

European Children Our Concern: ECOC asbl Annual Report (June 2007-June 2008)

Introduction

ECOC is a voluntary organisation and registered charity, founded in 1993 in Brussels. It is run by a core group of volunteers, who come from many different countries. ECOC's working language is English, using translation and interpretation services where available and appropriate.

ECOC's central concern is children who have learning difficulties and it serves this diverse and varied group by:

- Liaising with schools (Belgian/International/European) to identify their specific needs in terms of children with learning difficulties and providing resources and solutions wherever possible.
- Providing information, advice and support both to teachers and to families
- Networking with like-minded organisations to stimulate discussion, spread information and influence teaching practice

To cut down on administrative costs in order to concentrate ECOC's limited funds on its core activities, the decision was taken this year to close the rue Washington office. The library, housed at the Treasure Trove bookshop in Tervuren has been retained. Developing the website (www.ecoc.be) as an effective and up to date resource provider is a key activity for the coming months. Workshops and seminars, with particular emphasis on professional development for teachers, will continue, as will work with other like-minded groups. As a voluntary organisation ECOC has no secure and ongoing source of funding and therefore runs fundraising events on a regular basis.

Activities

- **workshops – for teachers and parents**

- **ADHD and Co-existing Conditions:** Two workshops for teachers and parents, held on February 27 and May 19, 2008 respectively with a total of 100 people in attendance, led by Dianne Zaccheo, MSW FTC, family therapist and founder of the Zaccheo ADHD/ AS/ Dyslexia coach training method. The event was a joint venture between ECOC and ADHD Family Resources Brussels
- **Mindmapping:** A workshop led by ECOC volunteer, Matthieu Kleinschmager, internal trainer at the European Commission. There was a mix of participants – from the European school, Le Mouvement Européen, Belgian individuals – numbering fifteen in all.

- **In-service training - for teachers**

...at European School II, November 2007 – May 2008

- Creating a School Culture and Climate for Success: Joanne Norris (JN)
- Positive and Proactive Classroom Management and Behavioural Support Strategies: JN
- Effective Teaching Strategies and Accommodations for Special Needs Students: JN
- Multisensory Teaching Strategies: getting the most out of all your students: JN
- General Introduction to Mind Mapping: Matthieu Kleinschmager

- Teaching Learning Strategies and Study Skills to Children with Learning Disabilities and/or ADHD: JN
- Examining and Developing Interventions, Structures and Support for 'at risk' Students: JN

... at European School III, May 2008

- Teaching Strategies to Support Differentiation in Primary School: JN

Joanne Norris works under the auspices of ECOC and ADHD Family Resources Brussels

Information, advice and support

- **Website development:** ongoing work to update contents
- **Newsletter:** produced monthly, this publication seeks to inform its readership of the latest developments in the field of learning difficulties. Circulated both electronically and through the mail, it goes to all ECOC members plus a further 165 people with an interest in the organization.

- networking and profile raising

- **Networking evening:** held on April 17 at Espace53.
- **Kids Rock – a family disco.** A fun evening for the whole family, held on April 12, and attracting twenty three families, many of whom had not encountered ECOC before. Members were available to talk about the organization and give out marketing material. This was a joint venture with Espace53.
- **Volunteer drive.** Following publicity through the ECOC newsletter and website, three new volunteers were recruited. One has taken on the role of treasurer, another that of membership secretary and the third has a communications brief.

- Fundraising

- **Christmas carols.** ECOC was one of three beneficiaries of the European Union's lunchtime carol concerts, held in the reception area of many EU buildings. This "instant" choir, made up of EU staff members, comes together each year to bring seasonal cheer and to raise money for worthy causes. ECOC received €5,832.88.
- **Whisky tasting.** A social event, with an expert on hand to share his knowledge of whisky. €415 was raised

Future Events

ECOC 2008 conference

Wednesday October 8. Speakers (to be confirmed):

- **Sari Solden**, author and psychotherapist in private practice in the US who specialises in individual, couple and group work with adults who have ADHD, with a particular focus on girls and women. Sari will present with **Dr. Ellen Littman**, a US-based psychologist.

- **Steve Chinn**, an expert on teaching teachers how to teach maths to children and young people who have dyscalculia, dyspraxia, dyslexia, AD/HD and other learning disabilities.
- **Cordula Neuhaus**, German author, child psychologist and charismatic speaker, specialising in behavioural problems in hyperactive children and young people.

This is a joint venture with ADHD Family Resources Brussels and ADHD Belgium

Fundraising event – whisky tasting

Friday September 5 at the British and Commonwealth Women's Club.

ECOC Facts and Figures

Income and expenditure: see attached statement

Chair: Rainer v Leoprechting (until June 08). Richard 'Chalks' Corriette (from June 08)

Treasurer: Rainer v Leoprechting (until June 08). Matt Schlarb (from June 08)

Core group (from June 2008): Sarah Bailie (membership secretary), Guiseppe Borsalino, Maria Doyle, Isabelle Howe, Carol Humphrey, Maggie Inglis, Joanne Norris, Penny Steel, Patricia Vandenplas.

Membership: ECOC has fifty individual members and eighteen corporate/school members, some of whom are honorary.

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