

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

18 July 2014

TROS GYNNAL QUARTERLY ADVOCACY REPORT
JANUARY – MARCH 2014

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the operation and effectiveness of the Advocacy Service **1st January 2014 – 31st March 2014.**
- 1.2 The report contains information on the number of referrals received and source, the nature of issues dealt with and a breakdown of the area of children's services that children requested advocacy support for.

2. Recommendation

In line with the recommendation of the Children's Commissioners following his review of advocacy provision across Wales It is recommended that Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of the report and the role of the Advocacy provider.

3. Background

- 3.1 It is a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to ensure that there is a commissioned Independent Advocacy Service available for:
- i). Children in Need
 - ii). Looked After Children
 - iii). Care Leavers

The service is also available to:

- i). Young people known to the Youth Offending Service
 - ii). Young people in Education in relation to SEN appeals
 - iii). Young people in the care of the NHS i.e. primary care or hospital
- 3.2 The commissioned Advocacy Provider In Rhondda Cynon Taf is Tros Gynnal. They will continue to provide the service up until 1st September 2014 when the contract will be transferred to the National Youth Advocacy Service. (NYAS)

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TROS GYNNAL PLANT

**RHONDDA-CYNON TAF
ADVOCACY SERVICE**

JANUARY – MARCH 2014

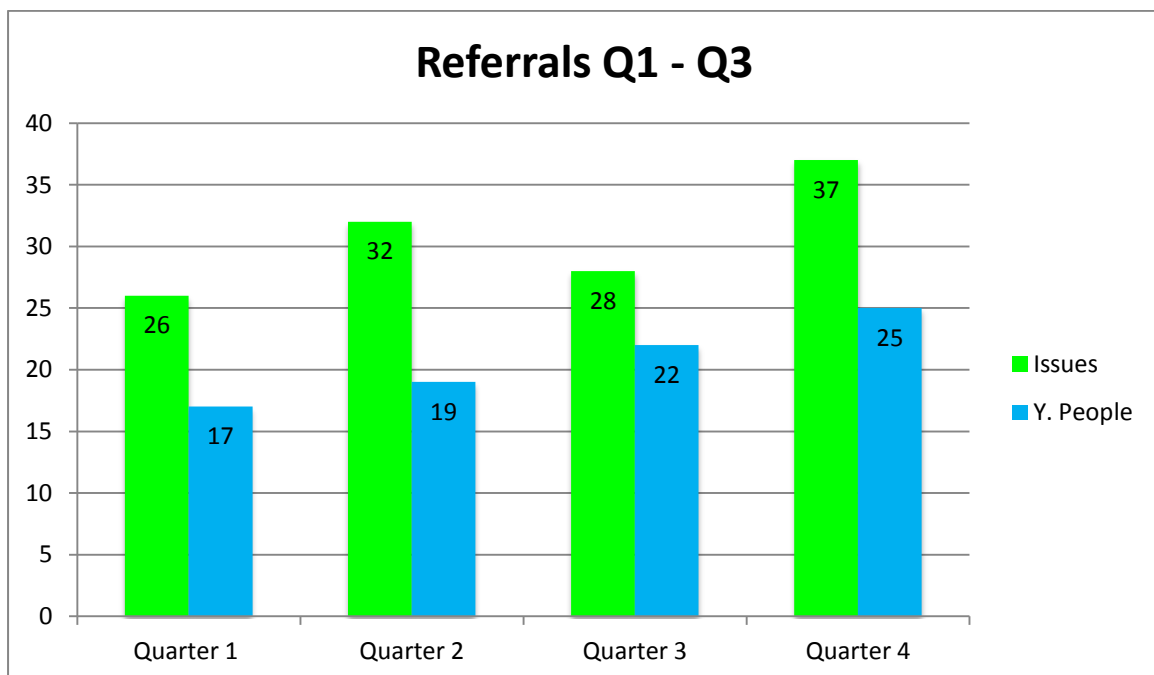
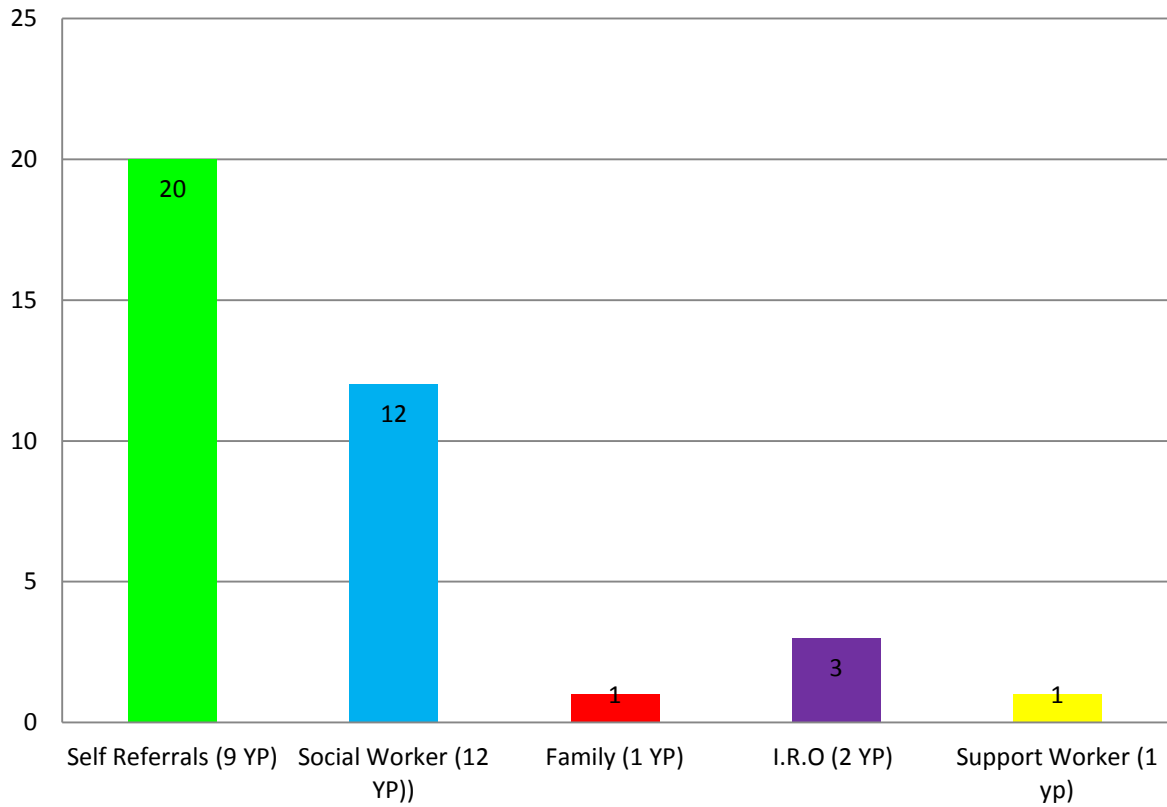


