



*CARE AND LEARNING  
ALLIANCE*

*PLAY@HOME PROJECT  
REPORT  
2011*

Please find below the final report for the CALA Play@Home project for 2010-2011. Three outcomes were targeted during the project, as set out in the Play@Home Evaluation Plan, attached.

Progress on the outcomes is described below:

## **OUTCOME 1**

*Parents have greater awareness of play at home activities and are more confident to try these at home.*

This outcome was fully met through the delivery of seventeen practical workshops which reached a total audience of eighty two parents. As well as working with eight Toddler Groups we delivered four sessions at groups in vulnerable areas, which were very well attended, three sessions at Baby Massage groups with the benefits including giving mothers of new babies, an insight into the books they had just been given by their Health Visitors. One Health Visitor stayed behind and joined in with the workshop, supporting the Toddler Facilitator to get all parents involved. Three further deliveries focused on 'Dad's involvement; they were invited to the groups by special invitation for the Play@Home event. Most of the fathers were aware of the Play@Home books and one had used it with his first child. Most were of the opinion that the books gave information on activities that they would automatically do with their children, although one father did comment that he didn't feel it was aimed at fathers.

Through asking them to plot their awareness and use of the books on a flip charted continuum as they arrived we noted that most parents had an awareness of the books before we carried out the workshops, although around 50% of parents had not been using them. By carrying out the practical activities at Baby & Toddler Groups the parents saw how much fun they and their children had and were in agreement that the activities in the books were a great idea and parents felt confident in saying they were going to look out their books, see their Health Visitors if they didn't have them or borrow one from the Library, as a result of taking part in the workshops. The hand outs of the activities were favourably received among the parents, including the Polish versions. Children also received song cards which parents said were a great resource for using in the car or having with them when out for a walk to sing along to. **Appendix A** gives some parental feedback on the content of the deliveries and the use of the books.

## **OUTCOME 2**

*Workshops raise professional awareness of the value and purpose of Play@Home activities giving confidence to promote these within respective roles.*

We feel that we were only partially successful in meeting this outcome. The workshops delivered at four Day Care Centres were greatly received, delivering to a total of forty one children and nearly all fourteen members of staff got involved with the activities. Most staff were aware of the Play@Home books, although only used

them sometimes as a source of ideas. Copies of all three books were held at just one of the centres. The early year's staff now have a raised awareness of the books after taking part in the workshops and seeing how easy the activities were to set up and carry out.

The staff at each day care centre received a follow up phone call interview from the project coordinator, one month after the workshop, during which all staff highlighted how they had begun to, and will continue to, implement the books in their settings – further data can be found in Appendix B.

On the other hand the workshop organised for other childcare professionals suffered poorer attendance than we would have hoped, despite wide spread distribution of flyers, posters, invitations and emails and early interest in the event. On the day four attendees benefited from the training and recorded their action plans (sent in a 'letter to myself'). Feedback from the training is to be found in Appendix C. Given the low attendance at the workshop we opted to include a short input on Play@Home within the ongoing Pre-Birth to Three training course to further raise staff awareness – to date these trainings have been attended by fifty pre-school and day care staff. In addition we included a short presentation on Play@Home to a range of twenty professionals and practitioners, including the Obsdale nursery ICAN team, at the CALA/Pennsylvania Literacy collaborative learning day on 5<sup>th</sup> April. The focus of the event was early literacy and included a look at how positive early home experiences, such as those suggested in Play@Home contributed to developing children's skills and knowledge.

### **OUTCOME 3**

*Improved partnership working between agencies and greater awareness of respective roles and responsibilities.*

This outcome was met through effective partnership working, some of which has been detailed above. As well as delivering workshops to Baby Massage classes we carried out workshops within two Women's Aid Centres. At the centres, we worked alongside eleven children, six mums and two Service Workers. Carrying out the workshop at one WA gave the adult service worker an opportunity to observe how well both mothers interacted with their children during this type of play situation. One of the families was Polish so we gave mum the Play@Home Polish book - she was delighted and said she would be trying out the activities with her child.

**Appendix D** is an evaluation put together by the adult worker present at the workshop and an add-on benefit of the project has been that the WA worker intends to take forward the workshop sessions within the centre; both for new families and her staff team.

The geographical spread of the project included Skye, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, Inverness, Dingwall, Black-Isle, Tain and Fort William and workshops took place between November 2010 and March 2011

## **CONCLUSION**

The Play@Home project has been successful in ensuring that the parents who attended CALA workshops have an improved knowledge of the Play@Home books and have more confidence in carrying on the activities at home with their children. CALA Toddler Group Facilitators have also further developed their own knowledge and understanding and as a result more frequently discuss the activities and parent progress in using them at home when visiting their groups.

The follow up calls made to Day Care staff helped consolidate their learning and remind them to incorporate the activities into their session planning. The opportunities taken to work alongside other Early Years Professionals, including Health Visitors, early year's practitioners and ICAN specialists has the potential to improve effective partnership working through stronger networks and awareness of common links via Play@Home. This in turn can only be of benefit to children and their families in Highland.

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