

Early Years and Childcare South Hams District Newsletter

Autumn 2007



Welcome to the Autumn Term 2007.

I hope you have all had a relaxing break over the holidays, and are back and ready for a full term ahead. Hopefully you did find some sun after many of the school sports days and summer fairs were all washed out.

The summer was busy with a Play Day in Dartmouth and Network Meeting at Daisy Play Centre. The network meeting was probably the busiest one to date, with over 57 people attending, so thank you all for coming. The talk was from Dave Roddy from Devon Fire and Rescue Service.

He talked about fire safety in the home.



Whilst this was a very informative talk many of you complained there was not enough information about the fire officer's job in the pre-school settings. I have requested that we have another fire safety talk in the New Year and I have specifically asked the theme to be around the childcare settings. Looking at issues such as fire extinguishers, fire policies and risk assessments and escape routes, fire drills etc. I hope you can all come again; I am looking to hold the New Year network in the Ivybridge area, so if you are happy to hire your space to me for a network meeting I would be grateful.

The other half of the meeting was an introduction to planning for play aimed specifically at the out of school settings. This went very well but more time was needed. Again I will be repeating this in the New Year, but anyone who would like to attend the planning network meeting is welcome to come to Teignbridge's network on the 16th October from 7pm to 9pm at the Methodist Church, The Avenue, Newton Abbot. The theme will be 'Planning for Play' – particularly of interest to those running out of school provision. Booking is essential as there will be refreshments provided – to book a place, please ring 01392 384926 or email Jackie Colby (as above). Or if you would like further information about this session – please give us a call.

The next South Hams network meeting will be **October 10th 6.30 – 9.30**. The theme will be a talk by Nic Dunn about the Transformation Fund, and the remainder of the meeting will be a **Christmas Craft network**; a hands on "chance to play"! These are proving very popular meetings, please bring along Christmassy ideas to share with others. Hopefully this will be early enough to help you with planning activities for the Christmas season.

Dartmouth Play day

To celebrate National Childcare Week and the Dartmouth Children Centre we had a fun day event in Dartmouth in June. The event was held in the Avenue Gardens, and surprisingly the weather was kind. There were displays of songs and music from Dartmouth Primary School, Blackawton Primary School and Dartmouth Pre-school. Magical Entertainer "Alan Dark" entertained everyone and "Bizzie Lizzy" managed to get all the children dancing.



There was information about the new Barnados Children's Centre and careers in childcare. The family play bus invited

everyone to "play", and there were many other activities and side shows. Refreshments were served by Dartmouth pre-school who took £80 on the day in donations towards their funds. A big THANK YOU to everyone who helped and came along to play!

Tania Skinner District Coordinator EYCS South Hams; 01803 869372, tania.skinner@devon.gov.uk



Children's Centres South Hams

A lot has been happening with the Children's Centres this term.

Totnes Children's Centre - is doing well; the bookings in the nursery are up; and they now have a full complement of staff. The family support services are continuing in the Daisy site and the Mansion site houses the childcare.

Dartmouth and Kingsbridge - Dani de Beaumont has been employed by Barnardos as the centre manager for both centres and a project coordinator has been employed for each centre. Dartmouth currently has an office in the Townstall Community Hall and Kingsbridge has a temporary office in Tresillion. Both centres are due to have a new build that is still in the planning stage. It is hoped that the building work will commence in October and the completion date is Feb 2008; the full services for the Children's Centre are aiming to start in April 2008.

Ivybridge Children's Centre - is due to be developed from April 2008 – 2010, There is already a steering group in place and it is hoped that the main hub will be in the centre of Ivybridge with out reach satellites at Brixton and South Brent, and then services will be taken to all to rural areas, via the use of a Playbus. A full consultation process will begin in the Autumn. If you wish to become involved with the Ivybridge Children's Centre please let me know.

Out Of School Development Worker News

Hi All

Congratulations to all the Playworkers who made it through their Summer Holiday Clubs!!! It was really nice to get out and meet you all again – and to take the opportunity to get involved in some of your Activities as well! Thank you for making me so welcome during my visits.

Also, welcome back to all those Playworkers who had a break over the summer period – I hope that you all had a restful break, and are ready for the new term. I will be making visits to all the After School and Before School Settings over the coming months, so I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Sharon Gehringer, Out of School Development Worker

Email: sharon.gehringer@devon.gov.uk

...CONGRATULATIONS...

