

## **Draft response to consultation from the DfES**

### **Strategy for Youth Services**

**What is the current distribution of youth services and youth engagement activities available across the country? How is that likely to evolve following the Youth Green Paper?**

Statutory and Voluntary sector partnerships

Children's Trusts

Youth Opportunity Fund - more young people led activities/provision

Youth Opportunities Card - activities on offer need to reflect needs and wants of the young people

Need to increase the incentives for stat & voluntary sectors to involve young people (funding etc)

Only by increasing funding will groups be able to include more young people. More adult volunteers needed to support the young people. It would help us to help young people if the government policy could change so that individuals could have time off for volunteering (as much as for say being a member of the TA)

Evidence of our distribution- include census figures, unit numbers, Starting a new unit stats especially those for Senior Section.

**Building on the Youth Green Paper, is there more that could be done to improve and sustain the effectiveness in the delivery of existing services and activities?**

Have one monitoring/evaluation process for all - voluntary & stat sectors. Use good practice to inform and then lead to overall improvements. Encourage better communication between groups to share information, training and experiences. Open up training opportunities to voluntary sector organisations. Ensure funding is distributed fairly and make the processes of distribution of funding clear and transparent for both Statutory and Voluntary sectors. Make the application process simple and offer training and support in completing funding applications.

**What are the particular barriers faced by different groups of young people, including disabled young people, in accessing services, and what are the policy issues that arise?**

Provision offered and accessibility is an ongoing barrier - the accessibility doesn't just apply to disabled young people, it also includes young people

excluded from schools (this is an issue when the only provision on offer is on school premises), there are issues such as costs, location, opening times etc Girlguiding UK is open to all girls and young women, and as an organisation we are working to improve the perception/awareness of the organisation, and we are currently working on a project to take our work into areas where it is most needed. All groups should be working, as we are, on their perception to break down barriers and make services available when and where needed.

Provision should offer a programme that reflects the needs and wants of young people, and not what 'professionals' assume young people want. We need to listen to young people. The behaviour of the adults working with the young people must be enabling.

With regard to policy issues there are too many policies.

**What is the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of different types of services and activities in terms of better life outcomes?**

Positive activities for young people results in less young people 'hanging around'. Young people would be more than happy to get involved in voluntary activities within their areas if they felt it would have a positive effect on their communities. By giving young people ownership of their programme they can see the benefits on themselves and their communities. Young people need better access to Relationships and education and health provision. It is key that activities and provision improve young people's self-esteem.

Evidence - Educational Framework, Anecdotal evidence, GOLD, Leadership schemes, community action etc.

**How can we best combine demand led provision for young people with provision that is planned and structured to have the best impact on outcomes for children and young people?**

Work with the young people, include them in project planning and in all aspects of delivering the activities - take the lead from them. Empower them to make changes as a project develops. If young people are involved with the range of provision on offer then they are more likely to use it.

Have an understandable set of outcomes, and ensure funding is available to enable voluntary & stat organisations to meet these outcomes.

There is a need to differentiate between children and young people, the association with children puts off the 13+ age range (for example: Children's Trust, shouldn't these be Children and Young People's Trusts?)

Evidence- Girlguiding UK's whole framework

**What more can we do to support and enable young people to exert a strong demand side influence on provision? What would we expect in return from young people - their rights and responsibilities?**

Ensure that young people's voices are heard, some youth forums/councils are seen as tokenistic. Do not just give forums to voice their views, but act upon their recommendations. To develop good citizens their views must be equal. Accepting young peoples' decision making capacity begins when they are very young. Encouraging recognition for their contribution to society with nationally recognised rewards and used to further their career. There should be recognition for young people involved in decision making panels, some form of accredited qualification rather than monetary reward.

It is not a matter of "allowing" young people to determine provision and in return expecting something from them. Services that genuinely enable young peoples' direction/ management are much more likely to improve their life chances.

Rights and responsibilities is implicit in the life model of developing young people.

Encourage young people to become aware of their rights, and ensure that voluntary & stat organisations embrace Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Evidence- SWITCH model, OROR, Right Now

**What principles and priorities should guide the allocation of current and future resources? And who do we need to target?**

Resource allocation needs to be tied to the choices and planning as a result of the young peoples decisions. Services to young people are more than levels of resourcing or the coverage. Adequate adult volunteers to support the work of the young people- time off work for volunteering.

**What measures and milestones need to be in place to ensure that performance can be assessed and delivery monitored at a local level.**

Clarity on what is to be measured, too often measurement is about "input" and not "output". A simple form of measurement that isn't bureaucratic.

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<sup>1</sup> AHGD/ HofGD/Startegy for Youth Service Aug 06