



July 2010

Local Updates

As you are probably aware by now, I have left my post as Commissioner for Parents and taken up a new position as Assistant Director – Targeted Services from 1 May.

Looking back at my journey as Commissioner for Parents I see big achievement in a relatively short space of time. This has come from the true commitment and dedication of staff, parents and carers to get a Parenting Strategy embedded with a robust structure for the voice of the parents to be heard. We should all feel very proud.

Of course the role will not be ending, we will soon be recruiting for a Families' Commissioner; this is a merger of the Commissioner for Parents and the Commissioner for Children and Young People, so watch this space!

Best wishes, Charlotte

News from the Districts

If you haven't already signed up to your local Parenting Services Forum (PSF), please contact Chrissy.marston@staffordshire.gov.uk and ask to be put on the mailing list of the forum covering your district(s). The purpose of the PSFs is to keep parenting practitioners and managers in touch with what is happening locally in terms of family support and activities, training and policy updates along with rolling out evidence-based parenting practice and overseeing the district Parenting Strategy Action Plan. If in doubt about its appropriateness for you, pop along to the next meeting or contact your parenting expert: jill.gregory@staffordshire.gov.uk (Moorlands, Newcastle, Stafford, South Staffs) or richard.harper@staffordshire.gov.uk (Cannock, Lichfield, Tamworth, East Staffs) or the district PSF chair – contact details below.

Remember also that details of events, cubs, activities and family support projects will be available on the Family Information Service website: <http://staffs.fsd.org.uk/>

Staffordshire Moorlands:

PSF meeting Monday 9th August 1.30 PM at Connexions meeting room, Eaton House, Leek. Chairperson: Janice Hallam 07800 626418 janice.hallam@staffordshire.gov.uk The forum is currently focusing on how we can most effectively keep information about parent support services up-to-date and get that information out to parents and practitioners alike. If you have any information or ideas that you would like to share with parenting practitioners in the Moorlands, please contact Janice.

Newcastle:

PSF meeting Monday 12th July 1.30 PM at Hempstalls Children's Centre. Chairperson: Kevin Byrne 01782 717717 kevin.byrne@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk all welcome to come along and publicise their role, project or organisation to other practitioners in a session dedicated to raising awareness of family support in the area and to finalising the district action plan.

Stafford:

PSF meeting Thursday 8th July 10.00AM **Venue TBC** Chairperson: Lindsey Gregory 07800 626414 lindsey.gregory@staffordshire.gov.uk

South Staffs:

PSF meeting Wednesday 21st July 11.00 – 12.30 at Codsall District Council offices. Chairperson: Kate Sharratt katharine.sharratt@staffordshire.gov.uk or contact Rachel Taylor 01902 696534 r.taylor@sstaffs.gov.uk

Cannock Chase:

PSF meeting Friday 16th July 12.30 – 2.00pm at Cannock Chase Children's Centre, a free buffet lunch will be provided.

These forums are held quarterly and each event will have a theme or a focus and give professionals the opportunity to get together and share information during a long working lunch break. You are welcome to bring along any information you wish to share regarding services you provide. The focus for July will be a Presentation from "Netmums". Chairperson : Sue Mckie 01543 469894 sue.mckie@staffordshire.gov.uk

Lichfield:

PSF meeting Thursday 19th August 10 – 12.30 at The Hawthorn Room, Friary Grange Leisure Centre, Eastern Avenue, Lichfield. Chairperson: Tove Lindgren 07931 890656 tove.lindgren@lichfieldddc.gov.uk

Tamworth:

PSF meeting Tuesday 20th July 12.30 – 2pm at Tamworth Early Years Children Centre, Basin Lane, a free buffet lunch will be provided. These forums are held bi-monthly and give opportunity for practitioners to meet and share ideas around good practice and parent / family support. Chairperson: Kim Holyman 01827 53343 caremanager@rmpc.co.uk

East Staffs:

PSF meeting Friday 17th September 9.30 – 11am at Hill Street Health & Wellbeing Centre, Burton. The forum provides networking opportunities, offering support, advice and guidance to one another to support the development of skills and knowledge relating to parenting. Chairperson: Mandy Woodhams 01283 566684 mandy.home-starteaststaffs@hotmail.co.uk

FREE Family Walk –

“Walk a mile in my shoes” Sunday 18th July 1 – 4pm at Birches valley Forest centre, Rugeley WS15 2UQ.