Congratulations go to Fun Days Out of School Club at Brixton and South Brent After School Club, who worked very hard to receive a 'Good' in their recent Ofsted Inspections. Well Done to both Teams!

Congratulations also go to the Staff and Committee of the Bidwell Brook Holiday Club, Bidwell Brook Special Needs School, and the Staff and Committee at The Den After School Club at Holbeton Primary. Both groups were successful in

their application for the Surestart Development Grant for New Settings. Both Settings worked to very tight deadlines to produce their applications, which were an outline of how they aim to be a High Quality and Inclusive Setting. Well Done!!!

...THANK YOU...

Many Thanks to all those who contributed to the Childcare Sufficiency Audit, by consulting with children in your settings to gain their views on the childcare that they receive or would like to receive. This information will be collated to form an insight into the thoughts of children across Devon, and included in the Childcare Sufficiency Report, which will be made available to you. We hope that you found the activities useful, and that you will continue to consult with children about your settings.

If you were not involved in the Audit, but would like ideas and information on consulting with children, please email me.

...UPCOMING DATES AND THEMES...

Dates to inspire activities and themes in your settings!

September

The Mayflower Set Sail - Sept 6th

Ramadan - Sept 13th to Oct 12th

Rosh Hashanah - Sunset Sept 13th - Nightfall Sept 15th

Mexican Independence Day - Sept 16th

Yom Kippur - Sept 22nd (Sundown)

Grandparent's Day - Sept 22nd

October

Sputnik 1 Launched - Oct 4th, 1957 (the first space vehicle)

United Nations Day - Oct 24th

Halloween - Oct 31st

November

All Saints Day - Nov 1st

Guy Fawkes Day /Fireworks Night - Nov 5th

Diwali - November 9th

Remembrance Sunday - Nov 11th

Mickey Mouse's Birthday - Nov 18th

Thanksgiving Day (USA) - Nov 22nd

Feast of Saint Andrew - Nov 30th

(Whilst every effort is taken to ensure these dates and events are correct, settings are advised to research them prior to planning activities as some dates change each year)

...GIVE US A GAME...

'Snatch the Keys'...

A Different Game to Try in Your Settings.....

You will Need ... A Coin, A Set of Keys and a Minimum of 10 Players (Two Equal Teams, both with a minimum of 4 players, a Game 'Leader' and a Game 'Ender').

Object of the Game ... To become the Team to get the Keys first! This game will enable children to explore competitive feelings, such as winning and losing (and Cheating!).

How to Play ...

- Players form two lines in front of and facing the 'game leader' (who holds the Coin). These will be the two teams.

- Players in each Team should stand side by side, with their backs to the opposing Team, holding hands with the person next to them. Everyone except the front player of each team should close their eyes. The end player should look at the keys.
- Place the Keys at an equal, accessible distance from the last player on each team. The 'game ender' will need to stand with the keys to observe fair play!!
- Explain that when the coin is flipped to Heads, the first player on each team must pass a gentle 'hand squeeze' to the person next to them, and this then travels down the team. When the last player is squeezed, they should 'snatch the keys'. The Team that grabs the keys first, scores a point.
- If a 'hand squeeze' is passed on tails, and keys are snatched, the team loses a point.
- After each 'snatch', players move up one – so everyone has the opportunity to start the 'hand squeeze', and to 'snatch the keys'.

Possible Adaptations for Inclusion ...

- Play standing or sitting on floor or chairs
- Tap hands or feet instead of squeezing hands
- Whisper instead of touching/holding hands
- Whispered trigger word instead of a coin
- Object can be changed to make the 'snatch' easier

Smoke Free England how is it going?

What do I do checklist

Employers, managers and those in charge of smokefree premises and vehicles will need to:

- display 'no smoking' signs in smokefree premises and vehicles
- take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers/ members and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smokefree
- remove any existing indoor smoking rooms
- ensure that no one smokes in smokefree premises or vehicles

You may also want to take these supportive measures:

- remove ashtrays from smokefree areas
- develop a smokefree policy in consultation with staff
- offer staff training to help them understand the new law and what their responsibilities are
- provide your staff and customers with support to quit smoking

The Government has produced an official guide which explains everything you need to know about the new law and what you will have to do to



comply with it. Additional guidance leaflets are also available for both businesses and individuals, along with supporting materials such as a 'step-by-step' wallplanner. These can be downloaded or ordered from this site. You can also sign-up to receive email updates about the new smokefree law in England. <http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk/what-do-i-do/business.html#enforcement>

At www.smokefreeengland.co.uk you can also download no smoking signs.

