

# Children and Young People's Trust

## newsletter

November 2010

**S** The Solihull Partnership

Children and Young People's Trust  
Improving outcomes for children in Solihull

### Introduction

**R**ead the headlines and you'd think everything was changing. But in Solihull we're still on the same journey - to improve the lives of children, young people and families in the borough.

Our new Children and Young People's Plan, launched in October, describes the things we want to do to make sure that all children and young people thrive and succeed. The changes to resources will mean some difficult decisions ahead, but our destination remains the same and we will need to support each other if we are to get there.

Our new plan has eight priorities, chosen by consensus about what is most important for families in Solihull:

1. Safe from harm
2. Supporting parents and carers
3. Raising achievement for all
4. Good physical and emotional health
5. An equal chance for vulnerable children and young people
6. Things to do and places to go
7. Active involvement
8. Looking after the environment

**Check out the plan.**

**Ben Lewing**  
Change for Children Programme Manager



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### A note from Councillor Norman Davies



**“ I welcome the idea of partnership working and I hope very much that what the Government has said about schools not being part of the Trust does not stop schools wanting to be part of it. It is important that all services responsible for children and young people are in communication with each other. ”**

**“During my year as Mayor, I came to realise the importance of voluntary organisations in the borough and the vital role they play in the lives of children, young people and families.”**

**Councillor Davies is a member of the Children and Young People's Trust Board and cabinet member for children and young people.**

## A week in the life...

**W**ith over 18 years experience in the voluntary sector and being the Chief Executive of SoLO, Janet Down is an ideal person to represent the voluntary sector on the Trust Board. Here Janet gives us an insight into a week as a Trust Board member...

### Monday

I arrive in the office just before most of my staff get in which gives me the chance to put the kettle on, open my computer and read my emails (I usually get about 120 a day!).

I ask my long suffering assistant, Maria, to print off the Children's Trust Board papers, usually between 15 or so reports and appendices - takes a bit of reading!

4th cup of coffee by 11am and time to lock myself away to run through a presentation on funding. My staff now think I have completely lost my marbles, because I am talking to myself energetically.

### Tuesday

I meet up with a parent who is a new member of the Trust Board to help her make sense of how it works. She's been through the Board induction but I'm mentoring her through the first couple of meetings which can be a lot to take in.

I spend the afternoon with the Commissioning Manager and Contracts Director from the Solihull Care Trust to discuss our current contract.

Just before I leave, I check my emails and have a lovely message from one of our teenage members who has just **loved** taking part in the summer activities and wanted to tell me. My day ends on a positive note - just how I like it!

### Wednesday

I meet a small group of young carers to find out what they think of our strategy and whether it's made any difference to them. They are involved in some really exciting things but they want more support, especially through schools - must do better.



### Thursday

Trust Board meetings happen every six weeks, three hours on a Thursday morning. Today is the launch of the new Board so there is some new faces around the table, including parents and politicians.

The agenda is broad, from changes in the NHS to the inspection of children's centres and much more. We discuss how to make sure young offenders are getting the education, training and employment opportunities they need to help them turn away from crime.

We also talk about how Board members will meet with families to hear how LINCS and the common assessment worked for them - it's our multi-agency way of supporting children and young people who are vulnerable and we've all got a stake in making it work.

### Friday

Maria reminds me I need to put together a report about the Children's Trust Board for the Voluntary Sector Stakeholder forum. I think that can wait until next week!

## Our Work

### The C.. scheme

**This scheme supports 15 to 24 year olds by encouraging them to take responsibility for their own sexual health and well being.**

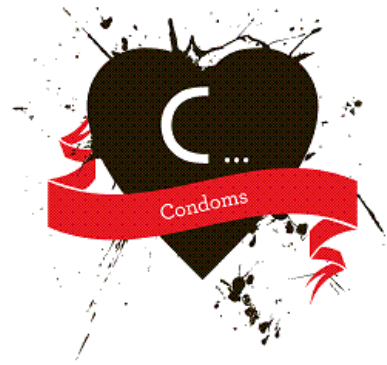
We do this by providing young people with information, advice and free condoms. So that young people have the knowledge and skills to use condoms correctly, to prevent unplanned pregnancy and STI's.

