



Supporting Muslim parents through divorce and separation

Supporting Muslim parents through the Approachable Parenting programme, and working with Barefoot Institute

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We welcome your comments on and contributions to our News Bulletin. Please address any correspondence to the editor, Jimi Odell:
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Providing befriending support in the Muslim community

by Kim Hall
Training and Development Officer, Family Lives

Family Lives has very successfully offered befriending support to parents, through a variety of national projects in local communities. Our most recent befriending project 'Working it Out' is dedicated to supporting parents going through divorce and separation. The project is being run in three areas - Gloucestershire, Leicester and Waltham Forest. In Leicester and Waltham Forest the project has been tailored specifically to work with couples from the Muslim community.

In general, the aim of the project is to recruit and train befriending volunteers from the local areas to work one-to-one with local parents. Once the volunteers have completed the training they are matched with divorced and separating couples to offer emotional and practical support in informal settings. The ultimate goal of the project is to support the parents in feeling enabled to communicate and co-operate with each other and thus agree longer term parenting arrangements for their children.

As with any new project, the core befriending training is carefully reviewed to ensure it will meet the training needs for the project volunteers. For the Working it Out project it was crucial

to ensure that the training met the needs of the people it was representing. Family Lives has a strong ethos of working inclusively with families in all communities and all training is written with this in mind. However, inclusion means accepting and allowing for differences and understanding that to be able to include people, we may need to treat people according to their specific needs. Therefore two versions of the training content were developed with one being adapted to enable us to meet the needs of volunteers and parents specifically from the Muslim community.

Working with Barefoot Institute

In Leicester and Waltham Forest, Family Lives worked in partnership with the Barefoot Institute, an organisation specialising in combining modern relationship psychology with traditional Islamic values, with extensive experience of offering Islamic guidance in helping to support Muslim relationships between family members. Once the key content of the training had been developed, Family Lives and Barefoot Institute worked closely together to ensure the content was culturally sensitive and acceptable.

Due to the nature of the service, it was anticipated that the majority of volunteers would be Muslim. Therefore it was necessary to give careful consideration to all aspects of the training and the role of the befriender in being able to support divorced or separated parents.

Training in context

Key areas of change within the training content included selecting warm up exercises and “getting to know you” activities that would help energise the group while remaining sensitive to the risk of placing volunteers in situations that might leave them feeling uncomfortable. We ensured we chose activities that did not involve touching or getting very close in the event that we had a mixed gender training group.

Any names used during the training, for example in scenarios, were chosen from currently popular Muslim names. The scenarios were also rewritten as it was found that the original scenarios were greatly geared towards a westernised image of married life, and divorce and separation.

Having a clear understanding for the stages of separation in Muslim marriage was also a key change within the content. Although the training still explored the impact of the stages of separation on each parent as in the original content, it also highlighted the process of divorce for Muslim couples and the importance of knowing the stages and process when working with couples. For example, under Islamic law, divorce adheres to specified waiting periods to prevent couples from rushing into a separation.

Information was included in the training to inform volunteers that befriending was an acceptable service in the Muslim community and was in full conformity with the religious and cultural text of Islam. This information was included to support volunteers in feeling confident in the role they were taking on. In addition it would be useful information for volunteers, in the event the service was questioned by a parent.

Family Lives and Barefoot Institute worked together to deliver the training. This worked extremely well bringing both organisations’ areas of expertise together to ensure the training was culturally sensitive and appropriate. Working together enabled us to discuss possible barriers to offering befriending support, and find acceptable strategies to put in place. Personal safety is an integral part of all Family Lives befriending training as volunteers most often work in the parents’ home or a suitable community venue.

Putting cultural sensitivity into practice

During the training, an issue was raised in relation to a female Muslim volunteer befriending a male parent. It was felt that it would not be culturally acceptable to be seen in a public place with the male parent or acceptable to visit the parent alone in their home. Together as a group a strategy was agreed that if the volunteer befriended a father, then the father would invite a female relative to be present in the house during sessions. The female relative would not need to be in the same room where the discussion was taking place which would help to

ensure confidentiality was maintained. The volunteers felt this was a much more acceptable system and agreed that this had alleviated concerns in being able to support a father going through divorce and separation.

Barefoot

INSTITUTE

for Muslim relationships

Another area that raised much discussion was a scenario around introducing children to a new partner. Many volunteers voiced strongly that children would not be introduced to new partners. Generally speaking, children would be most likely to stay with their mother and if the father started a new relationship, the children would only spend time with him without his new partner. During the training, however, volunteers gained opportunities in developing skills to support them in working with diverse families. This included considering Muslim families that might not always conform to the traditional view of the Muslim family archetype.

