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1. PEAL News

1a. ECU and PEAL resources on working with parents



A number of resources on working with parents are available to buy from PEAL and the Early Childhood Unit: the PEAL book (left) can be ordered from ncb@centralbooks.com or 0845 458 9910.

Sharing PEAL with parents, *Principles for engaging with families* and *Supporting parents to listen* are all available from Daisy Hirst at ECU, on dhirst@ncb.org.uk or 0207 843 6064. A full ECU [publications list](#) is available online.

2. PEAL Developments

2a. PEAL for higher education

The starting point for a new pilot delivery of PEAL is the need to embed partnership with parents and the importance of the early home learning environment in higher education courses.

The University of Northampton has agreed to bring together a group of tutors from courses in education, and mentors working in both early years settings and schools, to experience PEAL and comment on additional material. The pilot will focus on early years parental engagement and beyond, with research messages pertinent to transitions, reception and early school years. The pilot will enable us to enrich the training with examples of practice that meet the needs of both tutors and students, along with identification of barriers and ideas for how to overcome them.

We are grateful to our PEAL trainer who has been trialling some of these aspects, and to the staff at Northampton for the chance to build on her work.

3. Early Childhood Unit News

3a. Funded quality improvement support from NCB and C4EO

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) is being funded by the DfE* to develop a programme of work to improve outcomes for young children and their families through a model of peer to peer support, using an evidence-based approach to improve the quality of early years settings. Working mainly with local authorities, the programme will be sector-led and is based on a model developed in partnership with the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children's and Young People's Services (C4EO).

Together, NCB and C4EO will expand their existing number of early years sector specialists, who will support local authorities and others to:

- Identify and work towards direct outcomes for children and families.
- Improve leadership and performance.
- Embed peer-to-peer support and challenge.
- Understand the requirements of a revised EYFS.

The peer to peer model includes the following elements:

- An evidence base gathered through our existing knowledge reviews and validated local practice.

- Advice on early intervention strategies.
- A ‘sector specialist’ offer of peer-to-peer support for locally determined needs.
- National and local networking to embed learning into the sector.
- Simple performance management tools.
- Signposting to effective quality improvement support materials.
- Support for self-evaluation of impact.

The programme will build on what practitioners and managers already know and do well, and enhance quality improvement through the support of peers experienced in the early years and in change management processes. If you would like to take advantage of free peer to peer support please contact Priya Plowman at NCB. pplowman@ncb.org.uk

* This work is supported by the DfE’s [Improving Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families fund](#).

3b. Request for Practice Examples: children’s centres and early years settings



Context

C4EO and NCB are working together to identify and share effective practice currently taking place in early years

settings including children’s centres. With the reorganisations of children’s services as a whole that are underway in many local areas, the piloting of payment by results approaches in children’s centres, along with other aspects of early years services, we are keen to capture the good work that is already in place and to share this with others.

Request

We are particularly keen to receive examples of practice on:

- Organisational structures within whole early years services
- Leadership and management practice that lead to improved outcomes for children and families
- Models of workforce development in the early years as a whole and within children’s centres
- Engagement of families in greatest need through children’s centres with evidence of how their lives and those of their children, have improved
- Examples of effective integration of education, health and other support services and improved outcomes for those children and families receiving the services
- Effective family support provision including outreach Support for engagement of parents as first educators and development of positive home learning environments
- Support for early literacy, particularly for those children at risk of poor educational outcomes

If you would like to submit an example, you can download the submission

form from the C4EO website www.c4eo.org.uk and send it to C4EOTeam@nfer.ac.uk, or complete the form on line. If you would like to speak to someone about your example before submitting, please contact Joyce Connor at NCB jconnor@ncb.org.uk, 020 7843 6102.

3c. REAL at the *Early Literacy Work with Families* conference

This conference, hosted by the University of Sheffield on 24 May 2011, drew over 150 participants from around the country. Professor Peter Hannon talked about the history of early literacy, and the research and theory underpinning REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy); Professor Jackie Marsh presented on the changing nature of literacy and the impact of digital technology. A series of well-received, practical workshops and exhibitions showcased the excellent work of teachers and practitioners in Sheffield and Oldham currently working with the Early Childhood Unit and the University on *Making It REAL*, a Lottery-funded project that engages children and families through home visits and literacy events. Information on the *Making it REAL* project is available [on the PEAL website](#).

Professor Cathy Nutbrown launched the [REALonline](#) web-site and the new Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project. This will explore the key strengths of the REAL and ORIM (Opportunities, Recognition, Interaction, Model) framework through work with a team of practitioners in a range of early childhood settings nationally. The website will provide free resources and disseminate the REAL approach, material, and findings from the research project. REAL material, presentations from the conference, and details of the new research will be available at: www.real-online.group.shef.ac.uk

4. Training

4a. Growing Together Group: More than a 'stay and play'

23 and 24 June 2011, 9.30am to 4pm, Pen Green Research Base, Corby
'Growing Together' groups facilitate an approach to engage parents and children under three. One of the aims of the group is to encourage reflective parenting through reflecting on video material. This programme involves 2 days training at Pen Green, an opportunity to work with one family on a child study back in your setting, and returning to Pen Green for a third day's training after three months. **Cost:** £675 per person. **Contact:** Nicky Millard on 01536 443435 or nmillard@northamptonshire.gov.uk

4b. P for Partnership: supporting practitioners to work effectively with parents

28 June 2011, Early Education, London

Julie Briant details the lessons learnt from the Early Education year-long P for Partnership project in the London Borough of Lambeth. The project supported practitioners to effectively engage and support parents with the early childhood learning of their children. This course will focus on the importance of supporting practitioner leadership and skill development to work with parents. **Cost:** From £120. **Contact:** 020 7539 5400, Jessica@early-education.org.uk

