

National Assembly for Wales

Children and Young People in Wales Current Awareness

July 2009

This paper provides a selection of information about recent publications and policy and legislative developments concerning children and young people in Wales likely to be of interest to Assembly Members.

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National Assembly for Wales

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Children and Young People in Wales Current Awareness

Coverage

This paper highlights selected information on key emerging issues relating to children and young people in Wales, identified by searching through press releases, publications, reports and research from the major children's organisations and from other key sources.

It also highlights current developments in areas which have previously been considered or are under consideration by the National Assembly for Wales Children and Young People Committee.

The paper lists hard copy resources, such as journals and books, which are held by the Members' Library. The electronic version of this paper contains [underlined hyperlinks](#) to relevant websites and a list of useful sources is provided at Annex A.

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Children and Young People in Wales Current Awareness

1. Emerging Issues

Children's Commissioner for Wales Press Release, [Children's Commissioner publishes findings of nationwide research about young carers in Wales](#), 10 June 2009

Children's Commissioner for Wales (2009) [Full of Care - Young Carers in Wales](#), 10 June 2009.

This report aims to show the barriers that young carers face in achieving the rights laid out by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, such as the right to education, to relax and play and to have their views respected.

[Half of young carers 'can't cope'](#) BBC News, [accessed 10 June 2009]

A report from the Children's Commissioner has found that more than half of young carers in Wales have felt they could not cope with their responsibilities during the course of a week.

Brindley, Madeline, [Young carers want ID cards - to prove they're not lying; Children's Commissioner calls on Assembly to consider the idea](#), *Western Mail*, 10 June 2009, p.14
Children who care for sick relatives have called for the introduction of special ID cards to prove to teachers that they aren't lying about their plight.

Plotnikoff, J, and Woolfson, R, (July 2009) [Measuring Up? Evaluating implementation of Government commitments to young witnesses in criminal proceedings](#).

The NSPCC has published research revealing young witnesses often have to wait more than a year to give evidence in Crown Court cases in England and Wales. In response to the findings, the NSPCC is calling for the UK Government to enforce its policy of fast-tracking criminal cases involving young witnesses and monitor delays.

[Many children 'wrongly' locked up](#), BBC News [accessed 22 June 2009]

A report from the Prison Reform Trust (June 2009) called [Children: Innocent until proven guilty](#) says that up to three-quarters of children who are locked up before they appear in court do not subsequently receive a jail sentence.

Colquhoun, Fiona, (May 2009) [The relationship between child maltreatment, sexual abuse and subsequent suicide attempts](#)

This research report from the NSPCC looks at the link between different abusive experiences and suicidal ideation and active attempts.

Bagnall, Steve, [Suicide calls triple to Welsh child help line](#), *Daily Post*, 1 June 2009, p.9
Calls to a Welsh helpline from distressed children contemplating suicide have more than tripled in five years.

Norman, Katie, [Youth services in Wales 'hindered by lack of information gathering'](#), Western Mail, 11 June 2009, p.35

Major areas for improvement in local authorities' delivery of youth services have been highlighted by an Estyn report [Management information in local authority youth services](#) (June 2009).

[Recession in Wales: nearly half the unemployed are under 25](#), BBC News [accessed 3 June 2009]

A Joseph Rowntree Foundation report [Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion in Wales 2009](#) (June 2009) has found that nearly half of unemployed people in Wales are aged under 25.

Puffet, Neil, [NHS study reveals 70 avoidable child deaths](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 19 June 2009

A [Review of Patient Safety for Children and Young People](#) carried out by the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA), has found that more than 70 children in England and Wales died as a result of potentially avoidable medical lapses between 2007/08.

Mahadevan, Janaki, [NHS fails to meet disabled children's needs](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 22 June 2009

A new report from the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign in England called [Disabled Children and Health](#) finds that the NHS is failing to meet the basic needs of disabled children.

