

Staff Resources



Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning (EFICL) Pathways to Excellence Toolkit, Kent County Council

'Bite-sized chunks of information are great for parents and the app is a winning feature'
Judge

Kent County Council has developed a comprehensive suite of tools to support early years and childcare practitioners in enhancing family involvement in children's learning.

The toolkit can be used creatively by professionals from all agencies and organisations to encourage parents to participate in their children's holistic learning and also provide invaluable continuous professional development in the drive to develop and sustain a shared multi-agency approach to working with families. It helps practitioners to reflect on their own practice in core areas such as ethos and inclusion, conversations and links with families to enhance learning, transitions to school and supporting ongoing attendance.

Children's centres are included in the resource, enabling teams to reflect on their provision in terms of how they involve families in children's learning while also exploring the

range of services and groups that they provide to support this agenda. Wide-ranging advice includes promoting good practice in visiting families in their homes, such as the value of these visits, risk assessment processes and how to make the visits meaningful for families.

The toolkit includes a wall planner and strategies booklet to enhance family involvement, with the opportunity to create a long-term visual plan for practitioners and families to develop together, display and regularly review. There is a book on the power of schemas which illustrates several schemas and how they can be supported in the home environment, and an introductory eight-minute DVD. This has been filmed in family homes and Kent early years settings, including a maintained nursery and a childminder's home.

A free, innovative app is provided for families that features an electric learning journey to capture photographs, annotations and special

moments which can be shared with the child's setting and other family members. An age-related weekly pop-up feature provides families with good-practice ideas to enhance their involvement in children's learning. Help is also given to parents through the app on what to look for when choosing childcare, and a geo-location feature provides information on local early years settings and places to visit such as local libraries, parks and zoos.

Nurseries have reported revisiting their ethos on areas such as home visits and key person role and responsibilities after receiving training on the toolkit. One nursery says: 'After the EFICL training we have recently committed to using online technology to engage with parents, with amazing results. We are getting so much more feedback on activities and interests from home. We have also started small regular groups for parents to meet up and share concerns, which is working well.'

Highly commended Chatterbox Challenge, I CAN

The Chatterbox Challenge is a free educational pack and fundraiser developed by the communication charity I CAN. The charity's team of speech and language advisors have created the resource to raise awareness of the charity and give children a fun, hands-on experience that will boost their speech,

language and communication skills, which underpin all aspects of their learning and development.

The activities are about getting young children to take part in fun party games while chattering about what they are doing, seeing and hearing. Each setting, parent or carer who receives the pack gains access to a wide range of activities including colouring sheets, stories, props and song sheets.

Finalists
LearningBook
The ItKit, Learning and Training Consultancy
One File Learning Journal
Radwraps Magnetic Radiator Covers

Criterion

Open to EY resources and equipment that help improve practice/provision