



## **Informal social support:** the importance of friends and family

Plus all the latest news,  
training, resources and events

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## The power of transformation

In these uncertain times, it is reassuring to hear about projects which are successfully adapting to new circumstances by taking a different approach to supporting families. In this issue we hear from the Innovation Unit and NESTA about local projects which have transformed the way they work to provide better, lower cost support. Part of this includes recognising the value of informal support and how more can be made of this as an important element within the wider continuum of family support. You can read about their progress on page 3.

The importance of informal support is also highlighted in our article about teen parents by WeïtHsi Hu at Community Links. He identifies that teen parents often lack informal support as it is hard for them to socialise with friends – read more on page 4.

Parenting UK just held a very successful seminar with WAVE Trust to help you support parents in understanding the development of

early skills in babies.

We received very positive feedback from this event and are pleased to tell you that we will also run this seminar as an online webinar. You can find more information about this on our website, [www.parentinguk.org](http://www.parentinguk.org)

Despite the austere circumstances which we all face, the importance of supporting parents continues and the need for our services is on the rise. We hope all our members are finding ways to adapt and respond to the challenges which lie ahead.

Best wishes



Pamela Park, Chief Executive



## Parenting UK and WAVE Trust selected to provide support to the families sector under the Department for Education's 'Improving Outcomes for Children'

Parenting UK and WAVE Trust are pleased to announce that they have been selected to provide support to the families sector as part of a grant received under the Department for Education's 'Improving Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families' fund.

This partnership will deliver a programme of engagement with the voluntary and community sector to promote greater understanding and utilisation of evidence-based interventions. It will do this by increasing the expertise and support available to professionals and volunteers to deliver proven parenting and family support interventions, and to encourage greater collaboration between specialist organisations and sharing of best practice.

Parenting UK and WAVE Trust will offer a programme of topical roundtables, information seminars and webinars throughout 2011-12, as well as producing best practice resources to ensure current thinking from academia and think tanks is readily available to anyone working with parents.

We also offer an enquiries service to answer any specific questions regarding effective early intervention policy or practices. Do call with any queries on:  
Parenting UK – 020 7284 8370  
WAVE Trust – 020 8688 3773

“WAVE’s research shows that the key to the quality of a society is the quality of the parenting in that society. We are therefore very pleased to be working with Parenting UK. Together we will contribute to better understanding, and adoption of, UK and international best practice by parenting support groups.”  
George Hosking, CEO WAVE Trust

“Parenting UK are delighted to be working with WAVE Trust to provide essential support and information to the voluntary and community sector. Ensuring the sector has access to the latest thinking and best practice helps to give families access to the best support possible when they need it.”  
Pamela Park, CEO Parenting UK

# Transforming Early Years: different, better, lower cost services for families with young children

By Sarah Gillinson and Claire McEneaney

Transforming Early Years is a partnership between Innovation Unit and the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA). The programme is working with six localities in England to support local teams to design and deliver different, better, lower cost support for families with young children. We believe this kind of innovation is key to giving our children the start in life they deserve – many services are not currently delivering the best that they aspire to and at the same time, the funding crunch places existing support at risk. We believe that this tension can only be resolved through radically rethinking the ways in which we support families.

We are working with diverse teams in each locality, made up of frontline professionals, local authority staff, local third sector organisations, and parents and community members. By gathering new insights about the reality of life for local parents and children, the teams have come to a shared understanding of the most important challenges faced by families. These fresh insights are enabling the teams to develop new approaches to supporting families, which improve outcomes for young children and their families and save money at the same time.

## Findings

Research carried out by each of the localities revealed some striking commonalities in the challenges faced by parents:

- Isolation: many feel that they have no-one to turn to, be it family or friends; others are fearful of the localities they live in because of high crime levels; others simply feel that they have nowhere to go.
- Exclusion: they lack information about what help is available to them; when they do access services they fear the judgment of professionals, or encountering cliques of other parents who can be intimidating; many encounter physical barriers which prevent them accessing services, such as poor public transport.
- Helplessness: they feel 'done to' by professionals with little control over or say in their interactions, but despite this they feel lacking in the confidence to manage on their own; levels of personal aspiration are low and, where they exist, parents struggle with ways to achieve their goals.

As a result of this research, locality teams are working to new principles that underpin their offer to families:

- Focus on the whole family, not just the child
- Continuity rather than crisis
- 'People like us' are the first port of call
- Support is relationship-based, not activity-based

## New services

In every locality, one aspect of the solution involves an element of peer support for families – parents supporting other parents through the challenges that they face on a daily basis. In Bradford,

'community ambassadors' will work to build trust and rapport with local families, be trained to offer continuous, low level support to families and make connections with professionals when needed. Community Ambassadors will not come from 'perfect' families; they will be real people from the community who have the capacity to manage, who struggle and survive difficult times and who can then share their real life experiences with others. Parents 1st pregnancy peer supporters will be highly trained and work with a newly pregnant mum all the way through her pregnancy and up until 4 months after the birth, providing advice and support at every stage. Professionals will be freed up to deliver targeted work with those families who need their help most. Peer supporters will give professionals feedback from parents, allowing them to reshape their own practice, and model this with other clients and colleagues.

