**THE CULTURE CHANGE**

**Understanding**

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**The Short-term Political Manifestos Pledges**

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"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

It's more prudent to head off a disaster beforehand than

to deal with it after it occurs.”

– 'De Legibus' (c. 1240)

"Meet the malady on its way." ~ Persius (A.D.c 58)



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Children and their families must be at the centre of their decisions when managing their own Education, Health and Care. This is backed up by Professor Haslam, Chair of NICE.

One only needs to turn to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, (Stressors) and the WHO’s mandate: Health promotion is “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health”. In addition, “it moves beyond a focus on individual behaviour towards a wide range of social and environmental interventions” to address the root causes. These include to name a few, education and social inclusion. We also need to remember that Health is not just the absence of disease:



Listed below are two of the nine WHO Health Principles ratified in 1946:

* Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
* Governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures.

Why are these, the most basic of principles never implemented, or applied, when it comes to children’s and young person’s health? By Health I mean whole health, (Mental health, Education, SEND, Poverty ‘Nutrition’.)

Mental health is rinsing exponentially, yet there is a shortage of psychiatrists, CAMHS are denying those diagnosed with neurological conditions specialised help, waiting lists are often over a year; resulting in young people wanting to commit suicide and or unable to attend schooling. Schools are refusing specific education; Local Authorities are laying blame on parents when children are unable to attend school or are not offered a schooling placement. Parents are forced into Home Educating their children, creating a vicious cycle of never-ending stressors which is now resulting in angry parents using the judiciary system to seek Judicial Reviews against either their local authorities or the DfE. The implementation of the new SEND Code of Practise (EHCP’s) [2014] should have seen an overall improvement in Local Authority practices yet children are still not allowed to have their voice heard. ‘Collaboration’ is a mythical term, leaving children and their parents out in the cold.

We only need to be reminded that the Governments first duty is to ensure all of its citizens are safe from harm, *Primum non nocere*, and if the Government is causing undue / avoidable harm, by virtue of not implementing the health principles, then why is it not held to account, especially when it continuously allows its citizens, in this case, children to suffer routinely at the hands of those in senior decision making positions?

# What happens to those children of schooling age, who don’t fit any tick box? What happens to children who are learning disabled but are equally talented and or gifted? Is it ok then to prosecute parents (criminal records, lengthy sentences, monitoring tags, large penalties or fines) for simply giving birth to children who don’t fit a tick box or who can’t fit an outdated educational system? The knock on associated avoidable costs to ‘repair’ the damage are often 50 times more than the original early intervention costs had the parents, and/or children’s voices been listened too.

# Children thrive in suitable educational and safe ENVIRONMENTS, why then are children and or young people sent to ATU’s and locked up like animals simply for having ASD when they struggle in their local school placement? The Government, LA’s CCG’s, Schools, NHS, needs to be built around a common-sense approach by using CBAM (Cost Benefit Analysis Model) or the already existing early intervention policies that instil that prevention is still better than cure.

# The long term 10-year plan doesn’t just need a multi-agency approach, but rather it needs a long-term strategic collaborative intervention pathway. Short-term vision political pledges are ultimately halted by the lack of funding or lack of knowhow. The judiciary and tribunal systems are already overwhelmed and severely overstretched trying to cope with the exponential rise in appeals as a result from mental health stressors, not forgetting to mention that the government’s departments / Local Authorities are granted ‘special’ funding for their own legal representation at said courts, whilst also denying the appealing parents the exact same legal representational rights. Why? Equality, what equality?

# Who picks up the costs, when things go wrong? Everyone loses, (the children, parents, tax payers, Local Authorities, Central Government, Courts, Services Providers, NHS, Education Institutions, Charities, NGO’s etc.) except for barristers and solicitors… who walk away gloating at having beaten or stopped the much needed help/prevision funding from getting to an already broken family, suffering from mental health stressors. Just think how many lives could be saved from or made better and how much money could be saved by simply following the legislation and the principles that are already in place.

# The Government and its LA’s, CCG’s, Educational Establishments, NHS Services all need to establish a cultural paradigm shift to improve on its position based on the UN’s very damning report.