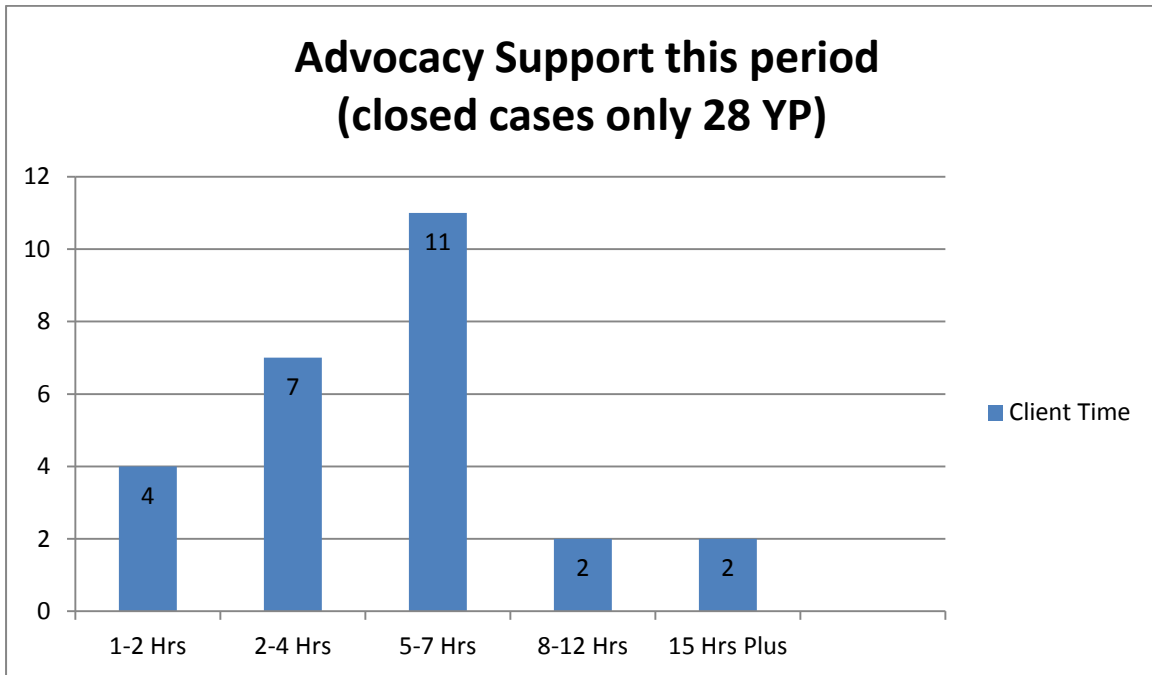
Tros Gynnal Plant
Standing up for Children

