

THE IN-HOUSE  
MAGAZINE OF  
THE NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
CHILD CONTACT  
CENTRES

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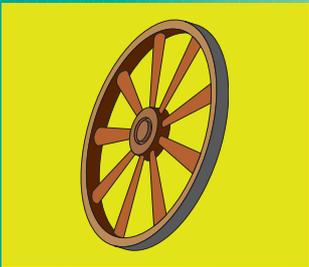
# contact

M A T T E R S

**PASS IT ON**  
Why not leave me  
on your registration desk  
for staff to read?



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHILD CONTACT CENTRES



## Moving families forward

### 2007 Conference highlights

#### Were you there?

For many delegates this year's AGM was one of the best ever. Evaluation showed that Trent Vineyard proved an excellent venue and the speakers were inspiring. There was a good, positive sense in the air, of common pride and enjoyment. The theme of the conference linked with this year's training on Moving Families Forward, with a reflection on The Reluctant Child.

The Rt Hon Lord Justice Wall delivered a challenging speech "In many ways, the law has enormous difficulty dealing with domestic violence. The remedies the lawyer proposes are limited and often short term. They do not address the fundamental issue... We have somehow to get across the message that physical and/or psychological violence in an intimate human relationship is simply unacceptable."

Honor Rhodes praised the valuable role of Child Contact Centres in recognising "the potential of families, however fractured, to change" and enabling that. But she emphasised the need for centres to plan and deliver support for positive change. She talked of 'stuckness' and how we can overcome it through our work. Centres are well placed to give support at a particular point, whilst preparing families for the most successful outcome – making their own contact arrangements safely and amicably. This should be an aim that all are aware of in supporting good endings, so that families can go "forward to the future, enabled to be very ordinary by a very special piece of work done by you... A humble enough goal but achieved by the magic that is thoughtful, careful relationship rebuilding."

*Continued on back page*

# New year's resolution: 'I will make the most of my membership'



**What does being a member of NACCC mean to you?** It seems to vary so much from centre to centre. Amongst

all the numerous positive comments we get, there are some voices of dissent. Almost all are founded on the visibility of the 'face' of NACCC.

Part of that seems to stem from a need for more regular support. Staff and volunteers from supported centres seem particularly isolated; most don't have access to a more local network of like-minded people experiencing similar celebrations and concerns. In the old days NACCC could visit more often. The national network was smaller and Regional Trustees were more heavily involved. The ensuing recruitment of a number of Field Support Officers, assisting with accreditation, gave a greater 'face' to NACCC. It is this that has been lost, now that we have fewer staff.

So how do we get that 'face' back? We do lots for our members: we support, train, provide an Information Line, CRB service and publications, influence and lobby and more.

But it is the voice at the end of the line or the visit that make many centres feel part of the network. I have increasingly become aware of this. So here's my 5-point plan for making the most of your membership; see if it works for you.

1. If you hold a special event let us know if you would like a NACCC presence. Our new Board has a number of trustees very willing to attend if they are available. Our President, Regional Support Managers and myself may be able to attend instead. Time is limited of course, but it's worth sending an invitation
2. Share your successes with other centres and members – we welcome photos and short news items for Contact Matters or we can email in between if it is a time limited funding opportunity for example. Successful funding bids, interesting projects and anonymous case studies help to strengthen our structure – capacity, resources, understanding and good practice.
3. Write or pick up the phone if you need to talk to someone about an aspect of your work.

We tend to focus our regional support around training, accreditation and development. Partly that is necessity, but also it is in recognition of your autonomy, your independence.

4. Create a more local network or develop peer mentoring, whether that be through meetings, phone contact or email. Supervised centres have their own special interest group, instigated and run by the Child Contact Centres themselves.
5. Keep up to date with NACCC – try to attend training and other events; evaluation shows that talking to other centres is always a highlight. Read the website, this Contact Matters, emails, letters. Respond if you feel strongly about something. It may influence national legislation or the way NACCC works. (I'm leaving the door wide open here!)

**NACCC is much more than those of us sitting in offices or meetings with limited resources; NACCC is a membership organisation, being part of a network. Why not resolve to make the most of it in 2008?**

**Yvonne Kee, Chief Executive, NACCC**

## New trustees welcomed to NACCC Board



A warm welcome to Claire Bell, Mike Dornan, Alex Jaundrill and Amanda Page – new and co-opted members of the new committee!

