



Report to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Kitbag Project

Overview

IFF's Kitbag is a set of resources designed to develop the personal and collective skills and capacities needed to thrive in today's 'powerful times'. Whilst Kitbag is based on a large body of sound theory and is the result of intensive development with an international team of experts, when we applied to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation in August 2008 for support the product itself had been tested for real only in HM Prison Cornton Vale (where the women prisoners had modified it considerably for their own purposes) and in short workshop settings with a variety of other potential users.

Our application therefore sought support:

- to develop a production process and establish a clear supply chain for contents for Kitbag so we could produce at scale at a reasonable cost;
- to undertake field testing with communities under pressure in order to see what Kitbag can contribute in such circumstances over time;
- to develop a website for Kitbag for marketing, dissemination and building a community of interest;
- to modify the design of a prototype 'Kitbag for Kids' to make it suitable for younger children and to explore the potential for Kitbag in this area.

Our hope was that this work would move Kitbag to the next level where its supply and use could become a self-sustaining social enterprise.

One year on, we have achieved all of the objectives set out above. As a result we further believe that Kitbag as a self-sustaining social enterprise is achievable within a further twelve months. Kitbag is proving a powerful tool for both children and adults under pressure to develop the capacities required to thrive. We are immensely grateful to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for giving us the opportunity to develop to this stage what was when we applied a relatively untested idea. The full report of how we used that support follows below.

Community trials and field testing

The purpose of our grant application was to produce a number of Kitbags in order to allow us to test the effectiveness of Kitbag in practice in a variety of settings. We mentioned three groups in particular: the Achievers Disability Group in Possil, a Domestic Abuse Community Group in Aviemore, and a Carers Group in Fife. Our intention was to visit these groups, introduce Kitbag, leave it with them for a period, and then return to see what had happened and to get feedback.

We were encouraged to gather data from each of these groups, and so developed a) a simple self-reported survey of mental wellbeing before and after using Kitbag for each participant (using the WEMWBS scale); and b) a simple questionnaire about the experience of using Kitbag seeking direct feedback on the product, its usefulness and how it might be improved.

Our testing work in practice developed along broader lines, because:

- the availability of many more Kitbags than we anticipated allowed us to respond to groups in addition to those named on the original grant application;
- we found that it was more productive to work with groups that sought us out, and where there was an interested champion (project worker or community worker) to lead the work on the ground. That was not the case in Possil or Aviemore (named in the bid) – groups that we had sought out ourselves during the prototype phase to gain feedback on Kitbag under development. Whilst we did our best to support the testing work properly in these communities without a local champion, it was also apparent that we were going to learn more about its effectiveness in practice where the conditions for ongoing support were in place;
- we gained additional funding from the Fife Gateway fund for social enterprise that allowed us to pursue the testing with Fife Carers outside the present grant (see a note of the results of working with this group in Appendix 2). Note that Fife Carers had come to us – which meant there was greater local support for the work. We substituted another group in Fife who had come to us for help – the Kelty Women’s Group;
- In practice the before and after WEMWBS questionnaire was easy to administer, but proved to be at odds in some cases with the nature of the human relationships already established – appearing to some to treat people as objects of study. There was great reluctance too in all groups to have a ‘control group’ that did not receive Kitbag for the sake of comparison. And so, although people were willing to go along with the WEMWBS scale in some cases, we decided in the end that we could best learn about Kitbag by responding to need and by asking directly about the experience.

Our overall aim in the community trials and field testing was to take Kitbag out into the field for the first time to assess its potential. The following paragraphs detail how we deployed the resource the grant provided for this purpose. This work has been more extensive and diverse than originally anticipated. We have been able to respond to many more requests and expressions of interest as a result of having so many more Kitbags produced. We have so far distributed 150 Kitbags in this way, in response to expressions of need/ interest and at no charge other than a commitment to provide us with feedback.

Achievers Group, Possil

Nine women agreed to test Kitbag. They were delighted at the extent to which their suggestions on the first prototype had been incorporated into the new design.

At the follow up meeting, seven of the original nine women attended. One was in hospital following a stroke, the other did not attend. Of the seven who had agreed to participate, two had not yet used their Kitbags. Feedback was generally positive and constructive.

