

National Approach to Statutory Advocacy

Local Authority Report - RCT 2021 - 2022

Collated Quarterly Report

Quarter 2: July - Sept

Headline Report

During quarter two, 45 young people accessed the Issue Based Advocacy (IBA) service, presenting with 57 issues. This is a 55% percent increase when compared with quarter one. Active Offer (AO) referrals also increased significantly with 17 young people referred in this quarter, almost three times more than in the previous quarter. Of those young people accessing the issue based service, 78% were accessing advocacy for the first time. It is possible that some of this number is made up of young people who did not access the AO service when they became eligible.

Active Offer

During the quarter, 87 children and young people became eligible for the Active Offer:

CP:	5-9 yrs x 37	10 - 15 yrs x 36	16+ yrs x 6
CLA:	5-9 yrs x 2	10 - 15 yrs x 5	16+ yrs x 1

According to the updated monthly Active Offer report received from RCT, a total of 60 children and young people rejected the offer of an Active Offer meeting when it was suggested by their social worker, and thirteen accepted.

17 young people were referred for the Active Offer. (Four young people became eligible in June and were referred for AO in July)

Four young people were unfortunately incorrectly referred for IBA (three young people became eligible in June and were referred for IBA in July)

One young person was included twice on the report .

It is unclear how the remaining 11 young people responded to the discussion with their social worker.

Active Offer

Of the 17 AO referrals received, young people in the CP arena made up 94%. Only one CLA young person was referred for AO compared to three in the previous quarter. The majority of young people were again aged between six and eleven, with only four young people over the age of 11 referred for AO. Females made up 82% of young people referred for AO, a significant increase on the previous quarter when males and females were referred in equal numbers.

We are pleased to report an increase in young people having contact from their advocate within five working days. Of the 17 young people referred for Active Offer, 88% had contact with their advocate within five working days. Two young people moved to live with their mum following the referral, who told the advocate they had changed their mind about accessing the service. The advocate asked the social worker to follow up and let us know if the young people would like to meet with an advocate in the future.

Issue Based Advocacy

Advocates worked with five young people living outside of RCT in areas including Caerphilly, Powys, Pembrokeshire and Newport. Of the 45 referred, 15 young people were CLA, 20 young people were CP, and nine were open to Care and Support. One care leaver was referred for advocacy support during this period but did not engage with the advocate. This represents an increase in referrals for young people across all four areas, and follows the theme of most young people receiving advocacy support being in the CP arena. The gender split saw 26 girls and 19 boys accessing the issue based service. This follows a theme of more girls accessing the issue-based service observed in previous quarters.

The age category with the highest referral rate continues to be the 06-11 group with 24, followed by the 12-16 age group with 14.

Social services made referrals for 17 young people during this quarter, a similar number to the previous quarter, while 18 young people referred themselves. This represents twice as

Headline Report Contd

many 'self' referrals as in the previous quarter, and is directly related to the increase in AO referrals, as young people often refer themselves for issue-based advocacy following a successful Active Offer meeting. Three young people were referred directly by their residential home, two by family members and we received four referrals from third-sector organisations, including three from TGP Cymru Family Group Meeting Coordinators, and one from the Miskin Project.

Meetings continue to be the largest issue advocates support young people with, and continue to make up over half of the 57 issues referred. Advocates supported more young people with Core Groups than any other meeting. Young people were also referred for support with Family Group Meetings, Care and Support Reviews, PLO meetings and LAC Reviews.

Of the 45 young people who accessed issue-based advocacy in quarter two, 82% had contact with their allocated advocate, either by phone, video call or face-to-face within five working days of the referral being made. The most common reason for the delay was the advocate having difficulty in contacting either the carers, or the school, in order to arrange a visit.

Service Information

The permanent team manager returned from maternity leave in September. We have recently recruited two new casual workers and a part-time worker on a temporary basis. This follows formal notice tendered by one long-term team member. This recruitment will also help to cover the absence of another team member who is currently on long-term sick leave.

The team manager attended a meeting about the Active Offer (AO) along with the director of advocacy services, the head of children's services for RCT and several service managers. The recording of young people eligible for AO was discussed, along with the reasons for young people turning down the AO meeting. RCT have agreed to collate and provide this information which will be included in future reports, and TGP Cymru will provide up to date information on the AO referral process for front line practitioners.

Visiting Advocacy continues in four Local Authority community homes across RCT. Support continues to be virtual at present with weekly contact but plans are in place to offer face-to-face contact during the next quarter following discussions with community home managers.

TGP Cymru have recently implemented a new consultation process and employed a Quality Assurance Officer to oversee it. We are continuing to adapt this [this](#) process to allow as many young people as possible the opportunity to independently evaluate the advocacy service they have received. CTM is currently piloting a system in which young people receive a link and are able to fill in a feedback form online. Four young people completed feedback forms during quarter two:

Four stated they found the service helpful.

