

## COMMENT

### Order and structure: a matter of discipline



In recent months we've heard a growing rumble of noise in the media about a greater need for discipline among children. This has sometimes included the desire to revert to a time when discipline was an accepted measure of control

by adults. There's a subtext here of a yearning for "order and structure" in communities – whether schools or neighbourhoods – where children and young people spend most of their time. Alternatively the subtext can be a call for reintroducing violence against children, meaning "corporal punishment", a "clip round the ear" or "a good smack".

Order and structure is a valuable and important part of learning and living with others. There needs to be clear and commonly understood "rules of engagement", without which bullying can prevail, preventing children from being able to enjoy life and achieve their potential.

The best teachers don't gain control with physical contact, they abhor it. The few who struggle may erroneously see physical "discipline" as a simple solution to their own need for more training in skills and techniques to manage behaviour.

Most parents and teachers use a wide variety of techniques to make clear to their child or student what is and is not acceptable behaviour. Most importantly they model it themselves by speaking in a calm but assertive voice, setting out warnings and taking actions that deny the pleasures and preferences of children, where necessary. Such techniques remain the most effective. They do not destroy the relationship on which progress for the child and success for the teacher or parent rely – as physical "discipline" can. Physical "discipline" is not part of a trusting relationship, it's often a cathartic action for adults. Violence against children teaches a child nothing more than how to be violent.

● *Barbara Hearn is deputy chief executive of NCB*

## Exploring nature through play

Play England has been awarded £500,000 from Natural England's Access to Nature programme – part of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces initiative.

In just one generation, children's access to nature has declined dramatically – fewer than 25 per cent of children use their local "patch of nature" compared to more than 50 per cent of their parents. Play England's Exploring Nature Play project aims to reverse this trend and help children to have the opportunity to experience the benefits that connecting with the natural world can bring.

As well as benefiting children, families and communities – playing outdoors and raising awareness of and love for nature



Children can benefit in many ways through connecting with nature

has long-term benefits as we face the challenges of climate change and protecting the natural environment for future generations. Play England is working on three adventure playgrounds – in London, North Tyneside and Torbay – to create a pool of ideas for promoting

environmental awareness through free play that will be shared with playgrounds across the country.

To help more families have adventures outdoors now, Play England has also launched an interactive play map.

● [www.playengland.org.uk](http://www.playengland.org.uk)

## Member news

### Sign up to the Finished at School campaign

Ambitious about Autism, the national charity for children and young people with autism, has launched a new campaign, "Finished at School: Where next for young people with autism?". The campaign aims to secure better educational options for all young people with autism aged 16 to 25, to enable them to develop skills, gain employment, live more independently and live the life they choose.

Dr Hilary Emery, chief executive of NCB said: "We at NCB fully support the Finished at School campaign as we believe all children and young people have a valuable contribution to make to society. We urge others to support the campaign to ensure young people have the opportunity to pursue good quality education and training post-16."

You can find out more about the campaign at [www.AmbitiousAboutAutism.org.uk](http://www.AmbitiousAboutAutism.org.uk) where you can:

- Pledge your support for the Finished at School campaign
- Email your MP asking them to support the campaign
- Read the Finished at School report
- Share your stories



Please go to [www.AmbitiousAboutAutism.org.uk](http://www.AmbitiousAboutAutism.org.uk) and sign up now

## Help for children this Christmas

It's not too late to send out festive greetings to your family and friends. Support a good cause this Christmas by buying your cards from Childlife, a special collaboration between four children's charities, including NCB.

The range caters for everyone with six designs to choose from. You can also buy money wallets – great for giving cash, cheques or vouchers to those hard-to-buy-for family and friends.

If you order five or more packs of cards, you'll get a free Childlife folding bag – ideal for carrying those last-minute gift purchases.

● *For a sneak preview of the delightful designs see [www.facebook.com/childlifeuk](http://www.facebook.com/childlifeuk). Order online at [www.christmas-cards.org.uk/childlife](http://www.christmas-cards.org.uk/childlife)*

## Success for NCB employment plan

A recent evaluation of NCB's Life Skills for Employment programme – which provided vulnerable young people from the Lambeth and Waltham Forest boroughs of London with the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence they need for employment and lifelong learning – reported that 93 per cent of participants said they had gained skills which would be useful in a job.

