



Family Learning News

Autumn 2009

Football Crazy

Throughout 2008/09 48 Family Learning through Football courses have run across County Durham in association with Sunderland Football Club. These courses attracted a total of 1139 learners, 189 of them being adult men.

The courses are aimed at developing parents/carers insight into working with their own child, increasing confidence and raising knowledge and awareness of issues related to health and a healthy lifestyle.

The courses are incredibly popular with schools and are always very well received. They run for 10 weeks and include theory for adults only for the first hour followed by practical games and activities for adults and children in the second half of the session. The sessions culminate in a presentation for all learners at the end of the term held at the Stadium of Light.

This year 23 year old Esmat Qubani, who originates from Afghanistan, attended the Family Learning through Football course at St Cuthbert's Primary in Seaham with his three stepchildren aged 10, 8 and 6. He started the course to develop his English speaking skills to help with his job at a local pizza shop and learned a lot more than he bargained for saying "I think the sessions are a really good idea. It helps with my English and teaches others skills such as team building."



Stepdaughter Kasia attended the adults only part of the sessions with Esmat to help with his reading and writing, taking on the role a teaching assistant would but at the young age of 10 years old! Kasia was a great asset to the group and helped to bring a different perspective to the sessions. **For more information about Family Learning through Football contact Jeanna Osborne on 0191 3740506 or jeanna.osborne@durham.gov.uk**

What a Team

Family Learning has been a hit at South Pelaw Infant School. Headteacher Dorothy Hale and her team have worked closely with tutor Shelagh Sharkey from Return to Learn to run several successful courses for mums, dads, grandparents and children. Lots of enthusiasm and ideas have encouraged families to learn more about numeracy and financial literacy. A real success story.

Everyone is Equal at Willington C of E School

Nine parents & carers joined their children at Willington C of E Primary School to learn about different cultures through drama, ethnic arts & crafts, storytelling and cookery from around the world.

They enjoyed a trip to the Hindu Temple in Newcastle and learnt about tackling racism in football with 'Show Racism the Red Card'. Tutor Joan Watson, guided the group through 10 weeks of varied activities and helped make a DVD of their experiences.

One child commented "it was good because it was not just me learning new things, it was my mam too."

Area Round—up

Mid Durham

Several families of different nationalities enjoyed learning about each other's cultures, listening to stories and singing songs whilst improving their creative skills.



The group attended sessions at Keenan House where they practised their English and enjoyed working together to create imaginative drawings.

Easington

Seaham Eastlea Community Centre ran an Indian Cookery course over the autumn term which was very popular with learners. Children and adults attended the course which aimed to teach learners the basics of Indian cookery but which also looked at the culture and religions of India as well as learning some Punjabi.

Derwentside

A very successful course was run for parents/carers and children at St Patricks Primary in Dipton in the run up to Easter which looked at Easter based crafts and simple nail art techniques. Both adults and children worked together to produce some excellent results.



Nail Art

Dales

Over October half term week a RAKU Kiln event was held at Westgate Youth Centre which coincided with the festivals of Diwali and Halloween. Families who attended learned about the traditional Japanese technique of firing RAKU pottery using an outdoor kiln. Due to adverse weather conditions the RAKU kiln was out of use but learners did decorate their own tiles which were later fired in a conventional kiln by the tutor.

However, the gale force winds and driving rain didn't prevent all outdoor activities from going ahead as the learners managed to enjoy a family barbecue as part of the event!

Sedgefield

A multicultural workshop was held at Chilton Community Centre to help children and parents understand different cultures and celebrate equality & diversity. 34 parents and their children attended the session which was run by the Lions of Zululand group and included many interesting displays and interactive presentations.



For further information on Family Learning contact Margaret Richards, Family Programmes Manager on: 0191 3740539 Or Email Margaret.richards@durham.gov.uk

Back to nature with Family Learning

Hooked on Fishing!

In the late autumn and winter, Jeanna Osborne ran a hugely successful 60 hour FLLN course for 10 fathers and their children which led to an OCN Competent Coarse Fishing Level 1. This was particularly impressive as half of it took place outdoors at the water's edge and even included camping.

Essential partners for this programme included "Get Hooked on Fishing", who brought the expert knowledge and expertise needed for the fishing and the accreditation and the Extended Schools Coordinator and Parent Support Advisors (PSA's) who gave up their Saturday's to accompany the families and whose support and enthusiasm led to so many fathers taking part and completing the course.



George Harrison and son Ben

The programme, which ran at weekends, had faced particularly severe weather conditions, so had to be put on hold for a few weeks. Despite this, all dads completed the course.

The mornings focused on classroom based learning, with the tutor and Get Hooked coach supporting the literacy elements needed for the accreditation such as extracting information, following and giving instructions,



Father and son learning together

presentations. The afternoons focused on the practical coarse fishing where the learners out all they had learned into practice. The course culminated in an overnight fishing and camping session by the lake.