Three felt the service made a difference to their situation.

Three felt they now know more about their rights.

Three felt more confident since receiving support.

Three felt their views were considered.

Three young people providing feedback stated they would use the service again, one young person wasn't sure.

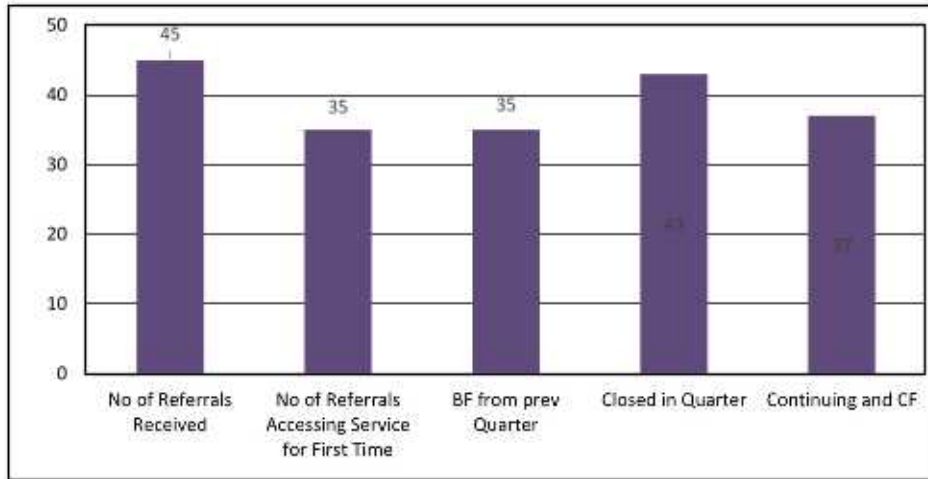
Please find below an example of advocacy work undertaken during the quarter from within RCT. The name has been changed to protect the young person's identity.

Situation: Leah is a 12 year old child in need of care and support. Leah is currently living with her aunt and brother following relationship difficulties between Leah and her mother. A Family Group Meeting (FGM) had been convened to explore the family situation and following referral, an advocate was allocated to support Leah to share her views, wishes and feelings during this process.

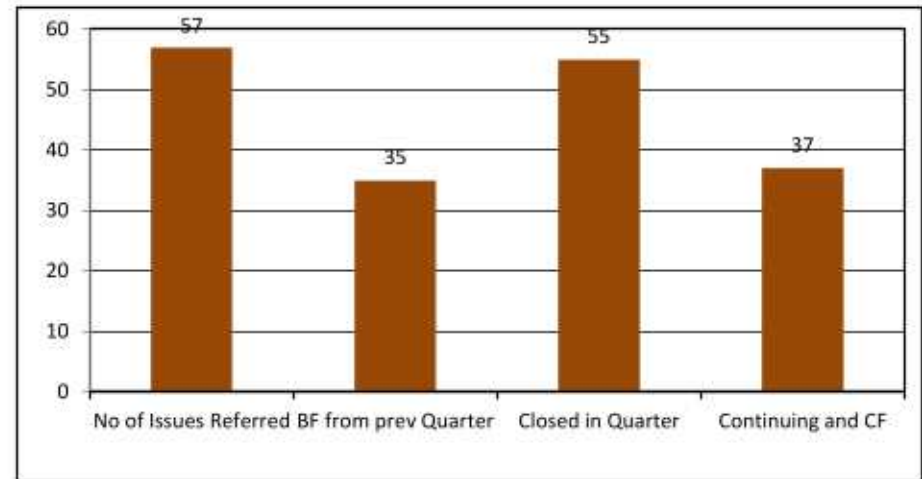
Action: The advocate arranged to meet with Leah at a time and venue chosen by her. The advocate and Leah discussed the information provide at referral and the FGM process. Leah said she wanted to return to live with her mother but she did not like her mother's boyfriend and did not want him to be around when she is at home. Leah also told the advocate that she was worried her mum wouldn't follow the safety plan devised by CAMHS. Leah was not initially invited to attend the FGM, so the advocate supported her to write views, wishes and feelings report to be shared at the meeting. As Leah wanted to attend the FGM, the advocate negotiated with the FGM Coordinator to allow Leah to attend.

Outcome: The FGM was rescheduled to ensure Leah could attend part of it. The advocate attended the meeting and helped Leah to share her wishes and feelings in person. A Family Plan was agreed which included Leah eventually returning to live with her mum, and Leah felt the plan reflected her views. The advocate will support Leah in the review FGM.