Help from Employers for Childcare Costs

Some employers offer some sort of help with childcare costs including childcare vouchers, subsidies to assist with costs and workplace childcare provision.

A few employers provide childcare subsidies or vouchers in addition to salary or wages. In the majority of cases employees undertake a salary sacrifice whereby an employee agrees to forgo part of their salary or wages in return for childcare vouchers or direct payment of their childcare costs. They are exempt from tax and national insurance to a value of £50 per week childcare costs, but only where the childcare used is registered or approved. For more information on childcare voucher schemes visit or call

www.hmrc.gov.uk/childcare - information from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

www.daycaretrust.org.uk – a national childcare charity

Childcare Voucher Companies

www.childcarevouchers.co.uk 0845 3304411

www.busybees.com 08000 430 860

www.sodexhopass.co.uk 01276 687094

www.faircare.co.uk/ 0870 777 0711

www.virtual-vouchers.com 08000 326777

This is not an exhaustive list of childcare voucher companies and there may be other companies offering childcare vouchers.

All change at the DfES

Three new departments were set up on 28 June 2007 by the Prime Minister. They replace the Department for Education & Skills (DfES) and the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI). The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is responsible for children's services. Families, schools, 14-19 education and the Respect Taskforce.

The other two new departments are the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR).

Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team - training dates

COURSE TITLE	DATES	TIME	LOCATION	VENUE
EYFS Briefings for managers of PVI's	18/09/2007	9.30 - 12.00	South	Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, Tavistock
EYFS Briefings for managers of PVI's	18/09/2007	1.00 -3.30	South	Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, Tavistock
Planning (Day 1)	11/09/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, Tavistock
Planning (Day 2)	05/10/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, Tavistock
Letters and sounds. Early Phonics	18/10/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Ivybridge Town Hall, Leonards Road, Ivybridge
The importance of movement in the Early Years	08/11/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Lavendar House Hotel, Knowle Hill, Ashburton
Early Writing	05/11/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Alexander Centre, 62 Plymouth Road, Tavistock
Code of Practice	01/11/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Ivybridge Town Hall, Leonards Road, Ivybridge
The Development of communication	29/11/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Ivybridge Town Hall, Leonards Road, Ivybridge
Early Number and problem solving	27/09/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Ivybridge Town Hall, Leonards Road, Ivybridge
Writing and implementing an inclusion policy	11/10/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Passage House Hotel, Kingsteignton
Promoting the needs of vulnerable children	20/09/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, Tavistock
Supporting positive behaviour (0-3 emphasis)	22/11/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Passage House Hotel, Kingsteignton
Gathering Evidence at Early years Action	31/10/2007	10.00 -3.00	South	Passage House Hotel, Kingsteignton

To book, call Dawn Meredith on Tel: 01392 385525 or email dawn.meredith@devon.gov.uk

Playing Out and About: new outdoor play training courses from Playwork Partnerships

Professional training courses for playworkers in enabling, facilitating and developing children's outdoor play funded through Children's Workforce Learning Network (CWLN). Further information about these endorsed playwork training courses is available from SkillsActive at www.playwork.co.uk

Two training courses have been developed

1. **Playing with the Elements**
2. **Playing on the Range.**

Playing with the Elements (Level 3 training course)

This training course will use the theme of the four natural elements - Earth, Air, Fire and Water – to allow those with existing playwork qualifications to develop greater knowledge and skills in environmental playwork. Training will include approaches for how to find, access and develop

sites for outdoor play, how to facilitate child-centred outdoor experiences and how to incorporate risktaking into children's play. Whilst the value of natural spaces for play will be explored through the residential tutor training at environmental centres in Wales, providing engaging outdoor play in limited outdoor settings will also be a key element of the course.

Playing on the Range (Entry-level + level 2 course)

This course will focus on providing training support for the growing number of playworkers involved in play ranger projects – open-access outdoor play provision in public parks and green spaces. The course will facilitate identification of national and local barriers to outdoor play provision and methods for bridging barriers. It is envisaged that the course will provide specialised training, skills development and support relevant to play ranger work roles, but also meet the need for introductory playwork training for those new to play who are starting play ranger jobs.

Autumn 07 Cluster Groups

These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to

- share good practice and contribute ideas
- network with colleagues
- view other settings.

