



**HIGHLAND
WELLBEING
ALLIANCE**



forging the future together

For Highland's Children - Bulletin 7

July 2005

This bulletin includes news of:

● Joint Committee Seminar - 19 August: <i>"Getting it right for every child"</i>	
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Getting it right for every childin Highland & Scotland

The Scottish Executive have published a far reaching consultation paper on the future of the Children's Hearing system and integrated children's services, called 'Getting it Right for Every Child'. This proposes streamlined processes and new statutory duties on agencies. It envisages earlier and more coordinated interventions, and fewer referrals to a strengthened and modernised Children's Hearings system.

Peter Peacock, Minister for Education & Young People says: "Everyone has a responsibility to do the right thing for each child and we must all work towards a unified approach, with less bureaucracy and more freedom to get on and deliver services for children."

These proposals will affect all agencies and services that provide care and support for children and their families.

This consultation paper will be the subject of a Joint Committee Seminar:

19 August at 9.30am - 2.00pm, in Highland Council Chamber, Inverness

Phase 1 of the Children's Hearings Review confirmed the support for the principles of the Children's Hearings system. It also highlighted some serious concerns. Accordingly, this new consultation paper is based on improved partnership working and early preventative measures.

It is envisaged that the seminar will involve plenary inputs and workshops, with key local and Scottish Executive speakers.

To reserve a place at the seminar, contact: kay.ballantyne@highland.gov.uk

Getting it right for every child: a summary of what is proposed

- ❑ Reduced bureaucracy and one plan of action which is underpinned by coordinated assessment of the child's needs.
- ❑ Better information for children and families, about what is expected of them and the professionals involved with them.
- ❑ Before referral to another service, agencies should take responsibility and do all they can to support the child. Automatic referral to another agency should be the exception.
- ❑ Building on the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, new statutory duties on all agencies, including: to identify children who are in need, to act on Children's Hearings decisions, to appoint a lead professional, and to be accountable for their actions.
- ❑ Compulsory measures should only be used where they are essential to deliver action for a child that cannot be achieved without such intervention. Revised grounds to be based on two tests - significant need and the likely need for compulsion.
- ❑ New arrangements to oversee standards and procedures for the Children's Hearings System.

The consultation paper is at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/06/20135608/56098>

Integrated Assessment Framework

While 'Getting it Right for Every Child' provides national guidance on an integrated assessment framework, work is progressing in Highland towards implementation in early 2006. A multi agency Reference Group is supporting a dedicated team, to develop a model that fits with existing and proposed structures and processes. Local meetings have taken place across the authority, to test out the model with practitioners and managers.

For further information, or to be involved in any of the consultations, contact: marj.stewart@highland.gov.uk

Child Protection Inspection Report

The report of the pilot child protection inspection has been published by the *Services for Children* unit. It concludes that children and young people in Highland are well protected. It is available at: <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/Highland%20Final%20Draft%2009-06-05.pdf>

The Child Protection Committee will incorporate recommendations from the inspection report into an action plan, with agreed timescales to further improve child protection services in all agencies across the authority.

Integrated children's services website

A new homepage for integrated children's services in Highland has been created, to make information more easily accessible. It is at: <http://www.protectinghighlandchildren.org/>

This homepage will provide information about child protection, and a compendium of relevant documents is already hosted there (with more to follow).

Very soon, this page will also provide access to the e-version of *For Highlands Children 2*. While the hard copy comes off the printers in July, and will be updated annually, the web pages will be kept up to date as action plans are progressed.

Ros is Cromba Fòram Sgìreil Sheirbheis na Cloinne

Ross & Cromarty Area Children's Service Forum

Education, Culture & Sport

- Schools across Ross & Cromarty raised almost £16,000 on Big Heart Day on Wednesday 9th February for the victims of the Asian Tsunami last December. This was with a wide range of interesting activities including: a beach clean; dress as you like day; Vice Versa - boys dress as girls and girls dress as boys; standing in a bucket of gunge; face painting; donating pocket money; rock concert; scavenger hunt; movie theme; cross country run; come to school in silly clothes; sponsored music 'Practice-athon'; and many, many more.

Social Work

• EARLY YEARS

- Surestart Funding will now be provided in all areas to support children aged 0-3 years who are considered vulnerable.

- The definition of vulnerable is:
- Families that meet any two of the following criteria:
 1. dependent on income support
 2. headed by a lone parent
 3. of more than 2 children

Or who live in rural communities, and meet either 1 or 2 above.

Ross & Cromarty Area Children's Service Forum are investing in NCH, Homestart, Family First and Highland Pre-school Services to provide support for such families.