*Photo taken at our recent meeting, from left to right:*

*Mary Lower (President), Aliona Laker (Regional Trustee East), Amanda Page (co-opted), Phil Doughty (Regional Trustee South West), Honor Rhodes (General Trustee), Mike Dornan (Regional Trustee – Central), Claire Bell (Company Secretary), Fiona McGill (Chair).*

*Not present: John Clay (Hon Treasurer), Norman Yates (Regional Trustee – North West), Alice Sharville (General Trustee), and Alex Jaundrill, our newly co-opted member representing Wales).*



# Squeaky wheel

*squeaky wheel (skwi:ki wi:l)* a repetitive scratchy sound created by the NACCC wheel moving in a circular motion through Government to keep in mind the importance of the children's safety using Child Contact Centres.

## The track of the squeaky wheel so far...

### November 2006

The Early Day Motion 294 proposed by MP Edward O'Hara (Labour, Knowsley South) in November 2006 received 30 MP signatures – thanks to everyone for all the lobbying you have done locally for NACCC's cause.



"As a member of Parliament I frequently become involved with the consequences of broken relationships and the difficulties these

can cause in terms of access to the children. Thus when I visited my local Child Contact Centre in Huyton with Roby I was profoundly impressed and moved by the wonderful service it provided in making available a safe, friendly, neutral and above all calm environment for children to enjoy and benefit from spending time with parents and other family members. I pay tribute to the selfless dedication of the volunteers of NACCC Centres who provide this essential support to the children and other members of broken families."

**Eddie O'Hara, MP  
(Knowsley South)**

### July 2007

Graham Allen MP (Labour, Nottingham North) met with Mary Lower and Yvonne Kee and then subsequently agreed to be a Labour 'champion' for Child Contact Centres in the House of Commons. Moves have been made to attract a Conservative and Liberal Democrat MP also.



"As Champion for NACCC in the House of Commons I am committed to raising the awareness of MPs to the need for

sustainability funding for NACCC and Child Contact Centres. The service you provide at all levels for children and their families week by week should not go unnoticed and should receive due financial recognition."

**Graham Allen, MP (Nottingham North), Champion for NACCC**

### November 2007

The petition to The Prime Minister has received 525 names (online = 137, paper = 388) calling for recognition in the essential role that the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC) plays towards the success of Child Contact Centres throughout the country in providing guidance and training. We call upon the Government to support NACCC by making a significant contribution financially while retaining the independence of NACCC.

### Ongoing

A good number of Child Contact Centres have written to MPs and local politicians and/or invited them to visit their centre. Funding and sustainability concerns have often been a main issue and for many this remains the case. But also we need to sell the positive aspects of our work:

- What centres do makes a huge difference to the lives of children
- Keep MPs in touch with achievements and celebrations
- Ask parents to talk or write to their MP too

## Cash appeal to save Dorchester Child Contact Centre



Dorchester Child Contact Centre faces an uncertain future because of the need for £3,000-a-year funding. An appeal was launched through the Western Gazette on 3 November 2007 supported by West Dorset MP, Oliver Letwin (pictured far right), the Dorchester Mayor, David Barrett (pictured far left with Yvonne Kee, Robin Knight, Reverend Paul Arnold, Peter Mann, Brenda Blackler of the Dorchester centre and Sally Butter CAF/CASS).

**Keep the wheel turning and keep letting us know what tracks you have made!**

# Special Interest Groups

## Professional shared experience and support

### Professionals Network

The yet-to-be-named North-ish Regional Network members have held meetings at Contact First in Stoke and at Grassroots in Blackburn. Because several supervised and assessed contact services are still in their infancy much of the business of the Network has looked at issues common to agencies rather than workers, e.g. training and finance. In particular we have been eager to present a united front in attempts to negotiate partnerships with CAFCASS – an initiative aided by NACCC's involvement at a national level, resulting in the consultation day on 6 December 2007. As we move forward I hope we can return somewhat to the professional support for people working in the field that was behind the original network idea. We are therefore meeting on 16 January 2008, looking at the impact of CAFCASS

partnerships on working practice; after this participants are invited to stay for training in Parental Alienation that is offered as part of Module 1A of our accredited training course (but open to all).

