

Young Inspectors REPORT 2010

Who are the young inspectors?

Every summer a team of 5 young people is selected by the Family Services and Social Work (FSSW) Participation Officer to inspect the social work service in Camden. The Young Inspectors are themselves service users aged from 16 to 20.

As well as getting the training and support to do the inspection, Young Inspectors also use their own knowledge and experience of getting help from social services. The team also gets views from other children and young people about the help and support they have received from the service.

The Young Inspectors then produce a report for staff and managers, setting out the views of children and young people together with recommendations and suggestions on ways to improve the service being inspected.

What have they inspected?

In summer 2010, the Young Inspectors inspected the School Social Work service.

The service started as a pilot scheme about 3-4 years ago. Its purpose was to improve multi agency working between schools and the social work service.

Each social worker from the service is linked with one of Camden's secondary schools and is based at the school on set days of the week. The team gives support to children, young people and families.

The Young Inspectors met social workers from the team to find out about the support the team provides, to help them develop the right approach to the inspection.

What did carrying out the inspection involve?

Young Inspectors were involved in the following key tasks:

- **Decide** what areas of the service were to be inspected. This involved talking with the social workers from the team.
- **Develop** a check list of what makes a good service for children and young people.
- **Write questions** to ask children and young people about the School Social Work service that would help to find out what makes a good service in their eyes.
- **Organise a programme** of activities that would help to find out young people's views.
- **Interview social workers** to find out their views about the service.
- **Make recommendations** for change based on the findings of the inspection.
- **Help write a report** for managers and young people on the findings of the inspection.

How did the Inspector's get young people's views?

Young Inspectors planned a consultation event packed with a range of fun activities and prizes to find out young people's views about the School Social Work service.

In addition, the team collected views by phoning young people who did not attend the event and by posting the questionnaire to those young people who did not get a chance to have their say.

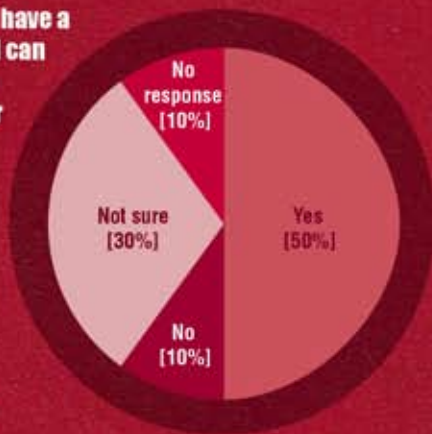
ABOUT SOCIAL WORKERS BEING IN A SCHOOL

1

Does it help to have a Social Worker at school? Why?

"Yes, because if I have a particular issue I can just go to talk to the social worker in the school period."

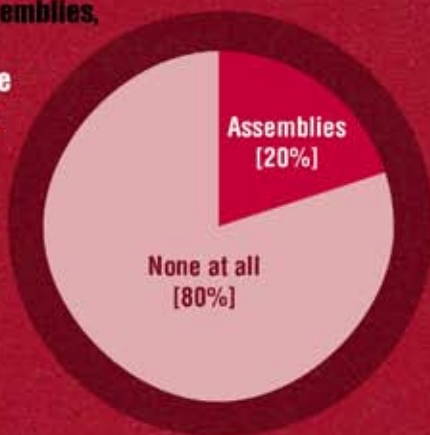
"Yes, because if something happened at home you can talk to the social worker in the morning."



2

Would you like your Social Worker to be involved in activities at school like: lessons, trips, assemblies, none at all?

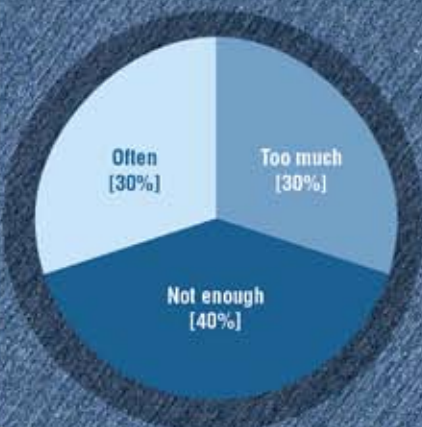
Most young people prefer not to have social workers involved in school activities.



ABOUT MEETINGS WITH A

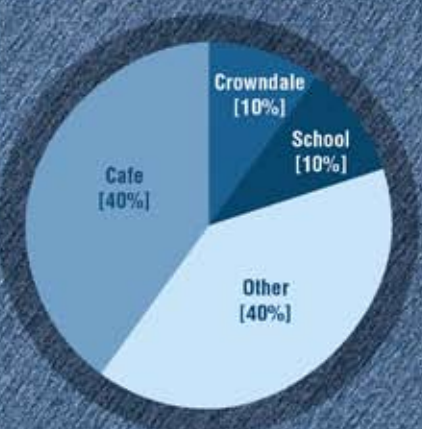
3

Do you see your Social Worker: often, not enough, too much?



