



East Devon Parent Carers' Voice
Notes from the meeting held on Wednesday 13th February 2008 – Bowd Inn, nr Sidmouth

Present:

Ian Simmins
Nicky Ruane

Parent/Carer
Development Worker

Lois Markworth

Parent/Carer

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

Lois welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from 4 parents who were unable to attend.

2. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

Speech and Language

It is still not known whether a replacement speech and language therapist for Exmouth has been appointed.

Replacement of Consultants

As yet it is not known when Charles Holme will be retiring or who will replace him. Nicky will contact Devon PCT to try to find out.

3. Updates from other meetings

County Forum

Lois had both attended the last County Forum. At the meeting Ann Whiteley, Director of Children and Young People's Services spoke about new developments and new appointments within the service and about the new funding for SEN. She then listened to the issues and concerns raised by those present. Lois reported that she felt that she had really listened and taken on board the concerns expressed.

Nicky informed the meeting that there is currently a SEN task group whose remit is to look at exclusions. Anyone who wishes to make representations to it should contact Dan Looker, Scrutiny Officer, on 01392 382722 or by email at dan.looker@devon.gov.uk

Full minutes can be found on the Parent Carers' Voice website at www.parentcarersvoice.org.

CAMHS group

Nicky reported that following on from the meeting in Tiverton, a group of parents are involved in the development of the CAMHS service. They meet regularly with managers and practitioners to highlight possible concerns and to work together to improve the service.

3. Conversation Days

Conversation days took place at 4 locations across Devon. It was felt that the FAQ sheet only covered the very basic questions and that some of the venues were not very good. It was felt that the comments made in the meetings had been listened to and, hopefully, taken on board. Concern was raised that education had not been present at the meeting in Exeter.

4. Day for parents on challenging behaviour

It is planned to hold a day for parents/carers on 'Practical Strategies for Coping with Challenging Behaviour' on May 7th. Details will be announced shortly.

5. Generic carers forum, flexible breaks grant, training etc

Flexible Breaks Grant

A Carers Link Flexible Breaks Grant is available to any member of the Carers Link who is currently providing unpaid care to a family member, partner or friend. Any Carer, including the parent of a child with special needs, can become a member of the Carers Link.

The grant can be used for any purpose that will help you to take a break from your caring responsibilities where you would otherwise be unable to do so. Previous successful applications have been used for days out, short breaks, evening classes, bicycles and gym membership.

For more information on applying for a grant or joining the local Carers Link parents and carers can contact East Devon Carers Link, East Devon Volunteer Support Agency, Northcote Lane, HONITON, EX14 1NH.

Tel: 01404 44411

Email: carers@edvsa.org.uk

Training Course in Chiring Skills

Training courses in Chiring Skills are available to interested parents/carers. The next course is being held at **Exeter CVS** on **Wednesday 12th March** from **10.30 – 2.00**. If anyone is interested in attending could they please contact Nicky as soon as possible.

6. Any other business and locality issues to take forward to the County Forum

Express and Echo Campaign

The Express and Echo will be running a campaign for Carers called 'We Care', starting 17th March. Their aims include: to raise awareness of the role of carers, highlight some of the issues faced and help to give a more powerful voice to Carers.

They will be looking for case studies across all groups of carers which highlight particular issues. If anyone wishes to participate or would like further information they can contact Nicky in the first instance.