

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE PLAN 2011-14
CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**REPORT TO COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP FORUM
16 FEBRUARY 2011**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The current Children and Young People's Services Plan comes to end on 31 March 2011. A new 3 year Plan is being developed for the period 2011-14, this will be informed by the views of providers, professionals and, most importantly, children and young people themselves.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A multi-agency Steering Group was formed to plan and carry out a large scale consultation with children and young people. The group comprised officers from Early Education and Childcare, Community Learning and Development, Social Services and NHS Ayrshire and Arran.
- 2.2 The Steering Group developed a consultation strategy which was approved by the CHP Officer Locality Group: Children and Young People meeting of 10 August 2010.
- 2.3 The consultation builds on the participation and engagement work established and working well in East Ayrshire including the Children and Young Person's Representative Forum, COGS, Have Your Say and Looked After Children and Young People's forum.
- 2.4 This report details the methodology and the findings of the consultation.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The consultation hoped to secure the views of children and young people aged 2-21 years and therefore a range of range mechanisms were employed. A questionnaire was developed based on the key areas of focus of the previous Children and Young People's Service Plan. Additional questions on awareness of the Child Protection Logo, the function of social work and awareness of the recession were included. A simplified version of the questionnaire was provided to support practitioners in seeking the views of young children.

In total the views of **832** children and young people were received from the 3-18 year population of approximately 20,000. Hay's Statistics for Social Science indicate a 95% confidence level can be assumed in 376 responses for this population size.

A list of the consultations and methodology is attached at Appendix 1.

- 3.2 Targeted consultation was undertaken with vulnerable children including young carers, looked after and accommodated children. The Young Person's Representative Forum also participated in a focus group and a group whose parents are chaotic drug users through 8 focus groups sessions.

A total of **67** children and young people participated in focus groups

Despite repeated efforts it was not possible to organise focus groups of any ethnic minority groups or secure the views of children and young people of travelling families however the demographic information provided by respondents to the online survey indicates these are representative of the community except in terms of age as the vast majority of respondents were over 8 years old.

A postcard survey was designed for use by Youth Outreach workers and **33** responses were received.

Children and young people with additional support needs were recently consulted by Common Ground Mediation on their educational experiences and by Heartfelt on their views on respite services and were therefore not specifically consulted as part of this consultation.

- 3.3 Broadsweep consultation for children over 8 years was undertaken mainly through an online survey hosted on the Dialogue Youth website. This was promoted to all schools, social services, youth services, out of school care, leisure and health services. A total of 248 surveys were completed online, 255 hard copies were submitted from Hurlford Primary School bringing the total to **503**.
- 3.4 Early years services and primary schools were asked to seek the views of children under 8 years through age appropriate activities, Community Work Assistant help was identified for 3 schools. **178** responses were received from 1 primary school, 2 early years establishments including 50 from an unnamed source.
- 3.5 VOXUR is a portable video booth which allows participants to record their responses to pre-recorded questions. 8 schools in a mix of urban /rural and affluent/deprived areas were selected for VOXUR sessions. A total of **51** children participated. A video summary of representative responses as appended.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Children under 8 years

Galston Nursery mind mapped the questions with a group of 10 children. The children's responses indicated their need for safety. The children also thought it was very important that help is given to other children who need it saying "if they don't have anyone to help them, we need to do it".

16 children from Nether Robertland Primary 1-4 submitted scribed drawings which mainly illustrate concern about crime and antisocial behaviour.

14 children attending Onthank Nursery participated in a focus group; their responses indicate that they see their parents, nursery staff and friends as sources of help and support. Responses indicate an understanding of the role of health professionals, some awareness of the effects of antisocial behaviour and physical safety issues such as road safety.

88 children attending Patna Primary School completed joint class questionnaires. None of the children who answered recognised the Child Protection logo.

50 of the simplified questionnaires were received from an unnamed source; the responses mainly reflected those of the broadsweep questionnaire. A notable difference was recorded in relation to "Having a say in your community and the

decisions that affect you” with 58% of this group rating this as fairly or not important as opposed to 84% overall rating this as important or very important. 17% of this group thought the recession may affect them in terms of less money for clothes, equipment and food, notably only 4% recognised the Child Protection logo.