From the first cohort of training in both Leicester and Waltham Forest, only one volunteer was non-Muslim. However as would be expected with any group there was still great diversity in backgrounds and family living. As with all of our training in Family Lives, setting a culture of safety within the training room is key. As such respecting the views and opinions of others and using high level listening skills is an integral part of the training environment. Creating this atmosphere of safety, enabled discussions like the one mentioned above of children meeting new partners, to be explored, challenged and considered in a safe and respectful forum. It also enabled volunteers to reflect on their views, feelings and opinions and created a safe place for people to challenge their own stereotypes.

Developing these key skills are crucial in being able to support parents and families using a respectful and non-judgemental approach. Together with high level empathic listening, this forms a foundation in the work we do in supporting parents to feel enabled and empowered to make changes within their family lives.

For more information on the volunteer befriending project, please visit:
<http://www.familylives.org.uk/about/our-services/volunteer-befriending/>

For more information about Barefoot Institute, please visit:
www.barefootinstitute.com

Engaging and supporting Muslim parents on how to be an effective parent in the modern world

by Kathleen Roche-Nagi
Managing Director, Approachable Parenting



Approachable
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Guiding Muslim families to better parenting

In recent years there seem to be more and more parenting related programmes, seemingly something to suit everyone. So is there a need for a specialist programme written for Muslim families? Are things so different between Muslim and non-Muslim families?

We at Approachable Parenting believe so and, from this belief, the Five Pillars of Parenting programme was devised in 2007. Through our work with the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and faith communities, we saw that Muslim families had requested support with parenting issues, and wanted a programme consistent with their religion and cultural backgrounds.

Parenting interventions should be tailored in such a way as to respect and not undermine the cultural values, aspirations, traditions and needs of different minority ethnic groups

This is also supported by a comprehensive review conducted in 2004¹ which found that programmes which do not take cultural factors into account risk poor engagement and the drop-out of BME parents. We did have concerns however; we didn't know if parents would feel safe to be honest and open about their difficulties, or if they would be cautious for fear of being judged. We wanted to be confident that all Muslims - whether Sunni or Shia, practicing or non-practicing - would identify with the concepts and Islamic components from the different schools of thought.

The Policy Research Bureau² concluded that there needs to be an awareness and respect for different models of parenting that arise within different cultures, and the need to tailor programmes accordingly, while at the same time recognising the commonalities of parenting within different cultures. They stated that further research is needed regarding what constitutes a 'culturally sensitive programme'.

Since its inception Approachable Parenting, now a social enterprise, has realised the importance of creating a safe environment where parents can explore problems and issues, where they are understood and listened to without being stigmatised. Over the duration of the course, parents are taught knowledge and skills from evidence-based psychological models to develop their parenting techniques and their relationships with their families. These are integrated within an Islamic framework consistent with parental attitudes, forming a basis for motivation for change within parenting.

For Muslims, religion is a way of life and there are many examples in their faith around how to raise their children. Muslim parents taking the course were very receptive to the verses of the Quran and guidance of Prophet Mohammed referred to in the course material. For example, when Prophet Mohammed addressed someone he would turn his whole body towards that person, which is a key concept in communication with others.

The Prophet also stressed the importance of playing with children which was particularly enlightening for the fathers on our course. Similarly, parents could identify with the words, "he is not one of us who has no compassion for our little ones" and "Allah (God) is kind, He loves kindness in all affairs". One of the verses used from the Quran reminds parents of the rewards they gain from their parenting; "And know that your wealth and your children are only a test, and that with God is a great reward" (Quran 8:28).

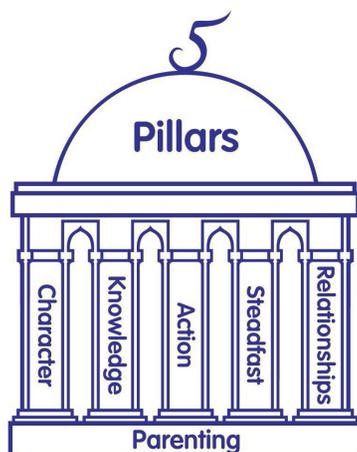


In addition, the programme includes taught skills which have been found to be linked to effectiveness in parent training programmes such as teaching positive parent-child interaction and communication, specific ways to deal with difficult behaviour (e.g. thinking time) and the ability to practice these during the group sessions via role play and home tasks.

Our programmes are delivered to groups over eight weekly sessions and learning methods include didactic teaching, role-play and practitioner and video demonstration. Teaching and learning is based on behavioural, social learning and family systems theories which enhances the skills and knowledge of the parents. The work has a direct influence on developing the characteristics of the family, hence having a positive impact on the family structure.

The Five Pillars are addressed simultaneously over the eight weeks, and are:

- **Character:** Identifying the importance of having good character, morals, personality and behaviour.
- **Knowledge:** learning new skills and strategies and acting on this knowledge.
- **Action:** putting learning into practice to achieve results.
- **Steadfast:** dedicated to overcoming difficulties; parents may doubt themselves as they experience resistance to the new techniques.
- **Positive relationships:** stronger family bonding, improved parenting and families initiating meaningful and permanent positive relationships.