Participants in the programme achieved accredited awards as well as essential skills to improve their chances in the job market.

Out of the 325 14- to 17-year-olds involved, 93 per cent achieved an Asdan JP Morgan Life Skills award and 96 per cent made a positive contribution to their borough, either through volunteering, peer mentoring, or working on a project helping the community.

Almost 100 per cent of the young people who took part in



Young people achieved awards

the programme felt that it would help them get a job, with 90 per cent reporting that their future plans had changed since participating in the programme.

The programme was developed by NCB and funded by JP Morgan for a year from September 2010 until August 2011 and built on the successes of the Nokia Life Routes programme, previously designed by NCB.

● For more information on NCB's work with young people visit [www.ncb.org.uk/what-we-do/involving-young-people](http://www.ncb.org.uk/what-we-do/involving-young-people)

## Support for young disabled people

NCB's Transition Information Network (TIN) is an alliance of organisations and individuals who come together with a common aim – to improve the experience of disabled young people's transition to adulthood.

Last month TIN hosted a seminar on Disabled Young People and Employment. The Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Education, the Preparing for Adulthood programme, Project Search, the Rose project, One Leicester and Beacon Hill school came together to give presentations and discuss a range of topics from employment support for young people to employment and personalisation.

Presentations and resources from the day are available from the events section of the TIN website.

● For information about future TIN events, become a member for free at [www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk](http://www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk)

**Children in Scotland**  
every child - every childhood

## Latest from Scotland

### Call for Scottish government to do more for families in Scotland

Children in Scotland responded to the Chancellor's autumn statement, by welcoming George Osborne's commitment to fund childcare places for disadvantaged two-year-olds in England and Wales. But they are calling on the Scottish government to go further and deliver real change by putting investment in childcare and education at the centre of its strategy.

Sarah Burton, Policy Development Manager at Children in Scotland, said: "It's time for the Scottish government to take seriously the impact of costly and inaccessible childcare on families and do more than simply copy Westminster's targeted focus."

● [www.childreninScotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninScotland.org.uk)



## News from Wales

### Having a Voice. Having a Choice

A poster campaign to help give disabled young people more of a say in decisions affecting their lives was launched last month in Wales.

Children and young people have a right to have their opinions heard when decisions are made about them but for young people with a disability it can be difficult to be involved in this process.

The posters, entitled *Having a Voice. Having a Choice* help young people to understand what they can expect, how they will be involved and what feedback they will receive.

The campaign was developed in consultation with young people and produced by the participation unit at Save the Children and Together 4 Rights – an all-Wales group of young disabled people, facilitated by Children in Wales.

**NCB (England and Northern Ireland) works in partnership with Children in Scotland and Children in Wales.** For further information visit [www.childreninScotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninScotland.org.uk) (0131 228 8484) or [www.childreninWales.org.uk](http://www.childreninWales.org.uk) (029 2034 2434)

## Get connected

### NCB training

NCB's training programme reflects the concerns, aims and objectives of professionals and practitioners working with and for children and young people.

NCB training benefits from the latest research by leading theorists and practitioners, to ensure that the training is timely and relevant, delivering the right weighting of policy and practice development.

### Building consortia and working in partnership

This one-day introductory course is aimed at children and young people's voluntary and community organisations that are looking to form consortia and partnerships in order to be able to bid for public service contracts.

- Newcastle – 17 Jan 2012
- Swindon – 16 Feb 2012

### Commissioning for equality

This one-day training course is designed to help equalities organisations bid for government health and social care contracts.

Developed by NCB and FaithAction, the course will provide practical advice on how to complete a tender.

- Manchester – 25 Jan 2012
- London – 28 Feb 2012

For more information, email [naraine@ncb.org.uk](mailto:naraine@ncb.org.uk) or call 020 7843 6084