

Preparing for Adulthood: how hard can it be?

Warrington Working Together Conference 2024

When I
grow up
I want to be....

a vet



A generation of promise?



Summary

- Preparation for Adulthood (PfA): how hard can it be?
- A professional perspective
- A parent/carer perspective
- A young person perspective
- Pies, pipelines and possibilities
- Conclusion

Straw polls



Straw polls



Preparing for adulthood means ...

preparing for:

- higher education and/or employment
- independent living
- participating in society
- being as healthy as possible in adult life

We want all children and young people with SEND to:

- *Achieve meaningful occupations in their adult lives*
- *Have greater control over the support they receive*
- *Do their best at nursery, school and college*
- *Feel valued and included in their local communities*
- *Lead happy and fulfilled lives*

A professional perspective

SEND Review:

Right support

Right place

Right time

- The organisational fit
- The timing
- The human element

- Local authority SEN team
- Local authority social care
- Careers information, advice and guidance
- School, college or academy
- Integrated Care Board
- Youth Offending Team



A parent/carer perspective



A parent/carer perspective



There are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns - the ones we don't know we don't know.

A young person's perspective

- *The reciprocal trust between adults & young people is an important aspect of **developing responsive, inclusive communities**, as well as promoting young people's independence, self-esteem, and resilience. Children ... should be trusted to take increasing levels of responsibility in decision-making, in line with their evolving capacities.*
- *Decisions that young people would like to be trusted to make can be divided into:*
 - ***Independent living** (life skills, travel etc.)*
 - ***Learning** (GCSE choices, further/ higher education)*
 - ***Support** (when, who and how) and **own capacity***

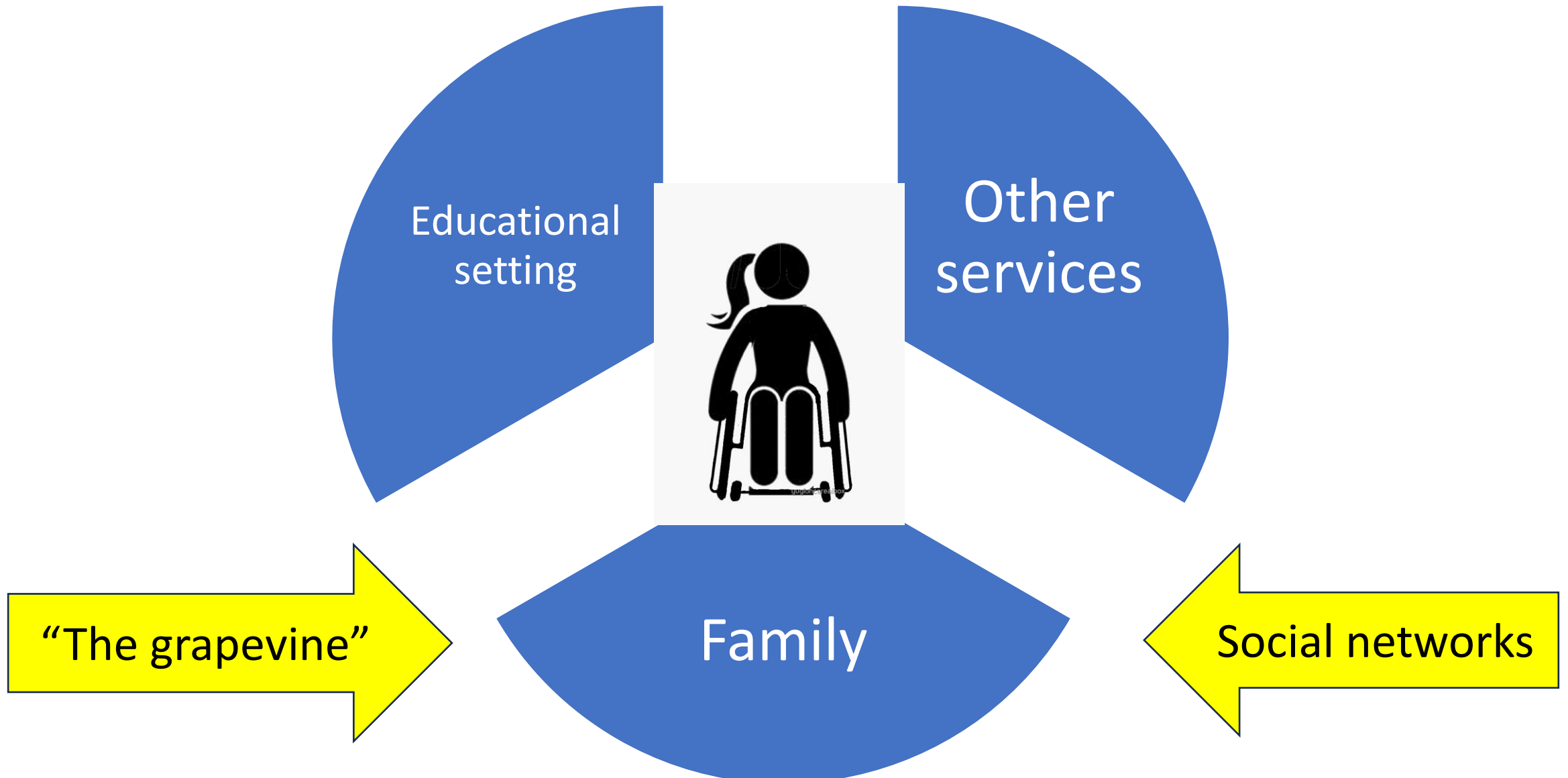


A young person's perspective

When they have a meaningful role in decision-making, most children & young people felt:

- nervous and/or under pressure before & while making the decision
 - happy, confident & proud after making the decision & pleased to have been 'in charge'
 - Rare instances showed regret or unhappiness regarding a decision
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- Children & young people say these opportunities are uncommon
 - Children & young people trust a wide range of individuals to support them in decision-making. But trust is eroded when adults make promises which are not followed through AND/OR lack faith in children & young people's abilities AND/OR use their position to influence choices
 - In order to build trust, children & young people must be told that their ideas have been received & considered; and there must be a record of their input

Pies, pipelines and possibilities



The pipeline of development



Catching our breath



- PfA is both easy and difficult
- We all do it – but only some of us can do some of it
- It's a scary but necessary journey for young people and for families
- Young people need opportunities to develop decision-making and independence
- Start early with small steps and build up
- Good PfA is about helping everyone lengthen their perspectives and become more outcome-focused
- And it takes good partnerships!