The most significant effect of the Network so far has been to create a feeling that we are part of a growing and increasingly acknowledged profession. As workers in a stressful and sometimes distressing field it is good to have a sense of shared experience and support. Having made a success of the regional network we would be happy to support people wanting to do something similar in their areas, though we welcome everyone to 'our' events as well.  
**Salli Ward, CEO, Pro-Contact**

## Funding for training

### Northern Ireland Network

The Northern Ireland Network of Child Contact Centres held its second AGM on 16 October 2007. Our speaker was Patricia Lewsley, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People. The meeting was attended by representatives of all of the centres, members of the judiciary, social services and solicitors. We have been given the go ahead to apply to the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety for funding to

cover the training for coordinators to be held in March 2008 (see page 9 for further details). The Department was supportive of the benefit of central joint training for all the centres in Northern Ireland. We are hoping that this will include two representatives from each centre.  
**Muriel Orr on behalf of the Northern Ireland Network of Child Contact Centres**

## Wales viewpoint on NACCC Board

### Welsh Network

Our last meeting was held in September and the Network is becoming more established. We are really keen to be able to form a truly all-Wales group. We currently hold two meetings per year so it is not a huge commitment. The Network was concerned that there was no representative from Wales sitting on the Board of NACCC so a nomination was discussed and unanimously

agreed to be sent. As a result I have been co-opted to the Board and I look forward to taking up my responsibilities there. I would be pleased to hear from any centre in Wales. A date for your diaries – the next Wales Network meeting is Saturday 8 March 2008.  
**Alex Jaundrill, on behalf of Child Contact Centres in Wales**

## Thankyou...

### ...to Mary, President extraordinaire



We are so appreciative of Mary – she pops into the office every Tuesday to sign cheques and sort out other stuff, she is always on the end of the phone line and if that is not enough she is regularly doing talks with local referrers and other organisations promoting the work of NACCC and Child Contact Centres. She recently sent in a donation cheque for £100 from her talk to the Rotary Club, Beeston, Nottingham.  
**Thanks Mary – we really value your hard work!**

### ...to Joyce, volunteer superstar!



Joyce has been volunteering for NACCC for over ten years helping with our mailings – no doubt including the mailing that brought this magazine to your doorstep! She has a wonderful sense of humour, and has put in more hours than we can work out. As long as she has a cup of tea by her side she is happy and has helped the office team through no end of sorting jobs!  
**Thank you Joyce – carry on the good work!**

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 years' service given to that centre.

#### Altrincham Child Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 gold (10 years)

#### Avenue Child Contact Centre

15 volunteers – 3 gold, 1 silver, 11 bronze (68 years)

#### Basingstoke Child Contact Centre

11 volunteers – 5 gold, 2 silver, 2 bronze (96 years)

#### Billericay Child Contact Centre

23 volunteers – 23 gold (230 years)

#### Bristol Child Contact Centre

18 volunteers – 6 silver, 12 gold (200 years)

#### Castle Hill Child Contact Centre

20 volunteers – 20 bronze (60 years)

#### Chard Child Contact Centre

5 volunteers – 5 bronze (18 years)

#### Devizes Child Contact Centre

7 volunteers – 3 gold, 4 silver (50 years)

#### Euxton Contact Centre

30 volunteers – 30 gold (300 years)

#### Huyton with Roby Child Contact Centre

18 volunteers – 18 gold (180 years)

#### Middleton (Manchester) Contact Centre

10 volunteers – 7 gold, 3 silver (85 years)

#### Pontypridd Children's Contact Centre

10 volunteers – 10 bronze (35 years)

#### Romford URC Child Contact Centre

12 volunteers – 12 bronze (36 years)

#### Staines Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 bronze (3 years)

#### St Mary's Family Contact Centre Norwich

5 volunteers – 5 silver (35 years)

#### Taunton Child Contact Centre

9 volunteers – 4 gold, 5 silver (65 years)

#### Weston-Super-Mare Contact Centre

1 volunteer – 1 gold (10 years)

#### Woking Child Contact Centre

14 volunteers – 10 gold, 4 silver (120 years)

#### Workington Contact Centre

2 volunteers – 2 gold (20 years)

**Congratulations!** – A total of 1621 years' service given to local Child Contact Centres. Please do let us know in writing if you have volunteers that 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).

## Contact Centre Accreditation and Re-accreditation

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

- Newington Family Contact Centre
- Children's Supervised Contact & Assessment Ltd
- Redditch Child Contact Centre
- Relate Cornwall Child Contact Centres

### First centres to be 'Re-accredited'

We are also pleased to congratulate The Meeting Place Child Contact Centre, Scarborough and Impact Family Mediation Service & Child Contact Centre, Sunderland on being the first centres to become re-accredited, a process currently being piloted by NACCC.



