

■ Somali Mental Health Project

The project will develop a culturally acceptable service which will build up knowledge within the Somali Community regarding mental health issues and support members in accessing mainstream mental health and other support services. The project is being delivered by the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust in association with the Somali Community and Cultural Centre.

■ Bullying Prevention Project

This operates in Regent's Park, Somers Town and the King's Cross and Brunswick wards and is dedicated to developing community based approaches and strategies to combating bullying and harassment among young people in public spaces. Camden and Islington Family Service Unit is developing the project and will link it to other services in the Youth Crime Initiative.

■ Youth Crime Initiative

In April 2002 an additional project strand was created to develop activities designed to combat crime and anti-social behaviour among children and young people aged 8-13. Already the project has delivered a successful programme of diversionary activities over the summer holidays and supported some of the most vulnerable children through the provision of key workers. Additional projects will be coming on stream during the current financial year.

Evaluation

Our Children's Consultation and Participation Officer is undertaking evaluations of the consultation process and its effect on the projects, and on the contribution of the summer schemes to the Youth Crime Initiative.

These will be available soon.



Children's Fund Partnership Information update



Summer Fun at Fusion (Inclusion Play Project)

Background

Camden Children's Fund Partnership was established in March 2001 with £2.4m allocated over 3 years by the Government's Children and Young People's Unit. Its initial brief was to identify and address gaps in preventative services for children aged between 5 and 13 and to encourage the development of a more holistic, case based, approach to the support of children among mainstream services.

Since then the fund has been enlarged and its brief expanded. This spring, we received an additional £500K over 2 years for work to prevent 8-13 year olds from becoming involved in crime and antisocial behaviour. The Annual Spending Review has set aside funding for work to continue to March 2006.

Membership and structure

The Partnership is a broad coalition of statutory, voluntary sector and community agencies, parents and children. The Working Group, which functions as the board, oversees the work of seven steering groups, each of which is responsible for one of the core projects delivered through the initiative. The Education Department is the Accountable Body, provides the current Chair and employs the Children's Fund Project Manager and other core staff.

Objectives

The Children's Fund has two key objectives which are to ensure that

- there is an agreed programme which picks up on early signs of difficulty, identifies children's needs and introduces children and their families to appropriate services
- children and young people who have experienced difficulties receive appropriate services in order to maximise the benefits they receive from education, health care and social services.

The philosophy underpinning the fund is that children, families and the voluntary sector need to be fully involved in service design and delivery in order to achieve a genuinely inclusive programme which is attractive and accessible to hard to reach groups. This aspect of the initiative has been carefully developed by Camden which undertook extensive consultations during the early stages of the programme. Through the Children's Participation Officer, we have been able to support the agencies delivering the projects in using client feedback as a basis for the refinement and extension of projects.

Consultations with clients are also being used by mainstream services to identify ways in which their current systems for identifying vulnerable children, handling interagency referrals and managing case files might be modified to deliver a more comprehensive support system within current budgets. This early work assisted the Local Authority in its successful bid to become a Pathfinder for the National Identification, Tracking and Referral Project which was launched recently.

Core Project Strands

In May 2001 six core projects were initiated to address identified gaps in the delivery of services. These are as follows;

- **Homeless Families Project**
Run through NCH, this project is providing children's support services and family support services to clients living in 25 hostels within Camden. The primary objectives are to ensure that the time they spend in temporary accommodation is used to strengthen them as families, build confidence and enable them to link up with mainstream support services.
- **Primary Schools Project**
The project is delivered through a partnership consisting of Coram Family, local statutory agencies and the schools themselves, currently Beckford, Brookfield and St Dominic's. It is developing methods for identifying early signs of difficulty in children and providing comprehensive support packages which can be delivered through close collaboration between agencies and sectors and function as a virtual organisation. The lessons learned through the project will also provide a model for such work in other primary schools and those secondary schools involved in the Behaviour Improvement Programme.
- **Fusion (Inclusive Play Project)**
Fusion provides holiday play and social activities for young people aged 11-13 who have physical disabilities, learning difficulties or health problems. The Play Service delivers the project and its aim is to build up the confidence of the young people involved and support them in making the transition to adolescence and more mature social activities.
- **Somali Supplementary Schools Project**
This provides direct grants to community based supplementary schools. It will build an association of supplementary schools to improve their sustainability and enhance the quality of the services they provide.