



PLANT YNG NGHYMRU
CHILDREN IN WALES

MINUTES of Cross Party Group (CPG) for Children & Families 29 November 2023, 10.30am to 11.30am

Attendees & Apologies List

Cross Party Group Children & Families		
Date: 29 November 2023; 10.30am – 11.30am		Venue: Ty Hywel & online via Teams
Organiser: Sean O’Neill, Policy Director, Children in Wales & Jane Dodds, MS		
Name	Organisation	Email
Jane Dodds MS	Senedd Cymru	
Rhys Taylor	Senedd Cymru	
Sioned Williams MS	Senedd Cymru	
Phoebe Jenkins	Senedd Cymru	
Hugh Russell	Children in Wales	
Sean O’Neill (online)	Children in Wales	
Louise O’Neill (online)	Children in Wales	
Joanne Hopkins	Public Health Wales	
Claire Williams (online)	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service	
Cherrie Bija (online)	Faith in Families	
Lisa Roberts (online)	RCPCH	
Anna Westall (online)	Children in Wales	
Rebekah Millar	Care for the Family	
Liz Gregory (in person)	Parent Infant Foundation	
Dave Goodger	Early Years Wales	
Sarah Durrant	TGP Cymru	
Sharon Lovell (online)	NYAS Cymru	
Sian Cox (online)	Powys County Council	
Marianne Mannello (online)	Play Wales	
Alex Williamson	Wave Trust	
Max Pearson	Office of John Griffiths, MS	
Eleri Griffiths	Office of Heledd Fychan MS	
Tina Foster (online)	TGP Cymru	
Sarah Thomas (in person)	Fostering Network Wales	
Dave Williams (online)	Aneurin Bevan UHB	

Apologies

Llyr Gruffydd, MS
Peredur Owen Griffiths, MS
Catrin Glyn, Carers Trust
Melissa Wood, Barnardo's Cymru
Mark Carter, Barnardo's Cymru
Delyth Jewell, MS
Rhian Smith, Fostering Network
Cecile Gwilym, NSPCC
Hannah Williams, Social Care Wales
Katie Palmer, Cardiff & Vale UHB
Nigel Patrick Thomas
Samantha Baron, BASW

1. Welcome

Jane Dodds MS and Chair of this CPG welcomed everyone to the meeting and ran through all four themes that have been covered at meetings during 2023 – Edge of Care Services; First 1000 Days; ACEs and Child Poverty. Today's meeting will focus on ACEs and we are yet to confirm a date for a joint meeting with the Child Poverty CPG and the First Minister. This will be confirmed as soon as possible.

A full list of attendees and apologies is attached.

2. ACE Hub Wales – supporting the ambition for Wales: a trauma-informed nation

Dr Joanne Hopkins, Director of ACE Hub Wales

- Hub was established in 2017 and now has 16 staff
- Half of the population will have experienced ACEs, without the opportunity to access support. Negative potential risk to health, social outcomes, life course
- Need to raise awareness and educate society
- In 2021, Julie Morgan MS commissioned a review of ACEs in Wales and the ACE hub was a consequence of that
- Understand relationship between four ACEs and higher risk
- Understanding the impact of adversity in childhood – depending on access to support
- Needs-led and strength-based
- ACE Hub has designed a website and there is a TRACE toolkit available for organisations to learn how to deliver more trauma-informed practises:
<https://acehubwales.com/trace-toolkit/>
- Conference to be held in February 2024 – details to follow
- ACE Hub supports those involved with substance misuse, further education colleges, two universities (Aberystwyth and Wrexham), and other organisations including housing and North and South Wales Police
- Over the last 18 months, the ACE Hub has been working with Traumatic Stress Wales to co-produce joint work (supported by WG)
- Four practice levels, including Inclusion (for those who are experiencing discrimination)

3. Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service - Relationship Based Practice Guidance: A trauma and ACE (TrACE) informed approach

Claire Williams, Team Manager

- See presentation slides attached
- Part of the South Wales ECM trial which explored how ACEs have impacted on child development
- Youth justice population had higher levels of ACEs
- Trauma informed assessment, timeline and developmental mapping for all children
- All new members of staff have a trauma-based induction
- Work to get all agencies involved on board with the trauma-based approach
- Two social workers who take a lead on this approach as 'team champions'
- Reparation / restorative justice – where trauma had impacted on development, child didn't have the skills to engage with this. Deliver restorative justice in a trauma informed way

4. Questions & observations

Jane Dodds MS to Jo Hopkins –

I'm interested in the concept of your service not 'labelling' children – is that because of feedback from people not wanting to use that language or is that what you've chosen to do?

