



Preparing for parenthood

Plus all the latest news,
training, resources and events

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What's parenting got to do with it? How parenting fits into the August 2011 riots

In August we saw many explanations put forward for the riots in England; while the factors that led to the rioting are many and complex, the quality of parenting is a significant part of the jigsaw.

In response to the riots, David Cameron has just announced a review of all policies to ensure they are good for families, saying “if we want to have any hope of mending our broken society, family and parenting is where we've got to start”.

Whatever the possible reasons – a genuine protest at a shooting, hostility towards the police, irresponsible and copycat opportunism, gang-related activity, an increasingly acquisitive culture at all levels of society, a poverty of hope, income inequality – there were undoubtedly many young people involved whose parents should have kept them away from trouble.

“Good enough” parenting which we know must include warmth, consistency, firm boundaries and positive regard builds the foundation for a child to grow up feeling loved and valued. In turn, children can develop the capacity to trust and to empathise, to respect other people, and to understand the consequences of their behaviour.

The ability to parent well can be made more stressful by factors, such as poverty, but poverty itself is not the main determinant, “there is no clear-cut causal link between poverty and parenting” (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2007).

Children begin to learn about the consequences of their own actions in infancy. For teenagers, as they struggle with the transition from childhood to adulthood, peers may become more important but parents are still crucial. Teenagers still need to know where the boundaries are and parents still need to know where and with whom their younger teenagers are spending their time.

The challenges of raising children are difficult for anyone, especially as their children move into the teenage years. But for a parent who did not experience “good enough” parenting themselves, it may be even more challenging. We have heard many parents since the riots claim that the law is stopping them from disciplining their child. Yet discipline is not about physical punishment but setting firm boundaries and we need to help parents understand that there are effective ways of managing difficult behaviour.

There is a wealth of evidence showing that parenting can be significantly improved with better outcomes for children. For example, evaluation of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting programme showed an increase in the use of positive discipline and communication strategies as well as an increase in both the parent's and the child's competence. Another evaluation of the Group Teen Triple P programme showed that it achieved its goals of reducing targeted risk factors associated with the development of behavioural and emotional problems in teenagers.

Parenting UK believes that we need to understand how the quality of parenting fits into a wider more complex picture of recent events. Parenting education and support works. It should be readily available on a universal basis, for example through health visitors, and targeted where needed.

Parenting UK calls for the government to recognise parenting as a key factor in building strong families and strong communities. We challenge decision-makers to focus on the causes of the problems by:

- Encouraging a shift in social norms so that parenting is seen as a life skill that one can learn and improve
- Ensuring parenting is included in the school curriculum so the next generation of parents are introduced to positive parenting principles and have an understanding of child development skills
- Ensuring parenting education and support is widely available, with both universal provision, beginning in the antenatal period and targeted support when needed
- More proactive use of parenting orders and intensive interventions rather than custodial sentences or eviction orders which should only be used as a last resort, to help families reform.

Parenting UK will be preparing a more detailed policy response to the riots in October.

If you wish to get involved, please email rtonkin@parentinguk.org

Preparing for pregnancy, birth and beyond: the role of antenatal education

The Department of Health recently commissioned a review into antenatal education which found that provision was variable and patchy. Uptake was also low by the most disadvantaged and excluded families and health professionals felt they were not fully prepared or supported in this work. As a result, the Department tasked a special group of experts to consider what provision needs to be in place to prepare mothers and fathers to be for pregnancy, birth and beyond. The expert group was informed by the review of evidence, surveys of expectant and new mothers and fathers, visits to existing programmes and a review of digital materials.

The review carried out by the University of Warwick (Schrader McMillan et al, 2009) found that, while evidence on what works in antenatal education is rather limited and unclear, there is some evidence that it plays a part in improving knowledge and preparation for parenthood and it can increase a mother's satisfaction with the birth and birth experience. The review also found that good quality, focused antenatal education can help manage and reduce maternal anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early childhood, leading to improved coping, more partner support and better birth experience.

The expert group developed a Preparation for Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond framework (see Figure 1) for planning local provision. The starting point for this is the recognition that most learning takes place through family and friends, and using the multiple media sources of information and opportunities that are now available. The four levels of the framework reflect how parents-to-be want to receive information and support from different sources and at different times.

