

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

6TH NOVEMBER 2017

NATIONAL YOUTH ADVOCACY SERVICE (NYAS) Update

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with an update of progress made by the NYAS for Quarter 2 and to receive information in respect of the 'Active Offer'.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the Quarter 2 report attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Consider the information provided in respect of the 'Active Offer' attached at Appendix 2.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is important for Members to note the progress, themes and issues highlighted by the NYAS in order to work in partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes are reached for those in our care system.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As part of the Board's Terms of reference, the NYAS are invited to attend meetings to enable both the NYAS and Children Services to discuss issues that affect service delivery in the community on a strategic level and to work in partnership to provide improved and better outcomes.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 There is no consultation required for this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

9.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board links directly to the Council's Corporate Plan priority – 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Children will receive a great start in life...'

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The NYAS are invited to attend each meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board, to provide a broader understanding and contribution into the services available to young people and vulnerable adults.

Regional Independent Advocacy Service Rhondda Cynon Taff Quarterly Report

Collated Quarterly Report

Quarter 2:

Date 1. 1st July-30th September 2017

Headline Report

REFERRALS

53 new referrals were received in the period which included 14 Active Offer of Advocacy referrals and 39 Issue based referrals.

Of the 14 Active Offer of Advocacy referrals made 9 Active Offer of Advocacy visits were accepted during the period. These young people requested further issue based advocacy support.

From the 39 Issue based referrals, 47 issues were supported by the advocacy service.

11 of the issue based referrals have now closed.

The majority of young people referred to the service this quarter were aged 12-16.

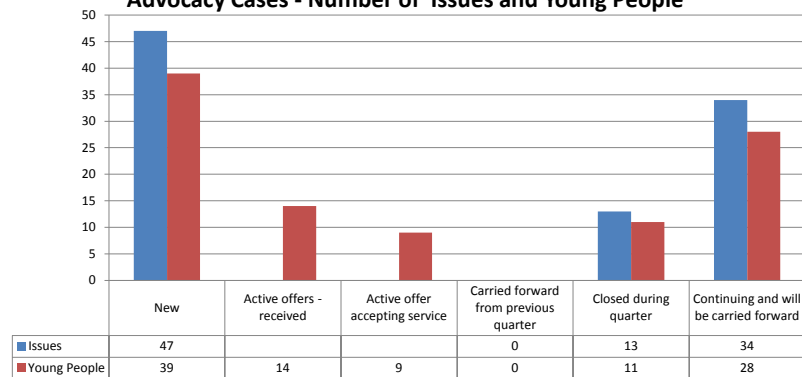
ISSUES

Advocacy support at Meetings was the highest referral issue this period.

We have attended, supported and represented children and young people at 32 meetings which included :-

19 CLAR/LAC Review meetings, 12 meetings for young people involved in child protection processes and 1 education meeting. see case studies.

Advocacy Cases - Number of Issues and Young People



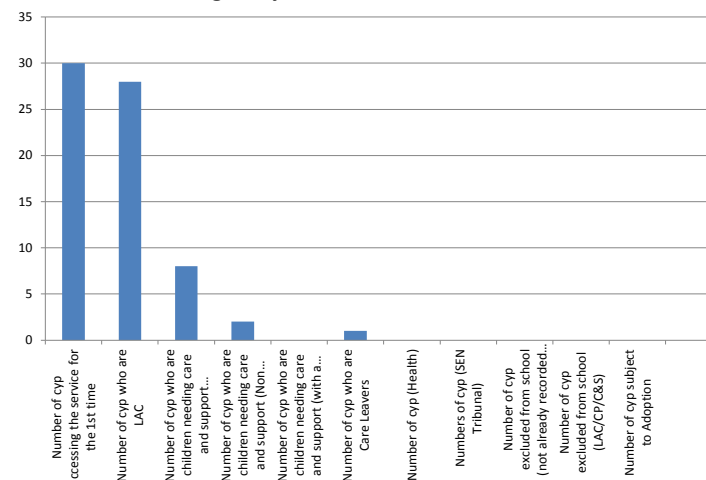
Reasons given by young people for not accepting Active Offer (where known)

14 Active Offer referrals were received.

1 young person declined an Active Offer visit and stated everything was ok.