They are also investing in new posts of Community Early Years Workers (Surestart), which will be Social Work posts aligned with Health Visitors to provide responsive, preventative services. These are currently advertised for recruitment.

They are also creating an Area Co-ordinator post to monitor Surestart services as well as a Family Learning Co-ordinator to develop Parenting Education in collaboration with a range of local professionals.

Additionally, this funding has enabled the creation of a 0.5 fte Senior Family Liaison Officer for Wester Ross. Amelia Wilson has been appointed to this post.

Health

• MOBILE TOY LIBRARY

The Mobile Toy Library is a voluntary agency that provides a range of toys, including those designed for children with additional needs, that can be borrowed by school, groups or individuals. They operate a 4 week cycle, during school term only, serving the following areas:

Week 2 -	Thursday	Avoch Fortrose Rosemarkie Cromarty Kilcoy
Week 3 -	Monday Tuesday	Strathconon Kinlochewe

		Gairloch
		Aultbea
		Lade
		Ullapool
	Wednesday	Marybank
		Maryburgh
		Conon Bridge
	Thursday	Mulbuie
		Munlochy
Week 4 -	Monday	Tain
		Alness
	Thursday	Ardross
		Alness
		Balintore
		Portmahomack

The cost is £7 per child per annum or £10 for 2 children per annum. There are concessions for those in receipt of State Benefits to £3 per child per annum and £4 for 2 children per annum.

For more information contact Mabel Ross on 01463 224671.

- HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOLS

All schools in Highland are to be Health Promoting Schools by December 2005. Ross & Cromarty schools are making good progress towards this target with the following now accredited:

- Alness Academy
- Ardross Primary
- Avoch Primary
- Badcaul Primary
- Bridgend Primary
- Bridgend Education Unit
- Conon Primary
- Coulhill Primary
- Craighill Primary
- Cromarty Primary
- Cullicudden Primary
- Dingwall Primary
- Gairloch High
- Gairloch Primary
- Hill of Fearn Primary
- Inver Primary
- Invergordon Academy
- Kiltearn Primary
- Kinlochewe Primary
- Knockbreck Primary
- Maryburgh Primary
- Milton Primary
- Mulbuie Primary
- Munlochy Primary
- Newhall Primary
- Newmore Primary
- Obsdale Primary
- Poolewe Primary
- Scoraig Primary
- South Lodge Primary
- St Clements School

- St Duthus School
- Strathconon Primary
- Strathgarve Primary
- Strathpeffer Primary
- Tarbat Old Primary
- Tarradale Primary
- Ullapool High

The following schools have accreditation visits pending:

- Achiltibuie Primary
- Applecross Primary
- Bualnabib Primary
- Culbokie Primary
- Dingwall Academy
- Ferintosh Primary
- Fortrose Academy
- Hilton of Cadboll Primary
- Inverasdale Primary
- Lochcarron Primary
- Marybank Primary
- North Kessock Primary
- Park Primary
- Sheldaig Primary
- Tain Royal Academy
- Tore Primary
- Torridon Primary
- Ullapool Primary

Any school wishing to be accredited should contact Dave McCartney at dave.mccartney@highland.gov.uk to make arrangements for gathering the portfolio of evidence and organising the Health Promoting Schools Team visit.

- **SAFE, STRONG AND FREE PROJECT**

The Safe, Strong and Free Project aims to reduce the vulnerability of young children to abuse and assault.

A pro-active approach is taken involving children, parents, carers and pre-school staff to prevent children developing bullying behaviour, being victimised by their peers, abducted or sexually assaulted by adults.

Workshops are now available in most parts of Ross & Cromarty. Contact Annette Ewen at: info@ssf-project.org.uk for more details.

Training

- Children's Service Workers received a further two days training on Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 February at Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club stadium. The tutors were Dave Rex, Mary Cosgrove, Marj Stewart, Gordon MacLeod, Valerie Gunn, Jane Park, Linda Thom and Jim Kane. The training themes were Food and Behaviour; Inter-agency Working: Prevention & Protection for Vulnerable Children; Working with Vulnerable Children & Young People: Resilience and How to 'Bump it Up'; Education & Health - outcomes for Looked After Children. This training was also an excellent opportunity for Children's Services Workers from across Highland to share examples of good practice and stimulate ideas for further development.

Communication

- If you are reading this you have already accessed the Integrated Children's Services web page. You will find published here Minutes of Area Children's Service Forum meetings; For Highland's Children Bulletins; information about "Your Choice to Healthy Living; information about Conferences and Training; and Publications.
- An Easy Guide that provides brief details about a wide range of children's services providers has been produced and is now available at the Integrated Children's Services web page. Contact the Integration Managers office if you want your details included or altered.

