

The Shared Learning Newsletter

Celebrating Share

Fifth National Annual Share Conference



The 2005 Share Conference was held on 9 March at the Hilton Metropole Hotel in Birmingham – a central location for the UK, which enabled more Share practitioners to attend the conference than ever before.

Over 150 delegates participated in a wide range of workshops, and listened to powerful keynote speakers highlighting the key role parents play in their children's learning.



Delegates enjoyed excellent hospitality in an opulent environment – a just reward for their hard work throughout the year!

The Family Learning Team was congratulated on: 'the best Share conference ever! More of the same next year please!'

Share Family Learning Awards

Award winners

- Share family of the year – The Needham Family, Doncaster
- Share family of the year – The Moores Family, Salford
- Share adult learner of the year – Mahmuda Islam, Haringey
- Share local education authority (LEA)/education action zone (EAZ) of the year – Knowsley
- Share tutor of the year – Veena Sharma, Haringey
- Share organisation of the year – Wharton Primary School, Salford



To conclude an exceptionally successful conference, the Family Learning Team presented the six category winners with their awards, which celebrate the outstanding achievements of those who have taken part in Share over the year.

Phil Street presented all the winners with their framed certificates, a £500 cheque, and a bouquet of flowers.

It was a truly memorable occasion for all concerned. Congratulations!

See overleaf for more about the conference and the Family Learning Awards.

A successful day!

Raising achievements

Phil Street OBE, Chief Executive Officer of ContinYou, opened the Share conference by giving his unwavering commitment to the future of Share, and highlighting the programme's significant contribution to raising the educational achievements of families.



Developing socially

Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford, from the University of London, shared fascinating data and statistics after investigating parental impact during early years development, referring to both the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education project (EPPE) and Share at the Foundation Stage.

Iram spoke about the role of parents and how, where parents are actively engaged in activities with their children, there is a significant increase in intellectual and social development in all children.



Involving parents

Mary Crowley MBE, Chief Executive of the Parenting Education & Support Forum, spoke passionately about the powerful impact of parental involvement, and drew together research from a variety of professionals to reinforce her message. She went on to say: 'The scale of the impact is evident across all social classes and all ethnic groups.'



Creating opportunities

Ann Gross, Deputy Director of Sure Start, spoke about the Ten Year Childcare Strategy and Every Child Matters. Her comments referred to a 'whole-system change' in order to create opportunity and 'build services around the child, young person and family; support parents and carers; promote prevention and early intervention.'



Eight workshops were delivered during the day, offering a wide range of sessions – from story telling to family learning, and from music-making to working with looked-after children. All participants, and their children, enjoyed the sessions immensely, as well as gaining new skills.

Many thanks to all our workshop leaders for their contribution to such a successful event!



Evaluation of Share at the Foundation Stage



An evaluation of Share at the Foundation Stage was carried out by Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford, from the Education Department of the University of London, with her colleague Bet McCallum.

Five LEAs were strategically sampled for their different geographical and socio-economic characteristics to pilot the programme: Kirklees; the London Borough of Haringey; Northamptonshire; Rochdale; and St Helens.

The pilot took place in nineteen different settings, representing playgroups, nursery classes, reception classes, and Children's Centres. The pilot interested a very wide range of parents/carers – different age groups, family structures, ethnic backgrounds, levels of employment, and socio-economic status were all represented.

Main findings

Below are some of the main findings reported in the evaluation:

- Parents appreciated that the activities were sometimes ones they would not have thought of themselves. The project has fostered the creativity of some parents in devising activities to do with their children.
- Parents have gained new learning and insights about their own children. Parents deepened their understanding of:
 - their children's disposition to learn
 - signs that their children were learning
 - the learning styles preferred by their children
 - their children's levels of knowledge and understanding.

As Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford says in the evaluation:

'Parents were learning more about their children through the processes of listening and observing, as well as reflecting on, writing about and illustrating the work they were doing.'

- Parents added to their knowledge of child development and learning. They articulated the merits of different activities, and showed a growing understanding of their potential to develop particular skills in their children.
- The enduring effect of sustained quality parent-child interaction leads to favourable child development, including persistence in problem solving, high self-esteem, socially skilled behaviour, closer friendships and better peer relationships.

This was a transformative idea, which led to parents' new investment in time with their children, and made them prioritise their time with them.
- Parents increased their confidence as educators. They became aware of their own learning needs, and began to look at ways in which they could learn as individuals through the Share accreditation scheme, developed through the Open College Network.



ContinYou's Family Learning Team will be responding to all the areas identified in the report for developing and enhancing the Share at the Foundation Stage programme.



To buy a copy of *An evaluation of Share at the Foundation Stage*, which costs £12.00 plus p&p, email Paula Woodall at paula.woodall@continyou.org.uk or phone 024 7658 8440.

