New Integrated Family Centre for Powys

A new Integrated Family Centre bringing together services such as childcare, family support and adult learning has been officially opened by the First Minister Carwyn Jones.

The Integrated Family Support Centre in Newtown is a one-stop shop for information, advice and support. Services such as parent and toddler groups, family support and counselling, parenting programmes and adult education are available on site.

The centre hosts staff from a range of services including health visitors, Action for Children family support workers and Montgomery Family Crisis Centre (MFCC) officers.

Welsh Government Flying Start funding supported the works to develop the Montgomery Family Crisis Centre site on the Mochdre Industrial Estate.

Chair of the CYPP, Gloria Jones Powell says: “This new centre has been developed with the CYPP working in partnership with Montgomery Family Crisis Centre, other voluntary organisations and parents in the Newtown area. It is a great example of agencies working together to improve access to services and enabling children and their families to have their needs identified and met at a time and place which best suits them.”

For further information or to book one of the rooms at the centre contact Community Focused Service Development Officer Karen Finucane on 01686 623230 or email karen.finucane@powys.gov.uk.

Pictures courtesy of Powys County Times

At the official opening of Newtown’s Integrated Family Centre were, from left, Hywel Roberts, Principal Officer of the CYPP, Shirley Powell, Managing Director of MFCC, Carwyn Jones AM, Jackie Richardson, Chief Executive of MFCC and Shelley Davies of the CYPP

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Powys Referral Scheme extended

The Powys Referral Scheme is a multi-agency project offering support to children with additional needs from two to 18 years. The scheme is managed by Wales Pre-school Playgroups Association (PPA) but directed locally by the CYPP. The scheme pulls together resources and now offers wider support with a joined-up approach.

The referral scheme supports children and young people with additional needs to access non-statutory, universal service provision such as childcare, early years education, play, leisure and recreation activities including Powys Youth Service activities.

All children referred to the scheme are considered by a panel made up of representatives from: CYPP; Wales PPA; Mudiad Meithrin; Powys Youth Service; Dyfodol Powys Futures; Early Years Education; Health Visitors; Educational Psychologists; Speech and Language staff and the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategy Group.

The referral panel will consider each referral and discuss the best course of action. This may be training for professionals working with the young person; signposting to other organisations including the Local Resource Solution Panel (LRSP) or funding for support staff for the child. The needs of the child can be very specific and so the scheme helps staff working with that family to be as equipped as possible to ensure the child’s well being and improved experience.

Once accepted on the scheme the child’s progress will be closely monitored by the scheme coordinators and updates are brought to every meeting. All settings are expected to be working to an agreed standard and must reach eligibility criteria to ensure good quality provision.

Partners coordinating the additional support include:

- Wales PPA - preschool
- Mudiad Meithrin (MM) - preschool
- Dyfodol Powys Futures - out of school and holiday clubs
- Powys Youth Service - youth clubs and holiday ‘teen extreme’ schemes

The Powys Referral Scheme has been extended and has brought together previous projects to form a joined up approach. The scheme will be officially launched in January 2012 but is up and running and already taking referrals and supporting families. Schools, child care providers, health visitors and youth groups are just some of the agencies that can refer a young person, with families also able to self refer.

For further details please contact Powys Referral Scheme, Wales PPA, Powys Regional Office, Plas Dolerw, Milford Road, Newtown, SY16 2EH. Tel: 01686 622969 or email: powysoffice@walesppa.org

16+ Prospectus

Powys has launched its first ever 14-19 post 16 prospectus. Learners aged 16+ across Powys have a wider choice of subjects than ever before as post 16 providers in the county have joined together to create the ‘North Powys Curricula’ and the ‘South Powys Curricula’.

The new prospectus has now been launched and was available for all year 11 pupils to help them plan for their ‘future’ studies across the county.