One woman in the group went on to use Kitbag during the recovery from an episode of illness. More of this story is captured in the box below.

Mary (not her real name) had a brain abscess and was seriously ill and in treatment for about three months. She wished she had taken Kitbag into hospital as she found it a great help after being discharged. At home she used it every day.

Mary said that Kitbag helped her to create a different kind of reality in which she was not worrying away at her problem.

She used the presence cards slowly, trying to “be the statement”. She used the oils every day. “It sounds silly, but that action of putting a little essential oil on every day became a symbol of something which I could do for myself, not something which others did for me.”

She used the kit every day, even on days when she felt tired and afterwards she always felt uplifted. “The kit was a godsend”. She feels it helped her to a fuller and speedier recovery saying it was “Better than the drugs”.

Average WEMWBS score at start: 37

Average WEMWBS score at follow up: 55

Domestic Abuse Group, Aviemore

An initial session was organised in late 2008 at which a group of seven women from the Community Violence and Abuse Support Service (COVASS) were introduced to Kitbag and its potential benefits. They gave helpful feedback on the design and usefulness of Kitbag in situations such as those which they and their client group experience. Before the session they had been expecting some printed sheets in a plastic ring binder – the usual form that such ‘resources’ take. They were surprised by the look and feel of

Kitbag. The soft exterior and overall appearance were thought to be calming and quietly powerful, gentle.

Each element was appreciated, especially the spaces for customising the kit. They suggested that making the kit more robust would be a good development.

The group agreed that the kit would be good for staff and clients alike and agreed to take twenty Kitbags on trial. Critical absences in the organisation led to some delay in the follow up. The Kitbags were eventually delivered to the group during a familiarisation session in July 2009. Ten of the kits were then distributed to women in August. Their immediate reaction was a very positive one at the receipt of the gift, a rare event for these women. The women fed back that they felt it would allow them time for themselves – another rare commodity.

One woman gave hers back and reported that she "felt it was an insult to her intelligence". Following further explanation about the use and purpose of Kitbag she subsequently apologised and responded positively.

Our contact at COVASS recently gathered questionnaires from the women in this group. The overall feedback has been positive and COVASS is keen to continue to work with IFF to explore the potential for Kitbag in its wider work.

We have made slow progress with this group. The interaction has emphasised the fragile nature of many of the support structures available to those most in need. We have had to work very carefully and patiently to ensure that our desire to help has not itself added to the pressures on a small organisation already overloaded.

Kelty Women's Group, Fife

Through our contacts with other social enterprises in Fife, IFF was approached by a women's development group in Kelty – a former mining village with high levels of deprivation - to ask if Kitbag could be used as part of a 10 week course for 11 women in the village who wanted help to boost their confidence. IFF ran three evening classes with Kitbag and the women continued to use them in their own time.

At the end of their ten week course, the women compiled a report of their experiences. Comments about Kitbag include:

"Most of all I love the Kitbag and although at this stage I have not used it to its full potential, it's something I will cherish the rest of my life."

Young mother, Kelty Women's Group

The women were very interested to hear that IFF had a children's version of Kitbag in development. They wanted IFF to provide this for children in the village nursery, and were equally inspired by the thought of providing one for 'every looked after child in Scotland'. We explained that we had no funds to develop the children's Kitbag at present. As a measure of their conviction

about the value of Kitbag, they promptly volunteered to do a sponsored walk across the Forth Road Bridge to raise the money. In June 2009, the group of 11 women plus two of their children walked the bridge and raised over £400. This was enough to fund a print run of 100 sets of animal cards, the key ingredient in the children's version. We are now working closely with the village nursery to turn it into a regenerative, healthy centre for the community (using Kitbag principles).

Because of the formal setting for the introduction of Kitbag, in a ten week course, this group was also willing to fill in the WEMWBS survey. The results are below. They form an interesting contrast with the qualitative data expressed in their story above.

Average WEMWBS score at start: 40

Average WEMWBS score at follow up: 46

Community workers in Renfrewshire (West Scotland)

In April 2009, as word of our activity with Kitbag began to spread, IFF was invited to showcase Kitbag at the Long-term Conditions Alliance Conference in Glasgow. The Alliance is an umbrella group for a wide range of agencies who campaign and provide services for people with long-term conditions. It was through this workshop that links were made with a range of agencies in Renfrewshire.