Localities are also making use of community hubs, as routes to supporting families. Many of the peer supporters will be accessible through community organisations where parents already go, such as shops and cafes. The team in Barking & Dagenham is developing a community shop, which would be owned and run by local residents. This will meet a real need in the community, which currently does not have an affordable and accessible shop offering basic items. It will also provide a safe, non-threatening, multi-generational space to act as the 'base' for peer supporters who would be trained in evidence-based parenting programmes. By presenting parenting support in a 'safe' space, which is not associated with or owned by a 'public service' the team hope to make the family support as successful and compelling as the shop.

Other locality teams are taking parental involvement further by involving them in the direction and leadership of services for families. The team in Knowsley are working to build the capacity of an existing parents group, Family Voices. They will be commissioned to deliver an increasing proportion of universal services and will be involved in the governance of the children's centre. Ultimately, they should take ownership of and leadership over the centre. The Knowsley team believe that by adopting this model, support will be more attractive to families who feel excluded from the authority-run centre, and will be more responsive to the needs and challenges of the community,

## Where next?

Innovation Unit and NESTA are currently supporting each locality to prototype their new services, and to build a robust business plan to help make their case. Ultimately, there should be two main outputs from this work: a series of interesting new models for early years services that could be shared and adapted to other local contexts; and a tested process to support other public services to develop different, better lower cost models. We will be working actively to share both of these outputs and welcome questions and requests for further information. Please contact Sarah Gillinson to find out more at [sarah.gillinson@innovationunit.org](mailto:sarah.gillinson@innovationunit.org)

## Research on Social and Emotional Needs of Newham Teen Parents: Importance of Family and Friend

At Community Links, we strongly believe that people who experience a problem understand it best. Our recent Participatory Action Research funded by Newham's Health Improvement Partnership Programme on the social and emotional needs of teenage parents in the borough has found that the informal supports many parents rely upon are not always there for pregnant teens and teen parents.

When a close friend of mine was pregnant, I was amazed how her friends organised together to help out. At the babyshower, a sign-up sheet was passed around for friends to volunteer bringing a cooked meal every night over the first two-week period after birth. These visits gave friends an opportunity to see the newborn baby, and took some pressure off the new parents.

Another close friend took up the responsibility of sending news and status of the parents and baby to broader social networks via emails for the first two weeks. People were welcomed to send greetings to the new parents directly, and were able to find out how the baby and the parents were doing without the parents having to respond directly to every message. The new parents could focus instead on caring for the baby, without being cut off from friends and social networks. This informal support really helped them to adjust to their new roles while staying connected to the community.

This type of support is one of the things teen parents need most in their lives, but it is often not available. When starting the project, we brought together a group of teen parents, and put them in charge of conducting research into their journeys and experiences from pregnancy to caring for the child. We started by exploring their own experiences, and from their stories, we identified the key themes within the research topic. These teen parents then received training to become peer researchers to go out and engage other teen parents in the borough to explore their experiences. We also held focus groups with professionals who had supported teen parents or pregnant teens before. Some key themes were identified in the pregnancy and parenting experiences of teens in Newham, namely reluctance in accessing formal services, importance of informal social support, and a need for social connection.

### Reluctance in Accessing Formal Services

Our research found that Newham pregnant teens and teen parents don't always access formal supports such as prenatal classes, parenting courses, or parent and toddler groups. This reluctance seemed to be due to the lack of appropriate materials; attitudes and skills of the professionals; and the absence of their peers. Social stigma of teenage parents also contributes to disengagement of formal services. We found that younger teen parents tend not to ask for help when they have difficulties with child-caring, because they do not want to be judged as incapable of taking care of their babies. Facing stigma and a lack of age-appropriate engagement without

a community of peers often leaves teenage parents feeling disenfranchised and alone to face the difficult challenges of caring for their newborn babies.

### Importance of Informal Social Support

The families of teen parents – especially their own parents – often play a major role in providing support such as finance, housing, and advice on caring for the baby. Family members also offer practical assistance by taking part in various daily parenting tasks and emotional support from a sympathetic and experienced perspective. Teen parents often found that their relationships with family improved once their child was born. The parents and family of teenage parents became more accepting and this acceptance fostered the development of a closer relationship. Teen parents also noticed a change within themselves becoming more mature and more responsible. In turn, families then tended to treat the teenage parents more like an adult.

The research found that relationships with friends tended to be the opposite. Friends can become distant due to a variety of factors. Initially, friends can distance themselves once they find out that the teen is pregnant. Those who stay as friends might visit to see the baby in the initial period, but unless a very strong relationship or bond was built before the teen parents became pregnant, friends tend to disappear after the teen parents have the baby. This is partly due to the fact that the context – time, place, or activities – in which the friends of teen parents socialise isn't suitable for the baby or the teenage parents anymore. Teenage parents and their friends no longer share a common framework for socialising, and being absent from school means teen parents can be forgotten by a circle of friends who do not tend to have the awareness, understanding, capacity, or interest to provide support for parents with young babies.

### Need for Social Connection

The teen parents we talked to cited a real need for a space or activities that would allow them and their toddlers to socialise and connect to each other. Most of them did not have any opportunities to meet with other teenage parents, and were lacking opportunities to socialise. This, and the fact that they may have lost contact with many friends, meant they were quickly becoming socially isolated.