Expectant mums and dads are intrinsically motivated to want to protect and do the best for their child, and are keen to learn how to do this and to find out what is happening to the baby. Reading books and watching television programmes have always been important, but freely available digital information and online virtual communities have become a major source

of helpful information for expectant parents. This is transforming how people learn and, with professionals guiding them, parents can reflect on their learning and make sense of the information in the context of their particular life and circumstances.

Antenatal education is therefore in need of development to make sure that it better reflects what mothers, fathers and families want and our deeper understanding of early childhood development and the importance of family life. There are many examples of people running groups and sharing information in new ways, especially in Sure Start children's centres and those run by non-state providers such as the NCT. Drawing on the research, the expert group developed a list of six themes for the content of any preparation for parenthood or antenatal education programme, be it one-to-one contacts, groups, self-directed learning or one-off events. The themes are:

- the development of your unborn baby
- changes for me and us
- our/my health and wellbeing
- giving birth and meeting your baby
- caring for my/our baby
- who is there for us - people and services.

Each theme has a menu of topics for mothers and fathers to choose from, including those traditionally underplayed in groups and classes, ie the psycho-social aspects of early childhood and parenthood and understanding babies. The content is interconnected and designed to assist parents and professionals to tailor programmes to suit different groups (and individuals) rather than be a standard prescription. The skill of the practitioner is in understanding the needs of the group and each individual within it, respecting and drawing out what parents know already and providing the opportunity for them to reflect on what this means for them and their lives.

Parents value health professionals as a trusted source of advice and information. While others have an important part to play, health visitors and midwives will always have a leading role. However, Schrader McMillan et al (2009) found that many health professionals feel unable or ill equipped to undertake groups, with antenatal education being seen as having low value. This is an issue that needs to be addressed by the professions and services. To help, the expert group is developing a guide for professionals and parenting practitioners to help them to run local groups tailored to their community. Using the themes and menus above, the pack will offer useful resources and reflective exercises to assist practitioners with planning a programme, and developing skills and confidence in facilitating groups.

The framework described here is a first step in rethinking the purpose and content of 'antenatal education' and how we can work together to guide mothers and fathers as they make what is probably the most important transition of their lives.

Figure 1. The PPBB Framework

Start with **family, friends and communities** using social networks for learning and support

Offer opportunities to learn and build social support **through community-based groups**

Make learning and preparation **part of routine care** (maternity and Healthy Child Programme)

Enhanced evidence-based services and support for the most needy individuals

Government trials parenting classes for all parents of children under five

Parenting UK welcomes the recent announcement by Children's Minister Sarah Teather to pilot the offer of vouchers for parenting classes to all parents of a child aged under five. It is heartening to see tangible investment backing up the Government's recognition of the importance of parenting and the early years.

The Government trial is part of plans to increase support for parents to help them communicate better with their children, encourage good behaviour, and prevent problems developing later on.

Parenting UK looks forward to hearing more about where these schemes will be run, how they will encourage parents to take up this voluntary offer, and who will provide the support. To ensure success it will be vital to address the issue of stigma which sometimes surrounds parenting support to ensure as many parents as possible benefit from this offer.

The Government will work with organisations with an existing track record to test the supply and demand for universal parenting classes, as well as other products and services that support families in the earliest years of a child's life.

The trial is likely to run in three or four areas of the country. Around three-quarters of parents say they want more information and support to help their parenting. The vouchers will potentially benefit parents from a wide range of backgrounds, not just those who may have significant problems, like drug or alcohol abuse. Many good and able parents still need information and advice in the early years of their child's life.

Pamela Park, Chief Executive of Parenting UK says, "We greatly hope that this scheme will prove successful in strengthening family life and building strong parent-child relationships. The universal nature of this offer will help to create a more positive culture towards parenting support and ensure wider public recognition that the early years of a child's life are vitally important in shaping their future."

Most parents will have accessed antenatal classes during pregnancy, which provide useful guidance and support. The trial will give parents similar access to parenting classes in the first five years of their child's life, so that support does not stop when their baby is born but is available right through to when their child starts school.

Children's Minister Sarah Teather said, "The Government should do all it can, without interfering in family life, to support parents to be the best they possibly can be. The first few years of a child's life can be the toughest period for parents' relationships. And these early years are also the most crucial for healthy child development."

Parents to be given new freedoms to run their local children's centres

Parents and communities are to be given the freedom to run their local children's centre, under new plans announced by the Department for Education.

The Government will consult in the autumn on changes to children's centres, including proposals that will enable parents and community groups to apply to their local authority to run a children's centre in their local area. Under the plans, local authorities, not the Government, would have the final say on whether projects go ahead.

