

In it Together II: Redefining Value in Children's Services

Children's Services Development Group
in collaboration with Donald Hirsch

Edited by Gemma Stockwood

Origins of In it Together II: Redefining Value in Children's Services:

With pressure growing across public services to "do more with less", CSDG has been working to provide creativity in children's services policy – looking at solutions that will encourage better services that also provide value for money.

A growing sense of a need for partnership working between local authorities and children's services providers has inspired the development of this report.

A roundtable, jointly hosted with the Local Government Association has contributed to the policy ideas in this paper. The views of Directors

and Lead Members of Children's Services, think tanks and government officials from the Department for Education and HM Treasury have all fed in to its conclusions.

This is supplemented by the work of social policy expert, Donald Hirsch, who has drawn on his experience providing detailed socio-economic research for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, OECD and, formerly, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. Donald has analysed research and drawn conclusions about what will work best for children's services in a time of significant financial pressure.

No matter how 'efficient' you make a public service in monetary terms, if it does not solve the problem it is intended to, or does not achieve the desired outcomes, it is a poor use of public money.

[Demos – Getting more for less: efficiency in the public sector ¹](#)

¹ Demos, Getting more for less: efficiency in the public sector, http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Getting_more_for_less.pdf?1248779976

Foreword

by Baroness Councillor Shireen Ritchie

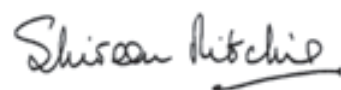
Parenting can be a tough job. However, most parents, despite their ups and downs, manage to raise happy, healthy and secure children who grow up able to play a positive role in society. As corporate parents, local councils seek to emulate this success. The aspiration is for each and every child they look after to have the security, support and schooling they need to reach their full potential and to lead happy and fulfilled lives, despite their earlier experiences.

But every parent will know that there are many factors that can, at times, make the job of bringing up children even more challenging. Pressures at work; tight household budgets; critical, absent or unsupportive partners; increased demands on our time; or a lack of physical and emotional support all contribute to a less-than-satisfactory experience of parenthood and family life. The same is also true in the corporate parenting context.

Recent years have seen a significant growth in the demand for local child protection services. Delays in the family court system have served to further exacerbate pressures already being felt in frontline children's services and have made it more difficult to intervene earlier in the lives of vulnerable and neglected children. Councils still struggle to recruit and retain experienced social workers, while negative media images and onerous central control and regulation have dented the confidence and damaged the morale of those remaining.

The recent Comprehensive Spending Review means that local government will have to find significant savings. While school budgets have been relatively protected, those for looked after children and child protection have not. In a time of scarce resources councils will be less able to divert money from elsewhere in their budgets or reserves to shore up these services as they have done in the past.

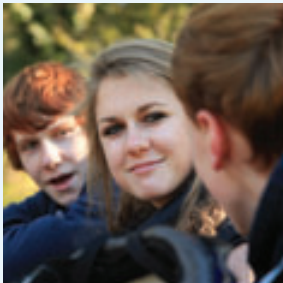
The sheer size of the savings required warrant nothing less than a radical rethink in the way that councils commission services; how and by whom they can be best delivered; and the extent to which they demonstrate the value of public investment in young lives. Like any good parent, we must focus firmly on what is best for the children and young people in our care. With providers, children, their families and the wider community, it is time to identify the pragmatic, decisive and timely interventions that not only reduce costs in the short term but, importantly, also improve outcomes for our children and young people in the longer term.



Chair of the Children and Young People Board,
Local Government Association

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Many thanks to: The Local Government Association, Marc Woolfson and Simon Darby for their help in producing this good practice guide.

Please note: All names of children within this document have been changed to protect their identities and pictures do not correspond to the children described in this report.

Introduction

Children with complex needs can and do develop into successful, stable adults.

However, in many cases looked after young people or those with SEN require the help of specialist services to enable them to make this transition.

We are writing this report with at a time when the public coffers are running dry.

At a time when local authorities are struggling to meet many competing demands, it is critical that we examine every part of our public services to ensure that they are delivering the best results in the most cost efficient way.

In it Together II: Redefining Value in Children's Services takes a new look at the needs of some of Britain's most vulnerable children, exploring how the independent sector can work with local authorities - from commissioning to transitions - to ensure that young people get the appropriate support, at the right time.

Investing wisely in services for vulnerable children can never be a false economy. This is because such an approach

pays two dividends: firstly, through diversion from negative situations such as welfare dependency, substance abuse, homelessness and criminality and secondly, through positive engagement with society, for example through increased employment and therefore tax revenues. CSDG believe that if we get the system right, we really can do 'more for less' - critical when ever more children are entering the social care system.

Given these escalating numbers, it becomes clear just how costly it can be - both for society and individual young people - if the right decisions about care and specialist education are not made early on. High levels of demand also highlight the need for a long term, sustainable view of how we can achieve the best outcomes for young people.

In it Together II aims to extend the partnership theme to examine how we define value in children's services, what can be considered 'good value' in achieving outcomes for children with complex needs and how service cost and quality are related.

We hope that you find this report to be a useful resource.

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About CSDG: CSDG is a policy coalition of eight leading providers of foster care, residential care and specialist education services.

Its members: Acorn Care and Education, Cambian Group, Foster Care Associates, Fostering Solutions, Hesley Group, National Fostering Agency, SENAD Group and Young Foundations collectively care for over 6800 children.

They have national coverage, working with the vast majority of local authorities, and together, to campaign for a child-centred and needs focused approach to children's services.

The CSDG vision is to place the wellbeing of each child at the forefront of policymaking and to deliver both value for money and excellent outcomes in a challenging public spending climate.

In it Together II: Redefining Value - The Vision

The premise of the *Redefining Value* project hinges on the principle that better services can be provided at less overall cost. In order to achieve this, we must examine the entirety of the care and special educational systems, viewing each stage - from commissioning to transitions - in the context of the whole.

This model will be strengthened if providers and local government can work together to develop a shared understanding of how this can be delivered.

The report focuses on four elements which combine to make an approach to children's services that will help generate both long and short term financial savings whilst, ultimately, helping young people to achieve.

These elements are:

1) **Early intervention** - With financial efficiency at the forefront of commissioners' minds, the temptation is to delay entry to care or specialist SEN provision to save money. However, putting off care proceedings or admission to special education is likely to lead to an intensification of need.

This will increase eventual cost for two reasons: a) the level of provision will need to be intensified in order to meet raised need and b) problems will become increasingly entrenched and deep-rooted and therefore harder to reverse.

Intervening early also means that services can be stepped down to a lesser level of intensity or, for some young people (depending on their background), they can even be returned home.

2) **Appropriate provision** - Demand for placements, carer shortages and special school closures, as well as a tendency for local authorities to prioritise use of generalist in-house services, has meant that some young people are not placed in the most appropriate provision to meet their needs.