The Health Improvement Officer for Renfrewshire organised for an IFF member to present Kitbag to a group of sixteen practitioners who work on a variety of projects with children and families, schools, young people, carers, adults and older people with mental health problems and adults who are unemployed for health reasons. Nine workers wanted to introduce Kitbag into their work and at the time of writing, two of them have taken this a stage further.

A report from the Health Improvement Officer is presented in the box below.

Only yesterday I met the Counsellor from a College who had been trying it out with her family during the break. They had been very impressed, especially her son, and she has plans to start using it within the college. An OT from the psychiatric hospital has been spreading the word. They are working on the best way to present it to their patients, and she has been promoting it in another area with other OTs.

I have used it with a group of Carers. This was very successful, it allowed them to focus on their own thoughts and feelings rather than their loved-ones. It is very difficult for them to think solely about themselves. Kitbag is a perfect vehicle to facilitate that.

As for myself, I have made a friend in my Kitbag!!!

Condition Management Programme in Renfrewshire, Argyll and Clyde

The Condition Management Programme is funded by the Department of Work and Pensions to enable people who are long-term unemployed for health reasons to return to work. The programme in the West of Scotland employs twenty-five healthcare professionals from a range of disciplines. Following the Long-term Conditions Alliance conference mentioned above, IFF was invited to introduce Kitbag at a team-building day. Many of the staff wanted a Kitbag for themselves, recognising how it would help them cope better with the emotional demands of their work. They could also see value in using elements with clients.

We and they are keen to follow up this initial experience, not least with DWP who fund the programme.

Maggie's Centre, Kirkcaldy

The Maggie's Centre provides support and advice to anyone affected by cancer. Workers at the centre in Fife expressed an interest in testing Kitbag with their clients, some of whom have cancer, others of whom are bereaved. IFF supplied six Kitbags and obtained a feedback questionnaire from five people.

The results were very helpful and provided useful suggestions for improving the design of Kitbag in future versions. Many commented on how it helped them calm and relax and had a positive effect on their mood. Some wanted it to be made of brighter colours and to be easy to keep clean.

Some of the comments from people are quoted in the box below.

"Kitbag is useful in that it's an opportunity to create space to address personal issues safely"

"It made me stop doing other things in order to concentrate on me"

"It provides a bit of "time out" in a busy world"

"A first aid box for your own personal issues. A portable therapy unit"

"Useful because it is personal, keeps everything you need in one place which you can use anytime and anywhere".

NHS staff

Early on in the development of Kitbag, IFF made a link with Liz Carter, Director of Service Improvement in South West Strategic Health Authority. In 2008 Liz was seconded to the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement to run a Department of Health-funded project to promote the values of the NHS with staff. Working with three independent consultants, she took Kitbag to three NHS organisations in the South West of England to assess its value for promoting better staff relations. Their impressions were very encouraging and Kitbag is now included as a development resource for NHS staff in a

compendium of such resources to be launched across the NHS in November 2009.

IFF has also been invited to introduce Kitbag to a number of NHS staff working in Fife. Comments from some of those who used Kitbag are quoted in the box below.

"I think all senior charge nurses or senior managers or anyone that has a stressful job should be given one as an essential stress management tool"

"Kitbag allowed me time out and on other occasions to speak using the timers"

"Kitbag helps me remain calm when dealing with stressful situations, allow time to regroup or regather my thoughts and allow time for me to listen and to speak without interruptions"

One member of staff used Kitbag when he was absent due to an operation. "Kitbag helped me concentrate and focus on getting better. Daily aims/goals helped me to recognise/remember that there had been improvement in my health. I also feel that it helped me to cope with the pain I experienced both pre and post-operatively."

He added that Kitbag was: "a good tool/resource to help you see where you are and where you are going, while giving comfort and strength for the journey".

IFF was also invited to present Kitbag to Primary Care Trust Directors in NHS North West who are interested in promoting dignity in the patient experience. They saw that Kitbag can support staff by helping them open up difficult conversations with each other and with patients. Partly as a result of this encounter (which we are following up separately), IFF will run two Kitbag workshops for staff in over 60 NHS organisations in the North West at a flagship conference in October 2009.

