



LISTEN TO ME

Listen to Me was launched this month by Councillor Mrs Maclaren, Convenor for Education, Children and Families, at the City Chambers. Learners, tutors, volunteers, family and friends gathered to celebrate the event.

The book, which was principally funded by Learning Connections with support from the City of Edinburgh Council and Deaf Arts Forum, presents thoughts, stories and artwork by learners who use British Sign Language (BSL) or complex communication systems.

Councillor Mrs Maclaren said, "This book is a tremendous piece of work and a valuable resource for learners and tutors."

Kenny Steadwood, one of the learners, said: "I felt important ... and enjoyed getting dressed up and having family, friends and staff come to see my work."

Alex Telford, one of his support workers, said: "It felt like a really nice inclusive evening. The whole night was about celebrating difference."

Communities Scotland wrote: "We are delighted with this book. Sharing a piece of writing with others can be a significant stage in a learner's progress, allowing him or her to build confidence. It also provides relevant, appropriate material for people to work on or to use an example of what other learners have achieved."

www.listen2me-online.co.uk

The website of the book has just been updated. As well as viewing the book, readers can check out material and issues raised by the book. The site includes a 'blog', which you can use to easily communicate with other people interested in these issues. Everyone is welcome to contribute to this by either commenting on existing topics ('posts') or joining the blogging team and starting new topics.

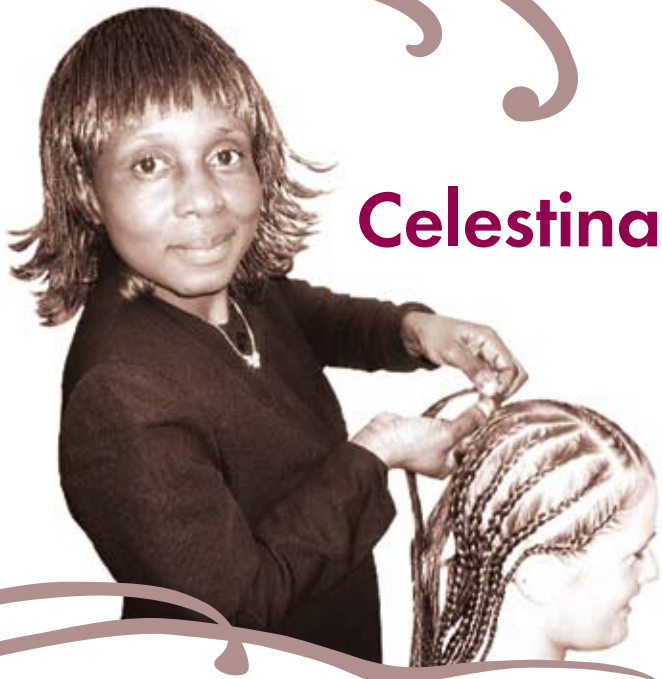


CLAN is particularly concerned to ensure that good literacy and numeracy learning opportunities can be accessed by all in the city. We are therefore very pleased to support Listen to Me which dramatically brings to life the challenges faced by learners who use BSL or complex communication systems. Our thanks are due to all the staff and especially the learners for producing an outstanding guide to help us all.

Angus Whyte
CLAN's
Co-ordinator



Photos: Mary McCormick presenting her speech and Kenny Steadwood's communication board.



Celestina

From a small corner shop at Labadi Beach Hotel in Ghana, Celestina Osei Bonsu, a professional hairdresser specializing in African hair styling, was determined to expand her horizon internationally.

In 2003 she arrived in the UK to take part in an exhibition of African hair products and hairdressing skills.

After spending time in London, she came up to Scotland and seeing that there was a gap in the market in Edinburgh for African hairstylists, Celestina decided that she would settle here and open a salon. In order to achieve this, she knew that she would need to improve her English and learn to use a computer.

"I wanted to do something that would help my community over here. I knew that I needed to improve my English to be able to talk to customers so I went along to an ESOL group run by tutor, Janet Cole.

"In class I designed leaflets and a business card and wrote letters and a business plan."

Celestina's determination and enthusiasm paid off and she has now set up shop in Leith specializing in African hairdressing.

Celestina used the North Edinburgh Business Incubator for help in putting together her business plan. She also had to learn book keeping, is building a web site and has sourced local advertising for her business.

She used to attend both Health and Literacy classes and CBAL classes during the day, however as she is so busy now she goes to Janet's ESOL CBAL class on a Wednesday evening at Telford college. Janet also visits her at her shop to help her with the computer.

Celestina commented, *"By going along to the CLAN groups, my English has improved and learning to use a computer has been fantastic.*

"I have achieved my aim which was to support my community here and also back home. I import hair extensions and other hair products from Ghana so I can help the local community over there."

Janet Cole said, *"Celestina is a great example of an ESOL learner who has been motivated to improve her literacy skills and to learn English to help her to set up her own business."*

Celestina's hair salon is at 187 Great Junction Street, Leith.
Tel: 0131 555 6029. Website: www.afrohairstcot.co.uk

Kick off!

the big plus
READING WRITING NUMBERS

A new initiative to attract learners to join literacy and numeracy groups will be launched by The Big Plus campaign in August. The aim of the initiative is to attract new learners by recruiting popular football players to endorse the campaign.

Advertising will include a two week outdoor poster campaign featuring the players. Players' images will also be used on other printed materials such as leaflets, posters and on The Big Plus website.

Teaching and Learning

The learning materials available to tutors will take the form of:

- printed learning materials for tutors and
- a Big Plus for football interactive CD-ROM which will present learning in a game format with themes such as Scotland in the World Cup and Famous Players.

