

# Newsletter

Children's Safety Education  
in the Spotlight at Scottish Parliament Event



Dear Friend

We were thrilled to hold a special evening to celebrate the success of child safety education in Scotland at such an eminent landmark.

CSEF prides itself on its commitment to reducing the number of child victims through the delivery of preventative safety education by teaching children about issues like bullying, drug and alcohol abuse, using the internet, home and garden safety.

Partnerships are at the heart of what we do and we were delighted that some of our trustees joined us to share experiences and to demonstrate how working together can help to ensure that more young people are given the opportunity to stay safe and well, and grow up to be strong independent citizens.

Thank you all for your continued support.

**Lord Wade, Chair of Trustees,  
Children's Safety Education  
Foundation**

## Thank you Scotland

CSEF held an event to celebrate Scotland's commitment to child safety education and its successes on Monday 8 September at The Scottish Parliament, Holyrood, Edinburgh.

We were delighted to welcome Elizabeth Smith MSP, the Shadow Minister for Children, Schools and Skills as host of the event and were very grateful for her enthusiasm for the charity and the Parliament's hospitality.

The event featured Sue Palmer, the acclaimed author of 'Toxic Childhood', as a keynote speaker, as well as Margaret Brunton, Home Safety Officer at South Lanarkshire Council and Mark Stevenson, Chair of the Scottish Burned Children's Club.

The event stressed the value of organisations working together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people, while highlighting the importance of encouraging children to be independent and make sensible decisions for themselves.



# Let Our Children Play

During the evening, author, Sue Palmer warned that we are raising a nation of bullies and victims by over protecting and over controlling our children.

Over the past 15 years, Sue's heard from teachers all over the country that children's concentration skills are deteriorating, they have poorer listening and language skills and they're often struggling to get along with each other. She believes these changes are connected with a major change in play habits.



"Play today is often sedentary, solitary and screen-based," Sue said.

"Alternatively, it's very highly structured and organised by adults. To learn basic social skills children need unstructured outdoor play, with other children and away from the direct gaze of the adults. When grown-ups always leap in to sort out their problems, they don't learn how to make friends, to deal with fallings out or to work out how to compromise and collaborate. They don't learn to use their imagination either, or develop the independence and resilience essential for healthy development."

Elizabeth Smith MSP also raised concerns over the lack of outdoor play and education for children and stressed that when it comes to safety, common sense must prevail.

John McNamee, CEO of CSEF said: "Active outdoor play is critical in children's development. Through real life experiences they learn how to make choices, interact with each other but more importantly how to spot dangers.

"What we are seeing when we are working with children is that they are struggling to make sensible decisions when it comes to potentially dangerous situations, as they lack the knowledge, skills and understanding required to make safe, informed choices.

"We understand that it's a difficult thing to balance – keeping our children safe but also making sure that we give them the same opportunities and experiences that we all had, and enjoyed so much. But nonetheless this is an important issue and one that needs addressing. We all need to work together - charities, schools, parents, government and the e m e r g e n c y services, to make sure that we best equip our children for their life ahead."



## Well Done East Kilbride

Some of our staff from East Kilbride attended the inaugural Scottish event and used the opportunity to highlight the effectiveness and generosity of our partners and supporters are in Scotland.

The CSEF office in East Kilbride has already reached over 150,000 children throughout Scotland thanks mainly to the support of leaders from the local business community and personal donations, providing bespoke safety education on issues such as safety in the home, fire safety and first aid.

Brian Young, manager at CSEF's East Kilbride office said: "This was a fantastic opportunity to not only highlight the importance of child safety in Scotland but also to formally thank all the businesses that have supported CSEF.

"As a charity, we rely so much on the kind donations that we get from local businesses that enable us to produce valuable educational resources and without them we wouldn't have been able to reach the Scottish children that we have over the past four years."



## Valuable Words From Our Scottish Partners

Also speaking at the event was Margaret Brunton, Home Safety Officer for South Lanarkshire Council. Margaret talked of the importance of experiential learning when it comes to teaching children safety education. She highlighted the major successes of the area's Crucial Crew events that have reached more than 50,000 children in South Lanarkshire over the past 14 years



The acclaimed Crucial Crew scheme is designed to address key issues of safety education for children that are often overlooked by the curriculum. This includes education on road and fire safety, and also gives children some knowledge of basic First Aid. Each safety scenario is presented in an interactive way and designed to offer the children a unique 'hands-on' experience.

Mark Stevenson, Chair of the Scottish Burned Children's Club focused on the great work that the Club has done since it was established in 2001 in providing support for children up to the age of eighteen who have sustained burn and scald injuries.

The main aims of the charity are two fold, firstly to help in the rehabilitation process of these children and to provide support to their family. Secondly it is the club's aim to play a key role in the reduction of such injuries by raising awareness of the problem and promoting safe practice in relation to the dangers associated with burns and scalds.

