

Policy Digest

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YOUTH
ACCESS

Policy Digest for members

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Sector Watch

This feature in the Policy Digest brings 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 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'

Barbara Rayment, James Kenrick and Steve Lee took the messages of 'Under Strain', our campaign to protect YIACS from spending cuts, to Westminster this month when they met MP's and Ministers at a Parliamentary event for the wider voluntary youth sector organised by NCVYS.

We are soon to begin Phase 2 of the campaign, which will involve us lobbying and briefing on a national level and asking you to help us do so locally once more. We will also be looking for case studies of YIAC success stories, including young people's own experiences, so please start thinking about whether you can help on that front.

If you did take action in Phase 1 and haven't yet let us know please [email Steve Lee](#). Watch your inbox in about a week for your next call to action.

Coalition Government

There is still as yet no formal statement on youth policy from the new Government, but it has to be said that what we have seen so far does not give any great cause for encouragement. Significant amounts of the cuts thus far announced have direct effects and implications for our sector. CYPN featured a useful discussion piece this month which speculates on the future. [Read the piece here](#).

Children's Minister Tim Loughton gave an indication that youth policy has not slipped entirely off the agenda in an interview with Children & Young People Now (CYPN). In it he says a large part of his role will be to encourage councils to preserve and improve non-statutory services. "Youth services are not a luxury add-on," he explains. "I think some local authorities need to be more adventurous in finding new partners." [Read the CYPN interview.](#)

The Government has though set out the basis upon which it will make spending decisions and has indicated that it wants to consult with organisations and the public on what its spending priorities should be in the future. This gives us an opportunity to make the case again for the effectiveness and value for money of YIACS.

These are the criteria for Departments to consider in determining future spending in the forthcoming Spending Review:

- Is the activity essential to meet Government priorities?
- Does the Government need to fund this activity?
- Does the activity provide substantial economic value?
- Can the activity be targeted to those most in need?
- How can the activity be provided at lower cost?
- How can the activity be provided more effectively?
- Can the activity be provided by a non-state provider or by citizens, wholly or in partnership?
- Can non-state providers be paid to carry out the activity according to the results they achieve?
- Can local bodies as opposed to central government provide the activity?

The Budget

There was little unexpected in the new Chancellor's first budget, and no mention of youth policy but the main points likely to affect our sector were:

- An average real cut in unprotected departmental expenditure of 25%.
- A 2 year pay freeze for public sector workers earning over £21000 a year.
- VAT increased from 17.5 – 20%.
- Child Benefit frozen and housing benefit cut.

Other changes may be seen to have direct affects on young people in the fullness of time. The flesh will be put on the bones of the spending cuts in the Comprehensive Spending Review published on 20 October 2010.

Initial reaction from the sector has been lukewarm, with warnings that children and young people will be the hardest hit by the Budget. [Read this story from CYPN.](#) CYPN also flags up the absence of measures to mitigate youth unemployment, but offers hope that lower NI contributions may make it cheaper for employers to hire young people. [Read the article.](#)

Here is a summary of other developments in the last month:

- **Gove outlines £670m in cuts** – DfE sets out its plans to save £670m this year. In a letter to former Children's Secretary Ed Balls, Education Secretary Michael Gove stated that £359m in savings will come from "cutting waste, and stopping and scaling back lower-priority spending". A further £311m will come from reducing

area-based grants to local authorities. [Read the CYPN story](#) and [Michael Gove's letter](#). More details are available in this letter from [Michael Gove to all local authorities](#).

