

OF INTEREST

- An evaluation of the social pedagogy University courses will take place in the New Year if you have been involved please watch out for this as your contributions will be essential for its development.
- The theme of this edition, led by the residential steering group, is reflective practice. Why not find out more about this approach in this article:
<http://is.gd/ydixgC>

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Reflective practice proves positive

Roan's early life included neglect and physical abuse and likely sexual abuse by several men. When Roan moved into a residential home aged 12, the staff of both sexes and all ages used pedagogic principles to build relationships including touch, hugs and one to one time in their room. Despite some concerns about staff spending one to one time alone with Roan the results were spectacular especially at settling time when staff would read to Roan, play games and tuck Roan in.

From Roan's arrival at the home Roan had made several disclosures, some of which needed to be followed up by the police and some of which proved at best to be an embellishment of the facts. The staff were able to support Roan and the blossoming relationships appeared to be helping Roan through difficult times. However, after over a year of living within the home, Roan made several new disclosures including an allegation towards a member of staff. There was considerable concern about how Roan could best be safeguarded; including particular concern about the possibility of Roan feeling uncomfortable around

members of staff and the increased likelihood of further allegations. As a result it



Members of staff, including the home's management team, reflected individually and as a group.

was decided that for safeguarding reasons, best practice would be that staff were not to spend time with Roan unaccompanied and that as much as possible another member of staff should be in view of any kind of touch especially hugs and cuddles.

The staff team worked to these guidelines as best as possible, trying to maintain a positive and caring relationship with Roan whilst ensuring that they adhered as best as possible to the safeguarding guidelines. However, there proved to be difficulties as Roan would seek out staff for hugs and cuddles, which often meant that Roan would approach members of staff when they were

alone. It also became difficult to help Roan settle as staff tried alternative strategies to spending one to one time in Roan's bedroom. This understandably created some tensions for both staff members and Roan, which ultimately resulted in an increase in negative behaviours.

Members of staff, including the home's management team reflected individually and as a group on the difficulties around balancing the meeting of Roan's needs with maintaining the required safeguarding measures obliged on the team by other professionals and management. Several group strategies were applied but ultimately Roan's behaviour continued to deteriorate.

It was at an emotional well-being session facilitated by Horizons (a clinical psychology provider (cont..page2)

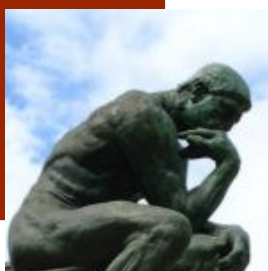




Reflection and Diversity

“Vital to the breakthrough was the importance given to reflective practice.”

Reflective practice, both individually and as part of a team.



Steering groups

The Fostering Steering Group met on the 12th November and discussed a number of developments which hoped to extend the use of social pedagogy in the current work of foster and contract carers.

Chiming with the theme of this edition they discussed the potential of reflective practice as a tool for all foster care.

The Residential Steering Group met on the 5th December look at a range of issues related to the understanding of cultural diversity in the residential homes.

The hope is to work with the Open Centre in Derby who work to promote understanding between different communities by

celebrating and raising awareness of their faith and cultural heritage.

If you are interested in being involved in the work of the steering groups please feel free to make initial contact through the details on the back of this newsletter.

Reflective practice... continued

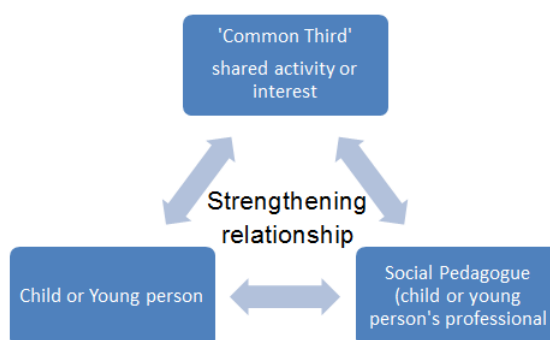
used to support (care home staff) that the team, including the home's managers discussed their thoughts arising from Roan's behaviour. All staff concurred that their relationship with Roan had felt strained. The psychologist facilitating the session questioned staff on what each thought was the main factor in this strained relationship. All agreed it was the lack of closeness due to the lengths that were being taken to maintain some form of physical affection and were certain that a lack of genuine physical contact was making Roan feel more anxious.

It was at this point that the psychologist introduced the theory of "Therapeutic Risk" which was explained as a managed risk which was taken in

order to move an individual forward. The staff team agreed that this would indeed be beneficial to Roan and the management agreed in the therapeutic risk could be used from that point on to rebuild and maintain relationships with Roan.