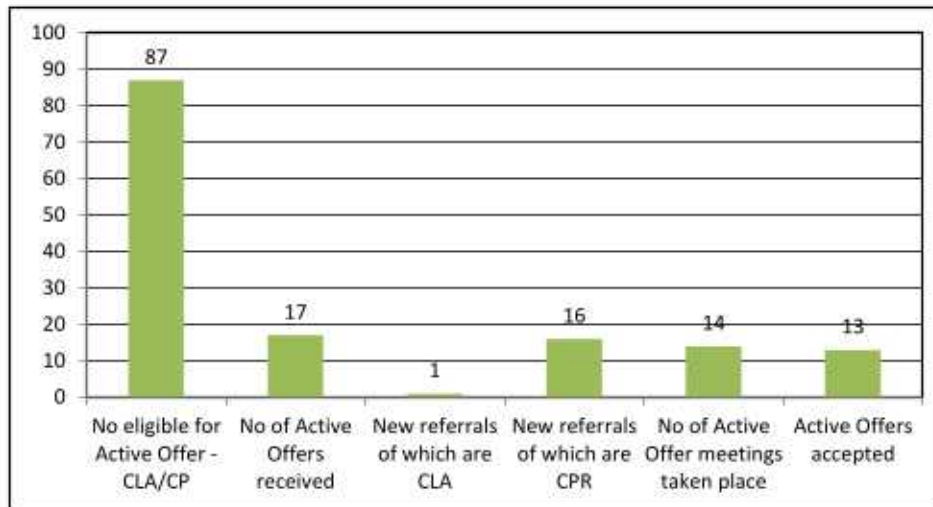
1a. Advocacy Cases - Young People - Issue Based Advocacy



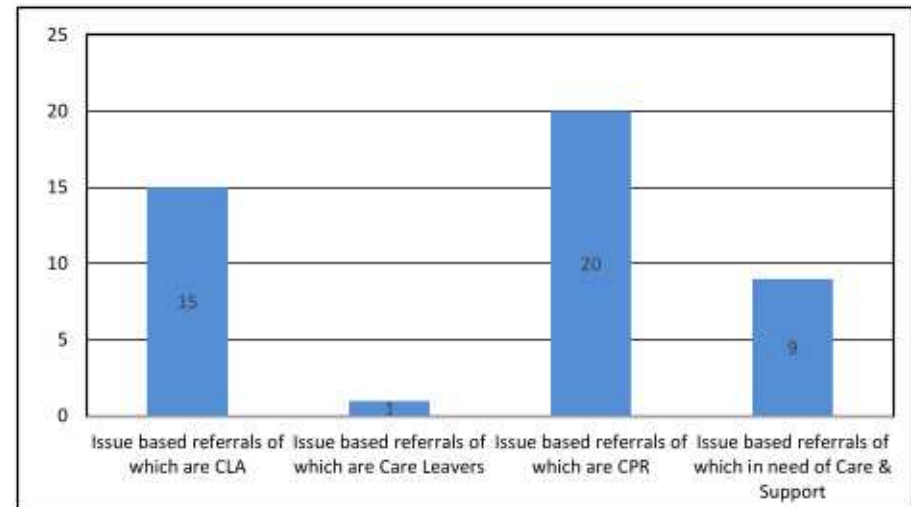
1b. Advocacy Cases - Interventions - Issue Based Advocacy



