



**SUPERVISED CHILD
CONTACT IN LONDON**
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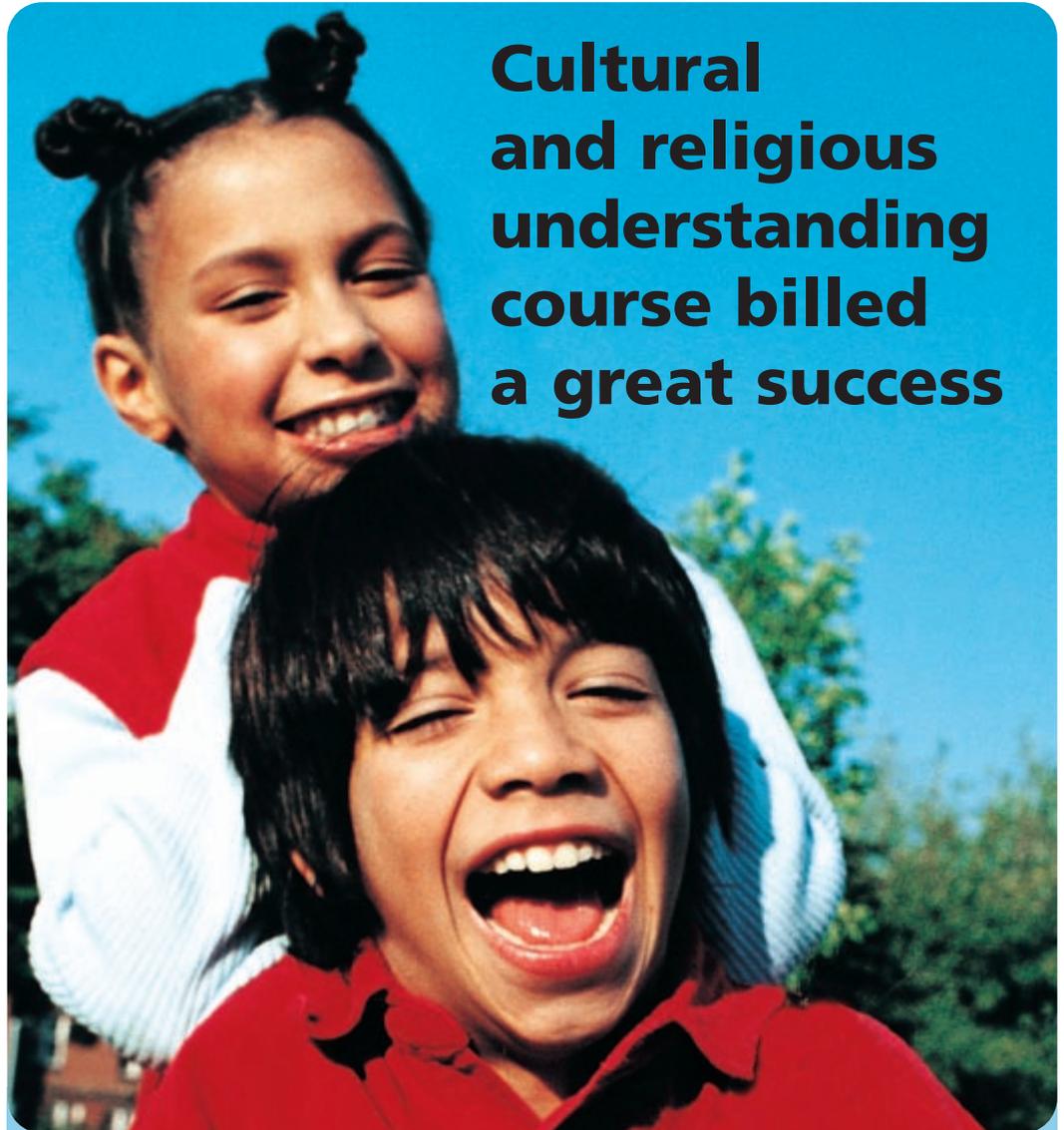
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**WHY DOES CONTACT
REALLY MATTER?**
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Cultural and religious understanding course billed a great success

(A day course for Child Contact Centre staff and volunteers held at Pudsey Child Contact Centre, Leeds)

This informative and enjoyable day covered various aspects of cultural and ethnic issues that may influence Asian families in a Child Contact Centre setting. There were five thought-provoking speakers, each giving an excellent overview of different aspects of Asian culture, family life and issues that may affect the transition into British life.

The first speaker was Dr Philip Lewis, who has had life experience in Pakistan and spent twenty years in Bradford.

Through his academic work and studies of Muslims and Islam he has built deep relationships across differing faith communities. He began the day with an overview of the Islamic faith, looking at beliefs and practices, and the different groups within Islam, including a historical look at the schools of thought influencing British Muslims. This helped to educate the audience to make distinctions between the more fundamentalist teachings and the peaceful religious understanding held by the majority of British Muslims.

