

Schools Family Support Service

Welcome to our first Schools Family Support Service Newsletter of 2015.



We hope you all enjoyed your Half Term break. We've really enjoyed meeting and getting to know all the families who have accessed our Schools Family Support Service over the last year. We also look forward to welcoming and supporting new families and sharing our enjoyable groups, resources and useful service in the future.

In order to provide the most cost effective service for families and our funders, we continually appraise our service. Apart from the statistical information that is gathered we measure our impact on seeing the improvements parents are willing to make to give their children and themselves a better life.

Staff reflective supervision sessions are a regular part of the teams operations. The sessions are to support, develop and ultimately evaluate the performance of the team through a process of inquiry; this encourages our own understanding and articulation of the rational of our own practice. The SFSS is a dynamic profession, requiring us to stay current in the field, whether it is applying the latest research, understanding the implications of a new regulation or acquiring additional training to meet the needs of an ever changing population. The cornerstone of our continued professional development is access a wide and varied range of training and developmental opportunities to increase our skills, knowledge and experience ensuring we maintain excellence within our everyday working practices. Staff receive regular supervision, annual PRD's and regular KIT meetings.

Did you know that since the service had its very first referral on the 2nd May 2014 we have received in total 499 referrals?, which equates to approximately 1100 children who have benefitted from our service. In April our service was subject to an evaluation that included seeking the views of school, staff, parents, children and the Schools Family Support Service staff team. This included an afternoon at Stoneycroft Children's Centre where parents could provide their feedback in person to the Families Team.

We have also spent time making excellent links with other services including: the NSPCC, the Citizen's fund, the ADHD foundation and Barnardos, as well as strengthening our working relationships with Shelter and Fusion to name but a few.



School Family Support Services, along with The Reader Organisation, are offering parents the opportunity to take part in Shared Reading Groups across the city. To start off we will be running a number 4 weekly taster courses lasting 1.5 hours. These sessions will be held in various locations including some schools. There is no obligation or pressure on parents to do anything other than to relax and listen to a short story being read aloud. However it is hoped that parents may build in confidence in order increase their participation in the sessions. At the end of the four weeks all participants will receive a 'Pamper Pack' a treat for themselves. Following this we will be rolling out a 3 month course for parents who have attending the taster course.



Our Emotions Day was designed and delivered as an interactive session in a small group environment. This was aimed to support children with additional needs or those who display challenging behaviours, to understand the differences between varied emotions and the positive ways in which they can express themselves. Activities included 'emotions bingo' and 'design your own magical character/super-hero', alongside an icebreaker game, fun quiz round and feedback opportunity.

The Self-Esteem Building Programme commenced on the 11th of May and has had a lot of interest from parents. The programme runs for 6 weeks and address's issues such as confidence building, re-addressing and changing negative thought patterns, promoting physical and emotional health and a general improvement to outlook on life. It is our hope that this programme will become embedded within our service delivery going forward. The course materials / scheme of work were produced by members of our Schools Family Support Team. The materials used on this programme are available for the entire team to access and adapt to one-to-one sessions that the team may undertake with family members.

DROP IN SERVICE. We have now commenced a drop in service for teenagers who are currently or have previously used the service in the past. These sessions are being held in a number of secondary schools throughout the city. Due to the success of this service there are plans to offer this service to more schools. The sessions are two hours long every fortnight. Teenagers are given the opportunity to keep in touch with their Family Support Worker and to discuss any burning issues they may have.

My Teenager and Me. Schools Family Support Service are pleased to announce that we are facilitating a 'My Teenager and Me' Parenting Course starting in June 2015. We have identified that there is little support offered for parents of teenagers. The course will support parents to build relationships with their children, helping them to develop a better understanding of what it's like to be a teenager. Parents will learn better listening and communication skills to help stay connected to their teenager. Parents will be given support with applying effective rules and boundaries at home. We will also advise parents on techniques for managing their own stress. There has been lots of interest in this course. The course aims to equip parents to better understand their teenagers, build positive relationships, relieving stress and improving the quality of relationships within the family.

Activity Days. Children from across the city have taken part in a variety of activities. Some sessions have taken place within our children Centres where they spent their time painting pictures & designing cards. One group of children completed a human size portrait of a family support worker. They described the things they like about having a support worker and the qualities their support worker should have. They also put their talents to good use by decorating the sign for the Schools Family Support Celebration Day.

Our Family support workers have also been involved in charity work.

We've grown moustaches in Movember for testicular cancer. We've run a half marathon, for mental health charities. Held a coffee morning for Macmillan cancer research and even completed the Three Peaks Challenge to raise money to go to Uganda giving Sports and Sexual education to children.

The summer holidays are drawing near and we have some new groups and activity sessions, there will be a 6 weekly Young Men's Group which will cover a variety of topics and the plan is for it to become accredited. A Calendar listing all family, group and individual events/activities will be forwarded to all schools before term finishes for the summer.