'The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning.'

Over the next year we will be looking at ways to support personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy – both vital for children's development and future success. In the Autumn term we will share ideas on how to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves.

'Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.'

Early Years Cluster Group Meetings Autumn 2007

Cluster Group	Early Years Adviser	Date	Time	Venue
Dartmouth	Julie Adams	Wednesday 7th November	4.30pm - 6.30pm	Stoke Fleming Pre School
Ivybridge	Lynda Hanlon	Tuesday 6th November	7pm - 9pm	Millswood Nursery. (Please bring a torch as it is a very dark path to the entrance).
Kingsbridge	Teresa Frake	Wednesday 17th October	4pm - 6pm	Tresillian Early Years, Kingsbridge
Plymouth	Rachel Burris	Wednesday 7th November	1pm - 3pm	Bickleigh Down Primary School
South Dartmoor	Ailsa Trenerry	Wednesday 7th November	1pm - 3pm	Playcentre Playgroup, Buckfastleigh
Tavistock	Judy Topley	Monday 12th November	1pm - 3pm	Alexander Centre
Teign Valley	Brian Lee	Tuesday 6th November	1pm - 3pm	Christow Pre School
Teignmouth	Jo Austin	Tuesday 13th November	4pm - 6pm	Sure Start Office, Teignmouth Day Hospital
Totnes	Julie Adams	Tuesday 6th November	6.30pm - 8.30pm	Humpty Dumpty, Totnes

To book call Dawn Meredith on Tel: 01392 385525 or email dawn.meredith@devon.gov.uk

Playing on the Range Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been designed for playworkers, playleaders and managers of outdoor open access play projects for children. It aims to establish: a clear definition and scope of outdoor open access play provision; additional training needs that new or existing staff will need in delivering effective open access provision. Download questionnaire from their website www.playwork.co.uk

will be Lower Weston Community hall, Weston Lane Totnes. Cost just £40.00 per person. enquiries@totnestraining.co.uk Telephone 01803 866979 or www.totnestraining.co.uk

First Aid Training

The Paediatric first aid course suitable for childcarers and childminders including those who work in nurseries. The course contents include dealing with emergencies, Safety, Unconsciousness and causes of unconsciousness, Suffocation causes of Suffocation, Choking, Blood Loss, Burns, Fractures, minor and major illness, also included Older Children, Infant & Child Resuscitation. Course dates left for 2007 is 1st and 15th September inclusive and 24th November and 8th December inclusive. The venue

Every Child Matters Training

These are introduction awareness raising sessions about the Every Child Matters agenda and what it means for you in your settings. The training is a must for everyone that works with children.

South Hams - The Daisy Centre, Totnes Children Centre, Thursday 18th October 6.30 - 9 pm

Teignbridge - Old Forde House, Teignbridge District Council, Newton Abbot, Tuesday 6th November, 9.30 am - 12 noon

West Devon - Tuesday 4th December 4 - 6.30 pm - venue to be arranged.

To book a place Contact Sarah Davies on 01392 383860.

Human Flu Pandemic

No-one knows exactly when a pandemic will occur. Once a pandemic arrives, it is likely to spread throughout the country in a matter of weeks. It may come in two or more waves several months apart. Each wave may last two to three months across the UK as a whole.

Guidance has been issued on planning for a human flu pandemic, this has been followed by guidance with infection control guidance to help reduce the spread of infection in a pandemic. To view the guidance - much of which would also be useful in dealing with more common viral infections - please visit: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/humanflupandemic>

There are four sets of guidance: for day schools and early years and childcare settings; for residential settings; for childminders; for Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE).

If after reading the guidance you have any further queries, please e-mail flu.planning@dfes.gsi.gov.uk or call the DfES public enquiry helpline on 0870 000 2288.

Foster Carer Awards 2007

Over 370 years of fostering recognised

Over fifty five carers, elected members and staff attended the Foster Care Awards Ceremony at County Hall on Tuesday the 15th of May to celebrate the achievements of Devon's foster carers. Awards were presented to carers who have contributed between ten and thirty five years fostering for Devon, and to carers achieving the NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People

The longest serving carer was Margaret Matthews, who has contributed thirty five years of fostering. Margaret attended the ceremony accompanied by her two adult sons, who both fully support her fostering work. She was presented with a bouquet in addition to the certificate and vouchers received by all those being recognised.