The Government also confirmed that a further 18 local authorities will trial payment by results for children's centres. Together with the first wave announced in July, 27 local authorities will be testing rewards for reaching the most vulnerable families, improving family health and wellbeing and raising attainment of children at age five.

As part of wider reforms to the core purpose of children's centres, the Government wants to see a clearer focus on reaching the most disadvantaged families and more work to help narrow the attainment gap between wealthier and poorer children that is evident from as early as 22 months.

Children's Minister Sarah Teather said, "Children's centres are at the heart of community life. New proposals to enable parents and communities to help run children's centres will give local people more control and influence over the services they use on a daily basis."

"We know many children's centres are doing fantastic work, but there is still more to be done to reach the poorest families. Children's centres are a powerful tool in tackling social inequality and we want to make sure they are giving children, regardless of background, the chance to develop well and be ready for school.

"That's why I'm pleased to announce a further 18 areas will be trialling a new way of working – looking at how we can reward children's centres for improving outcomes for families. We are putting a particular focus on disadvantaged families getting the help they need in children's centres, and on ensuring that every child develops well and starts school ready and able to learn."

To help children's centres improve their outreach services, the Department for Education will be working with the National College to recruit three regional outreach leaders. The leaders will work alongside the National College's Foundation Years Associates, to support and advise children's centres across the country. Their role will be to help share best practice and advocate effective approaches to targeting the most disadvantaged families.

Government announces £6 million for children in care and families who need extra support

The Government has announced an extra £6 million a year to provide additional support for foster carers and vulnerable families.

Thirty seven local authorities will share this extra funding in order to expand their own intensive intervention programmes and reach even more vulnerable children and their families.

The programmes supported by the government all address the need for stability in a child's life. There is increasing evidence that this work reduces the need for a child to enter care or custody, or can reduce the length of time spent in care.

Children's Minister Tim Loughton said, "Poor parental care can have a lasting impact on children. It can cause difficulties for children's development across many areas of their lives. Yet we know from the success of programmes such as Multisystemic Therapy that with the right support, families with entrenched difficulties can be helped to turn their lives around."

The programmes supported by the government are: Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care; Keeping Foster and Kinship Carers Trained and Supported; Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy.

Poor parenting increases likelihood of binge drinking at ages 16 and 34, says think tank Demos

A study of over 15,000 children by the think tank Demos shows parenting style is one of the most important and statistically reliable influences on whether a child will drink responsibly in adolescence and adulthood.

Demos found that 'tough love' parenting, combining consistent warmth and discipline, was the most effective parenting style to prevent unhealthy relationships with alcohol right into the mid-thirties age range. The report *Under the Influence* found that:

- Bad parenting at age 10 makes the child twice as likely to drink excessively at age 34
- Bad parenting at age 16 makes the child over eight times more likely to drink excessively at that age
- Bad parenting at age 16 makes the child over twice as likely to drink excessively at age 34

The report also found that high levels of parental warmth and attachment at an early age and strict discipline at the age of 16 are the best parenting styles to reduce the likelihood that a child will binge-drink in adolescence and adulthood.

While 'tough love' was the best parenting style to ensure against children becoming binge drinkers, less effective parenting styles were 'authoritarian', 'laissez faire' and 'disengaged'. Binge-drinking figures in the UK have officially been dropping since the early 2000's, but the culture of a binge-drinking minority that has become more extreme, and more public, has fed the media's infatuation with a boozed-up Britain.

Demos stresses that the lead role in how to deal with an entrenched binge culture needs to be taken by parents and government must support parents to do this. Without the active involvement of parents, policy to deal with binge-drinking will not have the reach or impact desired to combat the problem.

New online training module to expand skills and expertise around child poverty

CWDC has published a new online training module for any practitioner wanting to expand their skills and expertise around child poverty.

The module, "Understand, recognise and respond to child poverty" is suitable for practitioners across the children's workforce wanting to increase their knowledge in this area. Users may also find it helpful in identifying any training and skills gaps they might have.

The module is not accredited, but line managers and supervisors may want to use it as a continuing professional development opportunity for colleagues.

Alongside the module, CWDC are co-ordinating the development of a learner resource, which should be available on their website in the autumn.

The resource will act as a starting point for anyone expanding their knowledge on child poverty. It will provide supporting notes, useful tools and suggested activities for enquiry based learning.

