

The Nuffield Foundation Newsletter

Summer 2006

Uncrossing the wires

Children with specific speech and language difficulties are a group at significant risk. Not only do their language difficulties impact on their early educational progress and acquisition of social skills, but they also have a greater risk of literacy, social and behavioural problems at a later stage in life. Special provision needs to be made for them by the education and health services and, sometimes, social services.

The Nuffield Foundation has a long-standing interest in this group. Back in 1994 Gina Conti-Ramsden, University of Manchester, was given the first of several grants to establish a cohort study of children with Specific Language Impairment in special language units. She has followed their transitions into primary and secondary schools and, most recently, into further education, training and the adult world. Dr Conti-Ramsden is also studying the interpersonal and educational uses of new communication technologies such as text messaging among adolescents with SLI.

Nuffield's grants not only support excellent research, but also build



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capacity of academics and practitioners and foster collaboration and co-ordination between them. In 2004, Dr Courtenay Norbury, herself a former speech and language therapist, became a Nuffield New Career Development Fellow. She is working with Kate Nation at the University of Oxford on the relationship between language, communication skills and social well-being. The Nuffield Speech and Language Review Group, launched in 2005, brings researchers and professionals together to review the evidence on what works in the

treatment of children affected by these difficulties. Three large intervention studies have been funded, each with a different focus, encompassing primary and secondary age children and involving teachers, teaching assistants and speech and language therapists.

Taken together, these projects will make a significant and much-needed contribution to building UK capacity at the interface of research and professional practice, providing compelling evidence for policy development in this area. [www](#)

Welcome to the Nuffield Foundation Newsletter which highlights our current areas of grant making and focuses on the outcomes of the projects we fund.

Further details on all the stories marked with this icon [www](#) can be found on our website. The

Newsletter is published three times a year and you can obtain further copies or ask to be put on the mailing list by contacting the Foundation. If you have any comments on the Newsletter we would be delighted to hear from you.

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www.nuffieldfoundation.org

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Consultation on public health

Should people who smoke or drink excessively be entitled to fewer resources from the public healthcare system, or be asked for increased contributions? What are the obligations of parents, schools, school-food providers and the government in tackling childhood obesity? Are there cases where the vaccination of children against the wishes of their parents could be justified?

These are some of the questions asked by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics in their consultation on the ethical dilemmas related to public health.

The Consultation Paper provides background information and asks questions in the context of five case studies: infectious diseases, obesity, smoking, alcohol, and the supplementation of food and water. You can find more information about how to take part on the NCOB website. The consultation closes on 15 September 2006.

www

Every child matters



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The recent policy paper *Child first, migrant second: Ensuring that every child matters* results from research carried out by the Immigration Law Practitioners Association (ILPA) with funding from the Nuffield's Child Protection and Family Justice programme.

In 2000 eight year old Victoria Climbié died after prolonged abuse by her foster carers. The subsequent inquiry prompted the Government Green Paper *Every Child Matters* and a comprehensive reorganisation of children's services. But the ILPA

analysis suggests that despite Government reassurances, there is a tension between policies for protecting children and controlling immigration. Social workers are increasingly being required to behave as if they are immigration officials, and these roles are ultimately incompatible.

The researchers suggest that if the Government is serious about the ECM outcomes, it must first acknowledge that children subject to immigration control are children first and migrants second. They conclude that children living in this country should be afforded equal rights and treatment under UK law, and recommend that the policies and practice of immigration control must be compatible with our national and international obligations towards children as one of the most vulnerable groups in our society.

The full text of the policy paper is available on the ILP website. [www](#)

Welfare or farewell?

A recent Nuffield-funded study from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research reports that employers could do far more to support employees experiencing problems with mental health and stress.

***Welfare or farewell? Mental health and stress in the workplace* reveals that many employers believe that**

such problems have their roots in the personal and domestic lives of their employees - and while many do have policies on stress, these are often driven by the employer's need for legal protection. Report author Dr Heather Rolfe says this distinction is not helpful and that employers could do far more to promote mental



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health, with the end result being beneficial to both parties. [www](#)

Paying for long-term care

How should we finance long-term care in the UK? This recent study, funded under the Nuffield's 'Older People and their Families' programme, contributes to a more informed debate on the affordability and equity of different approaches to reform of the funding system.

The project is a collaboration between the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) at the London School of Economics and the Department of Health and Human Sciences at the University of Essex. It uses two unique computer models, constructed by the researchers, to estimate the demand for long-term care for older people and the effects of different charging regimes on the entitlement to state help with care costs. Costs are projected for 2002 to 2051. [www](#)



FROM THE ARCHIVE

NUFFIELD, ROWNTREE AND OLD PEOPLE IN BRITAIN

Seebom Rowntree was a pioneer in the use of statistical and scientific approaches to the measurement of social conditions, and the author of classic studies of poverty in Britain. It was to him that the Nuffield Trustees turned to lead the first of the Foundation's own major studies, on old age in Britain.