Young people are supported to resist peer pressure and decide themselves when they are really ready for sex; improving their confidence and helping young people make the right choice for them.

Any service for young people can offer the C.. scheme once staff have completed training.

If your service would like to become part of the Solihull C.. scheme please contact:

**Simon Walker, Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator**  
 ☎ 0121 704 8439 ✉ [swalker@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:swalker@solihull.gov.uk) or  
**Jodie Smith, Health Promotion Specialist**  
 ☎ 0121 712 7783 ✉ [jodie.smith@solihull-ct.nhs.uk](mailto:jodie.smith@solihull-ct.nhs.uk)



### Keeping our schools healthy



**Marilyn Phipps, the head teacher at Damson Wood Infant School tells us how the school has used the health related behaviour questionnaire.**

“Since 2004 we have been asking pupils to fill in a health related behaviour questionnaire.

The questionnaire covers a range of issues such as healthy eating, emotional health and wellbeing, drugs and alcohol, relationships and sexual health and economic wellbeing”.

“The information has helped us support the wellbeing of pupils and plan personal, social and health education programmes”.

One of the areas that has been highlighted in the survey was the fact that children were eating a lot of crisps and chips. To change this, the

school worked with the organisation ‘Food for Life Partnership’.

Marilyn then said “Children now do structured, progressive cookery classes and pupils grow and harvest their own vegetables. We also do cookery workshops with parents and with the help of Solihull Catering we have raised the profile of school meals with parents”.

The survey also highlighted that pupils were not washing their hands as often as they should.

“We worked with parents and pupils to raise the profile of hand washing and we asked pupils what would help them to wash their hands. As a result, we installed child friendly soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers and started using foaming soap”.

“The health related behaviour questionnaire flags up issues and we use this information to put things in place so that things improve. The survey enables us to track improvements year on year”.

**For more information on the health related questionnaire contact Bev Petch, Senior Teaching and Learning Consultant**  
 ☎ 0121 707 9488 ✉ [bpetch@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:bpetch@solihull.gov.uk)

## Counselling children and young people

**We commission Barnados to counsel children and young people aged between 5 and 13 years who are victims of crime, physical, sexual or domestic abuse.**

Barnados works with about 40 children and young people a year. One of the children who has recently benefited from the service is Miles\*. Miles was six years old when Barnados started working with him. Miles had anger issues, which stemmed from witnessing domestic abuse at home.

Miles's anger was displayed frequently at home and in the classroom, and he was referred by his school's Child and Family Support Worker. The counsellor, who worked with Miles for over six months, used play therapy as a means to encourage him to talk and looked at the different ways that he could manage his anger.

Clara Titre was the counsellor that worked with Miles. She said "Recently I was in contact with Miles' mum. She said that her son had come on leaps and bounds. She no longer had any concerns about his behaviour in school or at home. She went on to say that the family had just moved into a new home, hoping for a fresh start. Miles was now a more settled child, wanting to sleep by himself, in his own bedroom".

Clara then said "This was indeed welcoming news to hear that Miles was sleeping in his own room as he would sometimes raise this as an issue. Miles feared sleeping in his own bedroom, preferring his mother's bed instead".

**To find out more about Barnados Amazon:**

☎ **0121 236 9222** ✉ **amazon@barnados.org.uk**  
@ **www.barnados.org.uk/amazon**

*\*Name changed for confidentiality*

## Child's Play

**Safe places for children and young people to play are really important; here we share with you a success story.**

Meriden Park Adventure Playground opened in July 2008 and is the only play area of its kind in Solihull.

The play area in Chelmsley Wood includes a 20 meter zip-wire and a 6.5m climbing frame. Children can also take part in building dens and fires, face painting, organised games and mask making.