For a copy of the prospectus access the 14-19 portal www.epowys.net/1419 or contact the 14-19 Quality and Learning Pathways Manager, Nici Jones on 01597 826703 or email nici.jones@powys.gov.uk
A Day in the Life of .... a Social Worker

Julie Jones is Deputising Senior Practitioner in the Children’s Services team in the Welshpool area. Julie tells us about her role and that building positive relationships is a key part of life as a Social Worker.

Julie has been a qualified Social Worker for 10 years, she was drawn to the profession as she wanted to support people and speak out for those that in some way may be disadvantaged. Julie explains: “A lot of the work we do is based around early intervention and prevention. We work alongside Community Support Officers and Family Support Workers as well as many different partners and agencies such as the Open Door Family Centre, Health Visitors, the Specialist Safeguarding nurse and school staff. “We deliver a range of interventions such as the Incredible Years Parenting programme and through the Freedom project we are able to facilitate group work and 1-1 sessions for domestic abuse victims. When a need is identified by the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board we work with other professionals such as school nurses to deliver joint child protection training in schools.”

Julie continues: “The multi agency referral system enables referrals from a wide range of professionals such as teachers and health visitors. When a referral comes in we need to identify if support is needed, what that support is and who would carry it out. We would always aim to see the child alone if they are able and would make enquiries with other agencies to check if they have any relevant details on the family. “When we work with families that are resistant to interventions, we strive to break down the barriers and create a relationship that can achieve positive change. Concerns for the welfare of children are paramount to our work and sometimes we are working with parents that are no longer prioritising the needs of the child. We must make informed and professional responses to each case. “Amongst the challenges of the role we need to remember that we make a positive difference in the lives of the children and families that we work with. It’s rewarding when a child can flourish and can continue to remain with their family or when we start to get a family to engage when they have been reluctant.”

Julie attends the Local Resource Solution Panel (LRSP) in her area. She says: “LRSPs are a really useful environment to meet other professionals from different backgrounds and with different skills and experiences. We are all there to make valuable contributions to the needs of families. LRSPs give us a chance to let other professionals know what Social Services can assist with and what is a valid referral and what cases may be better referred to other support agencies. “This multi agency working improves communication about Social Services and helps to develop strong relationships with other professionals.”
Giving more families a “Flying Start”

Flying Start is a Welsh Government funded initiative providing intensive health visiting and midwifery services, free half day childcare for 2-3 year olds, parenting support and additional learning opportunities such as Language and Play to certain post coded areas. In Powys the Flying Start services, available in the Ystradgynlais, Welshpool and Newtown areas, have produced strong evidence to highlight their success. Over the past four years all of these areas have had a sustained drop in referrals to Social Services and levels of looked after children under the age of five years have remained consistently low.

To build on this success Powys CYPP decided to develop a similar early intervention and prevention project for the Radnorshire area which currently has disproportionately higher numbers of children in need and looked after children under the age of five.

The Flying Start Project in Radnorshire will offer up to 20 families from the Llandrindod and Rhayader areas with children under the age of five a bespoke package of support that will include:

- Free, high quality childcare
- High quality parent and toddler provision
- Enhanced health visiting through a dedicated Health Visiting Assistant (NNEB)
- Family Support Services from Action for Children
- Parenting programmes
- Language and Play activities

Families meeting the following criteria can be invited to take part in the project:
1. Those at risk of becoming children in need
2. Those who would benefit from a supported ‘step down’ from Children’s Services in order to prevent them returning again as children in need.

To refer a family to the project complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form with the family and submit it to CAF Coordinator, Christine Davis, at caf.admin@powys.gov.uk. To download a CAF form visit www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/lrsp

To find out more about the project then please contact Mair Wilson via mwilson@powys.gov.uk or on 01597 826 114

Additional support for families most in need

Families in Powys will soon be able to access a new Integrated Family Support Service, enabling them to make positive changes in the interests of their children.

Powys County Council and Powys Teaching Health Board are working together with Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire County Councils along with Hywel Dda Health Board to roll out the Welsh Government programme early in 2012, following a successful partnership bid.

