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Pull-out pages

Discovering other minds; Acquiring language; Recognising emotional abuse; Healthy body, happy me; EYFS – Learning through everyday experiences; Dyslexia; Let's go fly a

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Amy Griggs, Editor

Working in partnership is a term that is bandied around frequently: Working with parents; with other childcare providers, with healthcare professionals and local authorities. So why is it so important?

Childminders and nannies are traditionally seen as working alone, yet increasingly this is not the case. Many childminders now work together within a setting and many belong to childminding networks and other childcare groups. The advantages to both themselves and the children they care for are enormous: Better support and training is bound to have a positive impact in terms of the kind of care they can offer.

However, according to research by the NCMA, partnerships between children's centres and childminders are not always as strong as they might be (see page 12), and in some cases there is a feeling that childminders are competitors.

This is such a shame. First, because childminders are perfectly placed to provide wraparound care, and this works with children's centres not against them.

It is true that many children's centres have their own nurseries, but what about primary-aged children? Many parents struggle to find adequate childcare for this age group, especially during school holidays, and childminders can provide the perfect solution, particularly for low income families.

Second, children's centres are a great place for childminders to promote what they have to offer. A recent story on the BBC website labelled an unregistered childcarer convicted of manslaughter as a childminder, highlighting just how much ignorance still exists about childminding. It is surely more and more important for registered childminders to educate and reassure parents that they are not merely babysitters, and children's centres provide the perfect platform to do this.

You work hard and it is high time you got the recognition you deserve for the quality, individual care you provide.

If you have an opinion on this or any other issue, please email amy.g@markallengroup.com

Coming up next month: April

Special features

Recipes: Baking bread

Pull-out pages to file and keep

Child development: Emotional expressions

Birth-to-three: Physical development

Child protection: Recognising physical abuse

Health: Meningitis

Care: Table manners

Outdoor play: Town walks

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