

OLDHAM PARTNERSHIP – COMMISSIONED ACTIVITY

LAA BLOCK:

HOUSING

Activity Name:	<i>Young People's Homelessness Mediation Service</i>
Activity Reference:	
Organisation Responsible:	Depaul Trust
Activity Manager:	Judith Saffer 0161 232 0604 judith.saffer@depaultrust.org
Start Date:	1st April 2007
End Date:	31st March 2008

Summary:

1. Depaul Trust will create Oldham Reconnect taking into account the views of partners in the local area to ensure that the service meets local need.
2. The service will be accessible to all people aged 16 to 25 in Oldham, and to their families, who are experiencing relationship and communication problems which may lead to, or already has led to homelessness for the young person. Information will be available in Urdu and Bengali and other languages wherever possible.
3. All young people aged 16 – 25 who present at FCHO should be referred [exceptions could be made e.g. where there are no family members in this country] so that the Reconnect worker can explain and offer the service. Take up of the service will be voluntary and should not influence any housing decision.
4. The service will respond to referrals on the day of referral, and in person, wherever possible. Where there is an address but no telephone number a letter will be sent. Where there is a phone number, contact will be attempted for up to a week, after which a letter will be sent. In either case, no further action will be taken if there is no response within 2 weeks.
5. Referrals will be taken from a range of partner agencies and will be user led, identifying the support needed as soon as possible, and signposting where appropriate to other services, either as an alternative to the mediation service or to complement it. In addition, advice or support may be given to contact or trace family members.
6. A Reconnect worker will deliver the service on a one to one basis initially with the first meeting held with the party referred. Depending on the circumstances, this may be followed by further one to one meetings with the young person and their parent/carer, informal family meetings and more structured mediation sessions.

7. Meetings will take place at the referral agency, young person's hostel, family home or other agreed venue. Any home visits will be carried out in accordance with the Lone Working Policy [see appendix 2].
8. The Reconnect worker will maintain records and provide monitoring information, giving feedback to referrers about any relevant information and outcomes. Confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with the agreement of the young person or family member, except where there is concern about child protection.
9. The Reconnect service will be publicised and promoted by attendance at meetings and forums to assist agencies to understand the service and make appropriate referrals.
10. Depaul Trust will ensure that the worker receives the appropriate training to carry out the role. This would include mediation training, child protection, POVA, diversity and managing conflict. The worker should also be able to access any in-house training via OMBC on homelessness assessment processes and relevant housing legislation.
11. The worker will be based at Porter St, and will be managed by the Manchester Reconnect Manager. The worker will maintain a regular presence at FCHO and other partner agencies, including a drop-in service at Connexions. The worker will work 35 hours per week with flexibility for evening work to meet the needs of clients.
12. In the event of an unplanned absence, cover for urgent casework & drop-in commitments will be provided by the Manchester team whenever possible. In the event of annual holidays, the worker will ensure drop-ins are cancelled & referral partners advised when the service will be resumed.
13. A dedicated e-mail & telephone line will be available for users of the service, in order to contact the mediator directly & in confidence. Referrals can be made by telephone, fax or email. If the worker is unavailable and the matter is urgent, callers will be redirected to the manager in Manchester.
14. The Oldham Reconnect Worker & Judith Saffer will attend a monthly steering group meeting & prepare agreed reports on statistical performance of the project in Oldham.
15. Any concerns arising must be directed to the Housing Strategy Team initially.

LAA Indicator:	Work towards target:
Reduce levels of homelessness acceptances	(see above)