The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) will deliver targeted support to families faced with, or at risk from, parental substance misuse. Highly skilled professionals from across different organisations, such as social workers and health visitors will work as one team to identify and expand support to the most vulnerable families. The team will also work closely with partner agencies and professionals to ensure the family has access to a wide range of services to enable them to make positive changes to their lives.

Cllr Les Davies, Cabinet Member for Children and Partnerships, said: “I am delighted that Powys families will be amongst the first in Wales to benefit from the IFSS. Providing this intensive support to families who are in crisis should prevent family breakdowns, ensure that fewer children come in to the care of the local authority and that families are better able to manage.”

Carol Shillabeer, Director of Nursing for Powys Teaching Health Board explains: “This is a great opportunity for us to deliver the IFSS across Powys whilst working in partnership as a regional consortium across a large rural area. With a skilled multi-agency team providing increased support to those most at risk of family breakdown we are confident the service will improve outcomes for those families.”
A warm welcome to new Safeguarding Manager Alison Davies who took up the role in July. Ali tells us a bit about herself and the role.

She says: “I joined Powys after 11 and a half years as children’s guardian, with the last five as area director of The Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service Cymru, responsible for Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent. It’s a huge but exciting change from the valleys to the beautiful and very big area of Powys!

“I am responsible for the coordination of the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board, along with Shane Thomas and act as the link, along with Head of Service Amanda Lewis, to Children’s Services.

“I am responsible for ensuring the flow of information around the LSCB is accurate and meaningful. I check that the systems for child protection in Powys are working well and that any safeguarding issues are addressed.”

In addition Ali manages the Independent Reviewing Officers, Case Conference Chairs and Licensing Officer. As custodian of the child protection register she also responds to enquiries around child protection, safeguarding and Children from Other Local Authorities (COLA).

She concludes: “I look forward to being a part of the great work that is going on in Powys and to taking this forward with colleagues across the county.”

To contact the Safeguarding Manager, email alison.davies1@powys.gov.uk or call 01597 82 7325.

Junior Local Safeguarding Children Board have been busy again

Eat Carrots, be Safe from Elephants reports:

Five members of the group attended the Local Safeguarding Children Board Development Day on 23 June in Llandrindod Wells. The positive relationship between the LSCB and the Eat Carrots, be Safe from Elephants group is developing. Eat Carrots members attend LSCB meetings and submit reports for the members to consider. From these meetings it has become apparent that the two groups need to link priorities. Examples of issues they are discussing include domestic violence, substance misuse and young people who live with a parent or carer who has a mental health issue.

Members discussed the Child Protection process and fed back their views to the LSCB along with their suggested improvements. The group held their latest meeting in July when 21 members met for what turned out to be a very busy, interesting and fun day. The morning was spent with members giving feedback on the various activities they had been involved in. Paul Griffiths, Strategic Director for Communities, Skills and Learning and Douglas Wilson, Head of Schools Service, joined the group for lunch and afterwards had the opportunity to answer their questions and discuss issues arising from the session.

Consultation on the One Powys Plan - Five members went along to the Royal Welsh Show to join in a consultation with Powys Youth Forum looking at the Powys One Plan.

eSafety Networking Policy - Members met with Glenn Ashbrooke to discuss and give their views on the draft policy. One of the members working on this has been able to access a place on the Wisekids safety training in November.

Eat Carrots members were involved in the interviews for the new Safeguarding Children Manager’s post. Find out more on successful candidate Alison Davies.
Sian Lee has won the Powys Teaching Health Board Chairman’s Award for her work in the establishment of the Bibliotherapy Scheme. The scheme ensures books relating to the mental health needs of children, young people and their families are made available on prescription via local library services so that individuals can use the books as a way of helping themselves or their child. Sian promotes this scheme through visits to the libraries, GP practices, health visitors and others. The programme benefits families who, due to their often isolated location, would not otherwise have access to this information.

