

Media Information

For immediate use



6th May 2010

play@home programme launched in the Borders

On 1st April 2010, the nationally acclaimed *play@home* programme was launched in the Borders. The programme is aimed at the parents and carers of children from birth to five years old and encourages them to help the development of children through the use of exercise and physical activity.

In February this year 60 childcare workers received training to deliver the programme in childcare settings across the Borders. Parents and carers of all new born babies will receive their copy of the first *play@home* book from their Health Visitor which provides them with ideas that start children off on a life of good health.

The books give parents an easy stage by stage guide of fun activities, from Peek-a-Boo to balancing activities that they can do with their children from birth to encourage not just development, but also to help children become healthy and active from an early age. The *play@home* books are also available from libraries throughout the Scottish Borders.

Kevan Sanderson, Physical Activity Health Improvement Specialist for NHS Borders said “*play@home* recognises that parents are their baby’s first teacher and provides a foundation for a physically active life for the whole family, encouraging an enjoyment of physical activity, sport and leisure pursuits.”

The programme is already well established in Fife and a survey there found that 89% of parents said that they found the *play@home* book useful or very useful. Irene Miller the national advisor for the programme said “*play@home* has been used successfully in Fife for over ten years and I am delighted to be involved with the launch of *play@home* in the Borders”.

Dr Eric Baijal, Joint Director of Public Health for NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council said “In many ways the early years of a child’s life are the most important in

determining future health. I think it is entirely appropriate that NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council and their partners put such emphasis on promoting health development in early life. The early years are a national priority and this signifies our commitment to the earliest years of life being crucial to a child's development".

play@home originated in New Zealand and is supported by the Scottish Government across the whole of Scotland as a three year pilot project funded by NHS Health Scotland.

Contacts

For further information, contact Public Involvement & Communications NHS Borders on 01896 825589/5520