

# Young People's Health Strategy for Nottinghamshire

Draft - September 2015

## **Introduction**

The population of young people between the ages of 10 to 19 has been described as having ‘unparalleled potential’ to influence the future of this country over the next 50 years, and yet young people can remain ‘nearly invisible’ in our health services (Chief Medical Officer of the United Kingdom, 2012). We know that young people have experienced the least improvement in health status of any age group in the British population over the last 50 years, and we know that adolescence is the most significant period for the initiation of a wide range of health behaviours, positive and negative, including those associated with the largest health burdens in adult life (Chief Medical Officer of the United Kingdom, 2012).

This Strategy is intended to define ‘where we want to get to’ regarding improving the health of young people in Nottinghamshire, as well as detailing some elements of ‘how we are going to get there’. It does not replace existing strategies on reducing teenage pregnancy, child and adolescent mental health or obesity (for example), but it is intended to complement them, and to articulate a clear vision for what we want to achieve when trying to improve the health of young people, and, by extension, the health of the entire population of Nottinghamshire.

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## Vision for Young People's Health

We want young people to be **healthy** and **safe**, and **empowered** to live their lives and make choices that benefit them and others. We want young people to have quick and easy access to all the knowledge and advice they want to help them make these choices

We want young people to have a loud **voice** in shaping health services, and we want to **empower** young people to be confident users and consumers of all aspects of our services – to be able to tell us how they feel, what's good, what needs to improve, and how we can better serve their needs.

Whenever a young person walks through the door of a clinic, visits their GP, speaks to a health professional on the phone or in any way interacts with a health service, we want them to feel **welcomed** and **respected**, to be **listened to** and to be **confident** that their enquiry or health concern will be dealt with professionally and sensitively. Young people in Nottinghamshire should be fully involved in all decisions relating to their care, and if they want to be seen by a health professional alone, with a parent or a friend for support then that should be accommodated whenever possible.

Health services in Nottinghamshire should always be **inclusive** – young people need to know that they are welcomed, valued and respected whatever their ethnicity, religion, gender or sexuality.

If a young person in Nottingham faces a health issue, we want them to be able to find both the **information** and **support** that they need quickly and simply. Ideally we want to see a single, Nottinghamshire-wide **online** identity for young people's health so that young people can know that they're in the **right place**, and that they can **trust** the services and advice offered.

## What we did

We needed to know what Nottinghamshire's young people priorities and concerns were on the subject of 'health', so we asked them.

Young people in Nottinghamshire are already involved in an important 'Mystery Shopper' project to evaluate our healthcare services, where they call health services and visit premises and websites to understand just how 'young people friendly' these

services are. The results of this work told us that there are some excellent services in our county, but also some areas that could be improved. Importantly, young people found that there wasn't much information available on how to access services, especially online, and that some was out-of-date. A film made about the results of the mystery shopper programme can be seen at this link: <https://vimeo.com/124552641>

We went to representative groups of young people, such as the Nottinghamshire Young People's Board, and we went to groups with particular experience of health services, such as the Nottingham University Hospitals Youth Forum. We asked young people to help us draft a survey that we could use to understand the views of a wide range of people, and we asked them to help us distribute this survey to as many young people as possible. Around 1,200 answered this call and gave us their views – an overwhelming response. Wherever we went we found young people that were intelligent, articulate, and able to not only share their own perspective but also to point out some of the gaps in provision that we will aim to address.

## What have young people said?

Young people have told us that **emotional and mental wellbeing** are big priorities for them. We want to give young people in Nottinghamshire support and encouragement to know that **it's normal** to find things tough, and when they need help we want to provide a single, accessible source for all the information they need to help them get it.

We know that **confidentiality** is important to young people – they should be able to use health services without fear that anyone unwanted may discover something about their life or health merely by overhearing them or even seeing them whilst they attend a service.

