

Why do we need Parenting Support?

Recently there has been an increasing number of parents and carers from varying backgrounds and cultures that need support and guidance in caring for their children and managing their behaviour. Some parents are left feeling confused and disappointed at not being able to enjoy their children more as they develop.

If you are reading this you are not alone!

There is no such thing as a perfect parent or a perfect child!

Babies do not come with instruction manuals!



"Kent parents feel confident in supporting their children so that they are:

- *Cared for and encouraged at home*
- *Inspired and motivated by learning*
- *Safe and secure in the community*
- *Living happy and healthy lives"*

(The Vision – Kent Children's Trust Strategy for Supporting Parents 2008)

Common Concerns

Children do not usually behave inappropriately just to upset their parents. There could be an underlying problem. It might be because:

- They are testing the boundaries
- They could be anxious about school
- There may be sibling rivalry
- They want their parents' attention

Sometimes children can become stuck in a spiral of behaviour, particularly when they realise that this behaviour gives them the attention they crave. Family life can sometimes be compared to "living in a pressure cooker". It's sometimes easier just to try to keep a lid on it instead of releasing the pressure slowly and effectively.

Asking for help and joining a parenting support group can help you to find different ways of dealing with this.



What groups are available?

There are many excellent parenting groups available, each one deals with topics related to the needs of individual families.

The people who lead these courses are representatives from Health, Education, Social Services and Voluntary agencies, all working together to help families.

The following courses are available in the Dartford area.

Adult Education

Adult Education offers a range of courses. Generally the courses are offered through schools and children's centres. The courses provide the opportunity to address practical parenting issues and to share day-to-day problems and solutions with other parents. The aim of the courses is to increase parents' knowledge, skills, confidence and enjoyment of their role. Courses are for 2 hours a week for 6 weeks. 3-hour workshops may also be available.

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group

This is a group aimed at parents of children aged 0-18 years.

It is for those wanting to find out more about parenting in a sensitive and effective way. This may be more suitable for families who would benefit from early support to enable them to enjoy being a parent. This is for 2 hours a week over 10 weeks.

Strengthening Families strengthening Communities

This programme is aimed at parents with children aged 3-18.

It is particularly useful for parents and carers from ethnic minorities as it looks at how parents have been brought up in different cultures and with different traditions. This is for two hours a week over 13 weeks.

Webster Stratton Incredible Years

This is an intensive parenting group aimed at parents of children aged 0-12 with moderate to severe behavioural difficulties.

It is a very practical course which helps you to develop skills to manage behaviour and improve your relationship with your child. This is for two hours a week over 12 weeks.

Mellow Parenting Programme

This group is designed to support families with challenging relationship issues specifically with children under five.

This intensive course works with parents and their children and is for one day a week over 14 weeks.



Not sure what's best for you?

The information given in this leaflet is only intended as a guide. Please contact Steve Sherrell for further advice or send the completed registration form to him.

Telephone: 07920 526570

Email: stephen.sherrell@kent.gov.uk

Steve can:

- discuss your needs in more detail
- consider other ways of supporting you until a course is available
- ensure your interest is registered
- put you in touch with the person responsible for running the course

"Parents can expect to have access to high quality staff and services.

Mothers, fathers and carers can:

- *Get help when they need it*
- *Get help from professionals quickly*
- *Receive clear information about how to get help*
- *Work with trained staff*
- *Be given the same help as everyone else*
- *Have one main point of contact"*

(The Parents' Charter – KCC 2008)

** In this leaflet the term "parents" refers to the main caring adults in any type of family*



Where every child matters

Dartford East LCSP

Dartford West LCSP

Information on Parenting Support in Dartford

A guide for parents

Please read on!