

POSITIVE STARTS EAST AYRSHIRE'S RESPONSE TO THE EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK

This is the third newsletter in relation to Positive Starts, East Ayrshire's response to the Early Years Framework. The newsletter will seek to provide some up to date information in respect of progress.

The Scottish Government has recently published two reports:

- Early Years Framework
- Join the Dots: A Better Start for Scotland's Children, an independent report by Professor Susan Deacon

East Ayrshire has made good progress against the key actions identified in the Scottish Government's progress report and this is available for any colleague who would like a copy of the analysis. Professor Deacon's report sets out some ideas for practical action which she feels will support the implementation of the framework.

EARLY SUCCESS

The Council's Educational Psychology Service led a team of colleagues to a successful COSLA Quality Awards for the category 'The One To Watch'.

The award is in recognition of the work to date in respect of nurture approaches linked to the multi-service and agency Solihull approach.

Colleagues from across sectors came together as a team to present the work to a panel of experts.

The submission focussed on the research evidence supporting the development of a nurturing approach in East Ayrshire and asked the fundamental question – *If we had worked with some of these children at a much younger age would we have been able to make a difference earlier in a child's life?*

The nurture approach is now being rolled out across the Council's nursery and family centres.

A REVIEW OF EARLY YEARS SERVICES

One of the outcomes of the Council's budgetary consultation exercise is a review of early years services. This is encapsulating pre-birth to age eight years. The review will be multi-agency and consultation and engagement will take place between staff and parents and carers.

Extensive consultation is being carried out in May as part of the review.

A NEW NATIONAL PATHWAY FOR VULNERABLE FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 0-3 YEARS

This national framework focuses on a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary antenatal, postnatal care and early years pathway for vulnerable families and children. The framework has been developed to support the delivery of *Getting it Right for Every Child*.

One of the local areas for development arising from the pathway is to further improve key transition points.

HEARING THE VIEWS OF VERY YOUNG CHILDREN

The recent consultation for the Children and Young People's Services Plan 2011-15 secured the views of over 900 children. Almost 20% (178) of all responses were from children under 8 years with 40 being from under 5's.

10 children from Galston mind mapped the questions and children's responses indicated their need for safety and recognition of the benefits of help provided by school staff and health professionals. The children also thought it was very important that help is given to other children who need it saying "if they don't have anyone to help them, we need to do it".

16 children from Nether Robertland Nursery class submitted scribed drawings which mainly illustrate concern about crime and antisocial behaviour.

14 children from Onthank Nursery School participated in a focus group; their responses indicate that they see their parents, nursery staff and friends as sources of help and support. Responses also indicate an understanding of the role of health professionals, some awareness of the effects of antisocial behaviour and physical safety issues such as road safety.

88 children attending Patna Primary School completed joint class questionnaires and 50 of the pared down questionnaires were also received from an unnamed source. These responses mainly reflected those of the broadsweep questionnaire but one notable difference was recorded in relation to "Having a say in your community and the decisions that affect you". 58% of this group rated this as fairly or not important as opposed 85% of overall responses rating it thus.

PARENTING - Incredible Years

Five colleagues attended a 3-day training programme in 'The Incredible years Basic Parenting Program. The 3-day training is designed to promote positive parenting strategies and to assist parents in managing children's behaviour problems. It has a strong evidence base and is particularly aimed at professionals who are working with families of young children with conduct problems (ages 2-8 years), or with single parents, abusive parents, and teenage parents This program builds upon the roll out of the Solihull Approach and supports tier 2 interventions.

CLD Parenting

Community Learning and Development are continuing to deliver community based parenting courses and family learning opportunities across the authority. This includes working with Dads and kids in a

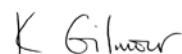
healthy living course in New Cumnock, family learning for toddlers in New Farm Loch, Speakeasy courses and supporting Nurture groups in a number of communities.

BUILDING EVIDENCE OF IMPACT: RICKTER

The Rickter Scale is an impact measurement tool widely used throughout the United Kingdom to measure qualitative 'soft' outcomes for individuals and groups in a range of settings. It is also widely used as a way to measure the effect of a project or service on people's lives. The effectiveness of Rickter stems from the fact that it is easy to administer, it instantly engages the client, helps to overcome communication barriers and produces quality information in a short period of time that is immediately available for action planning.

The East Ayrshire Promoting Lifelong Learning Partnership engaged the Rickter Company to train practitioners from a variety of Lifelong Learning partners including Early Education and Childcare, Community Learning & Development, the Voluntary Sector, Skills Development Scotland and Schools and NHS Ayrshire & Arran.

Training is continuing to be delivered on how to use Rickter with individuals and groups and it is the intention that staff from Early Education and Childcare establishments will have the opportunity to undertake Rickter training over the next year. Dates have been circulated but if you require any further information regarding the dates please contact Mary Wilcox on 01563 578118.



**Chair of Community Health
Partnership, Officer Locality Group -
Children and Young People**