

HIGHLAND CHILDREN'S DISABILITY SERVICE

Purpose and Roles of Staff

March 2011

A BRIEF HISTORY

From October 2004, The Highland Council began to develop a dedicated Social Work Service for children affected by disability and their families. Information was gathered regarding children known to Social Work Children and Family Teams and in November 2005, the Central Highland Team was formed - aiming to provide a more coherent approach to families within the Moray Firth area including the then East Ross-shire area. The focus of the Team was children with more severe and complex needs. Discussion continued over the following two years about the shape of a service to such children whilst the Council and Social Work Services in particular went through significant re-structuring. During 2008, the Council decided to maintain and expand a dedicated service to the whole of Highland.

THE SITUATION NOW

The Children's Disability Service now covers the whole of Highland. Since the start of 2009, the Service has been provided by two teams. Team Manager for the North, Mid and West Areas covering Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Skye and Lochaber is Alan Richards and Team Manager for the South/East Area covering Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey is Jonathan Turner. The Team Managers are managed by Marlyn Campbell, Development Officer for Children's Disability Services.

WHAT DO WE DO?

The Children's Disability Service (CDS) gives families and professionals access to an additional level of service where the priority is supporting those children with the greatest and/or most complex needs as a result of disability, At times this includes child protection or legal proceedings. The CDS are involved when a multi-agency group supporting a child or young person and their family, or the family themselves thinks that they need more specialised assessment, planning, support or intervention. The CDS coordinates and accesses a range of inputs for families affected by disability including

support work with children, day and overnight respite, need for over-night respite or direct payments for assessed services. In addition there are a range of workers within the Service with different roles and specialist skills as follows:-

THE STAFF ROLES

Administrative Assistant

This post is based in Inverness and supports the whole Service and is often the first point of contact into the Service. The role is to ensure the smooth flow of information to Team members, support the Team functions and deal with financial and personnel administration.

Support Workers

Support Workers work directly with children. This can be in the home to allow parents to fulfil other tasks as a form of respite or by supporting children and young people in other environments, such as shops, clubs or activities which they find difficult.

Family Key Workers

Family Key Workers come from different professional backgrounds, e.g. Occupational Therapy, Education, and Nursing. They will listen and support, assess need, complete plans, advocate and advise and liaise with other professionals.

They have a case-working and coordinating approach.

Autism Practitioners

This is a worker specifically for children with a diagnosis of autism. Again, the worker may come from a number of different professional backgrounds. They will have a particular experience of children with autism and will continue to develop this through their practice in support of children, families and colleagues.

Social Worker (ASD assessment and diagnosis)

This post brings Social Work expertise and skill to the multi agency Team involved in the assessment, diagnosis and support of children and young people with ASD with more complex needs. Due to their qualification, they may be called upon to take on specific child protection, legally focussed or more complex work.

Social Worker

This post is similar to the above post but with a wider scope to include children with any disability. The focus of their practice is on particularly complex, legal or child protection work and/or case-work allocated by the Team Manager to help the functions of the team.

Community Children's Worker (Inverness only)

This post has developed in many of the Children and Family Teams and operates to offer both direct work with children with more complex needs and case-coordination in specific situations. Workers will have considerable experience and skills.

Senior Community Children's Worker

This post is a resource allocator and manager and will be the person who supports and guides the Support Workers with regard to their job functions. The post-holder will support the Team Manager in monitoring the Team's use of external resources, transport and service providers. This post is for an experienced staff member who may also be used in some more complex cases as a coordinator or advisor.

Children's Community Learning Disability Nurse

These posts bring particular experience in health related assessment, and management of a range of difficulties including sleep, continence issues, diet, establishing and maintaining routines, preventing and dealing with challenging behaviour.

Clerical Assistant (North)

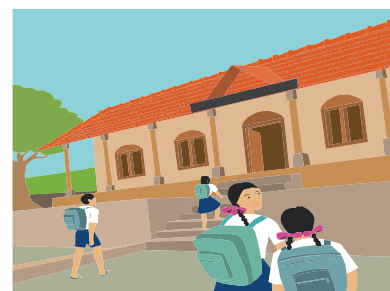
This post is available on a part time basis to support the North, Mid and West Team in all clerical areas and to deal directly with the public and professionals contacting the Team.

Team Manager

The role of the Team Manager in both areas is to allocate work appropriately bearing in mind the range of skills outlined, to learn about and implement strategies from the overview of all the case-work, to provide guidance and direction to the Team in child-care practice and standards and to present disability issues and themes to the Development Officer Disability.

Development Officer Disability

Acts as the overall Service Manager and supports the Team Managers in all areas of their practice. The role includes linking with families in a strategic way to improve services, representing the Council in disability issues, evaluating personnel and resource matters throughout Highland pertaining to disability.





LINK POSTS

It is also useful to highlight our close links with the **Integrated Services Officers** who are part of the Children and Family Teams throughout Highland and who guide and Support the process of Getting it Right for Every Child through liaising with all agencies involved.

It is also important to note the role of the **Social Worker (Complex Needs)** based at the Birnie Child Development Centre who deals with children often with particularly complex health and life-limiting conditions. This service is part of a continuum of support to children from very early years and diagnosis into community support services.

ACCESS TO THE CHILDREN'S DISABILITY SERVICE

Children's services in Highland now operate within the framework of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) and as a result all children with additional support needs should be known to a professional or supportive network around them. If a child has more complex additional needs, these may need to be brought to the attention of a multi-agency group. They may ask their link Integrated Services Officer (ISO) to consider and determine whether the Social Work Service has an input to make.

