



Involving parents

Children learn more in their first five years of than they do throughout the rest of their life time, so it is important that as early years workers we provide a stimulating and education environment at our settings. But what about when the children go home? They still need to have the same opportunities to learn and take on information. So to give children the best possible start in life it is important to get parents/carers involved with their children's learning too, so they continue the learning at home. There are lots of ways to do this;

- invite parents to join in at the setting
- arrange fun days or sports days and invite parents along to join in
- give the children activities to do at home which need a parent to be involved

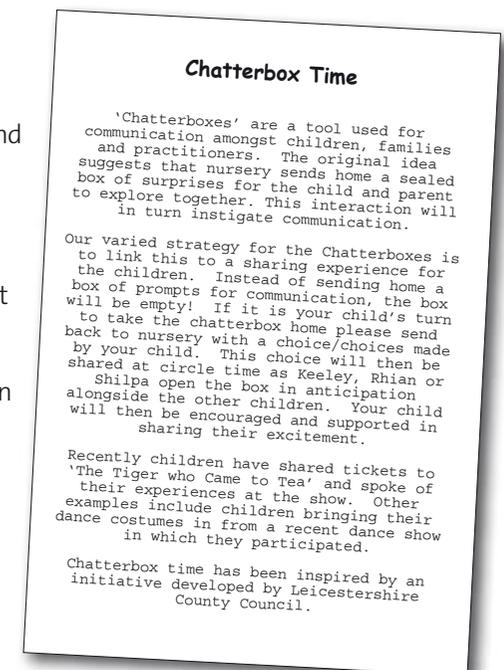
This may all sound like a lot of work and a bit daunting if you haven't done it before. Daisy Chain Nursery in Blaby are a good example of getting parents involved in their children's learning, we spoke to Manager, Amanda Donkin, to find out how they do it.

"We understand that it can be difficult for parents to find time after work to do extra activities with their child, so to make it easier for parents we use activities which they can do alongside their normal routines. All parents spent time with their children at the weekend, either at the park, or they might go swimming - so we encourage them to create a chatterbox.

Example of information given to parents from Daisy Chains

Chatterbox Time

Other ways we work to get parents involved is by using time that parents and their children would normally spend together - the weekend. We choose fun activities which appeal to both the parents and child and run them for a couple of hours on a weekend. The key is to keep the activity short so it doesn't take up too much of a Saturday and to let parents know well in advance so they can plan to attend. We recently ran a 'Build a Rocket' session, which ran on a Saturday for from 3pm - 4.30pm. We sent invitations to parents and had a good turnout because it wasn't just fun for the children, but I think a lot of the parents secretly enjoyed making a firing rockets as it took them back to their childhood!



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Build a rocket invite

Another activity we ran was a rhyming afternoon, we invited parents to come in to the settings to sing and learn some songs which could be practiced with the children and siblings at home. We saw this as a small step to encouraging parents to continue the learning from the settings at home.

Rhyming activity invitation

A lot of the activities we used were inspired from the 'Hello - year of communication resources' available from www.leics.gov.uk/helloresources - we found them to be a great starting point for our parent activities."

For more information about involving parents at your setting contact you Development or Improvement Advisor, and don't forget to visit www.leics.gov.uk/helloresources to make the most of the free resources.



Readers!

The Rhyme Challenge @ Daisy Chain ...

Dear Parents,

Your child is taking part in **The Rhyme Challenge**. The Challenge is great fun and will involve your child learning rhymes with their friends and carers, and sharing them at home with parents and siblings.

So that all the family can get involved in the Rhyme Challenge we will be sending rhyme sheets home via your child, making it fun and easy to join in. Many of the rhymes can also be found at www.bookstart.org.uk.

We hope to provide a video link via our website that will enable parents to watch their children enjoying rhymes with their friends at nursery.

Depending upon interest we also hope to facilitate a social afternoon where we can all share in the achievements of the children.

All at Daisy Chain xx

I would be interested in attending the rhyming challenge social afternoon : (TBC, December 2011)

(name)

