

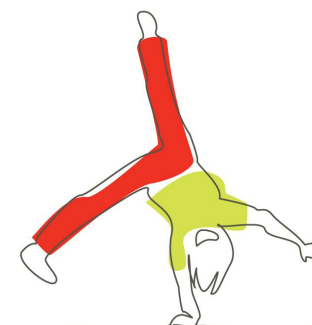
9th Annual Child Protection Forum



What the Child in Need census tells us?

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Introduction

- Action for Children supports and speaks out for the UK's most vulnerable, disadvantaged and neglected children and young people
- Action for Children is one of the UK's leading children's charities. We work with over 156,000 vulnerable children, young people and their families each year in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- Action for Children provides services that respond to and meet local needs.



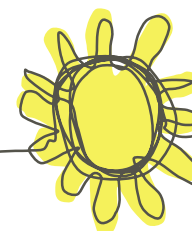
The Children in Need Census

- The Children in Need (CIN) Census aims to collect data on all children receiving support from Children's Social Care Services
- This includes looked after children and those subject to a child protection plan
- They have been collated in their present form since 2008



What does it tell us?

- The most recent census again shows significant numbers of children in need: 375,900 at 31 March 2010
- 39,100 children subject to a child protection plan
- We know that this is likely to be an under estimate
- We also know that a significant number of these children will be suffering neglect (19,300)



Present climate

- This year's census shows a much larger number of referrals to children's social services 603,700 than in previous years
- However only 395,300 of these resulted in an initial assessments completed
- There is an obvious resource issue for Local Authorities
- This is also at a time when there are huge pressures on budgets – especially for early intervention and family support services



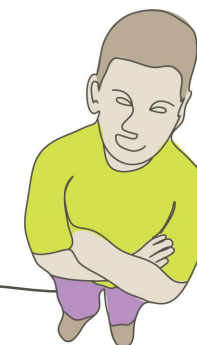
Neglect

- The most vulnerable and neglected children and young people should not be the ones to bear the costs of the countries deficit
- We have clear evidence that the earlier expert help is given the better the likely outcomes for vulnerable children and young people



What the children and the public say

- Almost two thirds of children and young people surveyed said they had seen signs of neglect in children they knew
- We know from our own research that 25% of the public were worried a child might be neglected
- 38% of these had not told anyone



What we know works

- We are at a time of great pressure, both to improve our practice and to do this at a lower cost
- There are also opportunities



What we know works

- Intensive, targeted family support
- Early identification of neglect
- Early response to abuse
- Use of relationships over time, including outreach, to work successfully with the most vulnerable and excluded
- Commitment to both intensive and long-term support where necessary



What are the implications

- The children in need census clearly shows levels of unmet need
- The growing consensus about the need for early intervention must become a reality
- And the challenge for Government is to boost timely intervention and support for disadvantaged children now



What are the implications

- Timely, targeted interventions, not only support families and help children and young people, they also reap financial benefits
- For one family support service run by Action for Children that works with 40 vulnerable families, reduces the number of children going into care, with a saving to the local authority of £37,000 per year for every child



What are the implications

- We need to ensure that money is spent wisely, based on what we know children and young people need, and strong evidence of what makes the most impact on children's lives

