

Stanley Children In Need Teams Agenda day

May 2005

All teams in County Durham have to have Investing In Children Membership, so the two Team Managers from Stanley Children In Need with the help of Investing In Children decided to have an agenda day, which took place on Tuesday 31st May 2005 at the Lamplight Arts Centre in Stanley. The aim of the day was to gather the young peoples views and ideas on their social workers, how they operate and what improvements were needed in the service provided. The team wouldn't be able to apply for membership if they did not involve the young people in decision making and make changes to the service provided.

We started the agenda day with a brief introduction, explaining that the young people running the agenda day work for Investing In Children. A **BIG** thanks to those who attended the agenda day and those who helped in the agenda day.

We then had our first workshop, in which we started with a 'blank sheet agenda', this means gathering young peoples opinions on the good, the bad and the changes in social care and health or 'social services', in this case the Children In Need team.

After lunch we began the second workshop in which we asked how the young people felt about the social care and health building.

We then had a competition and the prize was a box of chocolates. The competition was to see which young person could come up with the best change regarding social care and health. The judge was a young person who took part in the agenda day (not a facilitator).

At the end we asked if anyone would like to be part of the ongoing dialogue with the team or if they would be interested in doing some Investing in Children work. The young people were paid a fee of £10 for attending the agenda day with free lunch.

Stanley Children In Need Team Agenda Day

Tuesday 31st May 2005

11.00 Introduction

Who are we?

Arrangements for the session

What's it all about?

11.10 Workshop One

What do you think about Stanley Social Care and Health?

Your Views and ideas about the service you receive

Good points

Bad Points

What Changes would you make?

12 noon Lunch

12.30 Workshop Two

The Team at Stanley would like your views on:

The Building

What Happens when you have to wait around...Do you think there should be a friendly place away from the office?

12.45 Summing Up and Competition

What have you said?

What happens next?

Do you want to get involved with Investing in Children?

Payment

£10 for your time **because you're worth it**

Thank you

Workshop one

Group One

Good Points

- # Get Money for coming here.
- # Social workers help you.
- # Look spooky when they laugh.
- # Some of social workers try to tell you jokes.
- # He stinks.
- # CATS activities are mint, Leeds, go on holiday, South Shields, Lightwater Valley and Sheffield.
- # New gates
- # They give you lifts.
- # Never got phone switched off
- # Should all have a nice car.
- # Help you move house.
- # Yes/no do and don't help with school work.
- # They help with your horses.
- # I would love to go with social workers on activities, like rock climbing, swimming and they are sweet to us.
- # I like Wendy not Elle or Else as a social worker.

Bad Points

- # When they annoy kids.
- # When they tell you what to do.
- # When they do tricks that is not funny.
- # They all ways run about and when they call you a nice name, I hate that so much.
- # Cup of teas are awful.
- # Talk rubbish.
- # Tell you what to do.
- # Say same thing over and over again.
- # Tell you what to do.
- # Write to much.
- # Should tell you what they are writing and they don't.

- # Social workers are ill.
- # Don't like seeing social worker too much.
- # Make you move.
- # Talk to much.
- # Stopped CATS (under 12's).
- # Would like a bigger and larger Garden with no dogs???
- # Social workers come at inappropriate times.
- # Play inside too much.
- # Change name from social services/social care and health.
- # Social workers should take you more places, Metro centre, South Shields, Flamingo Land etc.
- # Should be able to call them what you want.
- # Social workers do not have funny jokes and should.
- # Social workers should get more involved, play with you on the Playstation.
- # Social workers talk to my parents too much, should speak to me more.
- # Social workers don't ask easy questions.
- # Bad way to control anger by counting to 10.

Changes

- # More Money, should get 20 instead of 10.
- # Don't write as Much.
- # Don't fill in as many forms
- # More activities.
- # CATS have a age limit- 12 and under ?
- # Shouldn't be on holiday as much.
- # Visits should be in school times.
- # Come at inappropriate times.
- # They lie.
- # Should all have a nice car.

Group 2

Good Points

- ✚ They are friendly, get money of them, they give you presents and take us to flamingo land.
- ✚ Reliable like a friend.
- ✚ They don't smell.
- ✚ Helps with homework.
- ✚ They try to get you lots of opinions for the future.
- ✚ The yip is good, it gets kids of the streets and out of trouble.