4) Dissemination

Our grant proposal included an element for dissemination. We had envisaged a single short report on three community trials and support for expenses to spread the word about Kitbag at upcoming conferences and gatherings including a NESTA innovation showcase and a BMA conference on doctors' wellbeing.

In practice there have been many more trials, and a great diversity of feedback. We attended both the NESTA and BMA events, and have informed a range of people in influential roles and positions about our Kitbag work by attending other events both in the UK and the US (a number of the original IFF project team members are based in the US).

Meetings have taken place in the USA with Adam de Vito, CEO of a children's games company; Dr Mehmet Oz, heart surgeon and author of a number of best-selling books on wellness; Nina Hill, Vice President, World Wide Alliance Development at Pfizer Headquarters, New York; Lesley Slocum at the British Consulate in New York; and many more informal meetings during the *Engaging the Other* conference in San Francisco, a BMA/AMA/CAMA

Doctor's Wellbeing conference and a NESTA Innovation Live conference in London. Details of feedback and useful information gathered in these meetings can be found in Appendix 3.

Most recently, Kitbag was one of eleven innovative projects short-listed for presentation at a Festival of Ideas for innovations in personalisation in mental health services organised by the Cabinet Office in September 2009.

In addition we have undertaken a good deal of activity with the express purpose of developing a network of supporters linked by the values that underpin the project.

IFF supported two events over the summer. The first was to host a visit of Bruce Alexander, Professor Emeritus at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver and author of *The Globalisation of Addiction: a study in the poverty of the spirit*. This event was held in conjunction with the Royal Society of Arts and KDOS, a new organisation set up in Scotland to promote more integrated responses to drug and alcohol problems.

The second event was in partnership with the New Social Arts School as part of an exhibition presented by artist Eva Merz on Women in Prison called, "What are they doing in there?" IFF chaired a debate between Baroness Vivien Stern, former First Minister of Scotland Henry McLeish, and Ian Gunn, former governor of HM Prison Cornton Vale.

The principal means of dissemination for this work has been the Kitbag website, particularly the blog.

Other Activity: Kitbag for Children and Kitbag in Prison

Our original grant application asked for support to develop a simplified version of Kitbag for children in care; and to develop the work we had already started with women prisoners in HM Prison Cornton Vale. The grant awarded was insufficient to cover this work – but we have progressed as far as possible nevertheless. A note on these aspects of the project is included at Appendix 4.

Conclusions: what have we learned and what will we do next?

This has been a year of intensive work and intensive learning. The conclusions from the project can be simply stated in response to four questions.

Does Kitbag work?

It is clear that Kitbag provides something of value to people – both those struggling to 'recover' from existing conditions and those seeking to raise their capacities to cope with new challenges. We have found that it is particularly effective if used in groups – which overcomes any individual reluctance to 'get started'. It does uncover and develop hidden resources in such settings – which is why it has been picked up by NHS as a way of increasing trust and mutual support within and between teams. Some individuals and groups take to it immediately – eg the group from the Maggie's Centre. But for others it is

counter-cultural. That is part of its power. But in those circumstances a group needs active support and encouragement over time to get the most from Kitbag – a key learning from the community trials.

Can we make Kitbags at scale?

Yes we can – without losing the hand made quality of the originals. But feedback tells us that for individuals (particularly the struggling individuals we have mostly been working with) our break-even price of £50 is still too high. The story may be different for agencies working with such people, however. We certainly believe we can sell our remaining stock at this price. At the same time we are working on a further iteration of the design – simpler, without the fabric, more of a Kit than a Bag, and pushing the cost down even further. Our work with the Children’s Kitbag, Kitbag for Kids, is developing in the same way. Having seen how successful just a couple of elements from the full Kitbag are with children, we are working on two very simple packages to provide the essence of Kitbag at modest price for children and parents.

Is there a ‘market’?