- **Details of cuts to each local authority** – [Download the details](#) of cuts to English local authorities.
- **Government leaves children's chiefs to decide 'savage' cuts** - Children's services leaders have been left to agonise over where the axe should fall after the DfE confirmed councils must decide how to distribute the £311m cuts to the overall area-based grant, leaving school support and Connexions services at risk. [Read the CYPN story](#). Some youth sector leaders have called for investment to be protected after the ring-fencing of large parts of the remaining budget was abolished. [Read this CYPN article](#).
- **Young Persons Guarantee to go** – Along with the Future Jobs Fund. [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Childhood Taskforce launched** - The government's newly launched Childhood and Families Taskforce will focus on improving support for disabled children, parental leave and tackling family breakdown. The Prime Minister will chair the Taskforce himself, but it is far from clear where young people sit within family policy. [Read the CYPN story](#) and [The Guardian Online piece](#) preceding the launch. Nick Clegg's speech can be [read on the Cabinet Office website](#).
- **Connexions budgets face axe** - Connexions is among the children and young people's services most likely to suffer from cutbacks in government grants to councils, senior local authority professionals have predicted. [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Youth Opportunities Fund cut and ring-fencing ended**– [Read the CYPN story](#),
- **Former ADCS chief warns of threat to 'most vulnerable'** - [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Ministerial responsibilities spelled out** – [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Criticism of YJB move to Ministry of Justice** – [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Public likes the National Citizenship Service** - ..but young people like it a bit less. [Read the Third Sector online article](#).
- **BASW calls on government to protect social work budgets before education** – [Read the CYPN story](#).
- **Frank Field to lead poverty review** – [Read the Guardian online story](#).
- **Big Society begins to take shape** – [Read the CYPN story](#) ..
- **..voluntary Sector welcomes it** – [Read the Third Sector Online story](#) ..
- **..but it's going to be hard work** – [Read the Third Sector online story](#).

- ..including for MP's and Ministers – [NCVYS launches placement scheme. Read the CYPN story.](#)
- **Big Society Bank giving grants by April 2010** – [Read the Third Sector online article.](#)
- **Office for Civil Society launched** – Nick Hurd is Civil Society Minister in the Cabinet Office. [Read the Third Sector online report.](#)
- **Less for voluntary sector in BLF proposals?** – The Government is proposing a reduction in the proportion of lottery monies going to the Big Lottery Fund from 50%-40%, though all BLF funding will now go to the VCS. [Read the DCMS media release.](#) This is causing some concern across the sector. [Read the Third Sector online article.](#) A consultation process is now underway, closing on 21 August 2010. [Respond to the consultation online.](#) The Government has privately moved to reassure the sector leaders that actual amounts would not be reduced, though no official confirmation has yet been issued. [Read the Third Sector online report.](#)
- **New fund for small community groups promised** – [Read the Third Sector online report.](#)

Other policy news in brief:

- **NPC stresses need for better impact evidence** - New Philanthropy Capital has published 'Scaling up for the Big Society', a report which argues that charities have an important role to play in building a 'Big Society' but are held back by an inability to provide evidence of their impact and the challenge of identifying proven, cost-effective approaches. [Download the report from NPC.](#)
- **NCVO Big Society Briefing** – [Download the briefing from NCVO's website.](#)
- **Review of social work** - Tim Loughton MP, Minister for Children and Families and Professor Eileen Munro have launched the government's review of children's social work and frontline practice. The review will examine ways of cutting bureaucracy to give social workers more time with children, and of improving links between social workers and other agencies such as the police. Munro's first report will be published at the end of September, followed by an interim report in January 2011. The final report will be submitted to government in April 2011.
- **New Select Committee Chair elected** - Graham Stuart MP, (Con, Beverley and Holderness) has been elected as the chair of the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee. Stuart has been a member of the select committee for the last three years. The remaining members of the committee will be nominated in the coming weeks. [Visit the Parliament website for more details.](#)
- **Centre for Policy Studies report** – An insight into the thinking which informs some government thinking is provided by *Cutting the Children's Plan*, published by CPC. Amongst the proposals in the report are devolving Sure Start, child care and Every Disabled Child Matters to local authorities and abolition of large swathes of programmes including Positive Activities funding and Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS) which it fears may contribute to "a 'counselling culture' which can foster a self-obsessed, excuse-seeking mindset." [Download the report.](#)