4.2 Youth Outreach

Community Learning and Development Youth Outreach workers facilitated consultation with a small number of young people contacted on the street. The most notable difference in this groups responses were in relation to who they would talk to if they had a problem with 53% indicating someone other than a parent/social worker/adult in school. Responses also indicate a high level of awareness of the function of Social Work and Social Workers. 21% of this group is concerned that the recession will affect access to colleges and universities and 18% are worried about people losing jobs because of the recession.

4.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups utilised existing groups/meetings with vulnerable children with the exception of the Children and Young Person’s Representative Forum. The sessions were facilitated by CLAD and health staff in conjunction with the staff who usually support these groups.

As would be anticipated responses indicate a high level of awareness of the Child Protection logo and of the function of social work and social workers although this was lower in the 8-11 year group of young carers than in the 12-13 year olds or the 16-21 year olds.

There was a notable difference in responses between the focus groups and the broadsweep results with the 92% of Focus Groups respondents rating it very important or important to have a say in community and decisions that affect as opposed to an overall response of 84%.

The young carer focus groups also showed some difference in response across the age groups with 56% of 8-11 year old carers finding it easier to talk to an adult in school if they had a problem as opposed to 0% of 12-13 year olds and 16-21 year olds.

This younger group of carers also placed less importance on being able to take part in play, recreation and sport with only 44% rating this as important or very important as opposed to 100% of the older young carers.

4.4 VOXUR Unit

During October and November 51 children aged 8-11 years from the following schools took part in the VOXUR consultation exercise:

Fenwick Primary School
Newmilns Primary School
Catrine Primary School
Hillhead Primary School

Greenmill Primary School
Bellsbank Primary School
Annanhill Primary School
Nether Robertland Primary

A summary video of representative views is appended, full response rates are detailed below:

What’s the most important thing to you about education in school?

20 responses (39%) stated studying an educational subject was most important followed by getting a job 17 (33%).

What helps you feel safe when you are at home or out playing or at school?

22 responses (27%) stated friends, 12 (15%) stated parents, 11 (13%) stated teachers, 8 (10%) stated family and 7 (9%) stated someone there for me.

Have you seen the Child Protection Logo before?

41 responses (80%) did not recognise the Child Protection Logo.

Who would it be easiest for you to talk to if you were worried or had a problem?

40 responses (78%) stated it would be easiest to speak to a parent if they had a problem, 12 (17%) stated friends and 11 (15%) stated teachers.

What do children need to keep themselves healthy and well?

26 responses (24%) stated exercise, 21 (19%) stated fruit, 20 (18%) and 16 (15%) stated vegetables.

How can adults find out what children think about their communities?

29 responses (49%) stated ask, 8 (13%) stated talk and listen, 8 (13%) don't know and 4 (7%) stated letters.

If you get the chance to take part in play and sport tell us what these are?

19 responses (21%) football, 11 (12%) basketball, 10 (11%) swimming, 7 (8%) tennis, 6 (7%) cycling and 4 (5%) dancing.

What would make you want to take part in sport and play?

24 responses (38%) stated like it/fun, 17 (27%) stated to keep fit and healthy, 11 (17%) stated to join in with friends and 4 (6%) stated to keep active.

Have you heard about the recession which means there is a lot less money for services?

Almost an even split were aware of the recession – 24 participants (47%) had heard of it and 27 participants (53%) have not.

What kinds of things worry you about the recession?

29 responses (53%) stated not worried, 7 (13%) stated parents losing jobs, 7 (13%) stated not enough money to pay bills, 6 (11%) stated less money for schools and leisure and 2 (4%) stated no job for me when I am older.

4.5 Summarised survey results

The following table details the percentage returns rating the criteria as very important or important. For ease of reading and comparison the table includes responses to all survey mechanisms except VOXUR which provided more qualitative data.

The figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents giving this rating.