Additionally, tutors can incorporate their own (football) learning materials. Each learner will also have access to The Big Plus promotional materials such as A4 booklet, ruler/calculator and pens.

The Final

All the learners who take part in the project will be invited to an event at Hampden where they will meet some of the players and receive recognition for their efforts. This event will provide a further opportunity to raise awareness of The Big Plus campaign.

www.thebigplus.com



Changing Perceptions

A group of learners are attempting to challenge the many misconceptions surrounding mental health by producing a magazine which highlights the issues.

The idea for the magazine came from learners who attend Safehaven (formally known as NE Edinburgh Mental Health Resource) in North East Edinburgh.

Supported by Hilary Morrison and CLAN Project Worker Karen McLean, the group initially worked on an in-house magazine.

However, after Karen managed to successfully secure funding from Craigentiny and Restalrig's Community Regeneration Fund they were able to produce a magazine that could be distributed around the city.

The project is completely user led with the learners taking on every aspect of the magazine's production including editorial, photography and research.

At the launch of the magazine, learner, Alistair McIntyre urged professionals to read it and to challenge their own views about people with mental health issues.



Calum Slessor added, "We need to change people's attitudes. Drugs, alcohol and substance abuse cause most violence and crime. Not us.

"Just because we suffer from mental health issues does not mean we are only what we are labelled. Labels are for jars not people.

"Sign posts mean much more than labels. They help you to find the right direction or tell you where you are. Sign posts help us all find the way."

The magazine has been distributed to health centres, libraries, councillors and MSPs.

For more information on the group or to request a copy of the magazine contact Karen McLean. Tel: 0131 661 2912. E-mail: karen.mclean@educ.edin.gov.uk

Starting Points

Learners on the Starting Points Course, run by the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) found that they all shared a common interest through their work as Care Workers - **dementia**.

It was this theme that dominated their sessions and proved to be the inspiration for producing a newsletter which contains their thoughts, concerns and research on dementia.

The group worked with tutor Joan Weir. Mary Laurie, one of the participants on the course said, "We chose the subject matter because we all work with people who have been affected by dementia.

"This common theme along with the fact that it was a small group, gave us the confidence to speak out. Joan, the tutor, was excellent and explained things really well."

A Long Journey of Uncertainty

When someone is diagnosed with dementia confusion and fear can be a partner on this journey: fear of the unknown and confusion of not understanding.

Members of the family find it very hard to come to terms with this illness, and the need for patience and calmness to care for their loved ones can cause great stress in a family unit.

"Our aim has been to stimulate positive and caring attitudes about dementia, to encourage the general public to inform themselves and to reassure anxious family members."

www.edspace.org.uk

Councillor Paul Edie officially launched Edspace on 30 May. The website will help people in Edinburgh experiencing mental health problems, and their carers, find the services they need.

For more information contact Vickie Hobson, WEA Workplace Organiser. Tel: 0131 226 3456. E-mail: v.hobson@weascotland.org.uk

Leith ABC for Kids

A new book to help children learn the alphabet was launched at Fort Community Wing in Leith earlier this month.

Leith abc for Kids is the end product of a Leith Family Learning project which built on the valuable experience and skills of local parents to create an abc which is relevant to children's everyday lives.

Karen Buist, Family Learning Worker explained, "I got the idea from talking to parents in learning groups in Leith.

"They said their kids books did not always reflect the lives their children have. For example, they would often feature children in gardens, but they live in flats.

"We decided to create a book that would feature images of the local environment and therefore be more relevant for the children."

Several parents of children from Fort and Stanwell nurseries responded to a questionnaire with ideas for each letter and then six parents joined together as a Family Learning group, meeting weekly for twelve weeks to create the images.

The group spent several weeks discussing ideas, then exploring Leith, taking photos and choosing images together. They then came up with a design style that allowed them work on an image for some letters each and a cover.

The result is a book which introduces children to the letters of the alphabet in a fun, relevant and educational way.



An appreciative Granny said, "The way I learnt the alphabet wasn't so good. The pictures in the books I had didn't mean much to me. It's much better looking at familiar things like this."

More abc's across city

The Leith abc has already received publicity in networks connected to Family Learning as well as being featured in Edinburgh's Evening News. A Family Learning project at Royal Mile Primary School is about to launch their own Royal Mile abc. For more information contact Karen Buist. Tel: 0131 555 6035. E-mail: karen.buist@educ.edin.gov.uk



Guide to Numeracy

A new book aimed at adults who lack confidence in their numeracy skills has been published by Chambers. Written by Jewel & Esk Valley College lecturer Geoff Mainwaring, the book is based around the Skills for Life numeracy curriculum. The book costs £6.99 and can be ordered online at www.chambers.co.uk

Copies can be borrowed from the CLAN Resource Base. Tel: 0131 652 3938. E-mail: resources@clanedinburgh.org

Literacy and Numeracy

Summer School at Telford College

MONDAY 30 JULY

10 am - 12 noon **Numeracy** 2 - 4 pm **Literacy**

MONDAY 6 AUGUST

10 am - 12 noon **Literacy**

The Summer School is designed mainly, but not exclusively, for people who have been accepted onto courses at college but feel they would like to brush up on their literacy and numeracy skills before the new term starts. This CLAN funded course will cover topics such as spelling, grammar and punctuation, fractions, decimals, graphs and charts. To make a booking or for more information contact Audrey Everiss. Tel: 0131 559 4236. E-mail: audrey.everiss@ed-coll.ac.uk

The next Beans will be out in August. If you would like to contribute, send your items to Fiona Holmes, CLAN Edinburgh, 1-3 Canon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5HE. Tel: 0131 270 6073. Fax: 0131 270 6074. E-mail: fiona@clanedinburgh.org Web: www.clanedinburgh.org