

Protective Behaviours NEWSLETTER

Edition 2 autumn 2009

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A Safety Awareness Programme to promote safety and well-being for children, young people and families

Welcome to the Protective Behaviours Newsletter for the South east.

This Newsletter aims to share information, practice and ideas about Protective Behaviours. If you have any examples of how you have been using Protective Behaviours please do e-mail us. This newsletter is produced termly.

Protective Behaviours training courses are currently free to people working in Brighton and Hove. For anyone else the charge is between £50 – 150 depending on the size of your organization. We can also provide bespoke training for your organization. The next 2 day training will be held on 5th and 12th February 2010 at the Safety Net offices. To book a place, e-mail us at: training@safety-net.org.uk.

In addition we are now running a free termly **Protective Behaviours Network** to help people to share and develop practice. The next event will be on March 25th at the Safety Net Offices 9.30 – 12.30

Protective Behaviours Resources to borrow

We have a **Library of Protective Behaviours resources** which are available to borrow and buy. We can send you a list of resources that are available or pop into our offices to borrow them.

If you are undertaking Protective Behaviours work we would love to hear from you. At the moment we have been getting requests for resources for working with children and young people who have learning difficulties. If anyone out there has any ideas for resources or activities, please let us know.

Protective Behaviours Network Dr Stephen Briers: 'Superpowers for Parents'

We were very pleased to welcome local clinical psychologist, Dr Stephen Briers of TV's Little Angels and Teen Angels, who talked to us about his latest book: 'Superpowers for Parents'. Dr Briers explained that, a lot of programmes for parents are focused around behavioural techniques rather than skills to help themselves and their children keep safe. A lot of skills parents themselves can do, thereby equipping parents to equip children.

Protective Behaviours teaches a core set of principles which help to lay the foundation for transferrable skills which can be applied in different situations. *"We can't expect children to deal with a situation of considerable stress or risk if we haven't laid the foundations and given them a set of skills and tools to prepare them."*

Parents can support their children by teaching them a number of core skills, which the research demonstrates lead to better outcomes for children:-

1. Emotional Literacy
2. Assertiveness
3. Problem-solving

Emotional Literacy

Dr Briers explained that there is a consistent correlation in the research between good emotional literacy and good outcomes for children. *"If we train children to be aware of their emotions they are much more likely to be able to deal with difficult situations."* Parents can assist their children with this by labeling feelings clearly and consistently, using photographs and books and talking to children about what they feel. (Continued on the next page)

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“Superpowers for parents continued”.

The development of empathy is a key skill and a crucial source of information about the world. Mary Donaldson's studies proved that children have a much better ability to get into other children's heads than was previously thought. Cultivating empathy is associated with better social adjustment, whereas low empathy is associated with anxiety, poor impulse control, lower cognitive ability and social clumsiness.

Assertiveness

Assertiveness is as much an internal as an external process; teaching children to manage their own difficult feelings in stressful situations is a key skill for self-regulation. We need to help children to develop values and their own bill of rights because assertiveness is easier if you know what you are being assertive about. Children who have good self-esteem know that they can achieve things and achieve goals; confidence is built on a sense of achievement.

Problem-Solving

A problem-solving approach helps children to understand that there is more than one solution to a situation. It gives them a degree of control and teaches the ability to predict consequences, which in turn can improve their decision making processes. We can help children to learn to problem solve by turning problems into people or characters, teaching children to mind map their problems and embrace their mistakes. The use of basic cognitive behavioural techniques, making links between our feelings, thoughts and behaviour can also be a useful tool in seeing that there are different choices that we can make in any given situation.

Dr Brier's books:

“Superpowers for Parents: The Psychology of great parenting and happy children” and

“Brilliant Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: How to use CBT to improve your mind and your life” are available from Amazon.

SNAP Groups: using Protective Behaviours to help children who have low self-esteem because of bullying

Safety Net has been funded by Children in Need to run SNAP (Safety Net Assertiveness Project) to help children who have low confidence or self-esteem because of bullying behaviour or situations that they may be dealing with. SNAP groups are run in community venues and teach children assertiveness skills as well as basic break away techniques and problem-solving through role playing situations. The SNAP group was recently filmed for BBC Children in Need. One child taking part in the SNAP programme said *“If SNAP wasn't here, I wouldn't know how to cope with bullies and how to stand up for myself”*

You can view the clip at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4J_PXBap5g

News: Funding bids for Protective Behaviours work

Wendy Guest, Health visitor at Moulsecoomb Children's Centre is working with managers to seek funding to evaluate the 'Feeling Good, Feeling Safe' Group that she has been running for parents.

Safety Net is currently submitting funding bids to support further development of resources and training to help colleagues in delivering more Protective Behaviours work with different client groups.

To view a Protective Behaviours Report that was recently submitted to Brighton and Hove CYPT about Protective Behaviours work go to the Safety Net web-site; www.safety-net.org.uk or contact us for details.