

Ulster American Folk Park provides a historical setting for planning future children's services

21 October 2013

Parents, children and young people had their say on future services for children and young people at a Halloween-themed family fun and information fair held this week at the Ulster American Folk Park.



Christy Johnston aged 2 enjoying a Halloween themed family fun and information fair at the Folk Park

The event, organised by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), brought local families, children and young people together with representatives from statutory, voluntary and community organisations to discuss the services currently available to support children and young people and how these can be improved in future. This was the first of a series of events taking place across Northern Ireland which will help inform the Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan 2015-2018. A special meeting of the Parent Reference Group on the day highlighted a range of issues affecting parents from Omagh, Fermanagh, Strabane, Limavady and Derry.

Kieran Downey, Director of Women's and Children's Services with the Western Health and Social Care Trust said: "Everyone at this event is committed to promoting the wellbeing of children and young people in West. To achieve this we all need to involve children and young people in decisions that affect their lives. We need to listen genuinely to children and young people, give careful consideration to their views and use their insights to inform our work in meaningful and respectful ways. By doing so, we will demonstrate our respect for them and their families as valued members of our communities and gain important information that will make our work and services more relevant to children and young people."

Orla Conway, co-chair of the CYPSP's Omagh Locality Planning Group, said: "We are really pleased to see so many people sharing their views today. These will help CYPSP to plan the support that families need. It is only by working together that we will make a difference in the lives of our children and young people. I would encourage anyone who could not attend today to get involved and contact Omagh Locality Planning Group directly to share their views."



The Parents Reference Group sharing their views on issues and family support services in the western area

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) is a multi-agency partnership, led by the Health and Social Care Board. It includes the leadership of key statutory agencies and community and voluntary organisations that have a responsibility for improving the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

For more information about the CYPSP in Omagh please contact Priscilla Magee on 028 6632 4181 or visit www.cypsp.org

If you are interested in joining the CYPSP Parent Reference Group in your area please contact Maria Herron on 028 7137 2006.