New Developments and information

- **Getting our Priorities Right: Good Practice Guidance for working with Children and Families affected by Substance Misuse**

The Scottish Executive's vision for Scotland's children is: 'A Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of his or her family background, has the best possible start in life'.

For Scotland's Children, published in 2001, gave advice on how better to integrate children's services.

The Report of the Child Protection Audit and Review 2002, aims to improve services for children who experience abuse or neglect. Both of these important Scottish Executive reports highlight the children of parents who misuse alcohol and/or drugs as a significant 'at risk' group. The Child Protection Review states:

"The problems of neglect and problem drug or alcohol use are often related, particularly where household finances are spent on drink or drugs, or the behaviour of the parents or their associates impact on the child's welfare. Some problems are intergenerational, particularly neglect. We have concerns about the future well being of a large number of children who are now being born into drug misusing families, and ensuring their better protection must be a priority."

It is vital that Drug/Alcohol Action Teams, Child Protection Committees and agencies involved in preparing Children's Services Plans ensure that all agencies agree how they will work together to protect children and support families. Managers must ensure staff in children and adult services in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors are equipped to identify concerns and take appropriate action to protect children. We must make sure that these vulnerable children and young people do not fall through the net.

Tackling substance misuse is a high priority for the people of Scotland and the Scottish Executive. This needs to be developed against the backdrop of current national strategies namely: *Tackling Drugs in Scotland: Action in Partnership and the Plan for Action on Alcohol Problems*. The national drugs strategy provides the framework for reducing substance misuse amongst young people and helping communities resist drug-related crime and anti-social behaviour. Challenging targets have now been set for improvement. The alcohol strategy, whilst acknowledging the many positive aspects of alcohol within Scotland, focuses on alcohol related harm and sets out a comprehensive plan to change attitudes and behaviour and improve support and treatment services.

Action is underway to stifle the availability of drugs, to improve drug users' access to treatment and rehabilitation and to strengthen drugs education in schools, as well as reducing binge drinking and harmful drinking by children and young people. Nevertheless, there is more to be done. Professionals in specialist drug- and alcohol-related services frequently feel ill-equipped to manage the often complex needs of both parents and their children and have focused on adults. Similarly, staff in

children's services have lacked the knowledge, skills and confidence to address parents' substance problems (alcohol and drugs) even when these are clearly affecting their children.

This guidance, coupled with the resources already provided by the Executive through initiatives such as the Changing Children's Services Fund, Social Inclusion Partnerships and Surestart, allied to training offered to DAT members and to managers and staff of services by STRADA (Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol), will do much to help improve the lives of children affected by parental substance misuse.

The Scottish Executive will monitor progress through Child Protection Committees' annual reports, Drug/Alcohol Action Teams Corporate Action Plans and Children's Services Plans; through the Social Work Services Inspectorate Annual Report process, and in due course, through the multi-disciplinary inspection system for child protection services.

For too long the needs and welfare of children in families affected by substance misuse have been overlooked. We must now concentrate our efforts on helping these children.

The Guidance is available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/gopr-01.asp>

- **New Area Manager at Ross & Cromarty Chief Executives Office**

The new Area Manager for Ross & Cromarty is Bob Cameron. Bob was previously Area Planning and Building Control Manager for Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey. He takes over from Malcolm McArthur who retires at the end of April. Farewell Malcolm and happy retirement. Thank you for your tremendous contribution and support to Integrated Children's Services. Welcome to Bob. We look forward to working with you.

- **Standards to give nursery kids a taste for healthy eating**

Nursery kids are set to enjoy nutritious meals and snacks in a move designed to give them a taste for healthy eating.

Building on the ground-breaking Hungry for Success initiative, which transformed schools meals in Scotland, new guidance will ensure pre-school children don't miss out on healthy and nutritious food.

The Nutritional Guidance for Early Years will ensure the best advice and information is available to give children a head start with healthy eating.

The guidance - designed for under-fives in nurseries, playgroups and family centres - will include:

- Nutritional information and recommendations on meals and snacks

- Examples of what a healthy and balanced diet consists of

- Advice on developing healthy eating habits

- Additional information on topics such as dental health and physical activity

Deputy Education Minister Euan Robson said:

"The benefits of a healthy and well balanced diet are undisputed, not just in improving a child's health but giving them the essential nutrients and energy to fuel them through the day.

"Scotland already leads the way in ensuring school meals are healthier, more appetising and offer pupils greater choice - but we want to do even more.