Children have the opportunity to test boundaries, be challenged and take risks through play whilst being kept safe from harm.

Children were consulted in the design of the playground and since its completion nearly 20,000 children have used it, including 385 with additional needs.

**This is what children have said about the playground...**

**"I would be at home on Xbox if I didn't have this park"**

**"Disabled people get to join in"**

**"It has given me more confidence with heights"**

**"It keeps me out of trouble"**



**And parents...**

**"I live in a flat with no garden so it's great"**

**"It's good for burning off energy and there are lot's of things for children to do"**

**"It keeps him off the streets and out of trouble"**

**"I can let him play safe and it's free"**

Children and young people continue to get their say on how the playground should be developed. A swamp with tyre stepping stones has recently been built and a climbing wall is in the process of being built reflecting children's wishes.

**Meriden Adventure Playground, Meriden Park, Moorend Avenue, Chelmsley Wood, Solihull**

## Connexions advice

**In Solihull, the number of 16 to 18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) reduced from 9.49% in 2005/6 to 6.1% in 2009/10.**

Connexions offers 13 to 19 year olds (and up to 25 for those with a disability or care leavers) impartial information, advice and guidance on education, training, careers, money and lifestyle decisions. Connexions works with the Children and Young People's Trust to reduce the number of NEETS.

Stephen Rimell is 18 and lives in Chelmsley Wood. He recently turned to Connexions for advice after he dropped out of college due to bullying and lack of support.

Stephen said "My Connexions Worker helped me look at my different options. I now have a steady part time job and am training to be a carpenter with ENTA training in Birmingham. I'm really grateful for the help they provided and in the future I hope to get an apprenticeship".

Stephens Connexions Worker, Shabbir Hussain said "Stephen has travelled leaps and bound from being shy and reclusive to a determined, pleasant, co-operative and well mannered young man who wants to succeed in life".



*Stephen Rimell recently asked Connexions for advice*

This interview was carried out by Sally and Laura, two young people who voluntarily put together a newsletter on NEET work in Solihull for their peers. **Find out more in the next edition.**

**To refer a young person to Connexions contact:**  
**Shirley ☎ 0121 251 1800**  
**Solihull Library ☎ 0121 704 6711**  
**Chelmsley Wood ☎ 0121 770 1861**  
**The B@se at Kingshurst ☎ 0121 717 5809**

## Parents access information

**Solihull Family Information Service provides parents with information and helps them access the services and support they need. Here we show you how the Family Information Service has supported a parent who has a child with additional needs find childcare and get back to work.**

John Farmer\* in Marston Green phoned the Family Information Service for advice. He wanted to find childcare for his son David aged 7 who has additional needs, so that he could return to work.

Alison Bermingham, a Family Information Officer, contacted local childminders to find those who were able to offer the care David needed and helped them access the training John felt they would need in order to meet David's needs.

John decided that due to David's changing needs he would prefer him to be cared for by a family member. Alison found paediatric nurses who could offer the family member training around how to meet David's medical needs.

Alison advised John about flexible working and signposted him to national organisations who could help. She also provided John with information about tax credits and disability benefits, support workshops and short breaks.

John said "I have found the service very useful as it is a central point of contact. Without the service the information you get is all word of mouth. It is so hard to find the information and support you need when you don't know what to do or where to go to find out."

**In 2009/10 3,771 parents contacted the Family Information Service for information and assistance.**

Alison said "When John contacted us he said he just didn't know where to start and was worried about returning to work. John has now returned to work and has been able to reduce his working hours to suit his family's needs. John is applying for a 'Short Breaks Grant' to put toward a family holiday and has accessed activities we have been able to share with families through the Parents' Network".

**The Family Information Service can help practitioners support families. You can contact the Family Information Service by:**

☎ **0800 389 8667**

✉ **familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk**

@ **www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo**

*\*Name changed for confidentiality*

## Get the latest workforce news

The Children and Young People's Workforce web pages are now available. Check out [www.solihull.gov.uk/workforce](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/workforce) for up to date information on training, working with other agencies, safer working practices and current workforce issues.