Many teenage parents in Newham do not attend parenting groups because they do not see their peers at these groups and do not find the activities relevant or exciting. For example, many of the young parents and toddlers groups, even though they are advertised for young parents, tend to have parents who are in their mid 20s to early 30s. Teen parents do not really feel that they belong and will often feel that they stand out being the youngest parents there. There is desire amongst teen parents to connect to other teen parents who share similar experiences.

## Improving Teen Parents' Informal Social Network

Because teen parents often feel disenfranchised by formal services, community will become a more important part of their support network, particularly for those who do not have a strong family support or are ostracised by their family. There is a need to focus on building the capacity of the community – families and friends – of teenage parents to support them through the difficult period of child-caring. The community needs to know how to reach out to teenage parents to offer support, what needs teenage parents have, what kind of help they can offer, how to provide emotional support, and finally where to find child-caring information.

I will never forget the way my pregnant friend's friends came together to offer her support, partly because I, who haven't had the experience of parenting, would never have known what kind of help to offer. It is thanks to those friends who have had the experience to come up with these ideas and bring the community together. Teen parents are a particularly vulnerable population that needs precisely this kind of informal social support from the community.

WeiHsi Hu is the Consultancy & Training Manager at Community Links, a local service organisation in Newham. If you are interested in the research report, you can contact him at [weihsi.hu@community-links.org](mailto:weihsi.hu@community-links.org).

## Intensive Intervention Projects save £280,000 per child

The Department for Education has published a new report on the effectiveness of Intensive Intervention Projects (IIP), reporting a cost saving of £280,000 per child over five years.

As part of the previous government's Children's Plan and Youth Taskforce Action Plan, 20 IIPs were established in 2008. Run by public sector and third sector organisations, their aim was to work with 1,000 of the most challenging 8-19 year olds and help to turn their lives around.

The report identified the key factors in these young people's complex problems as: learning difficulties, domestic and neighbourhood violence, bereavement, family break up and linked mental health issues.

The Department's evaluation tracked fifteen individual case studies, examining the quality of results for young people and their families, and the cost-effectiveness of five IIPs, aiming to assess the benefits of the projects.

The model's strengths appear to lie in the relationship between key workers and the young person and their family. Using a whole family approach, workers had relatively small case loads and used personalised budgets and flexible working hours to maximise the impact of the projects. According to the report the "most significant factor in achieving positive change... was based upon a persistent, non-judgemental and assertive approach."

Positive transformative results ranged from reductions in offending and risky behaviours to improvements in education, and enhanced psychological wellbeing and social and parenting skills.

The average successful caseload cost £35,000 over five years, and represented savings of £280,000 per person on prevented costs – an average of £8 saved for every £1 spent. As the responsibility for investment transfers to local authorities, the Evaluation of Intensive Intervention Projects shows that investing early can lead to significant savings.

The full report can be read at: [www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR113.pdf](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR113.pdf)

## Vince Cable pushes for flexibility of parental leave

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has published a new consultation document called *Modern Workplaces*, which outlines plans for more flexible parental leave. Under the new proposals, parents would be able to take parental leave in blocks, allowing them to return to work briefly during leave. This could create opportunities for parents to return to work more gradually, starting on a part-time basis.

An additional four weeks of leave would also be made available to both parents during the first year of a child's life, and parents would have an extended period of 26 weeks in which to request flexible working.

Vince Cable, the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, said "These measures are fairer for fathers and maintain the existing entitlements for mothers but crucially give parents much greater choice over how to balance their work and family commitments."

The Federation of Small Businesses was quick to criticise the plans, which it says are contradictory to the government's commitment to cut regulations for small firms. They have argued that allowing parents to take time off in chunks would complicate the administration of parental leave, and that small businesses already offer flexible working to staff.

Working Families, a leading work-life balance organisation, welcomed the proposal to extend flexible working stating that, while many good employers offer flexible working, the new legislation would provide a useful backup.

They did, however, express disappointment at the lack of provision for low income fathers, arguing that wage replacement needs to be more adequate to encourage fathers to take their parental leave. "If the Government are serious about making Britain family-friendly, they need to improve access to parental leave by paying it properly."

The paper is open to consultation until 8 August and the government hopes to implement the new plan by 2015. <http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/modernworkplaces/>

## OECD report shows investment in UK families is failing to improve outcomes

According to a new report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Britain is failing to improve outcomes for families despite spending well above the average on family support.

The report, called 'Doing better for families,' shows that, per child, the UK Government spends around £138,000 on child support from birth to eighteen, compared to the average of £95,000 among other OECD nations. Despite this, Britain is falling behind in several fields including employment opportunities for parents and gender pay equality.

In Sweden, where a similarly high figure is spent on child support with better outcomes, the focus is on universal support services such as affordable childcare, where the UK focuses more on giving cash benefits directly to vulnerable families.

This failure to improve outcomes follows a successful period of increased spending activity between 1995-2005 in which child poverty rates fell more than in any other OECD country and Britain ranked 3rd for the average family income among OECD nations. This progress has since stalled and recent cuts to early years funding, coupled with the high cost of childcare, may be making it harder for parents to find work.

