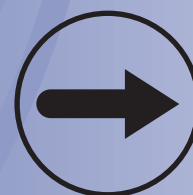


Parenting Action Plan - Summary

Information
Document



Parenting

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**Supporting mothers,
fathers and carers with
raising children in Wales**



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**PLANT A PHOBL IFANC - GWEITHREDU'R HAWLIAU
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE - RIGHTS TO ACTION**

Adran Hyfforddiant ac Addysg
Department for Training and Education



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

- Title of document:** Parenting Action Plan: Supporting mothers, fathers and carers with raising children in Wales - Summary
- Audience:** Chief Executives of Local Authorities, Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts; Directors of Education, Social Services, Public Health and Health Visiting; Framework Co-ordinators; Principal Youth Officers; Youth Forums; Key Children's Voluntary Organisations; Commission for Racial Equality; Equal Opportunities Commission; Disability Rights Commission; County Librarians; Community Voluntary Services; Welsh Local Government Association; Police Chief Constables; Wales TUC Cymru; Welsh Local Government Association; Members of the Parenting Action Plan Working Group; Children's Commissioner for Wales; Assembly Members.
- Overview:** This document sets out the actions the Welsh Assembly Government intends to take to raise the profile of parenting in Wales, and to increase the information, advice and support available to parents.
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This document can also be accessed from the Welsh Assembly Government website www.learning.wales.gov.uk
- Related documents:** Consultation on draft Parenting Action Plan issued on 15 March 2005.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Being a parent is a big job. Everyone who looks after children needs support and encouragement. They also need advice and information about a range of things as their children grow up. This Parenting Action Plan seeks to ensure that parents in Wales get the advice and support they need, by setting out what the Welsh Assembly Government intends to do for parents up to March 2008.
- 1.2 This Summary Version sets out the main points in the Parenting Action Plan. For full details of what the Welsh Assembly Government is doing for parents, you will need to refer to the main document.
- 1.3 The Parenting Action Plan is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Welsh Assembly Government tries to make sure that everything it does helps to put the rights of children and young people into practice. Parents also have rights, including the right to be supported in bringing up their children.
- 1.4 Article 18 of the UN Convention says:

“Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents work.”
- 1.5 There are many people who help to bring up children, and who play important roles in young people's lives. These can include grandparents, foster carers, people who have adopted children, step-parents, and sometimes also older brothers and sisters. When we talk about parents, we mean all these other people as well.
- 1.6 When helping people to bring up children, it is important that we do so in ways that take account of the different cultures and ethnic backgrounds that exist in Wales today.
- 1.7 We will publish updates on our progress on each of the areas covered by this Action Plan in November 2006 and November 2007.

2. EXTRA MONEY FOR PARENT SERVICES

- 2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government helps to support services for parents through Cymorth - the Children and Youth Support Fund. We use Cymorth to give money to children's and young people's services in disadvantaged areas of Wales. The local Children and Young People's Partnerships decide how the money is spent in each area.
- 2.2 Part of the Cymorth money is spent on services to support families, including classes for new parents, parent-toddler groups, and groups for single parents. At present, more than 200 family projects are supported in this way.
- 2.3 The Welsh Assembly Government has decided to put extra money into Cymorth in the next two years. This will start to happen from April 2006. We have given guidance to local Children and Young People's Partnerships, telling them that we expect them to use some of this extra money to increase the amount of support given to parents.
- 2.4 The Big Lottery is working with the Welsh Assembly Government to set up at least one Integrated Children's Centre in each local authority area. These centres will bring together many services for parents and children, including early years education, childcare, play, family support and health services.
- 2.5 The Welsh Assembly Government is also publishing a childcare strategy, setting out ways of increasing the number of childcare places and giving parents a greater choice.

3. INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES

- 3.1** One of the most important things parents need is good quality advice and information. The Welsh Assembly Government already gives every new parent two guidebooks:
- The Pregnancy Book - a complete guide to pregnancy, childbirth and the first few weeks with a new baby;
 - Birth to Five - a complete guide to parenthood and the first five years of your child's life.
- 3.2** Through this Parenting Action Plan we want to increase the amount of advice and information available to parents across Wales.