## Get started with the Common Induction

The next Common Induction starts on Friday 12 November. The modules are also open to existing staff.

Jason Roberts, a Volunteer Youth Worker from Bromford Housing has been on the Common Induction.

Jason said

“Taking part in this course has helped me both as a professional and as a parent. I feel more able to signpost families and children to appropriate services and feel more confident in accessing appropriate support for them.”

For more information on the Common Induction visit [www.solihull.gov.uk/workforce](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/workforce). To book a place contact Emma Jones on: ☎ 0121 788 5374 ✉ [cypworkforce@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:cypworkforce@solihull.gov.uk)

The Common Induction is a way of providing new staff and volunteers with skills and knowledge to work with children and young people. The programme is made up of seven modules:

- Integrated Working Awareness
- Safeguarding Level One
- Equality and Diversity
- Communicating with children, young people and families
- Child Development
- Health and Safety
- Information Sharing

Integrated working and Safeguarding are mandatory modules, but the others depend on your experience.

## Early intervention with families

LINCS can help you support children and young people before they reach crisis point. This is a reminder of how LINCS can help you work with families and the support that we can provide to help you carry out the LINCS process.

LINCS can help you support families early to prevent problems later on, saving time and money.

LINCS puts families at the centre and uses a common way of identifying, assessing and supporting children and young people when more than one agency is involved.

9 out of 10 children and young people living in Solihull who are supported by LINCS have benefited as a result.

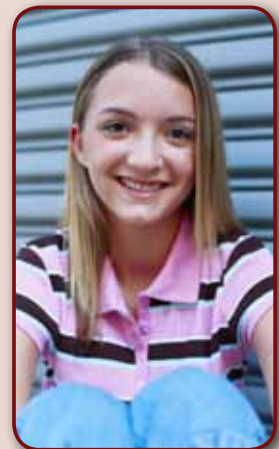
### Benefits

- Brings key agencies together - you do not have to do everything yourself
- Saves time and money
- Improves communication between practitioners

“We are finding that the LINCS process is really helping us to get families the support they need.”  
- Suzanne Overall, School and Families Manager, Lanchester PRU

A new, easy to use Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form is now available, as well as other new forms to help you complete the LINCS process.

The LINCS Support Team can also provide you with free training and support. This support is free but can only continue for a limited period.



For more information contact the LINCS Support Team:

☎ 0121 788 4334

✉ [lincs@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:lincs@solihull.gov.uk)

@ [www.solihull.gov.uk/workforce](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/workforce)

## Local News

### Breathing Space

**S**olihull NHS Care Trust launched the Breathing Space scheme in October. The scheme offers parents and carers of 0-5 year olds age appropriate information on the effects of tobacco smoke on babies and children and practical advice on going smoke free at home.

On joining the scheme, families are asked to agree to be contacted every year until their child's 5th birthday. Advice is practical and non-judgemental and parents/carers will have the opportunity to be referred into Solihull NHS Stop Smoking Service.

Parents are also given advice on issues such as smoke free childcare, fire safety, smoking in cars, cot death and meningitis.

Families can join the scheme themselves on [www.breathingspace.nhs.uk](http://www.breathingspace.nhs.uk) or be referred by a health or education professional anytime up until their child's 5th birthday.

**For more information contact Denise Milnes, Smokefree Co-ordinator, Solihull NHS Care Trust on: ☎ 0121 713 8926**

✉ [denise.milnes@solihull-ct.nhs.uk](mailto:denise.milnes@solihull-ct.nhs.uk)

Solihull **NHS**  
Care Trust



### Parents' Network

**P**arents often say that they find it difficult to find out what is going on in their area for their children and families. Parents can now join Solihull Parents' Network and receive a newsletter each term about:

- Services, activities and events
- Things that are happening or changing to make things better for children and families
- Ways parents can get involved and have their say about what is happening for families and children

So far, 600 parents are signed up to the Network, 192 of which have a child with an additional need or disability. 108 practitioners who work with families have also signed up to the Network.

