

# Policy Digest

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YOUTH  
ACCESS

Policy Digest for members

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## Sector Watch

This new feature in the Policy Digest will bring you a monthly snapshot of the impact of the post-recession public sector spending squeeze on YIACS. News from you on your own experiences is vital to us in piecing together a clear picture and coming up with an effective response. Please email Steve Lee on [steve@youthaccess.org.uk](mailto:steve@youthaccess.org.uk) or telephone 020-8772 9900 if you have any information, good news, bad news, worries or concerns about how your agency is facing up to these difficult times.

### 'Under Strain'

Youth Access' *'Under Strain'* report and campaign was launched this Tuesday 20 April 2010. You should have received an email with details of the campaign, including a pack to help you make use of the report and campaign locally. If you haven't received anything, or wish to discuss the campaign in more detail, [email Steve Lee](#).

*'Under Strain'* reveals a picture of a sector which is battling to meet what are recognised as vital needs against a background of rising and more complex demand, reduced funding, overstretched capacity and fearful of the future. [Read our media release](#) and [download 'Under Strain'](#).

**Your involvement is crucial to the profile of the campaign.** Please try to spread the word as widely as you can locally.

CYPNow covered the launch on Tuesday. [Read the CYPN story](#).

### It's May 6<sup>th</sup>!

In case it had somehow passed you by, the Prime Minister has called the General Election for Thursday 6 May 2010. We have tried to keep you up to date with what the parties are saying on relevant policy issues in the news section below, but apologise if we've missed anything! It's an important time and an opportunity for us to improve the profile of our sector and the work we do, so please do get involved with *'Under Strain'* and do what you can to spread the message.

## Select Committee calls for 'One-Stop' shops for support

Just before the election was called, the Commons Select Committee on Children Schools and Families published its report on NEETs. There is much in the report of interest to us, which indeed we specifically called for in our evidence to the Committee, including a call for a strategy for 16-24's to be created and for a 'One-Stop' shop approach offering YIAC type services to be invested in. It is frustrating however that the MP's did not seem to appreciate that such services are in existence here and now and providing excellent outcomes for young people, despite our having been clear in our evidence, and pointed to services in Holland as an example of good practice. Youth Access will be returning to this question in the launch of 'Under Strain' and will be seeking to meet members of the reconstituted Committee after the election. [Read the Guardian report](#), [read more about our evidence](#) and [download the full report of the Committee](#).

## Policy news in brief

- **NHS told to commission from all sectors** – New DH guidance does not see NHS as 'preferred provider.' [Read the Third Sector Online article](#).
- **4Children manifesto** – contains a call for integrated, meaningful, holistic support for young people and for emotional wellbeing to be a major public health priority. [Read the manifesto](#).
- **Advice Services Alliance manifesto** – ASA recognise that one-size doesn't fit all in advice and highlights young people as a group who require tailored services.
- **All parties consider offering smaller public service contracts** - MPs Angela Smith, Nick Hurd and Jenny Willott accept that smaller contracts could work better for the voluntary sector. [Read the Third Sector Online article](#).
- **Tories consider longer term contracts** – The Tories say they would introduce longer-term contracts and increase the voluntary sector's involvement in welfare-to-work, prisons and health services. [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Budget 2010** - NCVYS has produced a briefing paper highlighting key points for young people and the voluntary and community youth sector. [Download the briefing](#).
- **New support for voluntary sector** – CLG announces package of measures. [Read the media release](#).
- **Flexible grant for better integrated services for children** - Government publishes early intervention report and plans announced in the Budget for a new Children and Young People's grant intended to be a steps towards further integration in services for children and young people and should support a shift to more early intervention and prevention. [Read the media release](#).
- **MoJ to pilot Social Impact Bond** - The six-year SIB pilot will begin in the summer and will see around 3,000 short term prisoners serving less than 12 months, receive intensive interventions both in prison and in the community. Funding from investors outside government will be initially used to pay for services delivered by Third Sector providers with a proven track record of working with offenders. If reoffending is not reduced by at least 7.5% the investors will receive no return. [Read the Third Sector Online article](#).
- **Government sets out views on Third Sector involvement** – Positive response to Anne McGuire's recommendations published. [Read the response](#).

