

Fostering



Promoting foster
care in Scotland

Issue 25, Spring 2009

in Scotland

Fostering Network celebrates Big Lottery grant

The Fostering Network Scotland is celebrating the announcement of a grant for over £300,000 from the Big Lottery Fund. The grant will enable the Fostering Network to provide more support and training for foster families across Scotland, through the continuation of the Fostering Links project.

The Fostering Network is amongst 13 organisations sharing £2.8 million from BIG's Supporting 21st Century Life programme which aims to improve and nurture relationships between people, families and communities.

Based in Glasgow but benefiting the whole of Scotland, the Fostering Links project will help to reduce isolation of foster families in rural Scotland by setting up an outreach service and providing workshops to enable foster carers to exchange best practice. The project will also provide training for foster families, in order to develop their role in providing the highest possible quality of care for some of Scotland's most vulnerable children and young people.

Announcing the funding Big Lottery Fund Scotland Chair, Alison Magee, said: "One of the major themes emerging from this funding is the need for more support to be available for families, including single parents, foster families and young carers. Foster families in particular rely on this support to produce the best possible quality of

care for their children and young people. Without it these families can feel isolated."

Marjorie Ruddick, a foster carer who has taken part in the Fostering Links Project, said: "I have been a foster carer for over 25 years in the north of Scotland, and living in a rural area meant that in the past I could often feel isolated and unsupported. However, since the Fostering Links Project began, supports within foster care have been strengthened. Through my involvement I have been able to attend focus groups, to participate in consultations on key issues. I now feel more supported and involved, and have recognised that I am part of a team."

Sara Lurie, director of the Fostering Network Scotland, said: "This award from the Big Lottery Fund is fantastic news for foster carers and for the thousands of children and young people they care for across Scotland every day. Fostering Links will help bring foster carers and fostering services together to meet the challenges of 21st century foster care, improving participation, building stronger connections and gaining the skills needed. We're grateful to have the opportunity to make such a difference."

If you would like more information on the Fostering Links project, contact Sarah Crangle on 0141 204 1400 or email sarah.crangle@fostering.net

fostering
a career that **changes lives**

Foster Care Fortnight 2009 will run from **Monday 11 to Sunday 24 May**. Under the strapline **fostering: a career that changes lives**, the campaign will encourage people across the UK to consider a career in fostering and ask them to look at the skills and qualities they have which could make them a great foster carer. Fostering is changing and as child care experts foster carers have a vital role in caring for and supporting fostered children alongside a team of other professionals.

To celebrate the start of the fortnight, the team are holding an open day in the office in Ingram Street, Glasgow on Monday 11 May from 11am til 3pm and look forward to having the opportunity to meet up with people who may be thinking about taking the step to becoming a foster carer. We will also have people with experience of foster care on hand to answer questions and hopefully encourage others to think about fostering. If you know of anyone who would like to find out a bit more, why not let them know about the open day?

To find out more about *Foster Care Fortnight*, why not visit our dedicated website, www.couldyoufoster.org.uk or give us a call on 0141 204 1400

daltachd
dreuchd a dh'atharraicheas beathannan

We would welcome your contributions on any news, views, articles or ideas. Please send to Sarah Crangle, The Fostering Network Scotland, Ingram House, 2nd floor, 227 Ingram Street, Glasgow G1 1DA
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We would like to thank the following for funding this newsletter:
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JTH Charitable Trust
Souter Trust
W M Mann Foundation

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Joy Crawford (administrator)

Careers Scotland Support for Foster Carers

Research shows that parents and carers are the most important influence on a child's career aspirations and choices. Careers Scotland recognise that young people in care may require additional support at key stages, such as when making subject choices in school or deciding on the future options available to them before they leave school. Careers Scotland is therefore keen to work with individual foster carers or foster carer networks to support them to help the young people in their care make well informed career decisions.