- **Call for 'proper' pay offer for youth and community workers** – Against the background of spending cuts and an uncertain future for the youth sector, unions representing youth and community workers have rallied to call for above inflation pay increases. [Read the CYPN story.](#)
- **Unions fight cost cutting** - Unions have hit out at guidance issued to local authority chiefs on reducing workforce costs, saying it could dilute the quality of service for children and young people. The Local Government Employers issued Reducing Workforce Costs to finance and human resources managers. [Read the CYPN piece.](#)
- **Youth work defended** - The NCVYS has developed the Youth Work Sector Expert Group in partnership with the National Youth Agency (NYA) and the Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services (Chyps). The group has been established to give the sector a more pro-active role in lobbying government and leading debates over workforce issues. [Read the CYPN report.](#)
- **2011 'cliff-edge' hinders recruitment** - [Read the CYPN story.](#)

Advice Policy

RMJ goes into administration

Asylum legal advice charity Refugee and Migrant Justice (RMJ) has gone into administration, blaming late payment of legal aid by the Legal Services Commission. RMJ provides legal representation for more than 10,000 vulnerable asylum seekers and victims of trafficking, including nearly 900 separated children. [Read the CYPN story.](#) Justice Secretary Ken Clarke has defended the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) position. [Read the Third Sector online piece.](#)

MoJ announces ministerial line up

The MoJ has settled its ministerial line up under Ken Clarke, with Jonathon Djanogly taking on Legal Aid and Crispin Blunt taking Youth Justice away from DfE. [Read the MoJ media release.](#)

NCVYS Information sheets

NCVYS has produced 7 new career information sheets for individuals interested in paid or voluntary work connected to working with young people in the voluntary sector. Each sheet covers areas such as what it is like to be in the role, the work, routes in, qualifications and training. They cover: **Youth Advice Worker**; Young People's Housing Support Worker; Youth Worker; Youth Volunteer Co-ordinator; Youth Health Worker; Youth Participation Worker; Youth Sports Worker. [Download the Youth Advice Worker leaflet.](#) The other leaflets are available to [download from the NCVYS website.](#)

PLE Principles and guidance

A new guide written specifically for people who provide or who are thinking about providing public legal education has been published. It suggests that there are five basic principles to follow to deliver good PLE. The principles, known as 'Apple' cover Audience, Purpose, Provider, Learning and Evaluation. The guide provides practical examples and suggestions under each heading to help people put the principles into practice. [Download the Guide](#).

Rightsnet expands

A new version of rightsnet, LASA's renowned welfare rights website, launched on 16 June 2010. There are a host of new features, including news updates and discussion in debt, housing, employment and community care law. [Visit the Rightsnet website](#).

Counselling and Mental Health

New evidence on IAPT

The Government's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme is not only reducing rates of depression and anxiety but also driving down hospital admissions for physical illness, new evidence suggests. [Read details at Pulse Today](#). You will need register to access the report.

Bullying accounts for up to 44% of child suicides

Beatbullying has published research revealing that as many as 44% of suicides committed by young people in the UK are due to bullying, but they argue that more research into child suicide is absolutely critical. The data on suicides of 10-14 year olds points towards a higher tendency of suicide among young girls, with 65% of bullying related suicides committed by girls. 73% of suicides were committed by hanging, whilst six cases involved the young person taking an overdose of pills. In addition, the ONS recorded 1,769 suicides of 15-19 year olds between 2000 and 2008. As a result, the total number of adolescent suicides that are directly related to bullying could shockingly reach into the hundreds argue Beatbullying. [Read the Beatbullying media release](#).