Hints and tips – useful websites

Academy of Culinary Arts (Adopt a School) – www.academyofculinaryarts.org.uk

This is a programme of cookery workshops, which are delivered to primary and secondary schools by chefs who are members of the Academy of Culinary Arts and leading members of the food industry. The sessions are suitable for ages 5–18.

B&Q – www.diy.com (about B&Q)

Schools, community groups and charitable organisations can apply to their local B&Q store for funding to support a local project.

British Food Fortnight – www.britishfoodfortnight.co.uk

Provides information about this annual event, which is being held this year from 24 September to 9 October.

buy.at – www.buy.at/

This is a fundraising tool for a range of settings – schools, community groups, charities and sports clubs. A setting can buy goods at a discounted rate from a number of high-street shops, through a link that has been set up. The setting will then receive an average of £2.75 from every transaction.

Flour and Grain – www.flourandgrain.com

This website provides a wide range of educational resources dealing with the importance of a good balanced diet.

Fones4Schools – www.fones4schools.co.uk

This is a recycling scheme. Schools collect unwanted mobile phones for re-cycling and receive cash donations in return. The minimum donation to the school is £300, and the maximum is unlimited (it depends how many phones are collected). Those who collect the phones can choose from a range of prizes on the website.

Learning through Landscapes (Learning Together) – www.ltl.org.uk

This programme encourages parents to take an active role in the development, management and use of school grounds. If the school is an NCPTA member, it can apply for financial awards through the programme, which recognises good practice in school grounds work.

Sainsbury's – www.sainsburys.co.uk/activekids/

For every £10 anyone spends at Sainsbury's, they will receive one Active Kids voucher. The vouchers can then be donated to your school and redeemed for a range of equipment and experiences.

Tesco – www.tesco.com/everylittlehelps/

The Tesco Charity Trust Community Awards are targeted towards local communities where stores are based. Local organisations whose core work supports children's education and welfare can benefit from one-off donations ranging from £1,500 to £5,000.

Wootton George Consulting – www.wootton-george.co.uk

These charity fundraising consultants offer a wide range of fundraising services related to applying to trusts and foundations.

Performing rights – www.prs.co.uk

If you are organising any kind of event that uses music – live or recorded – you need to consider whether you need a licence. The Performing Rights Society (PRS) can give advice on legal requirements.

Parent Education & Support Forum – www.parenthood.org.uk

This website is designed as a resource to promote best practice in parenthood education for children and young people in schools. It is aimed at anyone involved in planning or delivering parenthood education.



Helping you get the most out of Share

ContinYou provides training courses/seminars and consultancy to enable Share settings to expand the range and improve the quality of the services they offer:

Share Practitioner Training: for practitioners working with families to deliver Share in their settings (Cost: £425 – 2½ days).

Approved Trainer Programme: enables Share settings to train their own staff to deliver the Share Teacher Training course (Cost: £800 – 2 days).

Monitoring the Share Programme: provides advice and support to ensure the delivery of a high-quality Share programme (Cost: £650 per day – up to 3 days).

Accreditation of Share: an in-depth seminar that covers all aspects of accreditation (Cost: £650 – 1 day).

Consultancy: a tailor-made service responding to your specific requirements (covering all aspects of parental involvement/support and family learning).

Contact Paula Woodall at paula.woodall@continyou.org.uk to find out more about Share training courses/seminars and consultancy services.



Success in Newham



NewCEYS, the Learning Community Project in the London Borough of Newham, was instrumental in the successful introduction of Share in the authority. One example of this success can be seen at Vicarage Primary School, a school with 670 on roll. NewCEYS provided funding and support for Share, and this investment helped Vicarage Primary School to offer the Share programme in February 2003, initially at the Foundation Stage. Some Share families have also accessed other family learning programmes provided by NewCEYS.

Facts and figures

- Bopinder Samra, the co-ordinator of the Parental Involvement/ Family Learning Project, invited schools in the authority to participate in Share training in December 2002.
- Two members of Vicarage staff attended the Share training – Panna Nagar, assistant headteacher and Head of Foundation Stage, and Abosedé Agbesanwa, EAL leader.
- Thirty parents/carers and their families have benefited from Share to date – and these new 'learners' are anxious to progress towards accreditation.

- Five 'dads' have actively participated in Share sessions, which is a credit to the families and staff involved.
- Ten families have expressed an interest in Share, and the Share team at Vicarage are confident that the figure will grow steadily. Share has already grown from Foundation Stage to include Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3!
- Sessions with families are delivered every fortnight for around 45 minutes after school. Parents and grandparents really enjoy the sessions, eagerly awaiting the next session ('it's cold and dark, but I arrive at Share and all that goes away...'; 'I am still so inspired by everyone around me...'; '...such strong friendships in our Share group').

