



Copy of Betty Laduke, Africa water carriers

K. O.

Enabling Environments Newsletter

Special Edition

Spring 2020

Week 5: Development

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In this special edition of the newsletter we are exploring the Standard of Development.

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Development Blog from Caroline Schofield



This standard is all about the balance between keeping people safe and giving everyone the chance to develop their potential. This feels so relevant at the moment, when we are balancing so much risk with so much need to learn new things and fast, to problem solve creatively, to support others to adapt.

This last two months has been a constant learning opportunity. Every day something new. Learning to love and then hate Zoom, learning about viruses and how they spread –we are desperate for knowledge! learning how to be with people in their loss and distress when hugs aren't possible, and learning about writing a blog!

You will have daily challenges, working out how to run your service safely and humanely, how to keep things going with all the restrictions. And how to support people doing new things that they are not comfortable with.

Two months ago, how many of us had done something new recently? Now we all have!

I've been PUSHED out of my comfort zone much of the time – forced to do things differently, but this has unexpectedly led to getting some good things done that I've been intending for ages. Like fixing and repurposing things because the shops are shut. Like reaching out to people in new ways because the old ways aren't available any more, like clearing clutter because I'm home all day looking at it all the time. And working out the tech to go online, and making a Zoom quiz look impressive, and so the list goes on.

And doing all these things when there's less support around, helplines are busy, friends with the skills are in high demand, and because basically now the world feels out of control, everything is prone to feeling harder than usual. But the situation has necessitated it, and often the outcome has been surprisingly positive.

We are all being pushed out of our comfort zones at the moment. Getting and giving support and encouragement is really important. It really helps.

Getting support to try these new ways of doing things has been a big help and makes everything feel more possible. I haven't had any aerobic exercise in 2 months and was beginning to really feel it. Meeting a friend for a morning sea swim has made a huge difference. This isn't about life and death risk, but it is about overcoming serious discomfort for the sake of mental and physical health. But the discomfort! it would be cold – for sure, it would hurt – it always does, I'll feel foolish screaming as I inch my way – always. But the feeling of exhilaration is like nothing else. The risks are worth it. Every day it's hard, but it feels so good to do it anyway. And so much easier to do it when a friend is screaming too!

Development always involves managing risks well. It's too easy to become risk averse and back away from life's challenges. But it's vital we help ourselves and help other people to reach out beyond what feels easy and safe, because the risks to our mental health, our physical wellbeing and our community are too great if we don't at the moment.

Tiny the cat has been taking more risks every day, exploring, adventuring, sitting on the skinny ledge outside the window surveying the danger. She's howled and yowled to mark her territory, and fled back to safety when it's too much, but she keeps on venturing out a bit further each day risk-assessing every situation as she goes. She seems happier and more relaxed every challenge she overcomes.

My Mum's been 'cocooned' at the care home for months now. She's so high risk it's terrifying, as they all are there, so no contact seemed possible. And then it was her 90th birthday, and with the care home staff we made a plan for her to sit in the doorway 4 metres away. We all drank prosecco, sang happy birthday and ate cake. Who knew everyone could be so creative and accommodating.

Now it's what we do every Sunday, it's become the 'new normal' as they say. There are many people in confined spaces, feeling frustrated and confused, really struggling with the isolation from their friends and family, and finding it hard to express their distress.

Two months ago, so much was unknown. We have adapted and learned, helped others change and seen what we'll keep doing, and what we'll stop doing as soon as we can. I heard a good suggestion early on in the lockdown – every time you hear yourself say “once this lockdown is over I'm going to.....” Make a point of writing it down on a post-it note, and when you can, do it! And really appreciate it!

Vlog by Caroline Schofield



<https://sway.office.com/ED1rdFmIvT5E037O#content=27bkfIEfNLVq0I>

1 - Vlog about Development

Caroline joins us in vlog form to discuss the Standard of Development.

McIntyre House - Make it a group effort



The lounge area at McIntyre House was drab, unloved and screamed *Institution*As we are aiming for EE accreditation –it was hardly inspiring.

Everybody has different skills and we started to clean out broken lamps, a huge collection of videos from “the olden days” as some of the lads said....

Due to the current COVID situation, we could not donate, so the lads came up with a novel idea and set up a table with a sign for people to help themselves, after that we agreed a budget of £100 for a total makeover of the room.

The lads discussed colours, tools needed and decided to accomplish specific tasks, but realised that they must also work together to innovate, think creatively, and solve problems. Making sure everybody had the chance to feel that they are part of a healthy group environment gave them a sense of ease and reduced pressure. They know they didn't necessarily have to shoulder the load all by themselves, and that they have a ready and willing support group.

Staff at the AP will always be open to feedback and new ideas. Regular team meetings (this was when staff made the lads a cup of tea) where sharing is encouraged in a non-judgmental atmosphere is an essential component of creating a cohesive, effective group of volunteers. As the group became more and more comfortable with the open atmosphere where they can share ideas freely without fear of reprisal, a feeling of trust developed between the lads and staff. All employees have varying skill sets, so we delegated to those employees and their particular strengths.

We had a few disasters, tantrums and change of leaders/tasks – there was some shouting but lots of laughter..