Derwentside Cyclists

During Family Learning Month some brave families cycled 22 miles from Stanhope to Stanley on a mission to get fit. Well done to them!

The Secret Garden

In the heart of Durham city, on the riverbanks by old Maiden Castle, is a very secret and peaceful walled garden. For one day in June this garden became much less secret and much less peaceful!

Learners and their families from family learning courses across County Durham were exclusively invited to attend the Secret Garden Event where there were various outdoor games and activities on offer for all ages and abilities.



Learners enjoy crafts in the yurt

The event began with an optional guided walk along the historical trail to the gardens where learners were met with activities such as weave making and bushcraft led by KECO, woodcraft and minibeasts with Durham Botanical Gardens and football games and skills with Sunderland Football Club. There was even a treasure hunt provided by learners from one of our family learning courses and the opportunity to learn about Frosterley Marble.

The event was extremely well attended, even Sunderland AFC's mascot Delila was there, and a great day was had by all!



Bubble blowing in the garden

From the Editor
This edition of Family Learning News is packed full with stories from across the county on courses and events which have taken place throughout 2008/09. It has been a very busy and successful year, as I'm sure you'll agree!

Heather Solan

Exploring the Great Outdoors!

Families from Durham Gillesgate Primary have been out and about with Focus on Learning tutor Sharon Stevenson recently. The project started with the aid of Countryside Ranger, Saul Fajerman who helped the group to explore nearby Keping Woods. The themes were then developed in following weeks to look at minibeasts, planting and growing and sustainable energy. One favourite activity was the den building morning with the bushcraft organisation "Keco".

At the end of the course, all members achieved the "John Muir" environmental award as well as developing their confidence and communication skills. Especially, everyone maintained their enthusiasm and eagerness throughout and want to do more family learning very soon!

**Family Learning Works!
Visit www.family-learning.org.uk**

Family Learning Makes Learning Together Fun!

Abracadabra!

Maths is Magic! Its official as parents from Tow Law Millennium Primary found out after completing a Family Numeracy course with a difference with tutor Sharon Stevenson of Focus on Learning. The parents and children investigated new numeracy trends not through paper and pencil but through playing cards, a rabbit and a top hat!



Each week the group covered a different mathematics theme, yet still found time to bake, complete craft challenges and devise and make their own board games.

The success of the course saw the children noticeably grow in confidence along with a large number of parents who went on to pass their National Tests in numeracy.

So inspired by the course, the group have asked for further ways to meet up and support each other and the school itself. Magic!

Story Chair

Parents and carers at Byers Green Primary worked with their children and LEAP tutor Hilary Hawkins to design and build a story chair from recycled materials. Once the chair was completed it was donated to the school for use with literacy work to help create a magical and inspiring environment during storytelling sessions.



The learners used their creativity and arts and crafts skills to create the chair resulting in an outstanding piece of work. Along with the practical skills, the group also developed their literacy skills, with the help of class teacher Mrs Archment and group tutor Hilary, by reading and writing fairystories, ending with a story called 'The Magical Chair' involving knights, dragons and fairies.

The group thoroughly enjoyed the course and are very proud of their creation. The sessions helped increase the children's imagination, encouraged sharing of ideas and introduced the learners to new skills and new friends.

The Silvertree Bears

Teddy bears are very important to us all. At Silver Tree Primary, Ushaw Moor, a group of reception parents are convinced of this after completing both a Family Numeracy and a Family Literacy course run by Sharon Stevenson of Focus on Learning.

Starting with Goldilocks and her three friends then ending with a teddy bears picnic, a great time was had by all. Up to 12 mums and their children shared games and expertise together.

Commented one mum "I liked how we made activities for the children to enjoy. They are things we could easily do at home and the children really responded well to them." Tia aged 4 confirmed "I like to see and do things with my mammy, even in school time."

All have asked to do more Family Learning courses as soon as possible.



Some of the group with their teddies

Easing the Transition

Tutor Jo Thompson of Learn East delivered a 10 week Family Learning programme to parents and children of Trimdon Grange Primary based around the children's transition from Nursery to Reception.

During the course the group looked at what the children would be learning at school, for example Jollyphonics and Primary Maths, and discussed the social transition, addressing parent's concerns and the school's expectations of the children. As well as this they also had fun making lovely learning resources to use at home for additional support.

The theme used in the joint sessions was 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' which incorporated counting, sequencing, healthy eating, shape recognition, spelling and simple addition and subtraction. One parent said "My daughter has been using the play mat we made every night! She knows the story inside out."

After completing the course the learners will now feel much less anxious and far more relaxed about the making the step from Nursery to school.



What a Culture Shock!

