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Get involved...
to make a difference

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connexions



The best start in life
for every young person

Get involved with the Connexions Service - to make a difference

What is it?

Connexions is a new advice and guidance service in England for all 13 to 19 year olds.

It will improve and enhance a range of services, including modernising the way that young people get careers advice. Teenagers will be able to get the help and support they need to reach their full potential, and make an effective transition to work and adult life. Its key objective is to encourage more young people to stay in education or training, so that an increasing number have the qualifications they need for further education or the world of work.

All teenagers will have access to Connexions - whether they are at school, in further or higher education, in or out of work. There will be a special emphasis on those young people who feel excluded and find it difficult to use the usual sources of advice.

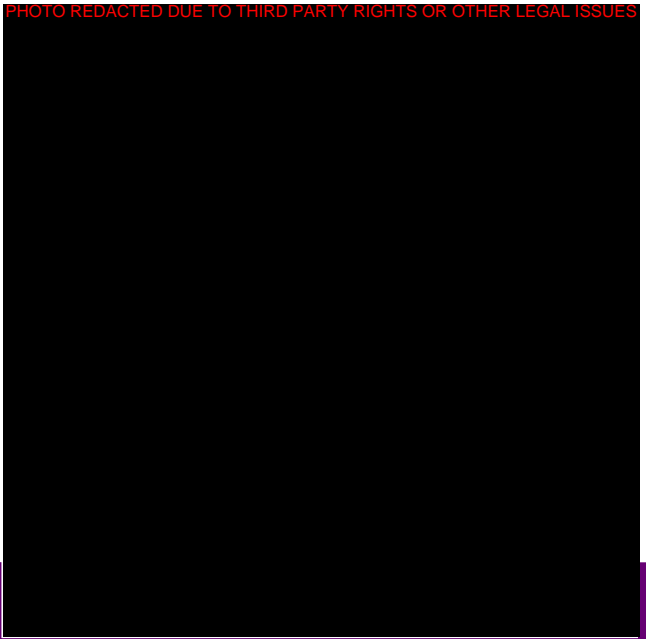
“Connexions is now reaching out to young people that slipped through the net. We’re picking up young people that we’ve not been in contact with before. A lot more community work, a lot more outreach work, a lot more working with agencies, sharing information, for the benefit of the young person...

And it is working.”

Lorraine, Personal Adviser, Grimsby

“What interested me about Connexions is the ‘joined up thinking’ aspect of it in terms of working with young people. Often the problem has been you’ve had demarcations. If you were in the college as a Guidance Officer, you could give people advice but you couldn’t go with them to the Job Centre or the Housing Office. There was a lack of continuity. Connexions allows you to work all the way through.”

Tony, Personal Adviser, Lewisham



Linking up

Connexions will be a locally designed and delivered service working to national standards, improving continuously in the light of young people’s experience.

**Young people will be at the heart of the service
- it will be designed with and by them.**

Existing services will have to break down barriers both between themselves and with young people. Service providers will have to talk together and work together to provide an holistic service.

Connexions Service Partnerships will be responsible for providing the new service. The Partnerships will cover the same geographical areas as the new Learning and Skills Councils. The Partnerships will have flexibility to meet local needs using the design that works best. The detailed delivery will be arranged and monitored by local management committees which are expected to cover the same areas as local authorities. Connexions pilots are showing how different structures are meeting young people’s needs in different places and different organisations.

The service will begin in 16 areas in 2001 and in the 31 remaining areas in the following year.

What will it do?

Everyone needs a bit of help through the maze of choices that they face during their teenage years. Some young people need more help than others. Connexions will offer each young person the support they need, when and where needed.

It will offer practical help with choosing the right courses and careers as well as access to broader personal development through activities like sport, performing arts and volunteering activities. In addition to advice on education, training and work, there will be help with issues like drug abuse, sexual health and homelessness.

The Connexions Service is also about building on the help that young people get from their families and communities. It will be important for Connexions to work with parents and carers.

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How will it work?

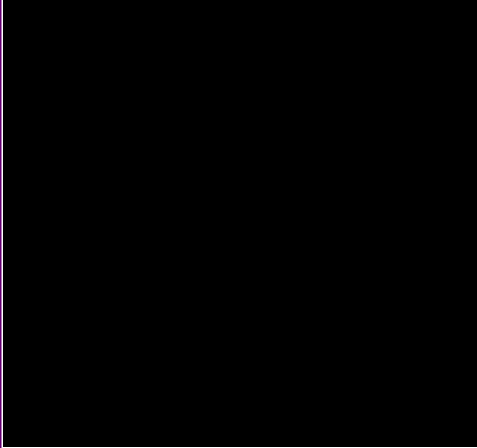
The Connexions Service will work by bringing together all the services and support young people need during their teenage years. It will be a radical, new way of delivering a range of services in a way that young people have said they want and will use.

