

Narrowing the gap is a major programme for the Children's Trust. It is part of the LAA so that there is added value on top of the existing partnership of the Children's Trust; in essence to ensure that we 'think child, think family, think community' as a strategic partnership. The basket of indicators selected against the overall ambitions of narrowing the gap is broadly amber/red whilst the work in hand to improve outcomes overall is amber.

The Stepping Stones programme is a three to five year strategic programme that will develop the continuum of provision to meet a continuum of need for all children and young people. Some children with complex needs will require access to specialist support in additionally resourced provision or special schools that are more regionally based. As part of the vision Stepping Stones seeks to promote the notion of early intervention and will explore at every opportunity how interventions targeted earlier and at a lower level will prevent the escalation of need over a child or young person's lifetime.

Action plans, as previously discussed, are in place both for the whole of the CYPP and for the specific areas with target indicators. The area of real concern is around NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training), Devon is doing well to hold its own here but there are two concerns:

- the full effect is not yet seen in terms of reducing opportunities
- the long term effect on the whole lives of young people who are affected by this is well documented and is appropriate territory for the Devon Strategic Partnership thinking decades ahead

This has got to be seen in the context of recent research that indicates that 15% young people who are 'NEET' are likely to die in the next ten years of their life.

Another, and related area, is the newly agreed priority area for the CYPP which is reducing child poverty and how this fits into our joined up working.