This grant has given us the great opportunity to manufacture some product and then test the market. We have followed the energy that has been generated in this way, rather than conduct an extensive abstract review of where Kitbag *ought* to be useful in theory. From Liz Carter’s enthusiastic endorsement from the NHS and the ways in which Kitbag is being taken up in the NHS North West Region as a tool for helping shift the culture in an era when we are going to have to draw on many resources other than money, we conclude that there is a strong market for Kitbag in the NHS. From the enthusiastic endorsement by the Playfield Institute, the interest of teachers, the suggestion that all children going into care should be given a Kitbag for Kids, and the whole-hearted response from the Kelty Women’s Group and their nursery, we conclude that there is a market for Kitbag for Kids. And from work in Renfrewshire and elsewhere, we conclude that there is a market for providing ongoing support to local champions seeking to introduce Kitbag across a range of agencies for diverse client populations.

What next?

Our priorities for the next 12 months are:

- continue to spread the word about Kitbag, especially capitalising on the launch of the NHS approved list of resources for promoting NHS values in November 2009;
- seek additional funding to match the Portobello Fund’s contribution to develop Kitbag for Kids to realise the aspirations of the Kelty Women (who walked across the Forth Road Bridge in order to bring Kitbag to every child in care);
- pursue dedicated NHS innovation funding to trial Kitbag as a resource for capacity building, culture change and organisational development in a single NHS Trust or other unit;
- streamline IFF’s support offering to groups and local champions as part of a package to distribute our existing Kitbag stock and recoup production expenses;

- Continue to support the organic development of Kitbag work in HM Prison Cornton Vale, volunteer sewing circles, and other emergent opportunities to make Kitbag available at low cost to groups in need;
- use existing funding to finalise the design of a simplified Kitbag and Kitbag for Kids elements – with a view to offering in time a range of ‘Kitbag products’;
- Work towards a larger grant application (eg UnLtd Venture Fund) by the end of the twelve month period to establish Kitbag as a thriving social enterprise, at scale.

Dr Margaret Hannah – Project Director
Graham Leicester – IFF Director
12 October 2009

Appendix

Report on work with Carers in Fife, funded by Fife Gateway

Carers Group – Fife

We began approaching carers of people with mental health problems by running two Kitbag workshops at a Carers conference in Fife in November 2008. The first was only attended by members of staff in mental health services. The second was attended by carers for people with mental health problems. The reception was mixed, with only a few participants thinking they would use Kitbag for themselves.

However, we continued discussions with Fife Families Support, the agency which provides help to carers of people with mental health problems, and found a group of 6 carers willing to give Kitbag a go. They were introduced to Kitbag in a two hour workshop and after 6 weeks came back with their feedback.

Overall the feedback from the group was very positive. People found the kit helped their concentration, was calming and helpful for their lives. They liked the ideas in the hope cards and found using Kitbag allowed them to put things into a different perspective. Some comments from the feedback are reported in the box below.

Feedback from Fife Carers Group

“A good tool to snap you out of negative rumination and fusion with negative emotions.”

“I think it would benefit all parents who feel bogged down with their responsibilities as parents and have lost their sense of self”

“I enjoyed making time to do this and didn’t feel guilty about all the other things I should have been doing instead.”

“It was good to do before going to bed, as it cleared your head and calmed your mind”

Average WEMWBS score at start: 39

Average WEMWBS score at follow up: 45

Appendix
Dissemination - comment and advice from visit to USA

Name of Contact	Comment and Advice given
Adam de Vito, Chief Executive, Big BOING, Emeryville, California	Really liked the idea, but was worried we had put too much time and effort into the product and not enough attention to getting it to market.
Maureen O’Hara, Professor of Psychology, National University, San Diego	Key member of Kitbag Advisory Group, took sample children and adult versions to discuss their introduction into health and educational settings with colleagues
Aftab Omer, Director, Institute of Imaginal Studies, Big Sur, California	Very keen on the product, but noticed how difficult it was to understand its potential without prior explanation. Advised that it be used as a “graduation” gift for people once they had been on a training programme.
Osprey Orielle Lake, artist, Marin County, California	Suggested Kitbag would make a great executive gift and said she would pass on details to contacts she had in that world.
Dr Mehmet Oz, Heart Surgeon, New York	Dr Oz has been involved in the project since its inception. He is very encouraging and made further suggestions around content – nutritional supplements e.g. Vitamin D, Omega 3 fats etc. He considered Kitbag for the Health Corps volunteers that he supports and for his publisher. He also suggested Amazon would be a good distributor for the product in the US.
Leslie Slocum, British Consulate, New York	Delighted with progress made since presentation of prototype at UK/US conference on the mental health consequences of catastrophes. Was willing to put us in touch with trades councils who help export UK goods to the US when we were ready.
Nina Hill, World Wide Alliance Development and colleagues, Pfizer Corporation, New York	Enjoyed the presentation and concept of Kitbag. “Felt as if I had my right brain exercised”. But follow up did not produce any firm commitments.
Nana Kessie, Program Coordinator, Women for Women International, Washington DC	Works with women to aid recovery in war zones and post-conflict. Some concern about cultural sensitivities – eg touch in some cultures. Could be a useful addition to other resources – but would need to be modified for developing world.