**Bibliotherapy Book Review**

**The Social Baby**

*(Book list number 14)*

**Issue** Promoting relationships  
**Keywords** Communicate at the beginning  
**Age range** pre-birth - one year old

The Social Baby looks at social interaction with very young babies directed at parents and those professionals involved in caring for newborns and their families. Within the covers there are a series of beautiful pictures that will move the most cynical being. The newborn, Ethan, is doing his utmost to communicate within the first minutes of life and this desire to connect remains the theme throughout.

Ethan, is reaching out to tell his story. Parents proudly describe these actions and as professionals we should encourage this enthusiasm so that parents continue to communicate with their child. Through communication the parent-child relationship flourishes aiding trust for the infant’s social emotional well-being to development.

The Social Baby, written by Lynne Murray and Liz Andrews, is recommended by Sian Lee, Bibliotherapy Scheme Coordinator.

Further details can be found in the explanation booklet in the Bibliotherapy Resource Pack. Or for more information on the scheme: [www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/bibliotherapy](http://www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/bibliotherapy)

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**Community Focused Services Development Officers**

For information on children and young people’s services in your area contact:

**Brecon Area and Ystradgynlais**

Jacquie Brown  
07766 991348 - jacquie.brown@powys.gov.uk

**Bro Dyfi / West Radnor**

Sioned Jones Pritchard  
07817 683366 - sioned.pritchard@powys.gov.uk

**Newtown / Llanidloes / East Radnor**

Karen Finucane  
07775 792873 - karen.finucane@powys.gov.uk

**Welshpool / Llanfyllin / Llanfair Caereinion**

Sheela Hughes  
07969 204198 - sheela.hughes@powys.gov.uk

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The Bump to Baby Road Shows give expectant and new parents the chance to find out about pregnancy, birth and ‘life with a new baby’. The next event will take place on Friday 25 November 10am – 2.30pm in Machynlleth at Bro Ddyfi Leisure Centre. The Knighton area roadshow will take place on 20 January 2012.

A variety of experts will be on-hand to cover topics such as paediatric first aid, child care, breast feeding, baby massage, car safety and real nappies. Midwives and health visitors will be available to give advice on issues such as birthing choices, pain relief and breastfeeding.

Local Machynlleth Midwife, Carys Griffiths said: “The road show is a brilliant opportunity for mums, mums to be and dads to find out where they can access help and support in the early months of being a parent.”

The roadshow, coordinated by the Children and Young People’s Partnership also offers the chance to find out what’s on in the area for pregnant mums and new parents and babies such as leisure opportunities and parent and toddler groups.

For further details contact the local Community Focused Services Officer.
Powys Children and Young People’s Participation Strategy for 0 – 25 year olds is now published.

The strategy provides ideas on good practice when involving children and young people in service planning and evaluation. It lays out opportunities within Powys for children and young people to have their voices heard and outlines the National Participation Standards. The booklet shows how young people’s issues can be represented at a local, regional and national level and also gives contacts for further information and resources.

The strategy, written in collaboration with Powys Youth Forum supports the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ensures that services meet statutory obligations in relation to the Children Act 2004.

The document, approved by the Children and Young People’s Partnership in June is available at [www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/participation](http://www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/participation). Action plans from partner agencies which are to accompany the strategy should be emailed to youth.participation@powys.gov.uk.

Members of Powys Youth Forum presented their work on School Councils at the Improving and Expanding Practice in Participation Conference at Cefn Lea Park, near Newtown last month.

School Councils was the chosen topic for Powys Youth Forum’s Spotlight debate this year. Youth forum members researched the topic across secondary schools in Powys with on-line surveys devised and circulated for school council representatives, general pupils and staff.

Just fewer than 300 responses were received and initial findings were presented by the Youth Forum at the Spotlight on School Councils Conference in April. The Children’s Commissioner for Wales based his lecture to the National Teacher’s Association in October on the findings of this research.

The findings from the workshops included recommendations such as school council meetings to take place regularly, link teachers to be supported by other staff and the head teacher and school councils to be encouraged to do a self assessment for the National Participation Standards.