OECD secretary-general Angel Gurría said "Family benefits need to be well designed to maintain work incentives, but they need to be effective in protecting the most vulnerable, otherwise we risk creating high, long-term social costs for future generations."

The report suggests a shift of focus for the UK to make better use of its investments. Such a move would require a well-planned transitional phase, as many vulnerable families rely on the support they currently receive.

The report makes several recommendations to governments, including:

- helping families combine work and care commitments
- offering parental leave systems that promote paternal engagement with childcare
- investing in early years and sustaining that investment throughout childhood
- protecting investments in social protection for families
- encouraging childcare services to improve cognitive development in children

Gurría said "More family-friendly workplaces, equal career prospects for men and women, and a better sharing of care responsibilities not only make economic sense, they are a moral and political imperative."

## £28 million boost to UK's biggest study of babies and young children

2012 will usher in the latest of a series of world-renowned UK studies tracking the lives of UK children and their families from pregnancy and throughout childhood into adult life.

A team at University College London, headed by Professor Carol Dezateux has received a grant from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills of £28.5m to carry out the study, which follows on from a series of cohort studies begun in 1946 and continued in 1958, 1970 and 2000.

With 90,000 babies involved, the new study will be the biggest ever conducted in the UK and will follow the growth, development, health, wellbeing and social circumstances of these children, who come from a broad ethnic and social background that reflects the diversity of the UK.

Developed by a team of biomedical and social scientists, the study will provide insights into the life circumstances of the current generation, with the most intensive part of the study focusing on the early years.

The study aims to look into the key factors in overcoming social disadvantage, particularly how parenting style and early temperament influence later communication and social skills. It will also examine the effects of eating and physical activity on later behavioural development, body composition and weight.

To ensure that the study is as effective as possible, a new Cohort Resources Facility has been set up to measure changes over time and across generations, with the intention of maximising the use and impact of the data.

A study of this size will give hitherto unprecedented insights into how social and economic factors can explain human behaviour in key areas from health and poverty to child development and healthy ageing. The study ensures the UK's position among the world leaders in life course and birth cohort studies.

## Young Dads TV

YoungDads.TV is the authentic voice of young fathers, brought to you by the Fatherhood Institute. Using digital and social media, the YoungDads.TV team are working with young dads below the age of 25 to create a positive and relevant online hub of news, advice, opportunities and support that champions young dads in their roles as fathers. Young dads know what they need best and have co-designed the project with ongoing input, either making the content for the site or signposting media that interest them.

Despite the popular negative preconceptions about young fathers, many want to be involved in their children's lives but don't feel supported in that choice. Research has shown that

children with fathers have improved life chances, and that being a parent can be a powerful catalyst for positive change amongst young men leading chaotic lives. YoungDads.TV supports young dads to take part in the lives of their children by giving them a chance to explore a more positive future, discover their strengths and make better decisions.

## Delivering evidence-based practice, understanding the challenges, designing solutions

Parenting UK held a high-profile roundtable in March with key figures from the parenting sector to explore the challenges and opportunities for the voluntary sector in delivering evidence-based parenting practice. This event arose because Parenting UK and its members sensed that there is a strong desire to develop a shared understanding across the sector about future expectations in developing the evidence base for parenting support and interventions, and the challenges that the current differing approaches to practice presents.

The main aim was to draw together key stakeholders – leading academics, commissioners and providers – to discuss evidence-based parenting practice and move towards a shared understanding of evidence-based practice which recognises a spectrum of appropriate and proportional evaluation approaches.

Key findings from the roundtable were:

- the voluntary and community sector have a clear commitment to evidencing outcomes
- there is a demand for a proportionate and transparent process which fosters consistency of practice in a robust evaluation process
- evaluation processes need to allow for some local flexibility and adaption within an agreed framework
- opportunity for greater collaboration, sharing of best practice and peer to peer support should be further developed
- the conversation about evidence-based practice needs to be inclusive and allow for genuine VCS engagement

Parenting UK has a vision for the future of the parenting support sector that addresses needs at every level, delivers what works well and takes account of the needs and values of local communities. We believe that robust but proportionate evaluation is key to driving improvement and securing the right outcomes for parents and families. But this needs to be underpinned by a clear and accessible pathway for all organisations, the parenting workforce, programme developers, service providers and parents to engage with. This clarity

will improve dialogue with local service commissioners and strategic planners leading to increased collaboration and co-production.

'Parenting and family support within the Big Society must be driven by a vision which places proven local impact at its heart, which is flexible enough to adapt to varied local circumstances, and which does not inadvertently discourage communities and voluntary organisations from delivering solutions which produce results locally. To enable family services to respond to localism and the Big Society, the sectors must work together in striving for a consistency of practice – where all commissioners, developers and providers seek to ensure that robust and proportionate evaluation is firmly embedded.'