The Five Pillars of Parenting, 4-11 years programme and our evidence have been evaluated by the National Academy of Parenting Research (NAPR), Kings College London, and it is part of the Commissioning Toolkit. We have also been awarded the CANparent Quality Mark this year for having a track record of good outcomes and a considerable body of research to support this.

Evidence gathered from the qualitative and quantitative data of our programmes showed very positive results. With behaviour of the children improving greatly, and parents reporting changes in their parenting and attitudes and general outlook. Success can also be measured by the motivation and commitment of the parents with high attendance each week and a high percentage of parents completing the course.

We found our initial concerns were unfounded as parents did disclose issues. Parents were willing to participate regarding things that went well and things that didn't go so well. They demonstrated their understanding of what they had learned, by applying it in a context that made sense. Many acknowledged that their initial decision to attend was only due to the Islamic elements and their significance. Furthermore, mothers who had previously felt isolated grew in confidence and were able to seek help for their depression and other issues affecting them.

What parents said:

- 'I learnt how to handle children in different situations'
- 'I am more aware of the strategies in dealing with difficult behaviour and feel more confident in dealing with it'
- 'I was able to link examples from my faith to the techniques I learnt'
- 'I benefitted from the practical advice applicable to day-to-day parenting and how to deal with difficult situations'

Case Study

Sarah is a mother of four children who attended the Five Pillars of Parenting programme three years ago with her husband. She attended to improve the relationships between herself and her children, seeking guidance to help remove the constant anxiety and stress she was experiencing. She had previously wanted help but hadn't found a programme that she felt comfortable attending, that would be relevant to her and her family's lifestyle.

Sarah attended the programme with her husband to ensure that they both understood the techniques and principles and agreed a common approach, which enabled them to a better and happier family unit. In her words she describes how:

"the Islamic content of the programme enabled us both to refer to our religion for answers to our issues. I believe that the Islamic principles and teachings have helped to focus us and as well as bringing us closer together.

"My husband has often had the approach; 'do as I say' to the children and he would easily get angry. Now we are better role models and remember Prophet Mohammed as our role model and examples of our faith which helps him to control his anger.

"The stress management session with the visualising trip to paradise is something I did with my children and they loved it. They remind me sometimes that they are being good so that they can go there. This warms my heart. It makes me feel like I am doing a good job and that they will grow up to be good strong young men that contribute to society.

"By going on this programme we learnt practical skills and we put them into practice at home which enabled us to grow as a family, we were calmer and the children were better behaved. I appreciated having everything backed by Quran or Hadith, this has really helped us to think of our approach, modify our ways and create a happy home".

Sarah and her husband's experience of the course opened their eyes to how they were parenting and now, three years down the line, they are still referring back to the programme and what they have learnt. They continue to reflect on themselves to understand what makes their children behave in a certain way. Also, they are better able to empathise with their children and discuss issues together which enable them to be consistent in their approach. Sarah states that the skills and the knowledge gained have helped them understand their responsibilities and the rewards they can gain from their parenting, and that this has helped develop better relationships within the home.

References

1. Barlow, J. *Systematic Review of the effectiveness of Parent-Training Programmes in Improving Behaviour Problems in Children aged 3-10 years*. Oxford: Health Services Research Unit: 1999
2. Moran, P., Gbate, D., van der Merwe, A. *What Works in Parenting Support? A Review of the International Evidence*, Policy Research Bureau

Website: www.approachableparenting.org.uk
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 LinkedIn: [linkedin/approachableparenting](https://www.linkedin.com/company/approachableparenting)
 Twitter: [@5pillarsparent](https://twitter.com/5pillarsparent)

Parents value advice and support from organisations according to new survey on family life

A new survey from CANparent has shown that parents value advice and support from family members, peers and support networks. CANparent has released the data to mark the national roll-out of its website, www.canparent.org.uk, where parents can find Quality Marked parenting classes.

81% of parents polled think that all parents could benefit from advice and information on effective ways of addressing their children's behaviour.

77% agreed that parents with kids under 5 could benefit from more advice and information on effective ways of addressing their younger child's behaviour.

84.3% of women think all parents could benefit from advice and information on effective ways of addressing their children's behaviour, compared to 76.5% of men who think the same.

Over two thirds of parents think that parents with children over 12 could benefit from more advice and information on effective ways of addressing their children's behaviour.

Parents today - unprepared and pressurised?

Nearly half of respondents feel that there isn't enough parenting advice available for those with children aged and 9-11 (47%) and 6-8 (41.4%).

42% of parents of children under 1 year old feel that there isn't enough advice for raising children of this age group.

42% of single parents feel believe that there isn't enough parenting advice relevant to children aged 2-5, compared to 29% of married parents.

Over half (52%) of parents with a child aged 10, think that there isn't enough parenting advice aimed at those with children aged 9-11.

Parents turn to mothers-in-law in times of stress

Nearly half of parents surveyed said they would turn to their mother or mothers-in-law for help, 22% indicated siblings or family members and 21% said they would confide in their best friend.

