

Issue No 11
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Sure Start

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COSLA EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2006

First of all I must congratulate my team for achieving a Bronze award from COSLA for our teenage parents programme.

Our teenage parents programme, for those who don't know, comprises several different initiatives which include:

- Parents at school project
- Young Mums To Be (YM2B)
- Young Dads To Be (YD2B)
- Young Mums Groups (YM+)
- Young Dads Group (Nippaz With Attitude)
- Young Dads Baby Massage

In addition to the groupwork, individual support is also provided where needed. This means that, although there are key individuals who have responsibility for running these groups (the Early Years Development Workers), from time to time staff from every other sector in the team contribute their own particular skills, be they social worker, family worker, career adviser or administrator.

However, this is also an excellent example of what can be achieved through interagency collaboration. The parents at school project receives financial backing from the Early Years and Childcare Partnership, and our able group of childminders, organised by Scottish Childminding Association, give a very high standard of care to the babies as well as support to the young mums. The YM2B and YD2B groups are provided with strong support from the midwives. Sure Start staff leading the YM+ groups are supported by Youth Action, Community Education, COZ and the Communities Team; and the Young Dads groups receive valuable input from Arts Services and West Lothian Leisure at Bathgate Sports Centre.

Mental health funding and regeneration funding have enabled us to provide a wider range of services than we could have done on our own.

**So, well done
Sure Start and partners**

PARENTING WEST LOTHIAN

The aims of PWL are to develop, coordinate and expand on parent support for parents of a child of any age in West Lothian. The website gives an A-Z of what supports are around and details of the range of programmes currently on offer. The website, however, is just the start of what we hope will become an invaluable resource for parents and professionals alike. As well as providing written information and links to other useful websites, we invite parents to contact us to book a place on a parenting course. Parents will be notified of where the nearest course is about to be run and will be invited to join it. Alternatively they can leave their name and address and once there are sufficient parents in that locality, the Steering group will ensure that a group is run as soon as possible.

A separate section for professional staff gives similar information but also includes additional information such as training events to help staff develop their own parenting support skills.

Please check out the website and let us know what additional information you would like to see incorporated on the website.

Training events currently planned include lunchtime development sessions, parenting programme training and an open information session where staff can come along, browse the materials and chat with the staff familiar with the programmes.

PARENTING WEST LOTHIAN TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

See the website for details of the autumn programme for staff training

www.parentingwestlothian.org.uk

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SURE START EARLY YEARS CONFERENCE

The Sure Start conference this year will have the theme of "Getting It Right From The Start" and will have a focus on early intervention and integrated working.

This year's conference has to move to a different venue due to the closure for refurbishment of Howden Park and will be held in Strathbrock Partnership Centre Community Wing on Wednesday 8th November. Speakers will include Boyd McAdam from the Scottish Executive talking on "Getting It Right For Every Child" and Professor Norma Baldwin from Dundee University providing an input on integrated assessment

Sure Start Information Sessions

☉ Friday 8th
September 2006

☉ Wednesday,
25th October
2006

☉ Wednesday
13th December
2006

These sessions are held in the Sure Start Office, Unit G, Kirkton Business Centre, Livingston Village

Sessions start at 9am and last 1 hour approx.

Working Together In West Lothian: Getting Through The Day



In West Lothian we have been offering a short group-based parenting course called “Getting Through The Day”. This course can be offered as a course for parents in general, although many who have undertaken the course have often presented with quite severe problems. It complements other courses aimed specifically at the more vulnerable parents where there are significant concerns from statutory agencies (“Mellow Parenting” and the “Incredible Years”).

“Getting Through The Day” was developed by John Rogers with parents in 1994, and the course continues to evolve as a result of parent feedback and ideas (as well as new findings from research on what works in parenting and in child development). It has been run in various locations in Scotland.

The course runs for 8 weeks and sees parent-child relationships as a foundation for behaviour management. It aims to promote peer learning and problem-solving skills and to acknowledge the needs of parents themselves together with the needs of the children. Although parenting can raise very uncomfortable feelings for parents, the course can be fun and offers a variety of learning opportunities, including group exercises, role-plays and discussions. Parents are relieved to discover out they are not alone in finding parenting hard work, and this relaxes them so they can start to think of other solutions to problems.

Feedback from parents has been very positive, and we are developing external measures of evaluation (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Eyeberg Behaviour Inventory) which so far seem encouraging. Of two courses recently completed, self-esteem improved by an average of 19.1% while improvements in behaviour on Intensity and Problem ratings improved on average by 18.4% and 37.4% respectively.

Sure Start has worked with other agencies since its inception, and this was continued when we started to run “Getting Through The Day”. We were asked to run the course in a variety of venues, and this has allowed workers from other agencies to carry on running the course once they have been trained “on the job”. This has meant that of 8 courses run from April to June this year, three were run by other agencies, while the other five, although led by Sure Start, involved other agencies. To date 16 workers from other agencies have had this training.

Workers involved in running the course have included Health Visitors, Community Education workers, Teachers, workers from the Integrated Children and Young People Support Team, and Educational Psychologists and workers from SPPA.

“Getting Through The Day” has been adapted for working with parents with a child with additional needs, for parents with an addiction problem, and for parents with children of Primary School age. A version is now available for parents of teenagers. (There is also a version for parents with children with ADHD).

Training of staff has been a mixture of co-working the course (training “on the job” –16 people) and a formal training day for 27 workers from a large variety of agencies, including Nursery School workers, and all those noted above. There is also interest from Primary Schools in linking work done in Nurture Groups and using the course to engage with parents. Because of the demand, further training is planned. On-going support for practitioners running parenting courses are also planned.

This initiative has been supported by Parenting West Lothian which is a multi-disciplinary steering group, which aims to co-ordinate and develop support for parents across the Council. This means that all resources and information for parents will be accessible to parents and professionals through the Website. It also aims to monitor the effectiveness of the range of supports for parents.

Developments so far seem exciting. Lots of people are planning courses and groups. Let’s see how it all works out.