Pamela Park CEO PUK

You can download the full report from our website:

[www.parentinguk.org/files/downloads/Delivering\\_evidencebased\\_practice.pdf](http://www.parentinguk.org/files/downloads/Delivering_evidencebased_practice.pdf)

## Parenting programmes in Southwark – working with local communities

Greenhouse Bethwin SE F.C. is a football club for young people aged between 7 and 21 in the London borough of Southwark. It has approximately 465 members and is one of the largest competitive clubs in the UK. The club aims to promote social wellbeing in the area, involving residents and local groups and delivering local services in line with the needs of the local community.

The club has recently been delivering a parenting programme as part of a partnership with Parenting UK. Parenting UK provided a member of staff to set up a project which would identify the needs of the families and the club. The two organisations worked together to identify parents who would potentially attend a programme, working collaboratively to run focus groups. Through this partnership, the club has been able to support parents who would not normally access this kind of service through any other route.

The football club identified that the links they had with the parents needed to be developed, many of the parents are not engaged with the football club, and in some cases parents had not been seen. There were also a number of parenting issues identified by both the parents and the coaches which needed to be addressed. The project consists of Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities Programme and a Children's Art, Self-Esteem and Confidence Building group, which runs alongside the parenting programme for children who may not be attending a match that day.

The parenting course facilitator is also on hand to discuss any issues raised concerning parenting issues with members of the Greenhouse Bethwin staff. Up until now there had been

very little opportunity for parents to network with other parents at the club. Most parents would drop their children and return to pick them up, only interacting with the coaches. The parents would talk if there was an issue with their children, however the capacity for the club to deal with this is stretched.

The links between the organisations have proved to be effective in tackling issues raised by the staff, including developing strategies for working with parents and children with special needs. The link worker from Bethwin has observed one of the sessions to get an insight into the programme and its delivery and has rolled out this information to Greenhouse Bethwin staff.

Some of the benefits identified by the parents attending the programme are increased levels of confidence in the parents when dealing with their children and others, including the coaches, parents have also said that they have developed some good friendships, and they have acquired a lot of information from other parents and feel supported.

*"I get home and there is an issue which I have to deal with and I think of Julie and Patricia in my head".  
(Julie and Patricia are the facilitators).*

The parents who attended the course feel there is a real connection with the club now, they feel that they are doing something for them as parents. The parents also felt a real connection with other parents, particularly after the cultural sharing part of the course.

Parents have begun spending time with each other during the week, thus relieving their sense of isolation. Parents want to continue meeting, one has already paid to attend a fundraising course to look at funding to continue this process. The children's group was also very successful, participating in self-esteem and confidence building activities, "The children have made really good friends with other children that they may have seen at the club, but were in different teams".

The coaches have observed that parents on the programme now 'stop and say hello' and might stay around a bit more on the sidelines. They have also noticed a change in the children's behaviour, including being more organised, more social, improved behaviour on and off the pitch, the children are more relaxed and in some cases attendance has improved.

What next? Greenhouse Bethwin will be starting up a Parents' Forum with the support of Parenting UK, this would give the parents a voice and an opportunity to be more effective in the club. Parents from the parenting programme taking a more active interest in the club, which will benefit the young people in a number of ways, i.e. effective community involvement.

The parents will have the opportunity to hear from the young people, different children and encourage their children to be on the various committees that are part of Greenhouse Bethwin, which will help with developing not only the physical development, but also aid in the emotional development and enhancement of their social and emotional strengths.



*Family Links*

transforming schools and families

Family Links is a national training organisation that uses the Nurturing Programme to encourage an approach to relationships that gives children and parents an emotionally healthy springboard for their lives and their learning. Family Links was commissioned by CWDC to provide over a third of their recent evidence-based training offer.

### **Parent Group Leader Training**

Family Links 4-day Parent Group Leader training equips staff to deliver the Nurturing Programme, a structured 10-week course for parents/carers and children. The Programme centres around *The Parenting Puzzle* - an illustrated, easy to use guide for parents and professionals - and a comprehensive Parent Group Leader Handbook.

#### **Next courses:**

21, 22, 28 & 29 September - Oxford  
2, 3, 9 & 10 November - Hull  
2, 3, 9 & 10 November - Walsall  
2, 3, 9 & 10 November - London

### **Getting It Right with Families Training**

Family Links two-day training promotes a consistent approach to positive behaviour management and equips staff to work effectively with parents and children on a one-to-one basis or in settings such as children's centres.

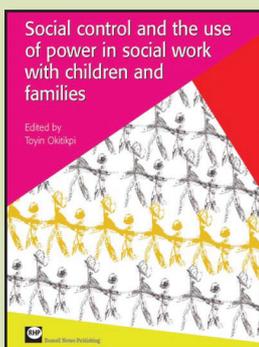
#### **Next courses:**

5 & 6 October - Walsall  
5 & 6 October - Oxford

For more details about any of these trainings or for whole-team trainings for 16 people in your area please contact:

Rebecca Durrant  
01865 405 632  
rebecca.durrant@familylinks.org.uk

[www.familylinks.org.uk](http://www.familylinks.org.uk)



### Social control and the use of power in social work with children and families

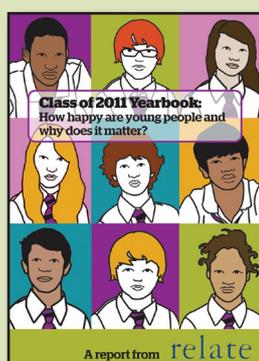
Edited by Toyin Okitiki

This publication aims to explore the extent to which social workers' powers are an important element of their practice, and that the use of such powers should not be viewed as being counter to the general approach that has been nurtured and developed by the profession from

its inception. More generally it attempts to encourage trust in the profession and to enable practitioners to regain their confidence about their role, duties and responsibilities.