Over 2 in 5 women (43%) said they would feel happy confiding in their best friend, compared to only 26% of men who said the same. Over 1 in 20 men (6.30%) said they wouldn't feel happy confiding in anyone.

Accessibility and willingness to access parenting support
More than half (54.40%) of parents said they have sought help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue, and nearly 46% stated they had never sought parenting help or advice at all.



- Almost 3 in 5 (59.60%) Female parents said they have sought help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.
- More than 3 in 5 (60.70%) of single parents said they have sought help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.
- More than half (52.60%) of male parents said they haven't sought help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.
- Almost 3 in 5 parents in Northern Ireland said they haven't sought help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.

A parent who attended a CANparent class said:

"Often people have the perception that the moment you become a parent you know what to do or the knowledge comes to you somehow... but this is far from being real... The course has been mind-opening and so important for both me and my child. I think all parents need guidance and support. They need to know that around them there are tools and simple techniques they can introduce to the child's life that will help them both: becoming closer to one another, communicating more and growing together.

"I am so glad I took this course, I have learned a great deal about being a parent and it was so worth it! I will treasure all the advice and I will definitely practice how to give clear instructions. I will keep the special time as part of our routine, I will pay more attention to my child's feelings and I will do my absolute best to teach my child the skills they need throughout life."

Whilst parents who responded felt that accessing support when children were at toddler or infant school age. Some parents felt awkward accessing parental advice when their offspring were at school age.

Health Minister, Dr Dan Poulter said:

"Good parenting programmes can really help every child get the very best start in life. By providing support and advice for all parents, schemes like CANparent are helping develop parenting skills and improving the important early relationships between children and parents."

Pamela Park, from CANparent says:

"A third of parents (33%) we surveyed felt it's not socially acceptable to ask for help when kids are at school age. One thing that remains a constant in family life is that parents and adult carers value and can benefit greatly from additional parenting support to tackle every day or -on occasions - challenging family situations whatever their child's age. We must change the culture across the country so that seeking out parenting ideas and advice is seen as a positive and practical step.

"We believe CANparent classes will play a role in achieving this. We know that parents want help and advice in raising their children. Currently, parents struggle to know which sources of advice are trustworthy. CANparent's charity partners have combined resources, experiences and a long history of raising public and professional awareness of the vital role of good parenting. We want the whole family to engage with us in order to support their children to get the best start in life."

Who do parents and adult carers turn to?

- 56% of parents went to family or friends with children for help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.
- Almost half (47.40%) of Females went to friends with kids the same age for help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue compared to 3 in 10 (29.70%) Males.
- More than a third (34%) of parents used the internet for help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.
- Just over 1 in 10 (11.40%) of parents went to a parent support organisation.
- Just over 1 in 10 (14.30%) of single parents went to a parent support organisation.
- Almost 2 in 5 (39.80%) parents aged 35-44 use the internet for help or advice on a parenting or childcare issue.

The objective of CANparent is to ensure its classes are quality mark approved, inclusive and easily accessible to parents and adult carers who wish to access support from professionals and fellow parent attendees regarding a variety of parenting dilemmas. CANparent aims to empower and equip parents with the skills to manage normal every-day and on occasion difficult parenting challenges. Ultimately CANparent aims to promote a shift in attitudes so that seeking family support is seen as a sign of strength.

Parents wishing to seek family support and parenting advice can call 0808 800 1102 or visit www.canparent.org.uk to register their interest in attending online and face-to-face classes.

Troubled Families risks missing targets

A group of MPs has warned that the Government has to speed up its efforts if it is to achieve the targets set out in the Troubled Families Programme.

The House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts has published a report on the programmes designed to support families with multiple challenges, pointing to statistics that show the progress of Troubled Families. According to the data, the programme had achieved lasting improvements with only 22,000 families, out of a target of 120,000, with a success rate of 13.8% for those families identified.

The report says that the Department for Communities and Local Government will need to speed up its rate of success if it is to "turn around" the outstanding 98,000 troubled families in the two years than remain on the programme.

The report also includes the Department for Work and Pensions initiative "Families with Multiple Problems", noting

that by September 2013 this programme had only achieved 4% of its target to support parents into sustained employment.

Read the report (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts).

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmpubacc/668/668.pdf>

NSPCC's Coping with Crying set to expand

The NSPCC has published research demonstrating the effectiveness of its Coping with Crying programme ahead of the programme's expansion. The programme, which has been piloted in 24 hospitals across the UK over the last two years, aims to reduce the risk of harm to babies through helping their parents to cope with the child's crying.

Non-accidental injuries to babies are reported around 200 times a year and are one of the leading causes of death and long-term disability in babies. Parents who do not cope with their children's crying can experience disrupted bonding processes with extreme cases leading to parents harming their babies.

According to the new research, there has been a reduction in reports of incidents where babies with feeding, sleeping or crying difficulties are injured by their parents.