Come along and spend a fun packed afternoon around the route to Health Community Arts trail and have a go at lots of free activities along the way. Everyone Welcome:

- African drumming
- Mobile zoo
- Rainforest roadshow
- Willow weaving
- Forest skills
- Prize draw

And lots more. For more details call Staffordshire Family Information Service 0845 650 9876

National Updates



EARLY CHILDHOOD UNIT BULLETIN

Welcome to the 6 May 2010 edition of the fortnightly Early Childhood Unit (ECU) Bulletin for the Local Authority Early Years Network. For more information, follow the link the links below:

POLICY

DEVELOPMENTS IN EARLY YEARS POLICY SINCE 1997

An article has been published that explores how high quality early years services provide a very positive start in life for young children. However, reducing inequality remains the key priority. For more details of *Improving outcomes for young children: can we narrow the gap?* by Gillian Pugh, published in *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development*, 30(1); 5-14, March 2010, visit:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a919587448>

The March 2010 issue of *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development* includes a range of papers about early years learning and curriculum. For more details visit:

http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=issue&issn=0957-5146&volume=30&issue=1&uno_jumptype=alert&uno_alerttype=new_issue_alert,email

CHILD POVERTY

CHILD POVERTY, PARENTING AND ATTAINMENT

A study has been published that uses longitudinal data from the UK Millennium Cohort Study (www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/mcs) to show the extent to which episodic and more persistent poverty in early childhood, and the lack of other family resources, disadvantage children at the start of their school careers. Positive parenting is shown to be an important contributor to school achievement and redressing the effects of poverty and disadvantage. For more details of *Poverty, family resources and children's early educational attainment: the mediating role of parenting* by Kathleen E. Kiernan and Fiona K. Mensah, published in *British Educational Research Journal* online, 26 February 2010, visit:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a919539487>

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN 'POCKETS OF POVERTY'

In March 2010 DCSF published *Pockets of poverty: the challenge for schools with small proportions of FSM (free school meals) pupils*. The booklet says that children from low-income households who are taught in schools serving affluent areas are in such a minority that they are easily bullied by their richer classmates and adds that a priority for such schools is to train teachers in how to help less affluent pupils. To download the booklet visit:

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00170-2010&>

SERVICES

CHILDREN'S CENTRES: DRAFT OUTREACH PRINCIPLES

Together for Children has added to its website a set of *Draft core principles, standards and skills for effective outreach from Children's Centres* which can be seen at: <http://www.childrens-centres.org/Topics/Outreach.aspx>

PLAY ENGLAND LOSES LOTTERY FUNDING

On 6 May 2010 *Children and Young People Now* disclosed that Play England has lost its lottery funding. Play England was created to support local authorities to deliver more play opportunities. For more details visit:

<http://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/ByDiscipline/Childcare-and-Early-Years/1000737/Play-England-loses-lottery-funding/>

The Play England website is: <http://www.playengland.org.uk/Page.asp>

PARTICIPATION

EARLY YEARS PARTICIPATION TOOLKIT

Hertfordshire County Council has recently published an *Early Years Participation Toolkit*, providing guidance and support to practitioners working directly with early years settings. The toolkit includes:

For more details visit:

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/caresupport/childfam/csupportservices/jobsinchildcare/eyfs/partic/eypartk/>

PARENTING

PARENTING STYLES DEBATE

A book published in April 2010, *The essential first year: what babies need parents to know*, by Penelope Leach, has sparked a number of discussions on the media on parenting styles. Penelope Leach claims that babies who are repeatedly left to cry are at risk of developing problems in later life because hysterical crying produces high levels of the stress hormone cortisol which are "toxic" to the developing brain. She also argues that babies cry for a reason - their lungs do not need the exercise - and babies are not capable of emotional blackmail. See, for example, *Times* 23 April:

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/article7105419.ece>

Guardian 22 April: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/apr/22/zoe-williams-crying-babies-debates>

