

Keeping in touch, 1000s of miles away

Childminder Marie Fenyn from Gedling has been using her laptop, funded through the Early Years and Childcare Services capital grant to keep in touch with two of the children she cares for whilst they are visiting Kenya.

The children have gone to see their grandma in Kenya for three months. Before they went, their mum put Skype on Marie's laptop. Skype is a software programme allowing you to make calls to other people over the internet and see them though a web cam.



Marie and the other children have been able to chat to Tana and her mum via the internet. Due to the time difference, the children have been talking to Tana after school whilst she has been in her pyjamas ready for bed.

Marie says 'All the children I care for got very excited at seeing Tana in Kenya. She told us she that she had stroked a giraffe that day and also sent us a picture .We are going to keep in touch on Skype over the next three months. Many thanks for the laptop. I know that the children in my care will learn a lot from it. We are already finding Kenya on the world map.'

New after school club at Orchard school run by our Play Service

Orchard After School Club is managed by the Nottinghamshire County Council's Play Service and is open Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-5pm for children and young people aged 3-19 years. The club operates from the London Road site at the Orchard special school, Newark Children are bused from the town school site when attending the club.

Phil Evans, Childcare Development Worker says " The whole ethos of club is Play Play Play. There are lots of play activities including construction,arts,physical i.e sports,music and dance, table top games and soft play. The emphasis is for the children and young people to relax,have fun, chill out and try new play experiences whilst socialising with peers."



Daycare & childminders

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Childminding network meetings 2011

Come along to a network meeting to meet other childminders and receive information and peer support.

Rushcliffe	Tuesday 8 March Wednesday 23 March	Edwalton Primary School, Edwalton
Newark	Thursday 10 March	The Dukeries, Ollerton
Broxtowe	Tuesday 15 March	Highfields Fire Station, Beeston
Bassetlaw	Wednesday 16 March	The Crossing, Worksop
Gedling	Wednesday 16 March Thursday 17 March	St James Church Hall, Mapperley
Ashfield	Wednesday 23 March	The Summit Centre, Kirkby-in-Ashfield
Mansfield	Wednesday 30 March	Manor Sport & Recreation, Mansfield Woodhouse

Spread the word!

Due to budget reviews and the need to make savings, we have been looking at the way we communicate with our providers and partners and looking at the most efficient value for money way.

An email allows us to send instant information and is a much quicker, environmentally friendly method of communicating.

In order for us to keep our database up to date, please ensure you have recorded your email address on your Families Information Service vacancy form. Also please spread the word to other colleagues about the importance of letting us know their email address so they too can receive emails and monthly newsletters.

Do you need help setting up a generic email address for your setting?



Having a generic email address allows all staff to read emails and isn't reliant on one person accessing the information. For help setting up an email address, contact Vicky Windsor- Beck, Marketing & Communications Officer on 07956 438 068 or 0800 781 2168.

Nottingham and County Childminding Association Website

For the latest childminding news and events visit:
www.nottinghamandcountychildminding.org

A website dedicated to supporting childminders across the county. On the website you will find lots of useful information such as the latest network dates, meeting dates, news, photos and much more....



Don't have access to a computer?

Why not visit your local library or children's centre to use their public computer.

Nottinghamshire Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

As you will be aware, we are undertaking a second Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) to help develop current and future childcare needs across the County.

Work for the 2010-2011 CSA is underway. During the summer all registered childcare providers received a supply questionnaire to fill in details about their provision. 10,000 demand questionnaires were also sent to parents and carers and questionnaires were also given out at events across the summer.

So what happens next?

We have been busy collating the data and a draft CSA containing the findings will be available for consultation on the County Council's website from January. Information officers are also holding district meetings with colleagues' partners and childcare providers to present the findings.

The final childcare assessment will be published March 2011.

Thank you to all the providers who filled out a questionnaire and returned back to us.

For more information about the CSA, contact the Nottinghamshire Families Information Service on 0800 781 2168 or 01623 520 694. Email fis@nottsc.gov.uk

Update on the Buddying Programme

The Nottinghamshire Buddying Programme is open to all people working with the Under 5s. For example schools, childminders, day nurseries, Children's Centres, playgroups.