Benefits

A number of benefits have been identified for school and families. Relationships between staff and families have improved considerably, and the links between home and school are much stronger.

Children are much more confident, and have demonstrated improved achievement. Parents/carers are also much more confident, involved in 'learning', and interested in 'how' teaching takes place. One mother said that they: 'involved her sister and dad – at times, even nanny. We became more creative working in the garden or just changing environments'.

Good luck to everyone at Vicarage and Newham!

*'Instead of buying sweets to reward Louise, we were looking at books, audio story tapes, craft activity sets ... We took photos of the work Louise created, and always tried to leave a piece of work on a positive note, so Louise felt happy to return to the work another day'.
(Parent)*

Share in Sutton-on-Sea



Share is thriving at Sutton Community Primary School! From September 2004 Share has been available from Foundation Stage to Year 6. Six new families were recruited at the 'Foundation induction evening' and, since then, there have been numerous requests to 'share in Share'. In fact, staff may need to plan for multiple sessions each week – such is the demand!

Sessions are 'vibrant and impressive', said one governor, who is impressed by the commitment of staff, the impact on children and the enthusiasm of parents/carers.

Sessions begin with parents working with each other; their children then join in; and this is followed by a 'lively plenary'. There have been numerous improvements for children, parents and professionals – for instance, in confidence, relationships, attitudes, attainment, behaviour, understanding, and community involvement.

Keep it up Sutton!





Healthy Share – in Swindon

Goddard Park Community School and Drove Primary introduced Healthy Share during the 2004 autumn term. All the sessions are linked to the Healthy School Award, and specialist professionals are invited in to the schools to contribute their expertise.

This approach has deepened relationships with many new partners, who are now actively working with the schools. This, in turn, has enhanced the whole Share programme.

At Goddard, sessions have included painting T-shirts, a head lice session and hand-washing charts. At Drove, around seven parents attend sessions each week; this increases dramatically when specialist sessions are delivered.



Successes

- One parent has gained in confidence so much that she has now taken up a post working in the school.
- One parent demonstrated how she could readily adapt activities to the needs of all her three children – whole-family learning!
- Another parent described how her four children had fully appreciated the objective of the hygiene session and activity – regular use of the hand-washing chart was a priority in their household!
- Two mums, one from Goa, the other Bangladesh, thoroughly enjoy the sessions, and have both commented on how much their confidence has grown. One of these is a fully-qualified teacher, and now feels that she would like to teach here in the UK.

This is all fantastic news – keep up the good work in Swindon!

Share witches in Durham

Barbara Setterfield is a grandmother who has been attending Share sessions at Deafhill Primary School in Durham for the last five years. She spends many happy hours working on the Share activities with her two grandchildren, aged 6 and 11.

The Tuesday afternoon group is led by the school's Key Stage 1 co-ordinator Jan Johnson. Over the years the number of participants has varied – never less than seven and sometimes as many as fifteen!

Successes

Barbara wrote to us recently to tell us about some of the successes of various members of the group.

- One member of the group has taken Open University exams, and is now working as a classroom assistant.
- One has taken up a position as a football coach.
- Another is now working as a special needs assistant.

- Some participants are developing 'story sacks' for use in school.
- Four parents achieved accreditation last year at Level 1, and are now working hard at Level 2 maths.
- Many of the parents are now attending a range of IT courses, including word-processing, spreadsheets, and working with digital cameras.

Barbara went on to tell us that the group members now also meet socially and in October, together with Jan and some of the other teachers, they donned witches hats and held a Hallowe'en party, which they and the children enjoyed immensely.

Well done to Barbara, and to all the staff and parents involved in Share at Deafhill Primary School. We wish you every success in the future.



'When I was asked if I'd like to come along to the first Share meeting I did not think my life would change so much ... the little Share Badger is helping to make many changes to all the people he comes in contact with. Five years ago, if you had told me at the age of 66 I would write this letter to you on a computer, I would have cried with laughter! We have proved that Share is for all the family.'

(Barbara Setterfield)

Involving speakers of languages other than English

Share aims to be as inclusive as possible, and to enable speakers of languages other than English to take part in Share – which is why we have already translated a range of activity booklets at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 into Bengali, Bosnian, Somali, Turkish and Urdu.

Publicity materials are also available in a large number of other languages for you to use in your Share setting: Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Bosnian, Chinese, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese ... and Welsh.

Use your usual Share order form to place your order for activity booklets and publicity materials.

- Have you translated, or would you like to translate, Share materials (eg the parents' publicity leaflet) into another language?
- Are you interested in sharing your translations with others through the Share website?