RCT REPORT JANUARY – MARCH 2014

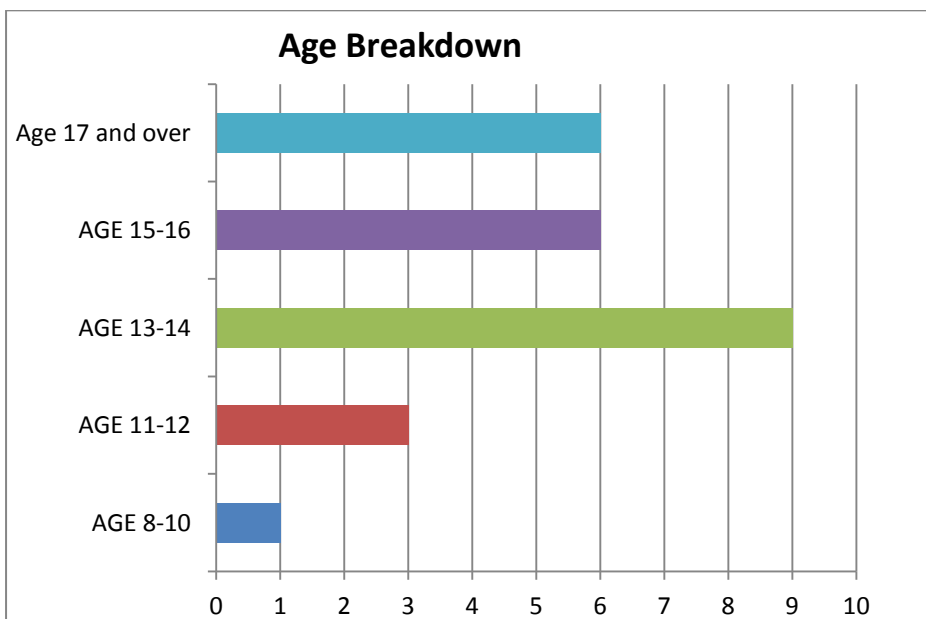
	Issues	Young people
Number of referrals c/o for this period	25	14
Number of new referrals this period	37	25
Number of total referrals closed this period	52	28
Number of young people new to the service	17	17
Number of referrals c/o to next quarter	10	8
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA		
Looked After Children (LAC)	17	14
Care Leaver	2	2
C.P Register	15	7
Children with disabilities	1	1
Child In Need	2	1
REFERRAL SOURCE		
- Social Worker	12	12
- Self Referral	20	9
- Family	1	1
- Independent Reviewing Officer	3	2
- Support Worker	1	1
- Responses within 1 working day	100%	
- Advertising – Awareness Raising sessions (3)	Leaflets	
- Compliments	See OBA sheet	
- Complaints 1	Resolved Stage 1	
- 3 young people initially referred didn't use Service	Issue resolved	
- % of children's views fully considered and rights represented	83% to date + 8 young people C/Fwd.	