It was also proposed that school councils should link with each other in order to share good practice; this could be in the style of a school council conference for school council reps and link teachers. The conference in Cefn Lea was a great opportunity to explain this research to professionals and young people across Wales.

A copy of the full survey report is available at [www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/youthforum](http://www.cypp.powys.gov.uk/youthforum).

British Youth Council

Powys Youth Forum members Lucia, Haz, Twill and Jack attended the British Youth Council (BYC) Convention in Cardiff in August. Jack Gillum and Lucia Jones report:

We spent our day taking part in workshops and activities and meeting new people from different youth forums and organisations. We all opted for the Participation: Youth and the world workshop first which was about how BYC is supporting young representatives to meet policy makers in Europe throughout this year and how they wanted our opinions.

In the afternoon Politicians’ Question Time was our chance to grill some local politicians on issues that are important to us, and in particular whether 16 year olds should be given the vote. It was good to have our views heard but at one point it turned into a political argument! Some of the hostility on the panel was because different parties were trying to point score, and it seemed like they were trying to be better than each other.

After this session we chose to take part in the workshop ‘Let’s Party’ (If you were in charge what would you change?) which was run by young people from Funky Dragon. The workshop was to gain a greater understanding of how politics works by having a go ourselves. We had to discuss issues and created our own political party which included designing a campaign, creating a logo and taking part in a debate and then an election.

The closing session was ‘Have Your Say’, which was a chance to share our thoughts with BYC on issues and policies that specifically affect us in Wales. Throughout the day we linked with Blaenau Gwent Youth forum and we hope to keep in touch to work with them in the future.
Training for adults working with children and young people in Powys

Information Sharing to support Integrated Working – half day
To promote working knowledge about the regulations & practice on Information Sharing between agencies. This course is part of the training offered to promote effective multi-agency working as part of the Local Resource Solution Panel and Common Assessment Framework initiatives, under the Children and Young People’s Partnership plan with the seven core aims at its heart.

Time: 10am– 12pm or 2pm - 4 pm – two hours

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Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Local Resource Solution Panel (LRSP) Training
To promote effective use of the CAF and associated tools to deliver early interventions to children and their families.

Date Venue
Tues, 22nd Nov 2011 Welshpool
Wed, 30th Nov 2011 Neuadd Brycheiniog, Brecon
Wed, 22nd Feb 2012 The Park, Newtown

Time: 9:45am – 3.45pm

Mental Health First Aid Children & Young People Aged 8 to 25
This 2 day course is fully backed and supported by the Welsh Government as part of their Suicide and Self-Harm reduction policy for Wales. This course is not for specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Practitioners.

6th & 7th Dec 2011 at the Training Department, Bronlllys Hospital - 9:15am – 4:45pm

YMHFA (Wales) aims to help participants:
- Preserve life where a person may be a danger to themselves or others
- Provide help to prevent a mental health problem developing into a more serious state
- Promote recovery of good mental health
- Provide comfort to a person experiencing mental distress

The 14 hour course covers a number of topics including:
- What is meant by mental health/mental ill health
- The signs and symptoms of common mental health problems for young people including: Depression, Anxiety disorders, Psychosis, Substance misuse, Eating disorders, Self harming behaviour
- The range of effective interventions and treatments
- How to access help and support

To book a place on the above training, please contact: rachel.williams4@wales.nhs.uk or email queries to: kate.davies2@wales.nhs.uk

There will be a cost of £5 for this course

The above course is also being run in March next year with Mid Powys MIND.

15th & 16th Mar 2012
9:30am – 4:30pm ( 2 day course)
Coleg Powys, Newtown
This course is free and must be booked with CYPP Training, see details below.

