



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

An Roinn
**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Families Matter: *Supporting Families in Northern Ireland*

**The Department of Health, Social Services and
Public Safety's Proposals on a Regional Family
and Parenting Strategy**

Response Document

January 2007

Consultation Questions

Please respond to the consultation document by e-mail, letter or fax.

Responses should be sent to:

e-mail: familypolicyunit@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Family Policy Unit
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Room C4.22
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

Fax: 02890 520529

Responses must be received no later than **30th March 2007**.

(Please tick a box)	
I am responding:	<input type="checkbox"/> as an individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> on behalf of an organisation
Name:	Ms Brenda Martin
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Supporting Families

1. Do you agree that the aims stated are the right aims? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

2. Do you agree that the vision stated is the right vision? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

3. The document lists 10 principles that underpin the strategy. Do you agree with the principles stated? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

4. **The document lists 7 outcomes from the Children and Young People's strategy, 'Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge'. Do you agree that these are the right outcomes for this strategy? (Please tick)**

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

5. **The focus of this strategy is primarily on preventative and early intervention to support parents at particular times of need and at particular stages in the development of their child. Do you think that this is the appropriate scope for the strategy? (Please tick)**

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

From my work with Barnados designing their parent facilitator training and with coordianting Family learning within the Belfast Institute I believe that all parents will benefit from support staregies from as wide a range of providers as possible.

Priority Themes

6. Do you agree that Theme 1 – Parental Support is an appropriate theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

7. Do you agree the actions suggested in Theme 1 are appropriate actions to take under this theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

In particular support of 5.14 - As a deliverer of family learning and in particular positive parenting courses evidence shows that dealing with child behaviour issues and working through strategies for supporting parents has a positive effect on children's attitude to learning.

8. Do you agree that Theme 2 – Access to Information is an appropriate theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

In particular 5.31 - we have worked with over 300 parents in Belfast this year in Nursery and Primary schools who have stated they would not seek support from other agencies due to a preception of the stigma it may attract. It is vital to work in partnership with all agencies who deliver and have a proven track record int his field.

9. Do you agree the actions suggested in Theme 2 are appropriate actions to take under this theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

We are currently working on a multi-media project which would focus on supporting both parents/carers and professional working with 0 to 4's

10. Do you agree that Theme 3 – Assessment of Needs is an appropriate theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

11. Do you agree the actions suggested in Theme 3 are appropriate actions to take under this theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

12. Do you agree that Theme 4 – Information Sharing is an appropriate theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

13. Do you agree the actions suggested in Theme 4 are appropriate actions to take under this theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

14. Do you agree Theme 5 – Integration and Multi-Agency Working is an appropriate theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

5.46 - formal support is offered within Belfast Institute family learning projects and in addition to providing formal support networks they provide parent to parent support within nursery and school communities

15. Do you agree the actions suggested in Theme 5 are appropriate actions to take under this theme? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

Multi agency approach is vital to ensuring that all the key players collaborate with this very essential task of supporting parents. Having designed Barnardos PFT and worked at expanding this work within the Belfast Institute I feel that it is vital that valuable resources are not wasted in reinventing the wheel when good practice already exists.

Equality Implications

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires Departments and other public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to the above obligation, public authorities must also in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to

the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Where there is evidence or an indication that an existing policy is having an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, or that a proposed policy may cause an adverse impact, an **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** may need to be carried out on the policy. The process used by a public authority to determine whether an existing policy or new policy needs an EQIA is called **screening**.

The Department is now screening the proposals set out in this consultation document and as part of the screening process, the Department invites you to consider the following questions.

The Department is inviting responses to the following questions:

- 17. Are the actions or proposals, which are set out in this document likely to have an adverse impact on any group of people in terms of the nine equality dimensions? (Please tick)**

YES

NO

If yes, please state the reasons why.

- 18. Are you aware of any indication or evidence – qualitative or quantitative – that the actions or proposals in this document may**

have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity or good relations? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If yes, please state the reasons why and how these might be mitigated.

19. Does the proposed strategy and actions afford an opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations? (Please tick)

YES

NO

If no, please state the reasons why.

Additional Comments

20. Do you have any other comments, which you think might be relevant to the development of the strategy?

Working with parents within our Family Learning project has been an integral part of our curriculum development within community education over the past five years. We have accessed external funding to allow us to develop this vital work and we have developed the appropriate accreditation to accompany this. We have worked successfully with nursery, primary and community groups engaging them firstly in parenting education and then progressing them onto general family learning programmes which will support both parents and children. We feel that it important that all players within this field are consulted on the development of this strategy.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMENTS