



## Newsletter

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### Newsletter 4 – February 2021

Dear Members of the Early Childhood Forum,

Welcome to the first Newsletter for 2021. We all hope you were able to enjoy the Christmas break despite the last - minute changes to safe distancing, isolating and social distancing which resulted in a very different experience for most. We also hope that this year will gradually improve for all of our members, as the Covid vaccination programme continues to be rolled out and the measures imposed by the 4th lockdown due to Covid 19, continue to be effective.

As all members are aware, the Early Years practitioners in Day Care, Pre-Schools, Nurseries, Childminders, PVI and Maintained settings, have provided invaluable support for children from Birth to five years and their Key Worker Parents/Carers for almost a year now. This has been extremely hard and challenging due to changing requirements issued almost daily by the Government and often with a sense of the profession being forgotten.

Members of ECF and the Steering Group have provided as much support as possible to Early Years settings by writing letters to the Government, to their own local MPs, signing petitions, continuing the lobbying that was evident in the last Newsletter.

#### **Peter Moss - Presentation 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 via Zoom**

At this, our first members meeting of the year, Peter Moss gave a presentation relating to a new book '*Transforming Early Childhood in England: Towards a Democratic Education*', edited by Claire Cameron and Peter Moss.

He took everyone present through the reasons for researching and writing the book relating it back to the 1970s, since when there appears to have been little improvement in the care and education provided for the youngest children. He reported that up until that time the care and education had been of a high standard. This is a theme that Peter Moss has been writing about for several years. The presentation and his thoughts highlighted many issues within the sector, the impact of continuous changes in Government, persons who are not qualified in Early Years but are in positions that lead these changes. Interestingly, he identified Sure Start as one of these initiatives, however, he was in favour of Children's Centres. The authors suggest that 'care' should not be included specifically within the EYFS Framework of other Early Years Curricula, that it should be inherent within the children's learning.

A short discussion ensued, which raised the point about contact with the Government and whether had Peter Moss and Colleagues approached them in the past. This received a negative response. However, since the presentation Melian Mansfield, our Chair, has remained in contact with Peter Moss and is meeting regularly in order to identify a way forward. The need for change in the early years is more



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important now than ever. An online meeting is being arranged on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 14.00 to bring together representatives from the various early years' projects currently underway. Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

The book is available to read online for free at <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/128464> & read the blog at <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/2020/08/06/ending-a-pernicious-split-how-to-get-beyond-childcare-as-a-commodity-to-education-as-every-childs-right/>.

### Early Years Coalition news

All organisations involved in the Early Years Coalition have been extremely busy working towards producing the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the Birth to Five Matters, by the sector, for the sector document to support practitioners providing care and education within the statutory EYFS Framework. During the recent weeks the results of the survey of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft have been analysed and used to inform the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft, especially in relation to the birth to 3 age range, the inclusion of a statement relating to Care etc. This second draft was disseminated on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and is available for access via the website <https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk>. Comments are requested via Survey Monkey, to be made by 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021, please.

### Forthcoming Events/Meetings

**3 March 2021 via Zoom at 11.00 – Maggie Fisher, a previous member of the ECF steering group, will provide an update on health visitors during the pandemic in England.** The zoom invitation has been sent out, with a reminder to follow.

**22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 via Zoom at 14.00 – CASE, ECF and Peter Moss** confirmation and further details will be issued soon.

Please share this newsletter with your members. We very much look forward to seeing you all at our next ZOOM meeting on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 and are keen to share your news with our members in future newsletters – do let us know what is new in your organisation.

With best wishes

Trisha and Barbara

On behalf of the Steering Group, Early Childhood Forum