5

Where would you like to have your meetings?



7

How would you like to be contacted by your Social Worker?

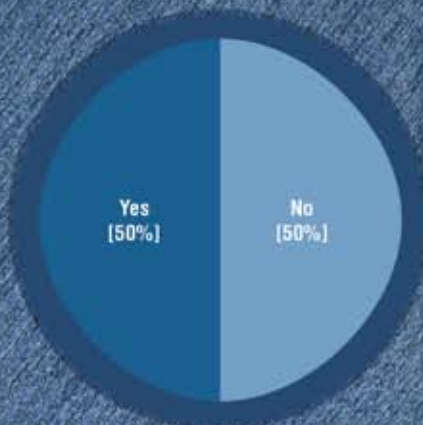


OUT THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICE?

SOCIAL WORKER

4

Do you have a choice of where you meet and what time?

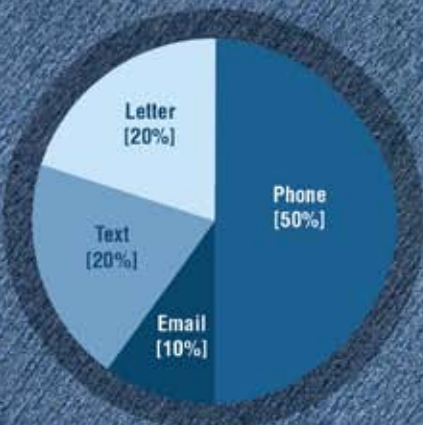


6

What is good about meetings with your Social Worker?

"It helps me look into problems in a different way and tend to always make me understand where it's all going wrong."

"You can be open about problems happening in or out of school."

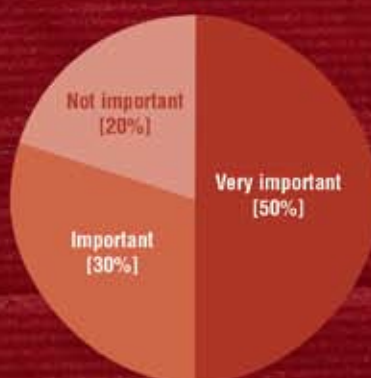


ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL WORKER

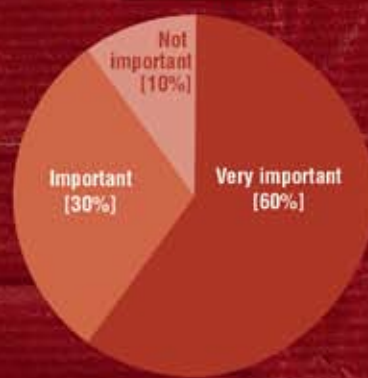
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Wish list – how important are the following qualities in a Social Worker? (Please add any qualities important to you)