### Keeping our mind open to new possibilities allows us to grow as a person

I have been a volunteer at Edgware Child Contact Centre for four months. This is my first volunteering job and I chose to do it to gain some experience as an undergraduate psychology student. I came across Barnet Volunteer Service, which immediately put me in touch with the Edgware branch of NACCC.

All the volunteers in the centre are friendly and helpful and they welcomed me in the kindest manner; we work as a team and make sure that everyone gets a chance to participate in all the different tasks. My role includes welcoming parents and their children and furthermore gives me the opportunity to observe the behaviour of children, which is valuable experience for my Child Development studies.

Volunteering is really eye opening. In my opinion, keeping our mind open to new possibilities allows us to grow as a person. I would encourage even more people to do so as volunteering is a very positive and fulfilling experience. Through volunteering, I have found passion in my life... which is a credit to Barnet Volunteer Service.

Aniko Sziraczki – Volunteer at Edgware Child Contact Centre (Adapted from article originally published by Barnet Volunteer Service).

# Managing the Reluctant Child



## Some points to think about and act upon...

Child Contact Centres are normally happy and relaxed environments but many are now having to work with increasing numbers of families where the levels of animosity and conflict are not only high but also having an adverse effect upon the children involved.

How should centres respond to these situations? This article is based upon the NACCC Reluctant Child Training programme. It will provide you with some suggestions and ideas that may be familiar or completely new.

## Where should you start?

You need to begin by remembering that:

- The welfare and needs of the children must always be put first when you are making any decisions about contact
- Every family is different and it will never be possible to find a “one size fits all” solution to the problems you are confronted with
- There will be times when you cannot help a family by either offering them a place at your centre or allowing contact to continue

## Prevention

It is always easy to be wise after the event. Experience of working with centres where a contact has gone wrong has taught us that some if not all of the problems could have been avoided if more time had been spent gathering information about the family and talking to them in advance of the contact commencing. What do we mean by this? There are two areas we would like to draw your attention to:

### 1. Referral Forms

- Are you insisting upon the same or separate forms being completed in full by both parties' solicitors?
- Are you in receipt of these completed forms in advance of any pre-visits or the contact commencing?
- Are you contacting any other agencies the family are known to mentioned on the referral form in advance of any pre-visits or the contact commencing?

### 2. Pre-Visits

Research has demonstrated that a very high percentage of children using Child Contact Centres do not know where they are going, why they are going, and who is going to be there. We also know that a lot of adults using centres have

been told very little about them or how to prepare themselves and their children for contact.

NACCC's national standards and accreditation process mean every centre should now be offering pre-visits. Although it has sometimes presented them with problems educating referrers, courts and families, an ever-increasing number of centres now insist upon a family visiting them in advance of any contact commencing. Regardless of whether pre-visits are mandatory or voluntary there seems to be a consensus of opinion amongst centres that they are an invaluable way to:

- Get to know and settle a family into the centre
- Give a family information about a centre and how it operates
- Gather additional information about a family and use it to try and identify any problems that might arise with a contact

The NACCC Guidance Manual contains a pre-visit checklist. Using this to help answer the following questions in advance of a contact commencing can often be very helpful:

- When did the last contact take place?
- Where did the last contact take place?
- Who was involved in the last contact?
- Why did it break down?
- What are the parent's feelings about contact now?
- How might these affect the children?
- Have members of the extended family or new partners been involved in the contact in the past and will this be continuing in the future?
- Are issues such as domestic violence, alcohol abuse or health problems likely to affect the contact in any way?

The logistics of pre-visits can be a source of some concern and debate within centres. Although every centre needs to develop a system with which they are comfortable, many now have a system that provides for:

- The non-resident parent to arrive first at the centre, be given information about it, shown around, asked a series of questions and given the opportunity to ask questions themselves
- The non-resident parent to leave the centre or stay in the waiting area
- The resident parent and children to arrive and go through the same process as the non-resident parent. (If there has been domestic violence and the resident parent is particularly nervous it may be better to arrange these visits on separate days)
- The resident parent to see and the child to spend time and settle into the contact room before any contact commences
- The contact to commence provided no major problems have arisen during the pre-visits and the child settling onto the contact room

Centres using such a system will often schedule the pre-visits into the first contact and allow thirty minutes each for the non-resident and the resident parent/children. They also operate a system where they write to the family once they are in receipt of a completed referral form and do not depend upon referrers to pass on information about the dates and times of any visits or details about how the centre operates.

The use of such a system will often reduce the length of a first contact to one hour. This can sometimes make the contact easier when a non-resident parent has not seen their children for some time.