The independent sector has been viewed as an expensive option; however, the bespoke services available are able to meet very specific need and reduce or eradicate it over time. Placing a child on the basis of cost alone can accelerate damage. Getting the placement decision right the first time, using the right kind of provision i.e. residential or foster care, can avoid placement breakdown and increased complexity.

Failure to place in necessarily intensive provision is a false economy due to the costs of placement breakdown or the increased fee for dealing with increasingly complex need.

3) **Avoiding placement breakdown** - Stable, secure placements are integral to achieving good outcomes for children with complex needs. Stability is a prerequisite for both educational and social development.

When a placement breaks down, the social cost - in terms of attachment disorder, disrupted education and intensification of needs - is huge and also acts as a catalyst for future costs in other services i.e. the justice or welfare system.

Placement breakdown also costs money in the short term. Indeed, it is estimated that each placement breakdown can cost an average of £20,000 in social work time, administration, case conferences and legal support.

Commissioning the appropriate care or education support at the right time can prevent placement breakdown. This is because needs are addressed and dealt with, creating a stable environment for continued progress to occur.

4) **A transition from care/to adult services** - The transition from childhood into adulthood is a critical period. If managed badly, the hard work and financial investment in children's services can be undone.

Increasing the role of step down services and enhancing communication around transitions is fundamental. However, arguably the most important factor is for *the transition from children's services to be viewed as a process and not an event* - with the transition managed and supported over time. This is necessary to ensure that young people are able to continue their journey to independence without the shock of a withdrawal of support as they enter adulthood.

This project aims to demonstrate that by linking value with outcomes, local authorities can invest strategically in care and education services that will have the most positive impact on the child. This can be achieved without incurring additional costs accrued through inappropriate placements, poor intensity of support or badly managed transitions.

From commissioning to transitions: the sector speaks

There is much creativity, foresight and expertise available in the children's sector, which was shared at a roundtable discussion jointly hosted by the CSDG and the Local Government Association – the conclusions of which have influenced the shape of the *In it Together II* project.

Below is a summary of some of the main challenges and solutions discussed at the event, including: the Spending Review, service demand, the tendering and commissioning process and the quality of the workforce.

The challenge:

The children's services sector is facing significant challenges.

The Spending Review saw the government announce 28% cuts to local authority funding.² It also announced the removal of the ring fence on Revenue Grant funding. Whilst spending on maintained schools is protected, children's social care services are not.

Both care admissions and diagnoses of SEN have continued to rise. There was a 6% increase in the number of children in care from 2009-10 and the number of Emergency Protection Orders rose by 32% between 2007 and 2009.³

The number of pupils with special educational needs in England also increased from c. 1.53 million (19% of) pupils in 2006 to approximately 1.69 million (21% of) pupils in 2010.⁴

More services, less resource:

This means that there are going to be more services competing for less resource and, it was in this context that Directors and Lead Members of Children's Services shared their thoughts on the most pressing matters facing the sector.

Optimism in adversity:

The backdrop to the following chapters is the sense from local government and providers that:

Whilst the current political environment may appear threatening, it can also be seen as an opportunity. The savings required by children's services departments herald the need for a transformation of local government service delivery.

Local government has shown its willingness to adopt a new direction, a characteristic that will be vital in the coming years.

Local authorities and service providers will need to work in

partnership to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for children and young people.

As one delegate said: "We need to push forward with partnership, using pilot schemes and flexible methods of working to determine what works".

However, this enthusiasm for innovation does not diminish the fact that there are real challenges facing the sector:

- 1) **Longitudinal studies** – The long term value of early, appropriate interventions has been under-researched. In recent years studies such as those conducted by Demos and the New Economics Foundation (covered in more detail later in the report) have made valuable headway in demonstrating the value of high quality children's services. However, detailed studies stretching into adulthood and spanning a range of services/outcomes would offer a helpful blue print for local authorities and providers seeking to provide the best support now.
- 2) **Tendering** – The speed with which commissioning occurs can often be very slow. The process of having to tender across broad definitions of need is a major factor slowing down this process and often stifles innovation and partnership working. For meaningful and effective partnerships between providers and local authorities to develop, reform of this process is paramount.
- 3) **Mapping Demand** – proposed changes to housing benefit and radical reforms to welfare mean that predicting likely demand for services is set to be problematic. With families moving between local authorities, it could also become increasingly difficult to address issues early on.
- 4) **Workforce** – The best care requires the best carers, who are equipped to do their jobs. Carers, social workers and teachers need to receive the best training and support to free them from bureaucracy and enable them to provide excellent care on the front line. Councils and independent providers can work together to ensure that the highest quality training and support is available.

With increased financial constraint has come the appetite for change and the sector is rising to the challenge of delivering more for less. The following chapters examine some of the starting points for redefining value in children's services.

² Spending Review, October 2010, http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sr2010_completereport.pdf

³ ADCS statistics, <http://www.adcs.org.uk/download/position-statements/april-10/adcs-sg-data-analysis-exec-summary.pdf>

⁴ Department for Education, Children with Special Educational Needs: An Analysis, October 2010, <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000852/index.shtml>

The bigger picture: examining whole-life costs

The cost of getting children's services wrong is astronomical – both now and in the future.

Evidencing poor outcomes:

- Children in care are 4-5 times more likely to have mental health issues than their peers
- Over 20% of women who leave care between the ages of 16 and 19 become mothers within a year compared to just 5% of the general population
- A third of homeless people were formerly in care
- 30% of children in custody have been in care
- 23% of the adult prison population has previously been in care⁵
- 14% of looked after children were unemployed the September after leaving school⁶
- Three-quarters of children who are excluded are identified as having SEN⁷
- Just 17% of those of working age with learning disabilities have a paid job⁸
- Children and young people with learning disabilities are 6 times more likely to have mental health problems than other young people⁹

However, getting it right in childhood can save the Exchequer and local authorities money and also dramatically improve whole-life outcomes for young people with complex needs. *'In it Together II'* demonstrates that:

Justice: If we can provide care placements that effectively meet need early on and are able to divert just 10% of the 19,373 young people whose care journey ends in prison, this could provide a saving of **£87,178,500 per year**.

Welfare: If better care interventions were able to help just 10% of the 3,500 young people who graduate from care to unemployment every year into education or a job, it could save the exchequer nearly **£20m (£19,705,000 in total)** each year.

Redefining Value demonstrates that if we view 'value' in the context of the whole life of a child with complex needs and provide timely and appropriately intensive interventions then we can make real financial savings.

The details above represent just a fraction of the cost to the economy of failing a vulnerable child but demonstrate that we could save **£100m** each year from diverting care leavers away from the prisons system or out of unemployment.¹⁰ In addition, investing in the right care for young people with special needs will save money for local authorities.

