



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Adult and Community Learning Service

On Course

Monthly update of Good News stories

May 2008

Welcome to our fourth issue where we share with you some of the impact that ACLS courses, working in partnership with providers, have on individuals and groups.

Many of the stories in this months edition come from our partners who deliver the 'Share' programme. Share is a family learning project that aims to help parents take an active interest in their childrens education and to further their own, and is funded and supported by ACLS.



Broxtowe

The William Lilley Infant and Nursery School have been running the 'Share' programme for some time.

The current group consists of parents of year 1 pupils. The parents work with their children at home on Share activities taken from the Share handbook. The classroom sessions take the form of working alongside a teacher on areas the parents feel they would like to learn more about to help their children. Parents are given background information about the particular subject, how it is taught in school and ideas about how to use the information to support their childs learning.

One learner said "I had been considering retraining and enrolling on a course with the aim of working with children in the future, after doing the Share training in my daughter's school and helping out as a parent helper I have definitely decided to pursue a role in working with children. I am now undertaking a Teaching Assistant course at college. The Share course has given me more confidence when working with my children at home".

Learning to Give Advice

Zuzana McMillan moved to England from the Czech Republic in 1997 after undertaking various courses she enrolled on an ACLS funded course with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Broxtowe.

Zuzana said "I started the course in April 2007 which was a great opportunity to enhance my skills and knowledge. Citizen's Advice offered a supportive training programme which did involve lots of training during the first few months which required great commitment. I gained a new insight into a wide variety of issues, learnt a new range of skills and also gained a wealth of information.

In addition my English skills have greatly enhanced and my confidence levels have improved. I finished the course in December 2007 and gained the 'Generalist Adviser' Certificate. In April 2008, I was fortunate to gain some paid work with CAB which will make a big difference to my personal circumstances and will really enhance my personal development".

Mansfield

Judy Davies from Oak Tree Primary School and Nursery trained together with a Classroom Assistant in October 2007 to deliver the Share programme.

Judy says "Involving parents in school activities has always been something that we have struggled with and Share was no exception. Our initial get together consisted of 3 parents, but they were keen to get involved so we went ahead. At the first session we had 5 parents and this gradually increased to 8 who attended on a regular basis. We covered a mixture of literacy and numeracy activities – phonics, counting, letter and number formation, making games and books, word searches (some in French) to name but a few. As some of our parents have children of different ages we were able to differentiate activities accordingly – hence the French".

Judy reports that not only have parents been undertaking activities with their children at home but that they have also gained much from the mutual support offered to each other within the group.

She says" There have been difficulties, but the benefits have far outweighed them, my relationship and understanding of the parents has grown. I look forward to the sessions and can see the difference Share makes to our parents".

Ashfield

Jeffries Primary School Share tutors Tracey Worthington and Lesley Hampson have 9 learners in their Share group which has been running since January 2008.

They report that, one particular learner originally did not want to join the group but did come with the aid of a good friend. They said "In the beginning

she was very shy and lacked the self confidence to participate fully. With support from us and the group members we have all watched her blossom. She and her children enjoy the activities and the quality time spent together learning. She now presents her work to the group happily and confidently. She joins in discussions and is not afraid to put her own view forward”.

The learner herself said “Before this group started I just used to sit in the house and do nothing really. Now coming to this group is something for me, I look forward to coming, it’s my time”

Worksop

The Share programme has had a big impact with one participant on the course run at Norbridge Primary School, reports Pearl Drinkall.

Learner Julie Wragg said “Share has been a valuable asset in our household. It has given us quality time as a family as Sunday night is Share night and we all sit down together to work as a team. Share has made me more aware of my children, no matter how qualified you are or how much more you may need to learn, everyone can benefit from spending that bit more time with their children and your children will certainly benefit from spending that bit more time with you!”

Music Making a Difference

Young Potential at Circle Arts received funding from ACLS to run a course entitled ‘A Creative Journey Through Music and the Recording Studio’.

Learners have been referred to the course by the County Councils Community Access worker for Basettlaw and the Adult Health and Social Care Team and all the learners have some form of learning difficulty and/or disability.

The course aims to raise self esteem, boost confidence and encourage learners to take an active role in their communities.

Through taking part in practical activities learners have improved their literacy and numeracy, ICT and team working skills as well as developing skills, knowledge and understanding in writing, performing and recording music.

Tutor Richard Palmer has cited learner Scott Emptage as an example of the impact that the course has had, “After 3 months of tuition his confidence has soared and his desire for learning is unparralled”.

Rushcliffe

A ‘Computing for the Terrified’ course run by South Nottinghamshire College at Cotgrave Leisure Centre with funding from ACLS has had some real benefits for some older learners.

Tutor Ann Shoebridge said " All but one of the learners was in their 70s; the exception being a mere 50 years young! Their reasons for joining the course were different, the 70 year olds didn't want to feel left behind as their grandchildren become proficient in using computers, the 50 year old student wanted to learn with a view to future employment.

After just 20 teaching hours learners feel that they have mastered the basic skills and they are confident about formatting documents and using search engines to find information. They understand about icons and know how to use them as well as different toolbars.

Students now use web cams and the internet at home with increasing confidence.

Ann went on to say "Teaching IT to total beginners is very demanding since every student presents with different needs. All of them initially require a high level of one-to-one teaching. Thanks to ACLS we are able to run smaller class sizes, thus giving each learner quality time".

Newark

In a previous edition of 'On Course' we reported on the 'Magnificent 7' who had attended a 'Keeping up with the Children' course at Oliver Quibell School. One of the learners, Donna has written to say how much the course had been of benefit to her, saying, "It's kept me up to date with my childrens learning and I now do voluntary work at the school. Everywhere I go and see other mothers I always advertise the fact that ACLS courses are really beneficial. You have a laugh and get to meet so many new people and feel so much better about yourself and realise how capable you are, it really makes a big difference to peoples lives."

For further information on any of the items in 'On Course' or about ACLS generally please contact us.

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