

Antrim Learning Together event

Over 100 teachers from schools in Antrim joined local family support professionals to consider the emotional health and wellbeing of local children and young people at the Antrim Learning Together event held in Parkhall Junior School Antrim on 14 February 2014. The purpose of this event, organised jointly by Antrim Learning Together Partnership and Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Antrim Locality Planning Group was to raise awareness among teaching staff about the range of issues that can affect young people today and how teachers can offer support within the school environment.



Welcoming them to the event, Mr George Beattie, Principal of Parkhall Integrated College and Chair of Antrim Learning Together Partnership quoted a recent Confederation of Business and Industry report which identified emotional health and wellbeing as the top indicator for future success in children and young people.

Councillor Mervyn Rea, Chair of the CYPSP Antrim Locality Planning Group stressed the 'importance of organisations working together to support our children and young people who face a growing number of issues in today's world.'

Speakers included Conor McCafferty from Zest who drew on his work with young people who self-harm to provide information about emotional wellbeing. He highlighted the key role teachers can play in seeing the signs and helping children and young people access the services they need. Conor's second talk focused on the impact of alcohol on young people. Billy McMillan and Louise Devlin from Barnardo's described the impact on children and young people when parents misuse alcohol and drugs. The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people was described by Clare Allen and Laura Dillon from Women's Aid.

At the event representatives from family support services were on hand to provide information about services available in the local area. Teachers were also encouraged to look after their own mental and emotional wellbeing with demonstrations of techniques including complimentary therapies and meditation skills.



At the end of the event Mr Beattie said:

“This has been an excellent event and as a school principal I feel we now have a better understanding of the issues affecting children and young people. We will be able to recognise the signs and have been provided with the information we need to ensure children receive the support and help they need to reach their future potential in the wider world.”

The event was supported by CYPSP, North-Eastern Education and Library Board, South Antrim Community Network, Northern Health and Social Care Trust and The Big Lottery.



The Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), led by the Health and Social Care Board, is a multi-agency partnership that includes the leadership of key statutory agencies and community and voluntary organisations that have a responsibility for improving the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

Read more about the CYPSP Antrim Locality Planning Group please visit <http://www.cypsp.org/antrim.htm>

To join the CYPSP Antrim Locality Planning Group or for more information contact Selena Ramsey, Northern Area Locality Development Worker at Selena.ramsey@northertrust.hscni.net or by telephone at 028 2563 6608