



## Summer Newsletter (July 2008)

**Clear Thoughts** is the name for Mental Health in Learning Disability Knowledge Centre. The website can be found at [www.clearthoughts.info](http://www.clearthoughts.info)

The project aims to provide people with a learning disability, their families and frontline staff with information about mental health in learning disability.

The project is being undertaken by ARC, the Association for Real Change ([www.arcuk.org.uk](http://www.arcuk.org.uk)), with funding from the Dept of Health.

We are just over 18 months into the project. It will last at least 3 years. This means your thoughts and views about the project are important. We can change it to meet needs.

Many people have already looked at the website and we have lots of positive feedback -

*'Just an e-mail to say how useful 'Clear Thoughts' is!'*

*'Clearthoughts website is a fantastic idea'*

*'What a fantastic new resource.'*

*'The very best of luck in your new venture'*

*'Please keep us in touch with new developments at 'Clear Thoughts'*

*'This is brilliant'*

We hope the website keeps getting better we have added new things to it recently -

The last newsletter sent at the beginning of the year asked about the types of images people wanted on the website. Thank you to all those people who replied.

The clear winners were the images produced by Change (the black and white line drawings), therefore we have added lots of new images in this style to the website.

The next step is to develop some key words to go with these images. We want to know what words people who have a learning disability use to describe them.

This will help other people make use of the website. There is a questionnaire either with this newsletter or on the website about these images. It has some ideas from people already but we would like lots more so please help.

Please feel free to feedback in whatever way is best for you. If you would like some hard copies of the questionnaire then get in touch (contact details below).

Once the words and images are completed we will send copies to all the Partnership Boards to help them develop resources locally.

The website also now has audio (as well as the words it can talk to you) To allow the website to talk you need to download 'Browsealoud' software. This is easy to do and its free. Lots of other websites use Browsealoud and you will be able to listen to them as well. [www.browsealoud.com](http://www.browsealoud.com)

The forum on the Clear Thoughts website is now working and we would like people to start using it and helping each other. You can log in as a guest if you do not want to give your name.

The final resource from another ARC, Dept of Health funded project, the Candle project can now be downloaded from the Clear Thoughts website.

Candle stands for CAMHS and New Directions in Learning Disability and Ethnicity and as is a resource for those who work directly with young people and their families regarding Learning Disability, Mental Health and Ethnicity.

The resource gives information, direction and resources to staff about the key issues that face children and young people who have a learning disability, mental health issues and are from a minority community.

The project clarifies the role of those working directly with the young person and offers practical advice on how to undertake this role.

The resource can be used in a number of ways - as a simple introduction to the issues, as an 'easy access' tool for specific information, as 'pick up and read troubleshooting guide' and to assist in the development of training.

The resource includes handouts, case studies and exercises all of which are free to photocopy and use. The resource is available as a hard copy for £25.00 a CD for £5.00. These costs include postage and packing. Get in touch if you'd like to order one or more of these.

The Candle Resource can also be downloaded for free from the Clear Thoughts website. (Be aware if you have a colour printer that it will use lots of ink! You might want to print in black and white)

Positive feedback from those who have already used the Candle resource include

*'It will really help our work to understand mental ill-health and learning disability in minority ethnic groups'*

*'I would like to order a CD of the candle resource for information to include in our healthy care training'*

The Clear Thoughts Project Worker has been to lots of meetings and conferences doing presentations about the work of the project. This means more people know about it.

Lots of articles have gone in various newsletters and journals and flyers about the project have been included in conference packs.

If anyone would like some flyers re Clear Thoughts project to have at appointments, meetings, to include in mailings, conference packs or to give to individuals families or staff then please get in touch. (Contact details below)

If you are an organisation that would like a link from this website then again get in touch, this is also the case if you would like to put a link to the Clear Thoughts site on your website.

We will keep people up to date with the project by producing newsletters like this every six months or so.

If you have any questions, suggestions or comments about Clear Thoughts or you would like to order the Candle resource as a CD or hard copy please contact the Project Worker, David Grundy on [david.grundy@arcuk.org.uk](mailto:david.grundy@arcuk.org.uk)