One thing that young people have told us is that **information** is really important; they see no reason why they should not be able to find **up-to-date**, **relevant** information about health issues or services **quickly** and **easily**.

## The Young People's Health Survey

In order to ensure we listened to the views of as many young people as possible, we created a young people's health survey. Available online, and in paper copies, this survey asked young people what they considered important for 'health', what they want more information on and how they would like this information. Almost 1,000 young people completed this survey, with over 200 more contributing to the question 'what the most important thing for being healthy?'

When asked this question, young people consistently prioritised emotional and mental health and wellbeing, alongside diet, exercise and being at a healthy weight. When asked how they would access information about health, young people's first instinct appears to search for it online, even before some would discuss it with parents, carers or friends. Importantly, when asked to pick the most important topic for a young people's health website, there was an overwhelming response, with a clear majority opting for 'emotional health and depression' and only about 10% selecting 'sexual health' or 'drugs, alcohol and smoking.' More detail is given below in charts 1, 2 and 3.

Young people were also asked an open question requesting that they tell us anything else they think is important; here we highlight a few responses that demonstrate the importance of emotional and mental wellbeing to young people:

*"...Young people really need to be educated about mental health and told they are not alone or weird...."*

*"...I do a lot of sport so staying fit and healthy is important to me..."*

*"...Part of being healthy is being happy so helping to deal with depression or bullying or obesity can help to become healthy. If you're happy, you're more likely to be healthy and enjoy life..."*

*"...Body image issues, eating disorders; it is vital to diagnose ED's early on... Perhaps if I had been diagnosed when I was 11, I would be fully recovered by now, and my childhood wouldn't have been completely stolen by psychological illness..."*

*"...People need to know about depression, self-harming, and eating disorders, because loads of young people do it or have it...."*

Chart 1: Categorised responses to the question 'What's the most important thing for being healthy?'