**Comment and advice from contacts made at NESTA and BMA events
November 2008 and Festival of Ideas, September 2009**

Name	Advice and Comment
Dr Su Wang, Head of Care, Post Office	Very interested in the idea for staff in Post Office, but could not afford the price. Suggested the need for something really simple and portable.
Cerdic Hall, Head of Professional Development, East London Foundation Mental Health Trust	Was interested in using Kitbag for staff development. His organisation has a link with a women's group in Uganda that makes bags. He is assessing whether they might be part of a production process for Kitbag in future.
John Henry, Psychotherapist, Maudsley Hospital, London	Working with refugees. Bought a Kitbag to try out with them.
Mark Fenwick, NStar Finance	Supported IFF (through NESTA) in developing Kitbag as a business idea. Bought a Kitbag to give to a friend who had recently had a family tragedy.
Liz Carter, NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement	Will include Kitbag in her Living our Local Values project for the Department of Health
Dr Sian Rees, Policy Officer, Department of Health	Provided useful names and contact details for people who may be interested in using Kitbag in the workplace
David Coyle, Senior Lecturer, University of Chester	Made contact with Helen Sanderson Associates on behalf of IFF
Chris Torn, Commissioning Project Lead	Interested in using Kitbag to transform mental health services in Cumbria
David Weaver, Recreational Co-ordinator, Derbyshire Mental Health Service	Transforming the experience of being an inpatient in an acute ward and wants Kitbag to contribute to this.

Appendix 4: Update on progress with Kitbag for Kids and Kitbag for Prisons

Kitbag for Kids

There has been considerable interest from agencies and professionals working with children to develop the children's version of Kitbag. We have found a potential partner in the Playfield Institute in Fife who provide training and information for staff working with children and young people to improve their wellbeing.

The following section is a view from Dr Wendy Simpson, the current Director of the Institute, based on her experience of introducing Kitbag for Kids in various settings and with a variety of children and professionals:

I would propose that children want to feel that they belong and can do what they enjoy doing; that parents want their children to be happy and to live to their fullest potential; and that teachers and other workers want children to do well and to be well. Moreover, the Government wants to ensure that children are flourishing because they know the physical and mental health benefits this brings to the whole population. Kitbag for Kids is a tool which has the potential to help meet all these needs because it aims to help children feel valued, worthwhile and loved for who they are.

In today's hectic, fast-paced life, full of technological gadgets and peer pressure to get more and more things, Kitbag for Kids helps children to sit back for a while, to reflect on who they really are, to discover themselves and what's really important in their lives. It allows them time just to be that person, not to have to meet someone else's expectations; to be authentic and self-motivated, both documented components of wellbeing. The contents of the Kitbag let children know that it is okay for them to express their feelings, both positive and negative, which has been shown to improve their self acceptance and also helps them to be more caring of others. It reminds children that they are precious to others and that others are precious to them, giving them a sense of meaning in their life, again an evidence-based component of flourishing. Moreover, Kitbag for Kids encourages children to focus and build on their strengths, such as gratitude, courage and patience, which are known to promote authentic happiness.

Using the kit together can help build better relationships between adults and children or between children in groups. Having good connections with others and good early attachments with significant adults are key evidence-based factors in promoting flourishing.

