

Improving young lives Our programme for change

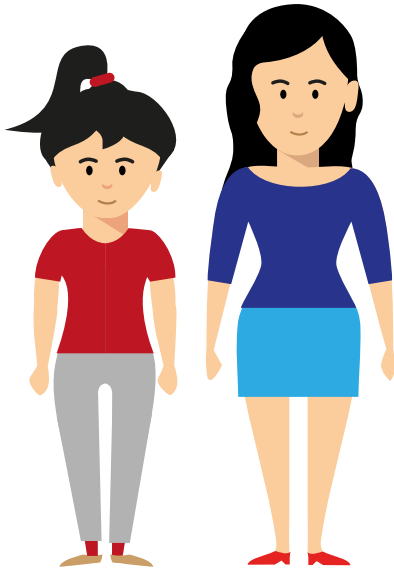
Improving Outcomes for Children is a programme of change that aims to improve services for children and families in need of help and support in Wales. Our work is overseen by a Ministerial Advisory Group chaired by an Assembly Member.

Here is some information about the programme, the progress we're making and our plans for the next two years.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Improving Outcomes for Children



We believe that children and young people in need of care and support in Wales should have an equal chance to succeed in life.

We're determined to make sure that anyone who is or has been looked after by local authorities gets the support they need to help them through difficult times and have the same life chances as other children.

We want to support families as early as possible so that crisis situations are avoided or minimised, and we're committed to working alongside our partners to do this.

We are working hard to...

1. Reduce the need for children to enter care.

2. Improve outcomes for children already in care.

3. Support care leavers to independent living and successful futures.

1

almost half
of children

in Wales go through
harmful experiences
during their childhood
(Public Health Wales)

Reducing the need for children to enter care.

**We aim to build stronger, more resilient
families and communities**

Early intervention can help us to spot problems sooner and good prevention programmes can stop them getting worse. That's why we're investing in initiatives to support vulnerable families on the edge of care.

Programmes like Families First and Flying Start are key to how we plan to tackle the challenges of difficult childhood experiences. Through these and other initiatives, we want to reduce the need for children

to enter care and increase our focus on prevention and improved support.

We know we need to do more to support vulnerable families so that children can remain living safely with their families. And we plan to do this by looking at the role of wider family and friends as a source of support – for example alternative carers for children on a respite, short-term or longer-term basis.

2

6,407
children

in Wales are being
looked after in care
(as at March 2018)

Improving outcomes for children already in care.

We want children who are looked after to have the same opportunities as other children

Lots of children who are looked after by local authorities benefit from the support of dedicated carers and the public services available to them. But we know that there is still a gap in the life chances they have compared to other children in Wales.

Children who are looked after are less likely to achieve educational qualifications and more likely to

be involved in the criminal justice system. They're more likely to have serious health, wellbeing and housing needs as adults, and to have to cope with issues that result from childhood traumas.

Our aim is for children entering care to have a positive experience that provides opportunities to learn, grow, flourish and go on to live successful adult lives.

3

Supporting care leavers to independent living and successful futures.

“Our aim is to provide the foundation so that young people can prosper.”

For young people to feel supported in their transition to adulthood

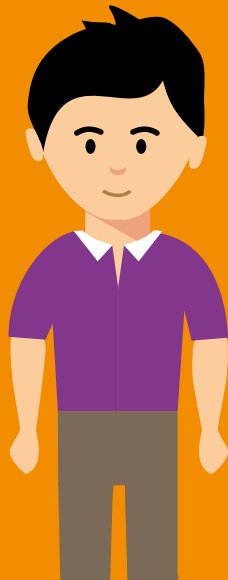
We want to make sure that young people get support and direction early in the journey towards independence. The right help at an early stage can improve their life chances and ability to achieve their goals and ambitions. As ‘corporate’ parents, local authorities and other public sector organisations have a key role to play in this – guiding young people in their care in a similar way to parents who have children living at home.

Care leavers often make the transition to independent living earlier in life. So stable housing and finances are even more important in helping them to prosper. We are working to provide the foundation so that young adults can take up further or higher education, commit to apprenticeships and job opportunities.

By working together to plan each young person’s move to independence, our services can be more responsive and effective when plans change.

