



## Skills Day at Wolverhampton

### Old Fallings Adventure Playground

BPCN staff went to Skills Day on May 26th 2010, hosted by Laky Sahota, Regional Programme Manager from Play England and Steve Jolly, Play Work Strategy Manager from Skills Active.

This was a free hands on, interactive event for playworkers held at Wolverhampton's innovative new adventure playground. The day included speakers and workshops, and provided playworkers a chance to network, share their views and develop their skills. Workshops included Fire Play, Creative Play, Inclusion for disabled children and Fire play.



Fatima, on her very first Den Building exercise

### Community Spaces

The community spaces open grants programme, managed by Groundwork UK and funded through the Big Lottery Fund, is making its final call to applicants. Grant awards of £10,000 - £49,999 are available to transform or create green open spaces. The programme will close to stage 1 applicants on the 28 January 2011. Projects must meet the eligibility criteria. The programme is encouraging more applicants from the West Midlands and would like groups to develop a good quality application before the deadline.



Projects can range from nature trails and outdoor gyms to community gardens and play areas. Please visit [www.community-spaces.org.uk](http://www.community-spaces.org.uk) for more information.

(Taken from Update for Birmingham's Voluntary Sector-BVSC) June 2010



**“The Skills Sharing day was an excellent event”**

**“At least 140 participants present on the day!”**

Further details  
**inside...**

# News Headlines

Read All About It!

## NCB calls for openness and honesty in programme of cuts



24 May 2010

Play England defends its work after reports the National Play Strategy was an example of inefficient government spending.

Adrian Voce, Play England's director stressed the impact that indoor lifestyles were having on many children and that it had serious consequences not only to their immediate well being, but their long term health and development. The play strategy has produced 2,000 new or improved play areas and 30 fantastic staffed adventure play grounds, which children long for and that every parent knows is good for them.

'Research shows that there has been a positive impact on children's health, learning, wider benefits to the community, such as reduction in crime. The play strategy has demonstrated excellent value for money and real benefit to the economy.

'Political parties have recognized the need for action: to make public space safer, and more child friendly, to renew our public play areas, and to give children in the most deprived areas access to high-quality staffed playgrounds.

Sir Paul Ennals, Chief Executive NCB said 'The Government has to make difficult decisions. If cuts to play funding are realized, this is not about reducing inefficiencies; it is about reducing the voluntary sector's work supporting some of the neediest communities'.

Source [ncb.org.uk](http://ncb.org.uk)

## Education Secretary Gove outlines £670m in cuts

By Andy Hillier

Children & Young People Now

**Children & Young People Now**

9 June 2010

The Department for Education has given its clearest indication yet about how it plans to save £670m this year.

In a letter to former Children's Secretary Ed Balls, Education Secretary Michael Gove stated that £359m in savings will come from "cutting waste, and stopping and scaling back lower-priority spending". A further £311m will come from reducing area-based grants to local authorities.

Cost savings include cutting the final round of youth sector development fund grants, which will save £8m, and scaling back the safeguarding budget also by £8m by delivering child internet safety messages more efficiently and reducing spending on the home safety scheme.

A further £5m will be saved by scaling back planned expenditure on play. The single largest saving will be made by not spending the unallocated £47m earmarked for one-to-one tuition.

Plans to extend free school meals to further primary school pupils and run additional pilot schemes have also been scrapped.

In the letter, Gove said that the cuts identified mean that "local authorities should be able to achieve the necessary savings through efficiencies across their budgets rather than cuts to frontline services".

## Family Information Service Event

Activity and Information Day for Parents of Children with Disabilities

**Date and Time:** Wednesday 21st July 10am-4pm

**Location:** Laurel Road Community Sports Centre, Laurel Road, Handsworth, B21 9PB

**Bus routes:** 101, 11a or 616

Drop into the event to find out about:

- **Benefit Advice**
- **Inclusive Play and Leisure**
- **Childcare and Funding Costs**
- **Availability of Childcare and Childcare Providers**
- **Free Sessions for Registered Childcare**
- **Local Support Groups**
- **Advice on Training Opportunities and applying for jobs.**

There's also a range of fun activities available including Tennis, Netball, Football and Rock Climbing. To also keep the children (and some of the adults) entertained one of our most popular team members Jaffa the dinosaur will also be on hand to meet and greet.

For more information about the event contact **Raj or Annie** at the Family Information Service on **0121 303 3521**



## Pupils 'being damaged by must-have culture'

Parents are under pressure to buy the latest gadgets for their children so they can keep up with fellow pupils, a leading teacher has claimed.

A Head Teacher has warned that schoolchildren are being damaged by the pressure to have the latest gadgets.

Graham Gorton, head of the Independent Schools Association has claimed that parents that enrol children in as many after-school clubs as possible, said could damage family life and rob them of their childhood.

Many see that they may be perceived to be failing as parents if they do not ensure their children have the latest gadgets and electronic devices along with their peers. Long gone, it seems, are those times when a whole weekend ahead with nothing planned was seen as a luxury and a perfect opportunity to spend time together and share those valuable and irreplaceable moments of childhood.'

Mr Gorton, who is headmaster of the private Howe Green House School in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, also said frequent testing was badly affecting children. He went on to say that 'we are in danger of robbing our pupils of the very essence of childhood by constantly judging their development against a target-driven educational system'.

The ISA represents 300 independent schools in Britain and abroad.

[Metro.co.uk](http://Metro.co.uk)

# News Update



**Birmingham**

**PlayCare**

**Network**

## Hi to all our readers and members!

My last article to you was written as the result of the general election was being announced, today coincidentally is the day the emergency budget is being revealed.

As expected, many of us both personally and professionally will be affected by the changing government and the budget cuts and play will be no exception. As you will see from our headlining article Play England are fighting the corner for play on a national level and you can be assured that on a local level BPCN will be campaigning for the child's right to play. This right to play is supported and upheld by UNICEF and the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the child.

"Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture): Children have the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities."

Play should not be viewed as a luxury, add on element to a child's life. It is a basic right that we need to fight to retain to support all the outcomes so many of us are striving to achieve.

This month BPCN has been spreading the word about the importance of play into another new arena. Along with Sunrise Senior Living at Solihull we have been looking at intergenerational play projects and how bringing together generations who rarely now communicate can really enhance communities.

BPCN had a great day at Sunrise open day playing marbles, creating a giant marble run and creating tea light lanterns whilst at the same time collecting some fantastic play memories from residents and visiting children. If you would be interested in finding out more about intergenerational work please contact us.

Please don't forget to sign up for our workshops, fliers should be dropping through your letterboxes right now and remember to pop down to one of our Play in Parks venues, we love to see our members in our most playful environments!

**Emma Payne** Business Development Manager

## Skills Day at Wolverhampton:

### Old Fallings Adventure Playground

Shirley Gayle's, (BPCN QDM) take on the day:

"The Skills Sharing day at Wolverhampton was an excellent event; with at least 140 participants present on the day. The event was held at a newly built adventure playground which has some fantastic scenery.

There were four workshops of which I found the Inclusion workshop to be very enlightening. The den building was good as you learnt how to secure and build different types of dens. The creative workshop gave you new ideas which you could take back to use with your club. Although I did take part in the fire play workshop there was a nice smell of food in the air, participants also made camp fires. On the whole it was a fun day and very much hands on. It was also an ideal opportunity for settings to network and share good practice."

Old Fallings Adventure Playground has its very own secret garden, sensory room, and playworkers work has begun on the building which you will be able to play in, play around and play on top of! In the mean time you can still play at Old fallings Adventure Playground on our Secret Garden site. The building is in its last stages of construction, but if you are looking for a venue that will inspire play then please contact Old Fallings Adventure Playground.

### Debbie and Eren's Fire building workshop



"Given that there was a short timescale in Phase 1, and most of the sites selected were based on Constituency recommendations, it was agreed that this year the process should involve the Community and Voluntary Sector (VCS) at an earlier stage. In order to facilitate this VCS Matters, agreed to support the process and help to engage VCS organisations, inviting them to attend a workshop briefing held at BVSC, Digbeth and to submit proposals for sites. Constituencies were also approached and in total of 24 sites were nominated. Using the play deprivation criteria, and taking into account the proximity of other Playbuilder sites, 12 Phase 2 sites were agreed by the Project Board subgroup, including the VCS members. A list of the sites is attached. Some of the sites that were rejected could not be approved due to factors such as a lack of revenue funding for maintenance; the likelihood of major development affecting the area/estate; and recent investment and renovation. Otherwise the sites were supported according to the play deprivation scoring system.

Following the site selection, consultation will take place with adults and children living in the neighbourhoods local to the sites to identify suitable equipment and developments, taking into account sustainability in all aspects."

## Playbuilder Update

BPCN would like to congratulate all the parks that have been successful in securing Phase 2 Playbuilder money.

### The successful 12 parks are:-

Farm Park in Sparkbrook, Yellow Park - Clifford Street in Newtown, Digby Park in Small Heath, Comet Park in Bromford, Masefield Square in Cotteridge, Highbury Park in Pineapple Estate Kings Heath, Dell Meadow in Druids Heath, Selly Oak Park in Selly Oak, Turnbury Park in Perry Beeches, Cannon Hill Park in Balsall Heath/Selly Park, Churchill Road in Lozells, and Five Ways Pocket Park in Fiveways/Lee Bank.

Here are a few words from Chris Johnson, Policy and information officer, BVSC:-



Birmingham PlayCare Network

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## Email & large print version

We are happy to email Swings & Roundabouts or provide a Large Print Version. For further details, or if you wish to be added to our mailing list, contact our offices.

BPCN welcomes contributions to Swings & Roundabouts. If you have an interesting article you would like to submit for inclusion please contact us. BPCN reserves the right to edit all copy received in order to fit the space available. Opinions expressed in Swings & Roundabouts are not necessarily those of BPCN or Birmingham Early Years & Childcare Team.

[www.bpcn.org.uk](http://www.bpcn.org.uk)

Caring About Play

# Introducing the Birmingham Outreach Team and Birmingham projects



Birmingham outreach team consists of a group of 4 workers which aid the developments of both The National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries and to the settings, parents, child carers and organisations we link with.

**As a team we are able to implement and advice on the following:**

- Provide information on toy libraries and their purpose.
- Introduce and liaise between service providers offering or accessing a toy library service.
- Provide help sheets and information on the running of the service
- Assist settings in locating and ordering stock
- Sign post to other toy libraries in the Birmingham area
- Help set up Service Level Agreements between centres.
- Assist with the production of policies and procedures.
- Advice on relevant forms and data collection.
- Assist on data bases and regular updated training.
- Ongoing support with existing Toy Libraries.

### Information sharing City Wide

Information held with regards to toy libraries across the UK can be found on the NATLL web site [www.natll.org.uk](http://www.natll.org.uk) or contact Gwyneth on Tel: 020 7428 2286 or Fax: 020 7428 2281 or email [helpline@playmatters.co.uk](mailto:helpline@playmatters.co.uk)

'Starting a Toy Library' packs and help sheets can be downloaded from the NATLL website

The 70+ operational toy libraries across Birmingham are listed at [www.birmingham.toylibraries.org.uk](http://www.birmingham.toylibraries.org.uk)

To find out who your Outreach Worker is, or make an initial contact, please contact:-

- Jo Hill** - 07823329287 Email: [jo.c.hill@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jo.c.hill@hotmail.co.uk)
- Chris Ward** - 07823335579
- Sara Reynolds** - 07823329119
- Joel Kempson** - via Jo Hill

### Job Opportunity

**Establishment:** Handsworth Day care centre  
**Address:** 32-34 St peters road Handsworth Birmingham B20 3RR  
**Job title:** Play worker  
**Hours:** 7.30-9.00, 2.00-6.00 term time only 7.30-18.00 Holidays  
**Qualifications:** NVQ level 3 or 4 in childcare and education  
**Salary:** £6.00 per hour reviewed after 6 months  
**Contact Name:** Ena Burke **Telephone number:** 01215237578

Do you have a job vacancy to fill? Please get in contact with **Fatima Bibi** at BPCN to advertise for free.