Mahadevan, Janaki, [Social workers' low morale puts children at risk](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 30 June 2009

A survey commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) in England revealed that 93 per cent of councillors in charge of children's services believe the reporting of the Baby P case had a negative impact on the way people regard social workers.

National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse Press Release, [More young people seek help for problems with drugs as services expand](#), 8 June 2009

Figures published by the National Treatment Agency (NTA) have shown that more people in England under the age of 30 are getting help for problems with drugs.

The UK Government has set out plans for a Schools and Safeguarding Children Bill in its draft legislation programme for 2009/10. The bill would clarify the role of Ofsted and other inspectorates in inspecting Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and improve monitoring arrangements for children educated at home. For further information, see the [Office of the Leader of the House of Commons](#) [accessed 29 June 2009]

[Focus on Children](#), Office for National Statistics [accessed 1 July 2009]

Focus on Children offers a statistical insight into the lives of the children in contemporary UK society. It includes information on their characteristics, experiences, wellbeing and lifestyle looked at from the child's perspective wherever possible.

2. Issues considered by the National Assembly's Children and Young People Committee

2.1 Looked after children

News Items and Press Releases

Children's Commissioner for Wales, [Welsh Children's Commissioner attacks care charge plans](#), *Community Care* [posted 18 June 2009]

Keith Towler has said he is concerned about plans to charge parents who voluntarily place their children in local authority care, warning it could lead to family breakdown or homelessness.

Mahadevan, Janaki, [Councils 'capping' care places](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 1 July 2009

Vulnerable children could be missing out on care home placements because local authorities are capping places, a leading residential care expert has claimed.

Mahadevan, Janaki, [Children's home staff must have better qualifications](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 1 July 2009

The UK Government has pledged to strengthen minimum standards for training and development of staff in children's homes, in response to proposals by MPs to improve the care system.

Higgs, Lauren, [Bid to boost foster carers' rights](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 28 May 2009

The leader of children's services union Aspect has written to the UK Government Children's Secretary to demand proper employment rights for foster carers.

Reports, Publications and Statistics

Thomas Coram Institute (2009) [Working at the 'edges' of care? European models of support for young people and families](#). London: Department for Children, Schools and Families

This is a cross national study into policy, practice and professional skills of the workforce in four European countries (Denmark, France, Germany and England) when working with young people aged 10-15 at or near the point of requiring accommodation outside their family.

Ofsted (July 2009) [Support for care leavers](#)

This study highlights examples of best practice provided to young people leaving care and is based on a small-scale survey of visits to six local authorities and four secure provisions; it also draws on evidence from social care inspection and takes account of care leavers' views and experiences. The report identifies how barriers to positive outcomes for care leavers have been overcome.

Clarke, Helen, (2009) [*The age of foster care*](#), London: The Fostering Network
The Fostering Network has looked at the age of current foster carers to identify whether there are any immediate concerns for the future of the provision of foster care. This report lists their findings.

Schofield, G, Simmonds, J., (2009), *The child placement handbook: research, policy and practice* .London: British Association for Adoption and Fostering
No electronic version available. A copy of this book can be borrowed from the Members' Library. This title is a comprehensive anthology exploring research, policy and practice issues, written by a range of child placement experts.

House of Commons, Children, Schools and Families Committee, [*Looked after children: Government response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2008-09*](#), 29 June 2009

2.2 Child poverty

News Items and Press Releases

Norman, Katie, [*More seek grant aid to pay for uniforms*](#), *Western Mail*, 11 June 2009, p.35
Parents in Wales have increasingly been accessing grants for school uniforms. A total of 6,374 pupils in Wales received Welsh Government-funded school uniform grants in the financial year 2007 to 2008 - an increase on 5,933 the previous year.

Welsh Assembly Government Press Release, [*Disabled children benefit uptake scheme to tackle child poverty*](#), 12 May 2009
A £500,000 pilot scheme will look over the next two years at the best ways to increase the household incomes of families with disabled children. Citizen's Advice Cymru will deliver a campaign to increase benefit uptake as part of their existing Wales-wide Better Advice Better Health initiative.