Continued overleaf

Working together

NACCC is a membership organisation. One of the great things about this is the way we are able to tap into all the expertise, experiences and enthusiasm that Centres can bring. Examples of this? You have responded to requests for information to put together a briefing report for MPs and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). You continue to let us know of your lobbying and promotional events. You tell us success stories and problems so that we can be more effective in providing a realistic, influential voice on behalf of Centres.

Then there are the strengthening special interest groups. These have some common identity that unites them, and they share practice and knowledge. With their own identified area of interest and corresponding expertise they are in a good position to feed relevant issues in to NACCC and from NACCC. Look inside this *Contact Matters* (pages 10 and 11) and you will see that all three are covered – The Professional Network, Northern Ireland Network of Child Contact Centres and the burgeoning Wales network.

But of course the external links are just as important, and you should take all available opportunities to develop your role at local level, through Family Justice Councils, CAFCASS, Children's Trusts and parents' advice and support agencies. See page 3 for a good example of multi-agency work.

All members have a chance to get together on a big scale at NACCC's AGM and Annual Conference in September. We hope to see you there.

Yvonne Kee
Chief Executive

(continued from front page)

Cultural and religious awareness raised at Child Contact Centres

The second slot was presented by Dominic and Awais Moghal, who, along with the other speakers are involved with the Bradford Churches for Dialogue and Diversity (BCDD). Dominic gave an overview of the salient characteristics of Pakistani culture, covering aspects such as caste, religion, tradition and the male influence in terms of within the family and also in extended family lineage. He explored how relationships play an important role with the emphasis being on community rights and not the individual. He also looked at the extended family structure and the challenges Muslims face when they settle in a different country, to maintain extended family values. Drawing on personal experience he highlighted some of the tensions and frustrations borne out as people seek to acclimatise to a new country, fit with a new culture whilst also attempting to maintain valued relationships with their family.

Awais gave a narrative description of the status of women in Pakistani culture; how women represent dignity, and operate kindness, obedience and patience, particularly in their role looking

after children, home and husbands. This made the audience more aware of how difficult it is for Asian women coming from another country, to adapt to a completely different way of life, often managing very differing tensions and expectations.



In the afternoon Mufti Zubair, a solicitor and Muslim law cleric gave a detailed presentation explaining Islamic law in relation to family and parenting. He outlined the teaching on bringing up children, and the legal aspects of divorce and access to children. Mufti explained how this role is invaluable in the Muslim community, providing guidance, particularly at times of distress and change. Although raising much

debate it also provided a chance to sit with and reflect on another cultural approach and how this might impact our understanding of Asian families accessing Child Contact Centres.

Finally Dr Margaret Nunnerley (who has a PhD in cross-cultural mediation) brought the day together with a group discussion, to agree ways to apply the things we had learned from the day to working at a Child Contact Centre. Her work with Asian women living and divorcing in this country provided a balance to the understanding of Islamic family law, exploring how some of the tensions of Islamic divorce proceedings were resolved.

The day as a whole provided a good mix of academic understanding and personal experience. It was indeed a day not to be missed, and if the opportunity arises to repeat this training elsewhere we would urge people to book it in their diary quickly!

Joanne Kettle & Dr Maggie Kiely,
Halifax Child Contact Centre

Supervised contact in London: promoting safe multi-agency practice



Allegations of violence and other forms of abuse are common when families break up and go to family courts for help. Where serious concerns exist or violence is clearly evidenced, contact may still be assessed as in the best interests of children and the family may be referred to a Child Contact Centre for supervised child contact. Separating fact from fiction, identifying the degree and nature of the risk and working with other organisations to effectively manage or reduce that risk and move the family forwards, is no easy task.

All of us now know the key messages from research and experience:

- When there has been a history of violence, ongoing contact with a child can provide opportunities for violence and repeat victimisation.
- The risk of violence can be greatest in the months following separation (Jones 1991).
- Assaults can often be linked to the contact arrangement (Hester & Radford 1996).
- There has been a clear presumption that contact with non-resident parents is invariably best for children and this 'presumption'

undervalues the importance of contact quality.

- There is a relationship between domestic violence and child abuse (Mullender & Humphries 1998, Edleson 1999).
- Many domestic violence incidents against partners are witnessed by children who can be damaged by the experience (BMA 1998).

The AMICA survey (Radford, Sayer & AMICA 1999) argued for a consistent risk assessment procedure in such cases, relevant training on contact and domestic violence and for children to benefit from more sensitive and individualised approaches to contact.

The Safe Contact Project (SCP) in Greater London, was set up to meet these needs. Membership includes CAFCASS, the Domestic Violence Intervention Project, Coram and other key organisations providing CAFCASS with supervised contact services across London.

The group meets quarterly and has:

- Developed an interagency protocol allowing for referral to DVIP for full risk assessment and when appropriate, access

to a domestic violence perpetrator programme and partner support work.

- Develop commonly agreed referral procedures and paperwork.
- Provision for matching cases with the most appropriate centres, not just on the basis of geography, opening times and the possibilities for outreach work, but also on factors relating to cultural heritage and first language.
- Opportunity for member organisations to network, share difficulties and develop practice together in a supportive environment.
- Opportunity to jointly campaign and publicise services.

