

Caring For The Health Of Children Who Are Looked After Away From Home

**AN AGENDA EVENT HELD SATURDAY 5th MARCH 2005
BY INVESTING IN CHILDREN ON BEHALF OF MIDDLESBOROUGH
AND REDCAR AND CLEVELAND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTS**

The Report Of Agenda Day Event For Children and Young People Who Are Being Looked After Away From Home By Middlesborough And Redcar And Cleveland Social Services Departments.

Introduction

We are a group of young people, from Investing in Children who staged an agenda day that was held on the 05th March 2005, to get the young people from the Tees Valley area's views, thoughts and feelings on their health care procedures. These young people were aged between 9-11 years old and some had disabilities.

To prepare for the day we spent some time with the IIC consultants talking about children looked after and how the law applies to them with respect to their health. We also talked about the procedures that cover these young people.

During the day we included some fun activities to keep the young people entertained and also at the beginning we played a ice breaker game to give all the young people a chance to learn every body's name and a little about one another.

The young people enjoyed the activities and it prevented the day from becoming boring for them all.

We had lunch brought in from McDonalds that also helped the young people enjoy the day, although not everyone had what you would call a healthy meal- from their new range!

At the end of the event we did an evaluation sheet for the young people to fill out and everybody that did received a free red nose for a reward for taking their time to fill in the evaluation sheet. These were a great hit with the young people and everyone filled out their form.

We split the agenda day into two different sections which consisted of two workshops looking at different aspects of their health and what they thought about it.

Here are the two workshops and their findings;

Workshop One:

In this workshop we wanted to find out what the young people knew already about their healthcare and what understanding they had about what they were required to do.

We also wanted them to tell us about their experiences so far in their lives, whether good or bad.

1. What do we mean by Healthcare?

Doctors, Dentist, Opticians, Hospital, Teachers, Psychologist, Mentors, Health Visitor, Surgeon, Midwife, Nurse, Orthodontist, Medical check up, School Nurse, Shrink, Paediatrician, Parents, Physiotherapist and Health advisor.

2. What type of things does it cover?

Teeth, Eyes, Ears and the whole body.

3. Have you had any health check ups?

Doctors - Medicals, Dentist, Opticians, Orthodontist and School Nurses.

4. Were these good or bad experiences?

Good

Help to keep you healthy and safe, prevent you from getting diseases.

Bad

Dentist,
Can't understand things they are saying, they don't explain things,
Don't like been given blood.

5. Who goes with you to the health checks?

Foster carers, Social worker, Aunties, Uncles, Sisters, Brothers, Parents and Nana.

6. What do you think of the healthcare that you have received so far?

Brilliant

Good

Ok

Could use easier language,

See same doctor for each medical.

7. How do you think you have been treated by health professionals?

Good help from them,

Ok, Some doctors and nurses better than others.

8. Do you know your rights around healthcare?

Don't really know and Not sure how often we have to go for check ups.

Workshop Two:

We wanted to know what the young people thought could be done to make their healthcare better and easier for them

We drew a picture of a person with four thinking bubbles coming from their head with the following titles in each:

WHO?

WHEN?

WHAT?

HOW?

These are the ideas that the young people came up with.

Who would you like to be there when you go for check ups?

- The same gender doctor as myself
- Same person every time
- Nurse
- Just myself and the doctor
- Social worker and myself
- My Mum
- Somebody I know
- Not a room full of people
- Parents
- Maximum of two people in the room and myself.

When would you prefer the check ups to be held?

- In school time
- Play time
- After lunch
- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Once every two years
- Only when ill
- Turn up on time that meant to.

What you would like to change?

- Do it all at once and get it over and done with.
- The above to prevent having to go back
- Thirty minutes long
- Travel free
- Make so check ups can be done at home
- Be made so it is less embarrassing
- Build relationship with medical professional first before having medical
- To be made feel more comfortable
- To be made more fun

How would you improve the health checks procedures if you could?

- Make it so there is one medical a year
- More organised
- Reward for going
- Camera installed to prevent abuse
- Do samples and then await the results instead of a full body examination.

Evaluation

We asked the young people who came on the day to tell us what they thought about it and handed out evaluation sheets at the end of the event; these were the questions that were asked followed by the findings.

1. Have you enjoyed the day?
Yes: 11
No: 0

2. Has the day been enjoyable?
Yes: 11
No: 0

3. What did you enjoy the most?
1 said Writing
1 said the end
1 said drawing
3 said dinner time
1 said playing games
1 said discussions
1 said everything
2 didn't answer.

4. Did you get the opportunity to express your views?
Yes: 11
No: 0

5. Do you think your views were listened to?
Yes: 11
No: 0

6. Can you think of ways we could improve on what we did?
4 said more games
7 didn't leave a comment.

7. Would you like to be involved with further work with Investing in Children?

All young people said that they would like to keep in contact with Investing in Children and all want to be involved in further work with Investing In Children.

CONCLUSIONS:

Overall we all found the day an interesting and exciting day for all, we found it to be a huge success.

All of the young people seemed to enjoy coming together in the way we did.

In total we spent about two and half hours doing the exercises we did- it seemed quite a long time but we probably needed more time than we had.

Some of the young people in our view found the day quite difficult as they were too young in our view, they had not really given any thought to what they think about their health care. We had to work quite hard not to give them bad ideas or to encourage them in the wrong way!

Many of the young people had never given any time to thinking about their healthcare - they were perfectly happy with the care they are getting - and we found it quite hard therefore to get them to look at how these things could be improved.

Most of the children did not realise that they are treated differently to other children, because they are being looked after.

A lot of our time was spent helping them to understand and making sure our exercises were right for them. We asked a junior school teacher to help us with the day but it was still quite hard work.

Many of the children who came had special needs, particularly educational needs. Several of them needed one to one help to understand what they were meant to be doing.

If we were to do any more work with this group we think we would need more adult help with running the day to make sure everyone got what they needed. and we would need to think of more ways of making the day exciting and interesting.

The red noses for filling out the evaluation forms worked well! Obviously offering a reward like that made the difference to what would otherwise have been a boring exercise for them.

We would like the opportunity of doing some more work more young people who are in care and to discuss their opinions of the health care that they receive but we have also agreed that it may be more worthwhile and interesting if we were to work around a similar agenda day but maybe with slightly older children aged between 13-16 year old.

We all think it may work better as this is the age group where they become individuals and start making choices for themselves. Very often older young people find medicals and these kinds of things intrusive and do not want to cooperate with them.

If we were to carry on with the work (which we would greatly enjoy,) then we would need some funding to do so, to carry out another agenda day and see if there is anymore work that we may be able to do around healthcare for young people in the Tees Valley area who are being looked after.

We hope the views and opinions that have come out of this day are helpful and will mean the professionals in those Social Services Departments will think about how they can do things differently in the future.

This Report was written by Katie A, Kimberley M, Libby F, Stephen D and Zoe B.