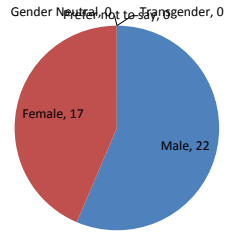
39 individual young people referred identified 47 issues requiring advocacy support.

Eligibility Criteria



Demographic Information

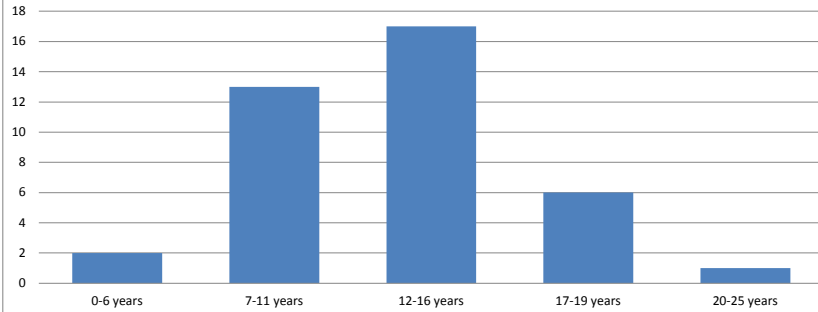
Gender of Young People



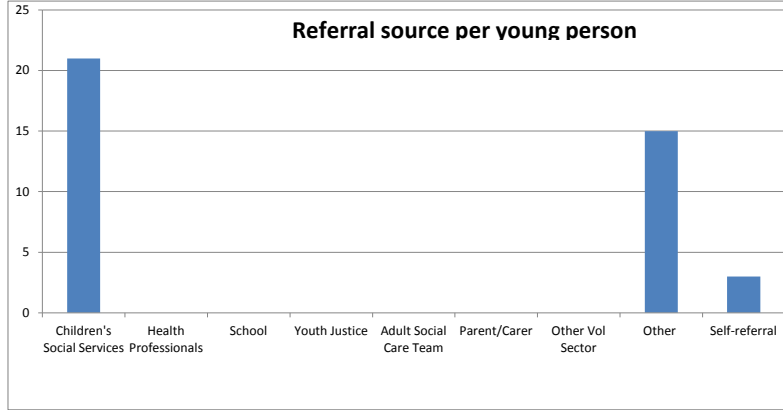
ETHNICITY

- Category 1 White UK - 32
- Category 2 White Welsh - 4
- Category 3 Dual Parentage - 2
- Category 4 Welsh - 1

Age of Young People

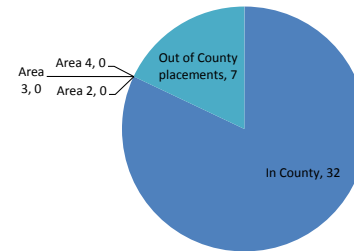


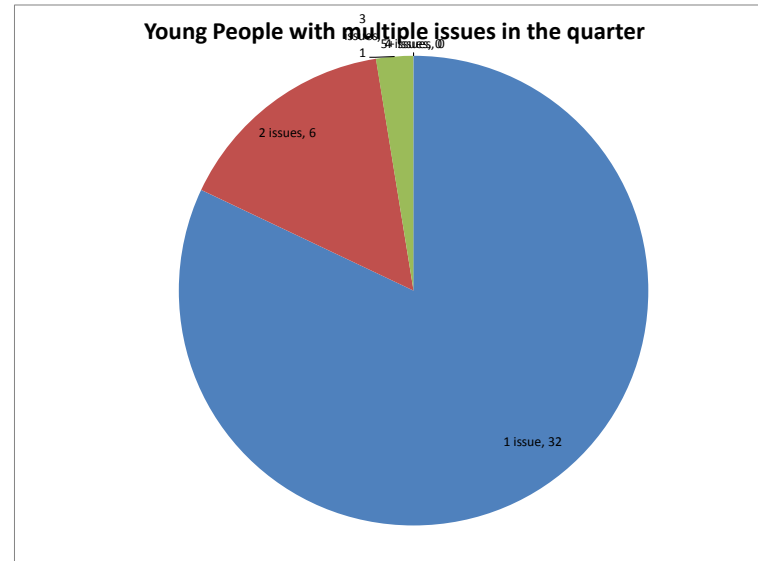
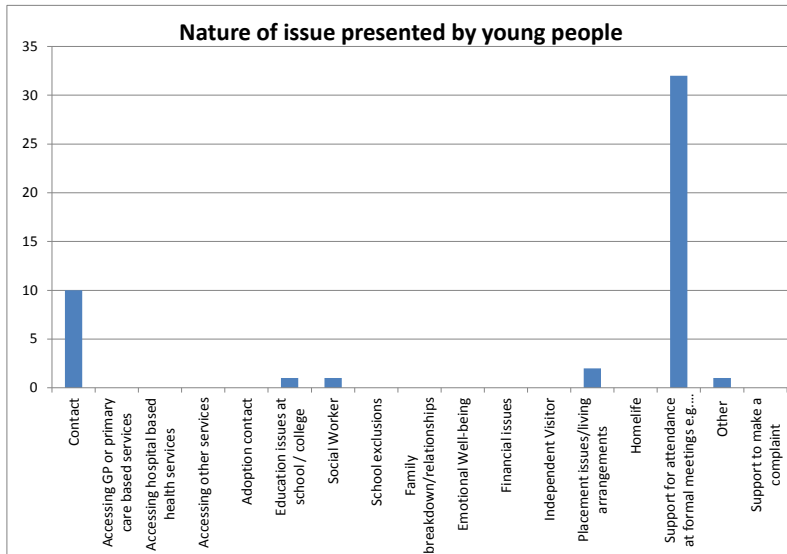
Referral source per young person