None of us, professionals or volunteers, like to work with uncertainty when the safeguarding of children and their carers is at stake. Risk assessment and management can never be an exact science. But sound professional judgement, the pooling of resources, mutual learning and support and commonly developed procedures, can help enormously.

Brian Kirby, Service/Development Manager, CAFCASS

'Moving families forward' AGM & conference

NACCC's AGM & Conference 2007 will take place on Saturday 15th September at Trent Vineyard, Easter Park, Lenton Lane, Nottingham NG7 2PX. NACCC is honoured to have **The Rt Hon Lord Justice Wall and Honor Rhodes** (Family and Parenting Institute) as keynote speakers at what should be a thought-provoking and inspiring conference.

European visitors

At our AGM we expect to welcome a number of delegates from Child Contact Centres across Europe. Along with NACCC they are members of CEPREP – the European Confederation of Child & Family Contact Centres. CEPREP brings us together to work for common aims in the interests of children and their families. Representatives of other national associations will be meeting in Nottingham for a meeting the day before the AGM. Whether or not you are fluent in other European languages, you will have the chance to find out more about practice in other countries.



Thank you to the many volunteers round the country who help children keep valuable links with their family. Warm congratulations from all the Trustees and staff at NACCC to those volunteers who have served their Centre for many years and have been awarded their bronze, silver or gold certificates. The following list indicates the number of each level of certificate awarded since the last issue of 'Contact Matters'. The number in brackets indicates the total number of year's service given to that Centre.

Aberdare Children's Contact Centre

7 volunteers – 7 bronze (21 years)

Abingdon Child Contact Centre

23 volunteers – 15 gold, 2 silver, 6 bronze (178 years)

Alkington Child Contact Centre

20 volunteers – 10 gold, 5 silver, 5 bronze (161 years)

Alton Contact Centre

17 volunteers – 15 silver, 2 bronze (107 years)

Camberley Family Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 bronze (3 years)

Cheltenham Child Contact Centre

15 volunteers – 11 silver, 4 bronze (67 years)

Cleveland Child Contact Centres

18 volunteers – 1 gold, 10 silver, 7 bronze (104 years)

Emmanuel Child Contact Centre

13 volunteers – 7 gold, 4 silver, 1 bronze (83 years)

Freshwaters Contact Centre

9 volunteers – 3 silver, 6 bronze (33 years)

Halton Child Contact Centre

17 volunteers – 5 gold, 12 silver (110 years)

Hemel Hempstead Child Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 bronze (3 years)

Jimmy's Contact Centre

3 volunteers – 2 gold, 1 bronze (13 years)

Maidenhead Child Contact Centre

25 volunteers – 21 gold, 4 silver (262 years)

Middleton Child Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 silver (5 years)

Neutral Ground Child Contact Centre

16 volunteers – 9 gold, 6 silver, 1 bronze (164 years)

Shirley Family Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 gold (10 years)
Skipton Child Contact Centre
1 volunteer – 1 silver (5 years)

Solihull Child Contact Centre

3 volunteers – 1 silver, 2 bronze (11 years)

South Bristol Child Contact Centre

5 volunteers – 5 bronze (15 years)

Tower Room Contact Centre

12 volunteers – 6 gold, 1 silver, 5 bronze (113 years)

Tring Child Contact Centre

9 volunteers – 9 silver (45 years)

Vale Royal Child Contact Centre

8 volunteers – 1 silver, 7 bronze (26 years)

Weston-Super-Mare Contact Centre

12 volunteers – 6 gold, 4 silver, 2 bronze (86 years)

Wycombe Child Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 silver (5 years)

Congratulations! – A total of 1620 years' service given to local Child Contact Centres. Please do let us know in writing if you have volunteers who you would like to thank and congratulate by issuing them with one of NACCC's volunteer certificates (Gold for 10+ years' service, Silver for 5 years' service and Bronze for 3 years' service).

Children's playroom gets facelift thanks to student placement

Over the last 6 months, the Meeting Place, Scarborough has been fortunate enough to receive two students from a local university on their work experience placements. This is the first time we have had students on a long work placement and it has proved to be very successful for both the Centre and the students. These two students, Gwen Fryer and Andy Penning have made a real difference to our Centre and I would like to thank them both for all their hard work and enthusiasm they have brought to the team.

In addition to them supporting contact sessions, they have undertaken a 'painting project', which gave the playroom a much needed face lift; and a 'fundraising project', where they organised a 'gig' at one of the local pubs. This was a very successful event, seeing

four local bands play in an amazing atmosphere, raising essential funds for the Centre. This enabled us to buy a carpet for our new room (a room for older children to relax in). Sadly, Andy and Gwen's time at university has come to an end, but we look forward to working with the universities and colleges to recruit some more students.

Fiona Jarvie, Co-ordinator of The Meeting Place, Scarborough



Gwen takes the challenge!

Good ideas, funding ideas to share? please let us know

Child Contact Centre Accreditation

Congratulations...

to all the Child Contact Centres listed below who have achieved Accreditation since the last issue of Contact Matters. Well done!