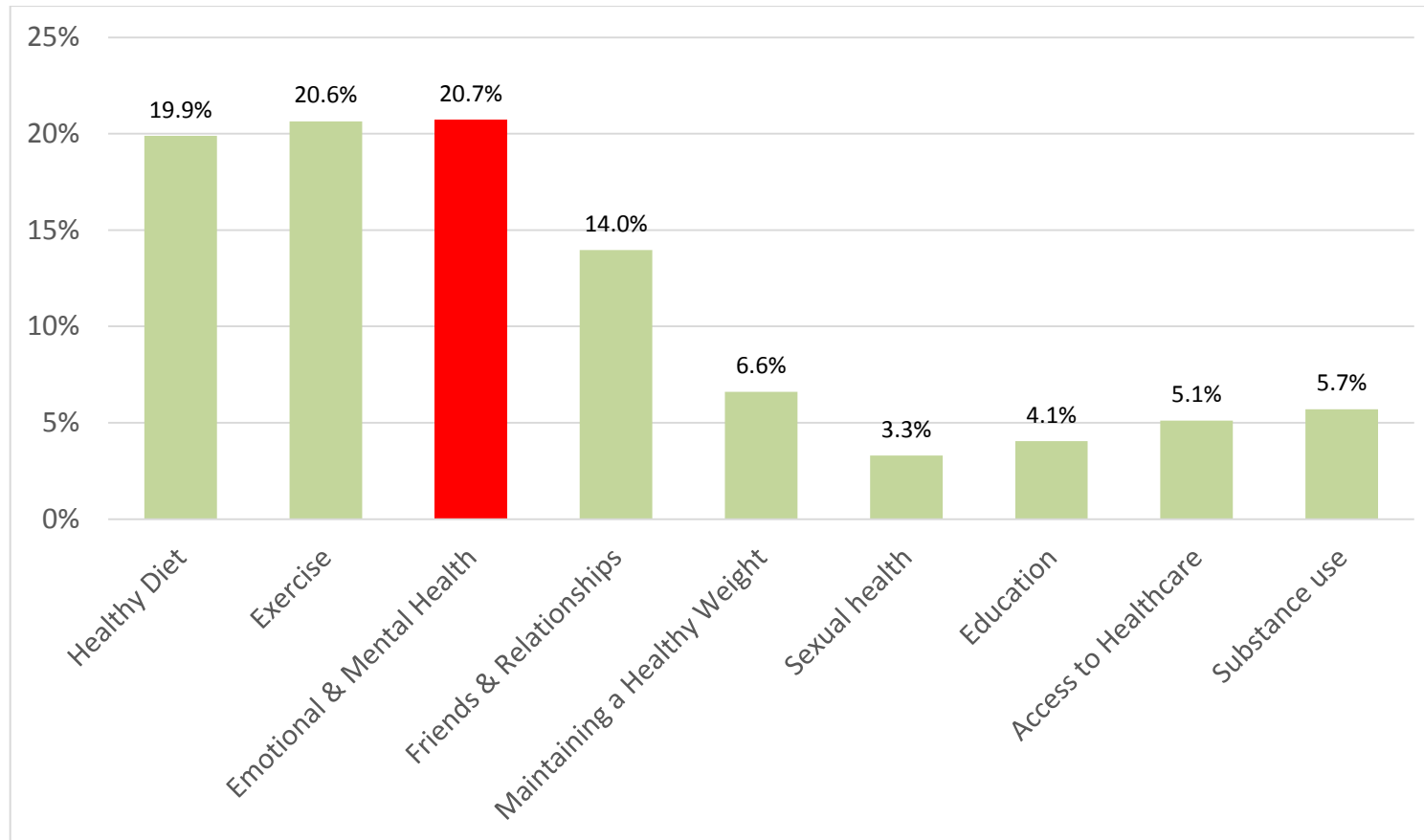


Chart 2: Responses to the question 'Let's say you want to know something about your health, your body, or about sex or relationships. How likely would you be to...?'

