

Green Paper consultation Team
DWP
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By email

Cc: Tom Jeffery – Director General, Children & Families, DCSF

Whomever it may concern

In work, better off: next steps to full employment consultation

The Association of Directors of Children's Services is pleased to submit these brief comments by way of response to the above consultation. ADCS is the national leadership organisation in England for directors of children's services appointed under the provisions of the *Children Act 2004* and for other children's services professional in leadership roles. The Association provides a national voice as a champion for children, with local and central government, and with the public.

The Association's comments are limited to one aspect of the proposals in the Green paper (page 83) regarding the proposal that from October 2009, people claiming Job Seekers' Allowance for 12 months will be required to undertake a four weeks, unpaid 'community work placement' or face a benefit sanction.

The Association is concerned about two specific points:

1. The effect that such sanctions may have in increasing the already-significant number of mainly young adults who withdraw from what they experience as a punitive benefit system altogether.
2. The effect of this proposal on dependent children must be carefully assessed. The potential risk is that the dependent children of parents in receipt of JSA for 12 months may be placed at increased risk, leading to both pressures on the families concerned (which will already have survived a year of JSA) and associated cost pressures potentially placed upon local authorities who have responsibility for the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people. Any financial analysis of this proposal must include an assessment of these potential costs.

I hope that you will find these brief comments useful.

Yours faithfully



Sarah Caton - Assistant Director, ADCS **on behalf of joint Presidents John Freeman and John Coughlan**

The Association of Directors of Children's Services