Adult Social Care: Enabling 10% of the 40,000 adults currently in residential care (2000 adults) to live, with support, in the community would save local authorities **£62,400,000** each year.

⁵ Centre for Social Justice, *Couldn't Care Less*, October 2008, <http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/client/downloads/Couldn%27t%20Care%20Less%20Report%20WEB%20VERSION.PDF>

⁶ DfE, *Outcome indicators for children looked after: twelve months to 30 September 2009*, England, <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000930/SFR08-2010.pdf>

⁷ Demos, *Ex Curricula*, http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Ex-curricula_-_web.pdf?1268925006

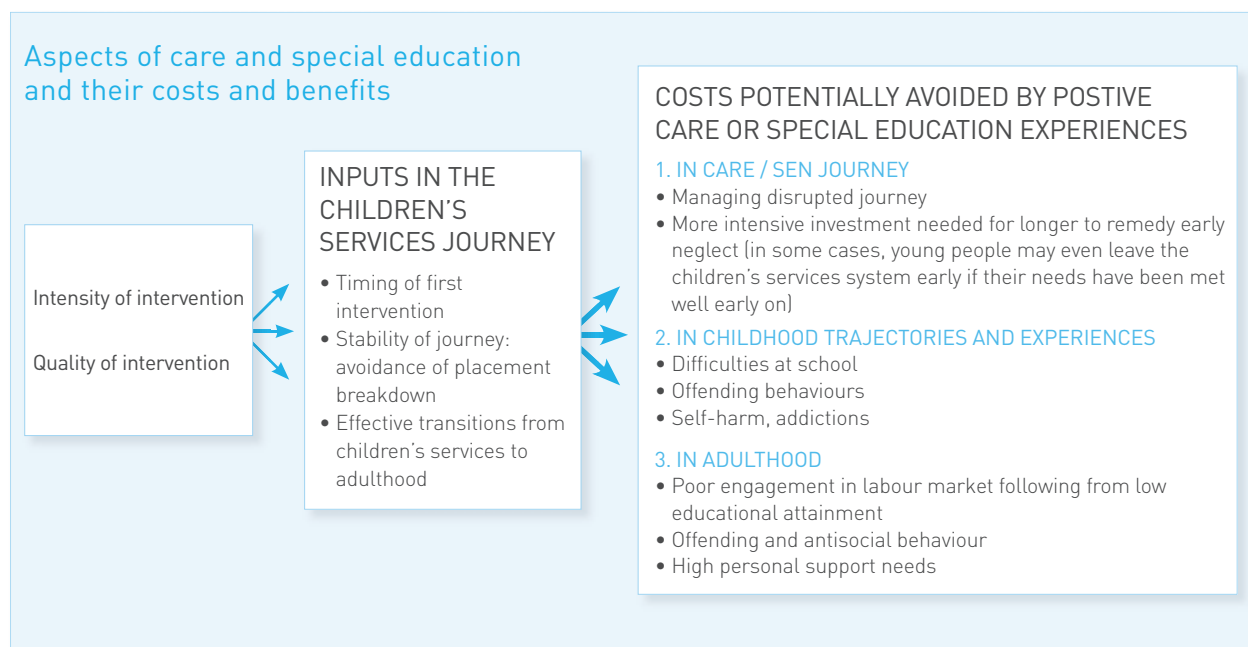
⁸ Foundation for People with learning Disabilities, *Statistics*, <http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/information/learning-disabilities-statistics/>

⁹ Foundation for People with learning Disabilities, *Statistics*, <http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/information/learning-disabilities-statistics/>

¹⁰ Please see later in the report for calculations

The bigger picture: examining whole-life costs continued

Given these statistics, the following diagram demonstrates how timely and high quality care and specialist educational provision can reverse these trends:



It should go without saying that a child's needs must remain central to the placing process. The left-hand side of the diagram shows the two factors that must be influenced by this information: intensity and quality (which should be high).

Selecting the right intervention applies at each stage of the care or SEN journey, as illustrated by the middle column.

The right hand side of the diagram demonstrates the consequences of failing to get these investments right and accounts for both short and long term costs. Avoiding short and long term offending behaviour, for example, will mean that the individual is better able to engage with society.

This will also save money. Below we highlight the potential savings government could make in just some of the areas of life where the right children's services interventions can affect young people's outcomes: criminal justice, unemployment, and Adult Social Care.

Justice

As of December 2009¹¹ there were 84,231 incarcerated adults in the UK. 23% of these prisoners was previously in care¹² – a total of 19,373. Given that the average cost of a prison place was £45,000 in 2008-09¹³, we can calculate that the cost to the prisons system of incarcerating care leavers in 2009 was £871,785,000.

If we can provide care placements that effectively meet need early on and are able to divert just 10% of the 19,373 young people whose care journey ends in prison, this could provide a saving of £87,178,500 per year.

If replicated across other areas such as welfare etc, the savings to be made across the whole life of a child with complex needs are significant.

In addition, avoiding the consequences of poor interventions stretching into adulthood (section iii of the diagram) does not only save money in terms of reduced use of justice or welfare budgets but also brings economic benefit through participation in the labour market.

¹¹ 2009 prison population statistic used to ensure consistency across calculations

¹² Centre for Social Justice, Couldn't Care Less, October 2008, <http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/client/downloads/Couldn%27t%20Care%20Less%20Report%20WEB%20VERSION.PDF>

¹³ Parliamentary Question, 25th March 2010, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100325/text/100325w0008.htm>

Adult Social Care

For young people with severe SEN, the quality of childhood care and the subsequent transition at the end of it can influence the level of personal support needed in adulthood. Young adults with severe SEN may never live completely independently. However, in many cases young people with complex needs can move to community based support in adulthood if they are given the right support to do so over a period of time. This has the potential to substantially reduce the cost of adult social care services.

As of 2007, 40,000 adults with learning disabilities were living in residential care, compared with 22,000 in supported living.¹⁴

The average unit cost to local authorities of a residential care placement is **£1200 per week** per person¹⁵ compared with c. **£900** for a supported living placement. This means that for each adult with learning disabilities who is able to live in the community, local authorities will save **£300 per week**, which adds up to **£15,600 per year** per adult.

As stressed before, some adults with learning difficulties may never be able to live independently; however by investing in appropriate children's services provision and through steady and supported transitions to enable even 10% of the 40,000 adults currently in residential care (4000 adults) to live, with support, in the community would **save local authorities £62,400,000** each year.

All of these outcomes have huge implications for the Exchequer, whether in terms of extra spending needed on services and benefits or taxes foregone from people with low lifetime earnings.

Unemployment

There are particularly high incidences of those who are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) amongst care leavers, 14% of whom were unemployed the September after leaving school.¹⁶ With 25,000 young people leaving care in 2009, this equates to c.3500 additional young people each year who are contributing to the UK's welfare bill.