- **Total Place approach endorsed** - CLG has reported on the Total Place pilots, setting out plans for a fundamental shift in the way public services are delivered at local level in England. All local spending from across all local agencies will be considered as a whole to “relentlessly focus on designing services around the needs of the customer and cutting out waste and duplication”. Read the report.
- **Conservative National Citizen Service scheme** – The Tories will set up a National Citizen Service - non-military national service - for 16 year-olds. National Citizen Service (NCS) will be a two month summer programme for 16-year olds, involving both residential and at-home components. It will be delivered by independent charities, social enterprises and businesses. [Read the media release.](#)
- **Conservative plans to abolish children's trust obligation** – In an interview with CYPN Michael Gove, shadow children's secretary revealed that the Conservatives would remove the obligation to set up children's trusts and publish children and young people's plans. [Read the CYPN article.](#)
- **Lord Laming not at all happy** - Lord Laming has stepped in to defend the legal requirement on all local authorities to create children's trusts. [Read the CYPN article.](#)
- **Tories reveal plans for community-run public services** - Community members to run their own schools and public services, according to the party's manifesto. [Read the CYPN article.](#)
- **Staff morale is sinking, Charity Pulse survey suggests** – [Read the Third Sector Online article.](#)
- **Unite publish case for youth work** – [Read the CYPN story.](#)
- **Youth service chiefs fear the full impact of cuts** – CHYPS and NYA survey Heads of Young People’s Services and find 80% faced with making significant cuts. [Read the survey.](#)
- **Balls sets out warning on central funding** - Ed Balls has thrown down the gauntlet to local authorities and challenged them to protect frontline children's services by finding "more effective ways of making their money work". [Read the CYPN article.](#)
- **Plaid Cymru calls for youth justice to be devolved to Wales** – [Read the CYPN article.](#)

## Advice Policy

### The role of web based advice

The vexed issue of online advice has seen two somewhat conflicting reports published in the last month. Get Connected published research suggesting that 9 out of 10 young people use the internet to get information about a ‘personal’ problem; while CfBT Education Trust published one suggesting that, as far as careers IAG anyway, young people do not want their advice online. Youth Access own research suggest a complex picture, but is clear that the balance of the evidence points toward a preference for ‘face to face’ advice. [Read more and download the Get Connected report;](#) [read the CYPN article on the CfBT research;](#) and [look at the evidence in the Youth Access report.](#)

### Youth homelessness – Statutory Guidance on G V Southwark

DCSF and CLG have issued statutory guidance on the local authority responsibilities to homeless 16-17 year olds in the wake of the G v Southwark case. The Guidance:

- makes clear the expectation that children (under 18s) will have their needs met by children's services;
- gives a clear statement that there is an interim duty to accommodate children under s 20 Children Act 1989 pending the outcome of the assessment; and
- sends a strong message that accommodation for homeless children must be suitable and appropriate to their needs and must not be bed and breakfast accommodation.

[Download the Guidance.](#)

### **New best practice web resource**

The National Youth Reference Group has launched a new website to showcase best practice in preventing youth homelessness. The group is made up of young people aged 16-25 from across England who are homeless or have experienced homelessness. The group exists to assist National and Local Government, Local Authorities and organisations to develop and improve their involvement opportunities for young people. [Visit the web pages.](#)

Other excellent youth homelessness web resources, including some contributed by Youth Access, are available on the pages of the National Youth Homelessness Scheme on the CLG website. [Visit the NHYS webpages.](#)

### **Money Issues**

Natwest Bank published a report suggesting that young people's money skills actually improved during the recession. According to the report around 67 per cent of 12 to 19-year-olds said they thought they were now better at handling money than they were a year ago. The recession has also had a direct impact on young people, with boys seeing their pocket money fall by 15 per cent during the past year, while girls suffered an 18 per cent drop. However, many young people still had unrealistic expectations about their financial future in terms of job salaries and when they would be able to buy a house. [Read the Independent Online story.](#)

The Ministry of Justice announced a package of measures designed to provide extra support for some people in debt. MoJ worked with the British Bankers' Association (BBA) and the Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS), with input from Citizens Advice (CitA) to develop a new way to help people who suffer an unexpected 'income shock' such as redundancy, reduced hours or illness. This initiative will allow debtors to make minimal token payments until their financial situation has recovered, where this is the best option available to them. [Read the media release.](#)

From 1 October 2010, minimum wage Youth Development Rate will rise from £4.83 to £4.92 an hour and the minimum wage for 16–17 year olds will increase from £3.57 to £3.64 an hour. For the first time, apprentice pay will be covered by the minimum wage framework. A new apprentice rate will be introduced at £2.50 an hour.