4c. Well-being from Birth

1 July, London

This is an extra date for this essential introductory course due to popular demand. The training explores strategies to support life-long well-being and resilience, by transforming the situations and experiences of babies and young children in their everyday lives. **Contact:** training@ncb.org.uk

4d. Children and young people's participation in evaluating services

A new national programme 'Action Impact' is being launched to enable organisations to measure and improve their impact and involve everyone they work with in the process. The programme will be delivered by Carnegie Leaders in Learning Partnership and Participation Works, and has been designed to enable attendees to learn skills that will support their organisation to define and evaluate impact, whilst providing a foundation of concepts and theory needed to ensure participation. **Further details:** www.participationworks.org.uk/events-training/products/action-impact

4e. Play in the early years

Play England has developed a one day training course designed to give participants the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver physically active play in the early years. Active play in early years training has been piloted with early years practitioners, centre managements, parents and carers in Sure Start Children's Centres across the North East region. It is now being made available for anyone who works with or cares for children in the early years and support staff delivering early years services. **Further details:** <http://www.playengland.org.uk/our-work/active-play-in-early-years>

4f. More is Caught Than Taught

A programme built around the wisdom of the African proverb: It takes a whole village to raise a child. MCTT is based on the concept that, whilst taught lessons are important, the most powerful way children learn is through emulating the adults around them. The programme is based on the belief that children should grow to be leaders believing that they can make a difference in the world and feeling that they have the resources (physical, emotional, intellectual, psychological and spiritual) to create a better world. During MCTT, parents and practitioners develop an acute awareness of the things that are shaping children's lives. **Further details:** www.inspire.eu.com/moreIsCaughtThenTaught.html

5. Events and conferences

5a. National Childminding Week

4 - 11 June 2011

This year's theme is "aspiration," reflecting the fact that registered childminders and nannies are uniquely placed to nurture interests and build on the future aspirations of the children in their care. **Further details:** www.ncma.org.uk/news_and_events/national_childminding_week_11.aspx

5b. Pen Green Improving Practice Symposium - using knowledge of child development to improve outcomes for children

9 June 2011, 10am to 4pm, Pen Green Research Base, Corby

This one-day event has been designed to stimulate reflection and learning in adults working with young children and families. It will explore key areas of practice and theory, and provide a deeper knowledge and understanding of schemas and the impacts of parental involvement in children's learning.

Speakers will include: Professor Vasu Reddy, Dr Cath Arnold, Penny Lawrence, and Pen Green Senior Practitioners. **Cost:** £180 + VAT. **Contact:** Becky Elliott on 01536 443435 or relliott@northamptonshire.gov.uk

5c. The Essential Nursery Conference - National Day Nurseries Association

Thursday 9 and Friday 10 June 2011, Leeds

This year's essential nursery conference brings together a range of speakers armed with the latest childcare knowledge to keep you up-to-date with the early years sector. Join the nursery experts on the quest for knowledge and hear from those at the frontline of the childcare sector on topics including: risky play, effective attachment, the future for your nursery business, early intervention, high-quality leadership. Speakers include Sarah Teather, MP.

www.ndna.org.uk/events-campaigns/conferences/annual-conf-2011

5d. Pen Green Centre Tour and Research in Practice event

11 June 2011, 10am to 4pm, Pen Green Research Base, Corby

The Pen Green Centre is recognised nationally and internationally for its work with parents, children and families. This one-day event will introduce delegates to the centre, the way it works, and the theory underpinning practice. This Research in Practice event will be an opportunity for workers from a range of early childhood settings to come together and share ideas and experiences, discuss current practice issues, and learn from one another. **Cost:** £180 + VAT. **Contact:** Becky Elliott on 01536 443435 or

relliott@northamptonshire.gov.uk

5e. Effective parenting and child well-being: understanding the evidence base

Tuesday 21 June 2011. Institute of Education, London

Parents have an enormous influence over the development, education, health and well being of their children. Rapid social, demographic and economic changes over recent decades mean that the demands and pressures on parents are changing. This conference provides an opportunity for researchers, practitioners and those influencing policy to come together to share information about the latest research evidence and discuss implications for policy. **Cost:** £50/£120/£130 **Further details:**

www.ioe.ac.uk/study/departments/cls/50443.html

5f. Institute of Education Research Seminar: ICT and pedagogy in the Early Years - Dr Christine Stephen, University of Stirling

Tuesday 5 July, 17.30 - 19.00, London

The Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education is staging monthly research seminars throughout 2011. These are **free** and open to everyone. Booking is not necessary. **Further details:**

www.ioe.ac.uk/study/departments/ecpe/448.html

5g. Early Childhood Forum Seminar: integrating health, education and social care within early years services

8 July 2011, 1-4pm, London

Speakers will include Dr. Helen Bedford from the UCL Institute of Child Health, and Maggie Fisher from CPHVA/Netmums. Further details will be available soon: please visit www.ncb.org.uk/ecf

5h. Breaking the cycle: Aspirations, literacy and the home

11 October 2011, 9.15am-5pm, London

Poor literacy skills are part of a vicious cycle of factors that lead to disadvantage and poverty of opportunity. Parental involvement is the most important determinant of literacy educational attainment. Through better targeted support for individuals, families and communities we can reduce the burden on public services, and help people to help themselves. Frank Field MP will give the keynote speech at this **National Literacy Trust** conference, reviewing government progress on child poverty and social mobility. **Costs:** £230 for the first delegate with £210 for each additional person from the same organisation or service. **Further information:** www.literacytrust.org.uk/communities/conference

We want your feedback and ideas! Please direct any comments or queries to [Daisy Hirst](mailto:daisy.hirst@ncb.org.uk), Administrator.

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