Bad Points

- ✚ Takes too long for my mums assessment when I want to stay at hers (she has done nothing wrong so don't understand why).
- ✚ Boring- chores reward system (crap) don't work for a long time but may work for a short period of time.
- ✚ Should give telephone numbers to young people as well as carers.
- ✚ Should be a friendship as well as a business/professional relationship.
- ✚ Should have a big meeting with parents, social workers and young person (most important what they want).
- ✚ Should have more of a laugh, foster carers shouldn't threaten you.
- ✚ They don't socialise that much with us.
- ✚ Take more interest in young people rather than just the carers.
- ✚ You should have a long term social worker, so that we feel comfortable talking to them, if social services change, we have to keep on making new bonds with new faces (we are sick of it).
- ✚ Some social workers should explain it more to the child that is involved, for that same misunderstand and some just don't get told.

Changes

- ✚ When you receive trip letters, they should contain locations.
- ✚ There should be more activities, for free, coz we are bored so we may mischief.
- ✚ You should be allowed to choose the gender of your social worker.
- ✚ To be able to change your social worker, if you do not feel comfortable with him/her.

Workshop 2

The Team at Stanley would like your views on:

The Building

What Happens when you have to wait around...Do you think there should be a friendly place away from the office?

This workshop was only a brief and I asked how they felt about the social care and health building. What do they think of the rooms in it and do they think young people should be involved in decorating the building?

- ✚ We as young people should design some pictures to go on the wall and there should be a graffiti board with names on it.
- ✚ Rooms should be improved to hold meetings, private places, decorate themselves, fire exits obvious, playroom should have cuddly teddy bears, books and magazines, new magazines not the boring ones, we should have heat and so on.
- ✚ When having supervised contact the room is fine, window ledges are filled with books.

The Competition

The competition question was who can come up the best improvement for social care and health, the prize was a box of chocolates, the

competition was judged by a young person not taking part in the competition of course and two facilitators acting as assistant judges

The entries sentences were as follows:

- + Getting lots of PS2 games.
 - + They could improve social services by letting the kids decorate the social to make kids want to go. Also they could let the children go out with the staff for the day. They should also talk to the kids more and do more activities.
- Winner**
- + They are starting to take more notice, and treating your wants, more seriously. They are taking more action quickly. They give you more options for the future. They have provided a Max Card for kids who are looked after to have something to do.
 - + If they can do our gardens, if they can give us a Jacuzzi and lots of summer clothes and new stuff for our gardens and more make up and a new coat and shoes.
 - + Improvements on more activities and things for children to keep them off the streets and out of trouble.
 - + Take you somewhere you feel comfortable.
 - + To fix my house.
 - + Spend less time writing and less time talking.
 - + Social workers to act less serious.
 - + Change my house into a mansion.
 - + The amount of times they come.
 - + The building because it is to small it needs to be bigger so that we can have rooms to have meetings in them.

Conclusion

Generally the young people felt that the Children in Need team was a pleasant service for the young people. However, there were some negative views about the service provided. The young people felt that the

social workers take them out on trips, which they enjoyed as well as receiving presents from their social workers.

The young people felt that the social workers are writing too much and not talking enough and feel intimidated by the young people. The young people felt that the social workers aren't funny and are not showing any humour.

Recommendations

1. I recommend that you have ongoing dialogue with the young people that are interested in being part of Investing in Children.
2. Allow the young people to participate in decision making that affects them regarding all aspects from today's agenda day.
3. I also recommend that the young people should have input in designing the layout of the social care and health building, allow them to choose the designs, ask the young people to contribute to decorating.
4. The rooms should be appropriate for the young people to talk to someone in private.
5. If you can allow the young person to choose the gender of their social worker it will empower the young person.
6. The young people felt that some of the social workers aren't being friendly with them. I recommend that the social worker should interact more with the young person, by playing on a game console or taking them to an activity i.e. bowling.
7. Come to some arrangements with the young person so that the social worker visits or a convenient time.
8. Pay the young people for attending meetings or arrange some huge activity with the young people, ask the young people what they would prefer.