During the programme's pilot period, 30,000 parents have been shown a film that offers techniques on managing stress levels and caring for a crying child. The report shows that 80% of parents have used the techniques shown in the film and 99% of parents at least remembered seeing the film a year later.

The programme will be expanded from May 2014 with another 19 areas hoping to show the film to a further 45,000 parents. The film is shown before or shortly after the baby's birth and will be available as part of York children's centres antenatal programme.

Improving Futures learning event booklet



Improving Futures
Evaluation and Learning

Improving Futures is a Lottery Funded initiative in which 26 projects across the UK are working to improve the outcomes of families with multiple and complex needs. In February 2014 the projects came together to share their progress, lessons and impact.

The resulting booklet summarises the key learning from the event, including: highlights from the Year 1 Evaluation Report; a summary of the lessons learnt from the Discussion Groups, including Evidencing Outcomes and Working with the Whole Family; a Family Testimonial from one of the families supported by a project; and the results from the Stakeholder Survey showing how the projects are working in partnership with local services.

<http://www.improvingfutures.org/news/?p=535>

Foundation phase having positive impact on early education in Wales

A review of the Welsh Government's Foundation Phase early learning scheme has shown positive but varied results.

The evaluation is being carried out by WISERD (Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods) with the University of Cardiff to assess the effectiveness of the Foundation Phase on primary pupils.

The programme involves learning through play and has been shown to have a positive impact on how children learn, although concerns have been raised about whether or not it prepares children for regular exams in later education.

The programme works with early years and primary pupils aged three to eleven, with a 'learn by doing' approach that encourages children to find their own solutions to problems.

Since being introduced to the Welsh education system in 2011, the Foundation Phase has had mixed successes but fares well in the Government-commissioned review. According to the report, "overall, the practitioners/key stakeholders interviewed and surveyed reported that the Foundation Phase was having a positive impact on children and learning".

The report also highlights some inconsistencies in the programme, noting that practices can vary considerably across different schools, age groups and areas of learning. There were concerns also around the availability of educators as children may be relying too heavily on high adult-to-child ratios.

The learning style promoted by the programme was found to be particularly effective with children with learning differences, those who had Welsh or English as a second language, and boys in general.

Education Minister Huw Lewis commented on the findings, saying: "The message that we're getting from these reports is that those delivering the Foundation Phase feel that our popular

early years initiative is making a real difference – especially for children from deprived backgrounds and those with Special Education Needs.

"But there are lessons to be learned. The reports do tell us that we need to do more to ensure a consistent experience for all learners across Wales. At present there is too much variation for learners from class-to class and from school to school. This must stop. Consistency is key if we're to deliver the same positive outcomes for our learners."

Read the report at <http://www.wiserd.ac.uk/news/latest-news/evaluating-foundation-phase-report/#sthash.5ADW4grV.dpbs>

Free childcare proves difficult for schools

A new survey has shown that schools are struggling to access the necessary funding and training to meet the demand for free childcare places for disadvantaged two-year-olds.

The survey, commissioned by the Department for Education, asked senior staff and head teachers at 49 schools who are currently or potentially providing the free childcare offer for disadvantaged two-year-olds, asking them about their experiences of delivering or preparing to deliver the service.

More than a third of respondents reported that they had had trouble accessing sources of finance and were not sure of how to fund the provision in the long term, while a quarter said that they had faced challenges in hiring and training specialist staff to work with the early years intake.

The majority of respondents also expressed a need for support in addressing these concerns as well as a guidance on how best to work with parents in order to address the needs of disadvantaged two-year-olds both educationally and developmentally.

The findings from the report follow recently publicised concerns about the availability of provision within the project's timescales. As of September 2013, the 130,000 most disadvantaged two-year-olds are entitled to receive 15

hours of free childcare, a number that will double in September 2014. Three quarters of schools currently offering the provision have already filled all of their places.

Government criticised for disregarding early intervention experts

A group of early years experts has warned the Government that current early intervention policies may be compromising young children's wellbeing.

The group, operating under the banner of the Save Childhood Movement includes experts such as Pre-school Learning Alliance chief executive Neil Leitch and Early Childhood Forum chair Melian Mansfield. They have written to each of the leaders of the three main political parties, calling for a child-focused and inclusive approach to early years that heeds expert knowledge.

Having recently confirmed that they will not be following recommendations from Cathy Nutbrown's 2012 review of early education, the Department for Education has come under fire for what the group describes as "disregard of expert opinion". In particular, they have criticised the department for choosing policies that are not backed by sector experts, and not backed by evidence of best practice in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The letter forms part of a wider campaign to urge parents and parenting professionals to engage with the political parties' early years pledges and make informed decisions about the future of children's wellbeing when voting in the 2015 general election.

In the letter, the group has urged the Government to consider their own manifesto "Putting Children First" as an example of how evidence-based collaboration can lead to positive results.

