

Update for November 3rd 2009 Branch Meeting

1. Funding.

a) We have had funding for two posts and have sorted out most technical problems, leaving one more to sort.

b) Helen Brewer's efforts mean that Waitrose has a little box for people to put money in towards FNF. Thanks, Helen! Presentation in November and we have made over £300.

c) Phil Evans cycling from Lands End to John o'Groats raised over £800

2. Meeting with Deputy Minister Gwenda Thomas

We have met the Deputy Minister on October 12th re presumption of shared parenting. David Currie, Paul Apreada and Helen Lloyd Jones went. The Chief Executive of CAF/CASS Cymru was there. The outcome of the meeting was that the Deputy Minister instructed the Chief Executive to continue the discussion on shared parenting with FNF and it was arranged that Paul should be our spokesman on this topic.

3. Contact Centres.

The suggestion has been made that FNF could be an organisation that would enable the parent to make a self-referral. This was mentioned at the meeting with the Deputy Minister.

4. Re finding a child when a parent has moved.

CSA are producing forms towards solving this problem. It is woefully inadequate. A revised version to be considered in the next review by CSA has been sent to them. The response we had from CSA was not encouraging. We need to pursue this further.

5. C-MEC

Sharon McDonnell is taking an interest in the C-MEC. Ask her advice if you are having difficulties.

6. Children in Wales.

FNF belongs to the umbrella group Children in Wales. Cheryl Griffin has the paperwork. Membership no.: **WA991**

User name: **Member**

Password : **ciwpass**

If anybody wants to know what Children in Wales does their web page that tells you is <http://www.childreninwales.org.uk:80/whatwedo/index.html> If you see any event you would like to attend, tell Cheryl. Cheryl is housebound at present following an incident with a Labrador which left her with a broken leg. The Lab is fine. Get well soon Cheryl.

There is an organization DYN Helpline **0808 801 0321** and web site www.dynwales.org in Cardiff which helps men who have experienced or who are experiencing Domestic Abuse.

HLLJ represented FNF at a Children in Wales training course on Domestic Abuse and Child Protection in Blaenau Gwent November 2nd. Figures show that more fathers are having contact than before. The course was geared to women being the victims, but it was acknowledged that men can be the victims and that one of the problems we all have is that men are even less likely to come

forward to admit they are being abused than women. It is important everybody is aware that violence is not acceptable and that there is help available and how to contact the help.

7. Port Talbot Branch

The next meeting of Port Talbot Branch will be in Taibach Rugby Club at 7.30 pm 24th November.

8. Development plan.

If you want HLLJ to e-mail you the plan please ask. If there are any extra points you want included let Helen know.

9. Telephone Help line

The training course was on October 31st and was a good course. It was good to see Conrad and Diane and to learn that so far all the news re Conrad's operation is positive.

The delegates now have phones and ethernet connections so they can plug in. Apparently they work! So all we need now is the number and we are ready to go. Hopefully we will have started before Christmas which is always a danger period for break up of relationships and incredibly hard for a parent to bear if they are not seeing their children. Let's pray we are on-line by then and easing the load on those like Matthew who have borne the brunt of all the phone calls for years.

10. McKenzie Training. Dates

20th and 21st February First come first served. Posters around with details. Helen LLJ needs to know if you are interested to get a feel of the numbers involved. So please tell her.

11. New Wrexham Branch.

There is a new branch starting up in Wrexham in December. This is great news and means that we have a breathing space on our plan to have five branches one in each of the list areas. We may decide to start a branch in Swansea. We are looking into it. We are also working starting one in Abergavenny next year.

12. FNF Cymru

The application to set us up as a charity is chuntering through the system. So is an application for a bank account. There are three trustees, Jenny Cuttriss, Andy Crumpton and Helen Lloyd Jones, who will be Chair. The Chief Executive will be Jon Davies.

13. CAFCASS and the Police

Following a meeting at the AGM with the Assistant Director of CAFCASS (England) we have been advised that CAFCASS officers can not call for a police check on the other adults living in the same house as a child without applying to court for permission. More delays in the system and more children at risk. Currently trying to establish whether this is true or not. Also trying to establish whether primary legislation is needed to change this. Brought this up at the meeting with the Deputy Minister and was told that anybody who suspected that children were being abused had a duty to report it and that it should be investigated. However we know of two cases where that has not happened. We will continue to niggle at this.

Cheryl Griffin can help you with filling in C100 forms and so can Diane McBride. Paul Apreada, Conrad McBride and Leigh Goodchild can advise in a McKenzie capacity. If you would prefer to use Welsh, Jack Wynne Williams can help. He sees his children on a Tuesday, so ask Helen and she will put you in touch.

14. Fund Raising

Could we start thinking about collecting money outside a rugby/football match? This will also help us raise awareness of the problems and of the fact we can offer some help.

Matthew Mudge is our McKenzie guru and if things are complicated contact him. 😊

- ◆ We also need fund raising expertise.
- ◆ We need PR expertise.
- ◆ We need to have more McKenzie friends.
- ◆ We need to have McKenzie friend trainers
- ◆ We need to work with CAFCASS CYMRU.
- ◆ We need to work with the Children's Commissioner.
- ◆ We need to work with the Grandparents' Association.
- ◆ We need to lobby the Family Justice system.
- ◆ We need people with McKenzie friend experience attending Port Talbot meetings.
- ◆ We need to liaise with CAFCASS in England where appropriate.
- ◆ We need people to rattle buckets at collections in rugby matches

Don't feel overwhelmed but please tell us if you see a niche where your expertise would be helpful.



Together we can work miracles. Every parent we help is a child helped too!

