Life Education Centres

Helping children make healthy choices

Welcome to this brief introduction to the mission and work of Life Education – the national charity working locally with primary schools, with parents and carers and others in the community to help children make healthy choices.

Who we are

Life Education helps children make healthy choices through a series of high quality, evidence-based programmes delivered directly to children and parents* in partnership with primary schools and in the community.

Our mission

To help children make healthy choices through our work with schools, with parents and engaging the community

Our values

Life Education's work and programmes are based on an holistic view of health education, involving children, their families and the community and covering all aspects of the child's well-being.

Our work

Life Education is a national organisation with local operating groups (mainly charitable Trusts) working in communities throughout most of the UK. The Trusts employ educators who work in schools and with pupils and parents.

* Where we use the word 'parent' in this leaflet we mean it to include parents, carers, foster parents and significant family adults.

Our partners

Life Education's main work is with primary schools and with parents, delivered through local Trusts, to ensure that children develop the vital knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to make informed choices about health that will enhance and enrich their lives.

We work collaboratively with organisations and agencies within Every Child Matters, the National Healthy Schools Framework and with children and parent organisations.

In the UK and Ireland, Life Education has already established 43 local operating groups working with about:

1 million children

1.5 million parents

4,000 primary schools

30,000 teachers

10,000 parents attending programmes

Our services in schools

Life Education's work in schools contributes to existing PSHE provision including achieving agreed learning outcomes which are delivered via high quality services for pupils and teachers at the Foundation stage and Key Stages 1 and 2.

Life Education's **mission in schools** is to help children make healthy choices by:

- contributing to life-skills and health education programmes using evidence-based principles of effective practice;
- educating children about the effects and risks associated with the use of all drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, and promoting the benefits of a balanced diet and exercise;
- working with and supporting parents, carers, teachers and others in the community in communicating healthy lifestyles messages effectively.

A preliminary planning meeting with the head teacher and PSHE co-ordinator helps us to understand the school's particular needs and identify the contribution that Life Education can offer. This meeting also offers an opportunity to assess the children's prior learning and experience and to plan the programme delivery as well as make appropriate provision for pupils with special needs.

A staff INSET session familiarises school staff with the content of the programmes and with the range of follow-up materials available. This session can also become a professional development opportunity for teachers covering positive teaching and learning strategies, drugs awareness and other PSHE-related issues.

Our work with parents

We believe that it is absolutely essential to involve parents in their children's learning about health and drug education. This is achieved through a vibrant Parent Assembly Programme, which complements the classroom-based school work and follows on from the work undertaken by teachers and children.

We also offer a range of parenting skills courses for parents, including:

- a comprehensive evidence-based seven session parenting course designed to cover topics where parents benefit from facilitated workshops. Issues covered include behaviour management, health and well-being, drug prevention, taking care of yourself and managing stress;
- a shorter, three session course focused on helping parents communicate with their children about tough issues, particularly relating to illegal drugs and alcohol.

We also offer training for school-based outreach workers and others working with parents in families at risk. Further parenting work is in development in line with national programmes and best practice, particularly where this can be done with partners.

Our programmes

- are evidence-based – taking account of 'what works' in education;
- use positive teaching techniques;
- are delivered by trained educational practitioners, using proven methods of delivery;
- support other school work by integrating Life Education resources within existing PSHE and Citizenship programmes;
- involve parents, carers and the community.

Life Education - responding to the developing educational environment

Our work is constantly evolving in response to emerging good practice and policy relating to PSHE & Citizenship education. Life Education programmes contribute to the Every Child Matters Framework and links closely to the five outcomes for children. Similarly, our work correlates to the National Curriculum subject orders and programmes of study in Citizenship and the new PSHE frameworks.

Life Education fully supports the key objectives of National Healthy Schools and also supports schools in delivering recommended best practice in health and drug education as outlined in *Drugs: Guidance for schools* (DfES, 2004) and as exemplified in *PSHE in Practice: Resource pack for teachers* (DfES, 2004).

Our programmes in primary schools work in conjunction with the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) objectives.

Evaluation

Life Education's programmes are regularly evaluated and measured by internal and external assessors against specific learning objectives. In this way Life Education is able to conduct an on-going review of effectiveness to develop and improve programmes in line with the findings.

Our aims for the future

We have set an ambitious programme of development for the next five years.

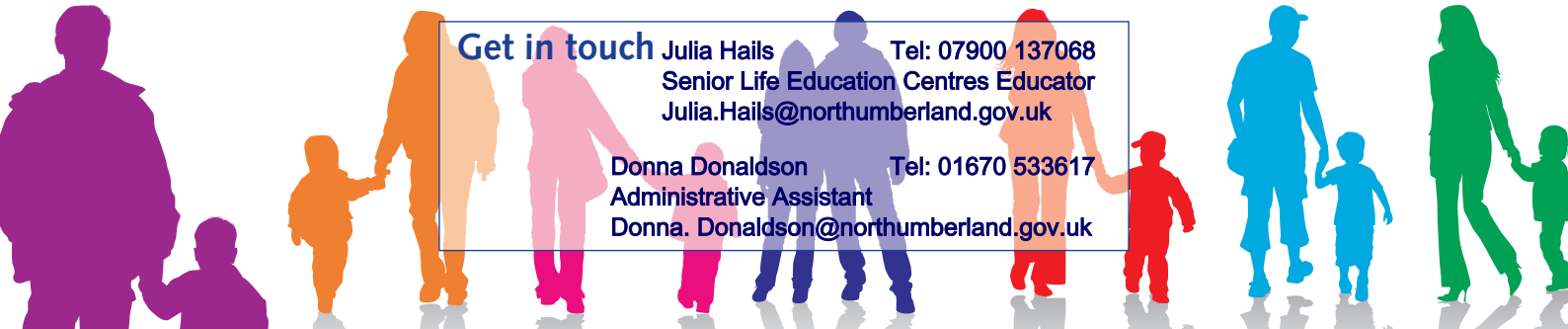
1. Reach one third of all UK primary schools with our services in schools;
2. Use IT to make our programmes much more widely available;
3. Reach one third of all families with primary school-aged children.

This will involve:

- providing schools with even greater flexibility in the way they can use Life Education services to make a contribution to their PSHE objectives;
- identifying more partners to work with in helping develop and deliver programmes for children and parents;
- using Life Education's strength as a community based organisation to help schools achieve Healthy School status and meet Extended Schools objectives;
- raising awareness of the importance of health education and attract more business sponsorship;
- attracting more volunteers to promote our work in schools and support core activities;
- extending services into areas of the United Kingdom where there is little or no Life Education presence, such as Scotland and Wales

Find out more!

We are working constantly with children and parents right across the country. Our wide range of activities, what we are doing and our reach is constantly developing and changing. This leaflet gives a general overview of what we do – we would be happy to discuss our work in more detail with you.



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