CWDC are currently working with a stakeholder expert reference group to develop this support tool. If you or any of your colleagues would like to be involved please get in touch.

To get involved in the stakeholder reference group email parentsandfamilies@cwdcouncil.org.uk

Q&A - Roots of Empathy, Isle of Man

Roots of Empathy is a social innovation programme, using classroom visits by an infant and parent. Through guided observations of this loving relationship, children learn to identify and reflect on their own thoughts and feelings and those of others.

Why was the decision made to introduce Roots of Empathy in the Isle of Man?

Roots of Empathy had been identified by one of the Island's senior health care professionals, Sue Porter, and together we brought the RoE International Development Director to the Island to talk about the programme. It appeared to be well researched and had been quite widely evaluated. In addition the fact that it was being used in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and some of North America made us feel that it had credibility. Mainly though it was Sue's passion that carried it passed most hurdles.

We managed to secure funding from four of the Island's Government Departments – Social Services, Education, Health and Home Affairs. They each put £10k per year for three years. This allowed us to start the programme with 10 schools in year 1, develop this to 19 in year 2 (although we wanted 20), and eventually 28 in year three. The expense was mainly in buying the authority to run the programme from Roots in Canada and to have a trainer come and develop our Island based Instructors – one for each school.

What has been the effect so far?

Roots has gained a very good reputation Island wide – with pupils, parents and teachers alike. It is significant that we have secured Year 4 funding – in very challenging financial times – demonstrating significant political support.

What are the cost benefits of Roots of Empathy?

We have not had an SROI done on it but there are strong indicators that suggest it educates participants about parenting with the effect that they state greater caution about future unwanted pregnancies. The main emphasis is around mutual respect, empathy and pro-social behaviours. These could well be significant factors in future positive behaviour and crime reduction but we have as yet no evidence of this. Year 4 is about the start so the first pupils through are still only 11 years old.

Is this part of a wider approach to prepare children for parenting in the Isle of Man?

There is an Island wide Early Years Strategy and also a Children's Plan (the first being part of the latter). Both name Roots as a key element. The Island also has a parenting education programme but Roots is not named in this.

Why is Roots of Empathy a good initiative to prepare children for parenting?

The thrust is about decreased incidences of bullying in the playground and increased pro-social empathic behaviour. I feel Roots does educate children to the responsibilities (and costs) of parenting – and this may have a future impact – but we cannot prove this.

Intensive intervention helps families reduce poor parenting and antisocial behaviour

The latest statistics released by the Department for Education show that Family Intervention Projects have helped to reduce the proportion of families involved in crime and antisocial behaviour by 50 per cent.

The statistics analyse the results of the 3,675 families that have been helped by intervention projects since January 2006. The data is based on figures recorded by a system developed by the National Centre for Social Research.

On average, there was a 47 per cent reduction in the proportion of families with chaotic home lives that included poor parenting, relationship breakdowns, domestic violence or child protection concerns.

The projects resulted in a 34 per cent reduction in the number of families with health risks, including mental or physical health and substance abuse problems. Families experiencing problems with education also saw some positive outcomes with a 53 per cent reduction in the number of families with problems with truancy or bad behaviour at school and a 14 per cent reduction in the number of families with no adult in education, employment or training.

Children's minister Tim Loughton comments: "The statistics show an overwhelmingly positive picture of how intensive family intervention can successfully turn around the lives of families that have many complex problems, often present for generations within the same family.

"More than 80 per cent of local authorities have told the department that they have kept a family intervention service, showing that they still see this work as a priority.

"Intervening early and services working more efficiently with vulnerable families is central to the government's commitment to unlock social mobility and tackle child poverty. That's why we are supporting local areas to expand family intervention services with the roll out of community budgets, which help local areas to pool funding into one central pot."

The number of families working with an intervention projects in 2010/11 was 5,461, a 55 per cent increase on the 2009/10 figure of 3,518.

Promote good parenting using 5-a-day for child development, think tank advises Government

Parents should be given 5-a-day key messages on child development, according to the latest report from think tank Centre Forum. The report suggests that the Government's plans to normalise parenting support should be carried out bravely and fully if it is to achieve its goal of increasing social mobility.