It's a bit of both. We're all about equality and having had conversations with parents, communities etc, they feel they need better support and not to be labelled.

Jane – it may be the opposite where people benefit from a label and it can be used as a coping mechanism.

Jane Dodds MS to Claire Williams –

The work you are doing is very impressive and interesting. Are you working with the judiciary around trauma-informed training and sentencing? If so, could this practise be rolled-out across other youth offending services?

Yes, we work closely with the judiciary and training is regular. Magistrates are involved with timeline meetings and reports to them are now moving towards being trauma informed. A series of workshops on implementing this into the youth justice service have taken place and resources uploaded to Youth Offending Service hub. These have been shared across England and Wales. Also a Network of Youth Offending Services is hopefully being set-up.

Sioned Williams MS to Claire Williams –

It is impressive that knowledge and tools are being shared wider. Just wondering about how the two lead social workers you mentioned are funded and do other Youth Offending Services have the same?

The evaluation of the service undertaken by Bangor University recommended having a "lead" worker. The two social workers that we have are not dedicated lead roles and are part of general social work, however, their trauma-informed work is now inherent in the framework.

David Goodger, Early Years Wales – I would be interested in linking-up with both speakers as the early years is so important. At a recent Early Years Advisory Group meeting we looked at how we can further support the EY workforce and develop case studies on how organisations are undertaking a trauma-informed approach, but maybe are not aware they are.

Sharon Lovell, NYAS Cymru – confirmed that all advocacy staff at NYAS have received trauma-informed training. Community and trusted adult approach – what is this? Impact on youth work and importance of youth work and play?

Mark to Claire Williams -

Very interested in the restorative justice approach and embedding the community approach. Interdisciplinary approach – is there any interaction with custody suites?

Much community work is undertaken, and we do deliver one-to-one work with trusted adults. Much “victim empathy” work being undertaken so then restorative justice tasks can be completed. Work is being undertaken with the Youth Engagement Project in Merthyr Tydfil when a child is taken into custody and is then ready to be reintroduced into the community.

Tina Foster, TGP Cymru – it’d definitely be worth linking in the speakers with TGP who had a 3 year funded project around restorative approaches which came to an end a few years back..

Marianne Mannello, Play Wales – need to consider the role of play in supporting children through trauma. We have started the process of offering trauma-informed training to play workers in community settings. Anecdotally, older children are showing signs of play deprivation.

Alex Williamson, Wave Trust to Jo Hopkins –

Is the Welsh Government fully committed to the ACEs agenda as the First Minister was asked three years ago what the Senedd were doing about ACEs and the answer was “not enough devolved power.” Also is the ADSS involved?

Wales is absolutely committed to development in this area and continued funding for the ACE Hub is testimony. Also the government is fully committed that every child has the right.

A great deal of time has been spent communicating with the ADSS – the website has important statistics and there are community practice groups.

Jane Dodds MS thanked both speakers for their very informative presentations and for group members for their contributions.

Actions

Make links with each other - distribute websites and speaker email addresses

Organise a morning session in the Senedd on ACEs. Organise a pre-meeting in January with members of this group to plan

There is a decent amount of good practice around, but all Youth Offending Services should be following Cwm Taf's lead. Need to take this forward

5. Update on UN Concluding Observations

Sean O'Neill, Children in Wales

Due to time constraints, it was agreed that this agenda item be covered at the next meeting.

6. Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Cross Party Group on Children & Families

Jane Dodds MS opened the AGM and Louise O'Neill of Children in Wales spoke to the attached Annual Report 2023.

Nominations sought for a Chair going forward – Jane Dodds was proposed by Sioned Williams and Alex Williamson seconded the nomination. No objections made.

Nominations sought for a Vice Chair going forward - Jane Dodds nominated Sioned Williams. No objections made.

Secretariat appointed – Louise O'Neill at Children in Wales.

Annual report was approved.

The meeting was closed and future dates confirmed as:

24.01.24, 10.30-11.30 (hybrid)

20.03.24, 10.30-11.30 (hybrid)

22.05.24, 10.30-11.30 (hybrid)

25.09.24, 10.30-11.30 (hybrid)

04.12.24, 10.30-11.30 (hybrid)