Published: Russell House, February 2011, £18.95

[www.russellhouse.co.uk](http://www.russellhouse.co.uk)



### Class of 2011 Yearbook: How happy are young people and why does it matter?

The report, *The Class of 2011*

*Yearbook: How happy are young people and why does it matter?* paints a stark picture of the emotional wellbeing of the UK's younger generation and clearly demonstrates the need for support to be available in schools. Especially in the context that statutory provision is already in force across Wales and Northern Ireland

and is being considered by the Scottish parliament. By the time an average class of 30 young people reach their 16th birthdays:

- 10 of them will have witnessed their parents separate
- 3 will have suffered from mental health problems
- 8 will have experienced severe physical violence, sexual abuse or neglect
- 3 will be living in a step family
- 1 will have experienced the death of a parent
- 7 will report having been bullied

Published: Relate, May 2011

[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

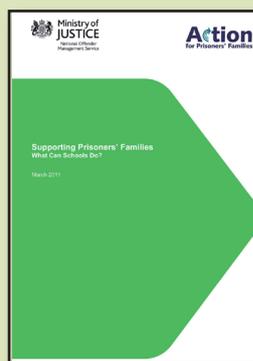
### New Futures: what is happening to children's services?

In November 2010, the National College and ADCS undertook a joint survey of Directors of Children's Services to provide a snapshot of changes in the way that children's services are delivered by local authorities. The survey was followed up by a 45 minute conversation with DCs in 12 local authorities that had participated, selected because their response to the survey raised issues that seemed worthy of further exploration.

This report summarises the findings from these interviews and the findings of a second survey undertaken in April 2011 by the National College and ADCS to establish whether the proposals reported in in 2010 had been implemented as planned.

Published: Association of Directors of Children's Services and National College, April 2011

[www.adcs.org.uk](http://www.adcs.org.uk)

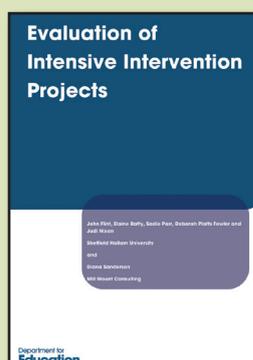


### Working with offenders' families – new briefings for different sectors

Action for Prisoners' Families has produced 10 briefings, supported by the National Offender Management Service, for magistrates, probation officers, social workers, youth workers, health visitors, GPs, midwives, teachers, the police and children's centre staff. The briefings are now available to download on APF's new website.

Published: Action for Prisoners' Families, 2011

[www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk](http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk)



### Evaluation of Intensive Intervention Projects

As part of the previous government's Children's Plan and Youth Taskforce Action Plan, 20 Intensive Intervention Projects (IIPs) were established, delivered by a range of public and third sector organisations. The IIPs aimed to turn around the lives of up to 1,000 of the most challenging and problematic young people aged 8-19 each year through addressing a range of risk factors, using a contractual

approach combining support and sanction. The aims of the research were to use an individual longitudinal case study approach to provide in-depth insights into how different IIPs were working, what IIPs added to existing provision and how IIPs were experienced by young people.

Published: Department for Education, May 2011

[www.education.gov.uk/publications](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications)

### Daycare Trust – new guide to families' inclusion

Daycare Trust has launched a new guide for childcare settings and schools to help them become more inclusive. 'Making a Bold Statement' is based on the findings from discussions with parents of disabled children and young people, which took place during the consultation.

Published: Daycare Trust, May 2011

[www.daycaretrust.org.uk/pages/daycare-trust-highlights-new-guide-to-families-inclusion.html](http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk/pages/daycare-trust-highlights-new-guide-to-families-inclusion.html)

### Adoption and special guardianship data pack launched

The adoption and special guardianship data pack summarises the current adoption (and special guardianship) story – the national picture on volumes, speed of decision making, the ages and backgrounds of children moving into adoption and other key factors.

Published: Department for Education, April 2011

[www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/adoption/a0076713/datapack](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/adoption/a0076713/datapack)

## Young People in Focus

[www.youngpeopleinfocus.org.uk/courses](http://www.youngpeopleinfocus.org.uk/courses)

### ESCAPE and Parallel Lines Parenting Programme

The ESCAPE parenting programme offers a flexible framework for working with parents and young people, and has been widely used with parents in the youth justice system and elsewhere. This programme promotes a problem-solving approach in helping parents establish a positive relationship with their teenagers. The ESCAPE programme can be used in one-to-one or group settings, and includes Parallel Lines, a companion programme for working with young people in conjunction with their parents. This three-day facilitators' training course will prepare practitioners for running their own parenting sessions using the ESCAPE programme.

