



**...because *YOUR* child matters**

## Welcome

Welcome to the Bedford Borough Parent Partnership Service Summer newsletter. If your child's school has given you this and you have not heard about us before, please read on. We ask schools to give our newsletters to their children who have special educational needs. If you are not sure what this means, we are at the end of the 'phone on 01234 276 267 and we can explain it to you.



## News round-up

We completed our move to 109 London Road in the middle of March and have worked hard to create a welcoming base for parents to come and visit us. Normally you would need to make an appointment to see us; however we are offering a 'drop-in' session, every Thursday morning between 10 am and 12 noon for any parent/carer who would like to call in and speak to a Parent Partnership Adviser or volunteer.

## Volunteer news

We are nearing the end of our training course for volunteer Independent Parental Supporters (IPs). Eight volunteers have braved the training and we look forward to working in new ways with our now extended team of IPs. Thank you to all who helped recruiting and

to our wonderful volunteers who come with different backgrounds and experiences. We know parents appreciate their help and we are so grateful for their time and knowledge.

## School transfer

As many of you know Jo Maule, our School Transfer Adviser, left us in October. Adele and Ruth will now be doing some of her role with Adele taking the lead. We will be telling you more about this area of our work in our next newsletter. But if you have a child with special educational needs, feel free to call our service regarding any aspect of their needs, including school transfer.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like any further information about the work of the Parent Partnership Service.

*David Newbury - Co-ordinator*

## Parents conference

Those of you who were able to go to the Conference in March agreed that it was a resounding success. Over 80 people attended and all the feedback forms said that they would attend again. So, as we're not ones to let the grass grow under our feet, we're already organising our second Parents Conference with Family United Network.

**Date: October 9th 2010  
– put it in your diary**

We can reveal that the conference will be held at the Park Inn in Bedford and that there will probably be workshops around diet, anger management, sleep solutions and handling adolescents, amongst others. We will also be asking more SEN and family support agencies to join us as this was something that parents said they wanted. Please

contact us on 01234 276 267 for more information in the autumn term.



## Barriers to communication - Part 2

“ A wise old owl sat on an oak: The more he saw the less he spoke: The less he spoke the more he heard: Why can't we be like that wise old bird? ”

In the Spring newsletter we looked at some of the barriers to good communication and why being a good listener is so important. The way to become a better listener is to practice “active listening”. This is where you make a conscious effort to hear the words that another person is saying and, more importantly, try to understand the total message being sent.

### There are five basic rules of active listening:

#### Pay attention

Give the speaker your undivided attention and acknowledge what he or she is saying. Look at the speaker directly. Try to concentrate only on him or her and ignore what is going on around you.

#### Show that you are listening

Use your own body language and gestures to show you are listening. Nod occasionally and smile and use other facial expressions. Make small verbal comments such as “yes”, and “uh huh” to encourage the speaker to go on.

#### Provide feedback

Repeat back what is being said to show that you have listened and understood and ask questions to find out more. Summarise the speaker's comments from time-to-time.

#### Wait for the other person to finish

Resist the temptation to interrupt. It frustrates the person who is speaking and stops us from fully understanding their views.

#### Respond appropriately

Good communication depends on us responding fairly and respectfully to the views of the other person. Be sincere, open and honest in stating your own views but make your points respectfully and treat the other person as he or she would want to be treated.

It takes a lot of concentration and determination to be an active listener. However, if you make the effort and practise these skills, you will be surprised at the difference it can make to your relationships.



### Bedford Borough Parent Partnership Service

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### Our open day

On Wednesday 26 May we held an Open Day so that parents and professionals could visit our new premises and see some of the work that we do.

Over 50 people visited during the day including parents, existing and new volunteers, front line staff from Children's Services, schools and voluntary groups. Our new base was officially opened by the Mayor and all of our visitors were enthusiastic about the support we can offer parents from London Road.



David, Parent Partnership Co-ordinator (centre of photo) with some of our visitors