

## **Child Whispering® A Signpost for Life®**

### **Fire Safety Materials Evaluation created for Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service**

#### **Evaluation Setting**

##### **Amesbury Archer Primary School, Salisbury, Wiltshire**

The school is in its fourth year of existence. It is a seven class primary school built on a new estate in a small town, eight miles west of Salisbury, Wiltshire. The children are from a wide variety of backgrounds. The estate is a mix of owner occupied and social housing. 20% of the children are from forces families. The local county Fire Service visit the local schools once a year to give a talk about fire safety. These visits do not involve the use of visual material.

All the key stage 2 children were involved in the evaluation of the materials.

**Stop, Drop & Roll** was shown three times; once at the beginning of each of the three DVD's. The children were told that this was to reinforce a key safety message.

#### **Evaluation Process**

All the children were assembled in the hall and introduced to the **Child Whispering® A Signpost for Life®** concept. Some of the children had already used the **Colourometers®** within the learning context in the classroom. They were shown the core concept of **Child Whispering® A Signpost for Life®** parts of the DVD's. They were told about the history of **Child Whispering®** and its vision. Each child was given a questionnaire sheet. They were told nothing about fire safety or hazards. They were kept in their class groups and then visited each of the four areas in rotation:-

Website games and large floor mat games and booklet distribution in the library area working on 16 desktop computers.

- Arson
- Matches & Lighters
- Hoax Calls.

The teachers remained in the classrooms while the groups rotated. Before the relevant DVD was shown, the children filled in the first question of their questionnaire. They watched the DVD or played the games and then evaluated their experience by ticking the relevant boxes on the remainder of the questionnaire.

The staff involved were asked to comment on the attention of the children and the appropriateness of the materials for each age group. The younger children were warned about the sensitive nature of the key messages.

## Key Findings

- On arrival at school the materials created instant high levels of interest and excitement from staff and children.
- There were no **technical difficulties** with the DVD's which were very easy to load and to operate on school interactive whiteboards.
- **Loading the games from the website** onto the school computers took longer, but once loaded, operated well.
- **The Website Games** held the attention of every child. **The Booklets** were received very enthusiastically by the children. No books were left behind at the end of the day. They were all enthusiastically taken home which is a sign that they were valued.
- The large floor '**Hoses and Ladders**' game was occupied throughout. The older children however did not use the bean bags but preferred to use themselves as the moving object. They did not seem to be addressing the key messages as they played. The younger children used these more effectively by reading the information on the squares more carefully than the older ones. Played by younger children with adult supervision might be a more productive and educationally effective way of learning and reinforcing the key messages from them.
- **The Card Packs** were not used on this day. Again, these would seem to be a more effective teaching aid if used with an adult to tell the story of the key messages on the DVD's. They would also be an effective way to recall learning at a later date.
- The children all agreed that the games on the computer and **Hoses and Ladders** were attractive resources which motivated participation.

## Watching the DVD's

- Every single child was totally absorbed in the showing of core concept **Child Whispering® Signpost for Life®**.
- The teachers in charge reported that, without exception, the **DVD's** held the attention of every child; even those children who find short term concentration difficult.
- The teachers were very positive about the content and underlying messages of the **DVD's** and the children were keen to give their feedback on the questionnaires.
- The children were excited by the whole afternoon and were keen to see the next **DVD** in the series after watching each one.

## Questionnaire Analysis

- All children gave partially or totally positive feedback from the afternoon. Every single one made a statement showing a growing recognition of the dangers of being involved in playing with fire or hoax calling. This was the clear underlying message that they all gained from all of the DVD's.
- The older children picked up additional learning about cost in terms of public money, their life, freedom and use of their mobile phone.
- All the children remembered the key message of **Stop, Drop & Roll**.

**Some of the comments were as follows.**

**I am glad I have seen the DVD's because: -**

- *"I would of played with fire if I didn't know what arson was"*
- *"It helped me understand the consequences of hoax calls"*
- *"It's helped me realise how dangerous arson is"*
- *"I now know that setting fire is really dangerous"*
- *"Now I definitely know I don't want to be involved"*
- *"If I see anybody doing it I can tell somebody straight away"*
- *"I know how serious one small move can be"*
- *"Now I understand how serious hoax is"*
- *"I didn't know it was really bad"*
- *"It's alarmed me about hoax calling"*
- *"It was eye catching and made me think deeply"*
- *"It made me realise the dangers of hoax calling"*
- *"it warned me"*
- *"It has taught me how serious it actually is"*
- *"I never knew that they put tags on and recorded every call"*
- *"It has taught me a lesson"*
- *"Now I know what not to do"*
- *"I don't want my phone disconnected"*
- *"Now I'll never call 999 if it's not an emergency"*

### **Other Key Findings**

- All of the children said that the story line was effective in learning the key message from each DVD
- 90 % of the children had an emotional response to the story lines. I consider this important if they are to learn in the long term. The most effective learning is when it has an emotional attachment.
- All the older children apart from a very small minority of 4 loved the characters and what they represented (evidence from discussion afterwards).
- Discussion afterwards confirmed that the children appreciated the experience of learning from the materials. There was deliberately no teaching input and that the learning was entirely through interaction of the children with the materials.
- They commented that it was very artistic and visual, that they grabbed their attention and that having speech bubbles was really good and would be brilliant for deaf and blind children. They agreed that the children's voice on the DVD's added to the message. They said that the books had fun activities, were interesting and gave more information.

- At the end of the afternoon many of the children asked for the website address and were keen to look it up the same evening and replay the games.
- The teachers were very impressed with the materials. They commented that the format would be an excellent way of communicating key messages in other areas such as bullying, healthy eating, E-safety, road safety, stranger/danger and learning strategies.

## Conclusion

These are clearly new, exciting and innovative materials conveying important life-long learning in an easy-to-use format.

The afternoon was a huge success and created a whole new aspect of learning within our PSHE curriculum.

The evidence of impact will only come as these children grow up and pass through their teenage years but I feel assured from their reaction, that the likelihood of their involvement in any aspects of crime related to fire has been greatly reduced as a result of experiencing the **Child Whispering® A Signpost for Life®** concept.

The children and staff of Amesbury Archer Primary School would like to thank Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service for the opportunity to take part in this evaluation.

Linda Dale (Learning Manager - Creating and Leading a New Learning)

*"I am passionate about learning, the emotional development of children and establishing effective relationships between adults and young people in schools and the community".*

Amesbury Archer Primary School  
Salisbury  
SP47XX  
April 2010

Secondary Education – 15 years  
Primary Education – 17 years

### Positions of Responsibility

Assistant Head of Year  
Deputy Head Teacher  
Acting Head Teacher  
Head Teacher

NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship)  
County Inset training provider  
Trained NLP Practitioner