- Aberystwyth Child Contact Centre
- Alkrington Child Contact Centre
- Alton Contact Centre
- Baker and Duncan Family Consultancy
- Bangor Child Contact Centre
- Basingstoke Child Contact Centre
- Birmingham St Anne's Child Contact Centre
- Bishop Auckland Family Contact Centre
- Bristol Child Contact Centre
- Cambridge & Ely Family Contact Centres
- Carlisle Child Contact Centre
- Celia Wadsworth Supervised Child Contact Centre
- Christian Alliance Housing Contact Centre
- Contact Centre Woking
- Coram Family Child Contact Service – Supported & Supervised
- Cwmbran Contact Centre
- Derby Child Contact Centre
- Doncaster Child Contact Centre
- Eastbourne Family Contact Centre
- Emmanuel Contact Centre
- Good Shepherd Contact Centre
- Guernsey Child Contact Centre
- Grimsby Child Contact Centre
- Halifax Child Contact Centre
- Hereford Child Contact Centre
- High Barnet Access and Child Contact Centre
- Hill Top Contact Centre
- Leicester Family Contact Centre
- Leigh Stonehouse Child Contact Centre
- Lincoln Child Contact Centre
- Llandudno Child Contact Centre
- Melton Mowbray Child Contact Centre
- Milli's Child Contact Centre
- Muswell Hill Child Contact Centre
- National Children's Centre
- Neath Port Talbot Contact Centre
- Newport Child Contact Centre
- North Nottingham Contact Centre
- Northallerton Contact Centre
- Retford Contact Centre
- Rhyl Child Contact Centre
- Rugby Children's Contact Centre
- Scunthorpe Child Contact Centre
- Sheffield ACE Contact & Assessment Centre
- St Andrew's Family Contact Centre
- St Augustine's Child Contact Centre
- St Cuthbert's Care Contact Centre
- St John's Contact Centre
- St John's Woodley Contact Centre
- St Mark's Child Contact Centre
- Supervised Child Contact Service (Relate North Wales)
- Swansea Children's Contact Centre
- Torquay Child Contact Centre
- Tower Room Contact Centre, Loughton
- Vale Royal Child Contact Centre
- Wakefield Child Contact Centre
- Ward Andrews Centre for Children and their Families
- Wellingborough Contact Centre
- West Boldon Contact Centre (Tyne & Wear)
- Wigan Child Contact Centre
- Withington Child Contact Centre
- Workop Contact Centre
- Wrexham Contact Centre
- Wythenshawe Child Contact Centre
- York Contact Centre

Wedge Card www.wedgocard.co.uk/ local shopping supports NACCC

- Would you like a discount card that entitles you to a range of great offers at hundreds of independent shops, and makes a donation to NACCC at the same time?
- Would you like to help us support our beneficiaries at the same time as contributing to your local community?

Well now you can with the Wedge Card.

The Wedge Card aims to revitalise local communities by offering great discounts to customers using local shops and services. It also supports charities and if you buy a card using the weblink below we will receive £10 out of the £20 cost of the card.

Initially launched in Central London, Wedge is spreading across the capital and out into other cities rapidly, and you'll find a range of fantastic deals

exclusive to Wedge Card holders in your local shops. Whether you are buying clothes, books, getting your hair cut or simply eating out, using a Wedge Card you'll be helping us and also helping local businesses to prosper.

Wedge Cards cost just £20 and are valid for one year. Most card-holders find that they recoup the initial cost in just a few purchases. Visit www.wedgocard.co.uk to find out what traders have signed up to the scheme.

Many thanks for supporting NACCC



<http://www.ncvo.biz/wedgocard/individuals.asp?RO=NOAACCC01>

CRB update



Can I use a Disclosure processed by another organisation?

CRB and NACCC advise against transferring disclosures. In the interest of children's safety it is required that a new disclosure is undertaken regardless of disclosures currently held.

How to get your CRB form right

To prevent delays in the Disclosure process accurate completion of the application forms is key. Inaccurate or incomplete forms have to be returned to you for amendments.

- Complete the form in BLACK pen.
- Fill in all required sections: A, B, C, D (if less than 5 years at present address), H and X. Sections E, F, G, Y & Z should be left blank.
- If the applicant has lived at their current address for less than 5 years please ensure that the full 5 year address history is shown in section D and that there are no gaps.

Section X – ID checking

CRB produce a list of valid identity documents; this is shown inside 'An Applicant's Guide to Completing the CRB Application Form' leaflet. The list is available on the website www.crb.gov.uk DIP 002 – ID Checking Process or contact the NACCC office and we can provide details. Please ensure that the correct number of documents is checked i.e. one from group 1 & two from group 2. Also ensure that you cross number 15 in section X to show that the address has been verified.

There are now also two additional documents: a CRB Disclosure certificate (if issued within the past 12 months) and an Asylum Registration Card.

**Judith Mewse
and Donna Moreland
(Administrators)**

CRB New Policies

We hope that your Centre received the mailing in March that included a slight update on the existing CRB policy along with two new policies and a CRB contract. Thank you to all of you that have returned your signed contracts. Please do not hesitate to contact the NACCC office if you have any further queries on the new policies.

