



Special Interest Articles:

- Our Team
- Care Commission
- Social Work Inspection
- Art Group Exhibition
- Summer Activity Scheme dates
- Children's Rights Banner
- A Trip to the Supermarket
- Falkirk Childcare Information Service
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder - Support Pack Consultation
- Short Breaks Service
- Comments/ Suggestions
- Project Linus

Children with Disabilities Team
Falkirk Council
Oxgang Road
Grangemouth
FK3 9EF

Tel: 01324-504343

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

NEWSLETTER

Our Team

Lesley Beath, Occupational Therapist
Gill Bedwell, Occupational Therapist/Access Officer
Louise Boyle, Social Worker
Beth Campbell, Social Work Assistant
Norma Cleland, Social Worker
Linda Fisher, Social Worker
Jennifer Madden, Social Worker
Sandra McAllister, Activity Scheme Co-ordinator
Kathleen McCormick, Senior Social Worker
Morag O'Dwyer, Team Manager
Myra Robertson, Admin Support
Helen Ruffell, Social Worker
Jill Wilkie, Occupational Therapist

You can now find us on the web
- just go to:-

www.falkirk.gov.uk

and follow the links to Social Work then Children and Families.

The website is regularly updated - please let us know what information you would like to see there.

Care Commission

The Children with Disabilities Team Activity Scheme is registered with the Care Commission and is inspected annually – you can read our inspection reports on the Care Commission website (www.carecommission.com). This year the Care Commission is changing its inspection process and introducing a

grading system with services being graded 1-6, 6 being the highest grade. The Commission is keen to hear the views of service users and will distribute a number of questionnaires prior to the inspection. If you receive a questionnaire please respond as it's important that your views are heard.

Social Work Inspection

The Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) will be conducting an inspection of the Social Work Service in Falkirk during the months of May and June. Like the Care Commission, SWIA places great importance on seeking out the views of service users and carers. The inspectors

may ask you to participate in surveys as part of their information-gathering process. You can find out more about the SWIA inspection process at www.swia.gov.uk.



The Artists

Art Group Exhibition

Our small group of artists once again excelled themselves by producing an array of wonderful paintings, drawings and mobiles which were on exhibition at the Callendar Square Shopping Centre in May 2007. The exhibition was a huge success and we had a great response from the

public. More than 100 people visited the exhibition on the morning of Saturday 12th May and all were extremely impressed with the quality of the artwork on display. We have been successful in our bid for funds from the Big Lottery Awards for All and we are looking at how we can use these

funds to develop the Art Group. We have also recently received a donation of £250 from a local company, Polimeri Europa, who have asked the group to produce some pieces to be displayed in their reception area.

Summer Activity Scheme

We will be based at the Community Education Unit, Abbots Road, Grangemouth again this year. The scheme will run from 7th July to 15th August

and if you have submitted an application we will shortly be sending dates and trip information.



Children's Rights Banner

Over the past few months some of the young people who attend the Tuesday Youth Club have worked on producing a banner highlighting children's rights. They have been supported by Isabel Forsyth from NCH

Tayavalla's Communication Project and we hope that this work will help to focus more on children's rights and encourage our young people to become involved in the work of Falkirk Children's Commission.



A Trip to the Supermarket - A Parent's Story



'I wanted to change the fact that my son was being excluded.'

Going to the supermarket with my son who has Asperger's syndrome is difficult. He doesn't like busy shops or letting you put unfamiliar items in the shopping trolley. During visits to the shops before he has been uncontrollable, screaming, lashing out at me, running up and down aisles, throwing everything that was new out of the trolley. He would sit down and refuse to move from that spot. I felt so embarrassed with people looking and staring at us both as if to say she should have more control over the child. It was extremely stressful for him, his sister and me and shopping trips often had to end without shopping. In the end I decided to go shopping without him because it was less stressful. My son had ended up being excluded from any shopping trips.

I wanted to change the fact that my son was being excluded, as shopping is a way of developing social skills. My aim was for him to eventually be less stressed and able to go shopping and adapt to new things being put into the shopping trolley that would not normally be at home i.e. different cereal from normal. This would help him make choices in what foods he might like to try and broaden his variety in his diet, also help him to understand that changes can be a good thing.

I decided to:-

1. Place my son securely in the trolley thus providing a safe environment for him.
2. Place a cover in with him so that if he wants to hide he can do so.
3. Then take a cover and a toy or something that interests him.
4. Encourage him to gradually remove the cover when he feels safe to do so.
5. Praise him every time he removes the cover or helps put things into the trolley.
6. Change items that I put into trolley.
7. Get him to mark off items on the shopping list.
8. Engage him by getting him to put things into the trolley.
9. Put new items on shopping list.
10. Get him to walk outside the trolley for full shopping trip.