## **Counselling and Mental Health**

### **New mental health briefing**

Youth Access has published a Policy Briefing covering both the Government's response to 'Keeping Children and Young People in Mind' the CAMHS review; and Fair Society: Healthy

Lives, the Marmot Review into effective strategies to reduce health inequalities. [Download the briefing from our website.](#)

### **Regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists update**

The Health Professions Council has approved an approach for continuing work in the area of psychotherapists and counsellors, including a timetable and indicative plan of activities for further PLG meetings and stakeholder engagement. [Read more at the HPC website.](#)

### **National Framework for Children and Young People's Continuing Care**

DH have published a framework setting out an 'equitable, transparent and timely process for assessing, deciding and agreeing bespoke packages of continuing care for those children and young people under the age of 18 who have continuing care needs that cannot be met by existing universal and specialist services alone'. [Download the framework.](#)

### **Commissioning mental health services**

Director General of Social Care, David Behan, has written to Strategic Health Authorities setting out the range of significant systems reforms that come into effect in 2010/11 and that will affect how mental health services are commissioned, performance managed, and incentivised to deliver improvements in quality, efficiency and responsiveness. [Read the letter.](#)

### **GP's criticise mental health delays for young people**

A Royal College of GPs (RCGP) survey found that more than three-quarters of doctors said they were rarely able to get specialist psychological therapy for children and young people suffering from emotional problems within two months. [Read the CYPN story](#) and the [RCGP media release.](#)

### **Child loneliness**

The NSPCC has published a report on children talking to ChildLine about loneliness. The number of lonely children counselled by ChildLine has risen by 60 per cent in five years. Last year nearly 10,000 calls were made to ChildLine, equal to one every hour, from children saying they felt lonely. [Read the NSPCC media release.](#)

### **New web resource on effective interventions**

Research In Practice has launched interactive web pages providing information about evidence-based interventions for children and young people with emotional and behavioural and other mental health problems. They suggest evidence-based strategies that can be used to tackle specific problems and evidence-based projects that might help 'troubled' children, young people and their families and are structured according to the categories used in the Health of the Nation Outcome Scales for Child and Adolescents (HoNOSCA). [Visit the RIP pages](#) and the [HoNOSCA pages.](#)

## **Youth Policy and Social Inclusion**

### **Assessment of IYSS**

Proposed measures for assessing the quality of integrated youth services have been published by a team of national representative bodies, led by the CHYPS. [Read the CYPN story.](#)

### **Flexible grant for better integrated services for children**

Plans announced in the Budget for a new Children and Young People's grant will be trialled from April 2011. This is intended to be a step towards further integration in services for children and young people and support a shift to more early intervention and prevention. DCSF is now working to identify a significant number of pathfinders to try out the Grant and will look for a mix of different areas. [Read the media release.](#)

### **Consultation on IAG services**

DCSF has launched a consultation on the Direction and Statutory Guidance on implementation of the IAG Strategy. Youth Access will be submitting a response, along with partner organisations. [Read more about the consultation](#), which closes on 16 June 2010.

### **Ofsted criticises IAG provision**

A new report from Ofsted, *Moving through the System*, casts an eye over careers IAG services and is critical of provision for looked after children among others. [Download the report.](#)

### **Positive Activities**

DCSF has published *Aiming high for young people – three years on* which updates *Aiming High: a 10-year strategy for positive activities* published in 2007. [Download the document](#) and [the evidence annex.](#)

Draft Quality Standards for positive activities have also been published. [Download the draft standards.](#)

### **Participation Age Trials extended**

DCSF has announced five new raising the participation age (RPA) trials and an extension of the existing 11. The trials focus on developing best practice in three different areas:

- re-engaging 16- and 17-year-olds with education or training;
- providing the right careers advice drawing on the recent IAG strategy ; and
- developing area-wide strategies that meet local needs and enable full participation of all young people in education or training.

[Read the DCSF media release.](#)

### **Safeguarding**

Two new guides on safeguarding have been published:

From DCSF comes *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* which gives guidance on how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is aimed at practitioners with responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. [Download the document.](#)

C4EO has published a guide around safeguarding for directors of children's services and their Children's Trust partners highlighting key findings from a knowledge review done in 2010 for C4EO and focussed on working with vulnerable children in families that are

'resistant to change'. [Download the summary report.](#)

### **Child Poverty Act 2010**

One of the last acts of the Parliament before this election was to enshrine the commitment to ending child poverty. [Read the DWP media release.](#)

### **Care Leavers**

The National Care Advisory Service (NCAS) has published *What Could Make the Difference? - care leavers and the welfare benefits system*, which reveals shortcomings that make it harder for care leavers to gain suitable accommodation and employment, training and education. [Download the report.](#) The Government has also now published a response. [Download the response.](#)

### **Crime prevention**

The Home Affairs Committee published a review of *The Government's Approach to Crime Prevention: Tenth Report of Session 2009-10*. The report calls for a long-term strategy of early intervention with at-risk children and their parents; and extra support for families when children move from primary to secondary school. Those exposed to the most acute combination of risk factors – including family neglect, poverty, school under-achievement, and a lack of positive role models – were 5-20 times more likely to offend than those who were not. [Download the report.](#)

### **Youth Justice**

Against the background of falling juvenile re-offending ([read the MoJ media release](#)), DCSF has published a 'rigorous review' of the work of the Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams. [Read the DCSF media release.](#)

Nevertheless, CYPNow highlights that young people supervised by YOTs are four times more likely to be NEET than those in the general population. [Read the report.](#)

The YJB, in the meantime, is working with the Foyer Federation in collaborative resettlement projects in North West and South West England. [Read the CYPN story.](#)

### **Reoffending and floating housing support**

The National Foundation for Educational Research has published an evaluation report of the four pilot projects of the *Children in Trouble* programme – a joint project supported by the Local Government Association and the Howard League for Penal Reform. The pilots were designed to encourage, develop, and showcase different approaches to reducing the use of custodial sentences for children and young people and included provision of floating housing support.

