



Advocacy and Promoting Rights of Disabled Children

Underpinning Legislation and Guidance

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Children Act 1989/2004
- National Advocacy Standards 2003
- NSF/ Disabled Children Matter Wales
- SEN Code of Practice
- Disability Legislation
- WAG Guidance on School Exclusion
- New Service Model for Advocacy

Powys Advocacy Service for Children and Young People

- One of 11 advocacy projects run by Tros Gynnal
- Service jointly commissioned in 2004 by Health Education and Children's Services
- Criteria includes provision of Advocacy for disabled children known to the Children with Disabilities Team

Statistics

- Project worked with 154 young people in 2009-2010
- 40% of referrals were for disabled children
- 50% of referrals from Social Workers

Work with disabled children

- Complaints about lack of services
- Experience of discrimination
- Developing skills to provide advocacy for children and young people who have specific communication difficulties
- Overcoming barriers to advocacy
- Raising Awareness of Rights
- Non Instructed advocacy

Tools for working with Disabled Children

- Pictures/Photos
- Symbols e.g. Widgit
- Toolkits e.g. I'll go first (The Children's Society)
- All advocacy staff have basic training in working with disabled children
- All staff have basic training in communicating with autistic children.
- Specialist advocates

Visiting Advocacy

- Contracts with 2 independent providers in Powys
- Visiting Advocacy to Short break Unit
- Visiting Advocacy to Residential Unit for Autistic Children
- Visiting Advocacy to Special School for Young People with moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural Difficulties.

Extending the Service in 2008 with funding from BILD

- Work with any young person with a learning disability or ASD aged 16-25
- 29 young people have had individual advocacy
- Increased participation of disabled children and young people in the work of project
- Young people on interviewing panel for Powys ASD Coordinator
- Young people make a DVD to raise awareness of advocacy.



Images used in the
Powys Anti
Bullying Plan for
Young People

Examples of Rights issues related to Health

- Young people demanding right to counselling
- Access to CAMHS service for young people with learning disability
- Use of complaints process to force Local Authorities to agree on providing services such as OT
- Pressure on Local Authority to provide residential provision for autistic child in county
- Young person exercises right to wheelchair

Examples of Rights Issues related to Education

- Advocating for Assessment of Communication needs
- Young people have a say in school they attend
- Young people enabled to complain about bullying in school
- Person Centred Approach to review meetings
- Advocating for 1:1 support in school

Advocacy can contribute to

- Change in balance of power. Young people having more say and adults less
- Young people feeling more confident
- Young people being consulted more
- Young people participating more in decision making bodies





Quotations from young people and their parents

“It felt good to get an apology for what had happened to me in the hospital”

“Having an advocate helped me get things off my chest”

“X was wonderful. She knew about autism.”

“I have no legs,
But I still have feelings,
I cannot see,
But I think all the time
Although I’m deaf,
I still want to communicate,
Why do people see me as useless,
thoughtless, talkless
When I am capable as any,
For thoughts about our world.”

Poem by 14 year old girl from UK



bild



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