

Annex 5

Summary for Families

Key points for Families

What can you do?

- Make healthy choices and encourage your family to be healthy.
- If you find parenting hard – seek help – we are getting better at knowing how to help and support parents.
- Communicating with your family really matters – where there is open communication we know that young people are less likely to try smoking and other unhealthy choices.
- Praising your children helps – we know that where this happens young people have higher self-esteem, do better academically and make fewer unhealthy choices.

Key Findings

1. England has poor outcomes for children and young people with respect to how long they live, how healthy they are and how rich children do compared to poorer ones. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) is therefore encouraging more research about how to improve this and how to involve more young people in clinical trials. CMO wants to make sure that experts have an opportunity every year to look at how much this has changed and to suggest to government how to make further improvements.
2. We need to encourage the public sector and other institutions to work together more closely to support children and young people. CMO is therefore asking for the Cabinet Office supported by Public Health England, and the Children's Commissioner, to consider initiating an annual National Children's Week.
3. Early action matters: the economic case is increasingly clear that investing money in our young people is wise and CMO is asking commissioners to move towards a focus on early action.
4. We need to ensure that efforts to improve outcomes are underpinned by improving the lives of all, with more resources targeted at the more disadvantaged. With this in mind, CMO is asking for a refresh of the current guidance on what we expect from local services about how to keep children healthy: the Healthy Child Programme. CMO is also asking local councils, Public Health England and local authorities and schools to identify innovative ways to make their sports facilities more available. Nutritional guidance is also to be re-examined.
5. CMO has noted the evidence on the value of the views of children and young people and seeks to harness this through the development of a "health deal", building on the recent government pledge on health outcomes and pre-existing work. CMO has also recommended that Health Education England ensure that the workforce receive necessary training on age appropriate care.

6. CMO seeks to develop further the evidence base for how to nurture resilience in young people, and how this can assist in educational attainment.
7. CMO seeks to mirror the recent announcement by Secretary of State, such that all young people with a long term condition have a named GP to coordinate their care. Similarly CMO believes that responsibility to the whole family should be a professional responsibility.
8. CMO is also asking those that regulate places that care for looked-after children, like Ofsted and the health equivalent (CQC), to check every year that they are doing the best they can for this vulnerable group.
9. To aid commissioning CMO seeks to develop better data around health and wellbeing in children and young people and in particular mental health problem prevalence.

Background

Every year the CMO for England produces an Annual Report in two volumes. Volume One is a surveillance document, commenting on many health issues. Volume Two is a close look at particular areas of concern. This year Volume Two focuses on children and young people. The report is based on the evidence of experts, who provided information about the life course stages. In addition, four other groups of children and young people were focused on: those with neurodevelopmental disabilities, those with mental health problems, looked-after children, and those in the youth justice system. CMO was clear that the voices of children and young people should feature strongly in her report. The report also looks at the economic argument for early intervention. The report contains an Annex, 'Atlas of Variation in Healthcare for Children and Young People'. This is a sizeable annex which describes some of the variation in health and healthcare across England.

In her report, the CMO makes recommendations on how to improve the health of children and young people and why this is important to do.

For a summary of the full report, please see Chapter 1 of the 'Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012, Our Children Deserve Better: Prevention Pays', available to download or view online via www.gov.uk