers. The Government would contribute a subsidy to top up the cards of disadvantaged 13-16 year olds. This subsidy would be withheld from young people whose behaviour is unacceptable and the card suspended or withdrawn;
- making an ‘opportunity fund’ available in each Local Authority to be spent at young people’s discretion on projects to improve things to do and places to go in their area.

Local Authorities working through children’s trusts have a central role to play in providing and commissioning activities for young people. To help ensure activities are of a more consistent quality and that they meet the needs of young people we propose to:

- legislate to clarify Local Authorities’ duty to secure positive activities for young people, as both commissioners and providers, creating clearer roles and lines of accountability at Local Authority level;

- define a new set of national standards for positive activities; and support Local Authorities in developing a local offer; and
- re-invigorate youth work by building on the ideas set out in *Transforming Youth Work* and recognising its vital role in engaging young people.

We propose to establish capital funding of £40 million over two years from April 2006 to enable Local Authorities to develop new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities, particularly in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. We also want children's trusts to think creatively about the range of facilities available to young people.

Government support for sporting opportunities for older teenagers will be increased by investing in a network of local youth sport development managers. We also want to explore the scope for giving more young people the opportunity to take part in summer residential events.

Young people will have the opportunity to be involved more closely in the planning, delivery and inspection of all publicly funded services in their area.

We expect young people to take advantage of these new opportunities responsibly. Sanctions should be applied where this does not happen.

**95.** This chapter sets out our proposals for giving teenagers real influence over the range and nature of services on offer locally, particularly those that provide positive activities for young people. It sets out ways in which we aim to increase the availability of such activities.

### Context

**96.** The provision of positive activities is currently patchy and of variable quality across the country. This is a key concern for young people, their parents and the wider community<sup>28</sup>.

**97.** Taking part in sports, constructive activities in clubs, groups or classes and volunteering during the teenage years has a positive impact on outcomes in later life: increasing educational attainment; reducing offending and smoking; and reducing the likelihood of depression<sup>29</sup>. There is also evidence that involvement in positive activities helps prevent teenagers from being drawn into anti-social behaviour and crime<sup>30</sup>. Wider activities can also help to broaden young people's horizons, developing their understanding of other cultures and religions and key issues such as sustainable development.

28 MORI/ Audit Commission (2002)

29 Feinstein, L et al (2004) *Leisure Contexts in Adolescence and their effects on Adult Outcomes* Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education, University of London

30 *Communities that Care, Risk and Protective Factors*, Youth Justice Board, 2005



98. However, whilst the clear majority of young people say they take part in these activities, around a quarter say they do not<sup>31</sup>. This latter group is more likely to be poor or from black or minority ethnic communities. Participation also falls off as teenagers grow older. This is particularly noticeable in sport where there is a sharp decline in participation post-16.

99. When asked why they do not participate more in sports or other constructive activities, young people most commonly say that they lack both time and interest<sup>32</sup>. This may be due to the poor quality of what is available or to young people's negative perceptions of activities in general. Other reasons may include a lack of information, cost, safety and transport problems, and a lack of confidence or support from friends. For some young people, such as disabled young people, other factors can limit access to social activities<sup>33</sup>.

### Our Vision

100. Young people should have access to the kind and quality of activities that they want and have a greater range of opportunities to choose from. For that to happen, services need to be more responsive and varied.

101. That is why we plan to give young people more control and choice over what is on offer in their area. Funding for

providers will be directly linked to young people's choice about the activities in which they take part. This in turn should prompt providers to involve young people more closely in designing and delivering services.

102. While focusing effort and resources on those who do not currently participate in activities, we want to increase the access that all young people have to beneficial activities which enrich their lives and contribute to achieving the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes. As we do this, we want to give young people a much clearer sense of what they can expect to be on offer in their local area, as well as their responsibilities in accessing activities and contributing to their community.

### Our Proposals

#### Opportunity cards

103. To give young people real influence and choice over the activities that are available in their local area, we propose to provide support for Local Authorities to develop 'opportunity cards' for young people – where possible building on existing youth card schemes.

104. Opportunity cards would provide card holders with access to a range of discounts on things to do and places to go and from high street stores. They could also be 'topped up' with money to spend on young people's choice of sports and

31 Park, Phillips and Johnson *Young people in Britain: the attitudes and experiences of 12-19 year olds* DFES 2004

32 YWCA (2002) *Joining the Survey*, YWCA; *Young People's (11-15yr old) boost to 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey*, Home Office, London; Somerset County Youth Service (2000), *Your Leisure, Your Needs, Your Views*, Somerset CC

33 National Opinion Poll *A survey of the views and experiences of young disabled people in Great Britain*, Disability Rights Commission (2003)



other constructive activities. Cards would also carry a photo and act as proof of age. This will be useful to young people and will strengthen initiatives to reduce under-age sales of tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances.

**105.** We will look for at least eight Local Authorities with a range of different characteristics to pilot opportunity cards between 2006 and 2008.

**106.** National discounts would be negotiated with large providers of sports, culture and recreational activities, subject to an ethical framework that ensures that all developments take account of the health impact on young people. A number of companies have confirmed they are interested in working further with the Government to develop the scheme. In addition, we would expect Local Authorities to negotiate a range of discounts with local providers of activities. We would also aim to make available through opportunity cards the wide range of discounts currently available through the Connexions Card (see paragraph 114).

**107.** As part of the pilots, we propose to support Local Authorities to develop and trial ways of topping up cards with money to spend on sports and other constructive activities included in a new set of national standards (see paragraph 124). This would enable parents, grandparents and others to give money to young people knowing that it could only be spent on beneficial activities. Young people would also be able to top up their card themselves, as would

Government, Local Authorities and other organisations wishing to promote participation in these activities.

**108.** Young people would be able to use their opportunity card to pay for activities, in the same way as they might use a debit card. However, payments could only be made to accredited providers of sports and other constructive activities. A wide range of providers, including large commercial companies, public services, schools and colleges, voluntary sector organisations and small community-led groups could be accredited. We want young people to be able to use their opportunity cards across Local Authority boundaries.

**109.** Putting spending power in the hands of young people will make sports and constructive activities more affordable. It will also mean that young people's choices influence directly what is available – ensuring that the activities available are those that young people want and will use.

**110.** Opportunity cards would provide each children's trust with an additional way of increasing young people's access to activities in their area. Subject to piloting we could therefore expect to see a shift in Local Authority funding for activities from the direct funding of providers to top-ups for young people's opportunity cards.

**111.** Additional top-ups for opportunity cards could also be used to incentivise young people and reward them for:

- volunteering or contributing to their communities;

- achieving excellence, for example in attendance or attainment at school or college; or
- reaching milestones in improving their situation.

112. As with all children’s trusts’ work, we would expect Local Authorities to involve young people closely in developing their opportunity card. Young people could be involved in identifying and negotiating discounts, identifying providers of positive activities on which they could spend their top-ups, reviewing and writing about different activities, or designing the look of the card itself.

113. If, through evaluation, pilots demonstrate that opportunity cards can be successful in encouraging young people’s participation in activities, we will establish a national scheme to support the roll-out of local opportunity cards across the country. We will continue to learn from

how cards are being used in some parts of the UK and across Europe to increase young people’s opportunities and access to activities.

114. We will also learn from the experience of developing the Connexions Card which uses rewards to motivate the participation and attendance of 16-19 year olds in post-16 education. Connexions Card also uses rewards to motivate positive behaviours, achievement and active citizenship, and provides a range of national and local discounts. We will be making decisions about the future of Connexions Card in the light of opportunity cards and the evaluation of pilots.

115. Subject to piloting, Government is also proposing to provide a one-off top-up for all new card holders and to top up the cards of disadvantaged 13-16 year olds each month with money to spend on activities. We will explore in pilots the

In Scotland, young people receive an entitlement card from their Local Authority in conjunction with **Young Scot**, the national information service. The Young Scot logo on the card gives young people access to shopping and leisure discounts in Scotland and across Europe. Every discounter is listed on the Young Scot website as well as in the Young Scot information book that is given to every young person as they enter and leave secondary school. Young people are involved in negotiating discounts and writing for the web about things to do in their area. In many cases the cards also provide access to other Local Authority services such as libraries, leisure centres and schools. Eighty per cent of 12-18 year olds in Scotland carry a Young Scot card.

In the **Rhone-Alpes** region of France all young people can apply for a card from the regional government that gives them a range of benefits. These include €38 towards membership of a sports club, €22 to try a new sport and €8 for cultural activities. Young people use the card to pay for these benefits at a range of approved providers.

extent to which this subsidy might be made dependent on contributions from young people or their parents. We will also look at how subsidies and support might address the additional barriers to participation faced by disabled young people.

**116.** Increased opportunities do not come for free. They have to be paid for – by parents as well as local and central government. We therefore expect young people to respect the opportunities made available to them and their increased say in shaping services. We will therefore not top up the opportunity cards of young people engaging in unacceptable behaviour, especially any form of anti-social or criminal behaviour, or abusing the opportunities and services provided. In these circumstances, we believe that Local Authorities should withdraw or suspend use of the card. The way in which such sanctions might be applied and managed would be explored in the pilot schemes.

**117.** We will work with Local Authorities to examine the practical and technological

issues around opportunity cards and the scope for integrating them with smart cards providing access to other local services. In particular we will look at the Government Connect platform on which Local Authorities are developing online services for citizens.

### *Opportunity funds*

**118.** We will make available a budget in each Local Authority to be spent at young people's discretion on projects to improve things to do and places to go in their area. 'Opportunity funds' would enable young people to establish their own small-scale projects, for example renting space in a community centre to put on activities, establishing a neighbourhood council or youth café, or running sports leagues and tournaments. Initiatives such as YouthBank and the Local Network Fund provide good examples from which to learn. As the Russell Commission highlighted, such initiatives need to be accompanied by

**YouthBank** supports young people acting as grant makers to other groups of young people who want to undertake projects or activities in their communities. The initiative fosters young people's sense of initiative and community and helps them to make decisions and judgements.

Some of those who have received grants through the **Bradford YouthBank** have in turn gone on to become grant makers themselves – even though they have often not previously been involved in organised community activity. Some young people have gone on to take on voluntary roles while others have become qualified youth workers.

YouthBank now has a contract with the Big Lottery Fund to support young people's involvement in Regional Panels responsible for allocating £40 million of lottery money.

The democratically elected **Young Mayor of Lewisham** advises the Mayor, the Council, the police and others to make sure that young people's views are taken into account when they make their decisions. The Young Mayor has £25,000 to spend on projects that will improve the lives of young people throughout the whole of Lewisham. He is supported by a Deputy and a Children and Young People's Advisory Group, as well as a borough-wide Young Citizens' Panel.

proper support to young people if they are to be successful.

**119.** Each Local Authority would be expected to advertise how young people could access their local opportunity fund and what criteria would be used to allocate money. This might be different in different areas – for example, allocation might be through existing young people's councils or a bidding process. It would also be possible to require some matched funding to be raised by young people themselves before they could access their local opportunity fund, giving the sense of an earned entitlement. We will ask Local Authorities to involve as wide a group of young people as possible in deciding the use of the opportunity fund and to give particular attention to engaging disadvantaged young people.