Learn East worked with Culture Shock Museum Team to deliver a fun and innovative course for parents and children at Our Lady of the Rosary Primary. It began with a trip to Hartlepool Museum to gather ideas and inspiration to create their own stories which would later be professionally recorded.

The group of 7 parents and children wrote their stories over the first couple of sessions by playing icebreaker games to share and create ideas. Everyone joined in and had fun laughing at each others silly stories during the games.

Once the stories were written and professionally recorded, The Culture Shock team stepped in to offer guidance and support as the technical element of the course began. The learners were allocated a Mac laptop each and used these to insert pictures and photographs into their personal stories. At the end of a brilliant project each learner received a DVD copy of their work which they screened as a group at the end of term.



The group get technical

Double the Glory: The FLIF story



Tutor Mary-Ann with some of the learners and Councillor Armstrong

Recognition of the hard work and dedication shown by parents and carers from Rosa Street Primary was given at the Sedgefield Adult Learner awards in June. Learners, who enjoyed the Family Fun with Numbers and Laughing with Literacy courses, run by FL tutor Mary-Ann Parton, received certificates at the ceremony and celebrated their success. Certificates were presented by Councillor Agnes Armstrong of Sedgefield Borough Council.

The courses involved a trip to the Discovery Museum where families were detectives for the day, a maths investigation at the Angel of the North and a creative workshop at Seven Stories, the Children's Centre for Books. Not only have the parents benefited but the children's level of ability and confidence in literacy and numeracy has excelled according to Colin Craggs, Headteacher at Rosa Street.

As a result of attending a numeracy based FLIF course in the spring term, parents and carers then progressed to a family learning literacy course. With the hope of continuing their learning journey, a National Test course will be delivered in the school from September. Families from the group have continued to be proactive and get involved in learning activities by attending the successful Secret Garden event where they shared games and crafts together.



Learner Denise Crowe receives her Special Learner award from Agnes

Summer Fun

Return to Learn ran eight fun Family Learning sessions throughout August.

At Lumley Community Centre children and adults attended an event with an 'Under the Sea' theme. Learners made a tissue paper collage, got involved in sponge painted jelly fish and children made creative cards for their parents and carers. Their skills were also put to the test with origami, using measuring and numbering.

At Roseberry Community College, another group made butterflies and dragonflies using wool and a bit of sparkle. They also created 'pom poms', which they all thoroughly enjoyed including the teenagers.

Another group continued the theme, making butterflies and dragonflies and using origami to create caterpillars and bugs. Further sessions were held at Roseberry Community College and Burnmoor Church Hall, using the same themes and ideas ensuring there was something for all to enjoy.

Family Learning DVDs

An award winning Family Learning Q1 project gave children the opportunity to teach their adults about new hand held technology in 5 schools in Durham.

Judith Cooper and Emma Foreman delivered the project which has been so successful that it has won a National Award.

Tutor Judith Cooper, who has a leading role on the DVD, said "I really enjoyed the project and was enthused by the excitement of the families. The DVD shows how Family Learning can assist parents to understand the new technology."



A father and son at Pitington Primary

Transition Project with the SAGE

Children and parents from Seaham Harbour Nursery worked hard on their transition project in partnership with the SAGE. Julia, from the SAGE Gateshead, used music and song to lead the group through sessions aimed at teaching parents and children about making the move from Nursery to Reception. The children enjoyed learning about their new school, Ropery Walk Primary, and spent two sessions there before making a visit to the SAGE Gateshead.



Making music with Julia

On their visit to the SAGE the children and parents had a tour around the building and performed inside Hall 1 to a round of applause from the lighting engineers. The group performed Incy Wincy Spider followed by Baa Baa Black Sheep. The children loved the experience as did their parents.



The project was run by Surestart, Seaham Harbour Nursery, Family Learning and the SAGE.

Sedgefield Enterprise Project

Budding entrepreneurs in the Sedgefield area defied the credit crunch by taking part in an Education in the Community Enterprise project.

Ten community groups from the Sedgefield area developed products such as jewellery, hand-made ceramics and growing their own greens. The finished products were put up for sale at the **Ferryhill Friday Market on the 3rd April 2009.**



Left, a garden produce stall selling plants and gifts.



Right, winning stall selling cooked produce

The market formed part of a family learning project run by Durham County Council's Education in the Community service. Groups received £50 funding from Enterprise in Education and received advice from the Family Learning team & Small Business advisors to help them develop their enterprising ideas for the market.

The most enterprising stall at Ferryhill Friday Market on the 3rd April received £150 in prize money. The prize was won by young people from Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre with their home cooked produce stall who were raising funds to establish a new drama group at their centre.

Family Learning brought us out of our shell!"

A mother from Family Learning Story Chair group

"Family Learning brought us closer together"

Family Learning through football learner