

CYPE(6)-04-23 - Paper 1

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Gwasanaethau i blant sydd wedi bod mewn gofal: archwilio diwygio radical | Services for care experienced children: exploring radical reform

Ymateb gan Gweithredu dros Blant | Evidence from Action for Children

1. Before care: Safely reducing the number of children in the care system

Please outline a **maximum of three** top priorities for radical reform of services for safely reducing the number of children in the care system:

Priority 1:

Identify most vulnerable families and provide long term community-based support to help them to manage needs- housing. Finance , health and relationships .

Priority 2:

Remove children earlier from the most dangerous parents - recognise that Complex PTSD and Attachment Disorders are akin to a learning disability and persist , current interventions assume that it is a matter of choice and education which is mistake. Protection for children earlier will prevent the pattern from re-occurring.

Priority 3:

Invest in family centre hubs to provide consistent community support to vulnerable families

2. In care: Quality services and support for children in care

Please outline a **maximum of three** top priorities for radical reform of services for children in care:

Priority 1:

Design services based upon relative stage of emotional development and assess impact of trauma and neglect with individualised plan for treatment – abandon chronologically based assumptions and approach to service design as they don't fit children who have suffered neglect and abuse.

Priority 2:

Raise the age of leaving care to 25 yrs – this will give children a chance to mature prevent the cycle repeating itself. Establish fostering as a permanency arrangement akin to a normal family with less intrusion from system once permanency agreed.

Priority 3:

Protect children from the impact of meeting the parents that abused them, contact or family time is widely perceived as a right and is supported. However, the experiences of abuse that required removal are devastating to the child's development and emotional wellbeing. Ongoing contact for the most seriously abused children has a debilitating impact upon the child victim of the adult abuser and creates ongoing mental health vulnerability as well as de-stabilizing caring environments. This should be assessed on an individual basis.

3. After care: On-going support when young people leave care

Please outline a **maximum of three** top priorities for radical reform of the on-going support provided when young people leave care:

Priority 1:

'Shared lives' should be extended to cover all looked after children. 'When I'm ready' has not been adequately implemented and often undermines the relationships between foster carer and child.

Priority 2:

Many children leaving care have lifelong impairments re, their development and mental health, this requires much more sustained support than is currently available, adult services should be extended to offer services to all care leavers if needed.

Priority 3:

Develop community resources to provide ongoing pastoral support, employment, housing, relationship management etc

4. Anything else

Do you have anything else you would like to tell us?