

Good Practice in Family Learning: Family Learning Benefits Spelthorne Parents

Spelthorne College recognised that family learning needs in the Spelthorne Borough area were not being met. In 2001 they set out to identify what the local community required and aimed to match that with the available resource they had within the college. The objectives of the project were to find gaps where learning is needed in the community and match that requirement with available teaching resources and to provide progression routes for those who may want to take part in learning or enter the job market.

They applied for funding from Spelthorne Community Learning Partnership in order to locate local schools that felt that their 'micro communities' could benefit from a family learning programme. Three local primary schools

responded immediately, and informed the College of particular clients groups that would benefit from learning. The college Adult and Community Programme Manager described it as "pushing on an open door". The secret seems to be to listen to what is requested, and not try to inflict off the shelf provision, that has worked with others or in different locations. Delivery had to be flexible in every sense.

Staff at one school felt that involvement of a group of dads was the priority, and knew that ICT would prove a powerful incentive. After-school work on computers proved the answer, but the original idea of producing a cook book to raise funds was voted out, in favour of a school newsletter. Staff involved soon

realised that a shift in emphasis was needed towards literacy. The findings clearly show that being able to respond quickly to changing needs reaps benefits. This project is still running nearly two years later. Another school thought that work done with a whole class in the form of a story-sack would entice involvement of the parents in a round-about sort of way. This proved to be the case and Parenting and ICT is to follow soon.

The programme now includes thirteen schools but more importantly a route for progression into further learning or work is being provided for the parents. Five members of college staff have been trained as InTouch advisers and can offer information, advice and guidance to parents.

Findings:

1. Listening to local community learning needs and creating a project to fit the different client groups works.
2. Constant flexibility in content, style, location, timing and even shifts in emphasis of content maintain attendance and deliver results.
3. The community benefits if adjustments are sometimes made to cater for the individual within a larger group.
4. By working with local brokers, who act as 'learning champions', people not involved with learning become learners.
5. Once confidence has been improved and trust developed, hard-to-reach people embark on learning and progress to accepting information, advice and guidance.

For more information on this project contact: Elaine Williams, Adult and Community Learning Programme Manager at Spelthorne College ew@spelthorne.ac.uk

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

Family Learning Weekend will grow from a weekend to a week in October 2004. This will allow greater diversity in programme offerings and participation from a wider range of venues. The dates will be Monday 11th - Sunday 17th October 2004.

As part of Family Learning Weekend, Friday 10th October 2003 is designated 'Take your Family to School Day'. For ideas on how your school or college can take part. For more details visit:

<http://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/campaigns/familylearning/flweekend/tyftsday/fyftsday.htm>

Upcoming Community Learning Partnership Meetings

If you have a story for Info@ send it to
info@surreyllp.org.uk
or contact Amanda Dickens on:
020 8390 661

September

22nd September Spelthorne CLP
24th September Banstead, Epsom & Ewell CLP
29th September Guildford CLP

October

1st October Woking CLP
8th October East Surrey CLP
14th October Waverley CLP
17th October Elmbridge CLP
21st October Surrey Heath CLP

info @surreyllp.org.uk



The Newsletter from the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership - September/October 2003

The Family Learning Weekend Issue - 10th - 12th October 2003

Families are our first and most important teachers!

The family and home are fertile grounds for stimulating a desire for lifelong learning. According to research commissioned by the Campaign for Learning, the home is the most important learning environment for UK adults. (MORI 1998.) And over seventy percent of 12 to 16 year olds rate their parents as their strongest learning influence. (MORI 2002).

"The goal of Family Learning Weekend is to make learning an everyday part of family life," adds Kevin, "engaging in the weekend's activities prompts families to positively question and re-evaluate their attitudes towards learning and families are encouraged to continue the learning they started together on the weekend."

Stimulating community-based learning

Family Learning Weekend aims to bring to local communities new approaches and new styles of learning. It widens the scope of venues in which learning takes place helping to break down any negative associations with formal education whilst stimulating new provision of family learning opportunities.

"Family learning can strengthen local cohesion, identity and encourage multi-cultural awareness," says Kevin. "Many organisations involved in the events form local partnerships that are very successful and are continued long after the event itself has ended. Many also develop a programme of family learning events throughout the year."

In Surrey, the Community Learning Partnerships have been working with the borough councils, voluntary and learning organisations to develop activities for this year's Family Learning Weekend.