### *The role of Local Authorities*

**120.** Local Authorities will continue to have a key role in ensuring the availability of high quality activities for young people. We propose to ensure that Local Authorities develop this role in two ways – by clarifying their statutory duty and by consulting on a new set of national

standards which would create a framework for local offers.

### *A revised statutory duty*

**121.** We propose to legislate to clarify Local Authorities' duty to secure positive activities for young people, as both commissioners and providers.

**122.** We also plan to issue supporting guidance that will focus on the central role of young people in making decisions about activities and facilities for them. The guidance will stress the overarching importance of understanding and meeting the needs of young people. It will also ensure that the particular needs of young people who face specific barriers to accessing activities (including disabled young people, homeless young people, those living in remote rural areas and those from particular cultural and faith backgrounds) are taken into account by children's trusts when planning and commissioning activities.

**123.** We will also revise existing performance indicators to ensure that they reflect more explicitly the new national standards on activities and the level of satisfaction of young people and parents.

### *New national standards*

**124.** To reinforce the importance of activities for young people, the Government proposes to consult upon a new set of national standards. These would articulate for the first time an ambition for the positive activities that all young people would benefit from accessing in their free time. We will consult on whether the standards are focused on the right issues, and whether they are achievable and deliverable within existing resources.

**125.** We propose that the national standards should include:

- access to two hours per week of sporting activity;
- access to two hours per week of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes;
- opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering;
- a wide range of other recreational, cultural, sporting and enriching experiences; and
- a range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time.

**126.** These national standards aim to encompass the full range of exciting and enriching activities in which young people might wish to engage in their free time:

- Sporting activity includes formal and informal team and individual sports; outdoor and adventurous sports; and

other physical activities such as aerobics and dance.

- Other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes includes activities in which young people pursue their interests and hobbies; activities contributing to their personal, social and spiritual development; activities encouraging creativity, innovation and enterprise; study support; informal learning; and residential opportunities.
- Volunteering includes the full range of ways in which young people can make a contribution to their local communities, including leading action, campaigning and fundraising.
- Other experiences include less structured activity that nonetheless contributes to a rich and varied life outside school or work, such as somewhere safe to hang out with friends, travel within the UK and abroad, and visits to music, arts, heritage and sporting events.

### *Local offers*

**127.** We propose that each children's trust will develop (with young people and parents) its own annual local offer about things to do and places to go in the area.

**128.** The local offer would be made up of three elements:

- a high-level summary of the local offer which would tell young people about the national standards and provide a

- clear statement of what is available for them locally;
  - an annual 'activities handbook' for all young people which would detail the range of things to do and places to go in the local area. This would also set out local charging arrangements, whether there is a local opportunity card and if so how and where it can be used, and young people's responsibilities when participating in activities; and
  - a statement about young people's responsibilities to behave appropriately and treat their communities with respect. This would set out how any sanctions would work, and what types of rewards are available for different activities – such as rewards for volunteering as discussed in chapter 4.
129. An example of what the high-level summary of a local offer might look like is set out below.

### ***Example: Your Local Offer***

The Government has recently published new national standards for things to do and places to go. They say that ALL young people would benefit from accessing a wide range of activities in their free time.

We are looking at ways to make these standards real for every young person in this area.

- If you are 13-19 years old you can have a new **opportunity card** to give you discounts on a range of things to do and places to go in your free time. The card also has an opening bonus to spend on sports or activities of your choice. You or your parents can top this up at any time, and if you are 13-16 you may also be eligible to get more money from us every month to help you take up new things in your free time.
- You can spend money from your card on a wide **range of activities** – dance, drama, making music, sports and outdoor activities – from a variety of organisations.
- There are also loads of opportunities to get involved in making things better in the local community by **volunteering**.
- If you have ideas about how to make things to do and places to go in the area better, we have an **opportunity fund** available to help you put your ideas into practice. There is also money available to improve facilities and equipment.
- If you have **something to say** about things to do and places to go in the local area, we are committed to acting on your suggestions.

The Activities Handbook which comes with this statement sets out all you need to know about things to do and places to go in the area, where you can use your card, how you can access the opportunity fund, and how you can let us know what you think.



**130.** Underpinning the local offer would be a detailed analysis of the things to do and places to go for teenagers in the local area. This would be conducted by the children's trust as part of integrated planning and commissioning contributing to the development of their Children and Young People's Plan. It would involve:

- an analysis of the full range of local activities from all sectors, mapped against a detailed understanding of the composition of the local teenage population (taking into account age, ethnicity, geography, disability and disadvantage);
- what young people say they need;
- evidence of what works in securing better outcomes;
- an understanding of who is currently benefiting from activities and services and who is not; and
- the views of parents and voluntary and community organisations, including faith communities.

**131.** In response to this analysis, Local Authority-funded services that are unpopular should be refocused or closed. Where gaps are identified, the children's trust would be expected to commission appropriate activities from the best of the public, private and voluntary sectors to fill them. This process is likely to lead children's trusts to focus their commissioning on more deprived areas where the market does not provide and on

engaging the most hard-to-reach young people who are least likely to benefit. In supporting young people's personal development, youth work has a vital role to play in identifying and engaging young people with additional needs. The skills of Connexions Personal Advisers are also vital in advocating for young people and ensuring they can access appropriate targeted support.

**132.** The local offer should also detail what measures are being taken to overcome the barriers young people face to participating in activities, including access for disabled young people; the level of any top up that a young person might receive on their opportunity card to help them access activities; and how young people can get involved to shape the activities and services available. It should take account of the health impact of services by 'designing health in' – for example, ensuring that premises are non-smoking and that healthy eating is promoted.

**133.** The local offer should be devised within the framework set by the national standards, but should be realistic and deliverable within existing resources.

### *The role of schools*

**134.** Many schools already provide opportunities for young people to develop their skills and explore their wider interests beyond the school day. The activities provided by schools as part of their extended offer to pupils will be an important part of the local offer to young people.

**135.** By 2008, the Government will have spent £835 million in supporting schools to develop extended services. As part of these extended services, by 2010 we want every secondary school to be open 8am-6pm on weekdays, including during the school holidays, offering a range of things for young people to do. Examples include a range of study support, including catch-up and booster opportunities, as well as homework clubs, sports, arts and other activities such as volunteering and cultural activities. Some of these activities will be delivered by schools; others will be delivered in partnership with the community, the Youth Service and other children's services. The range of activities on offer should be developed in consultation with young people and parents and should be accessible and inclusive. Young people and parents will be expected to pay for some of these activities. Not all young people will wish to attend activities delivered in school, but, by working in partnership, schools can signpost them to other providers in the community.

### *Facilities*

**136.** Evidence highlights the importance to young people and their parents of safe

spaces where they can hang out and socialise, as well as taking part in activities. Many local areas are exploring alternatives to the traditional youth club approach, for example by investing in mobile facilities or youth shelters. However, these sorts of facilities remain underdeveloped, and their provision is not always in line with what young people actually want.

**137.** We therefore propose to allocate capital funding worth £40 million over two years from April 2006. This will help to pay for upgrading existing places to go for young people and provide new facilities where none exist. It will be important that money is allocated for projects that young people really want, and so we will explore how capital funding could be linked to the proposals for opportunity funds. We also believe that by injecting a relatively small amount of capital funding, with a high level of control by young people, we will enable Local Authorities to develop new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities from their wider capital budgets, including investment in partnership with the voluntary, community and private sectors. We will consult with Local Authorities, the voluntary and community sector, young people and their parents on detailed priorities for capital

Five enterprising teenagers from Carlisle were so fed up having nothing to do and with all the anti-social behaviour in their area that they set up their own youth club for 11-16 year olds in **Stanwix Community Centre**. The teenagers got together with their Community Forum and Connexions Personal Adviser to establish the club. Cumbria County Council, provided a £2,500 grant for the purchase of equipment such as record decks and games, and to print promotional posters.



funding, including how far money should be targeted on disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and the procedures for allocating it.

**138.** As they commission activities for young people, we will encourage children's trusts to think creatively with young people and the local community about the range of spaces and facilities in use. For example, there may be spaces lying empty for periods of time – which could be used for the benefit of young people – such as school grounds and sports fields, libraries, village halls, faith facilities, company gyms and staff cafés. These could all, in principle, be made more available for young people to use at quieter times.

**139.** Our planned programme of capital investment in secondary schools will also contribute by improving school facilities for activities which can then be used by young people in the wider area. In addition, we are in discussion with the Big Lottery fund about how an expanded Young People's Programme might in due course respond to the priorities outlined in this document.

**140.** Young people in rural areas often have limited opportunities for taking part in recreational and leisure activities<sup>34</sup>. The cost and availability of transport can be a barrier to young people accessing activities in all areas – but they are a particular problem in the countryside. Mobile youth clubs and IT buses can be effective means of bringing activities to young people in rural areas – as well as in towns and cities. We will encourage children's trusts to think creatively about what can be done within existing resources to support rural young people's opportunities and access to facilities.

#### *Additional central Government support*

**141.** To address the low level of participation in sports beyond the age of 16 and to ensure that all 16-19 year olds (not just those at school or college) can be offered a minimum of two hours sport and physical activity, we propose to invest in a network of local youth sport development managers. Managers will support the development of new opportunities within youth settings by advocating the use of sport for personal development. They will also provide youth workers with additional

Since April 2001, **YouthWorcs – Rural** (the rural team of Worcestershire Youth Service) has been working to promote social and economic inclusion of young people. The aim of the project has been to create a partnership of rural young people, youth workers and rural regeneration workers. Young people have worked together to consider what barriers they face and to build their confidence. Their work has been disseminated to local, regional and national agencies. The group has also looked at rural drug use and rural transport issues.

34 Countryside Agency

training on the delivery of high quality sporting opportunities. In order to reach those young people not in education, employment or training, the youth sport development manager will work with local partners and use existing national models of good practice, such as *Positive Futures*, to engage young people in sport.

**142.** In addition, we want to explore the scope for giving more young people the opportunity to take part in summer residential events. Experiences of this sort enable young people to learn through active adventure and to mix with other teenagers from a range of different backgrounds and life experiences. They can also provide a productive context in which to develop new skills, for example, a better understanding of enterprise and business.

### *Involving young people*

**143.** We want young people to have more direct involvement in all stages of service design, development, delivery and evaluation. By involving them, we can help to ensure that they will share ownership of decisions and use facilities and services responsibly, and that the investment of public, private or charitable funds is directed to meet their real needs.

**144.** For some young people, voicing concerns and participating in civic life comes relatively naturally and will increase as they make the transition to adulthood. Others are less engaged, may lack confidence or the skills to work with adults,

or feel they have no stake in their neighbourhood or wider society. However, we want teenagers from the widest range of backgrounds and communities to be actively involved.