All courses above are free. For further information email cypptraining@powys.gov.uk or call 01597 829569

CYPP regularly run the training throughout Powys. Forthcoming training opportunities include:
- Epilepsy Awareness, Multi sensory, Speech and Language Support for under 5s, Child Protection,
- Paediatric First Aid, Food Safety in Catering, Fire Safety

The training programme for CYPP, LSCB, Adult and Children's Social Care and Health is available in a single training brochure at www.powys.gov.uk/socialcareworkforce
**Child Protection Fora**

Regional child protection fora sessions have been arranged to bring together those who provide front line support so that matters can be discussed and ideas shared. Safeguarding Manager Alison Davies will support the sessions and from time to time there may be a need to provide general briefings at sessions on particular matters. **Places will be limited to 30.**

To book a place email melh@powys.gov.uk or call 01597 826160.

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**Lead Practitioner: The Team around the Family and the LRSP**

To promote effective use of planning and service delivery interventions to children and their families. To promote effective multi-agency working.

**Time:** 9:45am – 3.45pm

**QUEEN ELIZABETH II FIELDS CHALLENGE**

Three Powys parks are up for the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. This is a fantastic new campaign, run by Fields in Trust, to protect 2012 outdoor recreational spaces in communities all across the UK.

Securing access to grassroots sporting facilities is particularly relevant given the other milestone event taking place in the UK in 2012 – the London Olympics. What better way to mark the greatest sporting show on earth?

The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge gives communities an opportunity to vote for an outdoor space in their area to become part of the scheme and be permanently protected as a tribute to the Diamond Jubilee.

Visit [www.qe2fields.com](http://www.qe2fields.com) to vote for one, two or all of the three Powys sites which are up for the challenge.

**Dolerw Park, Newtown**
**Oakfield Drive, Crickhowell**
**Bryn-y-Castell, Knighton**

Log on and enter either a postcode or local authority and place your vote!
**Celebrating Success**

The annual Children’s Award Ceremony held in June in Llandrindod celebrated achievements of over 250 young people.

Every child who is looked after, and every young person who has been a Looked After Child aged between 16 and 24 years, and are now supported by the 16+ team received an award which celebrated their achievements over the past year.

Children of foster carers also received awards recognising the caring and supportive role that they play in making the lives of children in foster care as positive as possible.

Achievements ranged from gaining qualifications, making excellent progress in terms of independent living, and becoming excellent parents to their own children. Shain who received an award this year was even preparing to represent Great Britain in the Special Olympics in Athens, and has met with David Cameron, the Prime Minister in recognition of his sporting achievements.

The ceremony is a chance for children and young people to meet each other and also social workers, other Children’s Services staff and County Councillors. Keith Towler, Children’s Commissioner for Wales presented the awards.

Guests enjoyed themselves as they tried out circus skills and met some very exotic animals. The young people also took the opportunity to show off their own talents with a dance performance and a turn on karaoke, some even sang along to their own tracks.

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**Youngsters go back to nature**

28 young people from across Powys have taken part in the fifth annual Wildcamp event held once again at the Stay Little Outdoor Activity Centre deep in the heart of the Powys countryside.

The five-day event is a joint initiative run by the Powys Community Safety Partnership, which is supported by Dyfed Powys Police, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the Powys Youth Offending Service. The event promotes outdoor activities as a means of helping the participants gain confidence, self-esteem and reward them for avoiding the crime and anti-social behaviour route.

“It was yet another successful event,” said Sergeant Jon Rees, who was team leader for the camp. “The youngsters had the opportunity to try abseiling, kayaking and gorge walking as well as take part in workshops looking at their behaviour and life skills.

“This event provides a unique opportunity to bring together youngsters from many different backgrounds and gives them a chance to work towards a goal – that is to think about their actions and behaviour and how it affects others and to see how they can change.”

At the end of the week, the group were treated to a special photographic presentation of the week’s activities, together with certificates commemorating their achievements.
High standards of specialist care

Golwg Y Bannau and Golwg Y Camlas are two units which form a children’s care home based in Brecon run by Powys County Council.

A pool of around 50 staff work at the care homes and together they offer specialist support to children and young people from across the county that require exceptionally high levels of care due to a disability.

Golwg Y Camlas provides short breaks for the children which offer their parents or carers a respite several times a year. Typically, children using the service may be wheelchair users, have chronic ill health issues, or may have very challenging behaviour because of their disability.