Referral Source - 20 IBA Referrals for young people received from Childrens Services: East Teams -IT T East 1= 6 referrals, ITT East 2 -5 referrals West Teams-All 4 Teams made 1 referral-It.& Ass.Team, ITT West , West 3,EAT Team.

Location Breakdown





Number of CP referrals made by Advocacy Service (+ outcome where known)	1
Safeguarding referral to MASH Unit 11th August 2017.	
OUTCOME: Response same day. Immediate Safeguarding measures put in place. Family contact was suspended. Concerns of the young person in question were resolved within a 24 hour period.	
NATURE OF ISSUES (Other)	
Other issues young people requested advocacy support for included:-	
Family contact- 10 issues, 2 Placement, 1 Leaving care, 1 Education, and 1 to improve their relationship with their social worker.	
SUPPORT IN MAKING A COMPLAINT	0
There were no Complaints to the service this quarter.	

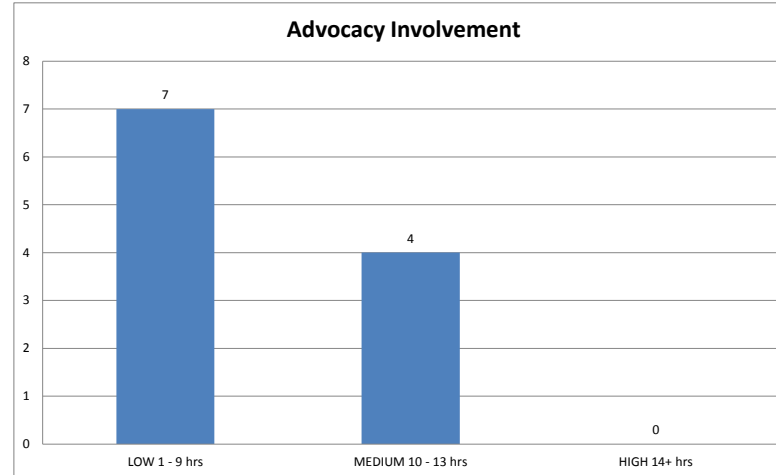
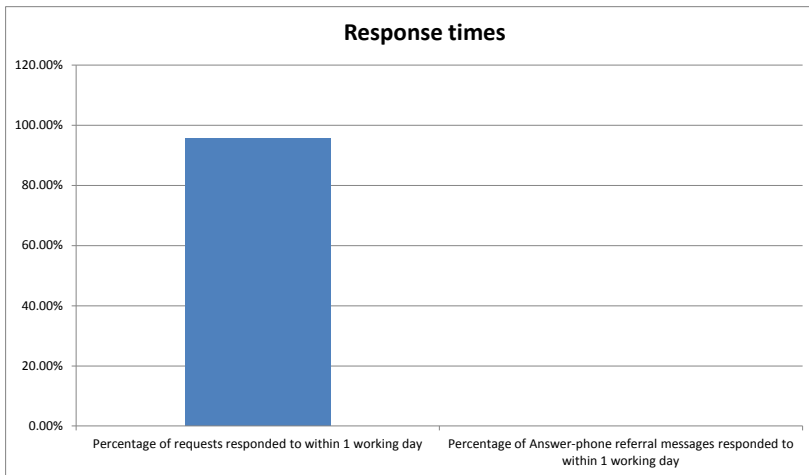
Additional Information