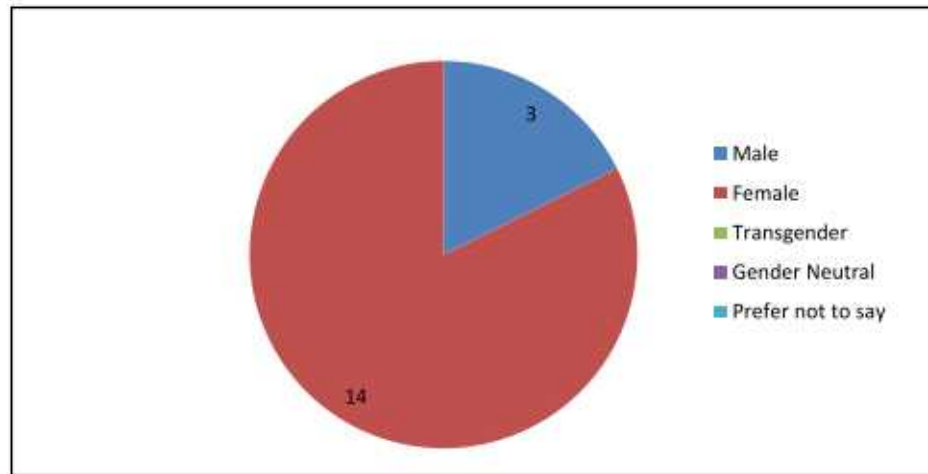
2a. Eligibility Criteria: Active Offer



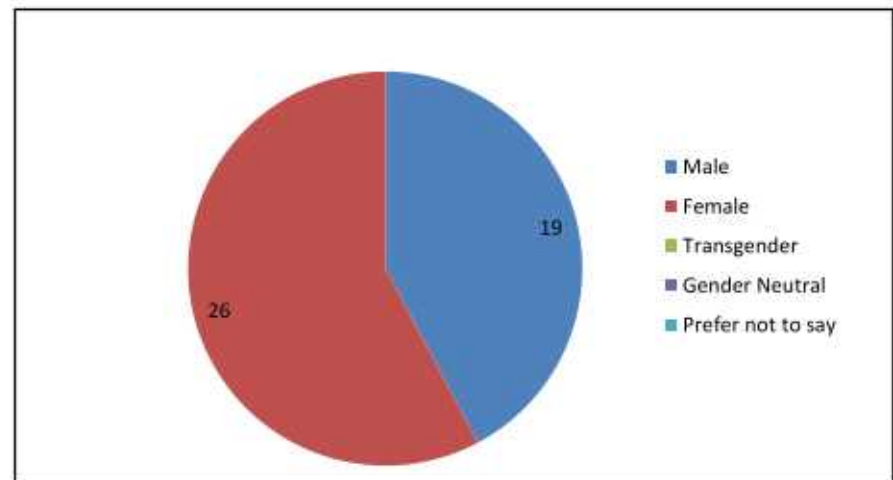
2b. Eligibility Criteria: Issue Based



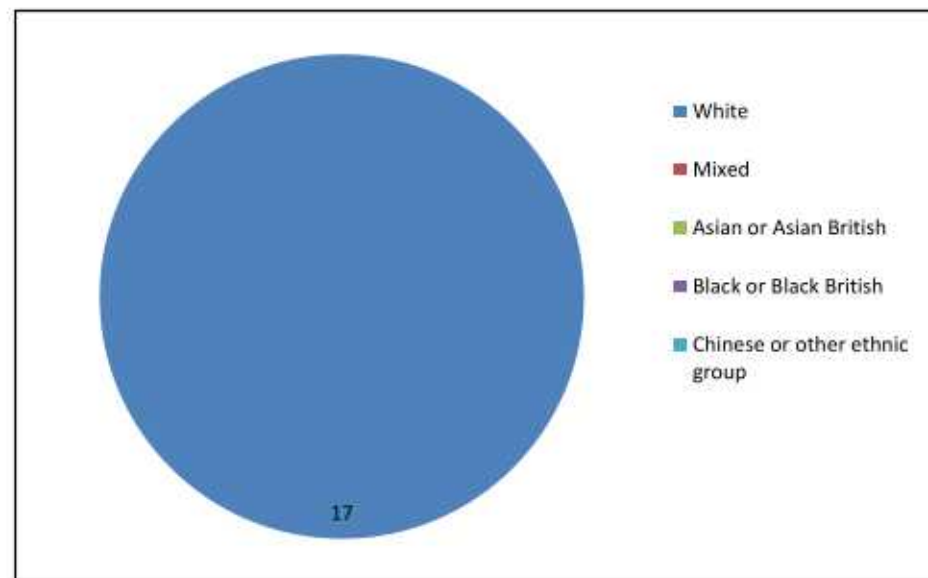
3a. Demographics: Gender - Active Offer



