

Peterlee Children in Need Agenda Day Report. **27th October 2006**



Peterlee Children in Need team had asked Investing In Children to help them run this agenda day as part of their application for Investing in Children membership. An agenda day is an adult free space where children and young people can express their views and opinions. They reason for this agenda day, was to find out what the children and young people think about the service that they receive from the Children in Need team. The 9 children and young people that attended the day ranged from 3 to 10 years of age and they where all young people who access the Peterlee Children in Need team. The day was separated into three workshops. These workshops were facilitated by two young people from Investing in Children. The workshops were part of a Halloween lunch organised for the children by the Peterlee Children in Need team.

The time schedule for the day.

11.30 – 1.30pm Friday 27th October at Hill Rigg House Community Centre in Peterlee

The children and young people arrived in Halloween fancy dress and did some colouring and face painting to get to know each other. The group worked together for an hour before sharing a Halloween lunch. The children and young people received personally chosen gifts as payment for their participation. Transport was arranged for the young people.

Workshop one:

The group were asked to discuss and draw good points, bad points and what they would like to be changed about the Peterlee Children in need team

Workshop Two:

The group was asked to discuss and draw the answers to the following questions:

- How often do you see your social worker?
- Do you know what a social worker does?
- Do you see your social worker enough?
- What do you want from your social worker?
- Where do you meet your social worker?
- Where would you like to see your social worker?
- If you have contact sessions with your family where do these happen?
- How much time does your social worker spend with you?
- What information do you get from your social worker?
- Would you like to see your parents become more / less involved with your social worker?
- How could you improve your relationship with your social worker?

Workshop three:

The group were asked to discuss and draw....what its like to live round here?

Workshop 1.

The good points

They help a lot
They care about you
Nice to them (young people)
They take you places
kind

The bad points

hesitate
Bossy (social workers)
Get angry (social workers)
(workers are) Silly

The things that they said they wanted to changed

Not to be so bossy
Keeping the same social worker longer
Better timekeeping (from social workers)
Stop changing appointments

Workshop 2

For the second workshop we asked the young people a series of questions.

- How often do you see your social worker? – see some social workers often enough, others not enough on average once a week
- Do you know what a social worker does? – support, help to take you places, look after you, drive you around
- Do you see you social worker enough? – different views yes and no
- What do you want from your social worker? – take out places, we want a happy family
- Where do you meet your social workers? – go out or stay at home, social services building
- Where would you like to see your social worker? – shopping centre, mcdonalds, depends on the weather
- If you have contact sessions with family where do these happen? – home, bowling, social services office
- How much time does your social worker spend with you too little or to much? – not enough really, about an hour, want to spend more time

- What information do you get from your social worker? – good information, boring information, not enough information
- How could you improve your relationship with your social worker... some people will have a good /bad relationship?-able to talk in confidence, kinder, helpful, there when you need them, good sense of humour, “I am happy with my social worker and my parents”

Workshop three

What's it like to live round here?
 what do you like and dislike about the area
 what do you do in your leisure time?
 Please see the drawings attached to the report

Disco 80's and 70's
 Wrestling
 Bowling
 Metroland
 Black hall farm
 Parks
 Fields
 swimming baths
 beach
 wacky warehouse
 Its OK
 Its boring
 Nothing to do
 Play with friends
 Got no money
 Play games
 Play football
 Play computer /PS2
 I like to ride my bike
 Bored
 I get bored

Conclusions

All the views of the children and young people were recorded onto flipcharts and are included in this report. We have attached all the drawings from the day too for you to have a look at. The agenda day went well. Although lots of the comments were positive the children and young people did feel there were some areas that social workers could improve such as “they hesitate a lot” and don't give us enough information. Some young people felt they could not rely on their social workers and needed to build a stronger and longer relationship. The young people enjoyed the day and liked being asked their views. One child said “it's the best day of my life” and didn't want to go home.

Recommendations

1. For successful Investing in Children membership your team must provide evidence of dialogue and change by having regular and consistent dialogue with service users – not just asking their views. Membership is only achieved if the children and young people feel you have listened and made positive changes within your service as a result. The whole team needs to work together on membership and the issues raised by the children and young people through this agenda day.
2. More information needs to be given to children and young people who use your service. The same information should be available to all the children and young people you come in contact with and should be presented in a way that is suitable for children and young people such as colourful leaflets and posters in easy to read words.
3. You must try never to make promises or arrangements that you can't keep. An appointment with a child or young person is just as important as an appointment with an adult.
4. If there are things you can't change this needs to be explained to the children and young people whether it's about an individual or the service as a whole. This will help you build better relationships.
5. Young people felt there wasn't a lot to do in their local area. Perhaps your team could help them find out what other activities there are?
6. It's important that the children and young peoples appointments suit the needs of the children and young people not just the social workers diary. Can you keep checking the times, dates and venues of children and young peoples appointments as peoples lives change very quickly?
7. Please read this report and look at the artwork. Please discuss it in your team meeting and develop an action plan about how you can or can't address the issues raised. Please give feedback to the children and young people that gave their views. The agenda day is hopefully just the start of a process of continual dialogue and change that will help you do your jobs better.

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