CRB Frequently asked questions

What is the cost of an Enhanced Disclosure?

The cost is still £36 for employees of Child Contact Centres; CRB has not increased the cost this year. They are still free for volunteers.

I have received a Disclosure and it shows a conviction, what should I do?

It is up to the Child Contact Centre to make a decision as to whether an applicant is taken on as a volunteer or employee. If the conviction will not affect children or the work that is undertaken at the Child Contact Centre then the fact that there is a conviction should not in itself be a bar to recruitment. Ideally the applicant will have discussed the conviction during the application process. If the conviction will affect children or the Child Contact Centre then it is entirely appropriate for the recruitment decision to be based on the fact that a conviction is shown on the Disclosure.

What do I need to complete in section Y on the Disclosure Application Form?

NACCC completes Section Y, so please do not complete anything in this section.

What should we do if a mistake is made while completing a Disclosure Application Form?

If a mistake is made, please cross it out and if required enter the correct information as near as possible to the boxes provided. Please do not use correction fluid.

Can I send a Disclosure form to NACCC that my church/parent organisation etc got from CRB?

No, as their reference number will be printed on the form, please contact the NACCC office and we will send forms out to you. There is no problem with another organisation processing Disclosures for Child Contact Centres as long as volunteers or staff are checked every three years.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy Statement

NACCC has received some queries relating to certain aspects of this policy sent out in March:

The Risk Assessment (point 5 of the Statement). This has already been undertaken by NACCC to establish that all Centres need to have all staff and volunteers CRB checked to enhanced level every three years.

Training (point 8 of the Statement). This article should provide sufficient training for most recruitment purposes. If you have specific concerns please contact your own legal advisors.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 gave ex offenders the legal right not to have to reveal criminal convictions, which were "spent". For most jobs and volunteer posts it is unlawful for an employer to dismiss an employee or refuse to employ them if they have a spent conviction. The Act also applies to overseas convictions. From the conviction date the rehabilitation periods are:

- prison or detention in a Young Offenders Institute for 6 – 30 months – 10 years;

- prison or detention in a Young Offenders Institute for 6 months or less – 7 years;
- probation, fine, community service order or compensation – 5 years;
- conditional discharge, binding over, care order or supervision order – 1 year;
- absolute discharge – 6 months.

These periods are halved if the offender was under 18 at the time convicted. A sentence of 30 months plus is never spent.

There are exempted posts and occupations where the person must declare a conviction whether spent or not. Working in a Child Contact Centre falls into this category. However there is no obligation on the offender to disclose *unless* they are asked although being told they would be CRB checked would constitute asking. Unless the person is banned or disqualified from working with children it's not unlawful to take on a person with a conviction whether spent or not for an exempt job, but the employer has to take reasonable steps to supervise their work and could be negligent if the worker is involved

in a further offence at work and the employer hadn't asked about convictions, done a CRB check or knew about the conviction but hadn't adequately supervised. Convictions may have to be disclosed to the insurers and this should be checked with them. Failure to do so may invalidate some policies.

If a criminal conviction is disclosed or revealed you will need to discuss this with the applicant in accordance with paragraphs 9 and 11 of the statement. Matters such as the nature of the offence, any mitigating circumstances, their intended role at the centre, their age at the time of the offence and their record since are all relevant factors. It is reckoned that one third of all 16 to 25 year old men have a police record.

It will be a matter of commonsense and the important factors are to listen to the person and be open with them about your reasoning and any reservations you may have.

Judy Birchall, Support Manager (North)



everyclick.com – the search engine helping NACCC raise money

NACCC and other supporters have started using Everyclick.com as their search engine. We have raised £17.53 so far – which all helps to keep the NACCC wheel turning! **Everyclick.com** is a comprehensive search engine where 50% of profits goes to nominated charities. If you make this website your home page and then use it when doing internet searches, it will start to generate revenue each time you search.

To choose NACCC as your charity Go to <http://www.everyclick.com/uk> and then type 'National Association of Child Contact Centres' where it asks which charity you want to support. This should then automatically select NACCC each time you go to the website.

To make Everyclick.com your home page

It is a good idea to have this site as your home page, so you don't have

to remember to keep going to the site to search.

1. Get the 'everyclick' website displayed on screen
2. Click on 'Tools' and then 'Internet Options'
3. On the 'General' tab Homepage section, click on 'use current'. Click 'OK'
4. This should set the website as your home page

Thank you for your support

Accessibility

ICT Hub – accessible ICT and websites

This partnership provides a range of services to help voluntary and community sector organisations benefit from ICT (Information and Communication Technology). Free publications produced by AbilityNet for the ICT Hub include:

- Easy, free & quick ICT accessibility for Voluntary & Community Organisations.
- How to commission & design accessible websites.