Telephone Helpline

- 3.3** We shall set up a free telephone helpline for parents in Wales, which can offer advice and support to parents in Welsh as well as in English. We are exploring the various options for delivering this service, and a final decision on the way forward will be taken by the end of 2005.
- 3.4** The new helpline will be able to provide parents with up-to-date information and advice about what is available in their local area. It will also be able to pass them on to other local sources of help and support.

Children's Information Services

- 3.5** There is a Children's Information Service in each local area in Wales. They provide advice to parents on a range of issues including childcare, parenting, leisure activities, education services, libraries, health services and local children's organisations.
- 3.6** The Welsh Assembly Government will continue to work with local Children and Young People's partnerships to develop better Children's Information Services for parents in Wales.

Booklets for Parents

- 3.7** In 2003/04, the Welsh Assembly Government worked with the National Family and Parenting Institute and Children in Wales to develop two booklets for parents:
- From Breakfast to Bedtime - tips for parents on coping with everyday situations such as mealtimes and getting very young children ready for bed;
 - Over the Top Behaviour in the Under 10s - advice for parents on why children behave in the way they do, and how to handle challenging behaviour.

- 3.8** These booklets were tested out in three areas in Wales. Feedback from parents was very positive, so we will be making these booklets more widely available to parents in Wales. The booklets should be available in all parts of Wales by the end of March 2006.

4. PROMOTING POSITIVE PARENTING

Physical Punishment

- 4.1** The Welsh Assembly Government believes that smacking children is wrong. We do not think it encourages adults, children and young people to respect each other. We believe that there are better ways of dealing with difficult behaviour and teaching children right and wrong. We know that many parents would like advice on how to get this right. During 2006-07, we will be preparing a booklet for parents with tips on how to bring up children without using physical punishment. This will be distributed to all new parents.

Incredible Years Programmes

- 4.2** The Incredible Years parenting programme is aimed at parents of children whose behaviour is so difficult that it causes problems for themselves and their friends, and also for their parents and teachers. It can also be used to prevent such behaviour developing in the first place. Results have shown that children's difficult behaviour becomes less of a problem for those parents who have attended the parenting programme. The Welsh Assembly Government is planning to give funding to Incredible Years Cymru, from 2006-07, to train more people in running these classes. We hope that this will help spread the classes right across Wales, helping many more children and their parents.

5. GETTING PARENTS INVOLVED IN PLANNING SERVICES

- 5.1** The way services for children and young people are organised in different parts of Wales is decided by Children and Young People's Framework Partnerships in each local area. The Partnerships have to make sure that children, young people and their families can have their say about what services are available and how they are organised.
- 5.2** In some areas Parent Networks have been set up. These bring together parents and the people who organise services, to talk about the things that affect them and to suggest changes or improvement. The Welsh Assembly Government wants to encourage these Parent Networks. Early in 2006 we will be starting work on a guide for local partnerships on different ways of involving parents, including good practice in setting up Parent Networks.

6. EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL SETTING

- 6.1** Parents are important in helping their children settle into school and encouraging them to learn. They are responsible for making sure that their children attend school, and schools need to involve them when there are problems such as bullying or bad behaviour. They can also be part of discussions about career choices or which subjects to take. It is vital that schools discuss their approaches and plans with parents.
- 6.2** The Welsh Assembly Government wants to encourage schools to build better links with parents. We also want to see more schools become the centre of the local community, especially in deprived areas. Here schools can provide services that are not available elsewhere in the community. This could include such things as childcare, education and training courses for adults, or information centres for parents.
- 6.3** We will also continue to improve Parentsnet, the new education website for parents (www.learning.wales.gov.uk/parents).
- 6.4** Schools also teach children and young people about being a parent as part of Personal and Social Education (PSE). This includes teaching about sex and relationships, being pregnant and what having a child is like. If this is taught well in schools, all children and young people will have the skills and confidence to be good parents. New guidelines on how PSE should be taught in schools were published a couple of years ago. The Welsh Assembly Government also made PSE compulsory in all schools in 2003. We will carry on trying to improve the way this subject is taught.

Further copies can be obtained from:

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