It concludes: "We are committed to ensuring that political systems safeguard the health and wellbeing of young children as citizens with developmental rights and freedoms and, over the next year, we aim to be increasingly active as a sector in ensuring that this is seen to be the case."

“We are also keen to offer our combined knowledge and understanding to policymakers in order to better substantiate the evidence and to ensure that the future wellbeing and attainment of children in England is not compromised by developmentally inappropriate practice”.

Read the full letter (Too Much Too Soon) http://www.toomuchtoosoon.org/uploads/2/0/3/8/20381265/scm_letter_re_policy-_draft_4.pdf

NCB report seeks to clarify children's centre funding

A new study has shown that parents and professionals want to see a clarification of how children's centres should be used and how their funding will be sustained.

The report is based on a survey carried out by the National Children's Bureau (NCB), which asked 161 early years practitioners and 46 parents for their thoughts on the sustainability of children's centre service provision, and how they believed the long term future of centres could be guaranteed.

Over 90% of respondents agreed that their local children's centre was important to the community, and the majority wanted to see funding prioritised.

The report highlights the importance of clarifying the core purpose of children's centres, and calls for an identification of long-term sustainable funding streams. Respondents called for policy makers to do more towards raising awareness of the positive impact that children's centres have.

Suggested measures for sustainability included ring-fencing local authority funding to protect children's centres from further service cuts that could lead to closures, and turning to private funding by allowing children's centres to host businesses who could contribute to running costs.

In the three-year period between April 2010 and April 2013, the total number of children's centres was reduced by 470.

Read the report (NCB).
http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/1127716/childrens_centres_survey_final.pdf



Fathers and families: A guide to assist parenting practitioners with including and working with fathers

Published by Parenting UK, 2014

This is a guide for parenting practitioners to offer tips and support in engaging and working with fathers.

The document originated as a research paper for Parenting UK, written by Adrienne Burgess of the Fatherhood Institute and funded by what was then the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

This 2013 update has been produced as a learning document for Improving Futures, a UK-wide programme funded by The Big Lottery that aims to improve the lives of children growing up in families with multiple and complex needs.

The updated paper includes new material that reflects recent research and aims to support the 26 projects involved in Improving Futures and their work with fathers. We hope that other service providers outside of the project will also find value in the information and tips presented within. <http://parentinguk.org/our-work/our-publications/>

Engaging with Parents in Early Years Settings

Authors: Diane Jackson and Martin Needham
Published by Sage Ltd, 2014

The role of parents in the early years is fundamental. In order to achieve the best outcomes for children, mutually beneficial relationships between parents and practitioners need to underpin children's care and learning.

There are many services for children and many different settings in which care and education can take place. Whether you work in children's centres, outreach and dual-focused services, preschools, kindergartens or schools this book will help you develop the skills and strategies to work alongside parents whatever your role.

Working therapeutically with families: creative activities for diverse family structures.

Authors: Tonia Caselman and Kimberly Hill
Published by Jessica Kingsley, 2014

Collection of practical games and activities for use in therapeutic work with different types of families. Chapters discuss the context, strengths and weaknesses and challenges faced by different family types. Covers: single-parent families; divorced, separated and unmarried families; blended families; grand-parent led families; families of prisoners; families with addicted children; families with addicted parents; and families with parental mental health problems. ISBN: 9781849059626

Mastering whole family assessment in social work

Author: Fiona Mainstone
Published by Jessica Kingsley, 2014

Mastering Whole Family Assessment in Social Work brings together what social workers in adult and children services need to know about assessment across both services. With tools and frameworks that make sense of the interface between adult life difficulties, family problems, parenting capacity and children's needs, this practical guide will help practitioners to think across professional and administrative divides. Case studies, practice vignettes, exercises and suggestions for further reading are included throughout

Building resilience in young people

Provider: Children in Wales
Location and start dates: Cardiff, 3 July / Carmarthen, 18 July
Course length: 1 day
Price: £115
Contact: hannah.sharp@childreninwales.org.uk
 Why do some young people cope with difficulties more easily than others? What factors really make a difference to how we deal with adversity? What can practitioners do to make a difference? This one-day course explores how you can develop an approach that builds on strengths to help young people deal with adversity, cope with change, survive disappointment and manage crises. It will draw upon practice, research and theory. Above all, it will enable participants to reflect upon their experience and build on their own strengths.

Tuning in to Kids and Tuning in to Teens, Emotionally Intelligent Parenting

Provider: Mindful, Centre for Training and Research in Developmental Health, The University of Melbourne
Location: London
Start date: 2 July 2014 (3 days)
 1-day Tuning in to Teens - £288
 2-day Tuning in to Kids - £440
 3-day Tuning in to Kids and Teens - £720
Qualification: Tertiary qualifications, experience in social work, psychology, education, health, community and youth work
Contact: Ann Harley or Nicholas Wright www.tuningintokids.org.au
 Tuning in to Kids and Tuning in to Teens are evidence based parenting programs developed by Dr. Sophie Havighurst and Ann Harley in Melbourne, Australia, with research trials conducted through The University of Melbourne. The program provides a new way of working with parents by focusing on the emotional connection between parents and children.

