



3. Partnership Working for Children and Young People



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This section of the report describes the ways that the health and wellbeing of children and young people is addressed using the Government's statutory framework. It refers to a number of national and local documents that set out the way Devon Primary Care Trust and Devon County Council work with a range of partners to achieve their objectives.

3.1 The health of children and young people as a public health priority

Improving the health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority because many of the factors that cause ill-health and disease in later life are present in childhood. Research by Barker (1998), for example, showed that low birth weight babies are at increased risk of cardiovascular disease and the disorders related to it in later life. Optimising the health and wellbeing of women during pregnancy and of their children is important, not just to improve their quality of life now, but also to secure the health of future generations.

Sir Donald Acheson's "Independent Enquiry into Inequalities in Health" (Department of Health, 2003) recommended that a high priority be given to policies aimed at improving health and reducing health inequalities in women of childbearing age, expectant mothers and young children. There has been a steady decline in the rate of childhood mortality in the United Kingdom, but there is still a need to enhance the health of children and young people. 'Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures' (Department of Health, 2009) sets out how the Government intends to work in partnership with local authorities and Primary Care Trusts to improve support to families at particular stages in their children's lives.

Reference

Barker, D. (1998). Mothers, babies and health in later life. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone



3.2 Strategic partnerships for health and wellbeing

The Devon Children's Partnership Trust is a strategic partnership made up of voluntary, independent and statutory organisations working together to meet the needs of children, families and young people. The work of the Children's Trust is based on the priorities of "Every Child Matters: Change for Children" (Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2004), the Government's framework for meeting the needs of children and young people. The Children's Trust Board is chaired by the lead elected member for children's services in the Local Authority and includes senior officers from District Councils, Police and Devon Primary Care Trust. The Board is supported by the independently-chaired Partnership Council and by a number of joint commissioning boards. The joint commissioning boards examine the needs of specific groups of children and young people and enable the partner agencies to work together to commission effective services.

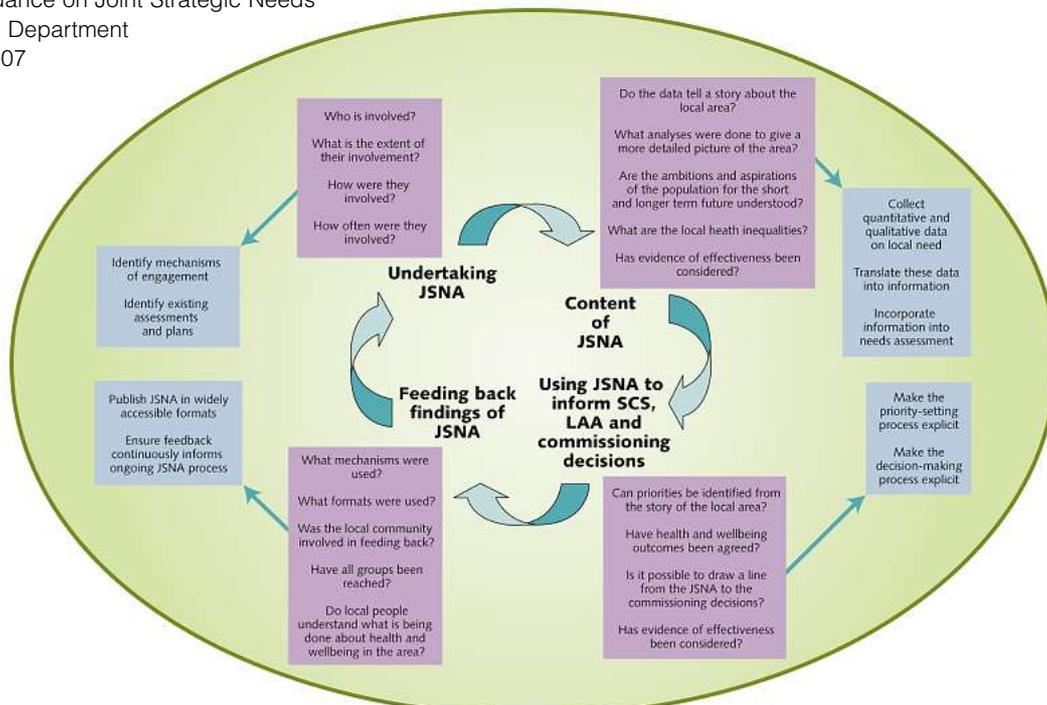
3.3 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Each year, Devon Primary Care Trust and Devon County Council work together to undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This is a statutory responsibility which is set out in the Local Government White Paper, "Strong and Prosperous Communities" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2006) which outlined a vision of responsive services and empowered communities. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is intended to be wide-ranging and to be a key document to help inform the Devon Sustainable Community Strategy. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007) places a duty on local authorities and Primary Care Trusts to undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The duty commenced on 1st April 2008. Statutory responsibility lies with Directors of Public Health, Adult Social Services and Children and Young People's Services.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment brings together information held by different public sector bodies so that the needs of communities can be better understood. This is then shared with stakeholders who use it to identify what the priorities for the forthcoming year should be. This enables the strategic commissioning of services to be informed by the identified needs of communities and the opinions of the key stakeholders.