Exam stress on the rise

Parents are increasingly worried about the stress that exams can put their children under, according to new figures published by YoungMinds. Calls to the YoungMinds parental helpline relating to worries about the pressure that exams are putting on their children have increased by nearly a third. A total of 1,058 parents called the helpline between 2009 and 2010, compared to 693 in the previous year. [Read the CYPN report](#).

Loneliness increases among younger people

According to a new report released today by the Mental Health Foundation, relationships that are vital to health and well-being are under threat by modern life, which can isolate

people from one another and lead to loneliness. Nearly 60% of those aged 18-34 questioned spoke of feeling lonely often or sometimes, compared to 35% of those aged over 55. [Read the BBC Online report.](#)

Happiness is talking to Dad

Young people who said they talked seriously to their dads "most days" are happier than those who don't according to an analysis of research from the British Household Panel survey into 1,200 young people in Britain aged between 11 and 15, released by the Children's Society to coincide with Father's Day. They gave themselves an 87 per cent score on a happiness scale compared with 79 per cent for those who said they hardly ever spoke to their fathers in this way. [Read the Telegraph online story.](#)

Youth Policy and Social Inclusion

Vetting and Barring Scheme on hold

Registration with the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) will be halted to allow the government to remodel the scheme. Voluntary registration for new employees and job-movers working or volunteering with children and vulnerable adults was due to start on 26 July but this registration has now been stopped. The Home Office statement says that "the government recognises that many businesses, community groups and individuals see the current scheme as disproportionate and overly burdensome, and that it unduly infringes on civil liberties." [Read more on the Home Office website](#) and in [this letter from the Independent Safeguarding Authority.](#)

IAG Directions and Guidance consultation

Youth Access provided a response to the consultation on the draft statutory guidance and directions to local authorities on implementation of the Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy. There are large question marks as to the future of the current strategy since the change of government, it is therefore important to make our key points that it needs to be explicit that IAG is wider than just careers advice and that YIACS have a major role to play in meeting vital parts of the IAG agenda. The response was endorsed by our colleagues at National Council for Voluntary Youth Service. [Download the response from our website.](#)

Government set out its analysis of poverty and deprivation

The Government has published the analysis of poverty, deprivation and worklessness upon which its policies around social justice will be based. The analysis identifies income inequality, social mobility and inequalities in educational attainment as key factors. [Download the report.](#)

Against the background of this analysis, official figures actually show that the number of children in poverty fell by over 100,000 last year. [Read the CYPN story.](#)

24% of children victims of crime

Almost one in four children aged 10 to 15 have been a victim of crime in the past year, official figures showed. A total of 2,153,000 crimes of theft and violence took place against under 16s in 2009, the Home Office said. A pilot extension of the British Crime Survey to include younger people found 24% were victims of crime. The report found children are more at risk of personal crimes, such as robbery, assault and theft, than adults. But they are far less likely to report their experiences, with just over one in 10 (11%) going to police, compared with 37% of adults. [Read the PA media release.](#)

Capabilities report

YMCA England has launched *Life in All Its Fullness: Towards a capabilities framework for measuring young people's development*. The report, written in partnership with the independent think-tank Demos, makes the case that Britain's 7.4 million 16-25 year olds were left in the cold by a focus on short-term outputs rather than securing better outcomes. They argue that that key services aimed at young people needed to enable them to build their social and emotional skills, so that they had the opportunity to make positive life choices and contribute to society. [Download the report.](#)

ContactPoint to remain in use until a new system is found

The ContactPoint child protection database will remain in use while an alternative system is settled on, DfE has announced. In a letter to directors of children's services, Tom Jeffrey, director general for children and families at the department, said the system will be axed as soon as practicable. [Read the CYPN story.](#)

Homelessness

A new ministerial taskforce has met for the first time to discuss how best to tackle the problem of homelessness and rough sleeping. Ministers from eight different Government departments across Whitehall will work together to see how the policies for which they have responsibility can help address the complex problems that cause people to lose their home. [Read the CLG media release.](#)

Call for improved transition support for most vulnerable

Children's professionals and commissioners are being called on to improve the support they give some of the most vulnerable young people as they make the transition to adulthood. The Revolving Doors Agency has published two guides, [Aiming Higher](#), aimed at professionals working with young people with "multiple needs" such as housing problems, drug addiction and crime. The second, called [Towards a Shared Future](#), is aimed at commissioners of services for such young people.