Observer 25 April: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/apr/25/babies-sleep-penelope-leach> *Sunday Times* 25 April:

http://women.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/women/families/article7107080.ece

For more details of the book visit:

<http://www.dorlingkindersley-uk.co.uk/nf/Book/PrinterFriendly/0,,9781405336840,,00.html?sym=SYN>

PARENTING BEHAVIOURS AND CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

The SPAC study of children born in 1991/1992 (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/>) investigates trajectories of parenting behaviours and children's development from infancy to early childhood, associations between parenting behaviours and children's development and how these associations vary according to socioeconomic indicators. The study indicates the importance of timing and quality of mothers' interaction with children, benefits of outdoor experiences and the connection between mothers' education and their children's development.

For more details of: *Parenting behaviours and children's development from infancy to early childhood: changes, continuities and contributions*, by Leslie Morrison Gutman and Leon Feinstein, published in *Early Child Development and Care* 180(4): 535-556, May 2010, visit:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a793267056>

See also: *Child poverty, parenting and attainment* in [Child poverty](#)

WORKFORCE

LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA

On 27 April 2010 CACHE announced that it is the first Awarding Organisation to receive approval for the *Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce*. Centres will now be able to register learners from the 1 August this year.

For more details of the Diploma visit:

http://www.cache.org.uk/cacheDNN/Portals/0/pdf/CYPD_V7.pdf

PROFESSIONALISING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

An article has been published that considers policies and strategies employed to professionalise the early childhood workforce in England since 1997, most particularly moves towards creating a graduate early years workforce, which could have implications for training, pay and employment conditions, the specific body of knowledge and the professional identity of early years practitioners. To download *Professionalising the early childhood workforce in England: work in progress or missed opportunity?* by Eva Lloyd and Elaine Hallet, published in *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 11(1): 75-87, visit:

http://www.worlds.co.uk/pdf/validate.asp?j=ciec&vol=11&issue=1&year=2010&article=8_Lloyd_CIEC_11_1_web

This edition of *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood* is a special issue on *Rethinking professionalism in early childhood*. To see the list of articles, which may be downloaded, visit: http://www.worlds.co.uk/ciec/content/pdfs/11/issue11_1.asp

NEWS FROM THE EARLY CHILDHOOD UNIT

The Young Children's Voices Network (YCVN) invites you to attend the National Networking Day on Tuesday 15 June, in Leeds. This event brings together local authorities across England to share effective practice in listening to young children. The day will include presentations from the Leeds YCVN, and from UNICEF on the Rights Respecting Early Years Award, plus workshops on current topics and networking opportunities. For more details visit:

http://www.ncb.org.uk/ecu_network/ycvn/ycvn_home/ycvn_events.aspx



Welcome to the May 2010 issue of the Family and Parenting Institute's newsletter - Family Focus..

The election has ended – but the cutbacks are just beginning

The Department for Children, Schools and Families no longer exists. The new Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government has created a Department for Education with Michael Gove in charge. Nick Gibb is Minister for Schools. Sarah Teather is Minister for Children and Families and Tim Loughton is Junior Minister for Children and Families. Conservative MP Maria Miller, who was shadow families minister before the election, has been appointed parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Department for Work and Pensions under Iain Duncan Smith.

The family sector is still battling to assess the implications of the new government and its personnel upon its work. The biggest question, of course, is where the cutbacks will be made. Children and Young People Now magazine has been attempting to analyse the post-election scenario as the smoke begins to clear.

[CYPNOW](#)

If you need to access content from the website of the former DCSF, a copy of the site (as it was at May 11, 2010) can be found on the [National Archives website](#).

Family Policy Digest

The items in this month's digest include the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010. The digest also covers reports from the Institute of Fiscal Studies looking at cohabitation, marriage and child outcomes, couple penalties and premiums in the UK tax and benefit system. It mentions the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee inquiry report into young people not in education employment or training, and DWP research looking at parents' views on necessities for families with children.

Horizon Scan

Upcoming publication – is parenting really a class issue?

The book is edited by sociologist Dr. Martina Klett-Davies, an expert in family and gender studies, who argues that the family is a transmission belt for the reproduction of class inequalities, economically and culturally. The exact release date will be announced very soon. Copies will be available to order through [our website](#).