Careers Scotland has a range of resources that can help foster carers and young people discuss career options. These activities have been designed to stimulate and provoke discussion with young people on their career. They can help identify the key issues they face and how you can support them more effectively. There are three ways you can find out more about how Careers Scotland can help:

- By visiting the Careers Scotland website www.careers-scotland.org.uk where you will find:
 - a section especially for parents and carers
 - information and activities that will help you talk about career decisions young people need to make
 - links to other useful websites
- calling the national helpline on 0845 8 502 502
- dropping in at your local Careers Scotland Centre

Hello and welcome

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of *Fostering in Scotland*. In this edition we will update you with what's new at the Fostering Network. We will also feedback some developments from within the Scottish Government and more locally will share some of what is happening nearer to you.

We always welcome your contributions to the newsletter and would love to have more of your views and ideas in future editions. If you have any news or thoughts to share, please do get in touch!

The team are also delighted that we have been granted some additional funding, not only to continue this newsletter as part of the Fostering Links project, but also to

hold more meetings and events across the country.

And having received generous donations for work with children and young people we would love to be able to develop a newsletter for children and young people: those in foster care and the sons and daughters of foster carers. So, if you know of any young people who would like to get involved in this - whether submitting their thoughts, stories, experiences, poems or pictures, or who would like to find out more about being part of the production team, please do get in touch with us here in Glasgow!

Until next time, happy reading!

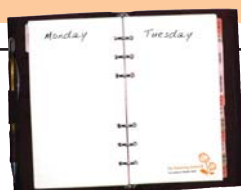
Achievements and Aspirations

On 26-27 June 2009 the Fostering Network will be holding a 2 day residential conference in London - *Aspirations and Achievements: foster care in the 21st century*.

This conference will provide a unique opportunity to learn about the work of foster care associations in supporting foster carers and working collaboratively to improve fostering services across the country.

This is an excellent opportunity to further your professional development whilst taking a short break to London. Prices start from £170 for foster carers for the two days including accommodation.

For further information or to book a place please visit www.fostering.net/conferences or contact Jade Barton at the Fostering Network on 020 7620 6428, jade.barton@fostering.net



Dates for your diary

May

6th the Fostering Network's *Media skills training for foster carers* training, Glasgow

7th the Fostering Network's *Media skills training for foster carers* training, Edinburgh

11-24th *Foster Care Fortnight 2009*

11th Open Day in the Fostering Network's Glasgow office, 11am til 3pm

13th University of Glasgow's *Children and Young People's Mental Health* conference

20th University of Glasgow's *Helping Children and Young People to Cope with Loss and Grief* conference

June

4th University of Glasgow's *Self Harm in Children and Young People* conference

11-12th SIRCC's annual conference, Crieff

26-27th the Fostering Network's *Achievements & Aspirations Conference*, London

July

12-17th IFCO's international foster care annual conference, Dublin

August

20th the Fostering Network's *Recruiting and Retaining Foster Carers* training course, Glasgow

25th the Fostering Network's *Understanding the importance of Child's Play* training course, Glasgow

September

1st-3rd the Fostering Network's *Skills to Foster Leader's Course*, Glasgow

Dear Members,

So far it has been a very busy year for the Fostering Network with **members' meetings** in five locations across Scotland during March. All the staff worked very hard to make the events successful and I certainly enjoyed the debates and meeting so many carers and workers from across the country. Everyone was keen to get more detailed information on the impact of the forthcoming new legislation. This is a time of great change for foster care with new Looked After Children regulations about to be put to the Scottish Parliament and opportunities for considering permanence orders for children becoming a reality. The Fostering Network staff have been working closely with the team of people in the Scottish Government who have the unenviable job of finalising the regulations.

The report on **Moving Forward in Kinship and Foster Care** was published on the Government's web site in March and I hope that many of you will have a look at it. It can be downloaded from www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/262356/0078450.pdf

The group involved in writing the report believes that the recommendations represent best practice. They are all focused on making foster and kinship care more able to meet the needs of a wide range of children, who have experienced neglect and lack of consistent affection and whose care presents many challenges.

One or two key points from the report:

- Children in well-selected, assessed and trained foster care placements have better outcomes and foster carers and looked after children have a positive profile locally and nationally.
- Sons and daughters who are involved fully in the assessment process feel better equipped to be part of a fostering household.
- Children's educational achievements are enhanced in living in a household

which values learning and where carers take opportunities for continued learning.

- Flexible and well resourced training opportunities for carers and agencies will improve experiences for children placed in foster care.
- Local authorities as "Corporate Parents" need to recognise the value of foster care and support carers in their task.

Permanence Orders which are designed to give greater security to children and carers who cannot live with their birth families will be introduced in the summer. The Courts will be able to grant a range of parental rights and responsibilities to a local authority and carers. These orders will allow carers to make more decisions about children for whom they are caring and increase the dependence on workers being involved in day to day issues. Getting a child a passport and agreeing school trips spring to mind as areas where carers need to have more rights and responsibilities. We all hope that the carers having these responsibilities will help to make children feel more secure. A lot of detail has still to be worked out in a short timescale and that means that we are all going to continue to be busy on that front. Further training on these new Permanence Orders will be rolled out in the Summer, but if you have any queries about how these will affect you or young people you are working with in the meantime, please get in touch.

We are delighted that **fundraising** efforts have been very positive so far this year and money has been coming in for us to do more work with young people. The shape of the programme of work with young people will be developed once we are clearer about the financial position, and we look forward to keeping you updated on what we will be doing and how you can get involved!

We are also really pleased that the Big Lottery Fund have granted us three years

of funding for a continuation of the work of the Fostering Links project. This is wonderful news and I look forward to meetings across Scotland starting again on a regular basis and giving me the chance to get to know many more of you at those events.

Foster Care Fortnight starts on May 11th and Sara and Sarah will be working with the Scottish Government to organise a celebration of foster care at Edinburgh Castle. The fortnight is a time for carers and agencies to tell people about fostering and how to take forward their interest in hearing more. The team in Glasgow will also be opening their doors on Monday 11th May and welcome any prospective foster carers or those interested in finding out more about fostering.

I cannot recall a time when so much is happening and when foster care is firmly on the agenda of the politicians at local and national level! To keep foster care there we will all need to continue to inform, educate and encourage politicians and senior managers in the Councils to invest in fostering services. Sara and I continue to meet Adrian Clark, the Fostering Network Board member from Scotland regularly. This is to ensure that Adrian is well briefed about the issues that matter in Scotland and that the UK Board hear about them.

The rest of 2009 is going to be a busy and challenging time for the Fostering Network, just as the challenges you face daily in foster care placements and in agencies across Scotland. Thank you for your commitment as foster carers for children and as workers ensuring that foster carers and children are well supported and valued.

Best wishes



Anne Black
Chair, Scottish Advisory Committee

Fostering Network publication's now available to buy online

All our publications and resources are now available to purchase online through our webpage, www.fosteringresources.co.uk

Now you can also search and shop online at the click of a mouse! Or, if you prefer you can still order by post, phone, fax or email, and as a member of the Fostering Network you

are entitled to a discount on all of our materials.

Our publications aim to provide everyone involved in fostering with the information they need. Both informed and informative, they are accessible, reliable and high quality. From our flagship pre-approval training course *The Skills to Foster* to our handy

Signposts in Fostering information leaflets, our resources are designed to help you provide the best possible care for children and young people.

Our publications are stored and distributed by PARTRIDGE & PRINT LTD, who will take your order, process payment and despatch your items.

To get in touch or to place an order, contact:

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Meetings across Scotland discuss new legislation

A series of meetings across Scotland in March 2009 discussed the new *Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act*, the revised *Looked After Children regulations* and the *Moving Forward* in foster care's recommendations for getting it right for every child.

The five events led by the Fostering Network held in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Aberdeen and Perth brought together a range of foster carers, social workers,

fostering panel members and legal representatives. The meetings included presentations from Anne Black as chair of the working party who led on the Getting it Right for every child in kinship and foster care strategy, and also from the Scottish Government on the proposed changes to regulations and legislation.

The days were filled with a range of lively discussions, and in particular the importance of a variety of training

opportunities being available for foster carers and fostering service staff, the benefits to joining up with other agencies for a range of fostering activities and the importance of partnership working and recognising the role of all those who play a part in the fostering process.

Of particular interest was the implications and implementation of the new Permanence Order, which is contained within the *Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act*. This will replace the existing Parental Responsibilities and Freeing Orders and it is hoped that this will ensure a more child centred, flexible and

secure plan for those children who will not be returning home.