The University of York has calculated that, on average, life-time public finance cost for one individual who becomes NEET is **£56,300**.¹⁷ This means that annually an extra **£197,050,000** is added to the state's bill based on care leavers becoming NEET.

Therefore, if better care interventions were able to help just 10% of the 3,500 young people who graduate from care to unemployment every year into education or a job, it could save the exchequer over **£19m (£19,705,000 in total)** each year.

Because of the far reaching impact of interventions in a child's life, it is crucial that the costs of caring for a young person with complex needs are considered in the context of their whole life. If investment in children's services means that a young person goes on to live independently, engaging positively with their community, the overall cost to the state over their life time may be significantly less than for someone with a cheaper but less effective care or special education journey.



¹⁴ Care Management Matters, The Future of Adult Learning Disabilities Care Provision, <http://www.mkbcare.org.uk/UserFiles/Adult%20learning%20disability%20care%20provision.pdf>

¹⁵ NHS information Centre, Personal Social Services Expenditure and Unit Costs England, 2008-09, http://www.ic.nhs.uk/webfiles/publications/009_Social_Care/pss0809exp/Final_PSSEX1_Report_2008-09_v1.9_03-11-10.pdf

¹⁶ DfE, Outcome indicators for children looked after: twelve months to 30 September 2009, England, <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000930/SFR08-2010.pdf>

¹⁷ Estimating the life-time cost of NEET: 16-18 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training, http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/spsw/research/neet/NEET_Executive_Summary_July_2010_York.pdf

Early Intervention, better outcomes?

Supported by a case study from the National Fostering Agency

Children who are only picked up by the care system after years of neglect or abuse are harder to help and may never escape the damage that has been caused early in their lives. The evidence shows clearly that children whose entry into care is delayed are more likely to have persisting emotional and behavioural difficulties and are less likely to find a stable and effective care placement.¹⁸ This is based both on observation of how individual children's lives develop and on contrasting outcomes among children entering care at different ages:

- Six out of ten children entering care do so because of abuse or neglect.¹⁹ Psychological research shows clearly that where this experience persists, children will suffer emotional damage, weakening the chance of forming future attachments.²⁰
- Less than one in five children entering care at age 0-4 demonstrates emotional and behavioural difficulties, compared to two-thirds of children entering care aged 5-10.²¹
- In a study of 130 children in the care system over 7 years, it was found that for those with the least stable placements, the odds of not being adopted rose by a factor of 1.5 with every year of age that they entered care.²²

The following case study illustrates the complexity of need that can arise through failure to identify and address abuse and neglect early on:



National Fostering Agency Case Study - "Consequences of failing to intervene early":

Jamie and his brother grew up in a violent and neglectful home, with no father. Their mother had a series of different partners throughout their childhood – some of whom were violent.

Instances of maternal substance misuse and aggression were not identified and eventually Jamie's mother ended up serving a prison sentence after being convicted jointly with a violent partner of killing Jamie's older brother.

By the time Jamie was identified as needing a care placement, he was delayed by approximately 4 years in all areas of his development and had wide ranging and complex needs including poor personal hygiene, a 2 year absence from education and unprocessed grief from his sibling's death. Jamie's unmet need was such that his behaviour was almost unmanageable.

This meant that Jamie needed an intensive foster care placement and would also require external support including a therapist and extra educational support to help him to re-engage with school.

Jamie was placed with an expert and well trained foster couple: Pete and Catherine, with Catherine viewing foster care as her full time job. NFA provided many courses for the couple to help address Jamie's specific needs and Catherine undertook an NVQ qualification to ensure that they were best placed to support him.

With intensive support from therapists and social workers coupled with Pete and Catherine's commitment to including Jamie in everyday family life, alongside their birth children, he was able to address some of the emotional and physical consequences of the abuse he had suffered.

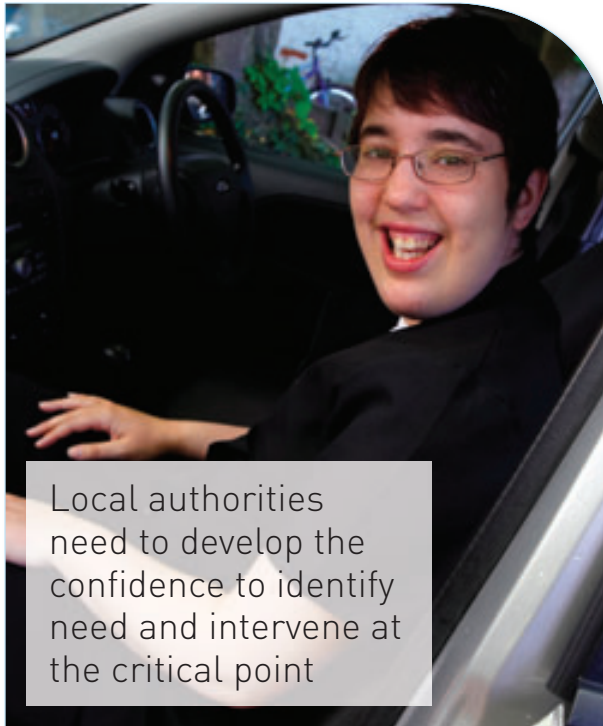
¹⁸ Hannon, C., Wood, C. and Bazalgette, L. (2010), In Loco Parentis, Demos, http://www.demos.co.uk/files/In_Loco_Parentis_-_web.pdf?1277484312

¹⁹ Hannon, C., Wood, C. and Bazalgette, L. (2010), In Loco Parentis, Demos, http://www.demos.co.uk/files/In_Loco_Parentis_-_web.pdf?1277484312

²⁰ Monck, E, Reynolds, J and Wigfall, V (2003), The Role of Concurrent Planning: Making permanent placements for young children (London: British Association for Adopting and Fostering).

²¹ Sempik, J, Ward, H and Darker, I, 'Emotional and behavioural difficulties of children and young people at entry to care', Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry 13, no 2, (2008), 221-33.

²² Selwyn, J, Frazer, L and Quinton, D, 'Paved with good intentions: the pathway to adoption and the costs of delay', British Journal of Social Work 36 (2006) 561-76.



Local authorities need to develop the confidence to identify need and intervene at the critical point

However, this was not an easy path and there were setbacks, such as a period of cannabis misuse, which required specific and tailored input from his carers.

The consistency and intensity of the interventions enabled Jamie to regularly attend school and complete his GCSEs, moving on to college to complete a vocational course in hospitality.

Jamie left care at 18 and successfully moved into independence. He hopes to become a restaurant chef. However, if Jamie's abusive home situation had been identified earlier, his need would have been less severe and the intensity of the care intervention and therefore the cost to the local authority could have been reduced.

Jamie's case study illustrates both the damage caused by delayed intervention and also the positive outcomes of the intervention once commissioned. In this case, identifying Jamie's needs and acting sooner may have prevented him missing out on education and avoided the grief and problems with relationships that he experienced.

Had this been the case, a much less intensive care placement would have been necessary and, most importantly, Jamie would have been less damaged.

Local authorities need to develop the confidence (and willingness) to identify need and intervene at the critical point. The most innovative are attuned to this need, however, with finances limited, providers will need to help authorities to feel confident about making these investments. Part of this includes the ability to robustly demonstrate that any earlier or more intensive intervention provided will be effective. This will improve relationships within the sector and enable local government to plan better for the long term.

Think tank, the New Economics Foundation, has researched the benefits of early intervention in children's services, with compelling results:

QUANTIFYING THE IMPACT: EARLY INTERVENTION

IMPACT: FOR EVERY £1 SPENT ON SERVICES TO CATCH PROBLEMS EARLY, SOCIETY COULD BENEFIT BY BETWEEN £7.60 AND £9.20.²³

HOW WAS THIS CALCULATED? THESE TWO FIGURES ARE EXAMPLES OF CALCULATED SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM TWO EARLY INTERVENTION PROJECTS. IN ONE CASE, THE BIGGEST BENEFIT CAME FROM SAVINGS ON REPEATED FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS; IN THE OTHER FROM REDUCED RISK OF CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR.

INTERPRETATION: THE SIGNIFICANT RETURN ON INVESTMENT CITED BY THIS STUDY DEMONSTRATES THE CAPACITY FOR EARLY INTERVENTION TO PRODUCE A FINANCIAL BENEFIT OF BETWEEN 7 AND 9 TIMES THE INITIAL INVESTMENT.

²³ New Economics Foundation (2009), Backing the Future – Why Investing in Children is Good for us All

The right placement at the right price

Supported by case studies from the Cambian Group and Foster Care Associates

Children who are cared for in settings that do not fully meet their needs may be cheaper to look after in the short term but more expensive in the longer term. Early intervention is critical but it must be built upon: it is not just a question of when a child first has contact with special education or the care system but also what kind of intervention is selected at the point of entry.

This case study from the Cambian Group illustrates this point:



Cambian Case Study - "Intensive intervention to reduce long term care ratios"

Rosie has severe learning difficulties arising from an autistic spectrum disorder. She was non-communicative and still wearing nappies at age nine and her challenging behaviour included screaming, violent outbursts and smearing and throwing faeces. This behaviour meant that she had to be kept apart from other young people and transported in a wheelchair or a buggy.

The local authority had placed Rosie in a maintained special day school where she required 1:1 care in a small, isolated room. However, this provision was not sufficiently intensive to meet Rosie's needs and her family became unable to provide the care that she needed outside of school hours.

Rosie's family fought for her to be placed in residential provision and she was placed in a Cambian school at age 9, where a holistic programme of care, education and therapy was developed and implemented. Using the PECS system for communication and a positive rewards approach, Rosie's self esteem and communication improved.

Within a year she was toileting appropriately, walking everywhere, travelling in cars without a special harness and communicating with the use of symbols. Time spent with her family had also improved and they were able to have a Christmas tree and decorations at home for the first time in 10 years.

Upon arrival at Cambian, Rosie's needs had been so severe that she required 1:1 support through the night at an additional cost to the local authority of £30,000 per year. After 12 months of intensive support, this cost was eliminated.

In many instances, intensive support for a limited period can dramatically reduce the level of intervention required in the longer term, and consequently the cost. This study also further illustrates the disadvantages of delaying intensive support for young people, as well as the positive outcomes that can be achieved once that support is commissioned.

There is also a much broader benefit to be found in the long term impact of care settings that young people feel positive about.

The New Economics Foundation has worked with children and professionals to assess these benefits. They have found that service users themselves are convinced that care that provides them with security and stability rather than a system that is constantly "messing them around" will contribute not just to their emotional well-being but also to the contribution that they can make to society.

The following example further demonstrates the value of intensive interventions:

QUANTIFYING THE IMPACT: INVESTING IN QUALITY

IMPACT: FOR EVERY £1 INVESTED IN HIGHER QUALITY RESIDENTIAL CARE, BETWEEN £4 AND £6.10 WORTH OF ADDITIONAL SOCIAL VALUE IS GENERATED.²⁴

HOW WAS THIS CALCULATED? THESE ARE BASED ON COMPARING TWO ESTIMATES OF COSTS WITH PROJECTED BENEFITS OF PLACEMENTS. THE NEW ECONOMICS FOUNDATION WORKED WITH RESIDENTS AND STAFF FROM THESE HOMES TO ANALYSE OUTCOMES. THESE INCLUDE EXTRA RISKS OF CRIME, ILL HEALTH, ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, DRUG ABUSE AND EARLY DEATH.

INTERPRETATION: THE ANALYSIS CALCULATED THAT ACROSS THE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN THIS KIND OF PROVISION COULD POTENTIALLY SAVE £700 MILLION OVER 20 YEARS. THIS IS AN INDICATIVE FIGURE, SHOWING THAT LARGE SOCIAL SAVINGS ARE AT STAKE.

²⁴ New Economics Foundation, 2009 A False Economy –How failing to invest in the care system for children will cost us all

Encouraging diversity of provision within the sector is essential, to ensure that young people and their families can be secure and that there will be a place available to meet each individual's needs.

Balancing the requirement for both appropriate and also intensive interventions is paramount in ensuring progress for each individual child, as evidenced by this case study from Foster Care Associates:



**Foster Care Associates Case Study -
"Step-down services: meeting needs
and minimising cost"**

Dylan's severe autism and challenging behaviour had led to a break down in his relationship with his parents and they felt that they had lost control.

Dylan had been placed in a residential unit for 18 months at a cost of c. £300,000 but his outbursts were becoming more extreme and it was clear that while he needed intensive support, a family environment would be more appropriate for managing his needs.

After much searching by the local authority, a placement was commissioned with FCA carers, Graham and Nancy, who had the experience and qualifications necessary to support Dylan. Given his difficult behaviour, FCA worked with the carers and Dylan to ensure that changes to his routine were carefully managed.

Graham and Nancy visited Dylan in his school environment, observing his patterns and behaviour and meeting staff. Graham also stayed overnight in the unit and Dylan had short respite stays with his new carers in order to help him to acclimatise. When the full time foster placement began, Dylan remained at his school to ensure continuity. This placement would cost c. £110,000 over an 18 month time period.


Ensuring that Dylan was placed in the right provision: intensive but personalised, has allowed him to flourish and, with extra support from FCA such as additional day help in school holidays, he has achieved personal education targets and taken part in bike riding, swimming and walking as a way of using up his energy.

