Adolescence to Adulthood in Warwickshire

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Warwickshire County Council

Basics of Evaluating Good Practice …

Clarity

Accountability

Process

Strong Leadership

Strong Partnerships

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Contrast that with Warwickshire in early 2009

Unclear of number of people in county (young people or adults) with autism…NAO return a bit of shock!

Individuals bounced between services (MH/LD/PD)

No agreed pathway from children's services

Increased pressure and concern from elected members around transition …high proportion of complaints from families of young people with autism

Little strategic thinking….policy and practice developed case by case

No services for people who fell short of eligibility criteria for adult social care … result (in transition) time consuming and preventable complaints (in adults) preventable crisis

Too many surprises (high cost and/or out of county cases returning)

Little formal support for families of adults and a fragmented co-support network….more support available for children and families.

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What helped…

Scrutiny and support from elected members (the "support" did feel better than the "scrutiny"!)

Involvement of a group of family carers and customers.

Improved data collection. Be honest where it is not possible

Developing a local pathway, publicise it …then use it …make an individual (and a team) Autism.

Creating a Multi Agency Strategic Transition Group and protocols

Senior managers within children's and adult services forced to work together to drive the work forward, accountable to overview and scrutiny

Awareness training for front line staff to improve assessments (develop an element of consistency)

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Focus on transition …the results …

Pathway for Autism ~ Responsibility of one team, increase knowledge across the team, clear/transparent.

Direct links between Children's/Adult Services ~ Clarity around assessment information, improved information, fewer surprises at 18, two accountable senior managers.

Improved Assessment ~ Multi-disciplinary case planning between children's and adults from 16 years of age for complex cases.

Accurate numbers ~ Now have information on all young people in Warwickshire with a diagnosis of autism. Can track their progress through transition whether they go on to meet adult social care criteria or not.

Specialist HFA/AS Team in Adult Social Care ~ Provides prevention focussed work with people who do not meet adult eligibility criteria but are at risk of doing so with no support.

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Transition Process in Warwickshire

Transition process in Warwickshire covers a broad range of young people not just those who are likely to go on and meet adult criteria.

Dedicated Transition Coordinator

Plan transitions in advice … rather than reacting (2009)

Shared understanding of support between all involved including schools/colleges and Connexions.

Year 8 Transitions Meetings ~ identify lead agency, involves schools, children's disability teams, Connexions managers and takes place annually in mainstream and special schools during June/July

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Transition Process in Warwickshire

Transition Case Planning Meetings ~ Case focussed meetings to plan the transfer of individual cases from IDS to adult services. Look at cases in detail and monitor progress, highlight areas of common/joint needs that could feed into the commissioning process. Attended by Team Leaders from Children's/Adults, Connexions, Leaving Care, CAMHS, LA 14-19 Education manager. Meetings take place every 6 months.

Multi Agency Transition Group ~ Strategic group chaired by the two transition leads, managers/representatives from all key agencies including FE Colleges, advocacy, parents/carers. Has the ability to make structural changes to practice and process across all agencies.

Locality Transition Groups ~ Networking, information sharing and joint training for practitioners from adults and children's services as well as parents/carers

Transition Information Days ~ A series of conference style events for parents, carers, grandparents as well as young people with speakers and workshops. Very successful.

Information, feedback, suggestions all collated by our Transitions Coordinator and fed into the Strategic Group to inform commissioning.

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Post Transition ~ Adult Autism and Asperger Team

We are a specialist social care team who work with people with High Functioning Autism and Asperger Syndrome

Broad role including:

Assessment and individual support to individuals with a diagnosis who do not meet the LA's FACS criteria. People can self refer, be referred by friends, family or other professionals.

Support to practitioners/agencies to resolve complex cases when specialist knowledge around working with people with Asperger's is required … we generally do not take on case responsibility.

Provision of information, advice and guidance to individuals and families.

The team is not a diagnostic service or a crisis team its focus is on support that tries to address issues before input of health and social care services … prevention

Individuals with FACS eligible needs are supported through the learning disability social care teams in line with the county pathway.

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In practice …

We source support, information and advice that is available to everyone in a local community … sustainable, creates awareness and understanding in those services.

People with AS were very clear they didn't want a social worker, they wanted to keep big chunks of their life to themselves and wanted support with a few key areas to allow them to move on

We have no money to commission on-going social care services

All support is limited not by time but on the outcomes on support plans

Much of the work is "ordinary" its around communication, social activity and planning … however many of the issues that tip people into crisis are also fairly "ordinary" …

Family and situational work are really important … we have to work with people where they are and with their existing networks … the other option is specialist services … an outcome this customer group didn't really want.