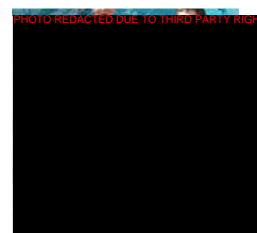
**145.** At national level bodies such as the British Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament have a role to play, as will:

- the new Children's Commissioner, who took up his post full-time at the start of July to act as an independent champion for the views and interests of children and young people;
- the DfES Children and Youth Board, which advises the Minister for Children, Young People and Families; and
- 'mystery shopper' and other local quality assurance schemes which have a direct influence over service standards.

**146.** Children's trusts have a key role to play at a local level to ensure the involvement of young people in planning and delivering services and in providing feedback on services to feed into inspections.

More than 60 young people from across Essex are now part of the voluntary **Proactive Essex Police Youth Strategy (PEPYS) Forum**. The group was set up to get views on the Essex Police Youth Strategy. Aged between 13 and 17, they helped re-write the Essex youth policing strategy to make it more accessible – 30,000 copies have since been distributed to young people through schools and youth groups. The Youth Forum also decided topics for discussion at the Essex Police Youth Conference, many of them went to the conference, and a number of them spoke giving their personal experiences and opinions. Most of the young people had never been to a conference before, let alone spoken in front of 300 police and professional delegates, so this alone had a big effect on their confidence and public speaking skills. The Youth Forum is now looking to influence police training, especially where it involves interaction with children and young people.

## 4. Young People as Citizens: Making a Contribution



### Summary

We want all young people to volunteer and contribute to their communities. The new body that will implement the recommendations of the Russell Commission on volunteering will have the task of developing exciting and innovative ways to achieve a step-change in volunteering. This will help to develop a stronger sense of rights and responsibilities and improve mutual understanding between young people and the wider community.

Our proposals include:

- encouraging more peer mentoring – young people supporting other young people;
- exploring how to expand longer-term volunteering opportunities;
- promoting more volunteering and active citizenship approaches in schools, colleges and universities;
- encouraging more volunteering in public services;
- considering options relating to financial support for volunteers;
- developing more flexible approaches to volunteering;
- celebrating further young people's positive achievements in the community; and
- exploring the role rewards can play in encouraging volunteering and affirming young people's positive choices.

**147.** This chapter sets out the benefits that young people and their communities can derive from voluntary work, and the ways in which we propose to encourage more young people to get involved.

### Context

**148.** Following the report of the Russell Commission, the Chancellor has pledged an extra £45 million over three years from April 2005 to support an expansion in

volunteering opportunities for young people. This will be supported by a matched volunteering opportunities fund, which aims to attract at least £55 million from private sector sources.

149. The Commission's headline recommendations were for a youth-led framework with young people at the heart of the design, development and delivery of youth volunteering; and a step change in the numbers and diversity of young volunteers as well as in the quality of the opportunities on offer. The Commission also recommended the creation of a dedicated implementation body that will bring together young people, business, the voluntary and community sector and government in a shared purpose – to make volunteering a valued part of young people's lives. The implementation body

will work closely with Local Authorities and their partners, so that their work is informed by the strategic overview and plans of the children's trust.

### Our Vision

150. Volunteering is both enjoyable and an opportunity for young people to demonstrate responsibility towards their communities. It can have benefits for both young people and wider society by:

- expanding young people's social networks;
- providing a route back to learning, jobs and society more generally;
- building safer and stronger communities and shaping more positive attitudes towards young people;

Joynal Hussain, is the **Rathbone Volunteer Achiever of the Year 2005**. While living in East London he had started to get involved in gang activities, anti-social behaviour, drugs and crime. But when one of his family had to spend time in hospital after a brutal gang fight, Joynal reassessed his life. He turned to the Rathbone Neighbourhood Support Fund (NSF) team for support and was encouraged to volunteer as part of the Government initiative Young Volunteer Challenge. Joynal now volunteers for 16–24 hours per week. He has planned and co-ordinated the Football in the Community Programme, taken part in the Millennium Volunteers Award Scheme, completed the Introduction to Youth Work course at college and was given the Jack Petchey Award for his contributions to the community. He will begin the Certificate in Youth Work Practice course in September and hopes to go to university. His experience demonstrates how volunteering can increase confidence and change a young person's life.

*'I just want to be a role model for other Bangladeshi young people. I want to say to them: "Look, there is more to life than crime and drugs – if I can do it, then so can you!". I just want to put something back into my community. Working as a youth worker will be a start.'*

Joynal Hussain May 2005

- helping to broaden horizons, influence decisions and attitudes, improve confidence and build skills;
- contributing to improved delivery of public and voluntary services; and
- leading to more engagement in democratic processes and local decision-making.

## Our Proposals

### *Opportunities and support for volunteers*

**151.** The Government welcomes the Russell report recommendations and we look to the implementation body to help us achieve this vision. We are particularly interested in the following ways in which we can enhance the current range of opportunities and support for volunteering by young people.

**152.** First, we will look to expand opportunities for **peer mentoring**. Young people, whether undergraduates, apprentices, employees or trainee youth workers, can be effective volunteer mentors and support other younger people at key stages of their development,

particularly if they have overcome difficult challenges in their own teenage years. They can act as role models, raising aspirations and achievements and exerting a powerful influence on young people. They can be particularly effective with those who have become disengaged from their communities or from learning.

**153.** We propose to ask the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation to work with the new Russell implementation body to expand opportunities for peer mentoring. We would expect this initiative to include a particular focus on 16-18 year olds at risk of negative outcomes and to explore new approaches such as e-mentoring.

**154.** Second, we will explore how to expand **longer-term opportunities**. The Russell Commission recommended an expansion in the number of full-time volunteering opportunities in the UK with up to 12,000 new full-time placements. The Young Volunteer Challenge Pilot has demonstrated that, with the right financial and personal support, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from a long-term volunteering

The **Salmon Youth Centre** is a voluntary sector project that has been working for almost 100 years with young people and the community in north Southwark, which on indices of deprivation and poverty, is one of the poorest areas of the country.

Local young people have the opportunity to spend a gap year volunteering full time at the centre thanks to support from the Rank Foundation. 'Gappers' play an important role in the centre's work, supported by appropriate training. For many of the volunteers who have not achieved at school, this has helped make the year a springboard into employment or further or higher education.

commitment. We are therefore extending the Young Volunteer Challenge until March 2006 so that its lessons can inform the implementation body's decisions on expanding full-time opportunities.

**155.** Third, we will encourage more opportunities **for volunteering in schools, colleges and universities**. We want to support schools to develop more active forms of citizenship. While citizenship education provides an important foundation at secondary level, we know from Ofsted that there is more scope for participative approaches. We are encouraging schools to develop Active Citizens in Schools schemes through an expanded programme of information seminars and materials. We will consider what more we can do to support volunteering in schools, including volunteering by children with special educational needs and disabilities. One option would be for students from specialist schools, like music or sports colleges, to share their expertise either with younger pupils in their own school or with pupils from other schools.

**156.** The Department for Education and Skills is also taking the lead in following through on the Russell Commission recommendations to promote active citizenship, including volunteering, in further and higher education. The Department will build on the successes of our post-16 active citizenship projects and shortly publish guidance for higher education institutions on strengthening

their relationship with schools, including encouraging more undergraduates to volunteer.

**157.** Fourth, we will encourage more **volunteering in public services**. All Government Departments will be investigating the potential for young volunteers to volunteer in public services, including widening access to volunteering for people with disabilities.

**158.** Fifth, we will consider options relating to **financial support** for volunteers. The Department of Work and Pensions and HM Treasury will be leading work to help ensure a greater diversity of young people volunteer. This will include publishing the existing rules on volunteering and the benefits system; looking at how access to volunteering can be widened, for instance through Activity Allowance Pilots and the Review of Financial Support for 16-19 year olds; assessing the interaction between volunteering and Housing Benefit; and looking at the issue of National Insurance credits for volunteering.

**159.** Sixth, we will look to provide **more flexibility**. In particular we will work with Millennium Volunteers projects to introduce more flexible approaches to volunteering including:

- developing stronger links to qualifications;
- more flexible ways of recording and accrediting personal development and achievement; and



- opening up award schemes to a wider range of organisations working with young volunteers.

### *Recognising achievements and contributions*

**160.** The Government should do more to acknowledge the excellent examples which young people can set. We believe that there is a case for focusing on the examples set by particular groups of young people – those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those who face particular difficulties or discrimination and any young people who may get stereotyped.

**161.** Many award schemes already celebrate young people's contributions to their communities, including the Philip Lawrence Award, Whitbread Young Achiever of the Year and the Millennium Volunteer of the Year Award. We will consider, with the new implementation body, the Russell Commission recommendation that a single national youth volunteering award should be developed.

**162.** In addition, we propose to test, in conjunction with the Russell implementation body, whether different types of rewards would incentivise young people to volunteer and make other positive choices. This would build on the experience of Connexions Card to award points to volunteers who could redeem them for their choice of reward. If pilots are successful we will source rewards nationally and manage an online system for the collection and redemption of reward points. We will explore whether this system should be linked to opportunity cards.

# 5. Supporting Choices: Information, Advice and Guidance



## Summary

All young people should have access to good quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) to help them make better career and life choices. The advice should be impartial, comprehensive and free from stereotyping. It should be available in ways that young people want – for example, face-to-face support and advice from people who know them and their abilities; but also on demand and interactively via the web, text and telephone.

We propose clear minimum expectations of the IAG that each young person and their parents should receive. These would be:

- at age 11-12 (year 7): an introduction from a variety of people, including other students, to what is on offer within secondary school;
- at age 13-14 (year 9): support in considering post-14 choices – particularly in the light of the 14-19 reforms, future career possibilities and the world of work, and a personal session with an adviser if they or their parents need or want it;
- throughout their teenage years: better help to think through post-16 options, personal social and health issues and career choices; and
- easy access to an innovative ICT service.

We want to explore how we might give further impetus to the quality and impartiality of IAG by expressing these expectations in a set of quality standards, on which we will consult.

For most young people this will mean knowing how to access support through their school or college and elsewhere, but we also recognise the need to provide better support for parents to help them help their teenagers to make choices.

We believe that schools and colleges should be accountable for ensuring the wellbeing and maximum progression of all their pupils and students, including those with severe and complex learning difficulties.

To support this and to reflect the wider reforms of services for children and young people set out in *Every Child Matters*, we will devolve responsibility for commissioning IAG and the funding that goes with it, from the Connexions Service to Local Authorities, working through children's trusts, schools and colleges.

We would expect children's trusts, schools and colleges to work in partnership to commission IAG locally. But where schools and colleges believe existing provision is poor, they would have the right to commission services directly. Following a phased approach from 2006, we would expect these new arrangements to be in place by 2008.

Local Authorities would be responsible for commissioning, as part of an integrated youth support service, IAG for young people who do not attend a school or college.

**163.** This chapter sets out our proposals for improving information, advice and guidance (IAG) for young people – and their parents. Proposals cover minimum expectations for the IAG that young people should receive and arrangements for delivering these.

### Context

**164.** The reforms set out in the Government's White Paper *14-19 Education and Skills* mean that young people will have more choice about what they study post-14 and a wider range of general and specialist routes post-16.

