

C4EO and Aiming High for Disabled Children

How can C4EO help you, your organisation and disabled children and their families in your area?

The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) recently delivered a series of regional Knowledge Workshops for local senior managers from any Children's Services agency responsible for services and strategy relating to disabled children and their families. The workshops were very well received – but we know we need to reach out to far more people than the workshops could cater for. This briefing will give you an idea of our work and how it can help you and your organisation.

The knowledge base

Those who attended the workshops were able to hear the knowledge base that C4EO has assembled so far - bringing together research and quantitative data to establish what works to improve outcomes. The research reviews are focussed on three priorities:

1. improving the wellbeing of disabled children (up to the age of eight) and their families through **increasing the quality and range of early interventions**
2. improving the wellbeing of disabled children and young people through **improving access to positive activities**
3. ensuring all disabled children and young people and their families **receive services which are sufficiently differentiated to meet their diverse needs**

There is a great amount of activity at both national and local level, so it is vital that any work around disability dovetails with Aiming High. Those of you working around early support or short breaks will be particularly interested in priorities one and two.

Summaries have been created which condenses the research findings in to an accessible document. If you would like to see the **knowledge reviews** or the related **research summaries** based on the research reviews please visit

www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/disabledchildren/default.aspx?themeid=2&accesstypeid=1

Two pieces of **primary research** are also being undertaken by C4EO, exploring sleep interventions and behaviour management interventions. You can learn more about these at: www.c4eo.org.uk/disabilityresearch/default.aspx.

Getting the most out of the knowledge base

It isn't just access to knowledge that C4EO provides; we also offer a range of tools and approaches that can help those responsible for services for children and their families to use this knowledge.

Accurate local data has never been so important, particularly as budgets and services are realigned to reflect local need. C4EO provides access to an **interactive data tool** which allows you to create maps and reports simply and effectively, and compare local data with other authorities and regions. There is a helpful tutorial online which guides you through the tool

<http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/earlyyears/default.aspx?themeid=1&tab=data>

Another approach that may be useful to you is that of Outcomes Based Accountability. Outcomes UK have developed an **OBA toolkit** which can be accessed online at www.c4eo.org.uk/obatoolkit/default.aspx and aims to help agencies implement and embed outcomes-focussed practice, make links between performance and outcomes and support cultural change.

Perhaps, though, the most impressive support tool we offer is the personalised individual support of a **Sector Specialist**. Sector Specialists are skilled staff working within children's services who have expertise in one of C4EO's themes (in this case disability). The broad range of professional backgrounds of these Sector Specialists is of tremendous value, allowing Local Authorities and partners to receive highly specialist support and also enabling Sector Specialists to learn from each other and develop a pool of skills and talents which transcend the boundaries of the C4EO's themes. We are predominantly geared towards providing tailored support (as it is known) to Local Authorities, though we have recently received enquiries from Primary Care Trusts and would consider each request individually. For more information please see www.c4eo.org.uk/evidence/tailoredsupport.aspx

Contributing to the knowledge base

C4EO are very keen to supplement the knowledge gathered from research and data with local practice examples. We believe there is good practice in your area and would welcome hearing about it. In so doing, you will be sharing these with others across the Children's Sector, helping them to make service improvements which really work, as well as showcasing your and colleagues' successes. If your local area has achieved results relating to one of the priorities above, please share your story with us. Visit www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/suggestgoodpractice.aspx?themeid=2 to learn more about C4EO's Validated Local Practice process.

Lastly, we would like to invite you to join our Disability online Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP is a web-based 'virtual networks' of individuals that provides the facility for those people who wish to share their challenges, questions, ideas,

resources and learning with others to do so. It can be a powerful way of encouraging collaboration in order to spread expertise and innovation. They include a range of tools such as:

- a forum - for having discussions with other members of the community
- a library - somewhere to share documents, presentations and resources of use to other people
- events - a means of publicising relevant events
- email alerts – to quickly notify the community of news.

Visit <http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/general/cop.aspx> to join the Disability CoP

Final words

C4EO works **with** the sector. Disability services face a challenging and exciting time; but we believe that sustainable improvement can, and should, be sector-led. Our role is to harness, develop and spread the sector's existing expertise and knowledge to improve outcomes for children and young people. We hope that you will explore the knowledge and support tools available through C4EO, and that they are useful to you – just as your knowledge and expertise is useful to colleagues elsewhere. C4EO is proud to be working with so many committed agencies and individuals and is committed to making its support as effective and responsive as possible, your input is key to us realising this ambition.