## And what about the Reluctant Child?

A good referral process and the use of pre-visits can often help to identify and address potential problems, but what else do centres need to keep in mind and do? If you attended the Reluctant Child training you will know that we began by looking at some research findings:

**"A consistent message from the research is that children are more affected by persistent and severe parental conflict than separation"**

**"A key development in the thinking about Child Contact Services has been the move from the dominant focus on the physical safety of the parties involved, to an inclusion of a focus on the child's emotional security and quality of experiences."**

These research findings show that Child Contact Centres and other individuals and agencies working in the field of family breakdown need to be more aware of the long-term effects of acrimonious divorce or separation and ensure that children's emotional security and quality of experiences are always put first.

### How can we recognise reluctant children?



As has already been said, much can be learned from the referral form and pre-visit. However, once a family arrives at your centre the children should continually be the focus of your attention. Those readers that attended the Reluctant Child training will remember that time was spent looking at how children's facial expressions and body language can often tell us a lot about how they are thinking and feeling.

#### What makes a child reluctant?

Although there are others, the principal reasons given during the Reluctant Child training were:

- Fear – "Will they will start arguing and fighting again?"
- Confusion – "Where are they taking me?"
- Anxiety – "Who is going to be there?"
- Anger – "Why has this happened to me?"
- Guilt – "It's all my fault"
- Insecurity – "What is happening to me?"

- Sadness – "I love my mum and my dad"
- Helplessness – "Nobody listens to me"

Time was then spent looking in detail at two other subjects that can often have an adverse effect upon a child's view of and approach to contact, namely domestic violence and parental hostility.

The subject of domestic violence continues to be a significant issue for a lot of Child Contact Centres. Many people are therefore aware of the short-term impact it can have on a family. What can sometimes be overlooked or forgotten is how domestic violence can cause long-term harm, if it is not identified and handled appropriately. With this in mind it always needs to be remembered that children and adults who have witnessed or been the victims of

domestic violence can sometimes have vivid recollections of what happened, leading to poor self-confidence and social skills, low self esteem, violent behaviour and depression.

'Parental alienation' is defined as "the systematic denigration by one parent of the other with the intent of alienating the child against the other parent. The purpose of the alienation is usually to gain or retain custody without the involvement of the other parent. The alienation usually extends to other members of the family as well."<sup>1</sup> Many people who attended the Reluctant Child training not only recognised this but also said that seemingly implacable hostility was something they observed regularly at their centres. As with domestic violence we can sometimes be drawn into only considering the short-term implications of such behaviour, however, it is now becoming more widely known and accepted that such alienation can bring about "the destruction of the bond between the child and targeted parent in a way that it is likely to be life long in duration."<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore important to think and act carefully when your centre is working with a family where there has been domestic violence or a child is reluctant to have contact because one or more of the adults involved in the process is trying to sabotage or undermine it.

<sup>1</sup>Richard A Gardner MD (Clinical Psychologist)

**Child Contact Centres...**  
putting your children first

**NEW! Putting Children First leaflet**

**£2 for 10 leaflets (incl P&P)**

Not heard of or used a Child Contact Centre?

This leaflet has been written to help you understand how your children might be feeling when they are using a Child Contact Centre.

**conac**  
CHILD CONTACT CENTRES  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CONTACT CENTRES

Promoting safe child contact within a national framework of Child Contact Centres

## How we can help reluctant children?



As has already been said, following the procedures relating to referral forms and pre-visits can often help to identify and address some problems before they arise.

Using a Child Contact Centre is a new experience for most parents. It may therefore be helpful to give them a copy of NACCC's new leaflet "Child Contact Centres... putting your children first". This can be done in person when they arrive at the centre or by courts and solicitors prior to their arrival.

If you are confronted with a situation where contact is not progressing well it is important that you proceed carefully and do not force the children into contact against their wishes. If a child does not settle or is resistant to contact, you should monitor what is happening and if there is no improvement within a short period of time either:

- a) Seek advice, support and assistance from your centre's CAF/CASS liaison officer, or
- b) Contact one or both parties' solicitors and ask them to seek directions or further directions from a court

In the majority of cases it is helpful to support any referral back to a solicitor or court with a letter giving a factual account of what happened. Be very careful not to include any opinion.

If your centre provides supported contact the letter should also make it clear that the case is not suitable for any other centre providing the same type of contact.

If you are unable to contact your CAF/CASS liaison officer or the solicitors involved with a family, then you could try contacting one of NACCC's Support Managers.