The buddying programme provides continuous professional development opportunities for all Early Years practitioners across the county. Peer support is used to improve practices and support the government's aim of strengthening the Early Years workforce.

Good practice in Early Years provision is identified in settings across the county and potential 'hosts' are invited to sign up for other Early Years practitioners (buddies) to visit.

There are currently over 300 hosts on the database offering a wide range of experiences, with numbers growing all the time, and over 400 buddies who have either completed or are currently enjoying a buddying experience.

A key success of the buddying programme has been the cross sector working that has developed, often with professional relationships continuing after the buddying experience has finished. The programme has flourished because of the flexible and personalised learning opportunities available. Due to its success, the programme is now being mainstreamed into the ongoing workforce development programme for Early Years practitioners.

Evaluations from buddies and hosts have highlighted the benefits of peer support to improve practice. The programme was recently short-listed for the "Children and Young People Now Awards 2010" in the Workforce Development category but was just pipped to the post by Stoke for their 'Stoke Speaks Out' work.



For more information about the Buddying Programme, email janet.lang@nottscc.gov.uk or ring 01623 404 347



Gill and Balwinder

Balwinder Kaur and Gill Rooney from Beeston North, Sure Start Children's Centre undertook a buddying experience as buddies with Lisa Brown from the Ethnicity Culture and Achievement Service to improve their 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL) practice.

We asked them some questions about their experiences:

Have there been any improvements in your practice due to the scheme?

We have improved our practice by introducing the 'Languages I speak' information sheet. This has made us more confident in asking parents about their language including words about activities in different languages.

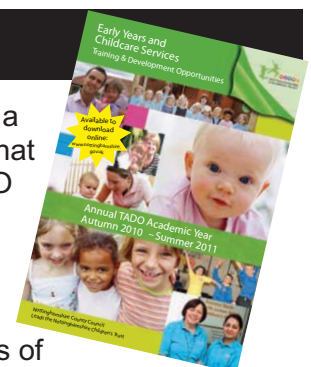
We have also improved our displays within the centre by labelling in different languages.

What are the advantages of the buddying scheme over conventional training?

The buddying scheme is more hands on training and is interesting because you are within your own setting. This allows you to see the results on how successful the practice is.

TADO Update

In August, the training team sent a letter to all providers explaining that due to budget reviews, the TADO would no longer be printed and was only available electronically.



Since then, we have received lots of feedback about the accessibility of the TADO on-line and recognise that not all providers have easy access to a computer.

As a result of this we have been able to print 50 copies of the TADO to sell for £5 a copy on a trial basis.

If you would like to buy a copy of the TADO, contact the training team on 0115 9773065 or email ey&cc.training@nottscc.gov.uk

Download the TADO at
www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/earlyyears

Events & news

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As the cold winter dark nights draw in, summer may be just a distant memory away; however we recap on some of the activities that happened in those warmer months

Play Days 2010

Five of the six play days organised by our Play Service and their partners ran across August attracting around 10,000 children, young people parents and carers.

Unfortunately due to the torrential rain, Retford's play day was called off but luckily the weather was kind for the rest of the days.

Many activities were on offer including den building, sand play, and environmental play and drumming. Play forums were involved in the planning and delivering of some activities.

Many thanks go to the Play Service team and also to the many partners who gave their time to support the days.



Some of the play day activities

Playschemes

Across the county, community volunteers also delivered around 30 playschemes with more than 3000 children and young people attending.

The Play Service would like to thank the volunteers for their time and say a big well done!

Want to organise your own play day?

Contact the Play Service on 01636 593947 for help and support.

Lark in the Park

In August, the Early Years and Childcare Services and their partners joined together for Lark in the Park which saw around 5000 people attend.

The theme for the day was Robin Hood and lots of activities were on offer including den making, fir combs decorating, animal masks and hat making. It was a great day and Robin Hood was even there himself with Maid Marion!

Activities were provided by the Sure Start children's centre Rushcliffe team, National Childminding Association (NCMA), Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA), Play Service, Foster Care and Adoption and the Families Information Service.