19, 20 and 21 July 2011, Manchester

## Family Links

[www.familylinks.org.uk](http://www.familylinks.org.uk)

### Whole School Programme

Family Links 2-day training in the Nurturing Programme for Schools offers a whole-school approach to creating a calm, kind respectful school community. The aim is to build children's social, emotional and behavioural skills so that they concentrate and learn much better. The training is for all school staff to build consistency in positive behaviour management skills and underpin the school behaviour policy.

Teaching staff are introduced to the 10-week Nurturing Programme for children, for which a series of handbooks are provided to deliver the material in Circle Time. The Nurturing Programme is an excellent framework in which to promote Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education. The aim is to reduce staff stress and for children to feel calm, secure and ready to learn. Training takes place over 2 consecutive days. Staff must attend both days.

## Children in Scotland

[www.childreninScotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninScotland.org.uk)

### Kitbag for Families

Kitbag for Families is an approach and a set of resources to help children grow up calm and confident, building relationships in families of all shapes and sizes. Developed by health professionals and award-winning designers, Kitbag for Families can be used from the age of three to adulthood. It would be an especially useful tool for those working with families experiencing turmoil or coping with distressing events as it helps facilitate individual expression as well as encouraging cohesiveness. However, any worker involved with children and/or families trying to navigate changes would find it helpful.

This half-day introductory training session is for those who would like to learn more about Kitbag for Families, its background philosophy, its contents and how to use it.

27 October, Edinburgh

## TCCR and Anna Freud Centre

[www.tccr.org.uk](http://www.tccr.org.uk)

### Mentalisation based therapy for parental conflict

The Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships, in collaboration with the Anna Freud Centre, has developed this application of Mentalisation Based Therapy for use with parents in conflict (MBT-PC). The course will cover the theoretical and research base of Mentalisation Based therapy with parents in conflict. There will be an introduction to some of the core clinical skills used in MBT-PC together with a focus on the clinical practice of MBT-PC.

The course aims to provide mental health professionals with an introduction to Mentalisation Based Therapy for Parental Conflict, and how to apply the approach to parents whose poorly resolved and sustained conflicts are adversely affecting their children's development and mental health.

22 and 29 July, London

## Family Rights Group

[www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk)

### Fathers Matter 3 - 'Working with fathers who present a risk to their children'

A one day training programme in engaging with fathers who constitute a risk to their children. The training aims to: explore some of the challenges in engaging with risky fathers and ways to overcome them; hear about examples of effective practice in this area; hear the views of fathers who have received local authority services and reflect on how practice within their own authorities addresses these difficult issues and begin to develop strategies to take forward more effective working practice.

14 July London

## Family Futures

[www.familyfutures.co.uk](http://www.familyfutures.co.uk)

### Smoothing the path – helping fostered children make the transition to a new family

Helping children to move from foster home to permanent placement has been a neglected area of practice. Regrettably, for many children, such moves are fraught, hasty and sometimes represent the loss of a significant carer. Every move is a trauma for children. This course will provide:

- Framework for thinking through the key issues to consider during the transition of single or multiple placements
- Practical guidelines for minimising the potential difficulties that arise during planning and process of placements
- Understanding of specific considerations and constraints affecting how professionals manage transitions with their own clients

Entries are provided by individuals/ organisations offering the training. Inclusion here does not imply endorsement by Parenting UK.

## John Ellerman Foundation

The Foundation aims to support a broad cross-section of national charities doing work across areas including health and disability, and social welfare. They know that core funding is difficult to obtain and are especially open to receiving applications for this purpose. They incline towards supporting charities which: offer direct practical benefits rather than work mainly on policy or campaigning; attract and involve large numbers of volunteers; co-operate closely with other charities working in similar or related fields; do innovative work; are small/medium sized (annual income more than £100,000 and less than £25m).  
www.ellerman.org.uk

## Henry Smith's Charity

Priority is given to work with groups experiencing social and/or economic disadvantage and work that tackles problems in areas of high deprivation. They make grants in the following categories: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic; carers; community service; disability; domestic and sexual violence; drug and substance misuse; ex-service men and women; family services; healthcare; homelessness; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; mental health; older people; prisoners and ex-offenders; prostitution and trafficking; refugees and asylum seekers; and young people.  
www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/index.html

## Big – People and Place – Wales

Funds capital and revenue projects that encourage co-ordinated action by people who want to make their communities better places to live. It will support local and regional projects throughout Wales that focus on: revitalising communities; improving community relationships or enhancing local environments, community services and buildings. Helping people to become more involved in their community is an integral aspect to this programme. Voluntary, community or public sector organisations, working separately or together, are eligible to apply.  
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog\_people\_places

## Noel Buxton Trust

Grants are made to charities active in welfare of children in disadvantaged families and of children in care. This will normally cover families with children of primary school age and younger; although work with children in care will be considered up to the age at which they leave care. Also funds penal reform, the welfare of prisoners and their families, rehabilitation of prisoners and work with young people at risk of offending. The Trust is a small one and seldom makes grants of more than £4,000, often considerably less.  
www.noelbuxtontrust.org.uk/index.htm

## Big – Reaching Communities

Reaching Communities funds projects that help people and communities who are most in need, and can really make a difference. Projects can be new or existing activities, or be the core work of your organisation. They want to fund projects that respond to needs identified by communities, and those that fund projects that help those most in need including those people or groups who are hard to reach.

