



PARENT CHAMPIONS

Newsletter Issue 9 - February 2016

Spotlight on ...Bradford

Our Parent Champions programme is run in partnership with Bradford local authority and the local charity Artworks Creative Communities in children's centres in targeted wards. The programme aims to reach families who are out of work or on low incomes, as well as increase uptake of early education, by sharing messages on the benefits of early education and other local services.

The Parent Champions refer families to nurseries, children's centres, family information services and community centres. They have also feed back information on community needs. This includes advice to boards of children's centres about activities for disabled children and support for job seekers.



Bradford Parent Champions

Recent survey data highlights the significant achievement of the programme. In just three months 38 Parent Champions engaged with 563 families. As a result 19 families have taken up free early education places and 31 families have taken up other local health and education services.

The programme also makes a big difference to the Parent Champions themselves. Volunteers have commented; *'it has inspired me to move forward'* and *'it has helped me to stay independent'*. The coordinator has also reported that *'it has had a really deep impact on some people.... It has shored up people's confidence as well as giving them new experience to put on their CV. Parent Champions are applying for jobs and college courses.'*

Recent data from the National Network

- There are 48 active and developing Parent Champions programmes in the National Network, with a further 11 that are keen and waiting to join.
- A total of 3,522 families were engaged, either one-to-one or in groups.
- There are 178 active Parent Champion volunteers.
- Our programmes continue to increase the uptake of free early education. Over the last six months 432 more families have taken up these places.
- Parent Champions programmes are now being delivered in partnership with children's centres, schools, housing associations, local charities and local authority information, education and public health services.

A HUGE 'thank you!' to you for sending us the data on your programme. It is essential for our reporting to the Department for Education and also helps us develop our support to you and identify ways of increasing the impact for children and families.

Upcoming events

Workshop on monitoring and demonstrating the impact of your Parent Champions programme

This month we ran a practical workshop discussing how to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of Parent Champions in your local community. This workshop was so successful that it will be repeated twice more; once in **Trafford on 11 April 2016** and again in **London on 12 April 2016**. If you would like attend a workshop in April, please book your place online via our website under News & Events.

Parent Champions Conference - 10 March 2016

Places at our third Parent Champions Conference on Thursday 10 March are filling up fast. The day will include presentations from the Department for Education, our Head of Research on national programme data and Contact a Family about their SEND pilot. The winners of this year's Parent Champions Awards will be announced and presented by Sam Gyimah MP, Minister of Childcare and Education. The conference is held at BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, 10.45am-3.30pm. For more details and to register please visit our website under News & Events. We look forward to seeing you there!



Programme update

Safeguarding

In light of the growing and changing role of our Parent Champions, we have taken the decision that ALL Parent Champions must be DBS checked. We know that most programmes already have this in place, but please do action this if you have not already. DBS checks are free for volunteers.

Farewell Deborah!

In January we said a sad farewell to Deborah Brodie who has managed the Parent Champions programme for some years. Thank you to all of you who sent in words of appreciation, wishing her all the best in the future. Using your quotes we wrote a special edition of *Champion Chatter*, which we framed and gave to her on her last day.

Current programmes team

Following Deborah's departure, Emma is now managing the Parent Champions programme and Lizzie is now Programmes Officer. We recruited Gayle Baker as the new Programmes Administrator. It's great to be working with you and we look forward to seeing you at one of the forthcoming Parent Champions events.

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