Overview of referral source this period

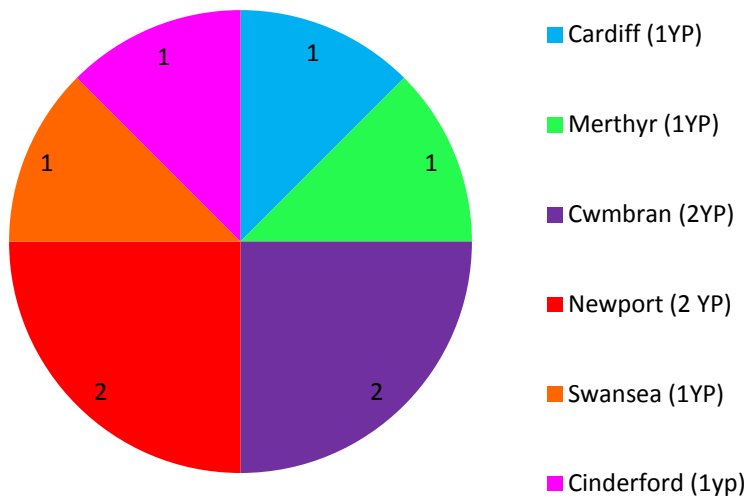




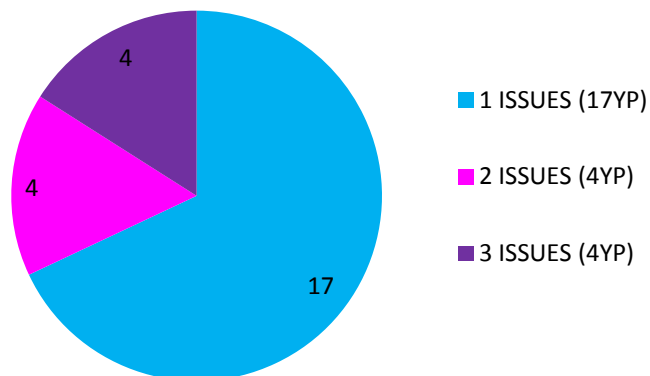
Gender



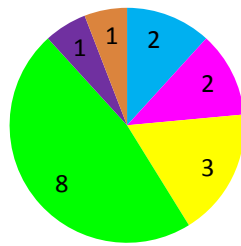
Breakdown of Out of County Young People



New Referrals this period YP (25) to issues (37) ratio

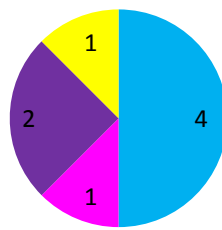


1 Issues - 17YP



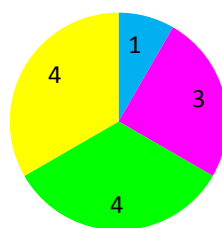
- Complaints
- Contact
- Placement
- Rep at Mtgs
- Independent Advocacy

2 Issues - 4 YP



- Rep at Mtgs
- Complaint
- Placement
- Education

3 Issues - 4 YP



- Contact
- Placement
- Social Worker
- Rep at Mtgs

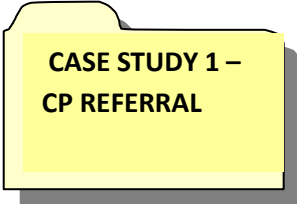
RCT REPORT JANUARY – MARCH 2014

OBA Report Card –Rhondda Cynon Taf Advocacy Service

January-March 2014

<u>How much did we do?</u>	<u>How well did we do it?</u>
<p>Individual Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 Issues across 25 young people supported by advocacy • 20 Self Referrals • 15 CP Referrals • 1 Referral-Family member • 1 Referral-Support Worker <p>Increase in Child Protection referrals.</p> <p><u>Comments</u> -Young people who were involved in the child protection process reported that they were pleased that the advocacy service could represent their views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of referrals contacted within a day of referral. • Positive feedback collected from young people, carers and professionals. • Well trained staff. All staff have received Advocacy training • All staff receive regular supervision and case reviews • Awareness Raising Sessions (3) • 6 Enquiries (SSD Staff) • Publicity distributed to all partner Agencies • Advocacy service participated in CSSIW inspection.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Is anyone better off as a result?</u></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>Young people reported the following benefits from having advocacy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people represented in the child protection process reported that it was really important to them that their advocate presented their views in the Meetings without them having to attend. • 83% young people’s views recognised and heard • 3 Advocacy Awareness Raising Sessions to new SSD staff and partner agencies. • 6 enquiries made by SSD Staff. • 3 Local Authority Residential Units visited </div>	

RCT REPORT JANUARY – MARCH 2014



**CASE STUDY 1 –
CP REFERRAL**

Young Person: 12 years old

Referral from: Social Worker

1st Issue: Representation at CP Review Conference

Context: The initial referral was for a young person placed on the Child Protection Register who was reluctant to talk to the social worker and wanted to have the opportunity to express their views at the CP Review Conference.