And finally – please remember always to act in a way that safeguards children and puts their interests first. Although this might result in you not taking a referral or stopping a contact it is not always possible to help every family wanting to use or using your centre!

**Duncan Gore and Judy Birchall,  
NACCC Regional Support  
Managers**

## Training matters – exciting new developments for 2008

### Supervised centres

Please see page 4 (Professionals Network) for details of the Open College Network training being piloted by Pro Contact, Manchester.

### Supported centres

#### 1) 'Moving Families Forward' NACCC regional training

**Who for?** All volunteers, coordinators and management committee members.

**Charge:** £15 per centre (rather than per person) unless they are hosting a venue.

**When and where?**

This training has already been held in Llandudno and Bracknell.

Other sessions include:

- Sat 2 Feb 08, Pudsey (pm)
- Sun 3 Feb 08, Altrincham (pm)
- Weds 13 Feb 08, Preston (eve)
- Weds 5 March 08, Liverpool, Bridge Chapel (eve)
- Tues 1 April 08, Hartlepool (pm)
- Sat 26 April 08, Chester, St Marks (pm)
- Mon 12 May 08 & Tues 13 May 08, Middle Rasen (pm)
- Thurs 15 May 08, Belfast, Knock (eve)
- Sat 17 May 08, Cookstown (pm)
- TBA – Kendal

Please note, further training dates in the Midlands and the South are still to be booked.

#### 2) Co-ordinator training

**Who for?** Co-ordinators and their deputies

**Charge:** TBC. Funding is being sought to cover part of the cost of this training.

**Content:** Will eventually cover 4 units (1) Referrers, 2) Families, 3) Staff and Management, 4) Funding and Publicity.

**When and where?**

- Mon 3 Mar 08 & Tues 4 Mar 08, Northern Ireland (Residential, Units 1-4)
- Thurs 6 Mar 08, Manchester (Units 1&2)
- Thurs 13 Mar 08, Leeds (Units 1&2)
- Tues 22 April 08, Basildon (Unit 1, pm)
- TBC, Birmingham (Residential, Units 1-4)

Further details regarding these two training courses will be updated in the next Contact Matters and on the NACCC website. For further information regarding the content of the training please contact Judy Birchall and Duncan Gore, Regional Support Managers. Booking information will be sent out to member centres at least eight weeks before each event.

### Dive in? Would you like to support the development of new supported centres through delivering training?

NACCC needs a pool of people with real experience of Child Contact Centres, who are able to deliver training to brand new centres on an 'as we need it' basis. Working to a ready prepared format, you will receive £50 plus travel and subsistence. Training will be given in the delivery of the session. Email your CV and a short proposal supporting your request to be part of the pool, to [ykee@nacc.org.uk](mailto:ykee@nacc.org.uk). We are aiming for a geographical spread and will choose according to that and personal experience.

## Accessibility

### Disabled children and young people

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) has introduced a web-based resource for people who work with disabled children and young people. It consists of briefings, links and resources, including how to access training.

[www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/projects/childrenwithdisabilities.htm](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/projects/childrenwithdisabilities.htm)

Tel: 0113 244 6311

### Guidance on recruiting and retaining disabled volunteers

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published this guidance which can be found at their website.

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com),  
England Tel: 08457 622 633,  
Textphone: 08457 622 644, Wales  
Tel: 0845 604 8810, Textphone  
0845 604 8820.

### "Good practice guidance on working with parents with a learning disability".

Contains helpful and informative guidance as to how professionals should work with parents with learning difficulties and provides a wealth of information as to current research and available resources.

Copies of the document can be downloaded at

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_075119](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_075119).

Easy read versions of the document can be downloaded at [www.valuingpeople.gov.uk](http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk).

## Centres

### Every Child Matters to Child Contact Centres

Every Child Matters (ECM) is the name of the Government's strategy for promoting the well being of children and young people. Its aim is for all children to achieve what it terms the five outcomes: being healthy (emotional as well as physical);

staying safe; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution and achieving economic well being.

All organisations involved in providing services for children are expected to do so in alignment with these outcomes. In the next edition of Contact Matters we will be featuring ECM, its likely impact on centres and suggesting ways in which what you do can be described using its terminology. In the meantime for further information please see [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0870 000 2288

### Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are non-statutory multi agency partnerships, which match local authority boundaries. They bring together at local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively. Each Child Contact Centres should have a route into this group, usually via the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) or equivalent. LSPs then develop a Local Area Agreement (LAA). LAAs are 3-year agreements with the priorities agreed between all the main public sector agencies working in an area and with central government. The LAA will set targets and the government will expect quantified and specific level of improvement from the targets. It's worth centres checking whether the priorities include reference to the effects of family breakdown especially on children, as this can be a way of securing local authority funding.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has brought out a publication – 'Negotiating the new local area agreements'. Available for free at [www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/476151](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/476151)

### Self referrals

The decline of legal aid has led to an increasing number of self-referrals. Is this affecting your centre? If so, are there any issues we need to be aware of? How do you administer referrals?

