

PRESS RELEASE

CWDC Funding Award

Funding announced for training to improve children's communication skills

Occupational Group Funding has been awarded by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to develop a creative partnership between Elizabeth Jarman Ltd, specialists in developing effective learning environments and the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

The project "Communication Friendly Spaces™: Improving children's speaking and listening skills in the home context" will be a customised training and development programme for registered childminders and nannies. Improving speaking and listening skills is high on everyone's agenda. A recent I CAN report suggests that over 50% of children in England are starting school with some form of language difficulty or disability.

Elizabeth Jarman, lead partner in developing the project said:

"This award from the CWDC gives us a great opportunity to raise awareness of the significant impact that the physical environment can have on children's speaking and listening skills. A review of the way that we have traditionally created learning spaces for children is long overdue. Potentially, this programme will make a huge difference to children's speaking and listening skills. It's really exciting!"

Marian Pearson, Director of Operations for NCMA said:

"NCMA is delighted to be working in partnership with Elizabeth Jarman Ltd with funding from the CWDC. We are keen to ensure that our members across England and Wales, are provided with opportunities to develop their practice. This will provide an opportunity for registered childminders and nannies to find ways of using a home based environment to develop opportunities to improve

ways of using a home-based environment to develop opportunities to improve children's communication and language skills. This will be a useful tool in influencing children's learning."

The project will raise awareness of the importance of the learning environment for registered childminders and other home-based childcarers, through:

- + A training and development programme, designed to deepen understanding of the impact that the physical environment can have on children's speaking and listening skills and demonstrate what this means specifically for the home context

- + Establishing a pool of regionally based trainers, to help deliver the Communication Friendly Spaces™ training and development programme at a local level.

The intended future roll out of the training and development programme will help local authorities to achieve their ambitious Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets on improving speaking and listening skills. It will also complement the Early Years Foundation Stage focus on Enabling Environments.