Figure 3.1 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment process

Source: Guidance on Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Department of Health, 2007



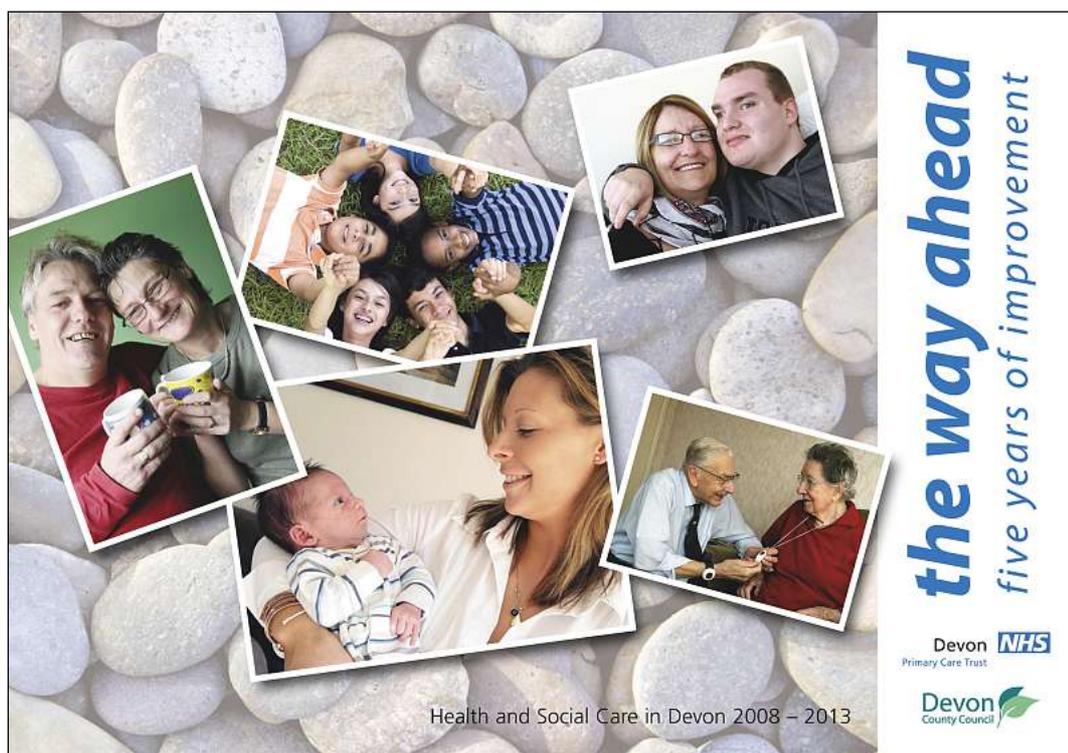
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3.4 The Way Ahead

“The Way Ahead” is a strategic framework for health and social care in Devon. It spans the needs of adults and children. It also covers a range of aspects of health and social care from actively working to support the population to stay healthy, for instance by eating healthily and stopping smoking, through to the need to provide high-quality care and support at the end of people’s lives. The priorities in “The Way Ahead” are determined by both the in-depth analysis provided by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the views gathered from extensive stakeholder and public engagement events.

3.5 Devon Local Area Agreement

The Local Area Agreement in Devon (2008-11) sets out a number of targets which reflect national and local priorities for both children and adults. Devon County Council and other members of the Devon Strategic Partnership work closely together to deliver specified outcomes and report on progress. The Local Area Agreement targets include long-term challenges such as reducing health inequalities and reducing our impact on climate change.





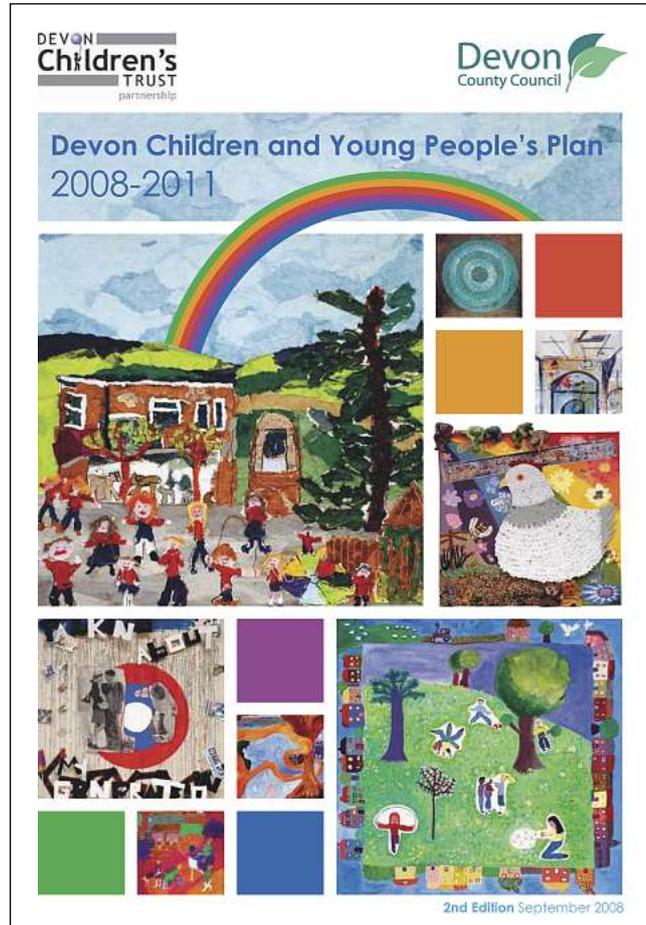
3.6 The Children and Young People's Plan

The "Children and Young People's Plan" (2008-11) sets out the aspirations for children and young people in Devon and the long-term ambitions for children and young people wherever they live in the county, and is based on universal entitlements for all children and young people, many of which are already set out in the single agency plans of Children's Trust partners in Devon. It includes everything from services for everyone, such as schools and GPs (known as universal services), to targeted work with children who have special needs.

The plan is divided into the five "Every Child Matters" outcome areas, as set out in "Every Child Matters: Change for Children" (Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2004). These are:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

The plan also highlights projects such as reducing bullying and improving life chances for children in care.



Every Child Matters - the Five Outcomes