The report's main recommendation is that a national parenting campaign is created, as suggested by Graham Allen MP, to raise awareness of child development, using the 5-a-day model for healthy eating, and help to effect a cultural shift towards viewing parenting as a learned skill. Centre Forum suggests the following 5 key points that could be used:

1. Read to your child for 15 minutes
2. Play with your child on the floor for 10 minutes
3. Talk with your child for 20 minutes with the television off
4. Adopt positive attitudes towards your child and praise them frequently
5. Give your child a nutritious diet to aid development

The report recognises that this type of campaign would need to be devised carefully in order to ensure that it does not actually widen the gap between child outcomes as free support is not always taken up by those it is targeted at. To ensure lower-income families buy in to parenting support, the report suggests exploring mechanisms designed "specifically to attract parents from lower-income backgrounds to the proposed parenting initiatives to ensure that such initiatives operate in the context of the commitment to improving social mobility".

One suggestion includes the possibility of creating a conditional cash transfer (CCT) which is an extra payment, such as a supplement to child benefit, paid when a parent does something active and positive for the direct benefit of the child in question, such as attending a parenting class.

Parenting and PSHE review

The Department for Education is currently undertaking an internal review of personal, social and health education (PSHE) as outlined in the Schools White Paper.

The Department is open to receiving further evidence from headteachers, teachers, parents, pupils and other interested parties and invites them to submit their views to the Department. After the review of PSHE education, the Secretary of State will publish proposals for public consultation.

Parenting UK feels strongly that PSHE should include elements around child development and relationships which would help to prepare children to be parents in the future.

We have previously made the case for introducing a GCSE in parenting and life skills, agreeing with the recommendations made by Frank Field in his review on child poverty, *The Foundation Years*.

Beginning the process of learning about parenting in schools will help to shift the social norms around seeking parenting support. Parenting UK will be submitting a response to the review. If you would like to contribute to this, please email it to info@parentinguk.org or you can respond independently. The closing date is 30 November 2011.

Responses can be completed online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations or by emailing PSHEEducation.review@education.gsi.gov.uk

New training from CWDC to support families with multiple needs

The Children's Workforce Development Council has created two new training offers for practitioners:

1: Go the distance: Developing localised strategies for a highly trained family support workforce

These are a series of one day training workshops across all regions of England through October, November and December. The workshops are for Further Education (FE) Higher Education (HE) staff, voluntary, community and private training providers, local employers and strategic workforce leads to enable them to develop sustainable strategies for embedding the delivery of the new Level 4 Award in Work with Parents (Intense support to families with multiple and complex needs). Applications for this are now being taken. Everything you need to apply including the application form, eligibility criteria and FAQ's can be found on the website:

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/working-with-parents-and-families/whats-new-in-2011-2012/one-day-training-workshops

2: The next level: Preparing to deliver the new level 4 Award in Work with Parents

In 2011-2012 CWDC will provide up to 80 train the trainer places for trainers who have resources in place to go on to deliver and assess the new Level 4 Work with Parents Award (Intense support to families with multiple and complex needs). This new award will be accredited on the QCF on 1st October and available through City and Guilds. It is envisaged trainers will go on to deliver the new award to practitioners providing intense, sustained whole family support. The train the trainer courses will be at no cost to trainers however we cannot fund back fill or travel. Applications for this will open late September.

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/working-with-parents-and-families/whats-new-in-2011-2012/train-the-trainer

To express an interest in the train the trainer places or to receive more details about the two offers please email parentsandfamilies@cwdcouncil.org.uk

Local authorities spending on average 6% of early intervention grant on parenting support

Following a freedom of information request by social care magazine *Community Care*, it has emerged that local authorities are spending, on average, just 6% of the early intervention grant on parenting support, and 1% on workforce development.

The early intervention grant is a fund of £2 billion made up of a combination of streamlined funding for vulnerable children in 2011-12. It represents a 12% cut from the Department for Education's non schools budget.

The grant is not ring-fenced, so each council must determine how it should be spent locally, with a view to targeting resources strategically and intervening early to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. It is intended to cover the following areas: children's centres, short breaks for disabled children, parenting support, substance misuse among young people, teenage pregnancy and children's social care workforce.

David Cameron is facing criticism for failing to protect funding for parenting support, following his comments on the August riots, in which he highlighted "proper parenting" and "a lack of proper upbringing" as problems that need to change.

A representative from The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) criticised the prime minister for emphasising parenting support at a time when local authorities are being forced to close parenting services due to funding cuts.

The BASW also highlighted concerns for long term effects of funding cuts. 35% of the grant is being used to fund children's centres, whose staff are increasingly being called upon to handle crisis work rather than early intervention. The lack of resources for workforce development could mean that preventative services will become marginalised as training for this type of work is reduced.