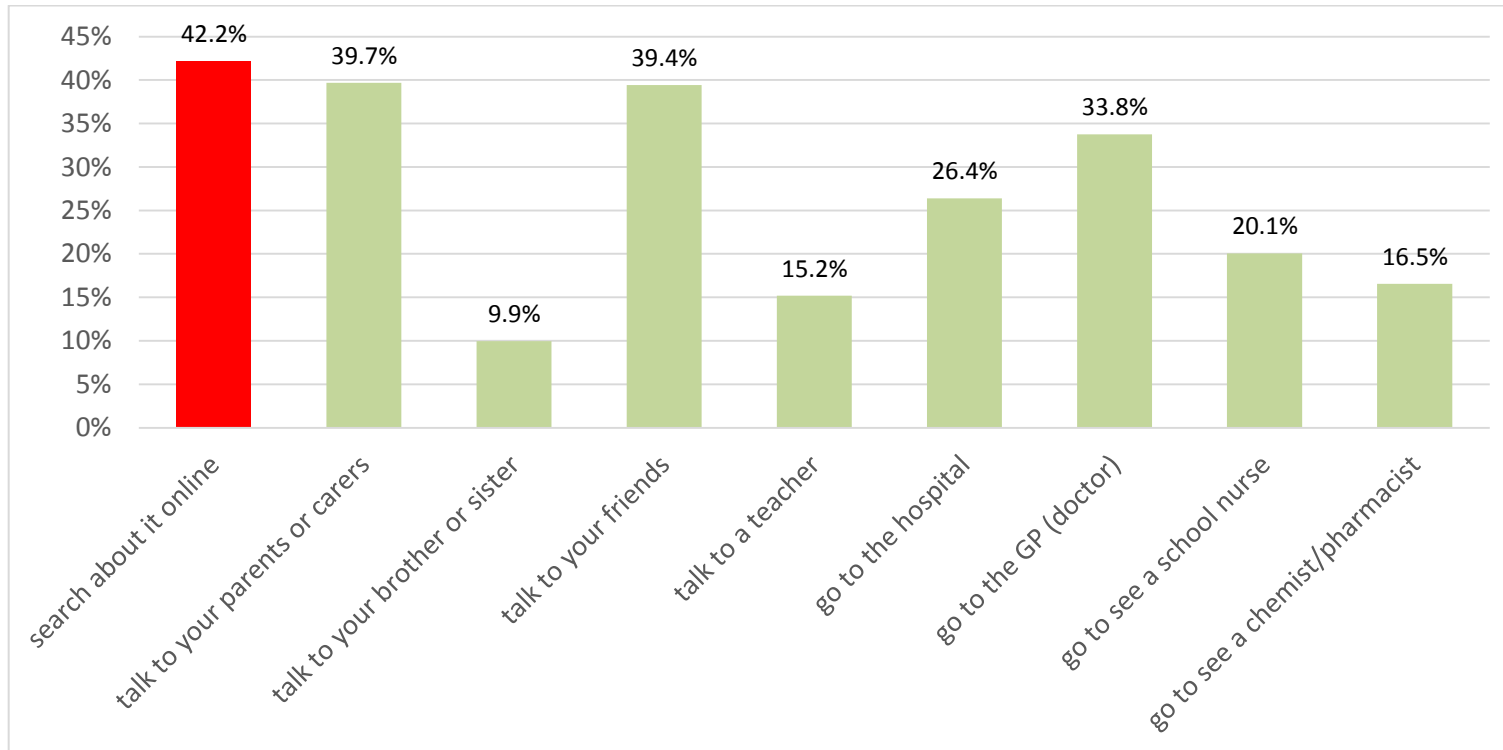
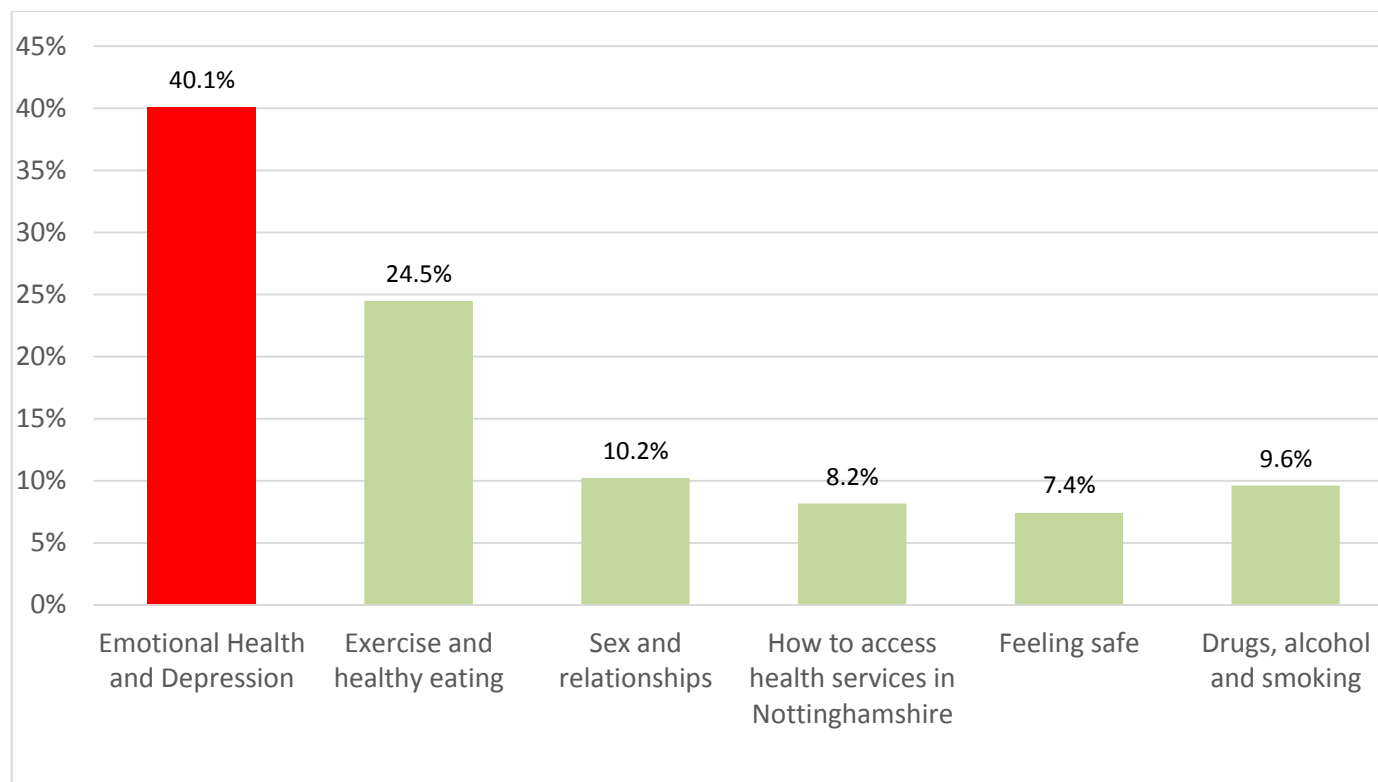




