



Every Child Matters in County Durham

Edition 4 November 2004



The heart of our vision

Children and young people's involvement is at the heart of our vision for Every Child Matters in County Durham. This newsletter focuses on some of the great variety of work already underway to help young people make a positive contribution. We are grateful for all those who have contributed articles for this edition, so many that we have been unable to print them all! Articles held over for future newsletters include:

- Coordination of Social Inclusion Programmes (COSIP)
- Easington Youth Forum
- The needs of children and young people in Wear Valley
- Study Support
- Family Learning in County Durham.

The ECM work has involved young people from the outset in agreeing a vision and in deciding which outcomes matter most, for the development of the Durham 5.

We are very keen that as many young people as possible are engaged with the work. Young People from Investing in Children are working with us to identify how far existing services meet needs across the County and are developing audit tools. These will be circulated through Schools Councils and other representative groups, so that a wide range of young people can be involved. The two Pathfinders will also ensure that children, young people and their families are fully involved from the start in shaping services.

Sharing ideas – Bringing everyone together



Over two hundred stakeholders recently attended Road Shows. Members of the ECM Implementation Team outlined national developments, challenges and Durham's response

through the partnership structure and Children and Young People's Local Planning Groups.

Practitioners from various disciplines from County Council and District Council Services, Health and Voluntary Organisations were invited to discuss and comment on the Durham Approach to a shared vision for services. There was recognition of the advantages of the Every Child Matters agenda but an awareness of likely obstacles and key issues. These were noted by the ECM Implementation Team and will be used to inform future plans.

Groups from across services worked enthusiastically on a case study. They considered how service provision could become seamless to find the best way of meeting the needs of a family, while outlining the roles of agencies and identifying possible gaps and difficulties relating these to present practices.

A second round of Road Shows will be held in the spring. Watch the ECM Website and newsletter for details.

Making a difference where you live



The SPICE Project

The SPICE project in Derwentside aims to enhance young people's understanding of local government services and to engage them in decision-making. Councillors have visited local schools for Question and Answer sessions to explain democracy and their role. Schools visited Council Offices and Leisure Centres, had internet and e-mail training and mock debates at the Council.

ICT has played a major role in the success of the project, giving young people the opportunity to learn about democratic issues in a fun way. On-line voting was used successfully to gather young people's opinions on various issues important to them.

In Local Democracy Week 2001, with support from all local schools, SPICE held the first major vote. Derwentside young people decided to build Consett and Stanley Skateparks. These became a reality when the Council increased its budget for young people by £60,000.

Young people submitted nominations for the various wards in Local Democracy Week 2002 and democratically elected a Young People's Forum for Derwentside. The election was a major success with 7,600 pupils (over 70%) voting.

The Forum has organised events/projects for local youngsters such as: Battle of the Bands, Under-18 Disco, Derwentside Youth Bus, "What If" Directory for Young People Services, Smartcard Scheme, Talent Show, SPICE IT UP grant scheme for local Youth Groups. It



has also carried out consultation for Derwentside local Strategic Partnership as to how NRF funds should be spent to address young people's priorities on health, environment, economy, etc. The Local Primary Care Trust consulted the Forum on "Choosing Health" and

Derwentside Council consulted it on the "Neighbours from Hell" leaflet and on the Leisure "Summer Activity Programme".

The SPICE project was part of the Derwentside District Council's successful Beacon Status application in "promoting Social Inclusion through ICT", and the Council has mainstreamed the Young people's Officer post and the £10,000 yearly budget for young people. The Forum has now 35 members and is regularly invited to give presentations to other authorities and groups to showcase its best practice and what it has achieved in just over a year. Recently, the SPICE project team was awarded the OPM 2004 Public Management Leadership Award "in recognition of its outstanding commitment, dedication and imagination in engaging young people and partner organisations in local democracy".

Contact: Eleanor Seed, Tel: 01207 218243



Connecting with Connexions

Young people's success stories (some names have been changed)

The 'Connecting with Connexions' Small Grants Awards aim to develop and increase links with the Voluntary and Community Sector across County Durham. The Award budget was increased from £30,000 to £35,000 for 2004/2005.

13 organisations applied for funding in 2002/2003, 46 did so in 2003/2004. In 2003 - 2004 a total number of 1902 young people were involved in the Awards and Events. At a per head cost of £15, the recipients demonstrated an amazing ability to deliver value for money. The applications assessment panel includes a young person.

Donna and Joanne, aged 15, had very little interest in school and what they were going to do when they left. They didn't want to discuss the world of work and a career. Donna and Joanne joined a young women's health and beauty group that arranged a visit to Gosforth Park Hotel. Beauticians there gave a talk, did demonstrations and provided lunch. Donna and Joanne are now looking into how to get the appropriate qualifications for this work.