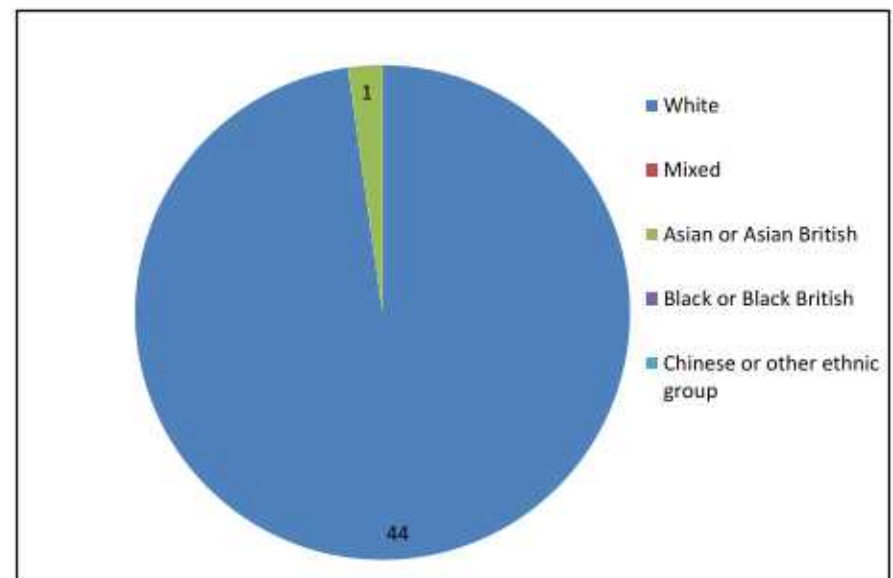
3b. Demographics: Gender - Issue Based



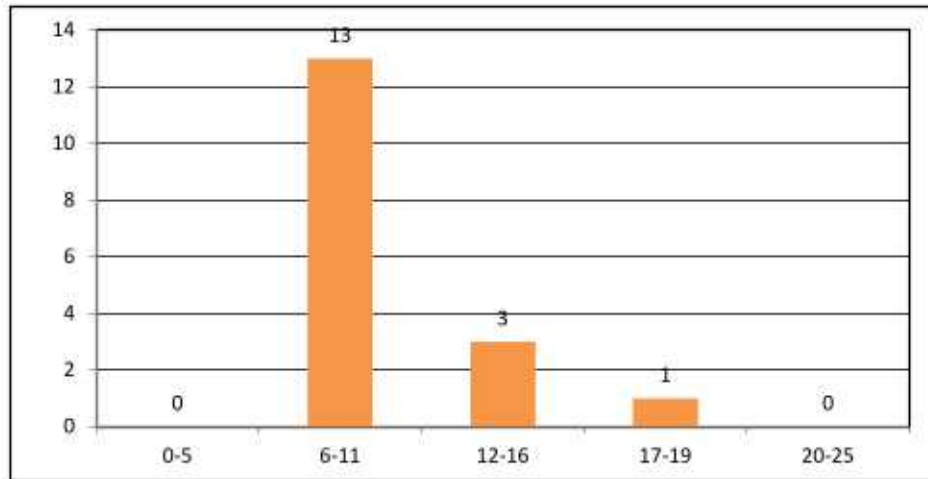
3c. Demographics: Ethnicity - Active Offer



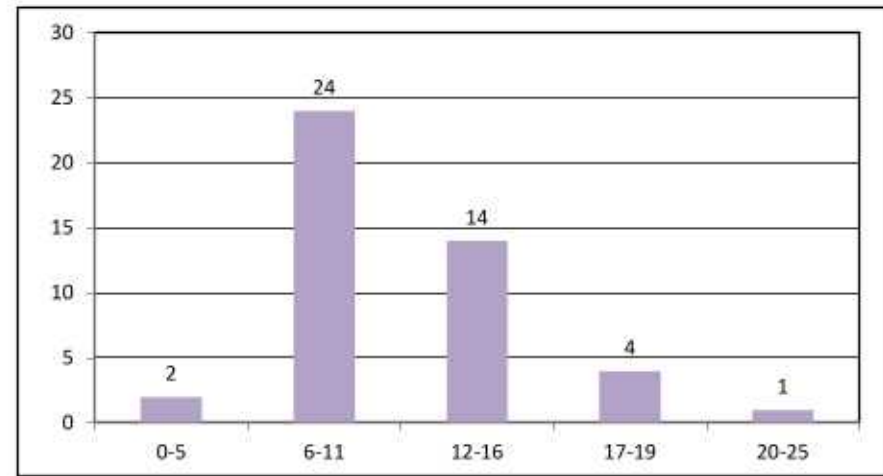
3d. Demographics: Ethnicity - Issue Based



