

Services for young people



We offer a range of high-quality targeted youth support services that help the most vulnerable and often socially excluded young people.

Through our services, we:

- ▶ reduce the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training
- ▶ reduce the number of entrants to the criminal justice system
- ▶ support young people affected by substance misuse
- ▶ support and aim to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies
- ▶ encourage young people's engagement through positive activities
- ▶ improve young people's health and wellbeing.

Young people can count on us to make sure their voices are heard. We will be there for them for as long as it takes.



as long as it takes

Targeted youth support services

Our services target and help the most vulnerable and socially excluded young people. We support all young people, including those with disabilities, and we offer specialist support to young people leaving local authority care to help the transition to independent living.

We know that a significant number of young people experience problems in their teenage years, such as falling behind at school or getting involved with drugs, criminal and other unacceptable behaviour.

Sometimes problems are only temporary setbacks that are rapidly overcome but for some young people, problems can prove more severe and entrenched. This can have serious consequences for their health, wellbeing and development. It can also impose significant burdens and costs on society and their families.

We are committed to delivering an innovative portfolio of targeted youth support services to help overcome these issues. We deliver our

services by being part of the local community. Working in partnership with other support agencies is key to our success – partners we work with include education welfare, behaviour support, Connexions, youth services, social services, sexual health, mental health, housing support, school nurses and youth offending services.

A key objective of our services is to offer training and employment to young people who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to enter employment, training or further education.

We deliver high-quality services to help young people to be safe and healthy, to enjoy and achieve in life, to make a positive contribution to their communities and to achieve economic wellbeing.

For a variety of reasons, many families find themselves in crisis situations. We help to deal with issues such as anti-social behaviour (including gangs, gun and knife crime, drug and alcohol mis-use), teenage pregnancies, homelessness and sustaining tenancies.



Action Training Service

We provide training to young people who have failed to make the progression from school to employment, training or further education. This support is not just about education but covers a range of skills they need to be successful in life. In 2008, we were successful in moving 62% of young people into education, employment and training, making a significant contribution to Norfolk's overall employment statistic. Norfolk's not in education, employment or training population stood at 5.2% in 2008, which is significantly lower than the national average rate of 6.9% and the regional average of 6.6%.

The Audit Commission reports it costs four times as much to put a young person through the criminal justice system as it does to keep them out of it.²

Three quarters of care leavers have no academic qualifications, with only 12%– 19% moving on to full-time education and only half the young people in leaving care projects in work. Care leavers are five times less likely to achieve five good GCSEs and eight times more likely to be excluded from school. They are also less likely to go to university.¹

Our integrated youth justice services provide ongoing support to young people who have been identified as being involved in persistent and/or serious offending. The services offer the Courts and Children's Services a constructive alternative to custody for young offenders and substance abusers.

We believe that all young people have the potential to succeed and that it is always better to prevent failure than tackle a crisis later.

Young people leaving care are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society. We ensure that young people have the support they need to find employment and develop independent living skills. We also offer safe homes for young people who are homeless.



¹ Care Matters: Time for Change, DFES 2007

² Tired of Hanging Around, Audit Commission, 28 January 2009



Positive activities

Participating in high-quality structured activities is a key element in improving the prospects of all young people. Young people develop socially and emotionally, build communication skills and improve their self-confidence and esteem. This in turn increases their resilience, helping them avoid risks such as experimenting with drugs, having unprotected sex, or being involved in crime, as well as contributing to better attendance and higher attainment at school.

Positive activities also have an important role in building community cohesion, particularly in bridging the gaps between young people from different backgrounds and faith groups, as well as improving relationships across different generations.

3 RiP – One in Ten Key Messages, 2008

About Action for Children

Action for Children is a charity working with the UK's most vulnerable children and young people. We are committed to helping socially excluded children and young people in the UK break through injustice, deprivation and inequality, so they can achieve their full potential.

To find out more about our education, employment and training services call 0300 123 2112, email: support.care@actionforchildren.org.uk, or visit www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Health and wellbeing

There has been a sharp increase in child obesity and rates of mental health disorders remain high. We are therefore committed to the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes for young people and to helping them to live healthier lives.

Through our children's rights, advocacy and independent visitor services, we offer confidential and personal support to young people. Our independent visitor services offer a reliable relationship for the young person, providing support and encouragement for their social, emotional, cultural and educational development.

75% of 16 - 17-year-old young males before the youth court are in no formal full-time activity at that point. Four out of five of these young people have been unemployed for six months and the rest have never worked.³