YOUNG PERSON’S NEEDS ASSESSMENT:
Guidance for Workers

The needs assessment is incorporated within a single assessment with social workers using the guidance to make sure necessary areas are covered

Introduction

This document acts as guidance for workers who are assessing the needs of young people leaving care. When we talked to young people they told us that they didn’t want to be asked the same questions regardless of their situation. Most young people leaving care have a relationship in place with a worker who has some knowledge of the young person’s needs, abilities and resources. Workers can therefore tailor the assessment process to the individual they are work with.

This assessment should be completed no more than 3 months after the young person’s 16th birthday or after the young person becomes Eligible or Relevant if this is later. The timetable must take account of any forthcoming exams and avoid disrupting the young person’s preparation for them. completed where there is no recent completed single assessment . The young person's social worker will be responsible for recording the assessment information and conclusions as well as the outcome of any meetings held. The young person must be invited to any meetings held in connection with the assessment.

The Needs Assessment should take account of the views of the following:

a. The young person;

b. The parents;

c. The current carer;

d. The school/college and the education service;

e. Any Independent Visitor;
f. Any person providing health care or treatment for the young person;

g. The Personal Adviser;

h. Any other relevant person including, in the case of a young person with special needs, a representative from Adult Services.

A decision not to include significant people must be recorded in the young person's file.

Young people with particular language or communication needs should be provided throughout the process with appropriate interpretation, translation or advocacy support.

Where the young person refuses to engage in the assessment process, this should be recorded, together with any actions taken to ascertain the young person’s views.

All parties, including the social worker’s manager, should sign the completed Needs Assessment Record. The young person should be provided with a copy in a format that is accessible to him or her within 2 weeks. The social worker is responsible for ensuring that the outcome of the assessment is explained to the young person.

The Needs Assessment will inform the development of a Pathway Plan which will be based on and include the young person's Care Plan.

This guidance contains pointers under each heading covered by the Pathway Plan to show the kind of conversations workers should have with young people.

**ACCOMODATION**

Discuss with Carers the first instance, after seeking advice from the Staying Put coordinator, about the BANES Staying Put scheme for post 18.

Exploring future accommodation options should start now, particularly if a young person wants to move at 18 into independence. Explore how the young person feels about their current living situation, where they want to live in the future and whether this is realistic.

- Is the planned accommodation suitable for the young person? This question should be considered with them in terms of their personal health and safety as well as their cultural, religious and community needs.
A home seekers application should be made. All LAC young people are eligible to join the housing register at 16 and have their housing needs assessed but this does not mean the young person will be moving on. It is to make sure when the young person is ready to manage independently there are options. It is important to explore all accommodation options including Staying Put. To register for social housing, an application is made online. The young person needs to tick the Care Leavers’ box and have their social worker’s name on the application. The worker can then check the application has been processed and the correct banding is in place.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AN EMPLOYMENT

Workers must record and update Qualifications and Achievements on LiquidLogic
- At present is the young person studying for any qualification or achievements? If so, what are they?
- What is the young person’s future educational or employment goals?
- What does the young person need to achieve these goals and who has the young person spoken to about them?
- Does the young person need to think about childcare, transport, equipment, materials, Bursary.
- Does the young person have a National Insurance Card? If not do they know how to get one and who will help them?

IDENTITY

- Does the young person feel as if they have had the opportunity to explore issues in:
  1. Sexuality
  2. Ethnicity/culture
  3. Spirituality/Religion
  4. Gender/Identity
  5. Disability
  6. Mental Health

- Does the young person feel as if they have been treated negatively due to any of the above issues?
- What does the young person understand about their past?
- Has the young person done any life story work? If not do they want to and who will do this with them?
HEALTH

- Is the young person registered with a GP/dentist and optician?
- Does the young person know how to access the LAC nurse?
- If not who is responsible for doing this?
- Is the young person concerned about:
  1. Their general health
  2. Their diet
  3. Their exercise routine
  4. Their eyesight/hearing
  5. Their sexual health

- Is the young person disabled and is this a concern for them?
- Does the young person smoke cigarettes and if so, is this a concern?
- Discuss issues with the young person about drugs/alcohol and solvent use if relevant.
- Does the young person feel lonely?
- Does the young person ever feel depressed?
- Does the young person enjoy food and does the young person eat regularly?
- Does the young person feel tired/unmotivated
- Are any of these things a concern to the young person or others involved in their life?
- If this is a concern what does the young person want to happen about this?
- Has the young person, someone they could talk to?
- How will the young person access confidential advice and how will their privacy be respected.

SUPPORT, FAMILY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

- Who are the important people in the young person’s life?
- Assessment should take into account the views of the young person, parents, current carers, schools/college/education service, any independent visitor, any person providing health care or treatment, any other relevant person including where young person has special needs, any representation from Adult Services.
- If the young person is ready to move on who will be their main support and what will their role be?
- Is there anyone the young person would want to see or talk to more?
• What professionals support the young person and is there anything the young person would want to change about this support?
• Would the young person like support with any of their relationships?
• Does the young person understand about the role of the Leaving Care Team?
• Does the young person know how to access advocacy?
• Would the young person like an advocate to contact them to explain how they might help?
• Has the young person got any hobbies or personal interests?
• Are there any hobbies and activities the young person would like to pursue?

PRACTICAL SKILLS

• Things that need to be discussed with the young person are:
  1. Cooking
  2. Budgeting
  3. Personal hygiene and personal space
  4. Washing/Ironing
  5. Managing to use public transport
  6. Identification – passport, birth certificate
  7. Accessing emergency services
  8. Can the young person ask for things assertively?
  9. Has the young person got a routine or structure for their week?

Assess the young person’s practical skills and knowledge in these areas.

Finance

• You will need to give the young person access to information on financial assistance by accessing the BANES Financial Policy going through with them the support we can provide and our expectations of the young person where the young person is eligible/ relevant. This needs to be outlined in the Pathway Plan.
• Does the young person have a bank account? If not, how can this happen?
• Does the young person understand about rent, council tax, utilities, benefits, bursary, earnings and tax?
• Does the young person worry about being in debt in the future?
• Use a budgeting plan to help the young person budget their incomings and expenses for the future. What issues does this raise for the young person about money?
• BANES has a savings scheme for young people usually not accessible until they are 18 and for young people who have remained in care after 16. When a young person in care reaches 18, the social worker should ask for a calculation of the savings amount due. The savings are intended to help the young person starting out in adult life and should be planned and agreed by the Team Manager.

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