



Children in Scotland
every child - every childhood



Media Release

11/05/2010

Matching services to local needs – how place-based learning can make services more effective

Creative new approaches that can help the children's sector workforce develop and deliver essential services more effectively throughout Scotland – including place-based and family learning – will be debated at a major conference in June.

How rural and urban development benefits from paying closer attention to children by developing their understanding of 'place' and community is the theme of *A Sense of Place: environments, community and services for young children*, run by Children in Europe and Children in Scotland in conjunction with The Highland Council.

Using what is available in the local environment, culture, community and family, can support children's learning and effective cross sector and partnership working. Urban communities can learn important lessons from rural service providers in making the most of these resources: at the conference Norwegian farmer Jostein Hunstad will describe Medås, the kindergarten he founded 10 years ago after wolverine attacks decimated his sheep, while Pam Rodway will introduce Crofting Connections, which helps young people learn traditional skills and safeguard their crofting heritage throughout the Highlands and Islands.

Practitioners and policymakers from across the UK also join speakers from Italy, Norway and Belgium to look at policy issues, including the Pisa educational performance indicators and developing an integrated approach to education and economic development.

Jostein Hunstad said: "The kindergarten provides opportunities for children to learn to take care of their local environment, to make their own food, and to know and respect local tradition and culture. It helps the children develop into responsible and environmentally aware adults who see and make use of the challenges and opportunities in their local environment."

Notes to Editors

1. *A Sense of Place: environments, community and services for young children* is on 8 June 2010 at Drumossie Hotel, Inverness. It is run by Children in Europe and Children in Scotland in conjunction with The Highland Council.
2. **Children in Europe** is a magazine for everyone working with and for children from 0 to 10 and those interested in children's issues. It is published simultaneously in 15 languages and 18 countries across Europe. It provides a forum for ideas, practice and information and to contribute to the development of policy and practice at European and national levels. It is published in the UK by Children in Scotland.

Children in Europe Issue 18, ***A Sense of Place: environments, community and services for young children***, edited by conference chair Bronwen Cohen, was published on 1 March. For more information visit www.childrenineurope.org.

3. **Children in Scotland** is the longstanding national agency for the whole of the children's sector, reaching over 250,000 individuals through our extensive membership of more than 450 statutory agencies, voluntary sector organisations, professional associations and community groups. For further information visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk.
4. Place-based education and services regard the local community, with its unique history, culture, environment and economy, as one of the primary resources for learning, and developing a sense of place in children as the foundation to understanding their own identity and place in the wider world. Place-based learning has been seen as particularly important in rural areas but is also relevant to many urban communities.

Photo/film opportunity

There will be a chance for film crews / photographers to visit Glachbeg Croft Education Centre, part of a six hectare croft on the Black Isle, four miles north of Inverness, prior to the conference. Please liaise with Children in Scotland to arrange.

To order a copy of Children in Europe magazine ***A Sense of Place: environments, community and services for young children*** telephone 0131 222 2400 or visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk/publications

For further information contact Tracey Francis

Email tfrancis@childreninscotland.org.uk / tel 0131 222 2419