

**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales  
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and  
Education Committee**

**Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg |  
Priorities for the Children, Young People and Education Committee**

**CYPE 11**

**Ymateb gan : Gwasanaeth Eiriolaeth Ieuencid Cenedlaethol  
Response from : National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)**

**Question 1** – Within the remit set out above: what do you consider to be the priorities or issues that the Children, Young People and Education Committee should consider during the Fifth Assembly?

1) The establishment and implementation of a National Advocacy Approach for statutory advocacy provision in Wales. This has been on the Ministerial agenda since the Children's Commissioner for Wales undertook a review of statutory advocacy services in Wales. In 2014 Ministers reviewed the evidence and findings from this review and those of the Ministerial Expert Group on Advocacy. Following on a secondment into Welsh Government to take this forward, ADSS formed a Task and Finish Group to develop the national advocacy approach. This group established the active offer for young people who are entitled to statutory advocacy, a national outcomes framework, a national reporting template along with a commissioning template. The work also involved a piece of work achieved by Cordis Bright to undertake a population needs assessment to determine the level of funding required for statutory advocacy provision. This work comprised of a business case presented to the former Minister, Professor Mark Drakeford and WLGA and ADSS. To date, there has been no decision made on the way forward, therefore this is an urgent priority and advocacy providers in Wales believe strong strategic leadership is required from Welsh Government to ensure Wales' most vulnerable young people receive the advocacy services described within the national advocacy approach. We urge the Children and Young People's Education Committee to explore commissioning a national advocacy service for young people in Wales to ensure true

independence is achieved and statutory advocacy is accessible to all children and young people who hold statutory entitlement.

- 2) Young people and mental health provision – the mental health provision in Wales is in serious need to be reviewed. The current picture often means that young people who are detained under the Mental Health Act have to be in settings outside of Wales. Waiting list for CAMHS is unacceptable and more research is required on the treatment of mental health and wellbeing for our young people in Wales. Preventative programmes need to be established.

**Question 2** – From the list of priorities or issues you have identified, what do you consider to be the key areas that should be considered during the next 12 months (please identify up to three areas or issues)? Please outline why these should be considered as key priorities.

- 1) Implementation of a National Advocacy Approach on statutory provision for children/young people. This issue has been outstanding for many years and needs addressing to ensure we protect and safeguard our most vulnerable children/young people in Wales.
- 2) Youth service Council for Wales.
- 3) Review of mental health care for young people in Wales. Taking into account treatment and preventative programmes.