Parenting UK's chief executive Pamela Park also expressed concerns about a lack of provision for parenting support: "Six per cent of the grant is not going to provide the type of universal provision that the government is calling for... Taking a holistic view, we believe councils must invest enough to allow for a universal offer of parenting support in early years, with enough on top of that for follow-up support for parents as new challenges arise as their children get older. I don't think this 6% is enough for all that."

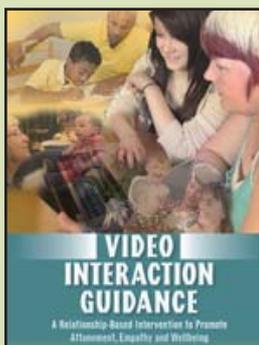
Of all the local authorities, Lancashire are putting the most into parenting support, with 68% of their early intervention grant being channelled into this area. However, Coventry in second place are trailing far behind at 16%. In the recent review of child protection in England, Professor Eileen Munro

pointed out that every £1 spent on preventative parenting interventions would save local authorities £7.89.

Allen publishes second Early Intervention review

In his latest review, *Early Intervention: Smart Investment, Massive Savings*, Graham Allen says "We feel it is vital that the Government now begins the groundwork to enable our late reaction culture to be transcended by an Early Intervention one. Our collective view is that the moment for a serious, sustained programme of Early Intervention, which is promoted inside and outside government, has arrived." The second report sets out how we can pay for those programmes within existing resources and by attracting new non government money. Key recommendations are that:

- Government sets out as a policy objective that all babies, children and young people should have the social and emotional bedrock essential for their future development and their ability to make effective life choices
- Government leadership and co-ordination must improve, not least through an Early Intervention Task and Finish Group made up of experts from across Government departments which will establish, measure and progress-chase Early Intervention outcomes
- The expected "Families and the Foundation Stage" statement must include regular and purposeful assessments for the 0-5s to help spot and correct dysfunction early
- An independent Early Intervention Foundation is set up to promote Early Intervention, spread best evidence based policies and complement the work being done inside Government. The Prime Minister is called upon to challenge private, local and philanthropic sources to co-fund with government a £20 million endowment to sustain the Foundation
- We must be more creative in bringing additional non-government money to investment in Early Intervention and that payment by results through outcome based contracts is promoted and funded from within existing budgets
- As part of building a social finance market we should establish an 'Early Intervention Fund' or Funds to raise around £200 million of private investment
- HM Treasury should commission a thorough review of Early Intervention growth incentives ahead of the 2012 Budget.



Video Interaction Guidance: A Relationship-Based Intervention to Promote Attunement, Empathy and Wellbeing

Edited by Hilary Kennedy, Miriam Landor and Liz Todd

Bringing together contributions from researchers and practitioners across a range of professions, this book provides a definitive introduction to VIG. The book explains the theory

behind the approach, reviews research evidence, and offers case studies that document how VIG has been successfully applied to family relationships, schools and higher education, individuals with communication and developmental disorders, and as a reflective professional development tool. The approach is then discussed from a range of theoretical perspectives and within the contexts of narrative therapy, infant and attachment interventions, positive psychology and mindfulness.

Published: Jessica Kingsley, £29.99

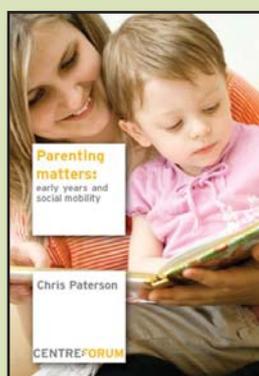


Supporting Families in the Foundation Years

The document summarises the Government's vision for the foundation years and explains why it is important to focus on child development and how parents and families should be placed at the heart of services. It also sets out the importance of intervening early and the role of different services, working together to ensure that children, their mothers and fathers

and other key areas receive early help where needed. It also explains how we will ensure there are skilled professionals and strong leadership across the sector and describes how the Government is establishing a new relationship with the sector which frees professionals to do what they believe is best.

Published: Department for Education, 2011



Parenting Matters: early years and social mobility

By Chris Paterson

The government has embraced the key message that it is by providing support in the earliest years of a child's life that the biggest differences can be made.

The most important factor influencing a child's development is the quality of parenting they receive and the quality of the Home Learning Environment this creates.

The government has stated that 'what is needed is a much wider culture change towards recognising the importance of parenting' and has expressed the desire for 'parenting advice and support to be considered the norm'.