Tel: 0800 652 4737;
www.ictHub.org.uk

RNID Tynetalk and TextDirect

Tynetalk and TextDirect allow textphone users to communicate with hearing people all over the world and vice versa. The service is simple and free to use even for businesses. Calls are charged at standard telephone rates. A hearing person simply dials 18002 followed by the full telephone number of the person they wish to call. Once the call is answered by a textphone user a Tynetalk Operator will join the line to relay the call. The hearing person will speak their part of the conversation and the Tynetalk Operator will type exactly what is being said. The textphone user will then reply by speaking directly to the hearing person or typing their conversation for the Tynetalk Operator to read to the hearing person. If another hearing person answers the call, no Operator will be involved and the call will continue as normal even if you have used the prefix 18002.

Textphone Users:
Switchboard:
18001 0151 709 94 94

Hearing Users:
Switchboard
0151 709 94 94
www.tynetalk.org

Centres

Staying safe commitment scheme

Is your organisation committed to keeping children and young people safe? Do you want your commitment to be recognised by the NSPCC? The scheme is open to organisations in England and Wales and is underpinned by the NSPCC *Safetycheck* standards. These standards provide a benchmark for good practice and therefore help to make organisations safe for children, young people, staff and volunteers. Tel: 0116 234 7276.
www.nspcc.org.uk/commitment-scheme

You and your CVS

Do you want to know about local training? Or how to promote your group? Or how to do a funding application? NACCC staff can often help, but there is a prime source of free information in the form of your local CVS. Some of the main areas of a CVS' work are:

- **Services & support** to promote your effectiveness. Some provide, for example, access to basic facilities such as meeting rooms, photocopiers, ICT, community accounting service, newsletters, training, funding advice etc.
- **Liaison** between individuals and groups in the voluntary sector, and with statutory and private agencies – good networking.
- **Representation** of voluntary and community groups with the different agencies.

You can find out where your local CVS is in the phone book, at the library, or through National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), Tel: 0114 278 6636,
Textphone: 0114 278 7025,
www.navca.org.uk.

Why not get information from your CVS about what they can offer?

Family

International child abduction leaflet

This leaflet, produced by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office provides some information on what parents should do if their child has been abducted, or if they are worried this is about to happen. Leaflets available from www.fco.gov.uk/childabduction, Tel: 0207 008 0878.

Parents Week 2007 – Turning Lives Around: What works for vulnerable families

Parents' Week (15-22 October) is a chance for parenting practitioners and all those working with families to celebrate progress in supporting families. The two aims of the Week this year are:

- to highlight the importance of parenting and family services in tackling disadvantage, enabling all parents to do their best for their children and progressing well-being for all families;
- to offer practical help to practitioners in their work with vulnerable families.

The week is organised by the Family and Parenting Institute whose activities this year include:

- a one day conference for practitioners on Monday 15th October in Central London;
- a free guide for practitioners on working with vulnerable families;
- materials to support your Parents' Week activities on dedicated web pages;
- Good Practice Forum on the website for practitioners to share examples of effectively engaging vulnerable families.

For further information see the Parents' Week pages of this website,
www.familyandparenting.org
Tel: 020 7424 3460

Legal

Anonymous registration for electors protects vulnerable

From June 2007 victims of domestic violence and stalking can apply to have their name removed from the electoral register, but they have to provide evidence such as an order under the Family Law Act 1996 or the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. If an application is granted, the details that appear on the register only have a person's electoral number and the letter N. Further details on the Ministry of Justice's website www.justice.gov.uk/news, Tel: 020 7210 8500.

Legal aid changes: Carter review update

Further to the previous issue on the recommended changes, the Government has now responded and new contracts for firms began in May. Various organisations have written responses expressing their concern and protests are still being made. The fear is that the number and expertise of solicitors undertaking legally aided family work will diminish rapidly, leaving parties unrepresented or represented by very junior members of staff. The impact on Centres could be severe as more families act for themselves and therefore become self-referrals. The solicitors that are still involved may do less with the onus put directly on the families to deal with the Centre, obtain the referral form etc.

Charities Act Implementation

The first order bringing parts of the Charities Act into force has been published. The most relevant change is the ability for trustees to purchase indemnity insurance with the charity's money where it is in the charity's best interests, subject to safeguards.

The Companies (Registrar, Languages and Trading Disclosures) Regulations 2006

A UK limited company, which

includes a charitable company limited by guarantee, must now include the following full particulars of the company on all its websites, emails, business letters and order forms:

- Full name (as registered at Companies House).
- Registered number.
- Address of its registered office.
- Place of registration (e.g. England & Wales).

All these requirements apply whether the document is in hard copy or electronic or any other form. If this information is omitted, incomplete or inaccurate, companies could face a criminal prosecution and a maximum fine of £1,000.

Volunteering

Volunteering England free service

Volunteering England deals with organisations of any size and have both experience and resources to help you involve volunteers in diverse, rewarding volunteering roles.

