

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

High praise for *Step in to Learning* programme

February 28, 2006

Beverley Hughes, Minister for Children, Young People and Families, today praised the success of *Step in to Learning* and outlined the next steps to maximise its impact across the country.

Step in to Learning is a training and development programme designed to give early years and childcare staff the knowledge and skills to identify parents, carers and colleagues with literacy, language and numeracy skills needs. The training offers innovative ideas to identify support and encourage these people into appropriate local learning opportunities. As well as supporting parents and carers, the programme offers development opportunities for staff and is mapped to Unit 1 of the City & Guilds 9295 Adult Learner Support Certificate and Unit 19 of the CACHE Level 3 Certificate in Professional Development.

Beverley Hughes launched new materials and supporting resources for the *Step in to Learning* programme. These materials have been developed jointly by *Skills for Life* and early years specialists and thoroughly trialled with a wide cross-section of early years and childcare staff including childminders and pre-school workers. These resources are now available to download, and from 1 April 2006 paper copies will be available to the general public to order **free of charge** from DfES publications at Prolog; information can be found on the web site:

www.surestart.gov.uk/stepintolearning.

Evaluation of the *Step in to Learning* programme shows that it has huge impact on the early years and childcare practitioners who attend the training and, as a result, on the parents/carers who they work with. Conference delegates at the national 'Step Higher' event, were impressed by parent testimonies whose lives have been changed by staff in their local early years or childcare setting practising the *Step* approach. Approximately 20,000 parents/carers have been signposted back to learning in the four years that the programme has been running and this number is growing all the time.

Beverley Hughes said, 'The Basic Skills Agency and Cambridge Training and Development Ltd, who have worked on the *Step in to Learning* initiative for the last four years, should be justly proud of what they have achieved. They have provided a wealth of experience through trialling the approach in 43 local authorities and have produced some excellent materials and resources which you as providers and local authorities can now expand upon and utilise to ensure that improving the literacy, language and numeracy skills of staff is firmly embedded in local authorities' planning of early years and childcare services.'

'As you will be aware, the recently published children's centre planning guidance makes it clear that we expect local authorities to embed the *Step in to Learning* training programme into their strategic planning for the childcare strategy.'

Guidance on how to set up the programme, and advice on accessing funding,

trainers and delivery is currently being written and will be available on the web site from 1 April 2006, along with contact details of authorities currently running the programme locally who can offer support and further advice.

Local authorities wishing to set up the programme can contact Elaine Voice at CTAD elainev@ctad.co.uk until 31 March and thereafter can contact the DfES on stepintolearning@dfes.gsi.gov.uk.

About Tribal CTAD

Tribal CTAD, a member of Tribal Group Plc, has over 25 years of experience of developing products and services to support learning, from strategy to delivery, particularly in the *Skills for Life* domain. We have particular strength in working with the relationship between technology and learning, with all its attendant issues such as inclusion, accessibility, and the mix or 'blend' of methods and media that can best contribute to good practice.

We concentrate on education and training and, while we are experts in *Skills for Life*, our capability and experience in providing consultancy services and developing teaching and learning resources extend well beyond the basic skills arena.

Note: The new Step in to Learning web site – www.surestart.gov.uk/stepintolearning – is under construction and new items are being added continually. If you can not find what you are looking for please visit the old site at <http://step.tribalctad.co.uk/> or contact Emma Mullenger on emmam@ctad.co.uk.