Action taken: The advocate met with the young person and explained their role. The young person explained their understanding of why they were placed on the child protection register which they felt was due to a misunderstanding regarding a younger sibling.

The young person did not want to attend the review conference but requested that the advocate attend on their behalf. The advocate supported the young person to put in writing the views they wanted presented at the conference. The advocate then agreed to attend the conference on behalf of the young person and feedback following the conference.

Outcome: The advocate presented the young person's wishes and feelings regarding home and family life as requested. The young person's name was removed from the Child Protection Register. The young person would remain in contact with social services as a Child in Need to complete some further work with the family. The young person commented they were really pleased that their views had been listened to.

2nd Issue- Change of Social Worker

Referral from: Young Person (Self Referral)

Context: The young person telephoned the advocacy office to request a Visit as they wanted to change their social worker.

Action: The advocate met with the young person. The young person initially gave a number of reasons why they wanted to change their social worker. Through exploring these with the advocate the young person was able to understand more about the social workers role in the child protection process. The advocate supported the young person to put in writing the points they wanted to raise. The young person gave consent for the advocate to discuss their letter with the social worker. At their next visit the social worker was then able to review the young person's concerns.

Outcome: The young person reported now that they understood more about being placed on the child protection register they were happy to continue working with the same social worker. They thanked the advocate 'for helping me to understand things better.'



CASE STUDY 2-

LAC REFERRAL

Young Person: 9 years old

Referral from: Social Worker (2 Issues)

1st Issue: Placement- Independent wishes and feelings regarding placement to go forward.

2nd Issue- Representation at Meetings- LAC Review

Context: The current out of county placement with relative carers and circumstance of a young person with learning difficulties were being reviewed with the possibility of returning the young person to a placement in the RCT area. Due to the distance involved the advocate stayed overnight and attended the LAC review the following day.

Action taken: The advocate met with the young person and explained their role. The young person engaged really well with the advocate. The young person expressed that they were very happy in the placement and at school and enjoyed life in the area. The only other request the young person wanted to make at the LAC review was for family contact in Wales on their birthday. The advocate also explained that if the young person ever needed an advocate in the future they or their foster carers could contact us. The advocate gave all contact information to the foster carers

The advocate attended the LAC Review and presented the wishes and feelings of the young person.

Outcome: A family contact visit in Wales would be arranged for the young person's birthday. The young person thanked the advocate and commented 'I think it's really good you can help me ask for things in my meeting.'

CASE STUDY 3 –

CARE LEAVER

Young Person: 16 years old

Referral from: A previous service user (2 Issues)

Issues: Placement and representation at a LAC review meeting.-A young person requested advocacy support to take forward their wishes and feelings at a LAC review meeting including a request to move placement.

Context: The young person had been a looked after child for a number of years and used the advocacy service several times during the past two years. The young person had been very happy when placed in Brynda community home but had to move placement due to pregnancy. Following the birth of a baby in November 2013 the young person was in a 2nd mother and baby placement.

Action taken: The advocate met with the young person. The advocate helped the young person to express their wishes and feelings regarding their placement in writing which included being unhappy and requesting to move placement. The advocate then sent the Letter to the social worker and agreed to accompany the young person to the LAC review meeting.

The advocate went to collect the young person for the LAC review meeting. The young person had run away from the placement and was not answering calls. The advocate sent a text and then called the young person. The young person spoke with the advocate who encouraged them to attend the meeting. The advocate presented the young person's wishes and feelings. The young person did later join the meeting and was able to explain why they had run away.

Outcome: It was agreed at the LAC review that SSD would look for a new placement for the young person. The young person thanked the advocate and said 'I feel a big weight has been lifted off me and I feel much better.'

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