



Sure Start

www.wlcsurestart.org.uk

Issue No 21
Happy Easter
April 2010

MOVE? WHAT MOVE?

We had hoped to move in February to our new office in Lomond House. Due to technical problems, this is now likely to happen in May.

Our phone numbers and address will change, but the website and our email addresses will remain the same. Staff mobile numbers are also the same: we know this is the most popular way of contacting us.

PARTNER SURVEY

After 2 years of few responses we had over 20 replies this year. Staff in a variety of agencies think we are mainly doing well. One felt our website needed updating: we agree and are hoping to update it in the coming month.

One was unhappy about our opening hours: we are following this up to see what we can do.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

- o Friday 16th April 2010
- o Wednesday 26th May 2010
- o Wednesday 23rd June 2010

These sessions are for new staff in West Lothian and provide information about our services and are held in the Sure Start Office.

Sessions start at 9am and last approx 1 hour.

Current Office Unit G, Kirkton Business Centre, Livingston Village)

New Office 2nd Floor Lomond House, Beveridge Square, Livingston, EH54 6QF

Please check the venue before you attend

INSPECTION NEWS – “VERY GOOD”

We had our 2nd annual inspection by the Care Commission in February of our crèches and are very pleased to report a big improvement in our grades to grade 5 ‘Very Good’ in all categories. We worked hard to improve since last time, following our action plan, requirements and recommendations from last year’s inspection.

The report is now on the Care Commission website.

www.carecommission.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

We carried out another Customer Service Survey in January 2010.

The results were as follows:

Treated fairly/respect	99%
Respond promptly	97%
Staff polite	100%
Convenient appointments	94%
Consultation important	91%
Information understandable	92%
Information complete	91%
Staff helpful	100%

Some results are better than last year others mostly the same. The most important finding was that only 71% said they knew how to make a complaint if they wanted to.

All families should get a copy of the Council Comments leaflet and our own leaflet which includes the Care Commission details. You can raise any matter with staff or direct to the manager, Paula Huddart on 01506 775841 or to paula.huddart@westlothian.gov.uk

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SEMINAR (FREE)

For your diary:
20 May 2010 Morning only
‘The Importance of Getting it Right in the Early Years’
including Professor David Howe
‘Good enough Care in Time’
Howden Park Centre

Further details in separate flyers.
Names in advance to
surestart@westlothian.gov.uk

PLAY SUPPORT WORKER - SUCCESS

Congratulations to Ruth Griffin who achieved her National Progression Award in Playwork and Childcare. She is now our 3rd Play Support Worker to gain this certificate.

MANAGER’S REPORT

We are reviewing how we gather information about our work. We publish our performance against our standards in our annual report and have found that some standards have been hard to measure, other standards are no longer relevant.

In our Annual Report for 08/09, we achieved all standards except the one to contact all YMs2B within a week of referral. This was 84% for the 2nd year running. We have put in place a new system in 2009/10.

FUTURE JOBS FUND

We have successfully applied for this funding to employ a Fathers' Support Worker.

Steven Roberts joined the team at the end of March for 6 months. He was one of our Peer Educators so he knows some of our work. He plans to do his HNC in Early Education and Childcare with the experience he gains here.

COMMENTS

In 2008/09 we had 25 compliments, 4 comments and 3 complaints. No complaint was upheld but 2 needed more clarity with parents.

One comment by a child led us to start a feedback sheet for older children in the crèche.

STUDENTS

We were fortunate to have a 3rd year midwifery student, Alison McMorrin, from Napier University, with us during March.

She brought excellent community skills, supported groups and visited some young parents at home. She was also able to offer to be present at one delivery, which was reassuring to the young mother. We wait to see if she made it!

COUNSELLING

Following discussions with our colleagues in the Peri-Natal Mental Health Unit at St John's Hospital, and Crossreach (Church of Scotland) the PNMHU and Sure Start have agreed to continue this service that Crossreach can no longer provide.

The crèche is run by one member of staff and volunteers: between the NHS and Sure Start we will ensure continuity for the parents using this service. Our members of staff [both called Mhairi] will co-run the group: a name change may be needed to avoid confusion!

FREE BENEFIT CALLS FROM MOBILES TO DWP

The Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) has agreed with most mobile companies to allow calls about benefits to be free of charge. The 0800 numbers receive 60 million calls a year, about 15% from mobiles. This should be a helpful move.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

We have checked whether we could offer free calls from mobiles but were unsuccessful. If you've run out of calling credit you can text your worker or get someone else to call the office and we will call you back. In our recent survey we asked how people prefer to keep in touch with us.

The most popular method is mobile phone call [44%]. House phones were next best at 31%; text 26%; email 22%: some people named a few methods and one said 'all'.

TRANSLATION & INTERPRETATION

In 2009 we translated a range of documents into Polish and Bangladeshi for parents with those languages as their first language. When needed, we also used interpreters in our service and this included a new phone interpretation service. We also agreed with NHS colleagues that they would translate an exercise booklet for a Polish mother as she needed to refer to it at home after consultation sessions.

We have recently received 'You and Your Baby' which is an easy-read version of 'Ready Steady Baby'. It is also printed in black on yellow paper which makes it easier to read, and has good clear pictures.

We will be using this as and when needed.

NEW STANDARDS

New service standards for Social Policy Children & Families services are now in place, which are consistent across all our services. They are:

- Respond to referrals within 10 working days
- Provide high quality services as judged by our customers
- Provide the information you need in ways that are easy to understand and meet your needs and preferences
- Ensure that our staff behave professionally in all aspects of their dealings with you
- Work with you to achieve the best outcomes for children

Our Parents' Forum helpfully suggested changes to the published format, which we have done.

We will be measuring our performance against these standards in surveys from now on.

We would be happy to hear from you if you have any comments to make on these standards: please email us at

surestart@westlothian.gov.uk