The ISO has certain resources to use as a form of intervention. If however a child needs are more complex and long term, the ISO can bring this to the attention of the Children's Disability Service Team Manager for consideration of a more specialised input.

The Team Manager then endeavours to match the child's needs to the available skills and expertise available to him within the CDS within a reasonable time-scale or make available a suitable resource as soon as possible if the Child's Plan developed by the multi-agency group has clear recommendations about the type and level of service needed. The Disability Team worker will then address the issues identified within the Child's Plan or will develop the assessment and the Plan along with the child, family and the others supporting them. Resources and services provided will be identified within the Child's Plan. This will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the level of service is appropriate or needs to be adjusted to meet changing needs.

Review arrangements are essential to try to ensure equity across the Service and also to identify unmet need. Review arrangements are essential to try to ensure equity across the Service and also to identify unmet need.



HOW ARE WE DOING?

We would like your feedback about our service whether we are new to you or you have been receiving any service from us for some time. Please just tear off this page and return to our Service at the addresses below

I

have found your service helpful because:-

I have not been satisfied because:-

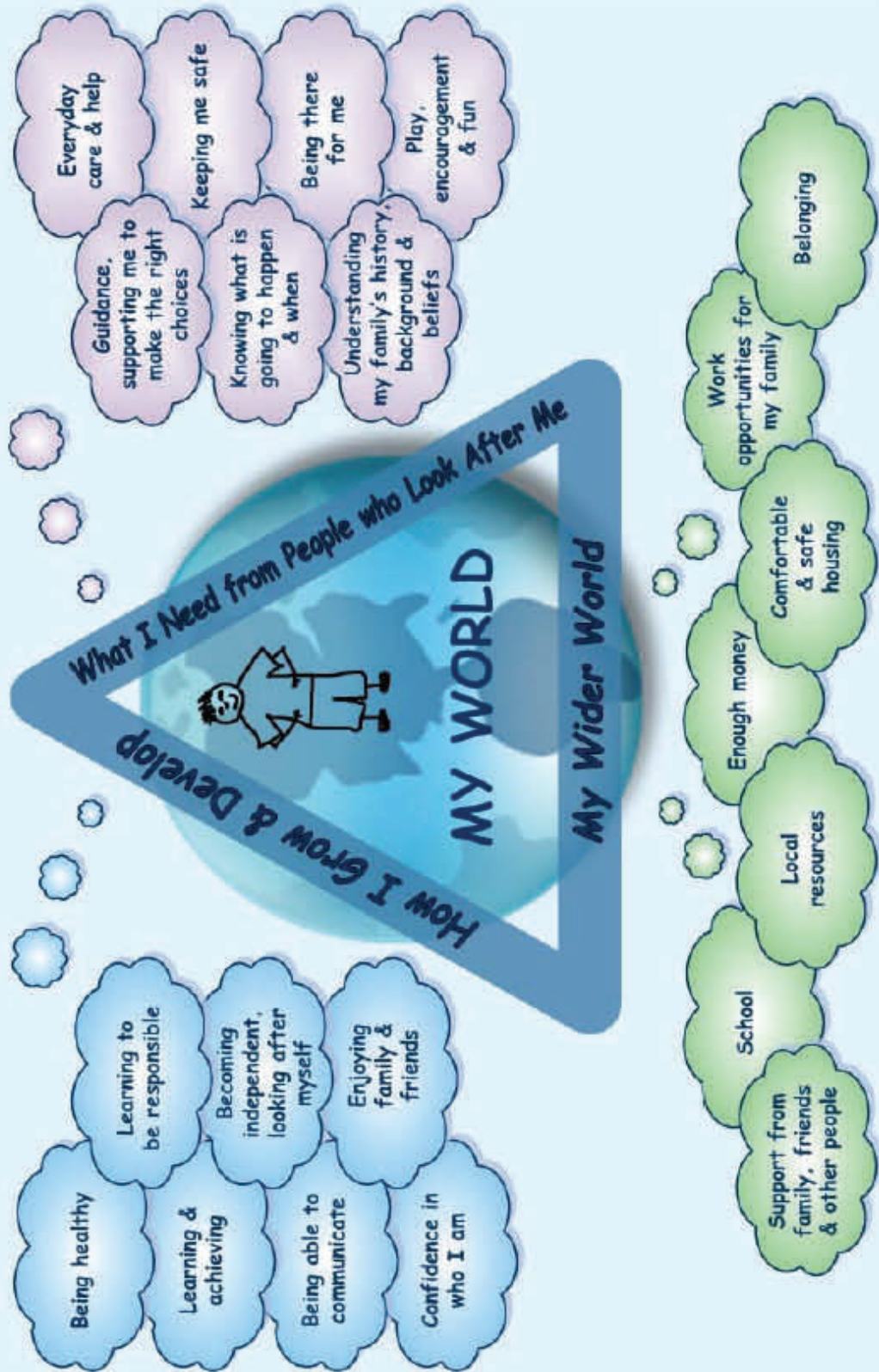
Please feel free to contact us:

**Alan Richards- Conon Family Resource Centre, Sellar Place, Conon Bridge, IV7 8HU,
Tel: 01349 861508**

Jonathan Turner-Ness House, Drummond Road, Inverness, IV2 4NZ, 01463 668683



My World Triangle



The whole child or young person: Physical, Social, Educational, Emotional, Spiritual & Psychological development