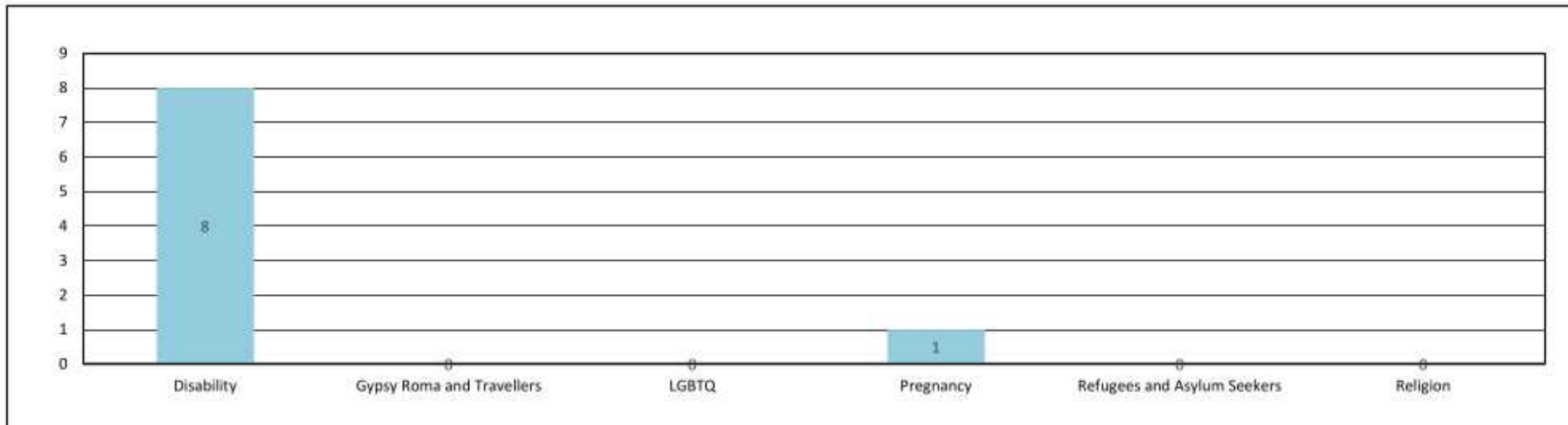
3e. Demographics: Age - Active Offer



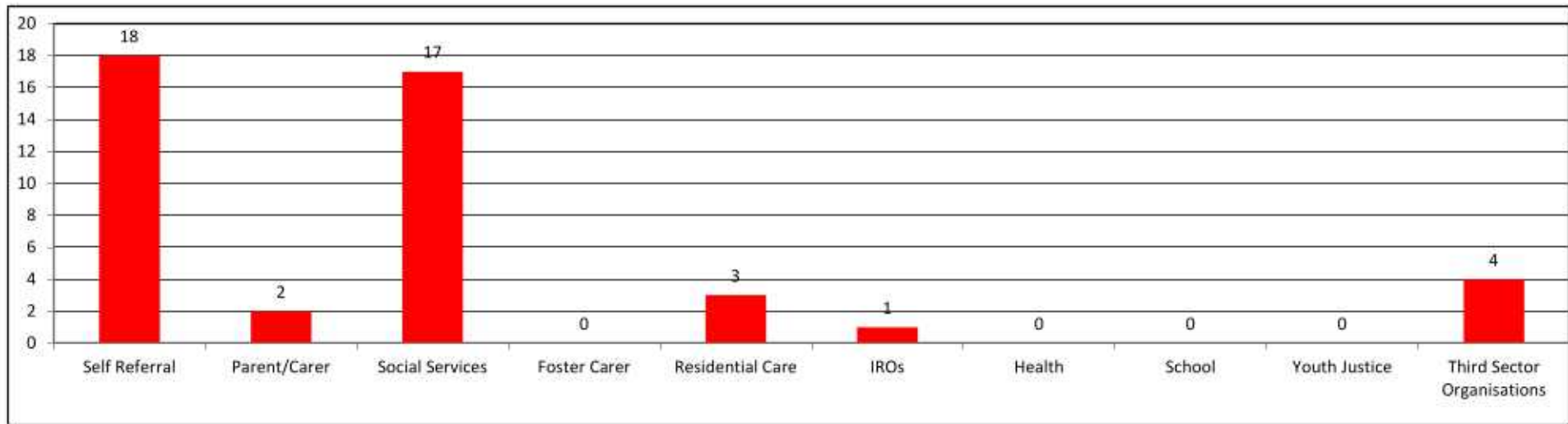
3f. Demographics: Age - Issue Based



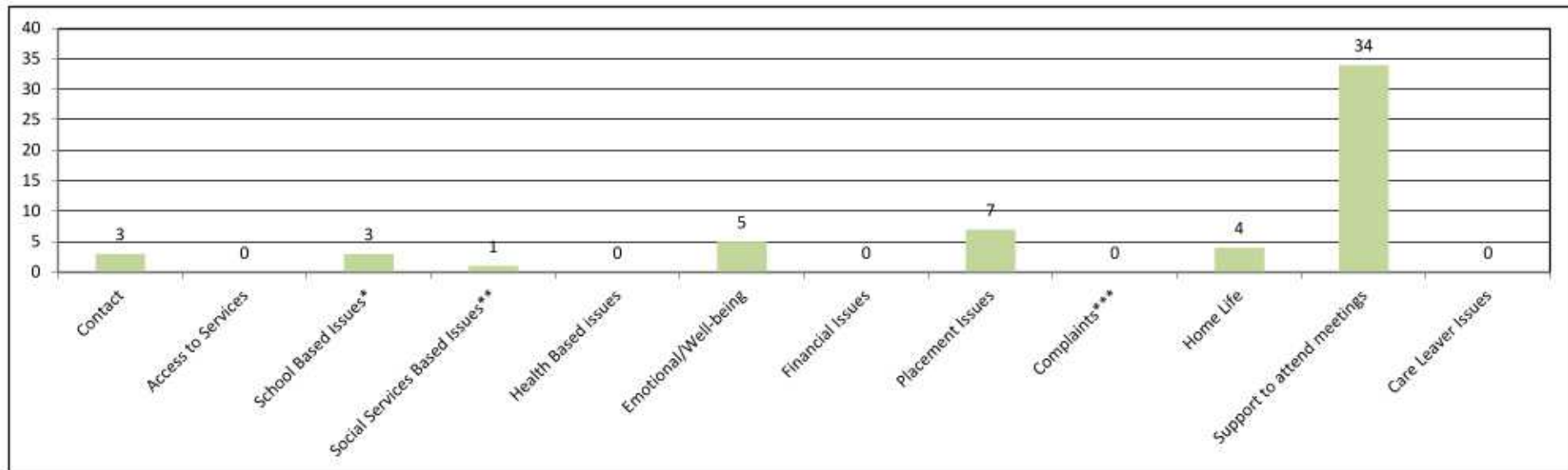
4. Protected Characteristics



5. Referral Source per young person - Issue Based only