Freephone/Textphone: 0800 028 3304, **Website:** www.volunteering.org.uk/information

Managing Volunteers Good Practice Bank

Good practice information and sample documents on recruitment, induction and training, support and supervision, retention, expenses, creating volunteer roles, health and safety, protection of vulnerable clients,

dealing with problems and more. Add your own good practice to the bank and help it grow. www.volunteering.org.uk/managingvolunteers/goodpracticebank

Funding

CAFCASS funding

From April 2007 changes took place which will affect a number of Centres in England. DfES monies for contact activities now fall under the auspices of CAFCASS. An audit of provision and past funding is currently being carried out by the newly appointed Commissioning officer. CAFCASS say that those Centres who are funded will receive money in direct proportion to the involvement of CAFCASS with their families.

GRANTnet

GRANTnet is a free to use funding search site provided by GRANTfinder. The site contains a comprehensive and up-to-date database of grants, loans and other initiatives operating in the UK. Currently it holds details on over 4,000 initiatives, including European Commission grants, UK Government grants, local government grants and grants provided by corporate sponsors and charitable trusts. The aim is to enable organisations such as community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises to undertake a search for funding that may apply to specific projects. Anyone can access once they have registered on www.grantfinder.co.uk.

NEW! NACCC brochure

See enclosed brochure featuring new Welcome poster, thank you cards and much more!



Working together for children

Initially the Network of Professionals in Supervised & Assessed Contact was formed as a way of professionals staying in touch, supporting each other and sharing practice.

Child contact service working can be isolating and I was conscious of services evolving or being designed without reference to what was going on elsewhere. Some of you may know that in our area we have already planned the first regional network meeting. It is hoped we can establish a forum comprising members from regional networks who can work with NACCC through regular meetings in Nottingham to meet the Network objectives:

- Consultation & Campaigning (including funding)
- Training & Standards

The National and Regional Networks will involve and inform NACCC regarding their direct involvement in the above and in the remaining objectives:

- Support (on professional practice issues)
- Sharing good practice and service development
- Service delivery partnerships

It was generally agreed at the Seminar held in January that each



Network should operate an 'all welcome' policy so that although the administration and organisation comes from within the region, events are publicised more widely and other people are welcome to attend, thinking especially of training. Two of the issues likely to be discussed within the Forum are NACCC's formulation of Quality Standards for Supervised & Assessed Contact and Training for professionals in the field. Both these topics are highly relevant to the design and delivery of an accredited training programme. It has been gratifying to find how many managers, professionals, volunteers and contact services are eager to:

- get recognition for the skills and experience staff already have;
- increase the credibility of services and individuals working within those service;
- ensure good quality and *directly relevant* training is available to all;

- take part in a process which will eventually see a standardisation of training for professionals working in supervised and assessed contact but also...
- provide for volunteers and staff in supported contact or not ready for a full programme of training.

The Child Contact Supervision & Assessment Qualifying Programme now has a programme of 22 units divided into two modules – 'Theory' & 'Contact Skills'. Each module is divided into components and then into the units. Components include 'Mental Health', 'Attachment', 'Alienation', 'Working with Families' and 'Report Writing'. Each unit brings its own accreditation under the Open College Network and so they can be taken individually. Once the programme has run as a pilot, beginning in October 2007, it will become available to professionals from all Centres. Many services may choose to adopt and adapt the package and therefore become Approved Centres but there may be other ways to ensure all can take part.

Salli Ward, CEO, Pro-Contact

Funding for Northern Ireland Child Contact Centres

The work of Child Contact Centres in Northern Ireland continues to grow. The majority of these Centres are now accredited by NACCC and the rest are working towards accreditation. In March 2006 the government announced that there would be £0.5 million made available in 2007/08 for child contact services in Northern Ireland. In February 2007 a consultation was held, attended by those involved in the Child Contact Centres, members of the judiciary, solicitors, social workers and Court Welfare Officers. The value and importance of the work of the Child Contact Centres has been accepted but we still await details of how the funding will be distributed/accessed.

Northern Ireland Network

The Department is also keen that add-on support services be provided where possible in conjunction or partnership with the Centres e.g. counselling, mediation, work with children etc. Some Centres already provide some of these services and Foyle Child Contact Centre has recently expanded their partnerships to work with Art Therapists in supporting children's understanding of their experiences. Part of the Department's aim is to have an equitable spread of Child Contact Centres throughout Northern Ireland so that a Centre is available to any family in need of such services.

Muriel Orr, on behalf of Northern Ireland Network of Child Contact Centres



Honor Rhodes, Director of Development, Family and Parenting Institute and new Trustee of the National Association of Child Contact Centres.

Why does contact really matter to me?

well judged confidence that our messages to Government will not only be listened to but also heard, two rather different things as any child in contact can tell us.

We live in complicated times, funding for services (either those run by volunteers or those with paid staff) is tight, so it is all the more important that we find ways of rising to the challenge of showing that what we do works and developing what we do so that it works even better.

Research has always mattered to me. One of the most formative pieces of research that I read as a social worker, and one that instantly affected my practice, was that of Stuart Milham et al. (*Going Home: the return of children separated from their families. Aldershot: Dartmouth 1993*) which found that children looked after by local authorities ended up in care two years later UNLESS someone attended to their needs for contact with their families of origin and worked actively to reunify them within the first 'magic' six weeks of being looked after. How important does that make creative and meaningful contact?

