

# On course

23, 30 AUGUST

## THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE AND OBSERVING YOUNG CHILDREN

This interactive one-day course consists of two sessions. The morning session will offer a thorough introduction to the EYFS, ensuring use of all of the resources in the EYFS pack. The afternoon will explore why we observe young children and how our observations guide planning. Practitioners will take part in a play session both as a 'player' and as an 'observer'; the observations gathered will be evaluated and 'next steps' planned.

● *Croydon. Cost: £50 plus VAT. Includes lunch and certificate. E-mail: [training@futureworks.org.uk](mailto:training@futureworks.org.uk) or call Shelley on 020 8916 2078.*

9 SEPTEMBER

## NCB TRAINING – WORKING WITH BABIES TO THREE-YEAR-OLDS: EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL AND LEARNING NEEDS IN DAYCARE

Participants will: discover how research confirms the key person approach; gain an understanding of how child-adult relationships are central to emotional, social and cognitive well-being; increase their knowledge about talking and listening, exploration and play; develop awareness of schemas for nurturing self-esteem; and prepare a plan to develop their work.

● *Southampton. Cost: £195 plus VAT. Call 020 7843 6084 or e-mail [training@ncb.org](mailto:training@ncb.org).*

30 SEPTEMBER

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THEORY AND PRACTICE OF A KEY PERSONS APPROACH WITH BIRTH TO THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Delegates will consider the importance of attachment relationships for children in the EYFS, and the benefits of a Key Persons approach for children, parents, practitioners and the nursery, sharing examples of how the approach has been implemented.

● *London. Cost: from £141. Visit [www.early-education.org.uk](http://www.early-education.org.uk)*

2 OCTOBER

## THE WHY AND HOW OF OUTDOOR PLAY FOR CHILDREN THREE TO FIVE YEARS

Delegates will consider why planning to give free access to outdoor learning is important for young children's development, and review ways to plan and develop the outdoor environment as a complementary, safe and yet risky and challenging learning environment for children.

● *London. Cost: from £141. Visit [www.early-education.org.uk](http://www.early-education.org.uk).*



Ross and Alison Midgley say an e-portfolio is more secure and inclusive for nurseries

### MANAGEMENT FOCUS: E-PORTFOLIOS

## Evidence online

A new tool for training is explained by *Ross Midgley*, director of training and assessment firm People and Business Development

One of the major drawbacks of work-based qualifications has always been the sheer amount of dead time involved in the process – time when nothing is happening. Dead time is demotivating for the learner and frustrating for the employer. And for the training provider, who is paid on results, it is a straight kick in the wallet.

A solution to this problem is to use an e-portfolio instead of a paper-based one. This is an approach that is proving highly effective for NVQ candidates.

A web-based portfolio can be accessed securely at any time by both learner and assessor – at home, at work, or wherever there is web access. Dead time is almost completely eliminated.

A Learning and Skills Council study in 2006 found that e-portfolios led to a sharp increase in student retention and achievement rates. Trainees in the LSC trials took just seven months, instead of 18 to 24 months, to complete their courses.

E-portfolios offer many benefits to the nursery manager. Because they are held on the computer, it is easy to generate statistics and charts to show who is logging on and what progress each learner is making. Web portfolios are secure, and can't be lost or left at home. And they are much more inclusive – staff who

may struggle with producing lengthy written accounts can include digital voice recordings and video evidence in their portfolio. All our assessors are equipped with voice recorders and video cameras that plug straight into a laptop, as well as Skype webcams and microphones.

Our company has just won an LSC contract that enables it to offer two- and three-year apprenticeships free of charge to employers anywhere in the country. Nursery visits are still necessary, of course – but this technology enhances personal contact rather than replacing it – although Skype conferencing can cut out the last-minute treks to gather one missing piece of evidence. Our company can also support nursery managers with an outsourced training management service, looking at training needs, finding appropriate courses and maintaining training records.

Learners do, of course, need to have some IT skills and access to the internet. However, maintaining a web portfolio is no more complicated than using Facebook or buying cinema tickets online, and we have not found IT access to be an issue. If a learner did have real problems, we could easily revert to paper. But it hasn't happened yet. ■

*Directors Ross and Alison Midgley can be contacted on 01440 731731 or at [info@pbdevelopment.co.uk](mailto:info@pbdevelopment.co.uk)*