Further narrative on issues/trends (Systemic)
 The Active Offer of Advocacy referrals and NYAS introductory visits accepted has already significantly increased further advocacy support requested by young people involved in child protection processes. We have attended, supported and represented young people involved in child protection processes at 12 meetings this quarter in comparison to 7 child protection meetings in the previous year. Early indications are that the aim of reaching some of the most vulnerable children and young people is being met.

Examples/numbers of cases where interpretation services accessed for young people
 There were no Interpreter Services used this quarter.

Requests to change an advocate (R80)
 There were no requests to change an advocate this quarter.

Service Performance



7
4
0

10 Feedback forms received of 11 young people/cases closed. **10**

*ALL 10 young people felt NYAS had made things better and they would recommend NYAS to someone else.
Direct feedback provided included:-"NYAS has really helped me by solving my problems and put what I had to say in writing. Thank You."*

0

Number of cases closed - not happy with response received from authority
Of the 11 cases closed no young people unhappy with the response received from the local authority.

0 Number of complaints received about the advocacy services
There were no complaints made regarding the advocacy service this quarter.

8 Number of compliments received about the advocacy services
Direct feedback received:- "Advocacy has helped me to get an answer and information that was important to me. I feel much happier and relieved. Advocacy is a really good thing you can help speak for children and young people as their Voice. I would definitely recommend NYAS advocacy to other people."

0 Number of requests to change an advocate
No young people requested to change an advocate.

Additional Information

Case Studies/Advocacy Action Plan

Case Study 1. D aged 14 - S17 subject to child protection processes.

Background- Self-referral following an Active Offer of Advocacy visit .

D requested further Advocacy support with regard to a forthcoming Initial Case Conference. The Advocate provided information on child protection processes . D was enabled to discuss and explore concerns, views, wishes and feelings and to put them in writing. Which included D's request for further help and support with anger issues.

Agreed Action: D requested NYAS Advocacy send the views, wishes and feelings letter to be read out by the Social Worker at the Initial Case Conference. Then the Advocate to obtain feedback and visit to explain the outcome of the first meeting.

Outcome:

D's name was placed on the child protection register . On the return feedback visit D commented "that help from NYAS and Social Services is a good idea for me and my family."

D also received the requested support from the Taeth Project and Ash Square. D had no other issues and the case was closed .

On case closure D commented " Thank you for helping me and for the way you listened to me and treated me."

D's Parents also provided the following feedback to the Advocate " The Active Offer of Advocacy and NYAS Advocacy support were excellent .We were pleased at the respect shown to our son and how it focussed on him." The Advocate provided D and the parents with NYAS contact information .

Case Study 2 -J aged 16 subject to a section 31 full care order.

Background: Referral via Social Worker. Issues Contact , LAC Review arrangements.

J is part of a large family and contact arrangements between siblings vary. J wanted to know that this was not "because of me." J requested better arrangements to allow time for J to speak in the LAC Review meeting.

Agreed Action: Advocate to forward views, wishes and feelings to the social worker then provide feedback to J.

Outcome: J received a full explanation of family circumstances relevant to sibling contact. Also that better arrangements will be made for the next LAC Review meeting.

J fed back on case closure "Advocacy is a really good thing you can help speak for children and young people as their Voice and help them get answers."

Looking forward - next quarter

NYAS Partnership working with RCT - NYAS are delivering :-
3 x Active Offer Drop In sessions.
Visiting 2 LA Residential Units- staff and young people
Presenting at RCT Foster Carers Training
Safeguarding week - NYAS are hosting a Safeguarding and development day for all staff. The programme includes Multi-Agency seminars with specific areas of Safeguarding experience. NYAS have several new and exciting Participation opportunities for young people .