6. Issues Presented

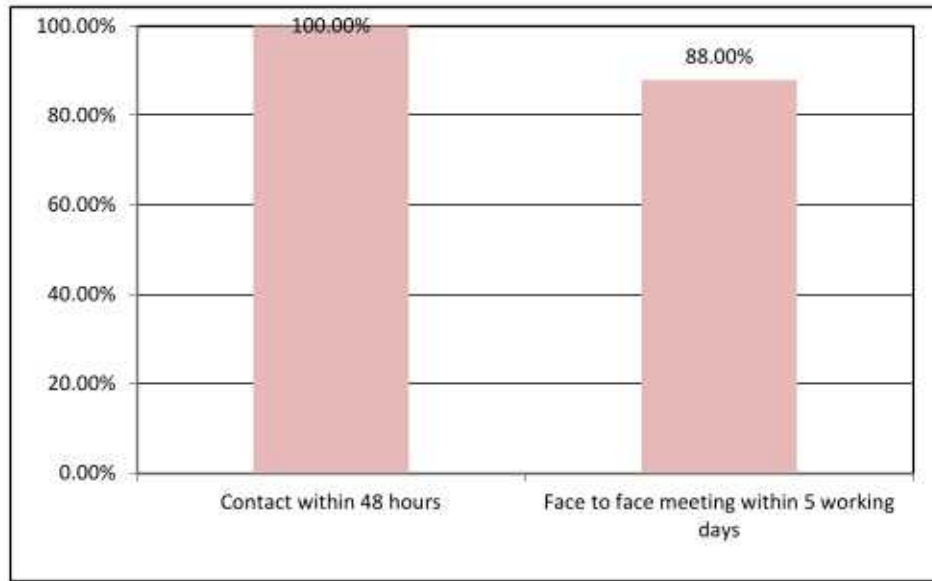


* School based issues including: SEN/ALN, exclusions, bullying, transport.

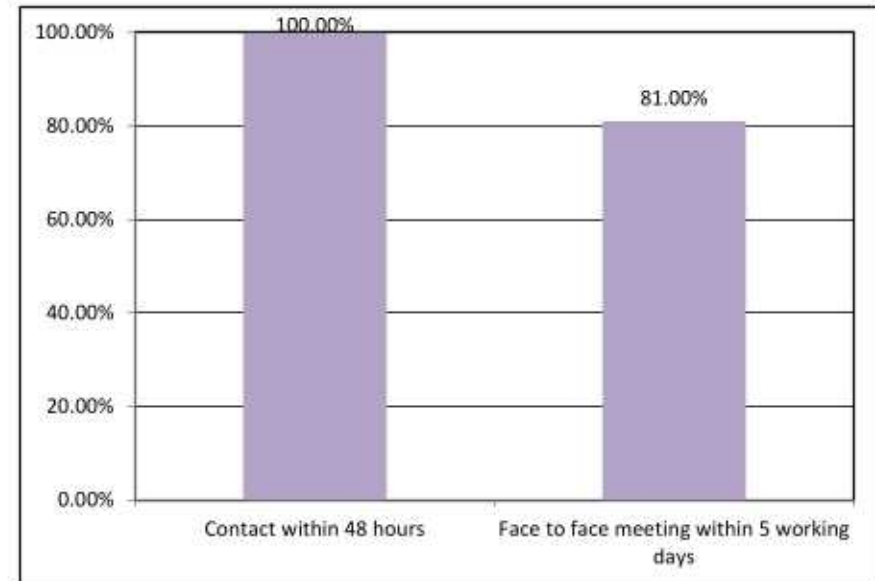
** Social Services based issues including: relationship with worker, care plan, service provided.

