

Independent provider alliance welcomes Prime Minister's call for market reform in children's services

The Children's Services Development Group (CSDG) has welcomed the Prime Minister's keynote speech calling for a "smarter state", particularly in the delivery of children's services. CSDG has been campaigning for commissioning reform to ensure the most appropriate placement is found and the best possible outcomes achieved for the child.

CSDG spokesperson Lizzie Wills said: ***CSDG welcomes the clear message from the Prime Minister that market reform is needed in children's services to improve outcomes and for it to work in the best interest of taxpayers.***

The Prime Minister has highlighted the unacceptable tolerance that exists for state failure in children's services. His call for a break of the state monopoly in the sector and the need to bring in new providers and new ways of doing things is urgently required to improve outcomes. Until local authorities equally consider the expertise and capacity that exist beyond their own in-house provision, children in care will not benefit from the opportunities that are available to them.

For too long, looked after children and children with complex needs have achieved below average educational outcomes or been five times likelier to be convicted of a crime than their peers. We must break this cycle and ensure the care system acts as a springboard to success.

CSDG welcomes the acknowledgment by government that the children's services market needs reform. CSDG has been campaigning for reform in the commissioning of services by effectively benchmarking all providers, local authority, independent, and voluntary on value, quality, cost, and crucially – outcomes.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. This press release is in response to the Prime Minister's key note speech which can be found [here](#).
2. For more information, please contact Jessica March at jessicamarch@westminsteradvisers.co.uk or on 0203 102 3621.
3. [CSDG](#) is an alliance of independent providers of care and specialist education services for children and young people with complex needs. Members include Acorn Care & Education, Foster Care Associates, National Fostering Agency, Options Group, Priory Group, SENAD Group and Witherslack Group.
4. To see CSDG's most recent report, which calls for the introduction of a National Outcomes Framework, *Collaborating for better outcomes: final report form the Children's Services Taskforce*, please use this link on CSDG's [website](#). This report was published jointly with the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU).