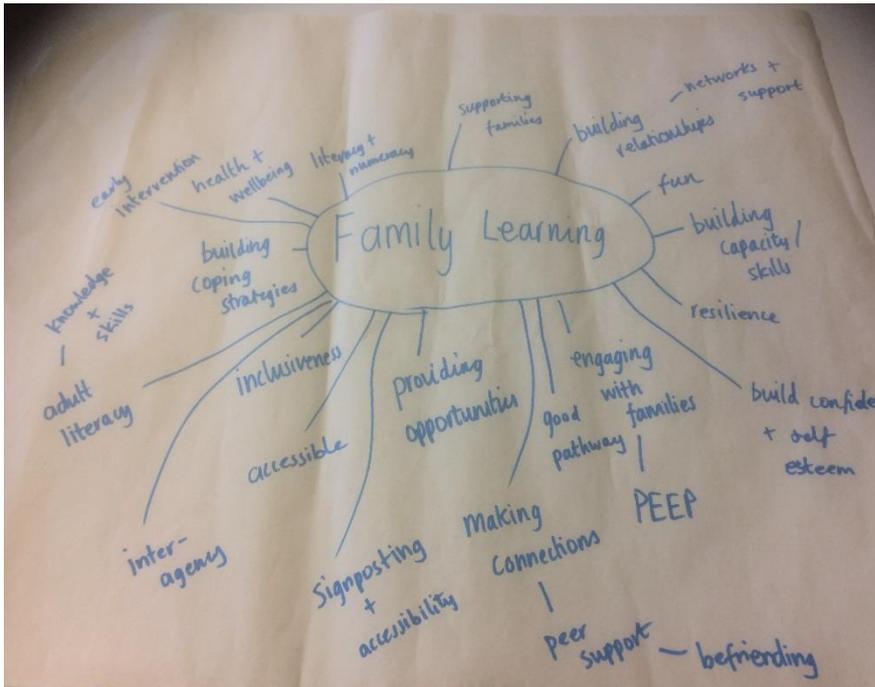


EAST LOTHIAN FAMILY LEARNING SESSION REPORT

May 2018



BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION



The Family learning session was held on Friday 11th May 2018 at Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre and delivered by staff from East Lothian Council Community Learning and Development Team. It was a free CPD opportunity for East Lothian practitioners. The session was aimed at staff who wanted to know more about family learning and how to incorporate it into their practice. Education Scotland delivered a similar Family Learning session in November 2017 which

formed the basis of the May 2018 afternoon. The previous session was delivered as part of the South East & Central CLD Workforce Consortium programme and was open to staff from the 8 partner local authorities. Places had been limited to East Lothian Council. The session had been well received and ELC CLD felt it was important to share the information to a wider practitioner audience in East Lothian. The Friday afternoon was chosen to allow colleagues from Education to participate.

The aims of the session were to:

1. Raise awareness of family learning both from a national and local perspective
2. Have the opportunity to discuss what we mean by family learning and parental engagement/ involvement
3. Share examples of family learning in East Lothian
4. Have the opportunity to network and forge partnership links

The session was attended by 18 participants from:

Third Sector	8 (5 First Step, 2 Family Support Workers SFTS and 1 DadsWork)
ELC Education	3 (1 Aberlady Primary and 2 North Berwick Nursery)
ELC CLD	4 (including the facilitators)
ELC Museums	1
Enjoy Leisure	1

The programme outline for the session:

- ❖ Input on the National Picture of Family Learning
- ❖ Table discussions and group exercises

- ❖ Family Learning Framework– using How good is our..?
- ❖ Group discussion
- ❖ Input from Organisations on Local examples
- ❖ Feedback, evaluation and comments

In groups the participants discussed **‘what does Family Learning mean to you?’**

Below is a summary of their responses.

- In schools Family Learning was previously used as a term for homework
- Activities for whole family with learning for adults and children
- Supporting families – through support groups and signposting to information, advice and opportunities
- Lifelong learning – positive and experiential
- Broad and lots of different approaches
- Holistic approach involving the whole family
- Skill building, confidence building of adults to develop skills and personal development
- Sharing information with parents to help support learning for the whole family

Here is Education Scotland’s definition of Family Learning.

What do we mean by Family Learning?

Family Learning encourages family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on intergenerational learning.

Family learning activities can also be specifically designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children’s learning.

“Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage.” (Family Learning Network, 2016).



Education Scotland
Foghlam Alba
Transforming lives through learning

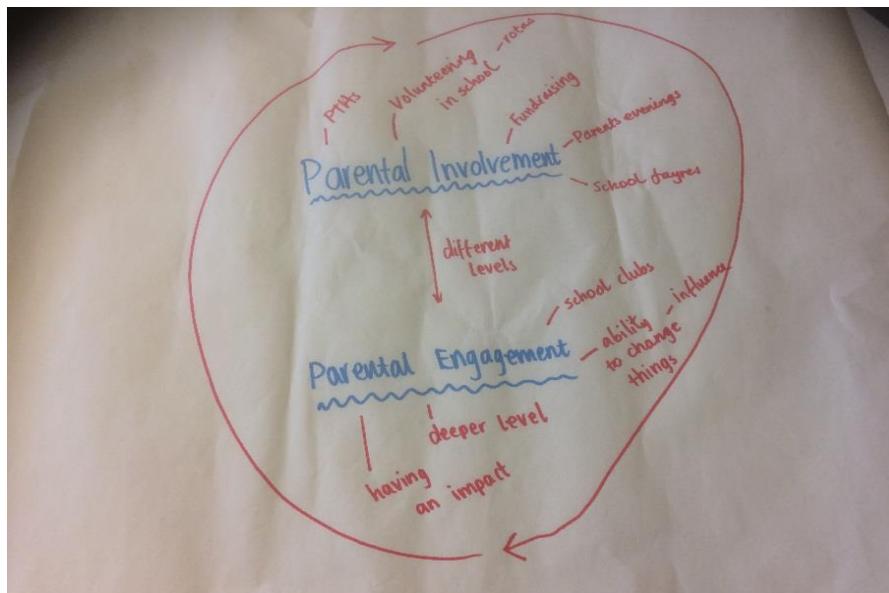
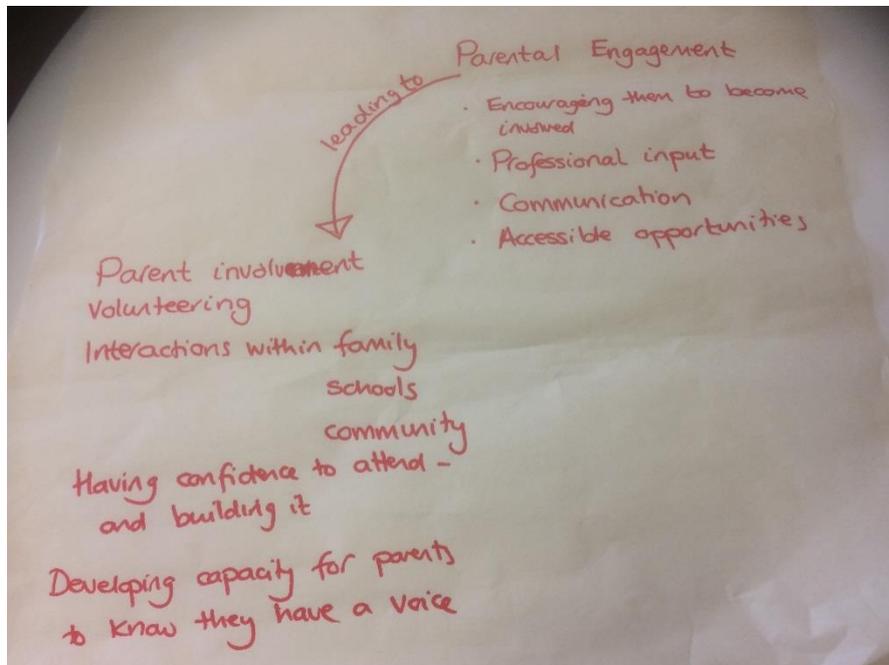


There were similar discussions on **what Parental Involvement and Engagement means?**

- Involvement leading to Engagement
- Can be tokenistic
- Can be just turning up
- Superficial
- Come here for...
- Ability and skills etc. to move to this
- Engagement
- Deeper
- Meaningful involvement
- Relationships
- Requires more commitment
- More ownership

- Take to SLT and do activities at home
- What extra steps?
- motivations

Other groups thought this was the other way round i.e. Parental Engagement leading to Parental Involvement



From an Education Scotland perspective, parental engagement is recognised in the [National Improvement Framework](#) as one of the six key drivers in achieving excellence and equity in Scottish education. The engagement of parents and families can help raise attainment for all and help to ensure every child has an equal chance of success.

The term parental involvement relates to the involvement of parents and carers in the life and work of the early learning and childcare setting or school. This can include parent representation on

Parent Councils or associations, involvement in establishment self-evaluation and improvement work, and volunteering with fundraising activities or by sharing skills and knowledge to enrich the curriculum.

GROUP DISCUSSION on the following questions:

- 1. 'What are the benefits to families and communities participating in family learning?'**
 - *Relationships improved*
 - *Confidence and self-esteem building*
 - *Responding to needs through family involvement i.e. see where to change/improve (shaped to meet needs!)*
 - *Building social capital*
 - *Sense of belonging*
 - *Breaking cycle of negative educational experiences*
 - *Close attainment gap*
 - *Taking parents on a journey – feel valued*
 - *Stronger families and communities*
 - *Can be shaped to meet needs*
 - *Families building relationships within*
 - *“Can do” approach – increasing confidence*
 - *Belonging*
 - *More likely to be involved and make changes (* First Step was set up by parents)*
 - *Can expose hidden poverty (for benefit) and other social issues?*



- 2. 'How can we work together to reduce the poverty related attainment gap?'**
 - *Don't duplicate but co-ordinate services*
 - *Create opportunities*
 - *Make accessible – finance – transport*
 - *Fun and interesting opportunities*
 - *Remove barriers to participation – work to identify barriers*
 - *Engagement can lead to school attendance*
 - *Empower parents – positive relationships*
 - *Bursary scheme*
 - *Being aware of all services that are out there and making connections – pathway*
 - *Supporting parents to move to the next step*
 - *Ability to not “time limit” working with families*
 - *Keeping up-to-date with specific issues that can be supported form multi-agency approach*
 - *accessibility*
- 3. 'How can your organisation support or further develop Family Learning?'**
 - *Family learning sessions*

- *Adventure PEEP/ water PEEP*
- *Address social and emotional values*
- *Work with partners*
- *Partnership with speech and language – family workshops*
- *Look at partnership working – not in isolation*
- *Make sure everyone is included and supported*
- *Raising Children With Confidence/ Raising Teens With Confidence*
- *Develop opportunities for ALL family members to be involved – DadsWork work with Dads*
- *Continuity of support – helps but can be an issue due to the lack or end of funding stream*
- *Being creative with what resources (people/skills/ activities/ networks) what we already have – links back to increase / broadening of accessibility.*



FEEDBACK, EVALUATION AND COMMENTS

We received 14 completed evaluation forms at the end of the session.

The rating scale used is 1 = unsatisfactory, 2=weak, 3=adequate, 4=good, 5=excellent

Below are the average scores from the evaluation forms.

The key points to highlight are the increase in prior knowledge / confidence and skills from 3.5 to 4.1 at the end of the session. All the other ratings are good edging towards excellent.

- Information in advance = 4.3
- Booking process = 4.8
- Prior knowledge/ confidence/ skills = 3.5
- Venue = 4.6
- Ability to take part = 4.6
- Facilitator – knowledge/ confident/ clear = 4.7
- Content relevant to your needs = 4.3
- Topics covered in sufficient detail = 4.6
- Course learning outcomes met = 4.4
- Details of further learning opportunities = 4.2
- Knowledge / confidence / skills gained = 4.1
- Ability to implement learning = 4.2

What are you taking away from today's session?

