



Iechyd Plant a Phobl Ifanc Health of Children and Young People

The Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People in Powys

by Dr Catherine Woodward (Director of Public Health) and
Stuart Bourne (Deputy Director of Public Health),
Powys Teaching Health Board

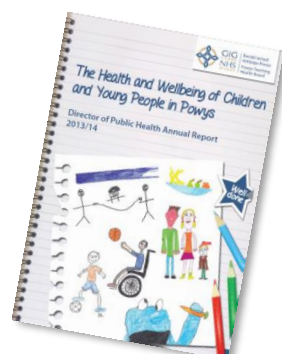
Setting / background

Important foundations for good health are created during pregnancy and the early years. Action to reduce health inequalities and improve population health and wellbeing must start before birth and continue across the life course.



Issues to be addressed

We needed to determine what were the main issues facing children and young people in Powys and what could be done to improve outcomes.



What we did

The 2013/14 Director of Public Health [annual report](#) focused on the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Powys. We looked at various sources of data and intelligence for this age group. We adopted a life course approach, looking at the different challenges for maternal and infant health, early years, school years and young adults.

Outcomes and learning

With the wealth of data and intelligence provided in the [Health of Children and Young People in Wales](#) coupled with other data and evidence sources, a number of recommendations were made. They included tackling issues around smoking during pregnancy, immunisation by socioeconomic status, healthy weights for children, outcome measures for healthy school and preschool schemes, NHS dental services for children and young people, local sexual health services and engaging with children and young people in Powys. It is still too early to know fully what impact these recommendations have made but we are already seeing improvements, including:

- Signposting and referral of women who smoke in pregnancy into stop smoking services has improved. This is the result of midwives being issued with carbon monoxide monitors for use with clients, introduction of an “opt out” approach to referral to smoking cessation services and Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training for midwives.
- The rate of teenage conceptions continues to decline, with an almost 50% reduction in the rate between 2004 and 2013.
- The identification of a reduction in overall uptake of NHS dental services in children and young people has led to a wider piece of work investigating access to dental services for children and young people - including inequitable access.

There has been an increase in activity to ensure pregnant women are being referred to stop smoking services appropriately.