Reports, Publications and Statistics

Hirsch, Donald, Davis, Abigail, Smith, Noel, (1 July 2009), [*A minimum income standard for Britain in 2009*](#), York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
This study updates 2008's innovative research, based on what members of the public thought people need for an acceptable minimum standard of living.

Winckler, Victoria, (25 June 2009), [*What is needed to end child poverty in Wales?*](#)
York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
The Welsh Government needs a clearer, more coherent and up-to-date approach to tackle child poverty in Wales, according to a study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Kenway, P, Palmer, G, MacInnes, T (2009) [*Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Wales*](#), York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
This study reviews ten-year trends in Welsh low-income statistics. It looks at progress on low income since the mid-1990s; examines unemployment and problem debt in the current

recession and considers what action government could take to lessen the recession's impact on people in poverty.

End Child Poverty Cymru Network, (2009) [Briefing Paper: UK Government Budget 2009](#)
This Briefing Paper calls on the UK Government to invest at least £3 billion on benefits and tax credits in time to reach the joint UK and Welsh Government target of halving child poverty by 2010.

End Child Poverty, (2009) [Keep the promise: End Child Poverty](#)
A collection of essays from leading authors within the end child poverty coalition.

Lupton, Ruth, (2009) [Growing up in social housing in Britain: A profile of four generations from 1946 to the present day](#), York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
This study describes how housing for families has changed over time and explores the relationship between social housing, family circumstances and the 'adult outcomes' for children who grew up in social housing – i.e. their experiences when they are adults.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Households Below Average Income \(HBAI\)](#),
[accessed 1 July 2009]
Statistics and commentary give an insight into the standard of living of the household population in the United Kingdom, focusing on the lower part of income distribution, for the period up to the end of 2007/08.

Scottish Parliament, Local Government and Communities Committee, (2009) [Report on Child Poverty in Scotland](#)
Sinclair, S, McKendrick, J (2009) [Child poverty in Scotland: taking the next steps](#), York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
This study discusses progress made in Scotland to end child poverty, and suggests what the Scottish Government needs to do to reach the 2020 target.

Platt, Lucinda, (2009) [Ethnicity and child poverty](#), Department of Work and Pensions
This report aims to significantly develop the evidence base on ethnicity and child poverty. The report draws on a range of data sources to present a variety of poverty-related indicators - including income poverty, poverty persistence, material deprivation, and worklessness - for children and families from different ethnic groups.

HM Revenue and Customs, [Child and Working Tax Credit Geographical Statistics](#),
[accessed 1 July 2009]
Statistics showing the numbers of families at various positions on the tax credits profile, and their entitlements, based on this data.

2.3 Families and Parenting

News Items and Press Releases

Williamson, David, [Call for Wales to have its own parenting champion](#), *Western Mail*, 19 May 2009, p.2 [accessed 22 June 2009]

Wales needs a parenting champion to cut through bureaucracy and ensure children and young people have the best start in life, according to the National Assembly's Children and Young People Committee.

[Carer grandparents 'face poverty'](#), *BBC News* [accessed 22 June 2009]

Younger grandparents caring for their grandchildren and their own elderly parents are increasingly being caught in a poverty trap according to a report from the charity Grandparents Plus called [The Poor Relation? Grandparental care: where older people's poverty and child poverty meet](#) (June 2009).

Legislation

[Proposed Children and Families \(Wales\) Measure](#) [as introduced on 2 March 2009]

National Assembly for Wales, Legislation Committee No.2, [Proposed Children and Families \(Wales\) Measure, Stage One Committee Report](#), CR-LD7574, 19 June 2009

Reports, Publications and Statistics

Boddy, Janet, et al (2009) [International perspectives on parenting support: non English language sources](#). London: Department for Children, Schools and Families

This research report presents findings from a study which aimed to build on evidence about what works in parenting support in England by reviewing promising activities in five European countries - Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. The study also identifies key issues and messages to inform practice in England.