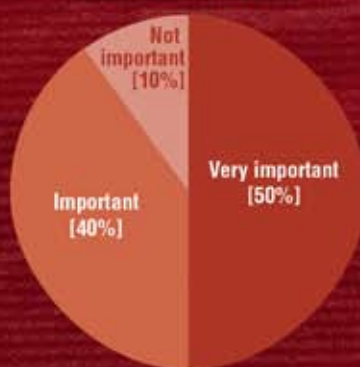
Friendly



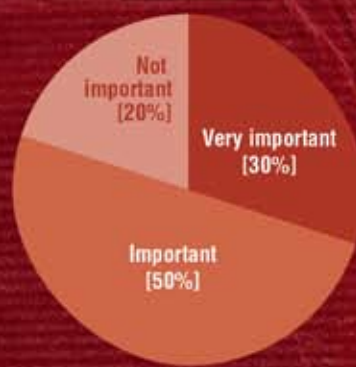
Trustworthy



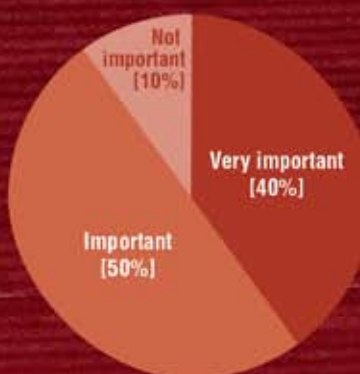
Understands CYP



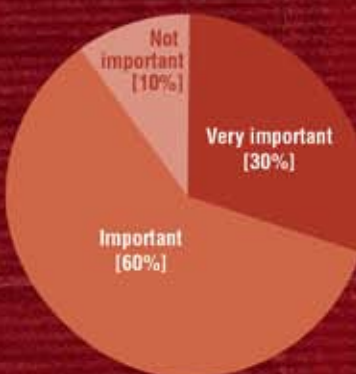
Patient



Honest



Helpful

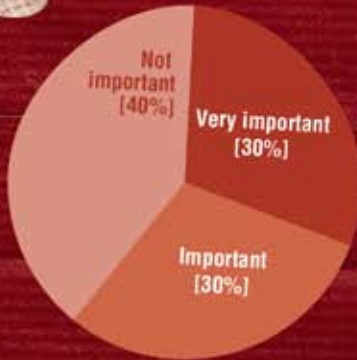


WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID ABOUT T

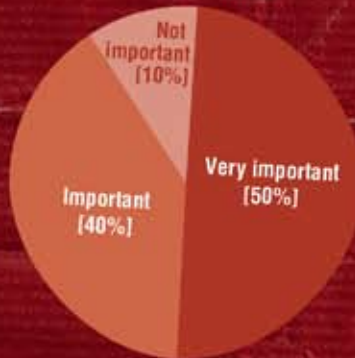
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ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL WORKER continued

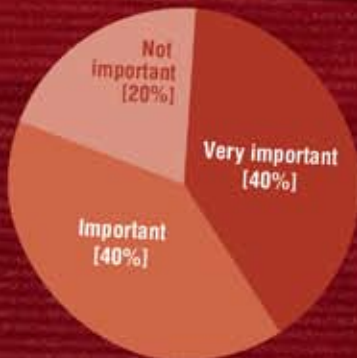
Practical



Considerate



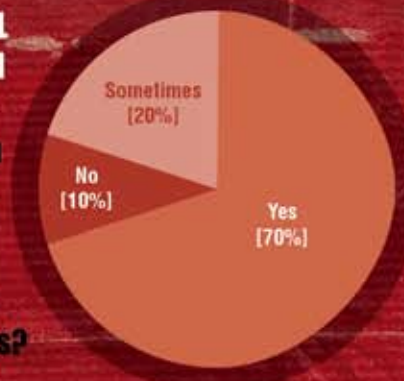
Passionate about the job sw does



ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL WORKER continued

9

Do you feel that you are listened to and have the chance to let the social worker know your wishes and feelings?



10

What are the best things about having a social worker in your school?

"You can go to her whenever you like and the social worker is always ready to take you in."

"I know I can see my social worker if I need to."

"The social worker helps new students to settle in at school."

11

What worries you about having a social worker in your school?

"My friends finding out that I have a social worker."

"Social workers want to know everything and I don't want them to get into my personal file at school."

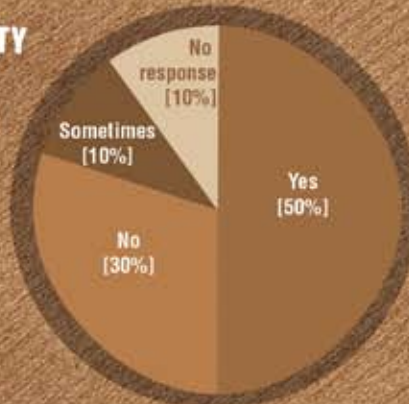
"You can be open about problems happening in or out of school."



THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICE?

TRUST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

12 Do you trust your social worker?



13 What helps you to have a good relationship with your Social Worker?

"When the social worker listens to me more and makes me feel I can rely on her."

"When a social worker has a friendly approach and when you can trust them."

14 What does confidentiality mean to you?

"When social workers must not tell anyone else, but if it is regarding your safety they may have to."

"I can tell my social worker anything and trust it stays between us no matter what."

"Comfortable and trusting with what you want to say."

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

15 What information would you like to get from your social worker?

"Nothing more; I am getting loads of information already."

"I would like to get a timetable of the times when I am going to meet my social worker."

16 What support would you like to get from your social worker?

"I have enough support. However, I would like my social worker to talk to my family more often."

"Support in more practical things I want to get done."

WHAT SOCIAL WORKERS SAID ABOUT BEING BASED IN SCHOOLS

Interviewing social workers from the schools teams

helped the young inspectors to find out what social worker's thought of the service they provided.

The interviews also helped the young inspectors to decide what questions to include in the young people's questionnaire.

1) WHAT IS THE BEST SETTING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS IN SCHOOLS?

- It is important not to isolate a social worker when working at a school. They should share a room with other professionals as this makes information sharing easier and helps in forming good relationships with other colleagues.
- More thought needs to be given to the location of the office within a school. Ideally, the office should be in an area that is easy to get to for young people.

2) DO YOU THINK THE SERVICE IS WELL KNOWN IN THE SCHOOL?