Family Learning Weekend is here! This national campaign raises awareness of the importance and scope of family learning to potential participants, practitioners and key influencers. It aims to strengthen communities and to create more opportunities for the family to learn together by encouraging organisations to offer a special family learning event on the second weekend in October each year. The dates for 2003 are 10th-12th October.

The Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership through it's Community Learning Partnerships is committed to promoting and developing family learning in the county. Says Kevin Delf, Chief Executive of The Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership: "Family Learning Weekend brings the excitement of learning and discovery back to communities. Mums, dads, grandparents, children and friends participate in locally organised events throughout Surrey with schools, libraries, museums, and shopping centres opening their doors and inviting families to discover how to build story sacks, speak another language, or try flower arranging."

Family Learning Weekend in Surrey

There are many events taking place across the county to celebrate Family Learning Weekend. As we go to press the Surrey Heath and Spelthorne areas are able to provide their details.

Family Learning: A Vision for Surrey

The Surrey County Council Children and Young People Leadership Team will launch and distribute a Family Learning Strategy for Surrey at the end of September or beginning of October 2003 after much consultation.

Here is a short preview of the vision for Family Learning in Surrey:

Families are an important context for learning for many people. Family life forms the foundation for learning; the attitudes of the wider family to learning and achievement have the most profound effect on a child's interest in learning and their involvement in learning throughout life. "Family learning" describes a whole range of activities and programmes which involve parents, children and the wider family in learning, often with children and adults learning together. In some cases,

children can be the teachers, for example, sharing their expertise in modern technology with older family members.

Parenting, emotional literacy and understanding family life are important elements of family learning. Family learning includes family literacy, family numeracy, family IT, arts-based activities such as music or craft, and understanding what goes on in school. Our strategy will promote family learning activities using a range of activities in venues such as

community centres, museums, outdoor centres, libraries or arts centres.

Many agencies and organisations are involved in family learning - schools, colleges, voluntary groups, libraries, museums, faith groups, sports clubs and many others. In Surrey, schools, Adult and Community Learning, many Colleges and the Community Learning Partnerships have successfully provided family learning programmes in the last few years.

Our vision for family learning is

- To achieve a comprehensive and inclusive approach to family learning which promotes learning within the family
- To raise achievement for adults and children
- By improving the lives and life chances of families, to enrich the community

If you would like to receive a copy of the Family Learning Strategy for Surrey when it is launched email Linda Piercy, Head of Adult and Community Learning for Surrey County Council at l.piercy@surreycc.gov.uk

Family Learning Day in Surrey Heath by Pauline Hedges, Head of Policy & Regional Manager - Spelthorne & Surrey Heath, Surrey Chambers of Commerce

We have an empty shop unit in the Main Square in Camberley for the Sunday 12th October. Mr Rotavator will be in attendance and we will also have face painting and simple flower arranging, story telling, story sacks, In Touch, Adult Learning etc. We will be issuing raffle tickets for a FREE raffle, prizes to be donated by local shops. This will add to the fun and also enable us to keep some record of how many people took part and also some form of telephone follow up, should we want to. Helium balloons will be handed out to all passers-by to promote the activities.

We have booked a pitch inside Main Square for 2004, so will have much more space next year for many more activities! For more information contact Pauline Hedges on 01784 444204.

Family Learning Day in Spelthorne by Kate Shore, Community Learning Advisor, Spelthorne Community Learning Partnership.

Final Arrangements are well underway for this year's Family Learning Event taking place on Saturday 11th October 2003 in Staines. Whether you come along to participate in the various activities, listen to the African band music, learn how to face-paint and have your face painted, enter our colouring competition or just take in the whole ambience, this is something not to be missed. With free refreshments and a place to rest tired feet, you can step aside from the shops and relax in a comfortable community-led event with something for all the family. The event will take place at Staines Community Centre, (next to Debenhams and opposite the Library) although activities will also be taking place in and around the High Street. This year the Jungle theme will also incorporate the 'Adopt a Cow' charity and children will have the opportunity to participate in various fun activities connected to this. Furthermore, the Family Learning Event is fortunate enough to be welcoming the ever-popular Mr Rotavator once again. The event runs from 10 am until 4pm with something for all the family. Come and try out new skills and activities! We look forward to seeing you there.

For more information contact Kate Shore, Community Learning Adviser on 01784 444222.