**165.** Young people also make choices about how to spend their free time, how to behave and about issues like health, relationships, smoking, alcohol and drugs. All of these can have a strong influence on their long-term life chances and their future development.

**166.** This means young people need access to individually tailored IAG across a broad range of issues from the source that best suits them. This advice needs to be comprehensive and impartial and it should challenge rather than perpetuate traditional stereotypes.

**167.** We know that young people prefer to seek advice from people who know them, their circumstances and their strengths and weaknesses. For many, this means their parents, peers and the people with whom they come into daily contact at their school or college. But there should also be alternative sources for young people who want to or have to use them, for example, those not in school or college. There will also be times when young people want to seek confidential information and advice – for example on physical, emotional and mental health issues – from a trusted adult

who is not linked to where they live or where they are studying.

### Our Vision

**168.** Our vision is that by bringing existing resources and services together all young people should have access to:

- personal development learning, delivered through the curriculum, covering careers education, personal, social and health education (PSHE), citizenship, work-related learning, financial capability, fitness and healthy living;
- confidential and impartial advice and support available through national helplines, online advisers and drop-in facilities; and
- information and guidance on jobs, skills and the labour market, with impartial advice for all young people on the full range of vocational and non-vocational options.

**169.** In practice this could mean a core offer for all young people that might, for example, include:

- **at age 11-12:** an introduction from a variety of people, including other students, a school nurse or other specialist workers, to what is on offer within their new secondary school;
- **at age 13-14:** support from tutors and/or guidance professionals in making choices on what to study post-14 and on future career possibilities; an

assessment of needs, and a personal session with an adviser if they or their parents need or want it; support in developing, implementing and evaluating individual plans for learning and progression; an introduction to online advice and support services that can be accessed in school, elsewhere or online; the opportunity to act as a mentor to younger pupils and/or engage in some other form of volunteering; and work experience placements to help them understand the world of work and which can challenge gender stereotypes;

- **throughout their teenage years:** help to explore and understand careers and their future employment prospects; support to negotiate issues around sexual relationships, sexual health, and drug and alcohol use; and support in deciding on and seeing through post-16 options and career choices;
- **easy access to an innovative ICT service** through which national and local information from a variety of sources could be reached, providing the information and advice they need, when they need it.

**170.** When young people felt the need for more sustained advice and help, support provided in this way would be a route, where necessary, to more personalised targeted support, as set out in chapter 6.

## Our Proposals

### *Devolving responsibility for information, advice and guidance*

**171.** To reflect the wider reforms of services for children and young people set out in *Every Child Matters*, we will devolve responsibility for commissioning IAG, and the funding that goes with it, from the Connexions Service to Local Authorities, working through children's trusts, schools and colleges.

**172.** In devolving funding, we have three aims:

- to ensure young people receive a better service linked with the school curriculum and to pastoral care – with young people, schools and colleges having a clear voice in the services that are delivered;
- that services are efficient and cost-effective;
- that high-performing Connexions Services are preserved.

**173.** To achieve these objectives, we ideally want children's trusts, schools and colleges to work in partnership. In the first instance this means children's trusts consulting with schools, colleges and young people on their views on existing provision. We would then expect children's trusts to seek to agree new arrangements with schools and colleges. Arrangements would differ depending on local circumstances. All parties could agree that the children's trust would commission

provision on behalf of all local schools and colleges. In other cases, however, we would expect different arrangements, such as provision through collaboratives like Education Improvement Partnerships. Under any arrangement, children's trusts or schools and colleges could decide to buy in services from Connexions or other external private or voluntary and community sector providers.

**174.** In most cases we expect to see children's trusts, schools and colleges agreeing on new arrangements. However, where schools and colleges believe existing provision is poor, they would have the right to commission services directly and withdraw from arrangements brokered by the children's trust. If they decided to do this, schools and colleges would have to consult with young people and commit to delivering IAG which meets new standards of quality and impartiality (see paragraph 179). For young people with additional needs, it will be important for schools and colleges to make links between the IAG they commission and targeted support services commissioned by the integrated youth support service. How far IAG commissioned by schools and colleges met quality standards would be determined by inspection. Where provision commissioned by schools and colleges was not meeting quality standards, devolved funding could be withdrawn by children's trusts.

**175.** The Government wants these new arrangements for commissioning IAG, including the possibility for schools and

colleges to commission services directly, to be in place by 2008. However, to ensure a smooth transition, there will need to be a phased approach from 2006. During this time, responsibility and funding for universal IAG services will transfer progressively from the Connexions Service to Local Authorities on the understanding that local collaborative arrangements will be in place by 2008. We expect this process to be locally managed and to involve children's trusts working with schools and colleges in the context of 14-19 planning by Local Authorities and the Learning and Skills Council, and the wider offer to young people.

**176.** This process should take full account of the views of young people and parents and cover how the funding for IAG will be devolved from the Connexions Service. There should be a clear timetable for implementation and clear interim responsibilities for delivery.

### *Accountability*

**177.** To reflect the transfer of responsibilities, there will need to be new accountability arrangements. As proposed in the *14-19 Education and Skills White Paper*, these should encourage institutions teaching 11-16 year olds to take responsibility for young people's future progression and success after the end of compulsory education.

**178.** As set out in the White Paper, we are developing ways of measuring at school level the progress of young people

through compulsory schooling and on to age 19. We are considering a range of options, including a measure based on the qualifications that year 11 pupils from each school go on to achieve by age 19 and a measure based on the progress made by all young people on school rolls at 14. This will encourage schools to help young people make the right decisions about future learning options and careers, and help them to assess how they are contributing to the achievement of wider objectives for young people, like reducing the number who, after leaving school, are not in education, employment or training. We will continue to develop the data we collect about young people's destinations, for example whether they go on to further education, university or employment.

**179.** We want to explore how we might give further impetus to the quality and impartiality of IAG through the use of quality standards for the provision or commissioning of IAG through children's trusts, schools and colleges. The standards could be used to ensure that minimum expectations for IAG are being met. The Government will consult on and develop these standards with key stakeholders alongside the more general consultation on this paper. We will look at how we might build on existing standards for careers education and guidance (including the careers education and guidance framework and the **matrix** Standards for adult guidance) to provide standards against which Ofsted could inspect. We will ensure that the quality standards also



apply to specialist services for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. We also want to hear views on the value of using quality awards alongside other levers to drive up the quality, and ensure the impartiality, of IAG.

**180.** Schools, colleges and children's trusts would also need to establish close links with local employers in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, to ensure that their students have access to good-quality work experience placements which help them to understand the world of work and ensure that advice is relevant and up to date.

**181.** We will make sure these developments are consistent with and do not cut across the National Agreement *Raising Standards and Tackling Workload*.

#### *IAG outside schools and colleges – the role of the children's trust*

**182.** It will be for the local children's trust to ensure that those young people in work-based learning or employment, those who are not in any form of education, employment or training and those who choose to seek advice in a different setting, have access to a similar range of opportunities as those in schools or colleges. Building on what has been available through the Connexions Service, IAG for teenagers who are not in any form of education, employment or training will need to include not just learning and employment opportunities but a broader package of personalised and sustained

targeted support and advice. In some cases this could be co-ordinated by a lead professional, as set out in chapter 6.

**183.** It is clear that the issue of young people not in education, employment or training needs serious attention, but it is not a problem that can be addressed by a single solution – these young people need specialised, varied and innovative support.

**184.** From 2006 we are investing £140 million over two years to test the effectiveness of personally negotiated agreements in re-engaging 16-17 year olds who are outside of learning or work. £60 million of this will be used to test 'activity agreements and allowances' for 16 and 17 year olds who have been out of education, training and employment for more than twenty weeks across eight Connexions areas. These agreements will set out the specific steps that the young person should take to move into learning or work, in return for financial support in most areas.

**185.** The remainder will fund a related pilot which will offer similar incentives to young people, as well as to employers, to encourage 16 and 17 year olds in jobs without training to take part in learning. Since the changes envisaged in this paper will come fully into effect after the end of the two pilots, delivery will be co-ordinated by Connexions working through children's trusts and in partnership with Jobcentre Plus. The delivery model for any national roll-out of the scheme would be determined on the basis of evaluation of the pilots.



**186.** Learning and Skills Councils and Local Authorities, through the children's trust, will support this work by producing a prospectus showcasing the learning, training and employment with training options available in the local area. Young people, their parents and others who are advising them will be able to use the prospectus as a basis for making more informed choices about the different learning pathways that institutions have to offer.

**187.** Connexions Partnerships have improved significantly the quality of information about the education, employment and training activity of young people. Local area information systems developed by Connexions have helped particularly in metropolitan areas and other areas where young people live and learn in different boroughs. Local Authorities, within children's trust arrangements, will need to manage these systems, and work with the Learning and Skills Council to ensure all young people's needs are met, including those travelling across Local Authority boundaries to learn and work.

**188.** As young people move towards the world of work it will be important that the services commissioned through children's trusts build on the relationships that Connexions Partnerships have with employers and Jobcentre Plus. We will spread best practice on how to improve these links and share information between Jobcentre Plus and children's trusts so that young people receive informed, coherent,

and integrated advice. This will be particularly important for the successful delivery of the activity allowance pilots.

### *Seeking information and advice independently*

**189.** Young people use a variety of interactive media to access information and advice how and when they choose. We have already responded to this through successful initiatives such as Connexions Direct, need2know, FRANK, Sexwise, the 'RU Thinking' website, and Teenage Health Freak. We will build on this by bringing existing resources together and using leading edge technology and multiple channels to provide an innovative combined ICT service. Over time, all young people should therefore have easy and immediate access to the information they need, when they need it and in a way that best suits their needs, including:

- personalised and impartial advice through e-mail, text and telephone;
- access to online advisers;
- a self-service facility with signposts to diverse, accurate and up-to-date information on topics like sexual health, drugs and smoking to dealing with relationships, managing finance and making choices about future learning and employment routes;
- young person-to-young person support, providing an opportunity for young people to comment on real life

**Connexions Direct** is a telephone, web-chat, email and SMS information, advice and support service for young people aged 13 to 19. Trained advisers are available from 8.00 am to 2.00 am seven days per week to deal with queries from young people on careers, learning, work, health, relationships, family problems, housing and a whole host of other issues. On average, almost 40,000 young people access information on the Connexions Direct website every week and a further 6,000 contact an adviser by phone or web-chat. Connexions Direct recently won an international Webby award.

**Need2know** is a website aimed at 13-19 year olds which contains advice on relationships, student life, money troubles, travel and leisure and a wide range of tips and resources for young people.

**FRANK** is a website and 24 hour confidential advice line for anyone concerned about drugs. It includes advice for parents and friends and a search for local drugs services.

**RU Thinking** is a website containing information about local services, facts about contraception, sexually-transmitted diseases and abortion, and links to other useful sites. It incorporates the Sexwise free confidential advice line which provides information on sex, relationships and contraception for young people aged under 18.

**Teenage Health Freak** is a website and advice service answering questions about all kinds of teenage health problems and provides information about growing up.

experiences and offer each other advice and support;

- an effective referral system to a range of local services suitable for and agreeable to young people;
- links with the technology supporting frontline professionals – the school workforce, social workers, school nurses, youth workers – so that professionals know what is being offered online and can use it to inform their work with young people.