*** Complaints refer to any complaints made against statutory services, including Social Service, Police, Health, YJS

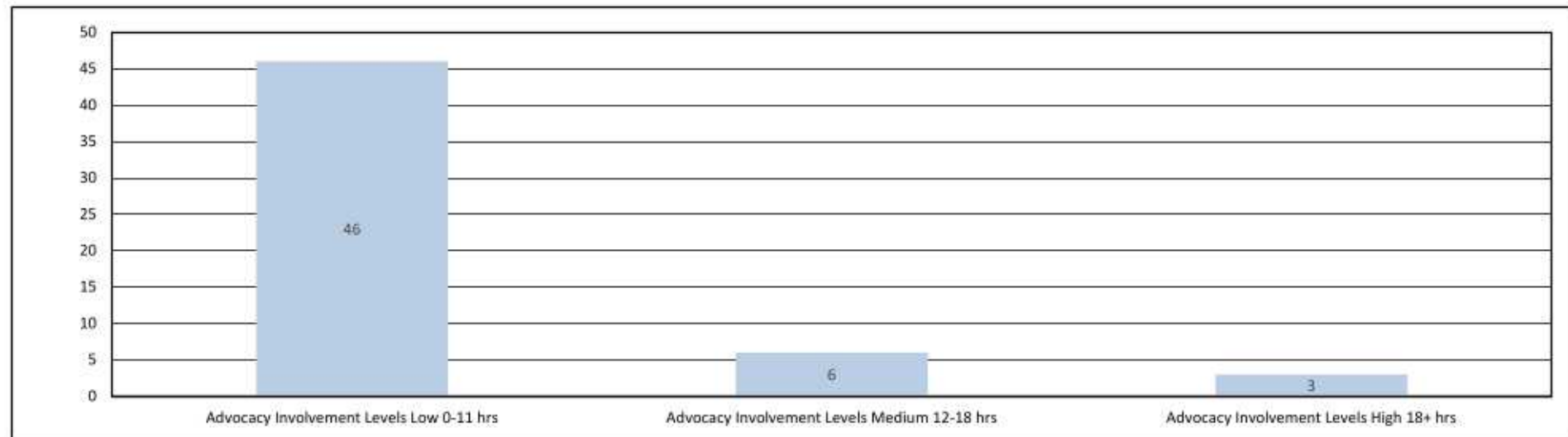
7. Service Performance - Active Offer



Service Performance - Issue Based



8. Level of Advocacy Intervention at point of Issue Closure



9.Outcomes: linked to The National Advocacy Standards & Outcomes Framework

<p>Outcome 1</p>	<p>Children and young people find good quality independent advocacy easily available and accessible.</p>	<p>The service aims to be as responsive as possible, and although external risk assessments continue to affect how quickly the advocate is able to visit the young person, the newly implemented internal risk assessment has helped to reduce waiting time. We are pleased to report that over 85% of young people referred across the two service areas had contact with their advocate within five working days.</p> <p>Advocates continue to support young people placed out of county, both virtually and in person if requested.</p> <p>Plans are in place to promote the AO service to frontline practitioners by reissuing referral information.</p>
<p>Outcome 2</p>	<p>Children and young people have their privacy and confidences respected and their wellbeing safeguarded and protected.</p>	<p>Advocates continue to gain skills in building relationships with young people virtually, but are also undertaking an increasing number of face-to-face visits. This is often to ensure the young person is able to engage confidentially, and without the concern of someone listening in or influencing what they say.</p> <p>Advocates remain flexible, and led by young people when arranging times and dates for virtual calls, and face to face visits.</p> <p>All advocates have up to date Child Protection Training.</p>
<p>Outcome 3</p>	<p>Children and young people are valued for their diversity, treated with respect and all forms of discrimination against them are challenged.</p>	<p>During this quarter, eight disabled young people received issue-based advocacy. Three young people are diagnosed with ASD, three have additional learning needs, one had Down Syndrome and another has Cerebral Palsy and uses a wheelchair.</p> <p>One pregnant young person was referred for issue-based advocacy in this quarter.</p> <p>Advocates always endeavour to engage with young people in a manner that is comfortable, and works for them.</p>
<p>Outcome 4</p>	<p>Children and young people are empowered to take the lead in relation to advocacy services and their rights, wishes and feelings and championed.</p>	<p>Young people consistently tell us they feel empowered to speak up for themselves following advocacy intervention.</p> <p>One RCT young person commented her advocate <i>“was easy and friendly to talk to”</i> and they found the service helpful but didn’t feel the service made a difference to their situation.</p> <p>This is a good example of how many young people have positive experiences with advocacy, even when they don’t get the outcome they wanted.</p>

Outcome 5	Children and young people participate in the design, planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of advocacy services.	<p>During the next quarter CTM Advocacy Service will identify a 'participation lead' within the project who will be responsible for keeping up to date with participation and consultation opportunities and support young people to share views about how the service is delivered.</p> <p>From now on, all young people who have received advocacy support will be offered the opportunity to share their views about TGP Cymru's website, with an aim to implementing proposed changes to make the website more accessible for children and young people.</p> <p>All young people who have received advocacy will continue to be asked for feedback in order for TGP to monitor the services provided and make improvements where needed.</p>
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