Call NACCC on 0845 4500 280  
[ykee@nacc.org.uk](mailto:ykee@nacc.org.uk)

### Webwise

22% of NACCC Child Contact Centres have their own website. Websites can be a valuable communication tool for organisations of all sizes – even the smallest organisations can benefit from a web presence. If you have recently set up or developed your own website and would like to share your experience and advice with other centres, please do email Ruth Miles on [r.miles@nacc.org.uk](mailto:r.miles@nacc.org.uk) For advice on hosting/domain names, designing a site, strategy, delivering services, accessibility and managing website content, go to [www.ictHubKnowledgebase.org.uk/yourwebsitebasics](http://www.ictHubKnowledgebase.org.uk/yourwebsitebasics)

## Volunteering

### Volunteers Week 1-7 June – get planning now!

During the Week events are held across the country to recognise, reward and recruit volunteers. The web site provides a range of tools and resources to help you celebrate Volunteers Week and the contribution that your volunteers have made. This could be a good opportunity for you to invite your MP to volunteer for an hour or so!

[www.volunteersweek.org.uk](http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk),  
Tel: 020 7520 8947.

Wales [www.wcva.org.uk](http://www.wcva.org.uk),  
Tel: 029 20431700, Northern  
Ireland [www.volunteering-ni.org](http://www.volunteering-ni.org),  
Tel: 028 9087 7777

## Young Achievers Trust

The Young Achievers Trust is a brand new Trust that wants to celebrate, recognise and just shout about young people aged 16-25 who are involved as volunteers, activists and social entrepreneurs.  
[www.youngachievers.co.uk](http://www.youngachievers.co.uk),  
 Tel: 020 7250 5700

## Insuring older volunteers

In 2006 regulations came into force outlawing age discrimination in the workplace. Sometimes organisations involving volunteers apply an upper age limit citing the difficulty in obtaining insurance as the reason. Organisations that use volunteers can opt to purchase personal accident cover for them, providing compensation for injuries, accidents or deaths when the organisation is not at fault. Although standard cover is usually offered up to 70 years of age, an extension of the age limit can often be negotiated, albeit with reduced benefits. There are examples of organisations obtaining cover for volunteers up to 90 years old, so do shop around if your insurer is not amenable. See 'A Golden Opportunity – A guide to attracting and retaining older volunteers' for further information and advice, accessed via Volunteering England's website.  
[www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

## Finance

### Setting budgets

It is that time of year again when you may be setting budgets for the next financial year. Useful resources might be: *Budgets for small groups and small projects*. (Information sheet published by South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau, [www.syfab.org.uk](http://www.syfab.org.uk) Tel: 0114 249 4343). The Charity *Treasurer's Handbook*, by Gareth G. Morgan, £9.95. Fit4Funding (see below) also do a fact sheet on setting budgets.  
**For support with developing your budget, contact your local Community Accountancy Service: [www.communityaccountancy.freeserve.co.uk/map.htm](http://www.communityaccountancy.freeserve.co.uk/map.htm) to find their details.**

## Funding

### Fit4Funding – The Charities Information Bureau

The fit4funding website provides help and advice for community groups and voluntary organisations who are seeking funding. Contains fact sheets and regional information.  
[www.fit4funding.org.uk](http://www.fit4funding.org.uk)  
 Tel: 01924 239063

### Last chance for Local Network Fund

The LNF offers small grants of between £250 and £7,000 to projects and activities for children

and young people with limited opportunities. This government fund is due to close in March 2008 and as some areas have already committed their grants it would be best to contact the call centre to check availability. Groups with an annual turnover of more than £100,000 are unlikely to be funded.

Tel: 0845 113 0161,  
[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

### The Children's Fund

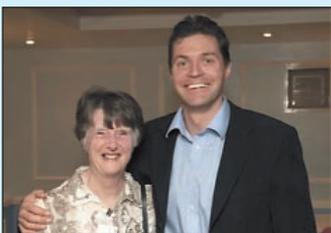
The Government have announced investment to continue the Children's Fund over the next three years, supporting projects that specialise in early intervention and prevention, improving the emotional wellbeing of parents to help them better support their children, and improving relationships between families and professionals. Funding for preventative services for children (aged 5-13) will continue at £132m in each of the three years from 2008 to 2011 and be distributed through local authorities.

