Your Guide to the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services
Why do we need a National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services?

The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales is a Welsh Assembly Government document. Some people call it the Children’s NSF. It has been written to make sure that there are high quality services to keep ALL children and young people as healthy as possible and safe from harm.

This leaflet tells children and young people, their parents and carers how it will affect the services they use.

What is a National Service Framework?

A “National Service Framework” or “NSF” is a guide for people who work in services like health and social care. It shows them the way they must work and what they have to provide. It will also tell the people who use services what they are entitled to and the way they must be treated.

Some NSF’s deal with the services used by a group of people (for example, there is one for older people as well as the one for children, young people and maternity services). Others look at services used by people with the same health condition (for example, those with diabetes or heart conditions).

NSF’s are written to make sure that everybody gets the same good services, wherever they live.

Whilst the Children’s NSF is mainly about healthcare and social services, it also includes other things like housing, education, transport and leisure because these help to make sure that children and young people are kept safe and healthy.
What does Children, Young People and Maternity Services mean?

The Children’s NSF applies to children and young people from before the time they are born until they reach age 18. Some young people will need to go on using the same services after their 18th birthday because they are disabled, have an on-going mental health problem, a long term health condition or have just left care. The Children’s NSF will also apply to them.

There is also a chapter on maternity services. This is so that pregnant women or those who have recently had a baby receive high quality services to make sure that children have the best possible start in life.
Making Sense of the Document

Chapters
The document is divided into chapters. There are different chapters to deal with the needs of different groups of children and young people.

Each chapter is made up of a number of different sections called standards.

Standards
Each standard deals with a particular issue such as Access to Services (this means where you will find a service and who can use it) and Quality of Services.

Key Actions
Standards are made up of Key Actions. These say exactly what services there should be and what they should look like.
How do I find the parts that refer to me?

Chapter 2 – Key Actions Universal to All Children
Looks at the services which all children and young people need to help them stay healthy and safe including promoting health and wellbeing, preventing accidents and injury and safeguarding children.

Chapter 3 – Maternity Services
Deals with the care and services that are available to women whilst they are pregnant and when they have recently had a baby. It also looks at services for newborn babies.

Chapter 4 – Children and Young People with Mental Health Problems and Disorders
Covers services for children and young people who have mental health problems or disorders.

Chapter 5 – Disabled Children and Young People
Looks at services to support disabled children and young people and their families.

The chapter on disabled children and young people includes a standard for young people who are about to change to adult services (also known as “transition”). This standard will also apply to all young people who need to continue to use the same type of services after they become adults. This could be because they have a long-term illness or have an ongoing mental illness or disorder or because they are in local authority care.

Chapter 6 – Children and Young People in Special Circumstances
There are many reasons why a child or young person would be thought of as being in special circumstances.

There is a full list given in the Children’s NSF, but examples are:
• Children and young people living away from home, in care, or with foster parents.
• Children and young people who are refugees or asylum seekers.
• Children and young people from minority ethnic groups.
• Children and young people who have been excluded from school.

Chapter 7 – Acute and Chronic Illness and Injury
Is about services for children and young people who become ill or suffer injuries and those who have long term health conditions.
Who will be responsible for the Children’s NSF?

The responsible organisations (for example NHS Trusts, Local Health Boards or Local Authorities) are shown next to each key action in the NSF document.

In Wales, each of the 22 Local Authorities has a Children and Young People’s Partnership, made up from organisations that provide services used by children and young people including schools, healthcare, social services, the police and voluntary organisations. These Partnerships are responsible for writing Children and Young People’s Plans (CYPPs) that set out how they will work together to improve services. They are also responsible for making sure that the NSF is being followed in their area. Information on the CYPP can be found in Shared Planning for Better Outcomes on the Welsh Assembly Government website: www.wales.gov.uk

Senior staff from the Welsh Assembly Government and the Welsh Local Government Association will lead a group to keep a check on how the Children’s NSF is working right across Wales. This group is called the NSF Implementation Working Group. It is made up of people whose job is to deliver health and social care for children and young people with representatives from local health boards, NHS trusts and local authorities. There are also representatives from local education authorities and voluntary organisations.

The Welsh Assembly Government published a paper called Children and Young People: Rights to Action in 2004. This set out how all the Government’s policies would deliver children’s rights, based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Government said it would ensure that all children and young people had the best possible start in life and the best possible physical and mental, social and emotional health, including freedom from abuse, victimisation and exploitation. The NSF will help to make this happen through the planning processes of local Children and Young People’s Partnerships.

How will they know if they are making progress?

Every year, those who are responsible for key actions will use a Self-Assessment Audit Tool (SAAT) to measure their own progress. This will allow them to see where they are performing well and where they need to make more effort. The information is used, with other statistics, to write their CYPP.

There are already systems in place to check how well those responsible for the key actions are working and for making sure that what is fed into the SAAT is correct.

The Welsh Assembly Government will check how well the Children and Young People’s Partnerships are working by looking at the results of the SAAT and what is said in the CYPP.
An Implementation Support Manager has been appointed for two years to guide and help those who are responsible for completing the SAAT and to make sure good ideas about the NSF are shared as well as telling the Implementation Working Group about developments.

**How long will it be before the Children’s NSF takes effect?**

Some key actions will mean that new services will have to be set up or that staff will have to be trained. This could take a long time and so, the Children’s NSF is a ten year programme.

During the ten years that the Children’s NSF is in place, things may happen which will affect services for children and young people (there could be changes to the law for example). Because of this, the Welsh Assembly Government will update the NSF every three years to ensure that it stays relevant to the children and young people of Wales.
Where can I get a copy of the Children’s NSF?

You can download a free copy from the NHS Wales website (www.wales.nhs.uk/nsf) or you can get a free copy by contacting

Children’s Health and Wellbeing Team
Directorate for Children’s Health and Social Services
Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ
Telephone 029 2082 3657
E-mail: childrensnsfrequests@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Who can give me more information about the Children’s NSF?

If you would like more information about the Children’s NSF, please e-mail the Children’s Health and Wellbeing Team:
childrensnsfrequests@wales.gsi.gov.uk
or write to us at the address above.
We will respond to you within 5 working days.

This leaflet was written for the Welsh Assembly Government by Martin Davies of Contact a Family Wales