**190.** We will ensure that as far as possible information is accessible to disabled young people, those with learning difficulties and

those who have English as a second language.

### *Young people and health*

**191.** We have already recognised the inseparable link between good physical and mental health and young people's ability to learn and achieve. With that in mind, we are working to improve the responsiveness of health services to young people. *You're Welcome* is a set of standards for health care outside hospitals which we want to see adopted in all local health services so that everyone – including all young people – feels welcome.

**The Parallel health and wellbeing centre and outreach service in Bolton** has been designed by and for young people as a one stop service to meet young people's health needs, whether physical, sexual, emotional or social. 11 to 19 year olds can drop in and find information, advice, and treatment, or talk to someone about anything they are concerned about. A range of local partners support the centre, including education, social services, public health, midwifery, health visiting, child and adolescent mental health, substance misuse services, Connexions, Youth Service and many voluntary agencies.

Young people have said:

"When I see the centre now, I feel it is mine – it will have things that young people like; not what adults want".

"It's great knowing that our input makes a difference for all young people".

"Since going to The Parallel it has given me the opportunity to meet like-minded people, and has turned my life around".

**192.** We also want to see how best we can improve the take-up of health services by young people. From 2006, Adolescent Health Demonstration Sites will go live in Bolton, Hackney and Portsmouth. They will offer enhanced health services alongside other services young people want, such as internet access, sport, leisure and youth services. If the model proves successful in improving take-up and helping young people to be healthier, the Department of Health will support children's trusts in developing it further.

**193.** We will continue to support the Healthy Schools Programme, which promotes the health and wellbeing of young people in schools. The Programme offers a framework to tackle many pressing public health imperatives such as sexual health education, teenage pregnancy,

obesity, healthy eating and reducing smoking rates.

**194.** The Government is continuing to make significant capital and revenue investment in promoting the mental health and psychological wellbeing of children and young people. As adolescents grow older they are more likely to make use of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The Government wants to explore how best to deliver appropriate services to this age group who may not identify themselves either with younger users of CAMHS, or with many users of adult mental health services. A well functioning joined-up system will also ensure a smooth transition for those adolescents whose need for mental health services continues into adulthood. The Department for Education and Skills and the Department of Health want to explore

what role colleges of further education can play in promoting the emotional and psychological wellbeing of their students as part of a rounded approach to helping them to succeed academically, socially and in all other aspects of their preparation for adult life.

**195.** Finally, to support young people through the transition from primary to secondary school, we also want to explore the scope for offering 12-13 year olds a 'personal health MoT'. This would offer young people the opportunity to explore their physical and emotional wellbeing with specialist staff who could provide support – for example with eating more healthily – or refer them on to further help.

### *Supporting parents*

**196.** We want to ensure that parents of young people have better access to the information and advice they need to understand the wide range of choices teenagers face, and are able to help and support them to make important decisions.

**197.** Access will be provided through the proposed local learning prospectus, the expansion of local children's information services, and the development of Parents Direct, the proposed new helpline for parents, which will build on existing services such as Parentline Plus.

**198.** Over time, we want local children's information services to draw together all the information on what is available locally, including details of any local parenting

classes, opportunities for family learning, community support groups and counselling, as well as the local prospectus which will give details of the learning and employment options for young people.

**199.** We know that moving from primary to secondary school is a time of particular concern for parents, so the Government wants all parents to benefit from extra information when their children start secondary school. We will be investing £20 million over two years from April 2006 to offer parents the opportunity of coming to sessions that would help them prepare for the challenges that young people will face at this time of transition, and tell them where they could find extra support if they need it.

**200.** We know that young people achieve most when their parents and carers are fully involved and supporting their development and learning. We want all schools to view parents as co-educators, and to work in partnership with them. Where families are experiencing difficulties, schools and children's trusts will work with parents to offer them the support they need, and if necessary they will be able to arrange structured parenting programmes.

**201.** Building on the experience of the Youth Justice Service, we would like to see parenting support programmes become more widely available, through mainstream community settings, such as schools and children's centres. These structured programmes could be delivered by the voluntary sector who could give

parents the information and skills to prevent everyday challenges from escalating into entrenched problems.

**202.** A more persistent approach may be required in engaging with parents whose children are experiencing, or are at risk of, serious problems. In some cases, statutory powers may be needed to secure their engagement in parenting support or skills training programmes or interventions.

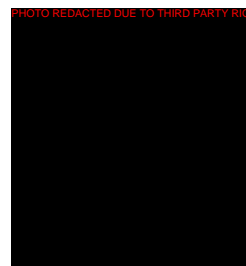
**203.** We would also like to see opportunities for more parents to be involved in helping their children to make decisions about their learning and career choices, where that is what young people want. Parents should, for example, as a matter of routine have the opportunity to attend fairs and open evenings aimed at explaining the local learning prospectus.

**204.** Other possibilities for involving parents could include parents coming in as speakers or providing work experience opportunities or visits. It will be for schools and colleges, in consultation with their parents, to explore how this could be achieved.

**205.** We know that young people who can talk openly to their parents about issues such as sex, relationships, drugs and alcohol are less likely to engage in risky behaviour. Government wants parents to have better access to the information and advice they feel they need to support this crucial role. We want all schools to consider how they can provide access to relevant services, perhaps building on the information made available at the key transition points of 11, 14 and 16.

**206.** Parents have varying needs and the way in which support is provided should recognise this. So, for example, children's trusts, schools and other professionals need to be alive to the specific needs of disabled parents; fathers as well as mothers; and parents who may have literacy, language and other difficulties.

## 6. All Young People Achieving: Reforming Targeted Support



### Summary

Young people at risk often lead complicated and troubled lives. They need the best possible services, offering the right balance of support and challenge. But all too often, they are passed between different services which focus on different problems.

For teenagers most at risk we therefore propose to reform and simplify the current system. This will lead to targeted support being planned and commissioned as part of an integrated process covering all services for young people, and provided as part of an integrated youth support service on a local level. This will mean:

- putting Local Authorities, working through children's trusts, in charge of working with all the relevant agencies and stakeholders to deliver more personalised, integrated and efficient support for teenagers;
- placing responsibility with Local Authorities for leading local action on teenage pregnancy and young people not in education, employment or training (with shared accountability with schools), while contributing to further progress in tackling drugs and youth crime in keeping with their existing responsibilities and with their existing duty under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- merging a range of existing Government programmes which focus on specific issues rather than tackling the needs of young people in a holistic way;
- ensuring that those young people who need integrated support in a number of overlapping areas have it effectively co-ordinated and delivered by a lead professional;
- establishing frontline youth support teams, with a focus on prevention and early intervention, that should be able to address problems and change behaviour through support and challenge; and
- achieving a step-change in the extent to which professionals engage parents and help them meet their responsibilities.



**207.** This chapter sets out our proposals for how services can best be delivered for young people with additional needs. It looks at how we can bring clarity to the range of existing services that are on offer and how we can focus them on meeting the needs of individual teenagers.

### Context

**208.** For most teenagers, the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes can be met through universal services such as schools and colleges, childcare provision, primary healthcare, the police and high quality youth and leisure provision.

**209.** However, a large minority of young people have needs that cannot be met by universal services alone. Some of these young people can have a range of serious problems which need specialist support. Others experience problems occasionally.

**210.** We know that, for many young people, problems multiply if they are not addressed. These problems are often caused by the same factors – such as being out of education, employment or training, offending and being victims of crime, teenage conceptions and substance misuse.

**211.** Despite improvements in services for young people at risk, too many young people don't get the support they need. Many say they are turned off by having to discuss their life story with different professionals and being subject to

numerous assessments. Many are left disappointed when they feel that professionals cannot change things on their behalf<sup>35</sup>. Other young people do not access the services they need because they are intimidated by the environment in which help is offered or because services are not open at convenient times or in easily accessible locations. Young people who need continued long-term support can lose continuity in treatment and support when making the transition between adolescent and adult services. For the most challenging teenagers, there are often numerous single interventions, but little continuity or consistency.

### Our Vision

**212.** To address these issues, improve outcomes for teenagers and provide better support for parents, we want all young people who need support and challenge from targeted and specialist services to have:

- a real voice in planning for their gradual transition to adulthood, with personalised and coherent support that reflects their needs, rather than simply suiting the way agencies work;
- a smooth transition to mainstream adult services, or continued long-term specialist support – especially for those with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) or those in public care who have not made the transition to adult services by the age of 25;

35 Hoggarth, L and Smith, D (2004) *Understanding The Impact of Connexions on Young People at Risk*, DfES RR607



- direct access to expert services through schools, colleges, Local Authorities and other services;
- a clear and simple assessment process without the need for young people or their family to re-tell their story to lots of people;
- the opportunity to get help for wider family problems, including for parents and siblings;
- access to high quality professional advice and support in places where they are comfortable and do not feel 'labelled', and where they have time to build up relationships with staff; and
- more opportunities to widen their networks and discuss issues and aspirations with an adult or peer mentor from their community.

**213.** In addition, young people with multiple and overlapping needs should have the opportunity to build a trusting relationship with one lead professional.

### Our Proposals

**214.** We propose a number of changes to the system of support for teenagers at risk.

**215.** We will ensure that children's trusts have the freedom and flexibility to address young people's needs by using their resources most effectively. We will:

- merge the main funding streams for targeted youth support and remove separate management information arrangements;

- reduce the number of different requirements for our programmes and initiatives – enabling local areas to put in place arrangements that best meet local needs within the existing statutory framework;
- consider transferring accountability for children and young people's drug misuse services to Directors of Children's Services or their equivalents; and
- develop with the inspectorates revised performance indicators that reflect Local Authorities' responsibilities for the reduction of youth crime and reducing NEETs, and the improvement of the life chances of disabled young people.

**216.** These and other proposals in this paper will enable targeted support to be planned and commissioned within an integrated process covering the full range of services for young people. They should also lead to targeted support being delivered as part of an integrated youth support service on a local level. It will be for individual children's trusts to define what structure best suits local circumstances and best addresses the needs of local teenagers.

**217.** Children's trusts will decide which of their existing services need to remain in place to deliver statutory duties and link with other professionals. We expect that this will involve streamlining accountability, collapsing management chains and merging the functions of separate services

which currently focus both on supporting young people and on the provision of positive activities. In making future decisions about commissioning, we expect that children's trusts will want to take account of the quality of existing provision, including through high-performing Connexions Services.

**218.** We know that the same risk and protective factors underpin a wide range of outcomes for young people. For example, 75% of males aged 16-17 who are charged and appear before the youth court are not in education, employment or training. To help more offenders into employment, Government Departments and the Youth Justice Board are working to develop employment options and employability support for 16 and 17 year olds offenders on their release from custody. But an effective and co-ordinated preventative multi-agency response is the only way to make a lasting difference in the lives of young people with complex problems and needs. To strengthen children's trusts' strategic leadership in relation to young people who are at risk, we therefore propose to ask them to take on a wider remit in relation to prevention.