% respondents stating very important or important	Under 8s	Outreach	Focus Groups	Online and Hard Copy Questionnaires	Overall Responses
Having help to learn new things like reading, using numbers and computers. Base: 695	99% (156)	73% (24)	92% (60)	90% (397)	91% (635)
Having a say in your community and in the decisions that affect you. Base: 705	83% (147)	78% (26)	92% (58)	86% (399)	85% (605)
Good quality education and care in nurseries and schools. Base: 564	0% (0)	88% (29)	98% (65)	94% (440)	94% (534)
Good access to colleges and universities. Base: 314	0% (0)	88% (29)	95% (37)	96% (233)	95% (298)
Good access to community based learning in local areas. Base: 505	0% (0)	79% (26)	97% (38)	81% (351)	83% (415)
Having help to prepare for the world of work. Base: 460	0% (0)	91% (30)	88% (59)	89% (321)	89% (409)
Being safe and protected. Base: 746	100% (163)	97% (32)	100% (66)	98% (474)	99% (735)
Additional help for children and young people who need it. Base: 702	98% (164)	91% (30)	100% (38)	97% (455)	98% (684)
Children and families getting help with their problems before these become big problems. Base: 692	99% (154)	97% (32)	94% (35)	95% (446)	96% (666)
Crime and anti-social behaviour being tackled. Base: 711	99% (161)	88% (29)	97% (62)	97% (440)	97% (694)
Having safe roads. Base: 736	98% (163)	94% (31)	87% (55)	97% (464)	96% (711)
Getting information on health and how to stay healthy and well. Base: 568	0% (0)	97% (29)	91% (60)	95% (446)	94% (535)
Being able to get help from health services, like the school nurse, the hospital or the dentist, when you need it. Base: 698	99% (155)	94% (31)	99% (64)	98% (434)	97% (683)
Being able to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport. Base: 709	97% (154)	88% (29)	89% (54)	91% (423)	92% (655)
% of respondents who have not seen the Child Protection Logo before Base: 681	97% (107)	36% (12)	37% (24)	81% (386)	77% (526)
% of respondents who would speak to a parent or carer if they were worried or had a problem Base: 782	67% (183)	29% (11)	56% (38)	77% (380)	71% (552)
% of respondents who would speak to an adult in a school if they were worried or had a problem Base: 782	29% (183)	8% (3)	18% (12)	14% (67)	17% (135)
% of respondents who would speak to someone else if they were worried or had a problem Base: 782	1% (1)	53% (20)	19% (13)	6% (32)	8% (66)
% of respondents who would speak to Social Worker if they were worried or had a problem Base: 782	3% (183)	11% (4)	7% (5)	3% (14)	4% (29)
% of respondents who know what Social Work does Base: 686	37% (86)	67% (22)	84% (54)	39% (197)	44% (305)
% of respondents who know what Social Workers do Base: 624	29% (59)	61% (20)	85% (55)	49% (227)	51% (319)

4.6 Free text responses

The survey questionnaires also allowed some free text responses; a small number of respondents made use of this is detailed below to provide additional qualitative data.

Is there anything important that we have missed out? If yes please tell us what:

Most comments largely reflected priority areas already identified by the children and young people's services plan, e.g. having safe places to play, eating healthily and having more access to recreational facilities.

The main additional priority area identified by the survey was bullying, with 9 respondents highlighting this as an important issue that had been missed out. The following issues were also raised:

- 1 respondent raised the need for activities for disabled people.
- Three respondents raised the issue of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), with 1 stating there should not be EMA and the remaining two stating there should be EMA.
- 1 respondent stated there should be opportunities for all children to participate in the 'Firereach' programme.
- 1 respondent stated there should be help to old people.
- 3 respondents stated social workers should listen to the child and see us more often
- 1 respondent stated that homework should be banned
- 2 respondents stated that young people should have help find places to help them better themselves if they don't know where to get it
- 1 respondent stated that Mauchline needs a train station to give the young people access to other already existing amenities elsewhere.
- 1 respondent stated that James Hamilton Academy should be turned into a new building.
- 1 respondent stated that there should be more parking for schools.
- 1 respondent stated youth work as a whole.

Who would it be easiest to talk to if you were worried or had a problem?

Respondents were asked who they would find it easiest to speak to if they were worried or had a problem. Those selecting the 'someone else' option were asked to specify who.

23 respondents provided information on who they would find it easiest to talk to. Of these the 3 most frequently cited groups were: a sibling (8 responses), a friend (8 responses) or a grandparent (3 responses).

Do you know what Social Work does?

Respondents who stated that they knew what social work does were asked to provide an example. **97** respondents provided an example. These could be categorised into 3 broad groups: providing people with help, working with children in care, and ensuring children are safe.

Providing help

59 respondents stated that social work provided people with help; either in a general sense (25 respondents) or, more specifically, for children (23 respondents) or families (11 respondents). Three respondents made reference to helping people on low incomes.

Examples include:

'helps people with problems'

'I think it helps young children and teenagers get through their problems easier'

'helps children and families get through tough times'

In relation to helping children, 14 respondents stated that social work helps children with problems they have at home or with their parents.