"By focusing on the early years, before children pick up bad habits and poor diets, we can encourage youngsters to adopt healthy eating habits that will stay with them for life.

"This guidance will give childcare workers access to nutritional information and advice, allowing them to provide healthy and nutritious meals and snacks for future generations of Scots."

Celia Gardiner, Programme Manager for Early Years at NHS Health Scotland said:

"We welcome the nutritional guidance for under fives and recognise the importance of such a measure. It is important that we get healthy eating messages across to our children from an early age and this announcement adds significant weight to that goal.

"Last year saw the launch of Adventures in Foodland, a healthy eating initiative designed to make food fun for pre-school children and introduce them to different types of healthy foods. We have been delighted by the enthusiastic response to this initiative."

Jacquie Roberts, Chief Executive of the Care Commission, said:

"The National Care Standards already emphasise the importance of both healthy eating and learning about a balanced diet in early education and childcare. This new guidance will provide carers with very useful detailed information on putting those standards into practice and driving up the quality of care experienced by young children across Scotland."

Consultation on the guidance will last until the end of June 2005 and the final document will be published later this year.

The Care Commission was set up under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 to regulate and inspect Scottish care services. Among the 14,000 or so individual care services that it regulates are around 4,500 day care and early education services for children, a category that includes nursery classes, crèches, after school clubs and play groups.

Through Hungry for Success we are investing £63.5 million to:

- Provide nutritious and more appetising meals, including larger portions at no extra cost to parents

- Introduce nutrient standards to ensure meals are healthier

- Improve the atmosphere and facilities in school dining areas

- Provide all P1 and P2 pupils with free fruit at least three times a week

- Provide free chilled drinking water in schools

- Remove vending machines from dining areas and ensure where they do exist in schools that they provide healthy alternatives.

- **Highland 2007**

Highland 2007 is managed by a tri-partite partnership comprising The Scottish Executive, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and The Highland Council. The project has enthusiastic Government backing to the tune of £9m.

The aim of Highland 2007 is to promote the Highlands as a great place to live and visit, by showcasing the unique and special nature of Highland culture in the past, present and future. The project has been designed to attract visitors from within and outwith the UK as well as those living and working in the Highlands.

To reach its audience, Highland 2007 will create a year-long programme of events and projects that builds upon and develops the existing cultural infrastructure of the Highlands, with the aim of leaving a positive legacy beyond 2007.

You can visit the website at: <http://www.highland2007.com/>

- **Young People Leading The Way**

- West Highland Way 25th Anniversary Relay (*The West Highland Way Strategic Development Initiative*)

Young people in the Highlands are being invited to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the West Highland Way, Scotland's first and premier long distance route by joining around 1200 other children and young people in a relay walk this June.

Attracting around 15,000 whole route walkers and 80,000 part route walkers the West Highland Way contributes in the region of £3.5 million to the Scottish economy.

As part of the anniversary celebrations a relay will take place in June along the entire 95 miles from Milngavie to Fort William. Gill Cox, Development Manager for the West Highland Way said: "We are looking for young people and children's groups from areas around the route to join in and celebrate with us. We have already had a lot of interest from schools, scouts, guides, church groups, nature groups, police cadets and disabled groups and want to make sure everyone has a chance to be involved."

The relay will take place from Milngavie on Monday 13 June and finish on Friday 17 June in Fort William at the State Street Caledonian Challenge. Each group will carry the specially commissioned baton over sections of between 1 mile and 4 miles, supported by members of mountain rescue teams, The Rambler's Association and Rangers from East Dunbartonshire Council, Stirling Council, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and Highland Council. Each group will be generously supplied with a Footprint map produced and published by Stirling Surveys to help them learn vital navigating skills.

Gill continued "The relay is about encouraging children to appreciate the wonderful Scottish countryside, become active and to enjoy themselves in a safe and informative way. Each participant will receive a certificate and medal plus their name will be printed in the anniversary relay book."

For more information about joining in as a school or a group, or supporting the relay through sponsorship or in a voluntary capacity, contact Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park on 01389 722600 or Gill Cox, West Highland Way Development Manager, Office: 01389 722600, Direct line: 01389 722025 Fax: 01389 722633 or email gill.cox@lochlomond-trossachs.org.

The West Highland Way Strategic Development Initiative is funded by Argyll and Bute Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, The Highland Council, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, Lomond and Rural Stirling LEADER+, Scottish Natural Heritage, Stirling Council and WHELK LEADER+.

Charles Stephen, Integration Manager, Ross & Cromarty/ Skye & Lochalsh.