

Children's Participation and Rights Team

Newsletter

Spring 2010



Welcome to the first newsletter from the Participation and Rights Team. We've changed our name to make sure everyone knows that we are a children's rights service, as well as running participation activities and providing independent visitors and advocacy when young people need it. You'll find out more about us and what we do on the next pages.

The new Head of Children's Social Care says Hello

Hello there

My name is Pam Allen and I am the new Head of Service for Social Care. I am in charge of all the Social Worker teams who work with children and their families.



I have met some of our children and young people in care at events, starting with my own interview for this job.

I have been a social worker for a long time and although I know a lot about being in care there are always new things to learn.

I meet every week with my Management team and they tell me how things are going, what we need to pay attention to and what we have to change. We talk a lot about our children in care and things that we need to improve on.

If you have any comments that you want to make the Management team would really welcome that. You can either contact the participation and rights team or email me at pam.allen@eastriding.gov.uk or telephone on 01482 396404.

The newsletter is great, I get lots of news from it and the Pledge posters are well covered in our offices.

Have a good Easter break.

Have you seen our website?

There's loads of information on the Team's new website, www.rights4u.org.uk. Have a look around the site, find the 'Get in touch' page and send us an email to let us know what you think about the site.



What we do...

Children and young people in care



We come and visit all young people who become looked after by the council, make sure you know what is happening to you, give you information and advice on your rights and make sure you know who to talk to if you have a problem.

We run groups like the Children in Care Council who meet regularly to help make changes for all children in care, and also run the Independent Visitors scheme.

Young unaccompanied asylum seekers



The Participation and Rights Team is increasing its support for young asylum seekers, including those placed out of the East Riding.

Our information leaflets have now been translated into Dari and Pashto, and can be downloaded from the rights4u website.

Young people with disabilities



By working in partnership with the Disability Team and schools, the Participation and Rights Team helps to ensure that children and young people with a disability are able to make their views known, to influence decisions and to evaluate services.

Advocacy



Our advocacy service is about helping you to get your voice heard to get something stopped, started or changed.

Advocacy can help you with things like bullying, problems in your foster placement or children's home, difficulties with your social worker or other professionals, worries about contact with your family and a whole range of other things.

Staying safe



The Young People's Safeguarding Group (YPSG) has been formed to gather young people's views on issues to do with 'staying safe'. The group has links with the East Riding Safeguarding Children Board, and will focus on issues and projects raised by them, as well as pieces of work the young people wish to undertake.

Meet the Team



Jayne is the manager of the team. She makes sure all the different parts of the team are working properly and plans new areas of work.

Becky is a children's rights officer who works with young people who have a social worker, or who have a disability, or are from a minority group. She runs the YPSG and the anti-bullying workshop.



Donna is one of the children's rights assistants. She works with Gemma, mainly with looked after children and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. She is responsible for Viewpoint and accreditations.

Gemma is a children's rights officer and works primarily with young people in care, including acting as an advocate for them. She leads on the Independent Visitors scheme and the Children in Care Council.



John is the Team's part-time research assistant. He manages the rights4u website, evaluates the Team's events and activities, and carries out various pieces of research.

Karen is a part time Support Services Assistant. She looks after the administration for the team along with Kathy.



Kathy is a part time Support Services Assistant. She looks after the administration for the team along with Karen.

Kerry is one of the children's rights assistants. She works with Becky to help children and young people get involved in having their say.



Roscoe is an apprentice, working part-time with the Participation and Rights team and part-time with the Pathway Team. He sends out invitations to events to young people and delivers presentations to a variety of people.

Vicky is a third year social work student on placement with the team until June.



Reorganisation of Child Care Teams

What does it mean for young people in care?

Children's Social Care staff are planning a reorganisation of the Child Care Teams and the Family Support Teams, which will start in April.

There will be 14 teams:

- Ten Family Support Teams across the East Riding of Yorkshire
- Three Looked After Children Teams, including the Pathway Team
- The Children with Disability Team

This means there will be two new Looked After Children Teams. One will be based in Bridlington and the other one in Beverley. These two Teams will be responsible for all children in long term care from their 2nd review, if there is no plan for them to return home or be adopted in a relatively short time and they are not subject of continuing court proceedings

This will not affect those who are with the Pathway Team or children with the Children with Disability Team.

All the Teams should be in place by 12 April so discussions are starting now about any changes in Teams and social workers for young people in long term care.

We don't know yet which social workers will be in the Looked After Children Teams, but it does mean that some young people will have a change of social worker. We will make sure that this change is done properly and not rushed. If you are in long term care, your social worker will talk to you about any changes which will affect you and how and when the changes will happen.

The purpose of the new Teams is to ensure that young people in care have a good service from their social workers. We want the social workers who transfer into the Looked After Children Teams to understand what it is like to be looked after, to be good at listening to you and taking the right action on your behalf.

We believe that the new arrangements will help us to provide a better service for children and young people in care and are very much looking forward to starting up in April! We will also be asking you what you think of the changes in the future so do let us know.