Matthew aged 14, is profoundly physically disabled - he is paralysed apart from a small amount of movement in his fingers. Matthew's speech is OK but his physical disability had left him socially isolated and his parents were feeling depressed and desperate on his behalf. Matthew began attending the remote control car group and has revelled in being able to join in. He can hold his own in the group, attends regularly and has developed social skills. Matthew and his parents now look forward to a positive and enjoyable group.

Contact: Sue Baxter,
Tel: 0191 3831777

Family Link Service

Not too young to have an opinion.

The Family Link home visiting service gives emotional support and practical assistance to families with children under 8 years old who are experiencing specific difficulties. Family concerns range from; multiple births, mental health, isolation, fleeing violence, general health issues, confidence and self esteem, disability, parenting skills, bereavement.

Family Link co-ordinators recruit, support and train local volunteers, who are then matched sensitively with vulnerable families. They offer parents/carers and children opportunities to explore their difficulties and help them to find solutions to their own problems

During the past year Children North East's Family Link Service has been piloting a new 'Voice of the Child' scheme. It aims to provide children 3 – 8 years with more creative and fun ways to feedback their thoughts and feelings about a service that plays an important role for them and their families.

'Voice of the Child' activity packs proved to be very popular with children and volunteers. Using drawing, colouring, picture games and activity sheets children identify activities they like and dislike, what makes them happy and sad, how they feel about volunteer visits.

Evaluation of services provided by volunteers is not an easy task, owing to inconsistencies in how volunteering is defined, variable training, recruitment and task allocation practices and the fact that volunteers often work in conjunction with trained professionals. Nevertheless the use of volunteers in providing support for families has increased both in the UK and in the USA. Therefore it is extremely important to ensure that volunteers are part of any evaluation process where they can encourage and support feedback of all family members especially children.

Contact: Wendy Hindmoor, Derwentside Family Link Co-ordinator, Tel: 0191 3844247



Keep up to date with the ECM Website

The aim of the Website is to inform all stakeholders of developments affecting them.

The Website will provide:

Information to audiences such as staff, young people, their parents and carers

A means of consultation

A means of contact

Access to planning data

Copies of the latest Newsletters will also be available.

Log on to the Website for the latest news about the:

Audit of needs and services

Durham Five

Pathfinder Projects

Current Events

Useful Links

The Website will be live from 26th November and its address will be:

www.everychildmattersincountydurham.org

www.everychildmattersincountydurham.org.uk

Dales Locality CAMHS Team Engaging Young People

The Dales locality CAMHS team now has Investing in Children (IIC) status. This follows meaningful dialogue with young people about the shape of future CAMH Services and the areas in which they would like to see change.

On-going dialogue has seen the refurbishment of the Mulberry Centre out patient waiting area, publication of a video about mental health issues and a new "stressed out" website to improve understanding of and access to CAMH Services.

This work with IIC and the young people will continue by means of:

A Young Peoples' Reference Group on mental health services ages 16 to 18

A group focused upon the experiences of children and young people within Aycliffe Secure Unit and their access to mental health services.

Contact: Mark Cain, Tel: 0191 3336550

Audit of Needs and Services

The timescales have slipped on the audit of needs and services. This is a complex piece of work but data capture forms will be circulated to service managers in December.

These are for completion before Christmas and the first set of data and information relating to need will be on the Every Child Matters website in January.

Parenting Network Seminar

Thursday 2 December 2004
Chester-le-Street Cricket Club
2.30 – 4.30pm



This seminar will help establish a countywide Parenting Network supported by Family Learning in County Durham.

If you work with parents, deliver parenting programmes or are interested in finding out more about supporting parents in County Durham and wish to attend:

Contact June Davison on 0191 370 6412 /3 or email brenda.clutterbuck@durham.gov.uk

News about the NSF

The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services was published by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills in September 2004.

The NSF is described as "a ten year strategy and change will not happen overnight." It comprises 11 standards and each standard has markers of good practice and interventions required to meet the standard.

The standards cover:

- Promoting health and well-being, identifying need, intervening early
- Supporting parents/carers
- Child, young person and family-centred services
- Growing up into adulthood
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Children and young people who are ill
- Children in hospital
- Disabled children and young people and those with complex health needs
- Mental health and psychological well being
- Medicines management for children
- Maternity services

Implementing the NSF is seen as an integral part of the Every Child Matters agenda. For all agencies, information about the NSF is available at:

www.doh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/ChildrenServices/fs/en

Communities of Learning Event

8th December 2004, 9am – 12.30pm,
County Hall Durham

Communities of Learning are groups or clusters of schools, working together with the LEA to promote inclusion for children and young people with special educational needs. This event will include specific examples of how schools are working together to improve outcomes

To attend contact Val Johnson on 01740 656998

or email val.Johnson@durham.gov.uk

How to contact us:

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