“I’ve known Pam for about a year, and I’ve been coming to the drop-in centre for six months. I don’t come here too often, because I’m actually at college now, doing an NVQ 2 in beauty therapy - it’s good. I was there last year, but I had to quit because I left home and had financial problems, and Pam’s organised it so I could go back this year. When I first left home she helped me get support, she’s helped me get my bedsit. She’s got me into the training centre. **I’ve a lot of respect for her.**”

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“At first, she wouldn’t even answer the door to me, wouldn’t acknowledge me at all, but obviously I knew she needed help. I virtually camped on her doorstep. She was on Prozac, anti-depressants. She didn’t know how to pay her bills, how to budget her week’s money, plan her menus. We went round the shops together, and worked it all out. That’s the kind of thing that’s changed since Connexions came along. I wouldn’t have been able to do all that before.”

Pam, Personal Adviser, Scunthorpe



VIKRAM

At 18, Vikram is looking forward to a career in architecture.

'I've had really good careers advice from Connexions, and found it very useful'

After getting B grades in two A levels (biology and design & technology) at sixth form college, this year he is doing another A level in art so that he can go on to study architecture at university.

“At first I didn’t want any

But I’m glad of

coming back a

need the help.

“I came in to see my Personal Adviser because I had lost my place in my **hostel accommodation**. He sat me down and got me a drink first. Then he asked me what had happened. I told him and he helped me to get temporary accommodation for that night. He then helped get another place two days later when I saw him again. He got onto Benefits to get me some money to live on. I’m not homeless anymore and he’s helping me try to find a job or go to college.”

6 The best start in life for every young person

“I’ve got family problems at home, and aggression problems in school, so she’s put me on this course to help me out, and given me anger management and stuff. It’s helping at home and it’s helping at school. She spoke to my family. She’s set targets we’ve got to reach, like if my Mum shouts at me, I’m not allowed to shout back, and if I shout at my Mum, she’s not allowed to shout back. She’s talking to my Mum - she’s helping her as well. It’s having a good effect, my Mum’s a lot more chilled out.”

help, thought I didn’t need any, and wanted to do it on my own.

it now. My Personal Adviser just kept
and coming back, and saying you do

”

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All teenagers will have access to Connexions. But there will be a special emphasis on those young people who are excluded from mainstream services.

All young people who need it will have a Personal Adviser who will assess their individual needs and broker access to specialist services if necessary. This could be expert careers guidance, health advice or housing support for young people leaving young offender institutions. Personal Advisers will maintain contact with young people to ensure that everything is working satisfactorily and effectively.

“I’d just become a mum, and I didn’t want to become like all the other teenage mums. I went to see Lorraine, and started doing a computer course because I love computers.”

“I started working with her 10 months ago. She was in full-time care then, and left in November when she turned 18. She had a young baby, and together we worked on her confidence and self-esteem, and sorted through the money problems that she had. She was quite motivated to learn, so via the Learning Gateway, she went on a computer-training course, which she has now finished. The cost of the professional childcare that she needed was met by the Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). Together, we are now looking at further training opportunities.”

Lorraine, Personal Adviser, Grimsby

Does it affect me?

Many organisations are involved with young people - public, private and voluntary bodies. All are striving to provide a good quality service to support young people and their families. The local Connexions Service will either encompass or come into close contact with all of them. The new Service provides the opportunity to integrate the provision of services from the point of view of young people - professionals working together to a common aim.

Whether in the statutory or non-statutory sector, if all or part of the work of your organisation affects young people aged 13 to 19, now is the time to find out more about the Connexions Service and your role in it. Your help and involvement is needed and will be valued.

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"A very able student was doing a broad base of 'A' Level courses. Her school based PA gave her impartial careers advice which enabled her to consider a range of career possibilities.

This support helped develop her confidence to settle on a career in computers."

A Personal Adviser, Coventry

Tom Wylie, Chief Executive, National Youth Agency:

"Connexions will provide a long sought-after opportunity to create a comprehensive and coherent system of support and development for young people. Local youth services are already seizing the chance to play a full part in shaping the Service."

Ursula Russell, Chair of the Careers Service National Association and Chair of Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions pilot:

"You can't give young people a good service unless you join up. This is a wonderful opportunity to create a network, where the net is so small that no young person falls through. The challenge is to come up with completely new models to deliver the service and the new guidance will help partnerships deliver that vision."

Ray Tarleton, Head of South Dartmoor Community College, Devon:

"The scheme is already providing powerful motivation for students who have been carefully targeted and are performing beyond expectations."

How to find out more

If you would like to find out more about the Connexions Service, please look at our website www.connexions.gov.uk where you will find planning guidance and other information published to help Connexions Partnerships deliver the Connexions Service.

If you want more information and to find out how you can get involved, please get in touch with the Government Office nearest to you;

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