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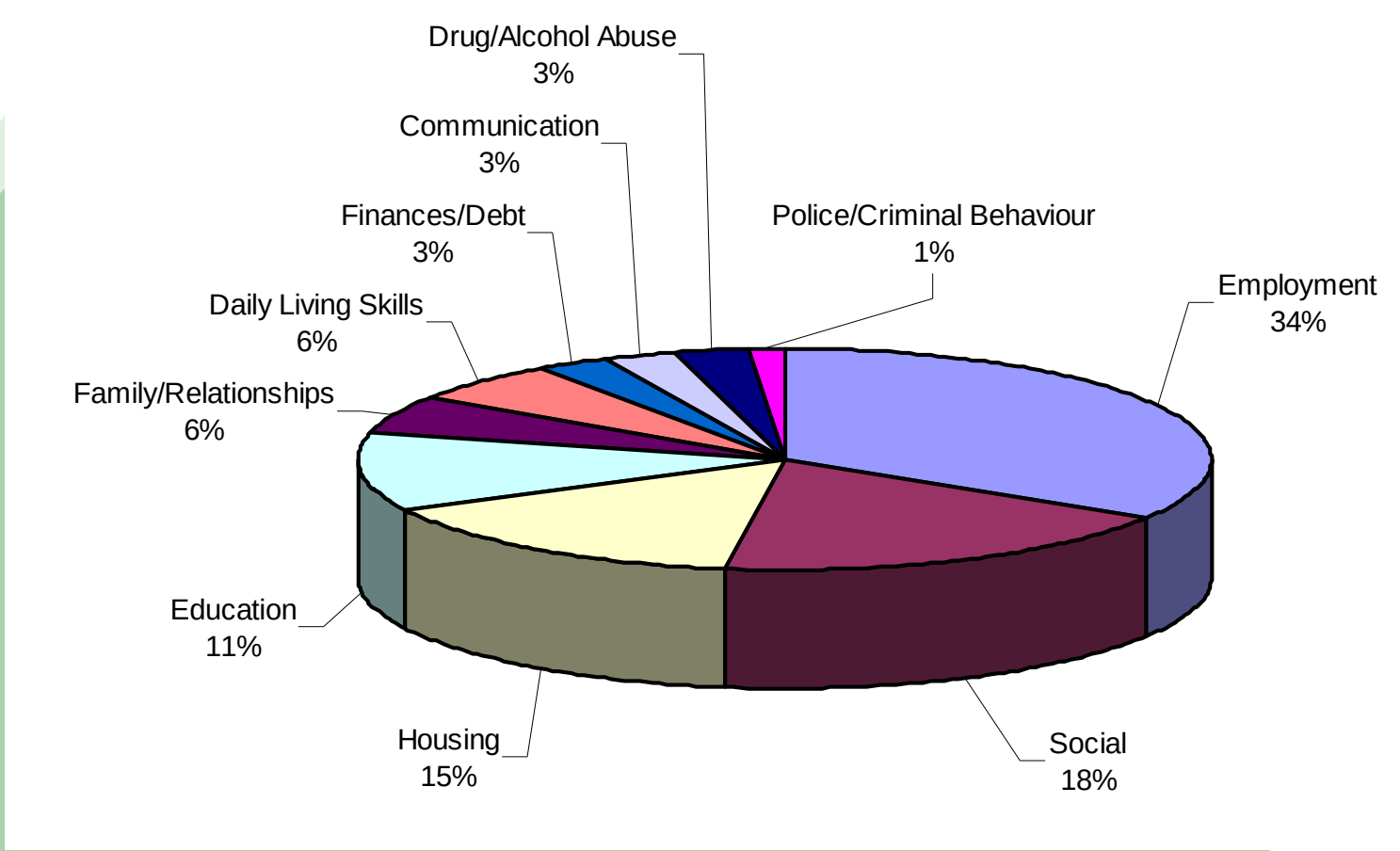
Breakdown of support offered …



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As expected large proportion of work around employment support … emphasis for many people on sustaining that employment, quite challenging as referrals often made at crisis point.

Social/Communication issues … we have had to develop a support group because no independent ones exist … time consuming

Safeguarding referrals are on the increase, quite worrying, lots of issues around hate/mate crime, sexual assault, possession of weapons, weapons instructions/manuals.

Use of the internet to develop relationships … Many of those relationships putting one or sometimes both parties at risk.

Police/Criminal behaviour is certainly on the increase, computer crime/misuse will certainly rise above that 1% soon if it hasn't already. Online gambling is another issue … very, very difficult for us to support people with until it descends into crisis.

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Bridging the gap … 16 to 18 years

Improved transition practice showed the true picture of the number of people with AS not going on to meet the criteria for adult social care.

Majority of young people still supported through the college/6th form system but struggling with their lives outside and a two year wait before they could refer themselves into our service

Used NTST project funding to pilot a 16-18 service using the adult model.

10 young people and their families from December 2010 to April 2011

Commissioned Dr. Karen Guldberg's team at the Autism Centre for Education and Research at the University of Birmingham to evaluate success … ACER also reviewed the adult team.

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Bridging the gap …

Support included introduction and access to social activity, job search and support into voluntary work, support outside of college, confidence building and travel training.

ACER publishing their paper in October 2011

Early signs are that feedback is very promising with many of the young people involved either no longer requiring support or are being supported by friends or volunteers.

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Thank you … Any Questions?

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