This report strongly supports this willingness to engage

directly with what is happening in the family sphere to prevent the (deeply illiberal) squandering of individual potential.

Published: Centre Forum, August 2011

www.centreforum.org/assets/pubs/parenting-matters.pdf



A families' guide to the law - 4th edition

When can children work by law, or go to the doctor alone? What does the law say about term time holidays?

The laws affecting children and families are numerous and can be confusing. Myths about what age a child can be left alone are common. Yet it is essential for families and for those who work with families to understand the legal framework;

to know the basics about childcare, parents' and partners' rights and children in trouble. Professionals who will find it invaluable as a reference or to hand out include all those working in family support, children's centres, child and nursery care, safeguarding children, legal advice, schools and school governors.

Published: Family and Parenting Institute, 2011

www.familyandparenting.org

Parenting and children's brain development: the end of the beginning

After questioning the practical significance of evidence that parenting influences brain development – while highlighting the scientific importance of such work for understanding how family experience shapes human development – this paper reviews evidence suggesting that brain structure and function are 'chiselled' by parenting. Although the generalisability of most findings is limited due to a disproportionate, but understandable focus on clinical samples (e.g. maltreated children with post-traumatic stress disorder) and causal inferences are difficult to draw because of the observational nature of most of the evidence, it is noteworthy that some work with community samples and very new experimental work (e.g. parent training) suggests that tentative conclusions regarding effects of parenting on the developing brain may well be substantiated in future research. Such efforts should focus on parenting in the normal range, experimental manipulations of parenting, differential susceptibility to parenting effects and pathway models linking parenting to brain development and, thereby, to behavioural development. Research on parenting and children's brain development may be regarded as at 'the end of the beginning'.

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Authors: Belsky, Jay, and De Haan, Michelle

Fathers Plus

www.fathersplus.org

Train the Trainer

Would you like to be able to deliver a training session on working with fathers and family men to your teams, colleagues and stakeholders?

Fathers Plus are holding a full day course in Liverpool for practitioners and managers who wish to become equipped in course delivery of the popular Fathers Plus 'Introduction to working with Fathers and Men' two hour training session.

Participants will receive a trainer pack with all the materials they need to begin delivery and access to remote support and a trainer helpline.

17 October, Liverpool

13 December, Nottingham

9.30- 3.30pm, £119 pp

Engaging with Fathers and Male Carers in Early Years

Working with Fathers early on matters to children in later life. The day will focus on:

- The needs of dads to be and how to develop and deliver services to meet these needs.
- The Importance of male involvement in breastfeeding initiation and maintenance
- How to get fathers and family men into early years services and how to keep them – from publicity to recruitment: Is your service men friendly?

7 November, Newcastle

10am-3pm, £99 pp

Call 0845 130 7225 or email

charlotte@fathersplus.org to book

TCCR and Anna Freud Centre

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.

18 and 25 November, London

Children in Scotland

www.childreninScotland.org.uk

Building Attachment: Theory into Practice: Resilience and Coping, Additional Support Needs

Attachment theory offers a universal approach to understanding child and human development from conception to adulthood. The rapidly growing body of research informed by attachment theory demonstrates the impact of relationships in the early years on neuropsychological, emotional, cognitive and social development across the life span.

This workshop offers participants an understanding of secure, insecure and disorganised attachment and, from this understanding, ways of working with and caring for children who have experienced loss, separation, abuse and neglect: children who often consider themselves unlikeable and even unlovable.

The day will be a mix of input, individual and group exercises, small and large group discussion. It is suitable for all professionals and carers who work with children and families.

4 October, Edinburgh

£140.00

Children in Wales

www.childreninWales.org.uk

Parental Mental Health and its impact on Children

A one-day course facilitated by YoungMinds

This course is aimed at anyone working with children and families and who wishes to increase their understanding of the impact of parental mental ill health on child development. Also to explore ways of supporting families where there

is mental disorder.

The course will include:

- A presentation of the clinical symptoms and behaviours associated with common disorders
 - How mental health problems affect parenting
 - Young people's experiences of having a parent with a mental health problem
 - Safeguarding issues
 - Exploring risk and resilience in families as a way of shaping interventions
- 7 October, Merthyr Tydfil
Members: £85 (Non-members: £120)

Action for Prisoners' Families

www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

Hidden Sentence Training

A training course for all professionals who support prisoners' families, including children's centre workers, school staff, play workers, health visitors, and family intervention teams.