That very weekend, staff spent one to one time with Roan emptying their room and preparing it for redecoration. The time spent in close proximity working with Roan not worrying about the possibility of repercussions had immediate results and Roan appeared more relaxed than they had for many weeks.

This approach highlights the need for a social pedagogy approach to build relationships and thoughtfully managing the balancing between safeguarding and authentic affection. Vital to the breakthrough was the importance given to reflective practice, both individually and as part of a team. The support of Horizons in group reflection, problem solving and strategy building highlights the need to listen to the staff working with the young person to find "bottom up" solutions and shows how using a 'common third' activity to build and revitalise the relationship really works.



Austerity pressures threatening children's human rights



long term impact on children and society

25th anniversary of the convention, found children are not being adequately protected from harm. Also their rights are not central to decision-making poten-

rector Paola Uccellari said: "Cutting... services is short-sighted; it will have a long term impact on children and society."

The Children's Rights Alliance has warned that England may struggle to meet the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

tially contravening articles of the convention. The report did highlight some improvements in meeting the rights of children but emphasised that England may soon struggle to meet many of the standards. Children's Rights Alliance di-

The report also highlighted that "The professionals... have faced a huge increase in their workload, while investment in their work has reduced".

The 'State of Children's Rights in England', published on the

The report can be found here: www.crae.org.uk/news/

"the journal provides a platform for dialogue between theory and practice"

Derbyshire in the International Journal of Social Pedagogy

The latest edition of the International Journal of Social Pedagogy is now available online.

The interdisciplinary field of social pedagogy is developing and evolving constantly and the journal provides a platform for dialogue between theory and practice. It encour-

ages both original contributions about theory and research in social pedagogy and articles that reflect social pedagogical perspectives in practice settings.

Of particular note is an article by our own Nicole Chavaudra which provides a perspective

on social pedagogy in Derbyshire, its development in residential settings and its potential for the rest of children and young peoples' services.

You can find the article here: www.internationaljournalofsocialpedagogy.com/index.php?journal=ijsp

Reflective practice is the theme of the latest SPDN

Following the excellent Social Pedagogy Development Network (SPDN) held at Lea Green in our very own Derbyshire back in June a number of staff were able to attend the most recent SPDN held in Dublin.

This had a focused on reflec-

tion and why it is fundamental to social pedagogical practice. The event covered how we can practically and creatively engage in reflective processes with children and young people and within work teams. The keynote presentation 'Choosing the path of most

resistance' gave delegates a deeper look into the process of critical reflection.

You can find out more about the event and the SPDN here: <http://thempra.com/SPDNmeeting11.htm>



Why reflection is fundamental to social pedagogy?



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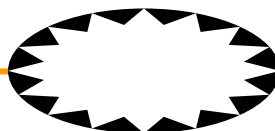
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Working together to support and inspire children, young people, and their families to be the best they can be; safe, healthy happy, learning and working.

Stay in touch

If you have any comments about the gazette or would like to know more about the development of social pedagogy please feel free to get in touch. Also do make contact if you would like to highlight your own or colleagues work developing social pedagogy.

Disclaimer: we hope this provides useful and relevant information, but we cannot guarantee that all source documents referred to have been checked and verified. We cannot accept responsibility for actions or omissions taken after reading this bulletin. Nothing in this bulletin is intended as a substitute for expert, professional or legal advice.

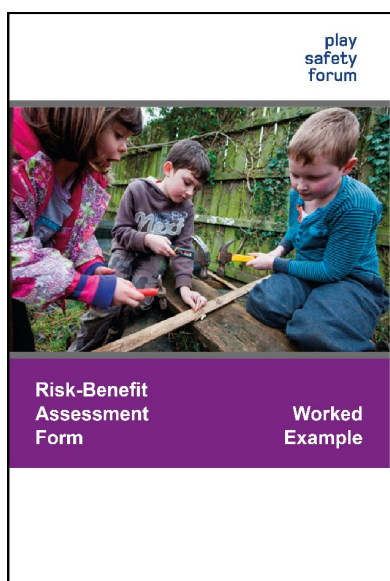


Managing Risk in Play Provision

The Play Safety Forum has recently published helpful documents which they hope will assist with the move to a more balanced, thoughtful approach to risk management in children's play.

They hope to give schools and others an authoritative, practical support to help them weigh up risks and benefits.

Published by Play Scotland in partnership with Play England, Play Wales and PlayBoard Northern Ireland, and was commissioned and developed by the Play Safety Forum.



Their hope is that this will help find the balance between keeping children safe while ensuring play remains challenging so as to builds resilience and risk competence that will last children a lifetime.

More information can be found on the Rethinking Childhood website here:

<http://rethinkingchildhood.com/2014/11/12/rba-risk-benefit-assessment-form-launch/>