Due to the specialised service, staff take up to three children at any one time as careful consideration has to be given to the compatibility of those children. Dragna, a care worker at Camlas, explained: “Our focus is always on the children and we work hard to make their stay enjoyable. We had one child recently who said they were looking forward to seeing us again which is always lovely to hear.”

Situated next door is Golwg Y Bannau – a unit which offers longer-term residential care for children that have been diagnosed with severe Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The children at Bannau are resident Monday to Friday and also receive respite care in the school holidays. In partnership with Penmaes Special School the children receive a 24 hour curriculum that helps with behaviour management and social integration.

Once children reach a certain age and depending on their ability the staff help them gain independent living skills such as cooking and self care. A recent inspection by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) praised the “highly motivated” staff and commented on them being “committed to providing high standards of care”.

Staff member Julie chats with Daniel who has lived at Golwg Y Bannau for several years. He is a particular fan of cooking and enjoys his cooking sessions with Mark and Rowan.

Attitudes to Substance Misuse

Thanks to over 1,400 young people in Powys that took part in the Substance Misuse Survey. The 11-18 year olds told us about their attitudes and experience of smoking, alcohol and drug taking. Some headline results are below but all of the data is being analysed by the Community Safety Partnership and the CYPP to better understand the issues faced in relation to substance misuse and to help in future planning of support services.

- Two thirds consider taking illegal drugs to be likely to damage their body.
- Only one third consider drinking too much alcohol is likely to damage their body.
- More young people think it is OK to “try getting drunk” than to “try smoking”.

Young people want to know more about; volatile substance abuse, prescription drugs, drinking responsibly, tranquilizers, mixing drugs and alcohol, how drugs get into the country, effects on family and others and how to deal with situations they may experience.

Many said that young people should be informed about substance misuse as early as Year 5 and said the best way to learn about substances were dramas, a theme day, a section on the school website and posters around school.

Many young people said it is ‘easy’ to get hold of alcohol and cigarettes. Alcohol is the substance most frequently used by young people but often just the odd glass at celebrations.

For full results visit www.powys.gov.uk/youth

The Substance Misuse Commissioning Strategy has been drawn up in light of these results and will be published shortly with some recommendations from the survey to be implemented by March 2012.
This equation is actually the recipe for Child’s Play Two, a Lottery funded project that is being delivered across Powys.

Three teams of playworkers are taking mobile provision to the towns, parks and hamlets of Powys as part of an initiative to focus on all the benefits that come with a child-led play experience.

While the playworkers’ vans are sparkling and (nearly) new, the rationale behind the project has a little more history. Architects on building sites back in the 1930s had noticed that children would congregate where materials were dropped and improvise with the timber, ballast and wheelbarrows. And, risky though they undoubtedly were, one of the most popular play areas in communities during and shortly after the Second World War were bomb craters.

The Child’s Play Two playworkers are tasked with creating an interesting, albeit temporary, outdoor play space wherever they are delivering a session. This could be in the middle of a housing estate, on a school playing field or even on a street corner, if it’s safe enough.

Furthermore, and reminiscent of the cardboard box at Christmas that has a greater play value than the toy that’s in it, there’s an emphasis on using recycled materials such as old tyres, wooden palettes and off-cuts of fabric.

Launched in January 2011 the project is hosted by Dyfodol Powys Futures, and will run until 2013. However, Project Coordinator, Nick Waller, is confident that the programme will create a legacy of play well beyond the shelf life of the project itself. Nick explains: “We have already piloted some community roadshows which work on the principle of ‘Show, rather than tell’. Children’s play is often hindered by adults’ perception of what play really is. We are trying to change this by drawing attention to child-led play in action and thereby get the grown-ups to revisit and re-evaluate their own childhood experience.”

Child’s Play Two is aimed at 8 to 12 year olds but younger children can attend the sessions with a responsible adult. The sessions are free and generally two hours long.

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