

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Gwasanaethau i blant sydd wedi bod mewn gofal: archwilio diwygio radical | Services for care experienced children: exploring radical reform

Ymateb gan Grwp Resilience CBC | Evidence from Grwp Resilience CBC

Before care: Safely reducing the number of children in the care system

Please outline a maximum of three top priorities for radical reform of services for safely reducing the number of children in the care system.

Priority 1

end 'potential future emotional harm' as a reason for removal

Train social workers at all levels with the importance of the child-parent bond and the harm done by damaging or destroying them. Ensure they know the likely impact on children removed from parents against parents will, by knowing the statistical results and meeting those removed as children.

end secrecy of meetings, nothing about parents without their presence. Allow them to choose their own representatives

unless there is evidenced of risk of immediate physical harm, do not remove children but put in place support packages with local organisations, family, people they trust.

Priority 2

Apologies for multiple top priorities. I do not know which single one will have the most impact.

A process of truth and reconciliation and repairing past damage must be started after ceasing causing more damage.

Priority 3

Open up the subject to public scrutiny. Ensure all people who deal with children, eg nhs, schools, family are aware of the looked after children process, why children may be removed, what happens to them and the parents when they are.

Train social workers to end the us and them mentality, where parents who are not compliant but are opinionated or angry are Othered and seen as not fit to parent because they do not fit in with the services plans or culture.

Adopt the mantra of support not separation. Keep the bonds alive so children know they have parents who love them, miss them and belong to them. Ensure both parents matter, also extended

family. Encourage parents to join self help organisations to learn from each other, learn parenting skills and wholesome lifestyles through providing the resources to achieve this.

In care: Quality services and support for children in care

Please outline a maximum of three top priorities for radical reform of services for children in care.

Priority 1

Total change of culture away from othering parents to cooperating and supporting them. So end removal using 'potential future emotional harm' as a reason, only remove if in imminent physical danger. In other cases a time away, or support or training is appropriate not ending the parent child relationship. Train social workers to understand the fundamental importance of parent child bonds and the consequences of breaking them, especially forcibly. No meetings about parents without them and their choice of representation. End the culture that regards disagreement with social workers demands and values as a threat to children, There are different cultures and values in our society, the values of social services is a mainstream but not the only one. Disagreement is no reason to remove children. Make services aware of what happens to children after removal, and to their parents to learn if they can live with these consequences.

Priority 2

Number one priority was end forcible separation except in cases if immediate serious physical danger and transform the culture. Number 2 is support, building, trusting, empowering local support and providing the resources needed. Social workers should be there to support and strengthen parents and their communities. If the community is raising the child this will remove much of the harm from damaged or isolated parents. Social workers should change their culture from rescuers of victims (which always requires an enemy, the perpetrator) to empowering friends, there to be honest and to do whatever is needed in the moment, be it the washing up, taking children for a walk talking to the rest of the family, helping clean the house. Be equals not superiors! And failing that simply pay the community to do this work, it will probably be cheaper.

Priority 3

Resource communities with skills, power, land, buildings so they become architects of their own improvement. The children should be empowered, encouraged and allowed to have a range of good adult friends including the social worker, talk through with them how to help improve their lives. Give communities land all around to work on, be immersed in nature, get out of the house, play, break the limitations of house, screen, shopping, build a diy culture so any problems can be sorted by those impacted by them, because they have the resources

After care: On-going support when young people leave care

Please outline a maximum of three top priorities for radical reform of the on-going support provided when young people leave care.

Priority 1

I know little to nothing about this. It is probably too late to undo the damage in many cases. Enable them to join a campaign to stop this happening to others, it may help them

Priority 2

Priority 3

Anything else

yes. Please arrange to come to Pembrokeshire to listen to organisations with many parents of looked after children,. They have formed self help organisation, and my own organisation works to empower them and their communities to be resilient to all challenges.