Both programs target specific skills of emotion awareness, acceptance and coaching and incorporate self-care and mindfulness. This interactive training will equip you as a facilitator to deliver Tuning in to Kids and Tuning in to Teens to assist parents/carers and their children/adolescents.

Working with parents

Provider: Care for the Family
Location: Wales
Start date: 26 November 2014
Course length: 2 days
Price: £350
Contact: learning@cff.org.uk or 02920 815897

This high quality training will equip you to deliver our effective Positive Parenting courses, supporting parents and helping them build strong and secure relationships with their child.

The two day non residential training is an essential element in becoming a licensed facilitator to run our core range of Positive Parenting courses. You will need to complete both the Facilitating Groups and Working with Parents training.

The training is practical and interactive looking at key evidence based theories, research and applying this when working with parents in groups or individually. It gives valuable professional development with optional Level 3 accreditation.

TCCR Infant observation seminars

Provider: Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships
Location: London
Start date: 1 October (3 terms)
Price: £1,200
Contact: training@tccr.ac.uk
 A one-year programme of weekly 1hr infant observations and supporting weekly seminars (term time only) at which students present and discuss their most recent observation.

An initial briefing and guidance meeting to help set up observation placements and receive your CRB check will take place in July 2014.

- Enhance your observation skills and learn more about human development
- Observe the developing attachment that will influence the adult's capacity to form relationships
- An integral part of all psychotherapy training

CAMHS video seminars

Provider: Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships
Location: Online
Course length: 1 hour
Price: Free
Contact: dmccann@tccr.org.uk

During this seminar, the presenters speak to the question of the importance of the relationship between partners for the child's development, as well as addressing the impact children have on the couple relationship itself. The seminar ends with a consideration of the implications of the findings for practitioners.

View online now at:
<http://www.tccr.ac.uk/training/commissioned-training/camhs-webinars>

Excelling at early years inspections

Provider: Understanding Modern Gov
Location: London
Start date: 1 July 2014
Course length: 1 day
Price: £395 (group discounts)
Contact: enquiries@moderngov.com

By attending this one-day course you will understand the changes to the Ofsted inspection framework, allay fears about what they mean for you, and gain invaluable advice.

Furthermore you will have an opportunity to directly ask an inspector any nagging questions you may have and hear best practice from them.

Leave confident in your ability to demonstrate the high quality of your early years provision.

If you run training courses make sure you add them to our website. Just go to www.parentinguk.org and click on 'Your work - training directory' and you can add the courses yourself.

To see more courses available, just visit Parenting UK's website: www.parentinguk.org

Please note that inclusion of courses here does not imply endorsement.

SHIRE Community Solutions Grant Fund - Leicestershire

Website: www.leics.gov.uk/

Funding is available to enhance the capacity of communities in Leicestershire to design, develop and deliver innovative solutions that enable them to support both themselves and other vulnerable individuals and families, thus reducing demand on public services.

Closing date: 30 June 2014

Church Urban Fund - Together Grants

Funding is available to enable churches and Christian organisations in England that are working in deprived communities, in partnership with others, to undertake new or expanding initiatives which directly tackle the effects of poverty. The Fund is supported by funding from the J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust. Maximum value £5,000.

Contact: enquiries@cuf.org.uk

Hugh Fraser Foundation

Website: <http://www.scottishgrantmakers.org/the-hugh-fraser-foundation/>

The Hugh Fraser Foundation provides grants to non-profit organisations for charitable work in the UK, with a preference for Scotland. The Trustees favour smaller, more focused causes rather than large highly-publicised appeals.

The Children's Foundation - Regional Small Grants

Website: <http://www.thechildrensfoundation.co.uk/projects/regional-small-grants/>

The Children's Foundation Regional Small Grants programme supports community projects that benefit children and young people in the North East area in line with our aims and objectives. Grants awarded are up to a maximum of £1,000.

The Regional Small Grants panel meets three times a year in March, July and November.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation - R&D Programme

Website: www.jrf.org.uk

Support for research and development projects in the UK that contribute directly to better policies and practices in areas identified by the Foundation where it is believed that pioneering development or research of high quality are needed.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation is the largest independent funder of social science research whose resources do not derive from public funds. The core of the Foundation's work is a strong evidence base built from robust research findings and other search activity. The Foundation seeks to fund research and development which has the capacity to change policy or practice for the better.

The work is divided into a number of priority themes, each of which is supported by a specialist research committee. Each committee identifies priority areas within these themes. The Foundation then opens. Calls for Proposals for these priority areas. The priority themes are poverty, place and ageing society.

Closing date: 9 June 2014

The Suffolk Foundation - Suffolk Fund

Website: www.suffolkcf.org.uk/

The Suffolk Foundation manages a variety of different funds. Funding is intended to support local community groups and projects which make a genuine difference to the lives of Suffolk people.