Seebom Rowntree, circa 1937

His report, *Old People: report of a survey committee on the problems of ageing and the care of old people*, was published in 1947. In the words of the Foundation's annual report, the study delivered a "shock to the public conscience", especially in its authoritative documentation of the conditions in "public assistance institutions" - in effect workhouses - to which the poorest old people were consigned.

The report was very influential in the development of standards of care for old people in the emerging welfare state of the post-war years. A more recent example of Nuffield's support for issues in old age can be found on this page. [www](#)

How laws are made

Although Parliament is often described as a law making body, in reality its job is to affect and give assent to legislation that government puts before it. But to what extent is Parliament able to discharge that duty effectively? In particular, how able is the institution to influence and alter proposed government legislation? The Hansard Society hopes to answer these and other questions during a two-year inquiry into the legislative process, funded under the Nuffield Foundation's 'Open Door' programme.

The Society will adopt a case study approach, tracking a number of government bills as they progress through Parliament on their way to the statute book. As well as forming a general view about the effectiveness of Parliament in this process, the inquiry will

tackle specific questions about the extent to which consultation with external groups and individuals influences the shape of legislation; the role of individual MPs and peers in the process; how the two Houses work together; and the conditions in which Parliament is at its most, and least, effective. It is hoped that the findings will provide a basis upon which to highlight current areas of best practice as well as identifying areas in need of reform. [www](#)



"The Society will adopt a case study approach, tracking a number of government bills as they progress through Parliament on their way to the statute book."

Every little helps

For many UK foundations, funding projects in developing countries presents a dilemma. The potential benefits seem great: the need is unquestioned and grants that are modest by UK standards can have large effects - but the practicalities can seem daunting. Foundations that invest large sums in development may be able to justify the necessary investment in infrastructure to support their programmes, but this is not usually an option for those who fund on a smaller scale.

Together with three other UK foundations, Nuffield has commissioned New Philanthropy Capital to carry out a

study of the different funding models that have been developed to deal with this dilemma and the role that Foundation funding plays within the wider aid picture. As well as informing our own grant programmes, we hope that the findings will be of interest to others who fund on a similar scale. In addition, by describing and explaining the models used by these small to medium sized funders, we hope others will be encouraged to consider making grants for work in developing countries, possibly through partnerships or other means of joint operations. [www](#)



Nuffield is funding the development of local training for community eye healthcare workers to reduce avoidable blindness in Africa

Investing wisely

The Nuffield Foundation has been running a series of seminars for finance directors and trustees on how Foundations can best invest their funds. The seminars were run in conjunction with the London Business School, which recently received a Nuffield 'Open Door' grant in support of its new course on Foundation Management. This five day course offers coherent and independent training about investment principles and practices

specifically focussed on charities and endowments. It is intended to run the course annually for five years, with some scholarships available for participants from the UK public and not for profit sector. [www](#)



50 years on

Since 1956 the Elizabeth Nuffield Educational Fund has supported women studying to improve their employment prospects. In celebration, there will be a 50th birthday party in July with guests including former award-holders. The ENEF website will be publishing a new directory of other funds and trusts that help women seeking sources of funding for education or training. There are also plans for a Birthday Debate at Bedford Square in the autumn, reflecting an aspect of the Fund's main area of interest: women, education and employment. [www](#)



THE ROLE OF TEACHERS...

...in the assessment of learning. This pamphlet, resulting from an Assessment Reform Group project supported by the Nuffield Foundation, looks at the impact of assessment systems and investigates options for the future. [www](#)

SHAPING A STABLE SOLUTION

In this Nuffield-funded project the Pensions Policy Institute aimed to build up a consensus on what a long-term pension solution could look like. The final report brings together the views of around 80 experts on critical aspects of pension policy. [www](#)

GENETIC SCREENING UPDATE

Genetic Screening: ethical issues was the Nuffield Council on Bioethics's first Report and one of its most influential publications, downloaded from the Council's website nearly 23,000 times in 2005 alone. The NCOB's recent update reviews scientific and policy developments and identifies areas for future work. [www](#)



William Morris, Lord Nuffield
1877-1963

The Nuffield Foundation is an endowed charitable trust established in 1943 by William Morris (Lord Nuffield) the founder of Morris Motors with the aim of advancing social well being. We fund research and practical experiment and the development of capacity to undertake them, working across education, science, social science and social policy. While most of the Foundation's expenditure is on responsive grant programmes we also undertake our own initiatives. Full information on all our current activities and on how to apply for grants can be found at www.nuffieldfoundation.org

The Nuffield Foundation 28 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3JS
Tel 020 7631 0566 Fax 020 7323 4877