**219.** Recognising that Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) have had considerable success in delivering targeted youth crime prevention programmes with a strong performance management culture, the Youth Justice Board, Home Office and DfES have agreed proposals which would maintain this role for YOTs during the

current spending review period. To ensure an integrated response to young people, we would expect YOTs to work closely with local partners in children's trusts and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and to consult them. We will also introduce new freedoms and flexibilities in monitoring and evaluation, consistent with the principles set out in this paper.

**220.** At the same time, we will also explore in the light of practice and experience the scope for devolving to Local Authorities, working through children's trusts, those budgets that support prevention, including those relating to youth crime and substance misuse. We would explore the best way of merging and devolving these budgets to Local Authorities while ensuring an increased impact on youth crime and drugs.

**221.** In relation to targeted support we would encourage the integrated youth support service to set up targeted youth support teams which would have the aim of:

- identifying early those young people who need additional support or intervention, including using universally available activities to identify and engage young people with additional needs;
- making it easy for young people to access the system, and carrying out in-depth assessments of young people, where this has not already been carried out by practitioners within universal services;

- providing ‘wrap-around’ support, via a lead professional. The lead professional could be drawn from within the targeted support team or, for a young person who has a range of additional needs, could be someone with whom they already have an established relationship;
- delivering effective preventive work for groups of young people;
- providing an outreach, support and training role for practitioners within universal and more specialist agencies; and
- ensuring wherever appropriate that parents are involved from the outset.

222. Targeted youth support teams will therefore need to be able to deliver directly the majority of young people’s support needs, drawing when required on the expertise, skills, knowledge of their colleagues within the team and within their respective ‘home’ agencies where appropriate. There would also be an expectation that practitioners from within the teams are able to work with and provide support for young

people in settings where the young people are comfortable – schools, colleges, mainstream youth services and at home.

223. Those young people who need support in a number of overlapping areas should have access to a lead professional to ensure that this is co-ordinated and delivered effectively. By taking a lead role, the lead professional will:

- act as a single point of contact who young people and their families can trust, able to support them in making choices and in navigating their way through the system;
- ensure that children and families get appropriate interventions when needed, which are well planned, regularly reviewed and effectively delivered;
- reduce overlap and inconsistency among other practitioners; and
- ensure that where the young person requires more specialist services – which may involve a different practitioner taking the lead – the young person is involved in an effective hand-over.

**Sheffield Youth Inclusion & Support Panel (YISP)** offers voluntary support to high-risk 8-13 year olds and their families to prevent offending and anti-social behaviour. The Panel includes representatives from social services and education departments, the Youth Offending Team, police, housing, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Supporting Others through Voluntary Action (SOVA) and Connexions, and has links with a range of other agencies. Excluded young people are provided with a key worker, mentors, access to positive activities, and parenting programmes. A review by the local Children’s Fund showed that this approach was successful for all the young people supported who had moved back into full-time education and reported improvements in their family situation and their peer group.

**Telford and Wrekin** are reorganising the different services for children and young people into 'school and community clusters'. Multi-disciplinary teams will operate under area managers with a common focus on prevention and early intervention. The aim is to achieve a better balance between front-end services, prevention and early intervention. By identifying and addressing issues as they start to develop, the need for more intensive provision, treatment and protection should be reduced.

In the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, **Assist** – a Young People's Development Programme project – supports young people referred through social services who are likely to become looked after. They work closely with social services, drug action teams, the voluntary sector and the local teenage pregnancy strategy. A primary focus of Assist's activity is a reintegration programme which seeks to re-engage young people with education. Different agencies work together to offer literacy classes, drugs education, health advice, sport and physical activity, creative arts and emotional intelligence and literacy work.

**224.** We will work with local partners to increase the number of professionals working in multi-disciplinary teams with young people and their families. The first step will be the production of a multi-agency toolkit which will be just one part of a longer-term programme. This toolkit, together with guidance on the role of the lead professional, are being published at the same time as this document.

**225.** Through the introduction of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), we will reduce the number of separate assessments experienced by young people and simplify the assessment process. In 2005-06 we will build on the draft CAF prior to national roll-out of the CAF from April 2006, by working with partners to look at improving the experience of young people and families with more complex needs, who may currently be subject to

specialist assessments from more than one agency.

**226.** Advice and joint services should increasingly be available closer to teenagers' communities and in everyday surroundings. We will encourage co-location of services within schools, voluntary drop-in and health centres and universally available youth facilities and advice shops.

***Stronger responsive universal and targeted services working together***

**227.** Schools will continue to be key partners in the delivery of targeted support for young people. We want to see targeted support teams having close working relations with schools and providing a single route of referral for schools when they have concerns about a particular

In **Oldham**, the Youth Offending Service, Connexions and the Drugs and Alcohol Action Team are co-located in a Connexions branded **one stop shop**. They are managed under the umbrella of Positive Steps Oldham, a charitable trust. The trust also delivers the positive activities scheme during school holidays. Oldham was cited in the Audit Commission's report on youth justice (2004) as an exemplar of inter-agency, co-located working.

**The Connexions Centre, Kensington and Chelsea** is open six days a week for young people to ask advice on anything from university courses to housing support to Education Maintenance Allowance to sexual health support. This centre, designed with young people and with an environment like a modern high street coffee shop, provides young people access to Connexions PAs, youth workers, PAYP key workers, leaving care workers, teenage pregnancy workers, counsellors, victim support, housing workers, a branch library, and free on-line PCs linked to all ICT information and guidance services, in a non-stigmatising environment.

young person that go beyond the scope of their existing pastoral and learning support. Where substance misuse is considered a risk for a young person, for example, the referral process could build on work already underway in 30 high-focus areas, bringing together children's services and drugs services more effectively.

**228.** We know that, in taking forward Every Child Matters: Change for Children programmes, many local areas are adopting new approaches. Schools are at the centre of these changes, working closely with multi-disciplinary teams which support children, young people and parents, in and beyond school. They are able to address community concerns, tackling anti-social behaviour and promoting positive activities outside school hours, involving local communities in the solution of local issues and building local pride and self-

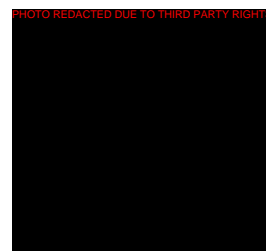
confidence. We want to encourage the wider development of such approaches.

### *Specialist services*

**229.** A minority of young people will continue to require highly specialist services. That includes teenagers with severe mental health problems, teenagers with complex learning and physical disabilities, and those who have experienced severe neglect, abuse or trauma as children. There is a clear statutory framework that sets out the entitlements these young people should expect. And it is important that specialist services continue to have the capacity and resources to fulfil these.

**230.** In most cases, engagement with services will be voluntary. However, services should be prepared to use statutory powers where this is necessary.

## 7. A Reformed System: Delivering the Proposals



### Summary

Local Authorities working through children's trusts will take the strategic lead in delivering the proposals outlined in chapters 3-6, receiving the necessary funding, responsibility and accountability. Through the integrated planning and commissioning of services – ranging from universally available activities to specialist and targeted support – we expect to see the development of an integrated youth support service.

We will build on the current accountability framework for children's services to establish clear lines of responsibility for delivering better outcomes, and over the transition period we will work with inspectorates to develop revised performance management arrangements.

We will simplify the current funding regime, merging separate funding streams to ensure that children's trusts can take an integrated and preventative approach to meeting young people's needs, particularly the needs of those most at risk. This will reduce duplication and enable children's trusts to use funding more flexibly and efficiently as they improve services for young people.

We will work with the Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams to ensure that in delivering targeted youth crime prevention schemes YOTs consult with local partners in children's trusts and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to identify areas of need and plan the commissioning of programmes.

Subject to consultation, we propose that implementation will be phased but complete in all areas by April 2008. We will support Connexions Partnerships and Local Authorities as responsibilities are transferred from one body to another.

Local Authorities will need to decide on the most appropriate organisational structures to meet local needs. However, we will encourage them to retain the valued Connexions brand. A number of pilots will help to test out our proposals and determine the practical implications of the reforms. During the transition period and beyond, Local Authorities



will also need to work closely with organisations in the voluntary and community sector and with the Russell implementation body.

The devolution of Connexions’ funding and the development of an integrated youth support service both have implications for the workforce. Local partners will need to build on the skills of today’s professionals, clarifying their roles and developing their skills to meet new challenges.

**231.** Chapters 2 to 6 set out our new strategy for providing opportunities, challenge and support for young people. This chapter deals with the changes needed if the reforms described are to become a reality. It also focuses on how we can support children’s trusts and the workforce as they plan and introduce the reforms.

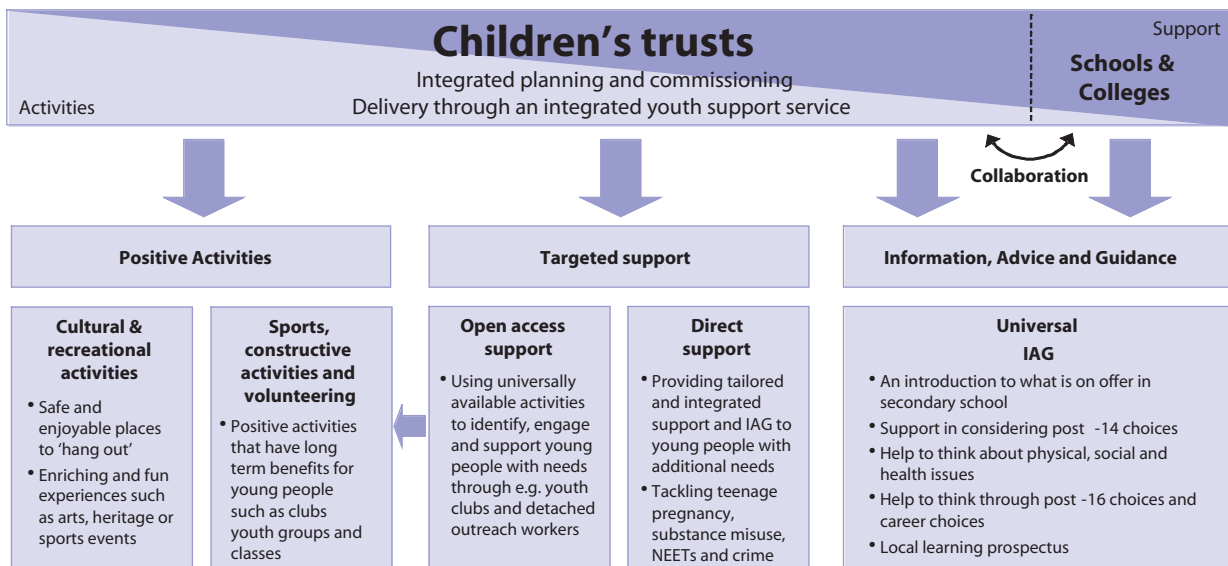
### The Reformed System

**232.** We believe that our proposals will lead to high quality, locally integrated services tailored to the needs of young people. At the heart of the system will be the Local Authority, working through children’s trusts, which will take lead responsibility for youth policy. Through the integrated planning and commissioning of

services – ranging from universally available activities to specialist and targeted support – we expect to see the development of an integrated youth support service.