By finding the right provision for Dylan and ensuring that it was at the right level of intensity to meet his needs, he has now been able to settle into a stable, secure family life and the hope is that he will move on to independence.

The intensive foster placement produced a financial saving of c. £190,000 over an eighteen month period and demonstrates the value of intensive but well matched placements in both saving money and producing excellent outcomes.

Both Dylan and Rosie's stories illustrate that the best outcomes are achieved when placements are tailored to the child – at the right level of intensity to meet their needs. For Rosie, stepping up the services to include residential support was necessary for her to flourish, whereas in Dylan's case a family setting was more appropriate. Managing the transitions to new services is crucial – whether to more or less intensive provision, so that young people are able to assimilate and cope with changes.

If the principle of appropriate intensity is followed, it not only creates a better placement for the child, it also means that there is a greater chance of other children receiving the support that they need – for example, with Rosie's day school place vacant, another child with more moderate needs could benefit from the facilities that were not suitable for her.



Encouraging diversity of provision is essential to ensure that a place is available to meet each individual's needs

From stability to success: the value of stable placements

Supported by case studies from Young Foundations and Acorn Care and Education

One of the most costly aspects of the care and SEN systems is placement breakdown.

A third of children in care experience a failure of their placement within 2 years, an alarmingly high rate. Each failed placement carries an average cost of c. £20,000 in social work time, case conferences and administration alone.²⁵ This figure does not account for the emotional, social, health or educational cost to the child and the longer-term impacts to society of the disruption that placement breakdown causes.

This case study from Young Foundations illustrates the value of finding a stable placement as well as the damage that can arise from placement breakdown. It also illustrates how fragile successes can be and the need for sustained support into adulthood.



Young Foundations Case Study - "Multiple Placement Breakdowns..."

Freddie came into the care system having been sexually abused. He felt a deep sense of betrayal after close family members turned a blind eye and he resorted to self-harm and significant aggression towards others to cope.

At 14 years of age, Freddie had experienced multiple placement breakdowns across the spectrum of care provision including foster and residential care and unsuccessful attempts to return him to his mother.

Although it was clear when he first entered the care system that his needs were complex, he was placed in a series of lower-cost, less intensive placements. With each placement breakdown, there were exceptional costs to the local authority, both in administration, legal and social work fees and also through commissioning a more intensive placement.

The human costs to the foster carers and local authority residential home staff can be measured by those who resigned after trying to care for him. The cost to Freddie was a series of rejections, and a reinforcement of his negative image of himself and others.

Eventually, Freddie was placed in a Young Foundations residential children's home at the age of 14 where he received intensive clinical, social and educational care. Freddie continued to harm himself for several months and staff, led by a trained psychologist, showed great patience and consistency.

This approach helped Freddie to stabilise his behaviour and he showed signs of significant progress – sitting GCSEs, joining a local running club and learning to show social warmth.

Freddie had a plan to leave care at 17, with outreach support. However, expenditure cutbacks in his local authority led to the termination of the placement when he was 16.

Freddie was returned home and within two weeks he was homeless, claiming benefits, and hurting others.

One of the most socially and financially costly aspects of the care and SEN system is placement breakdown



²⁵ CSDG estimate

Freddie's example highlights the negative impact of repeated placement breakdown and emphasises the false economy of placements made purely on the basis of cost. Local authorities are facing a tough task but Freddie's story effectively demonstrates that spot decisions based purely on price will often accrue greater expense as a consequence.

Research also shows that placement stability is closely linked to educational outcomes. This is not surprising given that disrupted care can often mean disrupted schooling. Children with unstable care experiences do worse on average in all measures of educational participation, including truanting and exclusions and make less educational progress than those in stable settings.²⁶

However, as the next case study illustrates, poor educational outcomes do not have to be synonymous with care and SEN:



Acorn Case Study - "Avoiding the 'NEETs' label"

Damien joined an Acorn school in Year 9, having been permanently excluded from another residential SEBD school. Damien has many complex needs that prevented him from engaging with education, such as a history of challenging staff authority and making unfounded accusations of staff who attempted to manage him. He also consistently threatened violent behaviour.

Care staff engaged skilfully with Damien and, with much patience, saw him begin to interact positively with adults. Dealing with Damien's attachment issues was critical in helping him to understand the value of education.

In Year 11, Damien turned a corner and, with ongoing support to help him manage his issues with physical intimidation, (a particular problem, given his large size) he began to understand the benefits of attempting to obtain qualifications that reflected his abilities.

As a result, the school was able to engage Damien in positive work as part of a broad curriculum, equipping him



to demonstrate patience, persistence and consistency, whilst enjoying the variety necessary for his specific needs.

This approach paid off and in summer 2010, Damien was awarded six GCSEs: two grade Bs, two C grades and two at grade D.

He has also attained the Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award, various sporting awards and outdoor education awards including climbing, canoeing, and sailing.

Damien has been inspired by his academic success, through the dedicated support of his carers and is now studying A Levels at a regional FE College.

Without Acorn's intervention it is likely that Damien would not have engaged successfully with the education system, and his behaviour, if unchecked, would likely have resulted in interventions from the criminal justice system.

²⁶ Biehal, N et al, Characteristics, Outcomes and Meanings of Three Types of Permanent Placement: Adoption by strangers, adoption by carers and long-term foster care (York: University of York, 2009).

Young people falling out of education and employment create one of the biggest costs to the UK government. Charity Catch 22 estimate that jobseekers allowance for unemployed 18-24 year-olds costs almost **£21m a week**.²⁷ The reality is that unemployment in the late teens can easily continue into the 20s and beyond.

Consequently, based on observed trajectories of individuals throughout young adulthood, it has been estimated that over a ten year period a generation of 16-18 year olds who are NEET today could cost the Exchequer around **£10 billion** in lost taxes and extra benefits – over ten times the current annual cost.²⁸

There are particularly high incidences of NEET amongst care leavers, 14% of whom were unemployed the September after leaving school.²⁹ With 25,000 young people leaving care in 2009, this equates to c.3500 additional young people each year who are contributing to the UK's welfare bill.


The University of York has calculated that, on average, life-time public finance cost for one individual who becomes NEET is **£56,300**.³⁰ This means that annually an extra

£197,050,000 is added to the state's bill based on care leavers becoming NEET.

Therefore, if better care interventions were able to help just 10% of the 3,500 young people who graduate from care to unemployment every year into education or a job, it could save the exchequer over **£19m (£19,705,000 in total)** each year.