**Approach your local authority to discuss what opportunities may be open to you.**

### Third Sector Fundraising

A weekly free email update is now available. Register by visiting [www.thirdsector.co.uk/bulletins](http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/bulletins)

## TV vet, orangutans and cream teas raise over £2.5K for Shropshire Child Contact Centres



Judith Clayton (Chair of Shropshire Child Contact Centres) and Steve Leonard, TV vet.



Cream tea anyone?

We held a very successful fundraising dinner (raising £2.2K) in aid of the Shropshire centres and were delighted to have the TV vet Steve Leonard attend who gave a most entertaining illustrated talk on his exploits with the endangered orangutans! We also had over 80 people support our "Cream Teas in the Garden" event – the weather was kind to us; a most enjoyable way to raise £350!

**Valerie Lindwall Collard, Co-ordinator, Shropshire Child Contact Centres**

**Good ideas, funding ideas to share? Please let us know**

# 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.

## Such an unusual request...

Dear NACCC

Last Saturday (after 23 years!) we had a first. A gentleman arrived and said that he had an unusual request – he employs a small team in a city centre shop, one of whom is a young woman. This lady is, apparently, the subject of disciplinary proceedings. The Saturday before she had rung in sick but the gentleman had been told by two different people that she was seen at our centre bringing her child to see his father. The gentleman asked if we would confirm whether or not she was in fact with us. I explained our confidentiality policy, and he said that he hadn't expected to get the information he was asking for. Obviously the only way through his dilemma would be for our client to ask for a list of dates and times of attendance, which would also be supplied to the other side. And I told him that the only people that information would be released to would be the referring solicitors or the clients themselves. I'm not sure if anyone else has had this request, but thought as a "first" for us it might be worth sharing the experience.

Mary Lower, NACCC President and Co-ordinator at Nottingham Child Contact Centre

...Has anyone else got a similar story?

(continued from front page)

## AGM launches national petition

The AGM started proceedings led by Fiona McGill (Chair) and Yvonne Kee (Chief Executive).



A motion was carried by the meeting on the wording of a petition to the

Prime Minister, instigated by Margaret Heilbuth of Watford Child Contact Centre and Frances Williams of Harrogate Contact Centre (see photo and page 3 for the encouraging support of the petition).



Thanks again to The Rt Hon Lord Justice Wall and Honor Rhodes (pictured here)

for their challenging speeches. The Rt Hon Lord Justice Wall was keen to find out if the local judiciary supports your centre. If you have any concerns,

please do get in contact with your Regional Support Managers (Duncan Gore and Judy Birchall) as The Rt Hon Lord Justice Wall or Sir Mark Potter may be able to help.

The afternoon workshops focussed on the following issues:

- **The Reluctant Child** (Judy Birchall, NACCC Support Manager – North)
- **Charities Act 2006 – Will you comply with the changes?** (Judy Birchall, NACCC Support Manager – North)
- **Re-accreditation – continuing to maintain standards and safeguard children** (Duncan Gore, NACCC Support Manager – Central & South)
- **Fundraising – how to improve your chance of success** (Yvonne Kee, NACCC Chief Executive)
- **The experience of contact centres in France** (Caroline Kruse, Point- Rencontre AFCCC, Paris & Benoit Bastard, Sociologist, CNRS, Paris)

- **How to encourage attachment between children and parents** (Salli Ward, Pro-Contact)
- **How do we know contact works and how can we find out how good we are?** (Honor Rhodes, Family & Parenting Institute)

## Conference CD

Copies of all keynote speeches and workshop handouts have been emailed to AGM delegates free on request. If you missed the conference, but would like to read the conference notes and handouts for yourself, they are available on CD to purchase from the NACCC office for £5.

## Newsflash!

Next AGM 20 September 2008

'CONTACT MATTERS' EDITORIAL STAFF MAINTAIN THE RIGHT TO EDIT LETTERS PUBLISHED.  
THE NEXT COPY DATE FOR ARTICLES IS 21 APRIL 2008.

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National Association of Child Contact Centres, Minerva House, Spaniel Row, Nottingham, NG1 6EP

Tel: 0845 4500 280 [www.naccc.org.uk](http://www.naccc.org.uk)