If so, please get in touch with Paula Woodall at paula.woodall@continyou.org.uk



Support in Leeds

Education Leeds is currently working in Partnership with ContinYou and the Parenting Fund to support the Share programme throughout the city.

Leeds now has a team of Share Approved Trainers recruited from the learning mentor team. They will be working across the city to develop and support Share in schools – from Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 3.



In addition, they will be working with foster carers and with the prison service in Leeds to encourage fathers to become more involved in supporting their children's education.

Exciting times in Leeds schools



January and July 2004 saw Share being rolled out to a further 54 Leeds learning mentors. As a result, there are now many successful parent groups being held in the city, including Hawksworth Wood Primary.

Susan Newton, learning mentor at the school, attended Share training in January and by March had a record-breaking ten parents on board. Concentrating initially on

Key Stage 1, the parents have been making puppets, helping their children with number patterns, and growing egg-shaped cress!

'I really liked doing the puppets with my mum. We made a prince and a princess ... it made me feel really happy.' (Emily, Year 2)

Susan said: 'The children have grown in confidence and one parent who had her own "barriers to learning" when she was at school has now enrolled on a part-time English GCSE course as a result of attending the Share programme.'

Susan is now using Key Stage 2 materials with her previous Key Stage 1 parents. As the demand for another Key Stage 1 group grows, she will continue encouraging her parents to become successful co-educators of their children.

Well done, Sue!



Diary dates

Share events

Share Training

Venue: Coventry
Dates: 21–22 June 2005

Approved Trainer Training

Venue: Coventry
Dates: 6–7 June 2005;
19–20 October 2005

Venue: Blackburn
Dates: 29–30 June 2005

Venue: North Yorkshire
Dates: 29–30 September 2005

Advanced Approved Trainer

Venue: Coventry
Dates: 6–7 July 2005

LEA Network meetings

Venue: Coventry
Dates: 9 June 2005
18 October 2005

Share Family Learning Conference

Date: 25 January 2006

ContinYou events

Taking Part seminars – making out-of-school-hours learning happen for children in care

Dates: One-day seminars
Contact: Michelle Mead on
020 8709 9900.

New Family Learning Team

As a result of an executive review of ContinYou's services, the decision has been taken to extend the remit of family learning beyond Share.

Share will continue to flourish alongside a range of new and exciting family learning activities and programmes. In addition, we will be offering a consultancy service to Children's Trusts, local authorities and other organisations, to develop family learning provision at a strategic and operational level.

The new Family Learning Team:

Paula Woodall, team manager –
tel: 024 7658 8440

Gill Morris, development manager –
tel: 0797 7097225

Julie Higson, development manager –
tel: 0774 8320255

What's new

Congratulations to Anne and Catherine!

We would like to take this opportunity to offer our warmest congratulations to Anne Hydon on her successful promotion to Sure Start Middlesborough. Sincere thanks go to Anne for her contribution to the team, and to the development of Share. She will be missed by everyone involved in Share – but we wish her every success in her new venture. Good luck, Anne!

Congratulations also go to Catherine Roberts on her successful transfer to TESSS – The Extended Schools Support Service. The team will miss Catherine, but we are pleased that she is staying with ContinYou, and wish her every success.

Schools Community Award

This annual award is open to schools that are members of the Extra Community network. It is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate examples of good practice that enhance learning and community development.

The theme of this year's award is out-of-school-hours learning (oshl)/study support – if your school runs innovative oshl activities, or involves volunteers in running the clubs, for example, let us know. It's your chance to win up to £3,000.

For more information about the Schools Community Award, and for an application form, call Liza Griffiths on 024 7658 8440.

Congratulations

The following schools have received the Share Quality Learning Certificate for the excellent work they are doing with parents:

- Broadgate Primary School, Leeds
- Sandown CE Primary School, Isle of Wight

New Share posters!

Four new Share posters have just been published – for Foundation Stage; Key Stages 1 and 2; Key Stage 3; and Healthy Share.

Contact Paula Woodall at the address below to order your copies of the posters.

Advanced Approved Trainers

Further to our internal review, we have identified a need to develop a team of Advanced Approved Trainers. An initial cohort of current approved trainers has been identified to participate in supplementary advanced training. This team will support the quality and delivery of Share training nationally. Look out for more information in subsequent newsletters.

Next issue

- Share with foster carers
- Encouraging comments from Ofsted

The Shared Learning Newsletter is primarily for practitioners and parents/carers taking part in Share. It is also useful for agencies or individuals who wish to find out more about how Share works in practice. We welcome articles, examples of activities, photographs and comments for inclusion in the newsletter. It is published termly and information needs to be sent in eight weeks before the end of term. We look forward to hearing from you!

For further information, contact:
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Building learning
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