Youth Justice in brief

- Number of young people entering youth justice system continues to fall – [Read the CYPN article.](#)
- Ofsted report on transitions through custody – Ofsted looks at support for young people leaving custody and finds it wanting. Difficulties in finding accommodation

had a detrimental impact on children and young people's opportunities for training, education and employment. Finding accommodation for older children on their return to the community was particularly difficult. [Download the report.](#)

- **Offences committed by 10- to 17-year-olds fall by 12 per cent** – [Read the CYPN article.](#)
- **Youth Justice Board faces fight to survive** – [Read the CYPN story.](#)

Children's Rights in brief

- **Campaigners welcome UN children's rights responsibility being given to senior minister** – [Read the CYPN story.](#)
- **Bill of Rights could strengthen the rights of children** – CRAE welcomes commitment to investigation. [Read the CRAE media release.](#)
- **Wales takes 'huge step' towards embedding child rights** - Wales moved a step closer to enshrining the rights of children and young people into law, after deputy children's minister Huw Lewis presented a measure to the Welsh Assembly. The proposed Rights of Children and Young People Measure will require Welsh ministers to give proper consideration to the rights of children, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), when making any strategic decisions. [Read the CYPN article.](#)

Teenage population 'to fall over next decade'

The number of teenagers in Britain will fall sharply over the next decade, new projections show, potentially forcing the closure of secondary schools and businesses. [Read the story in Telegraph online.](#)

Carlene Firmin interview

Guardian Online featured an interview with Carlene Firmin, who's Female Voice in Violence study into the sexual exploitation and violence suffered by young female gang members has helped to focus more services on reducing women's association with gangs or addressing their victimisation. [Read the interview.](#)

Health

NICE guidance on contraceptive services for young people

Draft guidance on ensuring all young people are able to access contraceptive services in city centres, schools and colleges has been published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). [Read the CYPN article](#) and [download the Guidance.](#)

Official abortion Statistics

ONS have published the latest abortion statistics showing that in 2009, for women resident in England and Wales:

- the total number of abortions was 189,100, compared with 195,296 in 2008, a fall of 3.2%

- the age-standardised abortion rate was 17.5 per 1,000 resident women aged 15-44, compared with 18.2 in 2008
- the abortion rate was highest at 33 per 1,000, for women aged 19, 20 & 21, each lower than in 2008
- the under-16 abortion rate was 4.0 and the under-18 rate was 17.6 per 1,000 women, both lower than in 2008

[Download the statistics.](#)

Recession News in brief

NEETS and unemployment return to the rise

The latest NEET statistics from DfE show 927,000 people aged 16 to 24 (15.3%) not in employment, education or training in the first quarter of this year. This is an increase of 32,000 from the last quarter of 2009, however it represents a drop of 6,000 from the same period last year. [Read the story from the Telegraph online.](#)

Meanwhile UK unemployment rose this month with 2.47 million now out of work, with a rise in unemployment among 16 to 24-year-olds of 11,000 to 926,000. [Read the BBC online story.](#)

The latest recession survey from London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC), part 2 of The Big Squeeze, confirms that young people have been hit hardest by unemployment. It also finds:

- the most marginalized Londoners are becoming more marginalized;
- unemployment is disproportionately affecting young people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and disabled people;
- Londoners are experiencing increased levels of stress and mental ill health;
- most VCS organisations have seen an increase in demand for their services, particularly advice, volunteering and counselling; and
- over 90% of organisations had changed the way they work to respond to increasing or changing needs.

[Download the report.](#)