Councillor John Smith, Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services, gave the welcome address and also closing remarks. He offered

sincere thanks on behalf of both the council and all young people cared for by foster carers for the carers' dedication and commitment



Group photo of all the award winners present at the ceremony, with Councillor Smith - on his right with the bouquet is Margaret Matthews, who was presented with a certificate for 35 years fostering.

to the fostering task. Councillor Smith also made reference to the good performance of the entire fostering service in the recent CSCI inspection. Anne Whiteley, Director of Children and Young People's Services echoed Councillor Smith's thanks to the carers, and recognised the importance of their input in promoting the five Every Child Matters outcomes for children in their care.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of certificates and lunch in the antechamber. All those present had a chance to reflect on the excellent service Devon's foster carers give to the children in their care - and, despite the challenges, on the great deal of satisfaction and fulfilment that fostering can bring.

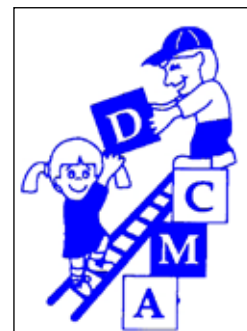
For a fostering information pack call 0845 155 1013.

Child Minding News

4Children Childcare Awards

Devon Child Minding Association was nominated for this years award in the category Childcare Team of the Year sponsored by Morton Michel. Erika Willson of DCMA said "We were delighted to be short listed to the two finalists.

Four representative members of the thirteen-strong team went to an interview at the Lloyds Building in London before eagerly awaiting the results at a spectacular gala dinner and presentation. It was just like the Oscars or BAFTA's of the childcare world! We were not chosen as the overall winners but feel very proud that we were runners up in an event that attracted hundreds of nominations around the UK. We can confidently say that we were the winners in England as the overall winners were from Scotland. I am sure I speak for all the members of the staff team when I say we are proud to be associated with DCMA and to have the service we endeavour to provide recognised at such a high level." Further information is available on the DCMA website www.devonca.org



Devon Child Minding Association 21st Birthday Conference

Every year Devon Child Minding Association (DCMA) celebrates the unique child care provision registered childminders run from their homes (e.g. small group numbers so more opportunities for 1-1 attention, community based work, comfort of a home environment) with childminders, parents and other childcare professionals at our annual conference and AGM.

This year we have been very fortunate to receive a grant from Awards for All to enable us to put on a bigger and better event than ever before at Sandy

Park Conference Centre, Exeter on Saturday 22nd September where there will be a selection of eight exciting and interesting workshops plus a nationally recognised keynote speaker.

DCMA is an independent childminding organisation and a registered charity. We work together with childminders, parents, local authorities and other children's organisations to provide high quality home-based childcare for children aged between 0 and 16 years.

South Hams Childminders Celebrate National Childminding Week

Devon Child Minding Association (DCMA) celebrated 21 years of working with childminders and parents in style this year with 9 local events held across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. The "Wild About Devon" series of fun days out were supported by Awards for All, and highlighted children's learning and development within Devon culture.

Childminders from all over the South Hams met



up at Stover Country Park near Newton Abbot for a fun day of celebrations. The children enjoyed storytelling, music and singing from

Sarah van Veen, face painting and clay modelling – and also some delicious refreshments of scones & cream and strawberries! The sun shone down for long enough for many of the childminders to enjoy a walk in the beautiful woodlands around the lake at the Park.

Karen Gardner from DCMA said she was delighted to see so many childminders and children having a great time and feels the week also highlighted how childminders are able to offer a wide range of different experiences.

DCMA also operates a Toy Library, which has an extensive range of toys and equipment to loan to childminders, all parents and carers.

For more information concerning DCMA and the Toy Library, visit www.devonca.org or call Janet Dix on 01752 202059.

PLAYLINK Services

Grant and Fundraising Service; Project Management and Teambuilding; Diversity And Inclusion; Research

We have assembled a tried and trusted team of associates with whom we have worked, and who work with us to assist other organisations

and groups. The associates are a diverse group of people with a wide range of experience. More about the services and them can be found by visiting www.playlink.org.uk

RACE FOR LIFE Westpoint, Exeter

A team of us from Devon County Council (Children & Young People's Services) Early Years & Childcare signed up for the Race for Life on 29th July 2007. We felt very passionate about taking part in this (even though we are not, what you would call, pro-active runners!) as we lost a very dear colleague and friend Mags (who was a District Co-ordinator for the Exeter area) earlier this year to cancer. We hope to have raised £1000.