Morris, K, Barnes, M, Mason, P, (2009) *Children, families and social exclusion: new approaches to prevention*, London: The Policy Press. No electronic version available. A copy of this book can be borrowed from the Members' Library.

This book seeks to consider new approaches to understanding the complexities of prevention, and how these new understandings can inform policy and practice. The authors use evidence from the National Evaluation of the Children's Fund to illustrate and explore the experiences of children and families who are most marginalised.

Layard, Richard, Dunn Judy, (2009) *A good childhood: searching for values in a competitive age*, London: The Children's Society. No electronic version available. A copy can be borrowed from the Members' Library.

This book, which is a result of a two year investigation by the Children's Society and draws upon the work of the UK's leading experts in many fields, explores the main stresses and influences to which every child is exposed – family, friends, youth culture, values, and

schooling, and makes recommendations as to how we can improve the upbringing of children.

2.4 Advocacy

News Items and Press Releases

Welsh Assembly Government Press Release, [New appointments to the National Independent Advocacy Board](#), Education Minister Jane Hutt, has announced eight appointments to the National Independent Advocacy Board, 19 June 2009.

Janaki Mahadevan, [Cafcass blamed for driving children's guardians away](#), *Children and Young People Now*, 1 June 2009

The professional association for court guardians and independent social workers (Nagalro) has said that Cafcass (the Children's and Family Court Advisory Support Service) is driving children's guardians away with excessive demands and that "huge increases" in paperwork and "knee-jerk reactions" to regulations have left vulnerable children without independent guardians for periods of five months or more.

Reports, Publications and Statistics

National Youth Advocacy Services Wales (NYAS) [Making Choices - A study into young disabled people's experiences of transition in Torfaen](#) (2009)

NYAS were commissioned to provide this study to examine the experiences of disabled children and young people and to explore their thoughts about transition.

Annex A Key sources of information on children and young people

[Barnardo's Cymru](#)

[Children in Wales](#) Regular email alerts are available via [The 4 Nations Child Policy Network](#)

[Children's Commissioner for Wales](#)

[Children's Legal Centre](#)

[Child Poverty Solutions – Wales](#), produced by Save the Children and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), with support from the Welsh Government with the aim of helping local practitioners, policy makers, managers and strategists to develop local responses to reducing child poverty in Wales.

[Children and Young People Now](#)

CYPNow.co.uk is a website for multi-agency professionals who need to be kept up-to-date with news and information across children and youth services.

[CRIN Child Rights Information Network](#)

[Eurochild](#)

[Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

[National Assembly Children and Young People Committee](#)

[National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(NSPCC\)](#)

[National Youth Advocacy Service](#)

[NSPCC](#) The latest child protection news is available via a free weekly email alert from the [NSPCC Inform](#) service. A current awareness service for policy, practice and research is available via the [CASPAR](#) service.

[Save the Children](#)

[Welsh Government Cabinet Committee on Children and Young People](#)

[WLGA Children's Policy Information](#)

Annex B Members' Library Resources

The Members' Library holds a number of books and journals which cover issues relating to children and young people. Recent issues and back copies of journals are available to read. We also have electronic access to some periodicals.

We are able to obtain additional articles and books on inter-library loan for Assembly Members and their staff. Please ask a member of the Library team for details.

[Children and Society](#)

Children and Society is an international journal covering childhood and children's services. Online access is available for all issues from 1987.

[ChildRIGHT](#)

ChildRIGHT is a very useful journal, published by the Children's Legal Centre at the University of Essex, which explains and comments on all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people in England and Wales. The Members' Library holds an archive of two years.

[Community care](#)

Community Care is published for social work professionals. It covers social care news and in-depth articles on policy areas.

[Health and Social Care in the Community](#)

Health and Social Care in the Community is an international peer-reviewed journal for anyone involved in nursing, social work, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, general practice, health psychology, health economy, primary health care and the promotion of health. Online access is available to every issue from the last three years.