**233.** We will expect upper-tier Local Authorities to make sure that District Councils – who are often very active in providing resources and facilities for young people – are fully involved in discussions about how to take these reforms forward locally.

**234.** The diagram below describes commissioning arrangements in the reformed system. It shows that children’s trusts would have the primary responsibility for commissioning activities





and support services. It also shows how, in collaboration with children's trusts – and building on their existing work on developing extended services – schools and colleges would commission information, advice and guidance for young people.

**235.** Mapping existing services from the voluntary, private and public sectors – including the Local Authority itself – against young people's needs would enable children's trusts to improve the quality of existing services and commission new services to fill any gaps. We would expect there to be a focus on the best available services from the public, private and voluntary sectors and will be issuing guidance and practical help on how to do this later this year.

**236.** As a result of these reforms we would expect teenagers to:

- have wider choice and take part in more positive activities in their spare time, supported by better information, and where Local Authorities have chosen to develop them, discounts and top-ups on opportunity cards;
- have the opportunity to influence services and activities available locally, including deciding how to spend their local opportunity fund;
- get more involved in their local community and in volunteering, through better opportunities and appropriate rewards;

- make more well-informed decisions about their lives, and get effective information and advice in a way that suits them;
- have earlier, better and more co-ordinated support if they have additional problems or needs; and
- be less likely to get into trouble, due to the better targeted support and the incentives that are available.

**237.** And we would expect parents to:

- have the opportunity to top up their teenager's opportunity card, if they have one, so that they know their money is being spent on constructive activities;
- have more of a say in the development of local services for themselves and for teenagers;
- have better information about their teenager's future choices including through a local learning prospectus;
- have the chance to join their teenager at an information, advice and guidance session about future education and career choices; and
- find it easier to access additional information, advice and support on parenting a teenager, through increased availability of parenting programmes, plus specialist support for more serious family problems.

## The Accountability Framework

**238.** To deliver these reforms, we need to move from the current system of overlapping and fragmentary responsibilities to one in which there is a clear national framework for national and local responsibilities.

**239.** The proposals set out in this paper for a revised statutory duty on Local Authorities in relation to activities for young people, the new national standards, and new local offers, will help create such a framework. Subject to consultation and parliamentary timetables, amendments to the statutory basis could be brought forward later this year and come into force in summer 2006.

**240.** There will be just one performance management system for evaluating progress against the Youth Matters reforms – the Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework. Children’s trusts should use this framework, together with the process which underpins local Every Child Matters reforms, to plan services for teenagers. Plans for teenagers should also be set out as part of Children and Young People’s Plans.

**241.** We will be working with the inspectorates and Local Authorities over the transition period to develop performance indicators for their responsibilities for teenagers related to youth crime and reducing the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training. We will also be looking for a new way to reflect youth participation in and satisfaction with activities described in the new national

standards on activities. We expect this work to strengthen the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) of Local Authorities, which in turn will feed into the star rating for children’s services as a whole in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

**242.** We recognise that YOTs have had considerable success in delivering targeted youth crime prevention programmes with a strong performance management culture. The Youth Justice Board, Home Office and Department for Education and Skills have agreed proposals which would maintain this role for YOTs, within local partnerships, whilst at the same time introducing new freedoms and flexibilities in monitoring and evaluation.

**243.** We will also be working with the inspectorates to develop a progression measure for schools, as part of the wider accountability framework for schools proposed in the 14-19 White Paper.

**244.** The new arrangements for integrated inspection through the Joint Area Reviews being introduced in September 2005 will support this by assessing the combined impact of local services on children and young people’s outcomes. In particular, we will be reviewing with the inspectorates ways to assess how well the views of children and young people are captured, the extent to which young people are involved in designing services and the extent to which a wide range of partners are involved in working together to improve young people’s outcomes.

**245.** Joint Area Reviews will seek evidence that services for young people take account of the full range of equality and diversity issues. They will seek assurance that local partners are implementing appropriate race equality schemes, including impact assessments, and are promoting good race relations. We will consider what information we can include in the Home Office's *Race Equality in Public Services* (REPS) report to demonstrate progress for young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

**246.** In future, where services for young people are found to have significant failings, we would expect to discuss problems with Local Authorities and their partners and agree on action for improvement. The Children Act 2004 establishes common powers of direction, which we would use where necessary to intervene.

### Funding

**247.** We propose to reduce the number of individual Government grants to allow Local Authorities to use funding more flexibly and efficiently and to think more creatively about how best to target need in their area. We expect this to lead to both greater efficiency and greater effectiveness for the resources we are committing.

**248.** By freeing up resources in this way we expect that, over time, Local Authorities and their partners, such as schools and colleges, will be able to focus more on prevention. This focus should be helped by improved integration across professional boundaries

and breaking down of barriers between programmes and funding streams.

**249.** Devolving power and funding must not stop at local government. Local decision-making should also be devolved – to teenagers and parents as well as to schools and colleges where appropriate.

**250.** The proposals in this document will be financed within available resources during the 2004 spending review period. Future resources will be determined in the normal way.

**251.** Within that context, the Government is making specific resources available to support the proposals. Combined with more effective use of existing DfES resources, this means that there will not be a pressure on council tax. As policies are developed further, the Government is committed to working with Local Authorities, their representative organisations and their partners to ensure no new unfunded burdens are placed on Local Authority resources.

**252.** In summary, to deliver our proposals, we propose to:

- put money for activities and the ability to influence activities directly into the hands of young people themselves through our new proposals for opportunity cards and opportunity funds;
- provide an opportunity fund for young people to develop and lead projects that create more activities and places to go;

- make available capital funding to improve the facilities on offer for young people;
- provide flexibility by moving existing Department for Education and Skills ring-fenced grants for youth support – including funding for existing Connexions responsibilities, grants for teenage pregnancy strategies and behaviour and attendance programmes – into Local Authorities Formula Spending Share or into an unhypothecated grant, using Local Area Agreements where appropriate to smooth the transition;
- review with Departments across Government other funding streams and where appropriate merge or align them; and
- facilitate, where appropriate, the transfer of responsibility and funding for information, advice and guidance to schools and colleges.

### Timetable for Reform

253. It is important that the quality of services for young people and their families does not suffer during the transitional period. Individuals, organisations and the system as a whole therefore need clarity about the timing and direction of travel in their local area. Establishing the direction and pace of change, communicating this effectively to local partners and managing the process

will be the responsibility of Local Authorities through children's trusts.

254. Services for children and young people have already begun a significant programme of change through *Every Child Matters*.

We want to build on the progress that has already been made and therefore propose a phased approach for these reforms, planned at the local level, working towards implementation in all areas by April 2008.

255. We anticipate that some Local Authorities and their children's trust partners will wish to move ahead at a faster pace, taking on new funding and responsibility from Connexions in 2006 or 2007. This approach keeps the period of uncertainty for staff and organisations to a minimum and will therefore be encouraged. We believe Local Authorities, in consultation with local partners, are best placed to judge their readiness. In discussing arrangements with authorities we would be looking for agreement on progress against priorities during the transition period.

### Managing the Transition

256. Local Authorities and their partners, increasingly influenced by the voice of young people themselves, will need to decide what structure for the organisation and delivery of services best serves local needs. While we expect Local Authorities to develop an integrated youth support service we are not advocating any particular approach.

**257.** We know that young people value the Connexions brand and associate it with knowledgeable staff, trusted advice and a service that responds to their needs. We will therefore encourage Local Authorities to retain the Connexions brand and would welcome views on the range of services it might cover.

**258.** As part of the transition arrangements and in order to test out proposals on the ground we are undertaking a number of pilots. We will ensure that the lessons learned and emerging good practice from these pilots are available to inform Local Authorities and their partners in implementing reforms. The pilots are:

- eleven Connexions Partnerships moving towards children's trust arrangements with Local Authorities in 2005-6, of which five are pooling funding in their Local Area Agreement. These areas are acting as case studies for the issues involved in devolution;
- a range of centrally supported pilots between 2006-08 in at least eight Local Authorities testing out opportunity cards and the supporting technologies as described in chapter 3; and
- pilots in conjunction with the Russell implementation body to test the ability of different types of reward to encourage young people to volunteer as described in chapter 4.

**259.** In addition we will discuss with Local Authorities taking part in the pilots on

re-engaging young people in learning (see paragraph 184) how they will maintain workforce capacity to deliver in the pilot areas.

**260.** Areas that come forward to implement these reforms in 2006 and 2007 are likely to exemplify a range of different approaches. Learning from both pilots and early adopters will be captured and disseminated for the benefit of others. Where necessary, we will provide guidance on specific aspects of implementation and transition.

**261.** The Department for Education and Skills will also work with individual authorities as they come forward to make the transition to improved services for young people. As part of this we propose:

- the Department for Education and Skills' annual priorities conversations with Local Authorities and their partners should cover planning to take on the new responsibilities. Part of this exchange would also focus on performance against local targets for reducing the number of young people who do not progress on to education, employment and training. The outcome would be an agreement on how to get the level targeted by 2010;
- discussions during transition with individual Local Authorities on how Local Area Agreements could be used to prepare for the changes; and
- resources (2006-8) to help with transition costs and to assist with

change management. In the light of consultation and further work with Local Authorities and partnerships on likely costs, a decision will be taken on how this could be allocated.

### The Voluntary and Community Sector

**262.** Local Authorities will not achieve these changes alone. They will need to work closely, through children's trusts, with their partners such as organisations in the voluntary and community sector.<sup>36</sup>

**263.** The voluntary and community sector is often best placed to reach and engage with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, and offers a rich seam of innovation. We expect children's trusts to draw on the experience and expertise of voluntary and community youth organisations as strategic partners in all aspects of planning, developing and delivering services for young people. Local Authorities, through children's trusts, will want to invest in building the capacity of voluntary and community organisations in the locality as part of their strategy for shaping and developing the market for young people's services to ensure greater contestability. We expect them to follow current good practice guidance in their funding relationships with these organisations, including minimising monitoring and reporting requirements, and adopting the principle of full cost recovery.

**264.** We recognise that transition to the new system may create uncertainty for voluntary and community organisations at local level. Local Authorities through children's trusts will need to work closely with voluntary and community sector partners to ensure that high quality services and approaches are not damaged by the transition process. Local Authorities should monitor and make transparent the proportion of publicly funded services which are delivered by the voluntary and community sector. Government will collate and track this information. Local authorities should also ensure that their commissioning processes take full account of the potential added value of services which are delivered by the voluntary and community sector.

**265.** At national level, the Department for Education and Skills is currently consulting on proposals to rationalise its funding streams for work with children, young people and families, with the aim of increasing the strategic coherence of grant funding and offering greater stability to the voluntary and community sector.

### Big Lottery Fund

**266.** The Big Lottery Fund is developing new programmes that are additional to and distinct from government spending, but which will complement local and central government initiatives where appropriate. The three Big Lottery Fund

<sup>36</sup> The DfES published *Working with voluntary and community organisations to deliver change for children and young people* in December 2004. The strategy is available from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)



themes: community learning and creating opportunity; promoting community safety and cohesion and promoting wellbeing are consistent with the priorities of *Youth Matters* and were recently endorsed in the Big Lottery Fund's public consultation.