If you would like to make a donation please contact Tania on 01803 869372.



Early Years Education Grant Funding Information

Parent Rota - To confirm and clarify that providers of EYEF sessions cannot impose parents to carry out a parent rota duty nor make charges to them for not doing so. Should you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact Marie Stone Finance & Systems Officer- email marie.stone@devon.gov.uk Tel: 01392 385443

Essential Ofsted updates

We are cancelling the Autumn Session Essential Ofsted Updates due to re-organisation and recruitment within the Registration and Inspection support team and the Early Years Support Teams. We will now be delivering the next Information sessions in February 2008. We have decided to extend these to two and a half hours sessions. Please look out for your District Newsletters in January which will have details of the dates, venues and agenda.

Important Reminder from Ofsted Complaints Log

Could everyone please make sure they are keeping a complaints log. Ofsted have highlighted this recently as many providers still do not have a complaints procedure.

Guidance and a template for this can be found in OFSTED publication 'Day care and childminding: Guidance to the National Standards' revisions to criteria October 2005.

Available from Ofsted on 08456 404040 or www.ofsted.gov.uk

New Support Contract for Devon

Trio Childcare Connections Limited was established in 1996 and since this time has diversified and grown greatly, now providing a range of childcare services across several counties. Trio are passionate and committed to on-going professional development.

Under our new Devon contract, we will aim to provide all voluntary, independent and private early years group settings with support and information. All groups in Devon will be visited on a regular basis. We will be working very closely with the Early Years and Childcare team to give you the best possible service for every contingency within your setting.

We look forward to working with you soon.

Childcare news in brief!

Child Development

Imaginary friends are beneficial to children, according to research by the Institute of Education, which found that children make up characters who offer companionship and emotional support, aid creativity, boost self-esteem and create a 'sense of self'. The research by Karen Majors, an educational psychologist, found that boys were more likely to have older, more macho friends, while girls tended to choose younger friends. (Observer, 8 Jul 2007, p20; Mail, 9 Jul 2007, p29)

Fruit In schools and pre-schools

There has been a 20 per cent drop in the number of children eating school meals since Jamie Oliver's TV programme, Jamie's School Dinners, was broadcast two years ago, according to a survey by the Local Authorities Catering Association. The £42m scheme to encourage children to eat more fruit and veg by serving up 44m pieces of fruit to two million children in 18,000 schools across the country has made no difference to children's nutrition, according to an evaluation study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. Every child aged between four and six was to receive a piece of fruit under the scheme, which has been given a further £77m by the Department of Health. The study of 'the largest scale intervention in English children's diet since the introduction of free milk in 1946' looked at 3,703 children in the North of England who were given free fruit between February and December 2004. It found that their intake of fruit had increased by only half a portion a day and by the time the children had moved up into Year 3, and were then not eligible for the scheme, any benefits had disappeared. Janet Cade, professor at the Centre for Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Leeds University and one of the report's authors, said the results were not 'totally damning' as the oldest children had only been given the free fruit for four or five months. The authors also suggest that a limited choice of fruit offered - usually apples, pears, bananas and citrus fruit - would not have helped. They said, to do better, fruit and veg had to become a normal part of children's meals. (Mail on Sunday, 8 Jul 2007, p5; Times, 9 Jul 2007, p5; Guardian, 12 Jul 2007, p3; Telegraph, 12 Jul 2007, p1, p8; Times, 12 Jul 2007, p22; Sun

Play

A survey of 1,200 parents by pollsters, MyVoice, found that 40 per cent of those with young children could not recite a single popular nursery rhyme, but 44 per cent said they were singing pop songs and television theme tunes to their children. The survey, commissioned by the children's TV channel Cartoonito, found that parental knowledge of nursery rhymes increased with age. (Express, 9 Jul 2007, p29; Mail, 9 Jul 2007, p5; Sun, 9 Jul 2007, p13; Times, 9 Jul 2007, p5)

This Newsletter is produced by Devon County Council, Early Years and Childcare Service, South Hams District, Parkers Barn, Parkers Way, Totnes TQ9 5UF. The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of Devon County Council. Got any news? Please contact Tania Skinner on 01392 386072 or e-mail tania.skinner@devon.gov.uk

This Newsletter can be requested in other formats, including audio tape, large print, symbols and other languages, please contact us on 0800 056 36 66 for further information.