Childminders develop a child's mind

Tuesday 3 October, 2017

Nearly 200 childminders gathered together in the Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline on Saturday 30 September 2017 for the SCMA Annual Conference. Designed on the theme of *Childminding develops a child's mind*, the conference combined enthralling presentations, a keynote address from the Minister for Childcare and Early Years and a range of innovative and inspiring workshops to make it once again a resounding success.

Commenting at the event childminder Lisa France said: “It's days like today that make me even more proud to be a childminder! Thanks to SCMA and the other professionals for believing in us and supporting the work that we do. What a fantastic, well organised event -with two informative workshops to challenge my thinking and practice. Looking forward to next years already! It's been a long day but I wouldn't have it any other way.”

Dr Elizabeth Kilbey who is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist, TV Celebrity and star of Channel 4’s hit series The Secret Life of 4, 5 and 6 Year Olds, wowed the audience with an interactive presentation on the *Use of Observation in Relation to Child Development*. During her career, Elizabeth has helped families to tackle everything from toddler tantrums to teenage meltdowns as well as more complex and challenging mental health difficulties. In a truly inspiring format she shared some of the learning outcomes of this work with the delegates.

“I specialise in early years and child development and it has been an absolute pleasure to come to Scotland to meet the delegates and talk to them about the amazing work they do with young people,” said Elizabeth. “I do feel really passionate and genuinely believe that childminders have a vital role to play in the development of children and young people, because they are in that unique situation to offer home based care in such an attentive and hands on way that I don't think you can parallel in other settings. It has been so interesting to hear delegate questions and really get a sense of how they are working with children and young people. It is really challenging times for childminders and early learning providers and I do think childminders have a key role to play in the development of young people, particularly across Scotland.”

Following Dr Elizabeth Kilbey, childminders welcomed exciting news on a new joint venture between SCMA and SQA - the SCMA Complete Childminding Learning Pathway - a Work Based Award.

“We have been working alongside SQA to develop the Complete Childminding Learning Pathway that will enable all childminders to gain an SQA accredited work place award,” said Anne Condie, Head of Childminding Services at SCMA. “SQA chose the conference to present on this exciting new development for childminders which I know will be welcomed within our sector.”

The afternoon commenced with a Keynote Address from Mark McDonald MSP, Minister for Childcare and Early Years. Commenting on his attendance at the event, the Minister said: “I welcomed the opportunity to come to this conference so that I could speak with childminders about Scottish Government plans for expanding Early Learning and Childcare and the role we see childminders playing as a part of that expansion. Conferences like these are so important as they bring like-minded people together so that they are able to hear from a range of professional speakers about some of the national policies and frameworks that are being developed. I enjoy hearing directly from childminders on issues that matter to them and, as suggested at the event, would encourage them to contact me directly on MinisterCEY@gov.scot should they want to raise their concerns regarding Early Learning and Childcare.”

Henry Mathias of the Care Inspectorate delivered the final presentation at the conference on key developments within the Care Inspectorate, including the publication of the new Health and Social Care Standards. During the presentation delegates learned more about My Childminding Experience, which aims to clarify the often misunderstood nature of childminding whilst showcasing the positive experiences of children and their families. Henry also highlighted ‘Your Childminding Journey: a Learning and Development Resource’, which is a new online resource to support the learning and development of childminders as they progress through their careers. Henry finished with a review of the new Health and Social Care Standards which are now radically different in many ways on the previous version.

In addition to receiving certificates, childminders who attended the conference will also be invited via email to apply for an SCMA Annual Conference Open Badge. Open Badges are digital records of achievements and skills that recognise both formal and informal learning. Achieving an Open Badge for

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the conference will involve writing a short reflective statement on what you have learned and how you have put this learning into practice.

Save the date

A key highlight in the SCMA events calendar, the date has now been set for the 2018 event! We look forward to welcoming childminders to the Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow on Saturday 29 September 2018 and of course any suggestions on workshops or content would be really appreciated.

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