



CASE STUDY: How Bookbug celebrated Year of the Dad

Bookbug has been delighted to support fathers during the year-long Year of the Dad celebration of the importance of fathers in child development and parenting. We have been working closely with Fathers Network Scotland and other dad-friendly organisations over recent years to provide dads and male carers with the confidence to read and book share with their children and help develop family bonding.

Dads Read factsheet

We supported Fathers Network Scotland in the production of a factsheet, “Dads Read” of top tips to get Dads reading with their children. The factsheet was communicated to our Bookbug co-ordinators in every local authority in Scotland and has been included in the agenda at each of the Bookbug Outreach programme Steering Group meetings to ensure partner organisations were fully informed.



Year of the Dad Events

Bookbug was delighted to attend some of the Year of Dad events that took place during the year including the launch at Edinburgh Zoo in February where we delivered free Bookbug Sessions for the families who attended. We attended the “Why it is important for us to engage with fathers in Scotland” conference in Glasgow in April. We attended and delivered Bookbug Sessions at the Father’s Day event organised by Dads Rock at the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh. All the events provided a great opportunity for us to collaborate with families and other organisations and share experiences of engaging Dads in our work.

Bookbug has undertaken a large amount of work supporting Dads in prisons with a number of initiatives to increase the ability of Dads to share songs, stories and rhymes with their children and grandchildren. One practitioner in Perth & Kinross who supported a family through father and child attachment sessions while fathers are in prison said:

“One father and his 1 year old interact extremely well. There is lots of bouncing and tickling and Dad is keen to sing and rhyme. He reads stories to his child and is keen to play, bond and engage with his son as much as possible. He even sings down the phone to his child out with visits!”

Bookbug has joined forces with Dads from an organisation in Angus, called “Just Play” who offer regular play sessions for families who have had some involvement with the police. By using Bookbug, Just Play has greatly increased the confidence of Dads to engage with their children. We attended their “Dads Matter” event in March where Bookbug Sessions were delivered and partner organisations offered their support on the day. The Just Play work was used as a Case Study, a copy of which was published on the FNS website:

http://www.yearofthedad.org/bookbug_joins_forces_with_dads_from_just_play_in_angus

Other organisations supporting Dads include Midlothian Sure Start who run weekly Bookbug Storydads sessions at Lawfield Primary School run by male Bookbug Sessions Leaders for dads, grandfathers, uncles etc. Tim Porteus from Sure Start who established the sessions was filmed talking about the work, and will be available for viewing on our website in January 2017.

Bookbug Sessions

For Bookbug Week this year, we asked our local contacts to think about ways of making their Bookbug Sessions more inclusive and welcoming for dads and male carers.

A number of our local authorities have developed Dads-only and Dad-friendly Bookbug Sessions in response to feedback that it can be difficult or intimidating for dads to attend predominantly female sessions. In Midlothian, the Sure Start group leader, Tim Porteus delivers Bookbug Sessions for dads and male carers, he says:

“If you are the only dad there and it’s all female voices, you can feel like the odd one out ... that’s a real shame. For children it’s vital that they see storytelling and song and rhyme coming to them with a male voice and that males are modelling this educational and social behaviour.”

We also have increased the number of male voices heard on our CDs included within the Bookbug bags:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-baby-cd>

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-toddler-cd>

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-pirate-cd>

Blogs

We have published regular blogs throughout the Year of the Dad from dads and men working in organisations that help support father and child relationships. They include the following:

From Brock Lueck from One Parent Families Scotland

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/bookbug/2016/11/year-of-the-dad-how-reading-singing-and-rhyming-helps-families-to-bond>

From a new Dad, Andy Smith, on his experiences ahead of Father’s Day:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/bookbug/2016/06/a-new-dad-shares-his-plans-for-fathers-day><http://scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/sharing-books-rhymes>

From author, Gareth Edwards, on the joy of uncovering an imaginary world of adventure through reading stories with children:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/bookbug/2016/05/year-of-the-dad-a-world-of-adventure>

From author and illustrator, Sebastien Braun on the love of reading from an early age through to his ambition to become an illustrator when becoming a father:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/bookbug/2016/04/year-of-the-dad-sebastien-braun-on-sharing-stories>

From Robin Munro, Co-chair of Dunfermline Dads who describes his experiences of establishing a parent/toddler group for Dads in Fife:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/bookbug/2016/03/year-of-the-dad-building-relationships-in-fife>

From Douglas Guest, who at the start of the year shared the impact of his own family's reading journey: <http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/bookbug/2016/01/year-of-the-dad-the-difference-reading-makes>

Douglas also delivered a presentation about Year of the Dad at our Bookbug Conference in March 2016. He explained the importance of engaging dads and father figures in the early years. We filmed Douglas after the presentation and a copy of it is live on our website and can be seen here: <http://scottishbooktrust.com/douglas-guest-engaging-dads-in-the-early-years>

Book Lists

We created a number of book lists about dads for dads and others to read to their children, grandchildren etc. :

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/10-books-about-dads-0-2>

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/13-more-books-about-dads-and-father-figures-3-7>

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/8-fantastic-books-to-read-aloud-with-your-children-3-7>

We plan to continue to support dads through our Bookbug programme and the expansion of our outreach work. We will ensure that our marketing and promotional material continue to represent dads and male carers in text and photographs. We continue to employ male freelance trainers and music specialists to deliver training and Bookbug sessions. Our new Toddler CD was produced earlier this year which features male singers on their own and with children.

We look forward to working with Fathers Network Scotland and ensuring the Year of the Dad legacy continues.

Training

Building on some really strong partnership with dads as Bookbug session leaders, we have created a new video to raise awareness of making Bookbug sessions welcoming for dads and other male carers. Tim Porteus from Midlothian Sure Start features on a clip which will

be incorporated into all future Bookbug session Leader training and will be included on the Scottish Book Trust website.

“Little simple things we do – we change songs e.g. “Five little monkeys jumping on the bed, now fell off and bumped his head. Daddy called the doctor and the doctor said, ‘no more monkeys jumping on the bed!’”

We do that at our Dads Bookbug Sessions, and there was a great moment when one youngster who was there for the first time said “it’s Mummy that phones the doctor”, and another wee youngster goes “but Daddies can phone the doctor too!” – Tim Porteus, Midlothian Sure Start

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