Chart 2: Responses to the question 'What's the most important topic for a 'Young People's Health' website?'



## **Measuring Success**

There are a wide range of health and related services for young people in Nottinghamshire, and some clear examples of excellent practice. Young people have highlighted some areas where we could do better, and our ambition for this strategy is that, by 2019, young people will tell us that there have been improvements in these areas. Very simply, if young people don't consider these aspects to have improved, we will not have succeeded in our aims. This will be measured through continuing 'mystery shopper' evaluation, as well as through ongoing participation and engagement with young people. We would recommend that further survey work be conducted to assess young people's satisfaction with health services in Nottinghamshire every 2 years. This will allow local performance indicators to be created, along with targets, to be monitored by the Young People's Health Steering Group, Children's Trust Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **Overarching Recommendations**

- That young people are always valued, listened to, respected and treated with dignity by health services in Nottinghamshire, and are never seen as less important than young children or older adults.
- That the central importance of the adolescent period in developing positive physical, mental and emotional wellbeing be recognised by all health and allied professionals
- That the views, voices and needs of young people are proactively sought and considered whenever health services or systems are being designed or evaluated in Nottinghamshire
- That health services in Nottinghamshire are always inclusive and specifically consider the needs and concerns of LGBTQI<sup>1</sup> young people, as well as young people of different cultures, ethnicities or who have different religious beliefs.
- That professionals in Nottinghamshire prioritise the safety of young people, understand the importance of child protection in their role, and are aware that no young person who is a victim of exploitation or abuse can be considered to consent to their own mistreatment.
- That health services in Nottinghamshire understand the central importance of emotional and mental wellbeing for young people's health.

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<sup>1</sup> Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex

## **Detailed Recommendations**

### **Emotional and Mental Wellbeing**

Young people in Nottinghamshire have been clear about how important emotional and mental wellbeing are for their health. There is a clear need for further support for young people

#### **What We Recommend:**

- That commissioners explore the possibility of providing additional direct support for young people around emotional and mental wellbeing. Online and remote options such as telephone support should be considered as part of this.
- Existing services that provide support for young people should be protected where possible
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) should be an integral part of teaching in all secondary schools
- Online information provision for young people should contain high quality content designed to signpost & support young people who want help regarding emotional and mental wellbeing
- Any further provision of support for young people should be developed alongside, and integrated with, the Schools Health Hub, which will provide the key link with schools around physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

### **Young People Friendly Health Services**

#### **What We Recommend:**

- Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board develop a Nottinghamshire-specific young people's health service brand which can link online presence with physical facilities. This brand will be underpinned by the 'You're Welcome' criteria and will demonstrate to young people that services are 'young-people friendly.'
- An online source of information (such as an app, and/or website or similar) be developed that provides young people with all the information they need to access health services in Nottinghamshire, and that uses the Nottinghamshire-specific young people's health service brand. This site should have high-quality, regularly updated content that empowers young people to engage with health services and provides a forum for online dissemination of health information relevant to young people. Further recommendations relating to this project can be seen in the 'digital engagement' section.