Networking/Children's Rights awareness-raising meetings :-

Active Offer of Advocacy NYAS Drop in sessions :-2 in Ty Trevethick and 1 in Tonypanyd.
NYAS attended 2 Team Meetings . Total of 61 Professionals participated in the visits.
Professional Feedback included:- "Thank you both for attending our Team Meeting today and providing valued NYAS information that we can put into practice immediately." CDW Team.

Publicity and Sharing

ALL NYAS publicity updated in RCT information points including LA Residential Units.
ALL Web sites and web information also updated. to include new Leaflets.
NYAS information leaflets and information for young people are currently under review.

Participation Activity

Peer Advocacy/Peer Mentoring- NYAS are offering young people the opportunity to become Peer Advocates/Peer Mentors or Mentees with regard to Education, Employment and Training. Joint work in Partnership with Voices From Care. Project funded by Comic Relief.

NYAS Film Project - older care experienced young people are making animated films aimed at younger children to help explain what it means to be a looked after child.

Through Tampon tax funding NYAS has employed a young Mums worker , to work with Mums who are in care and unborn baby or child are subject to child protection,

Staff training undertaken:

During the summer holiday period no staff training undertaken.

September NYAS Training on completing the new National Reporting Template.

Service Improvements

Recommendations/Suggestions -

As a crucial and key priority NYAS would like to continue to work with the Local Authority in ensuring that all children and young people are aware of the advocacy service and how to access it.
At our joint Monitoring and Contract Review Meetings NYAS welcome the opportunity to discuss collaborative working with the Local Authority continuing to ensure a robust and effective referral process is established and all practitioners are aware of the Active Offer of Advocacy.

Briefing paper – National Statutory Advocacy Approach

The national approach to advocacy for children and young people, known to children services departments will be introduced to working practice as of the 1st July 2017.

The national approach model places a duty on children's services staff to ensure all children and young people who –

- Become looked after 1st July 2017
- Become part of child protection procedures

Advocacy is required to be “actively offered” by the social worker at a meeting with the child or young person.

For children and young people in receipt of services, via a care and support plan the social worker should offer and inform them of the accessibility of the service and make a referral on their behalf where consent has been given. This offer of issue based advocacy should be recorded on the child/young person's children services file.

What is the active offer?

The “Active Offer” of advocacy is in place to ensure all children and young people are offered a “face to face” 1 hour meeting with the commissioned advocacy provider when they first become known to children's service departments and thereafter at key transitional times, for example – LAC reviews, placement moves and conference meetings. During this meeting the advocacy provider will –

- Discuss the advocacy service
- Inform of rights and entitlements
- Provide information on services and support available to the child/young person
- Inform child/young person of the Children's Services Complaints Procedure.

Social care staff need to record details internally that the “active offer” of advocacy has been made available and make the relevant referral to the advocacy provider if the child/young person consents to a meeting.

The advocacy provider will provide monitoring information via the National Reporting Template on all activity relating to the active offer and ongoing case work.

The provider will compare and contrast the number of active offers provided by Social Workers to the child/young person and the numbers who go onto receive the active offer and case work.

The following flow chart will provide information to support staff of the referral process agreed.

NB – Children and young people should be reminded of advocacy services throughout the time they are receiving support from children’s services departments.

Active offer flow chart

Stage 1 – Active offer

(Social Worker to explain in brief the advocacy service and offer a face to face meeting with advocacy provider – Social Worker to record offer and outcome)



Stage two – Referral to advocacy provider

(If the child/young person has agreed to meet with the advocacy provider the Social Worker should make an active offer referral to the service using the online referral form @nyas.net)



Stage 3 – Active offer meeting

(On receipt of the referral the advocacy provider will contact the child/young person and agree a meeting date, time and venue. The advocacy provider will with consent of child/young person inform referrer of arrangements)



(Once the meeting has taken place it is deemed the following outcomes will be reached)

Outcome 1

Take up of advocacy – If the child or young person feels the advocacy service can provide immediate support to a specific issue the advocacy provider will close the active offer referral and open a new referral for the identified issue and provide advocacy support. The provider will inform the named referrer of outcome which should be recorded within children’s services data management systems.

Outcome 2

Advocacy declined - The child/young person has identified no immediate need for advocacy

support. The provider will provide service information, how advocacy can help and contact details for future support. The named referrer will be informed of the outcome which should be recorded on children's services data management systems. The advocacy providers will close the active offer referral.