My daughter was involved in this plan.

The first week we tried to go shopping with no strategies we were not very successful. My son was

under a great deal of stress and we ended up coming away without any shopping.

The second week we explained to my son that we would go shopping on Monday and Wednesday. On Monday we went at night time when the shop was quieter. I placed him in the trolley to see if this would make him feel safe. We spent 30 minutes in the supermarket and only got a few items just to get him used to the noises within the supermarket.

On Wednesday we went after school when it was noisier to get him used to the supermarket being busier. We only managed to get a few items before we had to leave as he became really distressed.

The third week we arranged to go shopping on the same days as last week and at the same times to keep his routine. I took a cover to see whether it would make him feel calmer and safer. He could hide under the cover if he was feeling stressed. The first day he hid under the cover most of the time within the supermarket but I was able to complete a full shopping list. We increased the time within

A Trip to the Supermarket (contd)



'He got involved in marking the list and putting things inside the trolley.'

the supermarket to 40 minutes. We used the cover for a couple of weeks and introduced his toy with the cover. Gradually my son started to remove the cover and just play with the toy. We praised him when he removed the cover to encourage him to finally take the cover away.

The fifth week we arranged to go shopping on the same days but put in an extra shop on the Friday. I explained to my son that we would not be taking the cover this week but he could still have his toy and I would sit him in the trolley. The shopping trips this week were not stressful for both him and me. The Friday shop I gave him the calculator so he could add up how much the shopping would cost instead of giving him the toy. He adapted really well and kept trying to guess how much the

shopping would come to.

The sixth week we arranged to go shopping the three days taking the calculator and getting him to mark off the shopping list. He got involved in marking the list and putting things inside the trolley. He walked alongside the trolley. The shopping trips went well.

The seventh week I arranged to go shopping with his Grandma instead of his sister being there. The shops were extremely busy. He was walking alongside the trolley because he wanted to. He chose to put items in the trolley but he got quite stressed and when I asked him to put milk in the trolley he threw it in. The milk burst, I asked him to go and tell a worker who was close

by if they could mop up the mess while I dealt with the people he had splashed and their attitudes. When he came back we carried on with the shop and he pushed his Grandma's wheelchair. We didn't go shopping any other days that week so that he didn't get overly stressed.

The outcome for my son is that he is not excluded from any further shopping trips. He is able to learn social skills and be around people in busy shops. He was learning valuable skills for when he is older. He is able to help make a decision to what food we will put in the trolley and understand that people like different foods so it is okay for them to be in the trolley. He is meeting different people in the supermarket. He is able to help with the shopping and learn at the same time.

Falkirk Childcare Information Service

What is Falkirk Childcare Information Service ?

Falkirk Childcare Information Service is a telephone helpline for parents, carers, childcare providers, childcare organisations and local services who work with parents/carers. The service provides a wide range of information on childcare provision, pre-

school education and childcare issues.

Falkirk Childcare Information Service is the only service who provides relevant information on childcare providers in the area.

Childcare Providers
Childcare Providers can offer childcare and

education to children aged 6 weeks to 16 years and are registered and inspected by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (commonly known as the Care Commission). Falkirk Childcare Information Service can provide details on; costs, opening hours, facilities, application process and services available from; Childminders, Crèches, and

Falkirk Childcare Information Service (contd)

Falkirk Council Nurseries, Family Centres, Out of School Care, Parent & Toddler Groups, Playgroups and Private Nurseries.

Local Information - Bulletin Board

The Bulletin Board is a system where organisations, services and individuals can advertise their information, freely. Information must be related to childcare, children and/or parents and carers.

Topics available are - Childcare Training, Local Childcare Organisations, Family Support Information, Useful Contacts, Holiday Activities, Leisure Activities, Additional Needs Support.

What type of service is available ?

The telephone helpline offers free advice, guidance and details with regard to childcare and related issues. Information is available over the phone, by post, fax or e-mail. Callers can expect their calls to be answered by experienced and knowledgeable staff with details being sent, faxed or e-mailed within 1-3 working days.

Childcare Provider details and Bulletin Board Information is available on the website – www.childcarelink.gov.uk/falkirk.

When is the service available ?

It is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm with an answering machine available for those times

when calls cannot be answered.