The Fostering Network and BAAF will jointly be drawing up guidance and delivering training across Scotland on these new changes. The regulations and legislation are due to be laid before Parliament in April and should come into force after June 2009. Feedback from the meetings was extremely positive, in spite of some clarity in some areas still being required, and we are also hopeful of holding further similar meetings to enable more discussions to take place.



Building the Skills

The Fostering Network is launching a second edition of its flagship pre-approval training course, *The Skills to Foster*, in May.

The Skills to Foster has helped prepare thousands of potential foster carers for their exciting and demanding new role. However, the world of foster care has changed significantly since it was first published in 2003. Foster carers have a more varied and demanding role than ever before, not just in meeting the needs of those they care for, but in working as part of a professional workforce surrounding those children and young people.

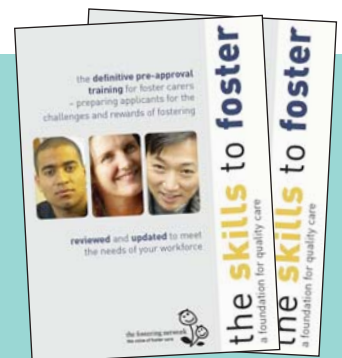
There is a clear expectation of ongoing training, right

from the pre-approval stage. With this in mind, the new course reflects its position as the first step on a journey of learning and development. The existing Workbook will be replaced by a comprehensive *Record and Resource Book*. This not only consolidates learning from the training sessions, but provides more in depth information that can be kept as a reference following approval. The book is packed with activities which not only record learning, but build a bank of evidence for future training and development.

New elements have also been added to the course to reflect the situations modern foster carers may face. There

are more case studies, representing the diversity of fostered children and young people, and foster carers themselves. Working in partnership with everyone surrounding a child is emphasised throughout, particularly parents and other people close to the child, as well as schools and other agencies. Participants will now also cover the basic principles of attachment theory, and be encouraged to relate this to behaviour and child development.

We hope that these developments will make *The Skills to Foster* even more indispensable than before.



The aim of the course has always been to provide participants with information about the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to begin a career in fostering. The second edition will be an important tool in giving them the best possible start.

The new materials will be available from May. For more information, visit www.fostering.net



SVQ success for North Ayrshire foster carers

North Ayrshire's fostering and adoption team are extremely pleased to say that they have now managed to put 11 of their 48 foster carers through their SVQ level 3 in Health & Social Care (Children and Young People). Another eight are registered to start in May this year.

Ed and Kate Baxter completed their SVQ in 2007 and nine carers, Eileen Condy, Grace McLean, Jacqueline Donlon, Sandra Smith, Linda Short, Roseann Fraser, Veron Maneely, (pictured) Marlene Leach and Tracy White (not in photo), started the program in January 2008, all managing to complete this in December 2008!

North Ayrshire Council were supported in providing this training by the Scottish Government training monies in 2007 and commissioned the UK Centre for Continuing Professional Development (UKCCPD) to carry out the SVQ

assessment. The Council then brought in Sue Robertson and Marjorie Ruddick from the Fostering Network, alongside North Ayrshire's Justine Young, to run eleven one day courses to cover the 'underpinning knowledge' for the programme. These courses included safer caring, managing challenging behaviour, child development, attachment and managing information.

The delivery of the SVQ program involved a significant time contribution from supervising social workers in the family placement team as well as from the foster carer students themselves and Director for North Ayrshire Council, Bernadette Docherty presented certificates of completion to each foster carer at a celebration lunch, thanking them for all their hard work and commitment and congratulating them on their achievement.

New training courses for 2009

Sue and Joy are pleased to announce some new additions to our range of training courses in Scotland. The training team remain busy and are looking forward to continuing to meet and work with many of you over the next year.

Our new one-day **Recruiting and Retaining foster carers** course will take place on Thursday 20 August in Glasgow, cost £90 +VAT. The day is designed to help participants to identify their fostering services recruitment needs and outline and explore a range of recruitment techniques that have worked in other fostering services. The course will build on the findings from the Fostering Network's Recruitment and Retention project, sharing effective practice in Scotland.