They decided to mix paints and we have literally ended up with 50 shades of grey!

The end result is amazing and even those who didn't engage have commented how much better the room feels and the lads are actually using it now, watching TV and chatting. The atmosphere here has greatly improved, which at the moment is a blessing with all the uncertainty and troubles in the world.

We are so proud of the lads and one came back the other night with a bag of cushions his Nan had sent –

It has given them purpose and a sense of belonging.

The only issues now is – they have plans to decorate every room..

Watch this space!





Standards Card: Development



An enabling environment is one which achieves the tricky balance of keeping people safe but giving them the freedom to develop to their potential. Being able to try new things and do something you have never done before helps us grow and step out of our comfort zone.

This crisis has given us all so much opportunity for this. We are being pushed beyond our comfort zones frequently at the moment, and we need support and encouragement for this to feel ok and become good learning and new skills for the future.

Managing the risk of the virus in positive and inclusive ways, learning from each other, sharing good practice and supporting each other, will help us all grow.

Activities to curb the boredom



Finding ways to do new things, stretch ourselves and grow is challenging at the best of times, and especially hard at the moment, but it is essential now, and easier with support.

Here are some suggested activities that may be helpful

They can be done separately, or together from a safe distance, and can be shared. Some of you may be busier than ever, so will need to pass this on. But for some, this will spark ideas for ways to stay safe.

Ask for ideas

What skills and knowledge do others have that they can share? Helping others develop and learn is good for self esteem, and can make us feel useful at a time when we feel powerless

Video box

Is there a way that staff and residents could make a short video and share it with others? Give people guidance about how to do it well, on a phone or a pc, whatever is available to them, and share (perhaps have a moderator!)

General quizzes

These can be downloaded from online sites and members of staff are well versed in sourcing these for Bank holidays etc.

Specialist quizzes

These could be based on EE knowledge with input from RCP, pop quiz and again available online.

Puzzles/word searches

These can be purchased or again sourced on line

Art Work

From colouring in type activity to a limited painting activity or even a competition with small prizes

Poster competition

Using the EE standards as a template and designing each of the 10 standards but without giving it a label name from EE

A form of EE bingo

which could be broadcast on Way-out TV, residents are given a small EE standard booklet and items relating to EE are drawn out of a box for players to try and guess/workout where the item of evidence best fits

Poetry competition

A theme is set and players compose there sonnet, rhyme etc

or a rap instead

Ask Residents

for their ideas. In particular, ask what relevant skills and knowledge they have that they can share

Rekindle old hobbies

Doing something you like and are good at can be especially helpful at the moment. Picking up an old hobby or activity can make you feel more in control in these crazy times. Sharing that with others can help you connect, and help others develop

Knowledge Hub



The Enabling Environments Discussion Forum can be found at Knowledge Hub (www.khub.net).

This is a great platform to be able to share ideas, knowledge and have discussions with other members of the network.

What does Knowledge Hub involve?

- Group activity stream –the group home page shows an activity stream of all the most recent contributions to the group and includes a micro blog.
- Discussion forum –ask questions, have conversations, discuss solutions to problems, share experiences etc.
- Library –upload, share and comment on documents –these can be tagged with particular terms for ease of access.
- Events –promote forthcoming events, discuss and comment on them.
- Members –view all members of the group and their profiles – members may also like to connect with each other.

The EE Team will be using this increasingly to send out information and advice during the COVID-19 restrictions, and hope to have members using this resource to share success stories too!

The full guide to joining the Enabling Environments Forum will be emailed alongside the newsletter, but please see a quick guide below:

Step 1. head to www.khub.net and create an account

Step 2. Verify your email

Step 3. Accept Terms of Use

Step 4. Finding the EE GroupType Enabling Environments into the search bar and look for the green EE Logo

Step 5. Request to join

Step 6. The team accepts your request, and you are now able to contribute.

Upcoming Training



Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, there are currently no face-to-face trainings or workshops taking place.

We do have the following online platforms running:

Telephone Clinics

These are group telephone conference calls offering you the opportunity to talk to an EE expert about anything relating to EE.

The next clinics are on the following dates:

- 2 June at 13.30
- 17 June at 15.30
- 30 June at 13.30
- 21 July at 13.30
- 13 Aug at 11.30

AP Managers Open Forum

This is specifically targeted to Managers of Approved Premises, and are more of a reflective practice or open space.

It is a chance to reflect upon those factors that are affecting you and a space to check out with others their experience. Creating this kind of space using technology is a new way of working for many of us, but the basic conventions are very similar.

These are held by Roland Woodward (EEL) and simply offer a safe space to openly reflect about current experiences or share ideas.

These are held every Thursday between 13.00 - 14.00.

HMP Open Forum

This is specifically targeted to those working in the prison service, and similarly to above is a reflective or open space to share experiences and ideas.

These are held every second Tuesday 12.30 - 13.30, the next session is 2 June.

Contact Us



Contributions!

We need your contributions. We want this newsletter to be a combination of project news and information supplied by you, our members. If you'd like to see your own EE in print or if you have tips and advice to share with others, pieces of artwork, creative writing, or quiz ideas **please get in touch**. Our aim is to help our members share their EE successes.

Contact Us

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