- The 'You're Welcome' Criteria be fully implemented across all Nottinghamshire health services that interact with young people. We would recommend that organisations use the 'You're Welcome' self-assessment toolkit as part of their performance management process.
- Services promote that they have implemented the 'You're Welcome' criteria through use of the Nottinghamshire-specific young people's health branding.
- All staff who may directly encounter young people as part of their role be trained in confidentiality and communication / engagement with young people – see **staff development**
- Services should ensure that reception areas are appropriately designed to be friendly, welcoming and that young people are treated like adults and made to feel comfortable. There should be a confidential space for young people to discuss their concerns along with greater clarity on confidentiality policies.
- The 'Mystery Shopper' work, where young people assess health services against the 'You're Welcome' criteria, continue on at least a bi-annual basis. Feedback from this will then be provided to organisations and stakeholders.
- That a 'professionals' section of the Young People's Health online resource (see digital engagement) be created to provide a single point of access to signposting information for professionals to guide young people to the services that can best help them. Pathways should be included (where available) so that professionals can always answer a young person's enquiry and inform them as to the next steps in seeking a solution.
- Young people have highlighted frustrations around the practicalities of being referred from primary to secondary care. Young people can find themselves explaining their conditions over and over again. We recommend that health professionals ensure information is shared appropriately, and used effectively, in line with current information governance regulations and guidance.
- Specific young-people services in hospitals (for example Nottingham University Hospitals Youth Service) are valued, and young people would like to see young-people specific services in hospitals and health services across Nottinghamshire. We recommend these services continue and are used as a model for further young-people friendly services in secondary care where possible.

## Confidentiality

### What We Recommend:

- Managers and clinicians should ensure that young people's health services are both confidential and safe. It is important to promote an understanding of the importance of both confidentiality and safeguarding; that these are not contradictory but complimentary
- A confidentiality statement poster that services will be able to print and display should be developed and distributed
- Where possible, health services premises be designed or arranged in such a way that young people can attend the service without other service users overhearing or otherwise becoming aware of the reason for their visit.
- The 'Confidentiality Toolkit' should be re-launched and distributed to give services guidance on how to ensure confidentiality for young people.

## Safeguarding

### What We Recommend:

- It is vital that professionals in Nottinghamshire prioritise the safety of young people, understand the importance of child protection in their role, and are aware that no young person who is a victim of exploitation or abuse can be considered to consent to their own mistreatment.
- A section of the online information source for Young People's Health (see digital engagement) be created to communicate to young people **what's not ok** – informing people who may not be aware of the risks and dangers of key areas, and clearly communicating where they can go to seek help. Topics to be covered should include:
  - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
  - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
  - Neglect
  - Abusive and inappropriate relationships
  - Sexual imagery online / on social media (pornography, 'sexting')
  - Grooming

- A section of the online information source for Young People's Health (see digital engagement) be created to communicate health and advice around mental health concerns, including self-harm and suicidal ideation. This section should clearly communicate where young people can go to seek help, and who they can speak to, including voluntary/charitable sector partners if appropriate.
- We recommend that organisations ensure they are fully aware of the latest practice guides and safeguarding procedures published by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board. These are available online at <http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com>

## **Staff Development**

### **What We Recommend:**

- All staff who may directly encounter young people as part of their role be trained in confidentiality and communication / engagement with young people.
- High-quality E-learning programmes should be identified and promoted to all relevant provider, commissioner and third sector organisations. Staff should complete relevant sections, and services should have a strategy for who needs to complete this training.
- We would recommend that, where appropriate, young people are involved in recruitment for key roles.
- We recommend that requirement to work effectively with young people is considered in all role creation and recruitment.
- Young people should be encouraged to be more assertive health consumers – we would recommend that organisations proactively invite feedback from young people and engage in participation and co-production where possible. NHS organisations should work with Healthwatch to ensure that young people's voices are listened to.