**267.** The Young People's Fund is the first Big Lottery Fund programme. It is focused on the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes and puts young people at the centre of projects.

**268.** The Big Lottery Fund will aim to address young people's needs through all its future programmes. The Parks programme, to be launched towards the end of this year, will include opportunities for young people to make a contribution to looking after their local areas. The Big Lottery Fund's wellbeing initiative has set aside £45 million to promote healthy eating for children, young people and their communities. Finally, the Children's Play programme will provide up to £155 million for local play spaces to support activities that are creative and fun.

### Volunteering

**269.** The Russell Commission recommended that there should be a single funding stream for publicly funded volunteering by young people routed through the implementation body. We will consider that recommendation as part of the 2006 Spending Review. Until a decision has been made, it will be important that we support our current volunteering programmes to plan for a smooth

transition. In particular we will ensure there are close links between those arrangements and children's trusts. Local Authorities will also want to work with the implementation body to extend opportunities for volunteering in their area.

### Transition and the Workforce

**270.** Our proposals have direct implications for the workforce in two areas:

- potential changes when funding and responsibility for Connexions work passes from Connexions Partnerships to Local Authorities; and
- changes to both roles and practices through the development of an integrated youth support service.

**271.** On the first, local partners will be responsible for making arrangements for the future of Connexions staff who may be affected. The vast majority of frontline Connexions staff will be needed to deliver the services set out in this paper. We anticipate, on the basis of early experience, that the formal devolution of funding and responsibility to Local Authority level will, for many staff (Local Authority or Connexions), be a continuation of a process already begun, and will not result in immediate changes to individuals' work or conditions.

**272.** In each area there will be local agreement, within the context of the Children and Young People's Plan, on the way in which information, advice and guidance will be provided. This will depend



on the nature of local collaborative arrangements and whether some schools and colleges are commissioning or providing services directly. Local Authorities will have responsibility for establishing with their partners, including the Learning and Skills Council and employers, what pattern of provision should apply and for helping staff to make the transition, for example moving from their existing employer to being employed directly by a school or college.

**273.** On the second issue, an integrated service will inevitably mean changes for many of the workforce currently located in Connexions, Youth Services or in targeted support programmes, whether they are employed by Connexions Partnerships, Local Authorities, the voluntary and community sector or private providers.

**274.** Local partners will need to agree the right balance between targeted and universal support and make clear the distinctive roles for each of the professions and services engaging with and supporting young people. We believe that, in the future, the focus should be on skills and competencies needed to deliver services for young people rather than on organisational and employment structures that have led to a proliferation of new, specific roles in response to individual initiatives. This means employers will need to look afresh at the mix of skills in their workforce compared to the local analysis of what young people need. Creating a better fit between these elements should enable

frontline professionals and practitioners to use their time more effectively.

**275.** We will support Local Authorities and their partners as they remodel their workforce substantially. Within this remodelling we anticipate a new and a reinvigorated role for youth workers. As set out in *Transforming Youth Work: Resourcing Excellent Youth Services*, youth work has a unique contribution to make to improving outcomes for young people. The same will be true within integrated youth support services.

**276.** The skills of Connexions workers will also be important in the delivery of the reforms. The wide skill set of many Personal Advisers provides an important model for the integrated youth support service. An understanding of local employment market needs, links with Job Centres and the Learning and Skills Council, and advocacy for young people in securing appropriate opportunities will continue to be vital in helping young people to enter or return to education, employment or training and to prevent young people's short-term problems becoming long-term barriers to engagement.

### Developing Workforce Skills in the Longer Term

**277.** Our proposals value and build on the specialist skills of professionals currently working with young people but involve developing them to meet new challenges. We need to bring the skills of the

workforce closer to the needs of teenagers and remove the barriers that can frustrate workers in the current system. We are committed to developing more coherent, attractive career pathways for everyone working with children and young people. These pathways will be based on a new single qualifications framework for the children's workforce, underpinned by a common core of skills and knowledge, as set out in the *Children's Workforce Strategy: a strategy to build a world-class workforce for children and young people* which was published for consultation in April 2005.

**278.** The development of a common core of skills and knowledge to be shared by everyone in the workforce was an important and widely welcomed recommendation in *Every Child Matters*. The six areas identified in the common core prospectus<sup>37</sup> are:

- effective communication and engagement with children, young people, their families and carers;
- child and young person development;
- safeguarding and promoting welfare;
- supporting transitions;
- multi-agency working; and
- sharing information.

**279.** The common core is directly relevant to the workforce supporting young people and will mean that all those working in this area having or acquiring a shared understanding of how to work with young people (and their parents and carers).

**280.** Young people are often confused about the roles and responsibilities of different professionals. We will aim to create greater coherence by establishing very clearly the skills and competences that people in the workforce have in common – and those things that make them distinct.

**281.** The new Children's Workforce Development Council, working with Lifelong Learning UK and other key partners, will help drive innovation and change and oversee the development of workforce skills.

<sup>37</sup> *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce*, DfES (April 2005)

## 8. Having Your Say: Consultation Arrangements



**282.** Young people are central to this document. We have sought and listened to their views and opinions throughout its development. We want to ensure that they and their parents have every opportunity to hear about our proposals.

**283.** We want to hear the views of all concerned – Local Authorities, schools and colleges, Connexions Partnerships, Youth Services, the private and voluntary and community sectors, the health sector, the wider community and particularly young people and parents.

**284.** We want to hear views on every aspect of this document. In particular we would like views on the questions set out at the end of this document.

### How to Respond

**285.** Consultation responses can be made online at [www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations) by email to [youthmatters.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:youthmatters.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk), or in writing, using the enclosed response form, to:

Consultation Unit  
Area 1A Castle View House  
East Lane  
Runcorn  
Cheshire  
WA7 2GJ

**286.** The consultation period lasts for 15 weeks from the date of publication, finishing on 4 November 2005.

**287.** The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made

available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies.

**288.** With the help of organisations which work with young people, there will be a number of consultation events to ensure that we gather the views and opinions of young people who may not otherwise respond. Some groups and organisations which are led by young people have been asked to gather the views of their peers. The Department for Education and Skills will also consult its own Children and Youth Board.

**289.** We would hope that organisations which work on behalf of young people will seek the views of the young people with whom they are in contact. Where organisations do this, it would be helpful if they would clearly distinguish between the views of the organisation and the views of the young people.

**290.** The Department for Education and Skills has also asked a number of family-led organisations to assist us in reaching parents.

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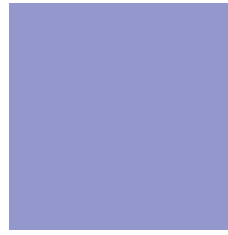
**291.** This document, an summary and a questionnaire for young people are available electronically at [www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth).

**292.** Further paper copies of this document are available for £17.85 from The Stationery Office: online from [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop); tel: 0845 702 3474; fax: 0870 600 5533; textphone 0870 240 3701; or e-mail: [book.orders@tso.co.uk](mailto:book.orders@tso.co.uk). Please quote Cm 6299.

**293.** Paper copies of the summary (Reference: YGPSUM) and the young people's questionnaire (Reference: 1612-2005DOC-EN) are available from DfES Publications: tel: 0845 60 222 60; fax: 0845 60 333 60; textphone: 0845 60 555 60; or e-mail: [dfes@prolog.uk.com](mailto:dfes@prolog.uk.com).

**294.** The young people's questionnaire is also available from DfES Publications in Braille (Reference: 1609-2005DOC-EN); Audio (Reference: 1610-2005DCD-EN); and British Sign Language (Reference: 1616-2005VID-EN). In addition, there is a version for young people with learning difficulties (Reference: 1617-2005RTF-EN).

# Consultation Questions



## General

1. What do you think are the most important issues facing young people now? How are these issues different for younger (13-16) compared to older (17-19) teenagers?
2. Are there issues faced by particular groups of teenagers that are not addressed in this document? If so, what are they?
3. Do you know of any projects or initiatives which have been outstandingly successful in tackling the challenges covered in this document?
4. How can we encourage young people to take their responsibilities seriously – what should the incentives be for good behaviour and what sanctions should be applied for poor and disruptive behaviour? Do you know of any examples of schemes which have applied these kinds of incentives and sanctions effectively?
5. What more could be done to divert young people from risk-taking behaviour, like smoking, binge-drinking and volatile substance and illicit drugs misuse?
6. What practical benefits and challenges will there be in developing an integrated youth support service?
7. How can the Connexions brand be used to best effect within the reformed system?
8. What more can we do to ensure that reformed services are focused on achieving the improved outcomes we all want to see?

## Empowering Young People: Things to do and Places to go

9. What do you think of the emphasis in the proposals on empowering young people themselves to shape local services? What other options are there for achieving this?

10. What should be done centrally to support the development and delivery of local opportunity cards?  
How should opportunity cards be developed so that the maximum number of young people can benefit?
11. Which activities do you think have the most benefits for young people?  
Do the proposed national standards on activities cover the right areas?  
Are they achievable and affordable within existing resources?

### Young People as Citizens: Making a Contribution

12. Will our proposals, taken together with those of the Russell Commission, lead to increased mutual respect between young people and others in the community?
13. What more can we do to recognise and celebrate young people's positive contributions to their communities?
14. Would the opportunity to earn rewards motivate young people to get involved in their communities?
15. How can we ensure that young people from the diverse range of communities that make up today's society are effectively engaged by service providers?

### Supporting Choices: Information, Advice and Guidance

16. What kind of help and support is most important for young people?
17. How can we ensure that information, advice and guidance provided to young people is comprehensive and impartial and challenges rather than perpetuates traditional stereotypes?
18. What do you think of our proposals to devolve responsibility for information, advice and guidance to children's trusts, schools and colleges?
19. Do you agree that it is important to have minimum expectations of the information, advice and guidance received by young people? Are the proposed expectations correct for each age group?
20. Do you agree there is a case for quality standards for information, advice and guidance? If so what should they cover? How can they be made affordable without putting pressure on financial or workforce resources?
21. Would quality awards for information, advice and guidance help to ensure high quality and impartiality?
22. Do you think a 'personal health MoT' for 12-13 year olds would be an effective way of helping young people make a successful transition to the teenage years and to secondary education?

## All Young People Achieving: Reforming Targeted Support

23. Do you think there is a good case for bringing together within children's trusts responsibility for commissioning different services which provide support to young people with additional needs?
24. How can we ensure that young people facing particular barriers, for example those who are disabled, are effectively engaged by service providers?
25. How can we ensure that the new lead professional role is successful in co-ordinating the delivery of targeted support to young people who need it?
26. What more could be done to help older teenagers make a smooth transition to support from adult services, where they need them?

## Parents

27. At what stage(s) of their children's lives would parents find it most helpful to receive information about how they can support their teenage children?
28. On which issues would parents of teenagers most like support? How, or through whom should information be delivered?
29. How could schools help parents remain involved with their teenager's learning and future education opportunities?





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