Thank you to all those who helped plan and carry out the activities.



Some of the FIS team meeting Robin Hood and Maid Marion

Families' feedback to the DCATCH project

In September, a DCATCH Family Fun Day was held at Center Parcs for all families involved with the DCATCH Project or the Inclusion Funding programme. The day was an opportunity for families to come together, share their experiences and views on childcare for their disabled child and to enjoy the activities at Center Parcs.

87 parents/carers attended the consultation activities to feedback to the DCATCH team and members of Nottinghamshire County Councils Children and Young People's Department. In addition, 126 children enjoyed fun activities of their choice with the support of 86 carers.

Holiday Childcare Pilot

As reported in July's issue of E News, Nottinghamshire County Council's childcare development team was one of 19 authorities to receive funding from the Department of Education for a holiday childcare pilot. The aim of the project is to establish sustainable holiday provision in our most hard to reach areas.

So what's been happening?

Play to Care Schemes

Two Play to Care schemes opened during the October half term holidays at Forest Town (Mansfield) and Coddington (Newark) Primary Schools.

The Coddington scheme ran three days during the week whilst the Forest Town scheme ran for two days offering sessions to parents who cannot usually access childcare due to sustainability issues.

Many activities happened at the sessions including clay modelling, mod rocs, scrapbooking, smoothie making, sports and games.

Sessions were well attended and subject to demand will be opening during the Christmas holidays.



Activities at the Play to Care Scheme

Childcare for disabled young people aged 11-19 years

The Childcare Development team organised a holiday pilot project at Orchard and Ash Lea special schools during the summer and October half term holidays for children and young people aged 6 to 19 years.

The project runs in partnership with the Play For Disabled Children's Team (P4DCT). The clubs are open two days a week at both schools and run beside the short breaks services to offer wrap around care.

During the summer the clubs were well used at both schools and enabled an additional 19 children and young people to access full day and wrap around care.

The October half term holidays was also well attended and the club ran a joint trip with the P4DCT to the Sea Life Centre.

The Holiday clubs will be running 2 days over the February half term at Ash Lea and Orchard.

Suitable services for 11 – 14 years – 'Safe Place to Be' clubs

Safe Place to Be (SP2B) clubs have opened at Quarrydale, Joseph Whittaker and Ashfield Comprehensive schools. The club are run by trained sixth formers with support from a keyworker and provide a safe, informal place for young people aged 11-14 to go to during the school holidays.

Quarrydale and Joseph Whittaker opened during the summer holidays for three hours, one day a week providing wrap around care to fit in with activities at local leisure centres. This allowed parents to receive a full day of care for their young person.

In the October half term holidays the previous 2 were joined by a club opening at Ashfield Comprehensive. All sessions have been well attended; the sessions at Ashfield were extremely popular with 39 young people attending one day.

The Safe Place to Be Clubs at all three club will open during the February half term holidays.

Children's centre celebrations

On 4 November, the Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council, Councillor Tom Pettingell hosted a Civic Reception at County Hall for parent volunteers, staff and partners from Sure Start centres.

The event was organised to mark the success of the Sure Start children's centre programme in Nottinghamshire to date. The county now has 58 children centre services across the county supporting improved outcomes for children under five and their families.

Two parent reps spoke of their experiences of using the centres. Speeches were also made by the Chairman, Councillor Tom Pettingell, Councillor Philip Owen, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People Services, Anthony May, Corporate Director and John Thorn, Head of Early Years.



Ofsted celebrations



Mansfield Woodhouse Sure Start Children's Centre was the first centre in Nottinghamshire to be inspected by Ofsted and the results were good – a good outcome overall with one area being identified as outstanding.

Inspection of children's centres (designated for over three years) began in the summer term after the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act bill was passed through Parliament

Ofsted inspects children's centres to look at their quality of provision, the effectiveness of the leadership and management and capacity to improve to ensure good outcomes for children and their families.

Since the first inspection in June, other centres across the county have been inspected and received positive results including Sutton Central Children's Centre, Ashfield, North Leverton Children's Centre Bassetlaw and Eastwood Children's Centre, Broxtowe. Watch this space for more news about the inspections.