Kitbag for Kids shows children that just being in the present moment is sometimes more important than activities. It can also remind adults of the natural capability of children for being in the moment and their ability to draw strength and joy from just living, without regret of the past or fear of the future. This can improve the respect that adults have for children, by showing them the innate wisdom that children have. It can also show adults that rushing children through endless activities is not always beneficial for anyone's wellbeing. It helps children to make a *habit* of stopping, relaxing and reflecting on their lives. This has the potential to have long term benefits for their emotional wellbeing. A wealth of research into mindfulness meditation has shown the benefits of this practice of focusing on the present moment for reduced stress and wellbeing.

Finally, Kitbag for Kids is a special gift for the child: they are in charge and they choose what to do with the contents of the kit. It is also tactile and beautifully constructed. This has the potential to make children using the Kit feel safe, warm, valued, trusted and competent and thus able to stretch their wings and flourish.

Workers and parents who have used the Kitbag have found that it helps to provide a safe space and a structure to talk about the child's feelings and create some special time for the child. Those working with groups have talked about its benefits as a focus for group discussions and helps children to open up, especially those children with additional support needs.

The Kitbag for Kids has the potential to help towards fulfilling the recommendations of a number of recent national policy guidelines and frameworks, i.e. Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland; Curriculum for Excellence; Getting It Right For Every Child; and The Mental Health of Children and Young People-A Framework for Promotion, Prevention and Care.

IFF staff have also worked with Kitbag for Kids. It has been introduced, for example, to the Springfield Project, based at the Playfield Institute, which works with foster carers. They provided valuable suggestions for simplifying the children's version for a younger age range.

In July 2009, we tried this simpler version out with two groups of eight four-year-olds at the Kelty nursery summer school. This school is available only to children the staff have particular concerns about due to their adverse home conditions. We found that Kitbag adapts very effectively as a short introductory session with a number of items presented to the children (like a "party bag") to use with their parents (and staff) afterwards. IFF plans to do more work with the nursery to follow up the impact this has with families.

In a further development, IFF has linked with the Relaxation Company, a charity promoting wellbeing in Scotland, to introduce Kitbag within a training course for teachers called Champions for Wellbeing. This course is designed to give teachers the skills in emotional wellbeing to support the Wellbeing & Respect strand within Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence. The main objectives of the course are to reduce stress and absenteeism amongst staff, enable them to become more positive and confident, raise levels of self-respect and self-esteem and improve their quality of life by enhancing health and wellbeing. Kitbag is now included as an essential part of this training as it gives the 'Champions' an ongoing tool for development for themselves, colleagues, pupils and the parents they work with.

The Relaxation Company and IFF are in the process of setting up a research project with Edinburgh University to evaluate the impact of the Champions for Wellbeing Programme on teachers and schools where they work.

Further work with children includes the introduction of Kitbag to a support teacher for the "Nurture Group" from St John's Primary School in Perth. The Nurture Group is for children arriving at primary school who have little or no

experience of ordinary family life. They often lack simple skills such as eating at a table with a knife and fork. They may have poor language development and low levels of self worth. When the support teacher began to engage with Kitbag with a view to working with the children, she became quite emotional as she began to realise the extraordinary benefits she believed it could have. She is working with Kitbag herself during the summer so that she can become familiar with it from her own experience in readiness for the new term. She feels sure Kitbag will provide her and her classroom assistant with ideas and techniques to work with the school's most challenging pupils.

This developmental work has been assisted by a grant of £6000 from the Portobello Fund. This is intended as the initial payment of a larger grant, subject to our securing other financial support. The intention is to support the design and development work required in particular to complete a version of Kitbag for children in the care system alongside other Kitbag for Kids 'products'.

Kitbag in prison

IFF's work at HM Prison Cornton Vale has been progressing slowly in the last year. This is partly because of a lack of funds, but also because there have been changes in personnel at the prison. Nevertheless two women who remain in prison continue to use their kits and want to make more for other women to use. Our plan had been for them to make six and we would provide the content and support to allow the women to become peer educators for others. IFF has now made contact with the new governor who is interested to explore avenues to take the work further. There is also interest within the Scottish Prison Service about the use of Kitbag as a cultural intervention for staff, recognising its potential for enabling staff to live their values in much the same way as has been discovered in the NHS.