Examples include:

'help children that are having problems at home'

'help children that are in need of help e.g if there parents are alcholollics'

'they help children if there parent is in jail'

Working with children in care

23 responses referred to the provision of care for children in care homes or whose parents were unable to look after them. 3 respondents stated that social work would take children away from their homes if they were not being properly looked after.

Examples include:

'they look after children in care'

'it helps children by giving them support and a home'

'takes your child away if your parents have died or done something bad'

Ensuring children are safe

10 respondents stated that social work had a role in keeping children safe – either in a general sense (5 responses) or in relation to harm caused by parents (5 responses).

Examples include:

'make sure kids are ok and safe'

'if a parent harms a child the social workers come in'

'a social worker goes to your house to look over you if they are worried'

Do you know what Social Workers do?

Respondents who stated that they knew what a social worker does were asked to provide an example. 10 respondents provided examples. As with the previous question, these related mainly to the provision of help (particularly for children, families, and those on low incomes) and looking after children in care.

Recession and budget cuts: anything else you want to tell us about this?

As well as selecting the three things that worried them most about the recession and resultant budget cuts, respondents were asked if there was anything else they wanted to say about this. 8 respondents provided comments. 6 of these referred to the financial impact the recession might have on individuals or families.

Examples include

'parents not being able to pay the bills or mortgage'

'I hope that all families are looked after well and have enough money'

'I am worried about my parents losing their jobs, mostly'

26 respondents provided comments on the priority areas identified by the current plan. The key additional issue identified as important was bullying, with 8 respondents highlighting this as an issue.

Siblings, friends and grandparents were identified as 3 additional groups that children and young people would speak to if they were worried or had a problem.

With regard to the role of social work and social workers, examples were provided by 97. The majority of these related to the provision of help for those who need it (particularly for children and families) and looking after children in care.

Additional comments regarding the recession were provided by eight respondents; these largely focussed on the financial impacts the recession might have on individuals and families.

5. Conclusion

This report provides a broad summary of responses, a full report showing graphs of all responses of the different groupings, full appendices of questionnaires and information leaflets will be prepared and available on request.

A summary report for children and young people will be prepared for distribution in the new year, it would be helpful if this could include a statement on how the views provided will be used.

Securing the views of our young children under in a meaningful and reportable format remains a challenge.

The VOXUR Unit provides an accessible and young person friendly method of securing views and it is suggested that the unit could be made available to schools on a rolling programme. Children's views could then be made available to the OLG: CYP on video in real time format.

6. Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Steering Group members for planning and undertaking the consultation but particularly to all children and young people who took the time to participate in the consultation and to the schools, early years establishments, Youth Workers, Social Workers, Health staff and Community Learning and Development staff who facilitated, supported and encouraged this.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE PLAN CONSULTATIONS CONSULTATION DETAILS

Date	Respondees	Number of Young People	Method
2/9/2010	Children and Young People's Forum	28	Focus Group
27/9/2010	Young Carers Cumnock	9	Focus Group
29/9/2010	Young Carers Kilmarnock	9	Focus Group
30/9/2010	Young Carers Cumnock	5	Focus Group
20/10/2010	Fenwick Primary School	7	VOXUR
21/10/2010	Greenmill Primary School	5	VOXUR
22/10/2010	Newmilns Primary School	6	VOXUR
1/11/2010	General Public	503	Survey Monkey and Hard copy questionnaires
05/11/2010	Catrine Primary School	7	VOXUR
05/11/2010	Bellsbank Primary School	8	VOXUR
8/11/2010	Lugar Group	5	Focus Group
09/11/2010	Annanhill Primary School	6	VOXUR
11/11/2010	Hillhead Primary School	5	VOXUR
12/11/2010	Nether Robertland Primary School	7	VOXUR
16/11/2010	Sunnyside Residential Home	2	Focus Group
17/11/2010	Galston Nursery School	10	Mind Map
17/11/2010	Kilmaurs Residential Home	6	Focus Group
18/11/2010	Montgomery Residential Home	3	Focus Group
1/12/2010	Nether Robertland Nursery School	16	Questionnaires
1/12/2010	Onthank Nursery School	14	
1/12/2010	General Public	50	Under 8 Questionnaires
1/12/2010	Outreach	33	Outreach questionnaires
20/12/2010	Patna Primary School	88	Under 8 Questionnaires
	TOTAL TO DATE	832	