Parents and practitioners can sign up to the network by completing the online registration form or contacting the Family Information Service.

☎ **0800 389 8667**

✉ [familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk)

@ [www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo)

### Competition winner

**R**achel-Louise Lawrence aged 10 at Coleshill Heath School was the lucky winner of an MP3 player in our Children and Young People's Plan consultation prize draw. In total, 1,929 children and young people took part in our consultation to help determine the content of our new Children and Young People's Plan.



*Rachel-Louise Lawrence, the Mayor, Councillor Ian Courts and the Mayoress of Solihull*

## Budding photographers

**S**olihull Council's Youth Council members were the budding photographers for our 2010/11 Children and Young People's Plan. They took and starred in a variety of photographs to show how Solihull young people like to spend their time.

[Click here](#) for a copy of the Children and Young People's Plan.



## Award winning service

**C**ongratulations to Solihull's Family Intervention Programme for winning an award at the Health and Social Care Awards 2010. The award was in recognition of their multi-agency teamwork and commitment to working with families.

The service run jointly by Solihull Care Trust and Solihull Council works with families when a young person is at risk or has been involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.

Since the programme started in 2009, 17 families have been supported to improve their life. The number of offences and anti-social behaviour with the families has reduced and parents are now more confident in managing their family's behaviour.

## Whats On

### Transition Event - Making choices for life after school

**Wednesday 10 November 6pm to 9pm**

**Thursday 11 November 9.30am to 2pm**

**Renewal Conference Centre, Lode Lane, Solihull, B91 2JR**

A transition event for young people aged 14 to 25 with support needs. A wide variety of organisations will be represented at the event to advise young people on their options and opportunities into adult services. Services will have inter-active stalls to give young people a meaningful and enjoyable experience.

**If you or the young people you work with are interested in coming along contact Maria at SoLO on: ☎ 0121 788 3469 ✉ [m.brown@solihullsolo.org](mailto:m.brown@solihullsolo.org)**

## About us

### What is the Children and Young People's Trust?

**The Children and Young People's Trust is a partnership arrangement that brings together key agencies to improve the lives of all children, young people and families in Solihull. It aims to make Solihull a place where all children and young people have an equal chance and are able to achieve their full potential.**

The Trust is responsible for delivering the **Children and Young People's Plan** which looks at improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull. It covers any service and organisation that affects those outcomes, from health to housing, education to employment, culture to care.

The Trust is part of the **Solihull Partnership**. The Solihull Partnership is the strategic partnership responsible for improving outcomes for all people

in Solihull. The whole Partnership includes local communities and their elected representatives working with public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations.

#### Who's who in the Trust?

Find out about the [Trust Board Members](#)

#### What is discussed at Trust Board meetings?

Our [eBulletins](#) provide a summary of Trust Board meetings.

#### Where can I find copies of important documents?

You can find key documents such as [strategies, plans and reports](#) on the Trust's website. More information on the Trust can be found on [www.solihull.gov.uk/cypt](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/cypt)

## Get Involved

### You can be actively involved in the work of the Trust by:

- Coming to a trust board meeting as an observer - contact us to find out more.
- Joining one of the many project groups - contact us to find out more.
- Contact us to tell us what you think about the articles in this newsletter or any of the work that is going on across the Trust.
- We produce an eBulletin every six weeks which provides a summary of trust board meetings. If you would like to join the mailing list please contact us.

#### Contact:

Shahida Khokhar  0121 704 8480  [cyptrust@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:cyptrust@solihull.gov.uk)

## Contact Information



If you have any **comments and feedback** about this issue we would like to hear from you. We're always on the look out for relevant articles, news and events for the newsletter, so please let Claire Salter our Marketing and Communications Officer know at [clsalter@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:clsalter@solihull.gov.uk) or call 0121 704 8474