Frieda Scott Charitable Trust

Website: www.friedascott.org.uk/

Established in 1962 and based in Kendal, the Frieda Scott Charitable Trust is a local grant-giving charity established especially to make funds available to other charitable organisations in the old County of Westmorland and the area covered by South Lakeland District Council. We encourage all applicants for funding to contact us first to talk through your plans.

John Lyon's Charity

Website: www.johnlyonscharity.org.uk/

John Lyon's Charity gives grants to groups and organisations for the benefit of children and young adults up to the age of 25 who are residents in London's northwest boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, City of London, and the City of Westminster.

The charity's main policy is to promote the life-chances of children and young people through education. To that end, the charity has distributed more than £50 million in the last two decades to a wide range of services for young people. These include youth clubs, arts projects, counselling, child care and parental support schemes, sports and academic bursaries and scholarships.

Membership renewals

Thank you to all of you who have renewed your Parenting UK membership for 2014-15.

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please remember to do so in order to continue receiving benefits such as future editions of this quarterly bulletin, discounted rates on our events, free access to our In Practice Papers, and first notice of all of our free events.

To renew, simply go to www.parentinguk.org and select 'Member Login'. If you have forgotten your password, you can request for a new one to be sent.

For further support, please contact info@parentinguk.org or use the contact form on the website.

Thank you.

June

Demonstrating and strengthening your evidence base
Date: 6 June 2014
Location: London
Organiser: Parenting UK
www.parentinguk.org/events

To support anyone delivering universal parenting support, we have organised a free event to help organisations demonstrate and develop the evidence base that underpins their work.

Learning outcomes for the day:

- Demonstrating your evidence base: what to collect, how to present it, what it means and how it should change the service you offer
- Theory of Change: why it matters and how to use it creatively
- Strengthening your evidence base: what more to gather and how to select compelling evidence
- How to make measuring commonplace and embedded in your work

The event will be made up of practical, workshop-style activities, as well as strategies with which to test and measure evidence and its impact.

We are offering this training as part of a programme of advice and support within the CANparent Market Development contract. This is to help organisations to develop high quality evidence-based universal parenting classes.

Beyond boundaries: giving every child a better start
Date: 11 June 2014
Location: Glasgow
Organiser: NSPCC
Booking: www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/

There is growing recognition of the need for early intervention to prevent child abuse and neglect and improve children's life chances.

NSPCC Scotland's annual conference will encourage professionals, clinicians, experts and policy makers to continue the debate about effective early intervention by looking beyond the boundaries of their existing fields.

Delivering the free entitlement for two-year-olds in your school
Date: 11 June 2014
Location: Leeds
Organiser: Family and Childcare Trust
www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/Pages/News

The Family and Childcare Trust are holding an event for local authorities and schools about the delivery of the free entitlement for two-year-olds.

Working in partnership with Mott Macdonald and Hemsalls, the event aims to raise awareness on how to find the right mix to deliver the two-year-old offer, how to support schools and having the right physical environment for two-year-olds.

July

Working in Partnership to Tackle Child Poverty
Location: London
Date: 10 July 2014
Organiser: Inside Government

The Working in Partnership to Tackle Child Poverty forum will offer delegates an opportunity to explore and discuss developments in implementing child poverty strategies and the key steps to achieving the elimination of child poverty by 2020. Delegates will hear demonstrations of best practice for eliminating the root causes of child poverty and delivering comprehensive strategies to help support disadvantaged children.

September

Recognising Mental Health Issues in Parents
Location: London
Date: 24 September 2014
Organiser: Parenting UK
Booking: www.parentinguk.org/events

Mental Health First Aid is an educational course which teaches people how to identify, understand and help a person who may be developing a mental health problem. In the same way as we learn physical first aid, mental health first aid teaches you how to recognise those crucial warning signs of mental ill health.

Being able to recognise mental health issues can enable you to strengthen your support for parents and families, allowing you to offer further care where appropriate and knowing how and when to signpost or refer to external support.

As well as increasing your own confidence about recognising and responding to mental health issues, this training can support you in meeting the elements of the CANparent Quality Mark by enabling you to create signposting routes and links with other professionals.

October

Date: 28 October 2014
Location: London
Organiser: GovKnow
http://govknow.com/event-detail.html?id=935&info=overview

Now in its third year, GovKnow's Children and Young People's Conference 2014 will bring together key stakeholders to discuss how, as a society, we can provide children and young people with the best possible start and support in life.

This important event will build upon the discussions and debate of the last two conferences to examine current policy and key issues affecting children and young people and will provide all attendees with the opportunity to hear from and question key stakeholders involved in shaping and delivering children and young people's policy. CPD certified (5 points).

Please let us know about any events you are running about parenting and families by emailing us at info@parentinguk.org

We welcome your comments on and contributions to our News Bulletin. Please address any correspondence to jimio@familylives.org.uk

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