This course gives a clear overview of the issues facing prisoners' families and provides a range of strategies and resources to help you support them.

Learning Outcomes:

- Be aware of the context of the current criminal justice system and the offender's journey
- Explore the impact of imprisonment on family members and society
- Recognise specific issues for children with a family member in prison which may present barriers to them achieving the ECM outcomes
- Identify the support needs of the family and how these can be met by statutory/voluntary provision and resources
- Reflect on how the insight gained will affect your practice.

Cost: £350 per day (plus expenses)

Duration: 6 hours Minimum eight participants, maximum 20

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

Warburtons

Warburtons bakers provide support to charities, organisations and initiatives that have a positive effect on young people, their families and the surrounding community. They are particularly interested in projects and activities that can improve life chances and provide opportunities for those who face more challenges than most. For example projects that:

- Have a strong family focus
- Encourage healthier lifestyles in the community
- Improve the local environment of the community
- Have a positive effect on the aspirations, education and employability of young people

www.warburtons.co.uk

Edgar E Lawley Foundation

The Foundation supports a range of good causes and currently focuses on the areas of:

- Hospices
- Children and Young People
- Elderly
- Community
- Disabled
- Medical, Research and other Miscellaneous Projects

Support is offered to organisations throughout the UK but priority is sometimes given to smaller charities located in the West Midlands.

www.edgarelawleyfoundation.org.uk/main.htm

Innovation Grants Programme

The Innovation Grants Programme (part of the Money Advice Trust) is aiming to fund projects that are original and creative. Grants could range from £1,000 up to £30,000.

For 2011, the priority areas are:

- the development of new information and resources that we can share with others
- the testing of support groups for clients or advisers;
- work with people who are usually excluded from society
- projects which combine money advice and financial capability
- work which will assist those who are homeless or facing homelessness.

www.moneyadvicetrust.org/content.asp?ssid=119

Co-operative Community Fund

Community Fund grants, between £100 and £2,000 are awarded to community, voluntary, or self-help groups to run projects that meet the following criteria

- address a community issue
- provide a good long-term benefit to the community
- support co-operative values and principles
- ideally be innovative in its approach

www.co-operative.coop/membership/local-communities/community-fund/

Big – Fair Share Trust

Targeted at 77 areas, Fair Share is a £50 million trust aimed at parts of the UK that missed out on Lottery funding in the past. Selected neighbourhoods in each area are receiving targeted support, and local people are getting the opportunity to make decisions on where the funding goes.

The Fair Share Trust programme aims to:

- Build Capacity and Sustainability – by involving local communities in decision-making about lottery funding.
- Build Social Capital – by building links within and between communities to promote trust and participation.
- Improve liveability - by improving the living environment for communities.

www.fairsharetrust.org

The Toy Trust Grant

The Toy Trust is the charity of the UK toy industry. It distributes funds to charities supporting young disadvantaged and disabled children. The Trust supports disadvantaged children (aged up to 13) and their families to address a range of causes. Up to £5000 is available for registered charities who support disadvantaged children.

www.btha.co.uk/toytrust/index.php

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

Charities Aid Foundation – www.cafonline.org

Charities Information Bureau – www.fit4funding.org.uk

Directory of Social Change – www.dsc.org.uk

Funderfinder – www.funderfinder.org.uk

Grants 4 Funding Portals – www.grants4.info/portal/index.asp

October

Child Health – Will the New Framework Deliver Improved Outcomes?

Westminster Briefing

12 October, London

In November 2010 the Public Health White Paper was published detailing the government's plans for a new, innovative approach to public health; focusing on moving responsibility to local communities and giving patients more choice.

www.westminster-briefing.com

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.

info@workingwithmen.org

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/

Providing parenting and family support through schools

Parenting UK and WAVE Trust

20 October, Manchester

This information seminar will look at examples of working with schools to provide family and parenting support. Speakers include Family Links and Families and Schools Together.

www.parentinguk.org/3/our-events

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

Talk To Your Baby 2011 Conference “Foundations for Life: shaping babies’ futures in an evolving landscape”

National Literacy Trust

4 November, London

This year's conference will look at how the changing landscape of the early years sector will impact on practitioners and professionals.

www.literacytrust.org.uk/events/53

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 misconnections, 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

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

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

We welcome your comments on and contributions to our News Bulletin. Please address any correspondence to rtonkin@parentinguk.org

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