Forward Look

Here you can find out the latest information on events in the sector.

Email info@familyandparenting.org to add your event

[More](#)

Notice Board

Do you tweet?

This month saw FPI sign up to Twitter. Follow us at <http://twitter.com/FPIonline>

Engaging vulnerable families

This national one-day conference addresses how we can engage with families who are at high risk – including young parents and those with drug or alcohol addictions. The event takes place on Thursday 8 July 2010, 9.00am – 4.00pm, at the Institute of Child Health, London. Please register online at [FSID](#).

Teachtoday – what can you teach children about technology?

Last month saw the launch of Teachtoday – an attempt to bring together everything related to children and technology for teachers. The [Teachtoday educational website](#) provides information and advice for teachers and other of the school workforce about the positive, responsible and safe use of new technologies. members

Study on Child Poverty and Child Well-Being in the EU

The results of a major European Commission study into child poverty across the continent have now been published. The aim of the report was to identify what causes child poverty and social exclusion in Europe, to provide an overview of existing policies on income support and access to the labour market; and ‘define a reduced set of indicators which best reflect the multi-dimensional nature of child well-being.’

[Tarki](#)

Care and Support Alliance survey

The Care and Support Alliance is a group of 35 organisations that have come together to raise the profile of social care and work to improve the care system. The Alliance is conducting a review of how social care services have changed in the last year. They are surveying people that use care and support services, or those that care for a friend or relative who does, about how the services have changed. The deadline is: 20 June 2010. [Care and Support Alliance survey](#)

Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Annual conference

This event celebrates the 10 year anniversary of SFSC delivery in the UK. The conference panels and workshops will provide an opportunity to reflect on the impact the programme has had on the parenting sector. The event 'will be an opportunity for parents, practitioners and policy makers to come together to look at how SFSC contributes to making parenting support inclusive and effective.' It takes place on July 19, 2010, 9am to 4:30pm, at the Russell Hotel in Russell Square, London. People can register for the conference at [Race Equality Foundation](#)



Supporting Relationships, Supporting Families: Is your service up to speed?

Wednesday 7 July, Hamilton House, London

Full price £75 (+ VAT)

Parenting UK members and One Plus One Associates £50 (+ VAT).

This conference offers delegates a chance to look at how different family formations and changes in family relationships affect children and their parents. It will focus on how mainstream services need to be sensitive to picking up relationship issues before they get identified as a problem; how can this be done best and what tools and experience do services and practitioners need to do this? What is the best skills set, knowledge and experience when working with relationships in a family context?

K9.30 Arrival, registration and refreshments

10.00 Welcome by the Chair

10.10 **Strong, stable families of all kinds:**

What makes relationships matter

10.35 **Strong Relationships, Strong Families**

(representative from coalition government invited)

11.00 Q&A

11.15 [Break and networking](#)

11.35 **Strength-based working**

Case study: assessing protective factors as well as risk

11.55 **Parenting together and apart**

Family mediation: cost effective resolution to family conflict

12.15 Q&A

12.30 Lunch and networking

1.30 Workshop session 1

2.10 Workshop session 2

Delegates can choose two of four workshops (one workshop per session):

- a) Online support services – using new media to support families cost effectively
- b) Grandparents as parents – how can we support them effectively?
- c) Single parents – why relationship support still matters
- d) Family man – supporting relationships to prevent re-offending

2.50 Break and networking

3.05 Cafe discussion session – delegates can choose one of:

- a) Government committed to communities “where those that can, do and where they can’t, offer help”: is your service up to the challenge?
- b) Relationships and the community
- c) New relationships

3.45 Chair’s thanks

4.00 Close

This programme is subject to change. Please go to www.parentinguk.org/3/our-events for more information. Supporting Family Relationships

Booking Form

Bookings can be made online, by post or fax

Fax: 020 8485 3587

Online: www.parentinguk.org/3/our-events

Post: Parenting UK, Unit 431 Highgate Studios,
53-79 Highgate Road, London NW5 1TL

Enquiries: events@parentinguk.org

Membership offer

If you would like to take advantage of the membership prices below but are not currently a member, you can join today. Call 020 7284 8370 for more information or to become a member. or visit www.parentinguk.org/1/membership