- Colleagues at school all know how to access the social work service. However, more needs to be done to advertise the service to young people.
- The service is used but there needs to be more recognition by most teachers. There should be more multi agency services meetings within the schools.

3) IS THE SERVICE WELL USED BY YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN THEY ARE IN SCHOOL?

- It is well used by those who have been referred to the service by the school and when social workers have a positive relationship with the young person.

4) WOULD IT HELP TO HAVE "FACE TIME" IN SCHOOL LIFE TO BE MORE VISIBLE?

- It would help to be more involved in activities in school if work time would allow. For example talking about social work as a career, being a guest speaker at a citizenship talk.

5) DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION TO GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCHOOL ABOUT THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICE? WOULD IT HELP TO HAVE A LEAFLET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICE?

- The team does not have a specific leaflet about the schools team. It would be good to have information about the social work team in the schools information pack. The leaflet could explain about the support offered by the social work service in schools.

6) WHERE DO YOU USUALLY MEET WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AT SCHOOL OR AT CROWDALE CENTRE?

- It is important to give young people options of where to meet depending on what they feel most comfortable with.

7) WHAT DO YOU DO TO MAKE SURE YOUNG PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE "CONFIDENTIALITY" OF THE SOCIAL WORK SERVICE?

- Confidentiality needs to be explained clearly to young people. Social workers need to break down the information to young people. It is also important not to make young people worried.

YOUNG INSPECTORS' VIEWS ON THE INSPECTION



Sadie

Sadie: I have had a great time I realised what my strengths are and that I can be very thorough with the tasks I am set. I definitely feel my ability to touch type has rocketed after all the computer work!



EMMANUEL

Emmanuel: Interviewing social workers helped me to gain a greater understanding of the role that social workers play in young people's lives. Also, the training session with Sunil Puri provided me with a newly found understanding of how a young person's childhood experience can have an influence on their later life.



JABEDA

Jabeda: Working within Camden council was the best thing I have done. I am proud to be in this project. I have met pretty lovely people who are really good to work with within a project like this. I have also learnt some new skills and how to work under pressure.

I also loved the team dance competition on the Nintendo Wii!



Phoebe

Phoebe: I have learnt new things, met new friends and had a great experience. I have learnt new facts about everyday life and aspects of child development which helped towards planning our consultation with young people. I intend to pursue a career as an organiser of events in the future.

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE THINK MAKES A GOOD SCHOOLS SOCIAL WORK SERVICE?

What makes a good service?

A good service makes children and young people happy with the support and help provided. The following are just a few things which they considered important in making a good service.

- **Confidential help** - young people want to know that the information they are sharing will not be given to anyone else.
- **Timely meetings** - young people need to have a say about the place and time of meetings.
- **Easy contact with the social worker** - young people need to know how to get in contact with their social worker.
- **Complaints information** - young people need to have the information about how to complain about the service or their social worker.
- **Access to Advocates** - advocates help young people's voices to be heard without feeling ignored or 'blanked'.
- **Friendly and welcoming service** - young people expect a friendly social worker to help them through any difficult situation. They need to know that social workers are there for them.
- **Information/advice** - giving the right information and advice to young people.
- **Support** - the right support for each individual young person.

Young Inspectors' Key Messages: for the improvement of the SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK service

MEETINGS

1. **Having a choice** of place and time of the meeting is really important to young people. Also, young people prefer to have the responsibility of leaving lessons for a meeting appointment rather than being called out by the social worker.
2. **Permission slips** signed by a social worker will help to relieve the embarrassment of the young person as they will not have to explain to the teacher in front of the class where they have been.
3. **School breaks and lunchtimes** are not favoured times for a meeting by young people. Be wary that the young person doesn't choose to keep meeting you in a specific lesson slot, as sometimes students use meetings so as not to be in a particular class.

SOCIAL WORKER WISH LIST

1. **Trusting relationship** with the social worker is what all young people value most. In the questionnaire responses, a trustworthy quality received the highest importance score from young people.

2. **Listening and keeping in touch** regularly is important to young people. Contacting young people directly by phone is the best way.
3. **Keeping the information in confidence** means different things to young people and is not always the same as what it means to social workers. The meaning of confidentiality needs to be broken down for young people, so that they can understand all its aspects.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOCIAL WORK SERVICE IN SCHOOLS

1. **Information** about the schools social work service could be included in the school information pack, school diary and on the schools website. This will help the service to be seen as one of the support services based in school and not working in isolation.
2. **A friendly leaflet for young people** will help them to understand what support and help they can get from the social worker based at their school.

Thank you to all the young people who gave their responses to the questionnaires and to the social workers who agreed to be interviewed by the young inspectors.

Emmanuel Phoebe
Tabeda Sadie Rebecca