Play therapist, Shelagh McFarlane will be working with the team to deliver our revised, **Understanding the Importance of Child's Play**. This one day course takes place on Tuesday 25 August in Glasgow,

cost £95 +VAT. The day will enable adults to gain insight into the child's world by joining them in their play, observing and valuing them. It will also give adults the opportunity to experience play and understand the powerful emotions play can evoke. Play gives the child the opportunity to access their internal world, master their stages of development and helps them re work emotional trauma. Making time to play with a child will help the attunement between the child and adult. It also gives the child and adult the opportunity to experience fun and creates new memories.

These are just some of the many courses we deliver and if you would like them more local to your area or are looking for something different we are always happy to tailor our courses to suit your specific needs. You can get in touch with Joy and Sue directly on 0141 204 1400



Forgotten Voices submitted to film festival

Our fantastic DVD produced by the Young People's project last October has recently been submitted to the Showcomotion Young People's Film Festival. We are hopeful of hearing whether the film is an award winner in the UNICEF Film Award category by June 2009. The annual film festival screens films made by or young people and prioritises films representing the lives of children from around the world and addressing issues which are pertinent to groups of young people. The festival is attended by both international and national media and we are really proud to have had the opportunity to submit the film.

Originally in a report form, the project then created a DVD in partnership with *the big step* and voices the words of young people themselves, bringing together a unique collection of the thoughts, views and feelings of young people who have direct care experience of foster care including the sons and daughters of foster carers and children and young people in foster care.

The film touches on issues such as *going into foster care, preparation for foster care, relationships within the fostering household, contact and education*, and is an invaluable resource for training and awareness raising with prospective foster carers and social workers, among others.

The DVD is available to download from our website, www.fostering.net or can be purchased, cost £23.50, plus VAT, plus £1.50 p&p. So far 17 fostering agencies/ local authorities have ordered up copies of the resource so make sure that you have your copy by contacting Linda Curran in the Glasgow office. Hard copies of the report are also available.



Young peoples guide to Overnight Stays published

Following the recent

publication of overnight stays guidance for practitioners on how to support young people who are looked after to have sleepovers with friends, the Scottish Government has worked with Who Cares? Scotland to produce versions for children and young people.

These booklets are a good way for foster carers to arrange overnights and also to explain to children and young people what information 'host families' may need to know about them, e.g. whether the young person needs an inhaler for asthma. The booklets also cover why, for some young people, it may not be appropriate to have an overnight stay.

Two versions of the booklet are available: one for 8-12 year olds and one for over 12's and have been widely circulated across Scotland to provide young people with information on what rules and arrangements need to be followed before allowing young people to have a sleepover. They can also be found on the website, www.scotland.gov.uk/overnightstaysfor8to12 and www.scotland.gov.uk/overnightstaysforover12



Renfrewshire Foster Carer's Complete SVQ

The first group of foster carers to complete their SVQ attended the recent Social Work Professional Training Award Ceremony to have their achievement recognised. The awards were presented to them by Peter McLeod, director of social work and Councillor Eileen McCartin, Chair of the Community and Family Care Policy Board. (The photograph shows three of the successful candidates along with the director and Councillor McCartin.)

Workplace assessor, Colin Cunningham says: "The award which the foster carers undertook was the Children's Care, Learning and Development Level 3 award. We decided that this award would be most appropriate given the focus on the child's development. This allowed us to focus on how carers support the child's development in a holistic way.

"As this group were the pilot group for

our centre there were a number of areas of the assessment which provided a challenge for the carers and their assessor alike. It was acknowledged right from the start that flexibility was the key to successfully supporting the carer's in completing the award. It was decided to run half day support sessions for carers to attend where they could work on written work, speak with each other and get support from the assessor. These sessions proved successful, although in order to increase the flexibility it was decided for the second group to have full day 'drop in' style workshops.

"Currently there are five foster carers working towards their award with another group of four starting in April 09. These groups are already benefitting from the hard work of the first group as they move forward in completing their award."

Change to insurance for over 18's

We are delighted to announce that the Fostering Network no longer have a separate membership category for over 18's. Previously this had meant that once sons and daughters of foster carers turned 18, they were no longer covered by our legal insurance and members had to make sure they were covered separately.

What it covers

Our legal insurance now covers the legal costs associated with your work as a foster carer and covers you as a member, your parents, husband, wife or partner and your children (whether birth children, adopted or when under 18 were granted a residence order with the foster carer), all of whom permanently reside within Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

What's not covered

The policy does not cover the husband,

wife or partners of your birth or adopted children, whether they remain living in your home or in their own home, or foster children who remain in your home once they turn 18 but who hadn't been subject to a formal residence order.

How to get in touch

Remember, in the unfortunate event of an allegation being made against you or if you need representation, please make sure that you telephone the Legal Advice Line on 0870 164 8020 as soon as you become aware of the need for representation, explain the situation to the Legal Adviser and let them know that you are a member of the Fostering Network.

Further information and the full terms and conditions about what is covered is available from our membership team, **t** 0207 620 6400, or download the policy from www.fostering.net

Advice and information from the Fostering Network

- how to use the service

As many of you may know, our Advice & Mediation service has been of great benefit to our members over the years and advice worker Sandra Moody has been providing fostering information and advice on a range of queries for almost 18 years! More recently, Sandra was joined by Sue Hardman who responds to queries across the North East of Scotland, with Sandra covering Central and South Scotland.

Both Sandra and Sue are currently funded by the Scottish Government to provide telephone support to all foster carers and fostering services in Scotland, whether you need confidential advice on a complex problem, independent mediation or a straightforward answer to a query.

Our service has been used over the years for a whole range of queries, including, among many others:

- tax
- insurance
- payments and benefits
- household pets

- setting up a foster care association
- differences over care plans for young people
- allegations



The service has been used by foster carers, kinship (family and friends) carers, social workers and students, among many others, from a range of organisations. Sandra and Sue, and other members of the team in Glasgow, are keen to support our members, and often go above and beyond our remit to make sure that your queries are responded to! Sandra says: "We aim to try and answer any query that anyone has about fostering."

While Sandra and Sue may not be able to visit you in person, they will respond to all queries, whether by phone, email or post. Sandra works from our Glasgow office Monday to Thursday from 10am til 4pm and Sue works from home, various days usually between 830am and 230pm. We also have our website, www.fostering.net which has a huge range of information and

resources that may help with answering your query.

Remember, in addition to receiving this *Fostering in Scotland* newsletter, if you are a member of the Fostering Network you can also benefit by accessing resources in the 'members only' section of the website. Your membership also includes:

- Free legal expenses insurance
- 24 hour, 365 days a year legal assistance, medical advice, stress counselling service **t** 0870 164 8020
- Tax helpline for advice on tax matters
- Our quarterly national *Foster Care* magazine
- Fosterline - the confidential advice line for foster carers based in our London office
- The Fostering Network's information service **t** 020 7621 1884
- Members prices on training, publications, conferences and events

To get in touch with Sandra or Sue, they can be contacted:

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SWIIS foster carers pilot foster carer course

Three foster carers with SWIIS Foster Care (Scotland) have recently begun a new program of study being piloted in partnership between the Open University in Scotland and SWIIS.

The new health and social care program, the K101 [Integrated Vocational Route], developed and delivered by the Open University, will combine both vocational and academic elements and will enable students to gain practical skills alongside a solid knowledge base.

As with other Open University courses, foster carers will be able to enjoy a flexible, part time, home based approach to learning. The course will work towards achieving both a Certificate in Health and Social Care [the first 60 credits towards the B.A. in Social Work] as well as an NVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care and will use a range of materials including DVDs, resources, workgroups, online discussions and regular support from a tutor.

SWIIS Training and Development Co-ordinator, Roy Lawrence says: "SWIIS places great value on the professional approach taken by our workforce and supports this by providing opportunities for all staff and carers to enhance their practice through accessing continuous professional development.

"We are aware of the continuous drive towards a tightly regulated workforce through the Scottish Social Services Council remit to register the social care workforce and scrutinise practice in line with the professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Social Service Employees. SWIIS fully embraces the notion of being a 'learning organisation' and the drive towards a culture within social care of registration and professional practice. We feel that our organisation recognises the benefits of 'reflective practice' and 'lifelong learning' and that the promotion of these demonstrates

an intrinsic support for employees to provide the best possible outcomes for all children and young people that are placed with SWIIS.

"SWIIS is delighted to become an 'Employer Partner' with the Open University for the pilot programme of the K101 [IVR], allowing SWIIS foster carers an opportunity to develop their careers as well as enhance their practice. As this is a completely new award and SWIIS is the only organisation in Scotland involved in the pilot, we have agreed to become involved in a full evaluation of the programme and recognise the chance this presents to develop a positive relationship with the Open University."

We look forward to hearing how the students progress with the pilot and will keep you posted on how they have found the course in a future edition of *Fostering in Scotland*.

Scottish Borders carers get ID badges

After years of negotiating with the department foster carers in Scottish Borders council are now delighted to finally have ID badges to support their role when out and about with children and young people.

Foster carer, Betty Falconer has been pushing for ID badges for two years and is delighted that they now have these badges. Betty says: "We now have our card so it will make life much easier for all of us but I once had a hard time on holiday with one of my young people. When I tried to take him back to the caravan he was screaming that I was not his mum. Before I knew it I had security asking me some questions about who I was and what relation I was to the child. After a bit of persuading he eventually believed us, however it brought home how vulnerable we really are."

Sandra Moody says: "It is essential that all foster carers

have some form of ID that they can present when asked to confirm their status as foster carers. They may be asked to do this in many situations, such as collecting children or young people from a police station, registering with schools, doctors etc. and it is likely that they are going to be asked to do this more often, with increasing concerns about child protection issues."

While this may be the practice in your area already, we hope that any fostering services who have not issued their carers with a suitable form of ID will be able to follow the Borders and ensure that all your foster carers are able to confirm their identity if needed.

We would also like to hear your experiences of ID badges for foster carers, including the pro's and cons of issuing and using them, so get in touch with your comments.

Edinburgh City launch *Caring for Vulnerable Babies* training DVD

The number of babies being referred to the City of Edinburgh Council for temporary foster care because of parental substance misuse has doubled in the last year, with ninety nine babies under six months old being referred in 2008. Fifty of those babies were referred before they were born and two thirds of all the babies were suffering from the effects of alcohol or drug addiction as a result of the mother's addiction problems.

Although this rise in numbers is unfortunate, and makes the need for more carers in Edinburgh ever more urgent, one positive outcome is that carers and staff have developed a range of skills and techniques to deal with vulnerable babies, helping to give them the best possible start in life. This wealth of knowledge is now being shared in the form of a DVD - *Caring for Vulnerable Babies*.

The DVD focuses on babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) - a cluster of signs/symptoms that affect new born babies whose mothers have used a variety of substances during their pregnancy. The DVD features



health and Council professionals, as well as foster carers. It covers a range of issues, from medical needs and treatment, developing attachment and feeding, to carers' experiences, support and preparing for the future.

Edinburgh City will be using the DVD as a training tool for their carers, and it is also available to purchase, along with comprehensive notes which can be adapted to suit the training purpose. The purchase price is £50 for authorities/agencies employing more than 100 staff and £25 for authorities/agencies employing less than 100 staff, or for individuals or community groups. If you want more information or would like to place an order, please contact Joanne MacDougall on 0131 529 7210 or email Joanne.MacDougall@edinburgh.gov.uk



The Debate Project

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Scottish Throughcare & Aftercare Forum

Debate Project Young People's conference
September 2009

Date and Venue to be announced

Join our fostering panel members database

As a service to its members the Fostering Network has set up a database for new and existing panel members. Members can register their interest in sitting on fostering panels, and fostering providers can search for potential candidates. To register or to search, you need to sign in (as an individual or corporate member) to the members section of our website, www.fostering.net

About fostering panels
Fostering panels carry out roles such as looking at applications from people to become carers and making recommendations about their approval, including terms, recommending whether someone should remain as a carer, and carrying out a carer's first review.

The fostering panel is made up of a mix of people including medical and legal advisers, experienced foster carers, people with experience of being in foster care and should include both men and women and should reflect the background and heritage of the children who are likely to need placement and the foster carers likely to seek approval.

All fostering service providers are required to establish at least one panel, and the Care Commission's National Care Standards 2005 set out the standard expected of panels.

So, if you feel that you have the experience and skills to sit on a fostering panel then why not register your interest by visiting our secure database.