



The Story So Far...

Brighton & Hove Parents' Forum

Connecting the parents and carers of
Brighton & Hove together



Background



- The Parents' Forum was setup in October 2005 after 18 months of consulting with parents and professionals running children's services.
- A core group of parents came together to make a recommendation to the Children and Young People's Trust Board to receive funding to support the forum in setting up, and to also have two places for parents to sit on the Children and Young People's Trust Board to be part of the decision making.
- The Parents' Forum has a dedicated Development Co-ordinator who works with the parents to promote and develop the forum citywide.

What is the Parents' Forum?



The Parents' Forum is open to all parents and carers of children aged under 19 (under 25 for children with special needs) who use children's services in Brighton & Hove.

- The Brighton & Hove Parents' Forum has been created to ensure that parents' voices are heard at a decision making level of the Children & Young People's Trust.
- It aims to promote the inclusion of all parents and carers across the city to influence and improve children and young persons services.
- It is here as an additional and independent group to bring parents together to develop a strong, experienced voice.

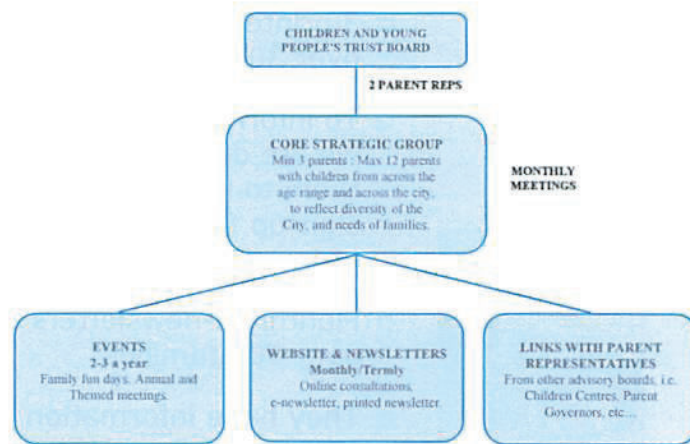
Our Mission Statement



We will achieve our vision and purpose by:

- Actively developing and facilitating awareness of issues of importance to parents
- Helping parents to work with the procedures, so they can effectively have their say and be heard, at all decision making levels
- Involving and engaging parents in consultation.
- Networking into other parent groups across the city and communicating broadly with the diversity of families that inhabit the city

How does it work?



Ways to share and receive information about issues that affect families.
 Enable the CYPT to consult through us on key changes and developments to children's services.

Website



- Over 100,000 hits over 2 years
- Regularly over 1000 visitors a month (about half of these from Brighton)
- Content includes:
 - Parent bloggers
 - Online discussion boards
 - Events calendar
 - Weblinks
 - Latest news
 - Online surveys

Newsletters/Annual report



- ❑ 3 printed newsletters going to over 30,000 families
- ❑ To inform parents about what we are doing and encourage them to visit the website and sign-up for the monthly e-newsletter
- ❑ Monthly e-newsletters sent to over 700 families
- ❑ They have information about latest news, events, updates on the website

Events



- ❑ 7 events over 3 years
- ❑ Met with over 1500 parents and 1600 children at our events.
- ❑ At events we have consulted on:
 - Top issues for parents
 - Parent Support Strategy
 - New CYPP
 - Our annual report
 - What it's like being a Dad in the city

What else have we done?



- ❑ Supported 2 parents to sit on the CYPT Board.
- ❑ Produced publicity and information to advertise the Parents' Forum.
- ❑ Met with many individual parents and groups from across the city to introduce them to the Parents' Forum.
- ❑ Directly and indirectly been involved in over 30 consultations.
- ❑ Supported the creation and implementation of the citywide Parent Support Strategy, as a result of which a service re-design procedure that includes parent/ carer involvement has been established.
- ❑ Supported the design and implementation of parent training for parent representatives sitting on Children Centre Advisory Groups.



Key messages from 'How are we doing' consultation



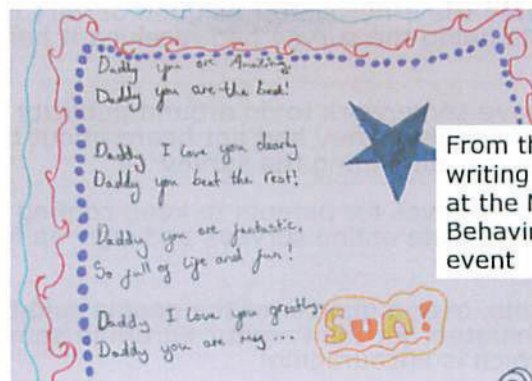
- ❑ People rated the website as good or very good, with comments like 'it is easy to navigate and full of information on everything you need'
- ❑ People rated the e-newsletter as good or very good, but very few people doing the survey had received it before (about 10%)
- ❑ We still have some work to do around publicity as over half the parents advised they had not heard about the Parents' Forum before completing the survey
- ❑ Need for incentives for parents to keep coming back to website, complete online surveys and sign-up for the e-newsletter
- ❑ Despite this, over a quarter of the people said they would like to help volunteer for the Parents' Forum in some way in the future, which is encouraging!

What are we working on now?

- Ensuring the website and newsletter are sustainable and have sufficient support
- An event for parents of teenagers to find out what can help to support them in their role
- Joint consultation project with the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership on School Food Issues
- Ensuring all CYPT staff know what the Parents' Forum can do for them. To assist them in engaging appropriately and early enough in any consultation with parents/families

Thank you for listening

Any questions?



From the creative writing workshop at the Men Behaving Dadly event