Help Children Achieve More (formerly known as Every Child Matters)

Background:
In 2003 the Government published a Green Paper called Every Child Matters. This was published alongside the formal response to the report into the death of Victoria Climbié, the young girl who was horrifically abused and tortured, and eventually killed by her great aunt and the man with whom they lived.

The Green Paper built on existing plans to strengthen preventative services by focusing on four key themes:

- Increasing the focus on supporting families and carers - the most critical influence on children's lives.
- Ensuring necessary intervention takes place before children reach crisis point and protecting children from falling through the net.
- Addressing the underlying problems identified in the report into the death of Victoria Climbié - weak accountability and poor integration.
- Ensuring that the people working with children are valued, rewarded and trained.

The Green Paper prompted an unprecedented debate about services for children, young people and families. There was a wide consultation with people working in children's services, and with parents, children and young people.

Following the consultation, the Government published
Every child matters: The next steps, and passed the Children Act 2004, providing the legislative spine for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and families.

The Every Child Matters (ECM) Green Paper identified the five outcomes that are most important to children and young people:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

The five outcomes are universal ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances. Improving outcomes for all children and young people underpins all of the development and work within Children’s Trusts.

The outcomes are mutually reinforcing. For example: Children and young people learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged; and the evidence shows clearly that educational achievement is the most effective route out of poverty.

Improving outcomes also involves narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers. The Government is focusing particularly on improving outcomes for looked after children and children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, and on reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy and number of young people not in education or training. The Government recognises the crucial role of parents, carers and families in improving outcomes for children and young people and the need to provide support for parents, carers and families in order for them to do so. The Government also recognises the important role of the local community.

In August 2010, the Coalition Government renamed ECM as Help Children Achieve More.