



## Pride of Flintshire Awards 2011 Evaluation Report



On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011, Social Services for Children held two award ceremonies to celebrate the achievements and successes of looked after children and care leavers. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year the Pride of Flintshire Awards have been held.

Young people were nominated by their foster carers, parents, social workers and teachers for outstanding effort or achievement in:

- sport
- music, dance & drama
- academic studies (primary, secondary, 16+)
- helping others
- well done award
- leaving care (special achievement, special commendation, phoenix)

By rewarding young people across a range of areas the awards help to increase self esteem and coincide with the start of the academic year.

Each ceremony brings together children and young people aged 6 to 25.

### Positives from 2011



- **146** looked after children and care leavers nominated.
- **4** young people volunteered to co-host the ceremonies.
- **8** young people performed at the ceremonies demonstrating their talents.
- **4** young people and **1** foster carer involved in the Task Group.
- **113** evaluation forms returned from young people, parents, foster carers, volunteer mentors, residential project workers, staff and County Councillors.
- **£1543** received in donations towards the awards.

### Views of children and young people



- I was really shocked I won and would like to say a big thank you (Kirsty, age 20)
- I liked all of it. Thank you so much (Casey, age 11)
- I liked hosting the event. Love it, always enjoy it (Kate, age 21)
- It was like the Brits! (Dylan, age 16)
- I liked getting my medal (Caitlin, age 7)
- My favourite bit was the singing and the food (Jamie, age 18)
- I liked the music and seeing people smile (Suesanna, age 13)

### Top marks from the children and young people



- **100%** of young people enjoyed the awards.
- **100%** of young people would attend again next year.
- **100%** of young people felt the awards were fun and friendly.
- **98%** of young people liked the free photo gift of them receiving their award.
- **96%** of young people enjoyed the disco.
- **91%** of young people enjoyed the buffet.
- **91%** of young people liked their certificate.



### Young people's favourite part of the evening

- Receiving my award. Winning!
- Getting my certificate.
- Getting the prizes from the stage.
- The chocolate cake.
- The raffle.
- Hosting the event. Really glad I was given the opportunity. Thanks.
- Getting my medal. It was great.
- All of it. Thanks so much.
- The food and the singing.
- Everything. It was great. Can't beat it.
- Disco.
- Music and seeing people smile.
- I liked everything and I'd come again next year!



### Views of Relatives, Carers, Children's Commissioner, County Councillors and Staff

- It was a really honour for me to attend this year's Pride of Flintshire award ceremony. I've been a few times as Commissioner as it's a great opportunity to value and celebrate the achievements of young people in care and care leavers. You just can't fail to be gripped by the inspiring stories from young people. (Children's Commissioner for Wales)
- The awards night was fantastic. The young people were brilliant and fully deserved to get the praise and attention. (Participation Officer, Children's Commissioner's Office, Colwyn Bay)
- Fantastic to see young people walk up with 'pride' & heads held high. (Relative / Carer)
- Heartwarming to see children's achievements recognised & rewarded. (Relative / Carer)
- Great night. Thank You. (Relative / Carer)
- Lovely to see children achieve. (Carer)
- Young people performing was excellent. (Relative / Carer)
- The whole experience was brilliant thank you. (Relative / Carer)
- Very enjoyable event and well worthwhile (Staff Member)
- Excellent night again (County Councillor)
- It made me very proud of our children in Flintshire (County Councillor)
- Fantastic evening. I feel immensely proud of the achievements of the young people with the support of their foster carers, parents and staff. For me it is the ultimate privilege of being Executive Member (County Councillor)

### Top marks from Relatives, Carers, County Councillors and Staff

- **100%** enjoyed attending the Pride of Flintshire Awards
- **96%** rated the post-awards disco for young people as good or excellent.
- **96%** rated the photographs given to young people as good or excellent.
- **92%** rated the presentation of the awards as good or excellent.
- **86%** rated the venue as good or excellent. A few had problems parking.
- **85%** felt the refreshments and the buffet were good or excellent.





## **What Could Have Been Done Better / Suggestions for 2012**

40+ attendees said no improvements were needed. One person said: "Keep it going and as fun and informal as possible." Overall, the evaluations reflect the enjoyment of all those attending.

Every year, however, the Pride of Flintshire Task Group undertake a thorough evaluation of all the feedback as our aim is to improve the event year on year. One suggestion that will be taken forward for 2012 is to hold the awards in October half term so young people don't have school the following day.

Another improvement is to give out tokens which young people exchange for their party bag at the end of the evening. This will stop some young people taking more than one party bag.

## **Conclusion**

As per 2010 the feedback is very positive.

The awards reflect Flintshire's commitment to corporate parenting. Hence, it is positive to note that looked after children and care leavers are happy to see their achievements being acknowledged and enjoyed the awards. The feedback indicates young people value the event as 100% said they would attend again next year.

Year on year we are also seeing young people taking greater ownership of the ceremony in terms of co-hosting the event or performing at the ceremonies. In this way, the event is an opportunity to celebrate the positives and helps to build young people's self-confidence.

A significant amount of financial support continues to be received, even in these difficult financial times. This year local businesses, senior managers, County Councillors and The Foster Care Support Group contributed in excess of £1500. This funded the purchase of the prizes, medals, trophies, party bags, raffle prizes and gifts for each of the performers.

Also, every year staff support the event by nominating young people and encouraging and enabling them to attend. Many staff from across the different teams attend in their own time to share in the young peoples' success.

As always the feedback regarding improvements will be incorporated into the plans for next year's ceremonies where possible. The input of users and carers is valued and enables us to improve our services and further develop the event for 2012.

## Appendix - Press Release

### Pride of Flintshire



The Children's Commissioner for Wales, **Keith Towler**, has spoken of the honour he feels in attending Flintshire County Council's 'Pride of Flintshire' award ceremonies, which are organised by the Social Services for Children.

The events took place at The Springfield Hotel in Holywell recently, to celebrate the many achievements and successes of children who are looked after by the Council and care leavers.

The children and young people were not only commended on achievement but also for their effort. There were also specific awards presented for the outstanding hard work and achievements of care leavers.

One young person received an achievement award for excelling at wakeboarding. Others were commended for making excellent progress in school, taking part in after-school drama activities, and achieving outstanding results at college.

Another had, with a group of school friends, started a Credit Union Savings Scheme whilst another young person had won a 'Young Woman Enterprise Award' for her work at the Us Unlimited Shop in Flint.

The ceremonies featured musical performances from the children and were thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended, including children, parents, foster carers, councillors and staff from Social Services.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales, **Keith Towler**, said:

"It was a real honour for me to attend this year's Pride of Flintshire award ceremony. I've been a few times as Commissioner as it's a great opportunity to value and



Leaving Care Special Achievement Award winner **Dean Boyes** with **Cllr Carol Ellis** and **Cllr Hilary McGuill**



Leaving Care Phoenix Award nominees, **Kelly Boylin**, **John Edwards** and **Kirsty Blackwell** with **Cllr Carol Ellis** and **Cllr Hilary McGuill**



Leaving Care Phoenix Award winner **John Edwards**, with last year's winner **Natasha Woods**, **Cllr Carol Ellis** and **Cllr Hilary McGuill**

celebrate the achievements of young people in care and care leavers.

You just can't fail to be gripped by the inspiring stories from young people."

Councillor **Carol Ellis**, Executive Member for Social Services, said:

"I have to say it was a fantastic evening. I feel immensely proud of the achievements of the young people with the support of their foster carers, parents and staff. For me, it is the ultimate privilege of being Executive Member."