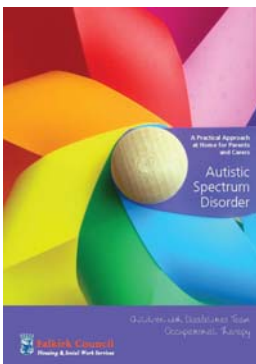
Can information be used by others ?

Those who receive details from Falkirk Childcare Information Service **must not** copy, display, distribute or keep on file any childcare provider details – this is to keep in line with Data Protection Principles.

For further details, please feel free to contact Falkirk Childcare Information Service or check out details and downloads on Falkirk Council Education Services Homepage at http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/education/childcare_and_preschool/childcare_information_service.aspx

Autistic Spectrum Disorder

New Support Pack



“Information and advice strategies.”

This Support pack provides strategies and advice for parents, carers and professionals. It covers many aspects of caring for young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder at home and as part of family life. It includes safety issues; care issues e.g. dressing and feeding; play in the home and garden; practical equipment such

as car seats and harnesses. It has been updated to include parents' leaflets and a wider range of ideas including sensory sensitivities. Copies are available from the Children with Disabilities Team, Tel: 01324-504343 Or on the team's website www.falkirk.gov.uk – follow the links to Social Work then Children and Families Service

*Lesley Beath
Paediatric Occupational
Therapist
Children with Disabilities
Team
Tel: 01324-504343
lesley.beath@falkirk.gov.uk*

Children with Disabilities Team

Short Breaks Service



“A fun, challenging and rewarding experience”

Falkirk Council's Children with Disabilities Team recruit Short Breaks Carers to care for a child/young person with a disability in the carer's home for a few nights a month. The carers are vetted, approved and trained and all have a genuine interest in caring for someone with a disability. At present we have an enthusiastic bunch of 15 carers, some couples, some single carers, who between them offer short, planned breaks to 24 children/young people. This is generally for 2 - 3 overnights per month. This is a fantastic opportunity for young people to gain wider social

experiences and develop new friendships. For families it can be a chance to re-charge batteries, knowing that their child/young person is being well looked after. For carers this can be a fun, challenging and rewarding experience. We are constantly trying to recruit new carers and this year we have been advertising in the Falkirk Herald and the Herald also published an article about the benefits to the family of one of the children who receives short breaks. The assessment of new carers does considerable amount of time. This is to be absolutely sure that they will make suitable carers.

Our carers come from all walks of life but all have a genuine interest in caring for a young person and find this a very rewarding experience.

If you are interested in becoming a Short Breaks Carer please contact Myra Robertson, Clerical Assistant, on 01324-504343 who will send out an information pack. Once you have read this over either myself or one of my colleagues would be happy to visit and discuss this further with you.

*Louise Boyle
Social Worker*

Princess Royal Trust For Carers Centre, Falkirk

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has a regular support group for parents. If interested contact:-

Jenni Fulton, Parent Worker, Princess Royal Trust for Carers Centre
Falkirk
Tel: 01324 611510
Email:
jennifulton@centralcarers.co.uk

Carers Week – 9th – 13th June.

The Carers Centre will be organizing a series of events during Carers' Week – look out for further information about what's on

Comments/Suggestions

If you have any views, comments or suggestions about the Newsletter or any of the services provided by the Children with Disabilities Team please contact us on:-

Tel: 01324-504343
Email: morag.odwyer@falkirk.gov.uk

PROJECT LINUS

Towards the end of 2007 the team was contacted by Elizabeth Stewart of Project Linus. She provided us with twenty beautiful quilts to distribute. The quilts were all hand made by local quilters.

"Project Linus was named after the security blanket toting character from the Peanuts comic strip. The late Charles Schultz, its creator, was pleased to have Linus inspire quilt makers to help sick and traumatized children.

Project Linus originated in

USA in December 1995. It is a voluntary organization providing quilts and blankets to seriously ill, abused or traumatized children and teenagers. It started in the UK in March 2000 as a result of quilters desire to help children in need. At the end of October 2007 Linus has delivered 76,289 quilts and blankets across the UK.

Throughout the UK there are co-ordinators who accept quilts and blankets from quilters groups and individuals and then pass them on to where needed.

The aim is to give the quilts and blankets within the area they are donated.

The patchwork quilts are made from 100% pre-washed cotton with wadding and a backing fabric. Laundering is easy; we recommend a cool machine wash and preferably a cool tumble dry. Light ironing is okay but it may flatten the wadding and some of the texture may be lost."

Elizabeth Stewart
Secretary
Project Linus



Jade Taylor displays one of the beautiful quilts donated by Project Linus..