These financial savings also extend to SEN, with York University research highlighting that for just one young person with autism a life time welfare saving of **£218,000** could be achieved by delivering an early diagnosis, suitable support through education and into adulthood.³¹

Placement breakdown is also associated with poor mental health. The evidence shows clearly that having mental health and behavioural issues on entering care exacerbates the risk of breakdown. The extent to which disrupted care itself causes mental health issues is harder to measure, but there is no doubt that it has an effect, irrespective of the previous mental health of the child.³²



Care leavers becoming NEET cost the economy an additional **£197m** each year

²⁷ Catch 22 Report, Ready or Not, <http://www.catch-22.org.uk/pages/download.asp?d=843>

²⁸ Godfrey, C., Hutton, S., Bradshaw, J., Coles, B., Craig, G. and Johnson, J. (2002) Estimating the cost of being 'not in education, employment or training' at age 16-18, DFES Research Report No 346, London: DFES.

²⁹ DfE, Outcome indicators for children looked after: twelve months to 30 September 2009, England, <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000930/SFR08-2010.pdf>

³⁰ Estimating the life-time cost of NEET: 16-18 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/spsw/research/neet/NEET_Executive_Summary_July_2010_York.pdf

³¹ Estimating the life-time cost of NEET: 16-18 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/spsw/research/neet/NEET_Executive_Summary_July_2010_York.pdf

³² Hannon et al, op cit, p91, Ward, W, Holmes, L and Soper, J, Costs and Consequences of Placing Children in Care London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2008).

Securing good transitions for adult success

Supported by a case study from the Hesley Group

It is essential that excellent children's services are not undermined by poorly managed transitions.

Much of the fallout of badly managed care comes in adult life and the way in which a young person's transition from children's to adult services is managed is vital in determining adult success.

Some key aspects of leaving care that influence later outcomes are:

- **The age of transition:** Those who leave care or move to adult services at 16 are much less likely to do well in working life than those who leave later.³³
- **Whether the transition is sudden or a gradual, managed process:** Young people are less effective at coping with life changes i.e. moving house, leaving school, getting a job; if they all occur simultaneously.³⁴
- **Adequate preparation and support:** Preparing both looked after young people and those with SEN for the transition that they are about to make is critical. Good communication is essential and support to helping a young person to find and adapt to suitable accommodation can make all the difference.
- **Psychological support** – Mental health support is also important. One study found that the number of care leavers with mental health issues doubled in the first nine months after leaving care.³⁵

This case study from the Hesley Group illustrates the impact of poorly managed transitions:



Hesley Group Case study - the Importance of Well-Managed Transitions

John has severe autism and displays complex, challenging and self-harming behaviour. He has severe learning difficulties and was consequently placed with the Hesley Group at age 12.

Over the following 7 years he was helped to access the community and make home visits without previous problems such as property damage and parental distress.

As John approached 18, Hesley felt that an intensive adult placement would be necessary to continue to meet his needs, which could be stepped down over time – not least because he still required 1:1 care.

However, the placing local authority decided that John would be moved to a cheaper, less intensive setting near to his parents' home. Unfortunately, the service was unable to cope with John's challenging behaviour.

A number of placement breakdowns followed where John's needs were greater than the commissioned provision was able to cope with and, eventually, he was physically abused.

At this point, John was readmitted to Hesley, at the request of his parents. The only other option was a secure unit. John's behaviour had regressed to the damaging levels displayed when initially admitted to Hesley and he required a 2:1 care ratio.

By settling for an option that appeared to offer an upfront cost saving, the investment made in John's care over his childhood was wasted and the local authority faced an additional cost of £50,000 over 2 years. This also caused great emotional distress to John and his parents.

With care transitions, as elsewhere in the system, there is a risk that taking shortcuts to save money will bring larger costs later on. While these will not fall on children's services budgets, the cost to the public purse can be high.

It is critical that post-16 transitions are seen as a process rather than an event. Adequate preparation should mean that if intensiveness of support is to be reduced it can be managed over time, rather than creating a cliff edge where support is suddenly removed at great detriment to the young person and cost to the local authority.

Managing transitions well also pays dividends in terms of encouraging young care leavers to become independent adults, contributing to society.

If transitions are not adequately supportive, there is a danger that young people will be ill-equipped to engage with further education or employment, becoming NEET. This will have an obvious effect on future economic and social prospects.

It is perhaps essential at transition, more than any other point in the care journey for there to be good communication and relationships between service providers and the local authority. Realistic discussions about a child's needs can ensure a smooth journey into adulthood as they are met by well informed providers and decisions are influenced by those who know the young person best.

³³ Dixon, J et al, Young People Leaving Care: A study of costs and outcomes, report to the Department for Education & Skills (York: University of York, 2006).

³⁴ ESRC, Tracking Care Leavers as They Move to Independence (Swindon: Economic and Social Research Council, 2003).

³⁵ Dixon et al, op cit

Measuring outcomes to demonstrate value

Supported by a case study from the SENAD Group

If we are to get the best out of public services it is also critical that we are able to demonstrate their value – through effective, clear and simple measurement of the outcomes delivered.

In children's services this is difficult because national indicators such as GCSE results are often poor reflections of the progress made by young people with complex needs.

A child with severe SEN may be unable to sit exams, or a young person may have missed several years of education upon entering the care system. In this context, significant progress may include engaging with other pupils in the class room or simply attending school consistently.

Measuring progress is critical in demonstrating the value of a care or special educational placement, as evidenced by the following case study from the SENAD Group:



SENAD Group Case Study - "Measuring outcomes to demonstrate the value of early intervention"

Harry came to one of SENAD's schools at age 10 as his parents were unable to cope with his complex needs and severe autism. Previously he had been educated in a day placement at a local authority special school, with limited respite for his parents.

The full funding of c. £200,000 for the 52 week SENAD placement was agreed at a tribunal as the local authority was reluctant to pay for independent provision.

At SENAD, Harry was able to develop well and, over time, showed progress in both verbal and non-verbal skill areas, for example: learning to open and maintain conversations as well as making steps towards taking care of his personal appearance.

This progress was measured consistently through use of CASPA, a progress measurement tool. CASPA focuses on all academic subjects up to level 8 and also personal and social development and allows this progress to be benchmarked against achievements across local authority areas or within the school.

Use of CASPA is also supplemented by other valuable measurements, for example through individual Education and also Communication Plans, which set targets and

examine achievements in education and speech and language therapy.

3 years into the successful placement, Harry's parents moved home, taking them outside of the placing local authority's boundary. This led to confusion over which council should fund Harry's placement. During this period, Harry's school fees were not being paid.

Eventually it was decided that the parents' new local authority would be responsible for the costs of Harry's care and they wanted to conduct a new SEN assessment. The authority expressed a wish to place Harry in its own provision, rather than the independent placement in which he was succeeding.

However, the dedication to both excellent care provision and careful recording of Harry's progress enabled SENAD to successfully demonstrate the good value of the placement, both in financial and social terms, showing that Harry was settled well and learning to control his behaviour.