The floating accommodation support service worked with young people, already involved with the Youth Offending Service (YOS), who were either homeless or at risk of homelessness and was found, despite challenges around availability of suitable accommodation and negative perceptions, to have demonstrated notable achievements. Young people reported that the accommodation placements and support they received were key factors in their decisions not to re-offend. The pilot was also perceived to have had an impact on sentencing. The court felt able to impose a community order on a young person rather than a custodial sentence because the person had adequate housing. [Download the report.](#)

### **Truancy rates at record levels**

The Guardian reports that truancy is at an all time high. [Read the report.](#)

## Health

### **Healthy lives, brighter futures – one year on**

Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Health and Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families have written to strategic health bodies to give an update on The child health strategy: Healthy lives, brighter futures which was launched a year ago. [Read the letter.](#)

### **Hear By Right in health services**

A new briefing from NYA sets out how the Hear by Right standards framework can help ensure legal compliance and best practice on safe, sound and sustainable participation of children and young people in health settings. [Download the briefing.](#)

### **Tool to boost involvement for disabled children**

The Children's Society has produced a specialised package of resources for those working with disabled children to promote involvement in decision on their healthcare. [Read the CYPN story.](#)

### **MP's report on drug use**

The House of Commons Public Accounts Select Committee has published *Tackling Problem Drug Use, Thirtieth Report (Session 2009-10)*. The report says that measures to reduce problem drug use by young people were having limited effect. It argues that it was 'unacceptable' that the Home Office had not carried out sufficient evaluation of the programme of measures in the strategy, and did not know if the strategy was directly reducing the overall cost of drug-related crimes. [Download the report.](#)

### **Mayor of London's Health Inequalities Strategy**

The mayor of London has published his strategy for reducing health inequalities in which he commits to promoting young people's emotional health and providing better financial advice and support at points of transition. [Download the document.](#)

### **Teenage pregnancy**

The Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG) has published its sixth annual report. It contains recommendations to accelerate and progress the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. [Download the report.](#)

London Metropolitan University is running an event on teenage motherhood on 29 April. *Teenage Motherhood: Policy problem or feminist cause?* Will bring together policy experts, campaigners and feminist scholars to consider: is teenage pregnancy a problem, or is young women's right to choose motherhood a present-day feminist cause? [Read more details on the London Met website.](#)

### **Review of rape reporting**

Baroness Stern published her report on rape reporting in England and Wales. The review finds that more information about sexual offences legislation should be made available to young people to enable them to better understand the concept of consensual sex. [Download the report.](#)

## **Violence against women**

The National Union of Students has published a survey into violence against women students. *Hidden Marks* found that 1 in 7 female students have been the victim of serious sexual assault or serious physical violence while at university or college; a quarter subjected to an unwanted sexual experience; and 12 per cent stalked while at university or college. The report recommends a 'zero-tolerance' approach to harassment and violence, and calls for the development of a cross-institutional policy to tackle violence against women. [Download the report](#).

## **In brief**

- Young people urged to have chlamydia test after every new sexual partner. [Read the CYPN story.](#)
- Older teens urged to check vaccine status due to a high number of mumps cases in 2009. [Read the DH media release.](#)
- Young people unaware of measles, mumps and rubella risk. [Read the CYPN story.](#)

## **Recession News in brief**

### **Unemployment up again**

The latest ONS figures show youth unemployment rising, with 929,000 16 to 24-year-olds out of work in the December to February period - a rise of 4,000 on the previous three months. [Read the BBC online article.](#)

The TUC has published a briefing examining the economic and social costs of unemployment. It finds that the death rate for children of parents classified as 'never having worked' or long-term unemployed was 13 times higher than that for children whose parents worked in higher managerial or professional occupations. [Download the report.](#)

### **Demographic analysis of recession impact**

EHRC is publishing a series of quarterly reports analysing the impacts of the recession on the employment outcomes by age, gender, disability and ethnicity. Previous recessions have had pronounced effects on the young, disabled and certain minority ethnic groups so these reports are intended to track progress. [Download the report.](#)