They want to encourage the following changes to communities as a result of their funding: people having better chances in life, including being able to get better access to training and development to improve their life skills; strong communities, with more active citizens, working together to tackle their problems; improved rural and urban environments, which communities are better able to access and enjoy; healthier and more active people and communities.

You can apply to Reaching Communities if you are: a registered charity a voluntary or community group a statutory body, (including schools) a charitable or not-for-profit company a social enterprise - a business that is chiefly run for social objectives, whose profits are reinvested in the business rather than going to shareholders and owners.  
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog\_reaching\_communities?fromsearch=-uk

## Where to find funding

You can find further information about funding on the Parenting UK website. The following provide general guidance and information on funding:

- Association of Charitable Foundations – [www.acf.org.uk](http://www.acf.org.uk)
- Charities Aid Foundation – [www.cafonline.org](http://www.cafonline.org)
- Charities Information Bureau – [www.fit4funding.org.uk](http://www.fit4funding.org.uk)
- Directory of Social Change – [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)
- Funderfinder – [www.funderfinder.org.uk](http://www.funderfinder.org.uk)
- Grants 4 Funding Portals – [www.grants4.info/portal/index.asp](http://www.grants4.info/portal/index.asp)

## September

### **Monitoring Parents: science, evidence, experts and the new parenting culture**

Parenting Culture Studies and the Kent Centre for Law Gender and Sexuality

13–14 September, University of Kent

This event provides the opportunity for inter-disciplinary discussion of empirical and theoretical work that explores the increasing advance of a 'science' of child-rearing. The organisers hope to encourage discussion of and debate about developments through which 'parenting' has been constructed as an activity which can and should be influenced by scientific evidence and expert opinion.

<http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/parentingculturestudies/>

## October

### **From Timid to Tiger: Parenting the Anxious Child**

The British Psychological Society

3 October, London

This workshop will outline the Timid to Tiger approach to managing anxiety in children aged nine years or below. Timid to Tiger is an entirely parenting-based approach. It is based on evidence that anxious children benefit substantially from a parenting style that is clear, calm and consistent. This workshop will give a brief overview of each session and cover many of the core techniques that are employed.

[www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)

### **Fathers are Important**

The International Federation for Parenting Education in partnership with Working with Men

15 October, London

Awareness of the importance of fathers has increased dramatically in the UK in the past ten years thanks to clear research findings, sterling work by parenting and fatherhood organisations and a willingness to listen on the part of policymakers. This conference will explore effective ways of working with fathers in an ever changing climate and offer an opportunity to hear directly from young fathers.

[conference@parent.freemove.co.uk](mailto:conference@parent.freemove.co.uk)

### **Critical Ages, Creative Solutions**

**Unite/CPHVA Annual Professional Conference 2011**

19-20 October 2011, Brighton

The CPHVA Annual Professional Conference is the premier event for health visitors, school nurses, nursery nurses and other community nurses working in primary care.

[www.neilstewartassociates.com/sh279/](http://www.neilstewartassociates.com/sh279/)

## November

### **Meeting of minds: working together to build better lives for children**

Children in Scotland Annual Conference 2011

3–4 November, Edinburgh

The event offers an unrivalled opportunity for you to collaborate with colleagues across the sector and demonstrate your commitment to services for children and young people.

[www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)

### **Families, Parents and Children: Moving from Relational Stress to Relational Health**

The Centre for Child Mental Health

19 November, London

This one day conference featuring top presenters in family therapy and parenting will explore cutting edge research (psychology and neuroscience) and key tools and techniques for effective work with families, parents and children. Initially presenters will focus on what is happening in brain and mind when family members suffer from entrenched negative relational patterns. They will pay particular attention to the pain of misconceptions, failed connections, dead connections and relational poverty in the family home. They will also consider the science and psychology of relational stress.

[www.childmentalhealthcentre.org/conferences](http://www.childmentalhealthcentre.org/conferences)

### **Conceptualisation of the mental health of children in the care system**

29–30 November and 1 December, London

Standard clinical conceptualization, assessment methods and formulations may miss the needs of this important group of children and adolescent. The workforce engaged with looked after and adopted children need specialist training, knowledge and skills to correctly identify what is going on for these children, and to develop interventions that will genuinely support their mental health and development.

[www.familyfutures.co.uk](http://www.familyfutures.co.uk)

### **Tackling child poverty through supporting and strengthening families**

Eurochild

30 November – 2 December 2011, Cardiff

Child poverty prevents children and young people from achieving their full potential and autonomy, and affects their health, their personal development, their education and their general well-being. Child poverty is often passed from one generation to the next, at huge cost to society due to lost social and human capital. Eurochild believes that supporting and strengthening families most in need is crucial for tackling child poverty and breaking the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage.

[www.eurochild.org](http://www.eurochild.org)

We welcome your comments on and contributions to our News Bulletin. Please address any correspondence to [rtonkin@parentinguk.org](mailto:rtonkin@parentinguk.org)

Published by Parenting UK Unit 431 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, London NW5 1TL  
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Registered charity No 1076942. Registered in England and Wales No 3588930

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