- *Good to relate theory to practice and reaffirm the work that we do links to good practice and positive outcomes for families*
- *Appreciation that there are so many organisations to link up with – networking*
- *An understanding of the opportunities available in the region and how we can tailor individual journeys for each family to ensure we meet their needs*

When do you think you will use what you have learned?

<i>0-3 months x 10 practitioners</i>
<i>3-6 months x 3</i>
<i>6-12 months x 2</i>
<i>12 months plus x 1</i>

How do you plan to use what you have learned?

- *Attend F Schools, use documents to evaluate*
- *Connect with other services e.g. museum boxes*
- *Useful in planning new group*
- *Policy reading, signposting parents to services, networking with new contacts*
- *Share knowledge with my colleagues*
- *Has given me a better understanding of terms 'family learning', 'parental engagement/involvement' to use and explore further*
- *Develop links with other services*
- *Develop networks and implementation / support of local family learning networks*
- *Explore partnership opportunities. Museums have underused venues that could offer events. Revisit U5s family event run in August 2014 with a view to running family fun days again.*
- *Introduce more family learning into our setting other than delivering PEEP – open to all the nursery parents may monthly / termly*
- *Improve family involvement and engagement in my setting. Investigate family policies and frameworks in more detail.*
- *To develop pathways for families*
- *Hope it can help us in our attempts to get more parents involved and build relationships with families*
- *Continue with existing practice*

What specific improvements could be made to this course?

- *Allow a longer period of time so can go into more detail*
- *Perhaps some of the guest speakers have a clear emphasis on family learning*
- *Early start earlier finish*
- *I would have benefited from more networking and the chance to sound out other organisations*
- *More information beforehand – I wasn't quite sure what to expect – though that was maybe just me*
- *None apart from a slightly longer session or opportunities for joint family learning*

Do you have any suggestions or ideas for future training courses?

- *How to improve English as an additional language engagement in your early learning setting?*

Any other comments:

- *Very informative session, well done*
- *Fab-thanks*
- *Thoroughly enjoyed training and very much liked hearing about other initiatives*
- *Thank you for an informative and motivating session*
- *Very well presented –learnt more about Family Learning and what to include in HGIOELC*
- *Fantastic training opportunity and networking too*
- *Very much enjoyed it and found lots of useful contacts*
- *Very interesting, lots of food for thought, inspiring, good chance to network and share ideas*

IN SUMMARY:

The feedback and evaluation have been very positive and demonstrate the aims of the session were met.

Future developments may include repeating the session if the need was identified. The ELC CLD Team would be happy to lead on delivery. We would review the timing, location and programme to ensure it met future needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Family Learning is being delivered by a range of partners across East Lothian but the full extent of the learning offer is not known. We recommend that Family Learning initiatives are mapped across East Lothian with the aim of delivering a more co-ordinated approach and raising awareness of the benefit of this method of engagement.

There should be closer working relationships particularly with Education as Family Learning features as part of the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education.

For further information or to get in touch please contact Diann Govenlock tel. no. 0131 653 4076 or email cldmusselburgh@eastlothian.gov.uk

FINALLY, THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING STAFF AND STUDENT FOR THEIR INPUT ON FAMILY LEARNING AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SESSION.



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APPENDIX 1

REVIEW OF FAMILY LEARNING SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY December 2016. Available from www.gov.scot

FAMILY LEARNING FRAMEWORK Advice for Practitioners April 2018 Education Scotland

ENGAGING PARENTS AND FAMILIES A toolkit for practitioners Section 5: Family Learning and community connections Education Scotland

HOW GOOD IS OUR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE? February 2016 Education Scotland

HOW GOOD IS OUR SCHOOL? 4TH EDITION

HOW GOOD IS OUR THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATION? Evaluation Resource Education Scotland