Adult Learners Honoured

Ten individual adult learners and four groups were presented with Adult Basic Skills Learner Awards at a special ceremony at the Burford Bridge Hotel in Dorking on Thursday 15th May 2003 sponsored by The Surrey Care Trust and Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership.

The event was hosted by Nicola Scott, Acting Director, Adults and Employer Relations, Surrey Learning and Skills Council. She said: "Our winning individual learners are people who have returned to learning through very different routes, at different stages in their lives and for very different reasons, but it is clear to me from reading their stories, that they have three things in common that set them apart: the courage to take that first step back to learning, the determination to succeed, and the strength of character that has made them role models for their colleagues, friends and fellow students."

Nicola paid tribute to the dedication and skills of basic skills tutors throughout Surrey. "Without the tutors there would be no learning. It is as simple as that," she said and continued by thanking them for their vital work.

The guest of honour at the ceremony was Tony Hart on behalf of The Surrey Care Trust. Tony is one of the UK's best-known children's entertainers, presenting Take Hart and Hart Beat for many years. Tony said, "I have been involved with the Surrey Care Trust for some time and I was delighted when they asked me to present these awards on behalf of Surrey Learning and Skills Council, as part of the celebrations of Adult Learners' Week. I am aware of the hard work you have all put in to gain these awards and congratulate you all on your marvellous achievements."

Several of the awards were sponsored by the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, a unique organisation that exists to



encourage more people back into learning. Kevin Delf, Chief Executive, was at the ceremony to lend his support. "We are very pleased to be sponsoring three prizes at this prestigious event," said Kevin. "To those of you who have been studying hard and working to improve yourselves, a very well done! Many of you have said that you are gaining in confidence. I would just like to say that the commitment and effort you are putting in to improve your skills is impressive. I am also very pleased that this event pays tribute to tutors, they are such special people, as many learners point out."

The Learning and Skills Council promoted this event as part of the Skills for Life campaign which is a national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills and which is now into its third year.

If you would like more information on courses in Surrey contact Intouch with Learning at Work on 0800 0856872 or visit www.intouchsurrey.org.uk. If you would like more information on becoming a Basic Skills Tutor call 01932 797861.

The winners of the Surrey Adult Learners' Awards 2003:

Margaret Ann Burden from Westfield in Woking

Nominated by: Diana Pearce, Guildford College of Further and Higher Education
Awarded: Individual Learning for Work Award

Maridel Murphy from North Holmwood, Dorking

Nominated by: Marcia Stone, East Surrey College
Awarded: Individual Literacy Award

Soodia White from Cranleigh

Nominated by: Joy Martin, Guildford College of Further and Higher Education
Awarded: Individual English for Speakers of Other Languages Award

Hannah Scott from Harmanswater in Bracknell

Nominated by: Linda Blyth, Adult Literacy Centre, Camberley
Awarded: Individual Young Person Learning for Work Award

Stuart Mitchell from Camberley

Nominated by: Diana Bidmead, Brooklands College
Awarded: Individual Entry Level One Award

Maria Cristina Taylor from Frimley

Nominated by: Judith Barnett, Camberley Adult Learning Centre
Awarded: Individual Literacy and Numeracy Award

Hilda Brazil from Effingham

Nominated by: Hermione Delamare, Brooklands College
Awarded: Community Learner Award

Mark Harrison from Stanwell

Nominated by: Jane Phillips, Flexible Learning Centre, Staines
Awarded: The Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership Lifelong Learning Award

Karen Henfrey from Ashford

Nominated by: Elaine Williams, Spelthorne College
Awarded: Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership Basic Skills Tutor Award

Claire Lynch from Isleworth

Nominated by: Elaine Williams, Spelthorne College
Awarded: Surrey Learning and Skills Council Basic Skills Tutor Award

Group Winners

Wendy's Thursday Group, Brooklands College

Nominated by: Wendy Woodley, Flexible Learning Centre, Staines
Awarded: Basic Skills Group Award

Remploy Contract Services, Leatherhead

Nominated by: Madeleine Glynn, NESCOL
Awarded: Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership Group Award

Guildford Borough Council Parks & Countryside

Nominated by: Joy Martin, Guildford College of Further and Higher Education
Awarded: Group Literacy Award

London Property Maintenance, Peacocks Centre, Woking

Nominated by: Teresa Law, Woking College
Awarded: English for Speakers of Other Languages Group Award