Effective help and support through partnerships

Together with the Welsh Government, our partner agencies and senior leaders throughout Wales are working hard to put our programme into action. The Children's Commissioner for Wales, Voices from Care and Children in Wales are all members of the Ministerial Advisory Group, representing children's voices and their rights under the UNCRC.



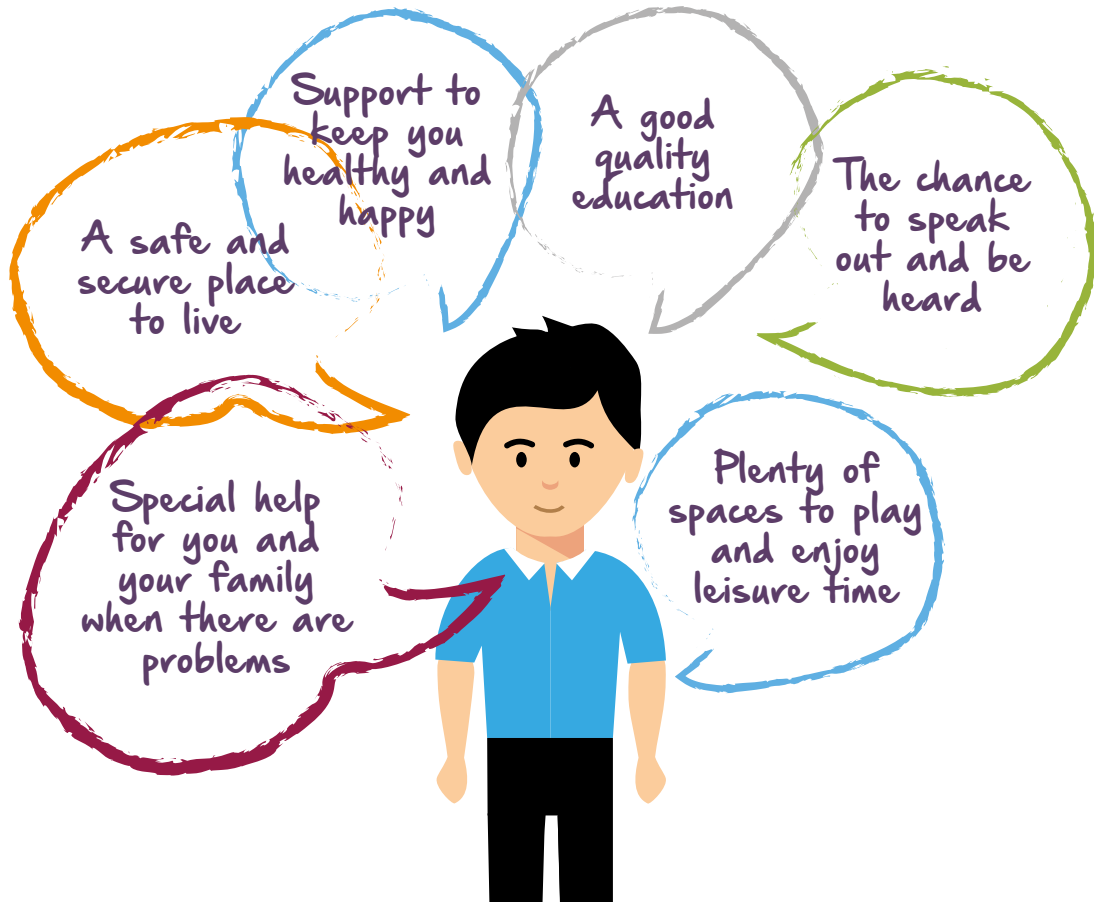
We are bringing about improvements in our services and the way in which they are delivered. We have achieved a lot already. Here are a few examples:

- Introduced edge of care family support services into every local authority in Wales.
- Set up the Reflect programme across Wales.
- Introduced the St David's Day Fund to support care leavers as they move to adulthood.
- From April 2019, care leavers no longer have to pay Council Tax.
- Introduced a maximum level maintenance grant for students who have left care.

Our priorities as we continue are to:

- Continue to improve our prevention and early intervention work,
- Help children and families to be reunited where it is safe to do so,
- Make sure we have enough good quality placements available for children in care.

We want you to have...



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Welsh Government

Find out more

- > Welsh Government www.gov.wales
- > Children's Commissioner for Wales www.childcomwales.org.uk
- > Voices from Care www.vfcc.org.uk
- > Children in Wales www.childreninwales.org.uk