## Digital Engagement

### What We Recommend:

- Create and promote a single, well-branded online resource (for example a site and/or app) for health information for young people in Nottinghamshire, with branding that can be used for display in service buildings and can be promoted in schools and via social media. This should contain high-quality, relevant, specific content about how to engage with health services in Nottinghamshire
- School-based promotion and content development for this resource should be led by the School Health Hub
- Work with young people should be conducted to identify the most appropriate medium for this content; this could be a website, a mobile app, or a combination of these and other online media.
- Work with partner organisations be conducted to ensure that all organisations with the aim of improving the health of young people in Nottinghamshire can use, promote, and contribute to content creation for this information source.
- This online resource should contain a section for professionals that contains signposting and pathway information for professionals from all health and local authority services to direct and support young people who have an enquiry or concern that they cannot directly address. This should ensure that a young person is never left without assistance even when a professional or member of staff does not have knowledge or experience of that person's concern.
- This project should be owned and supported by the Health and Wellbeing Board, rather than by a single specific organisation, to ensure take-up and promotion across all partner organisations
- It is recommended that this resource be branded independently of Nottinghamshire County Council or individual NHS trusts, but an information page be provided to communicate to young people that the information within is approved and accredited by the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board and by its member organisations
- Content for this resource should cover all relevant health and safeguarding topics, but with prominence given to those subjects seen as most important by young people. The Young People's Health Survey suggests the priorities should be emotional / mental health and wellbeing, including depression, and healthy lifestyle information – exercise and healthy eating.



## **Health Promotion**

### **What We Recommend:**

- Young people have told us that the most important areas that they want further information on are emotional health and depression, and exercise and healthy eating. We would recommend that the proposed Schools' Health Hub be the mechanism for engaging with schools and thus a primary route for health promotion around these subject areas as well as promotion of a young people's health online resource and associated brand.
- We recommend that the remodelling of the School Nursing Service takes into account the result of the Young People's Health Survey, particularly the importance of emotional and mental wellbeing to young people.

## **Sexual Health**

### **What We Recommend:**

- All young people in Nottinghamshire should have access to high-quality Relationships and Sex Education at school and through the work of the Youth Service.
- The C-Card service should continue to be prioritised and promoted to young people as it remains an effective, evidence-based programme which has great potential to improve outcomes amongst young people.
- The existing Nottinghamshire Young People's sexual health website be linked with, or incorporated into, the proposed Young People's Health online resource.

## **Substance Misuse**

### **What We Recommend:**

- Young people should be provided with full information about the legality, effects and potential dangers of substances that could harm them in a non-didactic style. Young people have told us that they don't want simply to be told that 'everything's bad', but to be given unbiased information so they can form their own judgements.

- It is recommended that a section on potentially harmful substances be included on a young person's health online resource for Nottinghamshire / Nottingham City

## **Young People with Disabilities**

### **What We Recommend:**

- Services for young people with disabilities or special educational needs are currently being redesigned to ensure they perform better and secure improved outcomes for both children and young people. Implementation of these reforms is to continue, including further rollout of personal budgets and Education, Health and Care Plans. The Pioneers group of young people have been very effective in participating with health organisations, and we would recommend that young people continue to be involved in the design and evaluation of these services wherever possible.

## **Ongoing Participation and Engagement**

### **What We Recommend:**

- We would recommend that the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust Board Participation Strategy be fully implemented and used to underpin all participation and engagement with young people.
- A key principle of this strategy is that it is co-produced by young people. Accordingly, young people should have a role in evaluating the implementation of this strategy and its recommendations.