

Children's Trust Partnership Monday 17th January 2011

Sue Earnshaw – (DPSA) District Parent Support Adviser, Lancaster District; Lancaster Children's Trust Partnership Strand sub-group Chair for Parenting & Early Intervention.

- **Overview of priorities for sub group you lead -**
 - The priorities are taken from the Lancaster District Parenting Strategy (reviewed Dec '09)
 - The aim is to produce a multi – agency action plan representative of services/agencies supporting children and families across the Lancaster District.
 - The 5 priorities are:
 - Support parental involvement via meaningful consultation in developing effective parenting support and children's services'
 - Improve the information and communication about available parenting support for parents and providers
 - Develop a district parenting support structure through a more joined up planning process and integrated team working
 - Establish commissioning arrangements so that services are outcomes focused and of high quality
 - Improve access to services by providing environments that are non threatening, accessible and friendly.

**The resulting Action (July 2010) reflects the targets/objectives of Agencies & Services across Lancaster District, who participated in the sub-group.

- **Successes and Achievements -**
 - The launch & publication of Lancaster District Parenting Strategy '08 which was recognised as an example of 'good practice' in the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership 'Sustainable Communities Strategy'
 - The development of a Multi Agency Parenting and Early Intervention Action Plan (July 2010)
 - The chairing of, development and continuation of the Lancaster District Parenting Forum, which meets monthly; has approx 130 -140 members on the e-mail distribution list; members are representative of all sectors of the children & young people's workforce, including schools; The forum provides: discussion/networking/local/regional & national topics of information sharing/ updates on new strategies and initiatives/consultation opportunities/training opportunities/sharing of resources/information for parents/carers/co-ordination on behalf of LCC re.training opportunities; reporting (to the Prevention Fund quarterly) and

informing the Children's Trust Partnership on behalf of the Forum ie: forwarding reports etc. DPSA has been Chair of Strand sub-group; encouraging and sustaining membership of both the Forum & the sub-group. Extensive partnership working with CAF and Extended Services Officers.

- Development of the Parenting website www.parenting.signposts.org.uk The minutes of monthly forum meetings & relevant information are available for parents/carers and practitioners to access and download. There is now a 'direct link' for parents/carers to access information. Continuously being developed and updated.
 - Distribution of fridge magnets to 3000 parents/carers & practitioners across the district informing them of the website.
 - DPSA has achieved a 'Train the Trainer' qualification in the Solihull approach; My Mum & Dad Argue A lot and recently achieved 'Work with Parents' City & Guilds Level 3 Award.
 - Forum has produced a 'Gaps Analysis' of services across the district. (Dec 2010)
 - Monitoring of 'Working together' as a result of being a member of the Forum – provides evidence of impact for practitioners.
 - DPSA was invited to join the recent Lancashire Work with Parents Workforce Development Strategy sub-groups
 - DPSA has involved, via the Forum, local parents/carers in a number of consultations for LCC.
 - Signposts (MARC) Ltd (host agency) conducted a County wide Parenting Programme audit which has recently been recognised in the 2011 Lancashire Work with Parents Workforce Development Strategy
 - DPSA has attended relevant meetings/steering groups, conferences and events and 'fed back' to the forum.
 - Link to Voluntary Sector Agencies and Services; is: information sharing and updates on agendas and government initiatives has been of particular importance
 - Lancaster DPSA has formed excellent working links with other DPSA's across the County, particularly in Wyre and Fylde.
- **Barriers & Challenges -**
 - Familiarisation of the Lancaster district and the wide range of services/practitioners who deliver to children, young people and families, sometimes in particularly rural areas.
 - Engaging parents/carers in the forum – extremely difficult task – lots of barriers ie: transport; childcare. DPSA had to become creative and innovative and went out and meet them instead! Now the forum has access to a number of Parenting groups who have agreed to be involved in future consultations.
 - DPSA has a personal challenge to keep the monthly Parenting Forum interesting – guest speakers; discussion topics; relevant updates

- Challenge to keep the parenting website updated – the website needs to be ‘in the moment’ to be of any use to practitioners & parents. Can quickly go out of date.

- **Funds/Budgets –**
 - Original funding for developing the Parenting Strategy (2008) - ‘Second Homes Funding’ (LSP) followed by Extended Services Funding for x 1yr DPSA post (09/10); followed by continuation funding, Prevention Funding, for DPSA to 31st March 2011.
 - Signposts have recently submitted a bid for Prevention & Early Intervention funding which includes a bid for the continuation of the present DPSA post. This bid aligns the present DPSA post with the Lancashire Prevention & Early Intervention Strategy;
 - The new post would provide continuity, consistency and a co-ordinated approach to service delivery for the children & family workforce of Lancaster District;
 - It would support the District Early Intervention Development Officer;
 - The parenting forum will continue to provide a unique network for the dissemination of information and feedback of local trends; it will provide an access point for service delivery in relation to the requirements of the Early Intervention Resource Panel and it will continue to support the embedding of the Common Assessment Framework into future service planning.