

Helping your Child to Read Workshop

Ebbsfleet Community Centre 21 May 2015

The aim of the workshop was to help foster carers to encourage their children to love reading. Jo Kelly started off the morning and linked the topics covered and then Rachel O'Connor (Educational Psychologist) gave a short presentation on why children might not enjoy reading and offered advice and ideas on how attitudes could be changed. She spoke about the Paired Reading scheme and carers enjoyed a short film giving an example of this.

Sarah Smith and Malou Bengtsson-Wheeler from Beanstalk, the reading charity, explained how their volunteers work with children by tailoring the resources they use to a child's particular interests. Unfortunately the Kent Library Service was unable to attend, but we had the benefit of a supply of books they suggested and a Story Sack and useful information on what the Library Service can offer.

Many other resources were available for carers to look at, which could encourage a warm and welcoming atmosphere in which to enjoy books – play tents, bean bags, fairy lights, etc

Some of the comments carers left on the feedback sheets were:

- I will try the suggestion of side by side reading and it will be good to see if the 'finger tapping' works
- A friendly, informative and fun morning – I will make more use of library facilities and use Paired Reading
- Very well structured and informative
- The clip of the baby was a reminder of how soon babies pick up on the pleasure of reading
- Excellent course – I like the idea of Paired Reading
- Loved the competition and the 'raffle'

100% of the carers evaluated the morning as excellent in all aspects with several saying they appreciated the informality, good humour and opportunity to talk to the professionals and each other. They were also very pleased to receive book tokens for their children.

There is another workshop being held on 19th June in Larkfield for carers in the West Kent area.