



Issue 1

www.parentingwestlothian.org.uk

Welcome to our First Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of the PWL Newsletter which aims to promote parenting work being undertaken across West Lothian and to provide regular information about group work initiatives and developments, which we hope will be of use to parents with children of all ages. In addition there will be information on training opportunities for staff.

Parenting West Lothian is an interagency group which was set up in 2005 to attempt to co-ordinate parenting work across the district, to support new initiatives which are being created in relation to need, and to promote staff training and development.

The group is made up of representatives from various sectors within social work, health and education, along with some voluntary organisations, most notably Barnardos. We receive valuable advice and support from management information staff in relation to the website.

We are keen to hear the views of parents on what is needed and to respond to them as best we can.

THE WEBSITE

The website was launched in 2005 as a means of getting as much information to as many parents as possible. Since its launch there have been many visitors to the site and it has generated numerous enquiries (both local and worldwide). We continue to aim to make the website as informative and accessible as possible.

The information is relevant for both parents and professionals. It provides a comprehensive list of parenting services within

West Lothian and some national organisations which exist to support parents in the infinitely rewarding, if at times difficult and often stressful task of raising children. (The A-Z of services)

There is also information on a range of parenting initiatives, which are run across the district including details of the different types of parenting groups, who they are aimed at and how to access them.

There is a section on how children grow and develop and a number of information leaflets developed by our psychologists to support parents with specific problems such as bed wetting, temper tantrums and so on. We are aiming to expand on this area by having a section on commonly encountered issues (A-Z of Topics) for parents and hope that parents will contact us with requests for information which we will then research and add to the website.

There are also links to other useful websites which cover a range of topics regarding parenting.

THE PARENTING STRATEGY

In 2010, a parenting strategy was produced which aims to provide greater co-ordination and focus to parenting work. The parenting strategy has been approved at the highest level with the Council Chief Executive and the Director of the Community Health and Care Partnership endorsing the strategy.

The strategy, which outlines how the parenting work links in with other priorities for children and families, can be viewed on the website.

PARENTING PROGRAMMES

A number of parenting programmes are run by various staff in West Lothian. The major programmes are all evidence based and have been running for a number of years. These include:

- PEEP - developed in England and now widely used in our nurseries
- Incredible Years - developed by Carolyn Webster Stratton and used primarily by the Sure Start team, Barnardos and health visitors but with a big commitment to developing training to enable more staff to run this
- Mellow Parenting - developed by psychologist in Glasgow along with our own parenting co-ordinator John Rogers and run primarily in social work family centres along with Sure Start, but being developed by the Children and Young People Team for use with school age children
- Getting Through The Day – written by parenting co-ordinator John Rogers, and evaluated by clinical psychologists which has been adapted for various groups and is extensively used throughout West Lothian

Other programmes have been developed locally in response to specific identified need and we continue to develop these as and when appropriate.

Over the last year we have been piloting a new programme for parents to assist with the transition of pre-school children into nursery and school. As well as a group initiative, this programme will be able to be accessed through the website, so for those parents unable to access a group they can work through the programme by themselves. This group is currently delivered in only a few areas. More about this in future newsletters.

In addition to the group work programmes, the use of Video Interaction Guidance, a programme developed in the Netherlands and formally known as SPIN is widely promoted and a number of staff have been trained in using this technique both with individual families and also within classes in schools.

Over the coming months we will feature these programmes in this newsletter so that parents and staff alike will be able to decide what kind of support is most suitable.

TRAINING

Staff training, development and support feature heavily with those of us involved in parenting work. Over the last year, a group of 12 workers have been trained in Mellow Parenting. Two workers have been given intensive training in the new Incredible Years programme for babies and toddlers, 6 in VIG, and a further 6 staff have been trained in Getting Through the Day.

A peer support group, which meets monthly, provides staff with the opportunity to discuss issues related to delivering parenting group work and enables workers to learn from the experiences of others.

Training opportunities for staff will be posted on the website and we are always keen to receive ideas from staff on what training opportunities they would find useful whether it be opportunities for formal training courses, or aspects of group work and parenting support.

Future Plans

We aim to produce this newsletter on a quarterly basis to keep parents and professionals up to date with new developments. The website will also be updated so for more detailed information on the strategy, annual reports, new initiatives and support services, access the website.

If you have any ideas on how to improve this service please contact us via the website.

A list of the agencies involved in the steering group is available on the website

For more information check out the parenting west Lothian website
www.parentingwestlothian.org.uk