I joined the Family and Parenting Institute in October of last year to set up a consultancy and development service. The whole organisation is profoundly interested in how families work, or

don't as the case maybe, and we have a large research and policy unit looking at a range of emerging issues what should interest us all, parents and non-parents alike. We have research projects underway looking at what helps parents get involved in their children's learning, the impact of parents' working hours on their children's emotional wellbeing and how family relationships are engineered in this busy modern world.

I am also a Non-Executive Director on my local Primary Healthcare Trust Board. This is illuminating work as it reminds me that promoting children's health and wellbeing is the responsibility of so many agencies and the best results for children depend on excellent partnerships and clear plans. The life changing power of excellent contact services remains one of the best kept secrets in the world of children's services; it is about time we shared what you all do and the difference you make to children's lives.

I look forward to working with you all.

I suppose it is inevitable that I would be interested in children's contact arrangements, not only was I affected by my parents' divorce but as a social worker of 20 plus years standing I have often seen the impact on children when we get contact wrong. I have watched children become anxious and depressed; and gone on to wonder how this will affect them in their later life, whether we have compromised their future wellbeing and placed a question mark over their future couple relationships.

I was so delighted to be asked to be a Trustee of NACCC; it has always seemed to me to be an organisation that harnesses the excellent ideas and passions generated by people who have invested so much of their time and energy to make contact work for children and young people.

I hope to work with NACCC so that all of us involved in this complicated, and sometimes distressing, work can face the future with a degree of optimism and a

Supervised standards

The Family and Parenting Institute are funding NACCC to research and produce national standards for supervised contact. Watch this space!

A Wales perspective

Child Contact Centre work is very much alive and well in Wales, with both supported and supervised contact available throughout Wales, run by a variety of service providers, all of whom are affiliated and accredited by NACCC. As with many other organisations, the development of devolved government in Wales has given rise to consideration of how or if NACCC should respond to the political scene, and any opportunities that a Welsh Assembly Government may present, particularly as its powers increase. A lot of UK voluntary and charitable organisations have established Welsh bodies so Contact Centre workers began to think about NACCC Cymru and what

Welsh Network

implications that might have. Roles within the network meetings are shared and we have begun to forge good working relationships between Centres. It has been interesting to find out how we all work, our differences in service groupings and the commonalities in our services. It is inspiring to be amongst a group of people with dedication to providing high quality services – people who can meet the challenges that our work brings whilst remaining focussed on the needs of children.

Alex Jaundrill, on behalf of Child Contact Centres in Wales

Dear NACCC



Please send your comments, letters and emails to Ruth Miles at the NACCC office. NACCC staff and trustees will be pleased to answer any queries and include them in the next edition of Contact Matters.

Dear NACCC

I'm sorry but I have to disagree with the reply to the letter from a father accused of abuse on the back of Contact Matters. We sometimes supervise contact between parents and children where the parent is accused of abuse or, more rarely, where this has been proven. If it were as simple as no contact being appropriate where there is an allegation of abuse then a lot more contact arrangements could be very easily brought to a halt by resident parents willing to make false allegations. Naturally any case with an investigation of this nature under way must be approached with caution and the right protocol used to ensure child safety; there may be occasions when the risk is too great – but this is certainly not a foregone conclusion. The particular circumstances of a case are relevant; you do not even state what is meant by 'abuse'. What is supervised contact for if not, at least in part, to protect children in circumstances of known risk?

Salli Ward, Pro-Contact C.E.O.

Dear Salli

Thank you for your email in response to the 'Dear NACCC' letter in the latest *Contact Matters* magazine. I think the key issue in the situation was that the abuse allegations were under active investigation. This may have been by social services and/or the police and therefore it is good practice to obtain their views before any contact is arranged/facilitated. It may be that an assessment by a supervised Child Contact Centre may have been ordered as part of the investigation. Although making allegations of abuse are often a diversionary or delaying tactic, in our experience it is very unusual for courts to order contact until they were satisfied that the allegations had been investigated by the appropriate authorities. It needs to be remembered that when things go wrong almost every major child abuse enquiry identifies failings in communications between the agencies involved with the family/children. I acknowledge that it may have been helpful for us to have specified the type of abuse that was being alleged and to also have made it clear in our reply that this type of referral would not be dealt with by a Child Contact Centre offering supported contact. Thank you for taking the time to contact us regarding this issue.

Duncan Gore, Support Manager (South)

Dear NACCC

We are a supported centre and have been asked by a social worker to report on how contact is going for a court report. We normally just supply referrers with dates and time of attendance and don't give any opinions on how a family is getting on at our Centre. What do you think we should do?

Dear Centre

You should, politely, explain to the social worker that because you are a supported Centre the only information you give is dates and times of attendance, perhaps referring them to your Centre leaflet, guidelines for referrers and/or the Judges Protocol giving them copies if appropriate.

You could also if you have the facility and the parties agree, offer the use of a side room to enable the social worker to undertake her own assessment. Some Centres charge for this.

Judy Birchall, Support Manager (North)

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