



Family Links

Family Links Meeting the National Occupational Standards for work with parents (NOS WWP)

Family Links has reflected the principles and values of the NOS throughout its development as a responsible training organisation working within schools and communities since its inception in 1997.

In order to promote a culture of quality in parenting provision, Family Links welcomes the opportunity to formalise its structure and systems within the organisation alongside the NOS standards. We are doing a more detailed mapping of all the trainings Family Links provides alongside the NOS WWP whilst noting the considerable overlap and common ground with the NOS Family Learning, NOS Youth Justice Workers, NOS Work with children, young people and families and Skills for Care.

Family Links is a national training organisation that provides training to equip professionals to facilitate the Nurturing Programme only. This training also enhances workforce skills in one-to-one client work. Family Links facilitators training meets certain of the NOS mandatory units discussed later. Mapping work is in progress to develop this further

In 2004/5 Family Links became an accredited course recognised by the Open College Network.

Organisation – Central Office Oxford

Currently Family Links systems are under review against the NOS:

- Recruitment
- Selection
- Supervision
- Appraisal
- Training – Child protection
- Recognition system
- Provide access to knowledge and information for parents, development of website links.
- Evaluation - Measuring performance against clear benchmarks Pre and post training questionnaire for practitioners: Pre and post parent group for parents/carers and children/teenagers using 1.Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, 2.Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. To be launched September 2007 throughout the UK.

Family Links regularly informs the national discussion about practice across the sectors formally through links with:

Annette Mountford – Trustee, Board of Directors- Parenting UK

Shirley Stephenson - Trustee, Board of Directors- Action for Prisoners Families
Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association –Interest Group Parenting and Family Support –linked to the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children

Verity Lowe – Wolverhampton Children’s Centre – Board of Directors

Gail Allen – Member Oxford Parenting Strategy Group

Eugenie Winters - Oxford Parents Forum Member

Organisation – Regionally

Regional and local discussion on practice at ground level is influenced by Family Links' 10 Area Co-ordinators and 7 Local Co-ordinators who network with key stakeholders in the wider communities across the UK.

Many are members of Local Parenting Strategic Groups who are committed to meeting local needs and deliver services that value and respect parents.

The role of these Co-ordinators is to provide and ensure quality leadership, training and support to practitioners, parents and families in their local area. Many deliver the accredited Parenting Programme with Learning and Skills Council funding.

Local co-ordinators return evaluation and feedback information to Family Links central office in Oxford which forms a base for directing future development whilst supporting two way communication.

Parent Group Leaders and Area Co-ordinators across the UK are regularly updated by email ,website, Newsletters, Top-Up Training and Family Links Conferences.

Over the last 2 years Family Links has made a contribution towards working within inclusive parenting environments to promote a culture that values diversity and difference.

- Prisoners & Prisoners Families
- Minority Ethnic Groups
- Mini Parenting Puzzle translated into Urdu
- Foster Parents
- Children's residential homes
- Pupil referral Units

NOS WWP and the Four Day Parent Group leader/Facilitator Training

The Nurturing Programme Facilitators Training was first written in 1978 in the USA, it was anglicised from 1992. The American author Dr Stephen Bavolek gave Family Links the license to develop the Nurturing Programme in the UK and Family Links is the only organisation licensed to train in it.

Any new or amended training written in the future will be developed using the NOS WWP.

The priority has been to map our existing high quality facilitators' training against the NOS WWP.

Level 1 & 2 Open College Network Accreditation is in place for parents completing the 10 week Programme.

In order to allow progression for parents and practitioners, the priority has been to map the 4-Day Training based on NOS WWP level 3 units within the Draft Qualification Structures for SVQ/NVQ/VRQ. This will give a framework for the units, learning outcomes and assessment criteria to skill the workforce facilitating the programme.

Mandatory Units

WWP 301 – Build and maintain relationships with parents.

WWP 302 - Communicate effectively with parents.

WWP 303 – Ensure confidentiality whilst maintaining good practice in child protection.

WWP 308 – Enable parents to develop ways of handling relationships and behaviour that contribute to everyday life with children

WWP 310 – Reflect on and update own knowledge and practice.

WWP 312 – Deliver services that value and respect parents.

Optional Units

WWP 307 – Enable parents to reflect on the influences on parenting and the parent-child relationship.

WWP 309 - Work with parents to understand and meet their own needs.

WWP 306/319 – Work with groups of parents

This process revealed clear strengths in many areas of the NOS with indications to make much more explicit many topics that are currently included implicitly. The real challenge for Family Links is to make these amendments without changing the character of the Nurturing Programme or losing the experiential qualities that make the training so successful and effective.

In January 2007 City & Guilds began trialling and testing the draft unit titles and learning outcomes within the new Credit and Qualification framework ,using Centres across the UK.

The pilot is due to complete in 2008. Family Links is following it's progress with interest and awaits outcomes to guide further development at level 3.It is clear that many of the practitioners undergoing our 4 day Parent Group Leader training would welcome the opportunity to work towards a level 3 accreditation.

NOS WWP and the Two Day Children Centre Multi-Agency Team Training

This training is currently being delivered within Children's Centres across the UK.

We currently have the support of a National Children Bureau partnership funding to write and accredit the 2-Day Children's Centre Multi-Agency Team Training alongside the new Credit and Qualification framework.

A mapping exercise of the training against the NOS WWP will run in tandem.

Shirley Stephenson Programme Director – August 07