

Dundee family learning - Family Fresh Air Club

This exemplar describes an approach to engaging families in health and wellbeing outcomes using outdoor activities. The aim of the outdoor activities was to show that families can enjoy the outdoors, at locations which are within reach of their own homes, for very little cost.

Identified mums, dads, grannies and grandpas, and their children/grandchildren, took part in the Family Fresh Air Club in partnership with the countryside rangers. The sessions were funded by the Dundee Partnership. Families from the Strathmartine area enjoyed the experience of a short walk and a themed activity in a different setting each week.



This was a particularly good engagement tool for engaging the significant male member of the family.

What was done?

Staff used local knowledge and data to identify areas that would benefit from a family learning health and wellbeing group. This family learning group was based within the Strathmartine area, in Dundee North.

Staff then worked in partnership with the park rangers to develop a programme. The primary focus was to increase the physical ability of family members as well as to increase their knowledge of local parks and woods.

Families were invited to take part in the programme by staff who had built up a positive relationship with them through outreach work. Once families agreed to take part, staff conducted initial baseline interviews. These were later used as part of the evaluation framework to test distance travelled in the families' learning. The programme below shows some of the themed sessions that the families undertook.

Week	Location	Activity
1 B1: Mon 22 Feb B2: Tues 8 Mar	Clatto Country Park EARTH	Walk around the pond. Refreshments at the Visitor Centre. Planting bulbs
2 B1: Mon 29 Feb B2: Tues 15 Mar	The Law AIR	A winding wander up the Law with a wonderful view from the top. Refreshments Flying Kites
3 B1: Mon 7 Mar B2: Tues 22 Mar	Templeton Woods FIRE	Walk through the woods. Den building in the woods. Refreshments at campfire by the Visitor Centre.

<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>B1: Mon 14 Mar B2: Tues 29 Mar</p>	<p>Trottick Ponds Nature Reserve</p> <p>WATER</p>	<p>Wee walk around the nature reserve. Refreshments. Pond dipping.</p>
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Once the programme was coming to an end, staff worked with families to evaluate the impact of the programme and, as part of this, asked families how they would incorporate what they had learned in their daily lives.

Why was it done?

Family Learning is a key priority for Dundee City Council as set out in their Adult Learning Annual Report 2014-15: *'Family learning within an Adult Learning context in Dundee describes work, primarily, with families with children aged 0-8yrs. This reflects the age range for early years work as set out in the Early Years Framework and the Early Years Collaborative. This family learning work has clear outcomes that reflect local and national priorities for CLD especially those relating to early intervention and prevention.'*



The Dundee Healthy Living Initiative Mission was set up to promote positive health and wellbeing by delivering health improvement activities as identified by local people in areas of deprivation using a community development approach.

It provides opportunities and support for local people to meet their own health needs, share knowledge and skills within their own communities, and influence decisions about health service development and delivery.

Impact

At the start of the programme, staff set out to create a benchmark. Families were asked, using questionnaires and open dialogue, about their current activities in relation to exercise and the outdoors. This highlighted that, on the whole, exercise and use of the outdoors were low for the families at the start of the programme. In some cases, this was also dependent on the weather.



- *'I haven't been to Templeton Woods for about 20 years!'*
- *'We don't get out often.'*
- *'We try to go out walking with friends but the minute it's too cold or raining, the walk gets called off.'*

They were then asked about what attracted them to come to the group. This was done as a way for staff to evaluate their engagement strategy for the next programme:

- *'Trying to get out more'*
- *'Chance to get to different places'*
- *'I don't drive, so it's good chance to get out'*

- *'Get to experience all the different activities.'*

At the end of the programme, staff completed an evaluation questionnaire alongside a series of open dialogue sessions with the families. This allowed staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. Families were positive, overall, about their experiences and use of the outdoors. In addition to increasing physical activity and using local assets, families displayed secondary benefits such as increased knowledge and understanding of wildlife and local plants and trees. Some participants also reported improved mental health. In addition to benefits for the families themselves, positive relationships were built between families and partnership staff.

- *'Some days I get up and can't be bothered but when I get here I have a laugh and a chat.'*
- *'Been amazing to get out and about.'*
- *'Absolutely loved it.'*
- *'Being out and about has helped take my mind off things.'*
- *'Encouraged me to go outdoors.'*
- *'I have redone the trips with my friend out with the group.'*
- *'They were full of knowledge and it was good to learn new information.'*
- *'We loved Laura.'*
- *'The rangers were amazing.'*