The local authority was able to see the value of the existing placement, and also the disproportionate cost that might arise from disruption of Harry's care and he remained in SENAD provision.

Harry continues to make good progress.

Ultimately, this approach can save the local authority money through consistently and expertly meeting needs in a long-term stable, placement that demonstrably produces good outcomes.

As Harry's case study shows, consistently measuring progress allows all concerned in planning care to be aware of trends and changes and to adapt care or education plans accordingly.

Good monitoring of achievements and setbacks enables care to be appropriately tailored and, in many cases, this model allows young people with severe behavioural needs to live and work in a group environment rather than relying on 1:1 care. At a time when local authorities are financially strained, good outcomes monitoring can help local government know that providers are delivering what they promise and can ensure that new steps towards partnership working keep the child at the centre.

Balancing the books and delivering better children's services go hand in hand: Recent evidence

The case studies above demonstrate that cost savings can be made – without detriment to outcomes – at every stage of the care and SEN systems: from commissioning to transitions.

Equally, a child whose entry to specialist care or educational provision is delayed too long may experience emotional damage with a lifelong impact. At the other end of the journey, a young person who has managed to overcome many of their difficulties through the right kind of care or special education may end up being badly damaged by a mishandled transition out of children's services.

Calculating the true cost of differing care and special education journeys is difficult – not least because of the resilience and reactions of individual young people.

However, one recent study by think tank Demos has compared the value of a good and a bad care journey:



QUANTIFYING THE IMPACT: FINANCIAL SAVINGS

DEMOS DREW CONCLUSIONS BASED ON A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, COMPARING THE OUTCOMES FOR A CHILD WHO HAS HAD A PERSISTENTLY UNSATISFACTORY CARE JOURNEY - WITH LATE ENTRY, MULTIPLE PLACEMENTS AND A POORLY MANAGED TRANSITION - WITH ONE WHOSE JOURNEY WAS WELL MATCHED, SUPPORTED AND STABLE.³⁶

DEMOS FOUND THAT WHEN THE CRITICAL FACTORS OF THE CARE JOURNEY: EARLY INTERVENTION AND MINIMUM DELAY, STABILITY DURING CARE AND SUPPORTED TRANSITIONS TO INDEPENDENCE ARE IN PLACE, YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BETTER OUTCOMES AND COST THE SYSTEM DRAMATICALLY LESS IN TOTAL.

"THE CHILD WITH THE 'SUCCESSFUL' CARE JOURNEY WOULD COST THE STATE £352,053 OVER A 14-YEAR PERIOD, WHILE THE UNSTABLE CARE JOURNEY COST £393,579 OVER A 7-YEAR PERIOD (A DIFFERENCE OF £41,526)."

EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, BY GETTING A GOOD EDUCATION AND EVENTUALLY A GOOD JOB, RATHER THAN LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY AND SPENDING TIME OUT OF WORK, THE CHILD WITH A SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENT COSTS THE STATE £90,000 LESS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 16 AND 30.

THIS EXAMPLE HIGHLIGHTS TWO KINDS OF RETURN ON INVESTMENT IN GOOD QUALITY CARE:

- 1) **IMMEDIATE COSTS** – THE STABLE CARE JOURNEY COST LESS IN THE SHORT TERM THROUGH AVOIDANCE OF PLACEMENT BREAKDOWN AND STEP UP SERVICES. THIS MEANS THAT OVER THE PERIOD WHILE A CHILD IS IN CARE THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS TO BE MADE FROM ADOPTING A STRATEGIC APPROACH
- 2) **WHOLE LIFE COSTS** - THESE TWO JOURNEYS ALSO PRODUCE VERY DIFFERENT FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL COSTS OVER THE LONGER TERM - BOTH FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED AND FOR SOCIETY. DEMOS FOUND THAT THE COST OF PAYING BENEFITS TO AN UNEMPLOYED CARE LEAVER CAN ADD APPROXIMATELY A QUARTER TO THE INITIAL COST OF CARING FOR THE CHILD.

THIS IS COMBINED WITH THE ADDITIONAL STRAIN PLACED ON MENTAL HEALTH, CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND ADDICTION SERVICES AS THE RESULT OF POOR CARE JOURNEYS THAT ARE MUCH HARDER TO PIN DOWN, BUT ARE ALSO LIKELY TO BE SIGNIFICANT.

³⁶ Hannon et al, op cit

Conclusions and Recommendations

In it Together II has clearly demonstrated that adopting a strategic and creative approach to care and special education – through early and appropriately intensive interventions – can create millions of pounds of savings for local and national government.

With public resources scarce, it makes economic sense to adopt a radical approach and, despite the budgetary pressures facing all public services, CSDG hope that *In it Together II* has demonstrated that saving money and delivering the best care and special education do not have to be mutually exclusive.

In testing times, children's services providers must work with local authorities to ensure that the care and special education systems are operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Whilst the public spending climate could be seen to be a threat in many ways, the *Redefining Value* project demonstrates that there is real opportunity for a creative, new and collective approach to children's services.

By finding the right combination of timely and stable interventions, that can potentially be stepped down as progress is made, young people can be equipped to succeed.

We also hope that we have shown that academic achievement and increased independence are not impossible to deliver consistently – even for some of the most damaged children.

However, this good work is fragile and can be easily undermined through a poor approach to transitions from children's services. It is vital that we begin to think carefully about the practicalities of transitions so as to avoid stories like those of the young people featured in this report being repeated.

The value of outcomes measurement is also critical in ensuring that limited resource is directed in the best way and providers must increasingly be prepared to demonstrate the results that they are able to achieve for the young people in their care.

In the light of our findings, we would recommend the following:

- 1) Challenging public spending circumstances can and should be seen as an opportunity for innovation, rather than for arbitrary price reductions that do not carry reform to the care and special education systems.
- 2) Commissioners and providers must work together to assess the needs of children, determine available resource and ensure that children are placed at the critical time. Delaying entry to care or SEN provision will lead to an intensification of need and greater cost in both short and longer term.
- 3) Focusing on putting young people in the placement that is most appropriate to them will reduce the burden on the system. It will also help children's services departments produce better overall outcomes and reduced lifetime costs as individual placements are more successful.
- 4) Providers must be accountable to the local authorities that they work with to demonstrate that they achieve promised results for young people.
- 5) Payment by results could also be applied so that children's services departments are also offered extra funding if young people successfully make the transition to adulthood, with reduced cost to other public services.
- 6) Transitions from care and special education are critical and this is an area that needs urgent attention in order to avoid throwing away financial investment and real developmental gains made over the course of a childhood.
- 7) Better research must be conducted into the longitudinal value of early, intensive, intervention, which as a model could save local authorities significant amounts both in the short and long term.



Thank you for reading *In it Together II: Redefining Value in Children's Services*.

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December 2010

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