

## An evaluation of the Rory Learning Resource For Alcohol Focus Scotland

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**Summary of findings and next steps for Rory**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
i. About the Rory Learning Resource	
ii. The evaluation	
iii. More about the Rory Resource Training	
<b>2. Delivering outcomes</b>	<b>4</b>
i. Participant expectations of the Rory resource training and its impact on confidence to use Rory	
ii. Awareness and understanding of the problems caused by alcohol	
iii. Knowledge of the impacts of parental drinking on children	
iv. Identifying children affected by parental drinking	
v. Awareness of support for children affected by parental alcohol use	
vi. Confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parental drinking	
vii. Rory as a resource which supports work with children	
<b>3. Discussion</b>	<b>13</b>
i. Rory's story and associated resources	
ii. Discussing alcohol use with younger children	
iii. Training issues	
iv. Locating Rory in the life of the school	
v. Support for children	
vi. Connecting Rory with other resources and with Curriculum for Excellence	
<b>4. Next steps for the Rory Learning Resource</b>	<b>20</b>
i. Refocus and edit the content of the Rory resource	
ii. Rethinking learning activities, lesson plans and worksheets	
iii. Clarifying the emphasis on resilience and creating protective environments	
iv. Valuing the role and importance of training	
v. Extend the focus in training and subsequent support on some key issues	
vi. Explore the development of Rory online	
vii. Build a network of Rory ambassadors	

## Summary of findings and next steps for Rory

### About Rory and the evaluation

The Rory Learning Resource has been developed by Alcohol Focus Scotland. The resource is described as follows:

*Rory is a storybook to help children understand parental alcohol misuse. This learning resource helps those who work with children to understand the impact that alcohol misuse can have on a child within the family setting. Rory is aimed at primary school children and tells the story of a dog who cannot understand why his owner is acting in a certain way, until it is explained to him that this is because his owner has a problem with alcohol. The book can be used by anyone who is in a position to raise awareness and respond to the issues of parental alcohol problems such as teachers or statutory and voluntary support agencies.*

Alcohol Focus Scotland commissioned TASC (Scotland) an independent company to evaluate the Rory Learning Resource *as it is used in the Primary School setting*. Evaluators attended training delivered as part of the Rory programme and observed delivery in the classroom by teachers in two Local Authority areas: West Lothian (34 teachers from 3 schools participated in training) and City of Glasgow (27 teachers from 14 schools participated in training).

The evaluation was supported financially and through the commitment of staff in West Lothian Council and City of Glasgow Council/NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the Rory resource delivers stated outcomes which are:

1. Teachers have enhanced awareness and understanding of the problems caused by alcohol in Scotland.
2. Teachers have greater awareness of the impacts of parental drinking on children.
3. Teachers are able to better identify children who are, or may be, affected by parental drinking.
4. Teachers have a greater awareness of the support available for children affected by parental alcohol use.
5. Teachers have increased confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parents drinking.
6. Teachers view and use Rory as a resource which supports their work with children by:
  - i. Helping pupils who are living with a problem drinking parent feel less confused or guilty about what is happening
  - ii. Encouraging pupils to talk to an adult whom they trust
  - iii. Helping pupils feel compassion or empathy towards other children who may have a difficult home life.

## Delivering outcomes

On completion of the training package the 61 teachers who had taken part were asked to comment on a number of areas; responses from the participants tell us that:

- There has been a significant rise in teachers' awareness in relation to the *problems caused by alcohol in Scotland* with 54 participants saying awareness has grown. In particular attendees identified that the scale of the problem is now clarified as is its impact on children. Before the training teachers' mean score of their *awareness of the impacts of harmful parental drinking on children* on a scale of 1 – 10 was 6.7; following the training this was 9.0.
- Before the training the majority of participants (38) stated they were *not confident* when it came to *identifying children affected by parental drinking* and a further 21 said they were fairly confident and only 2 very confident. Following training only 6 teachers report that they are not confident, 39 participants are now fairly confident and 16 very confident.
- Training has resulted in increases in the confidence teachers have in terms of *raising the issue of parental drinking with a child* (before training only 15 were fairly or very confident; after training 53 were fairly or very confident) and also in *confidence to manage a disclosure from a child about parental drinking* (before training only 34 were fairly or very confident; after training 52 were fairly or very confident).
- Having completed the training participants report high levels of confidence to use the resource with children: 31 respondents saying they were very confident to deliver Rory and 29 saying they were fairly confident.
- Training participants evaluated the training highly; with 45 participants reporting that *all* of their expectations of the training were met; in particular attendees reported that the training had provided good quality information as well as time to reflect and plan approaches to using Rory back in the classroom.

Observation in the classroom has seen Rory used in whole class lessons and by children working together in groups and doing individual work. Using Rory begins with the telling of the story and across observations and in interviews teachers reported positive reactions. A starting point for Rory is often in a 'circle time' context with the story followed by opportunities to talk, prompted by questions from the teacher. This group discussion often highlighted the degree to which children are exposed to adult's drinking; in classes of children as young as P1 and P2 children talked about alcohol use and also about specific brands of alcohol consumed at home.

Teacher feedback and observation of practice has evidenced that central to using the resource is the exploration of what is happening to Rory, how Rory feels and where and how Rory gets support. Teachers have been observed using whole class approaches to ensure understanding, encourage personal reflection, expression of opinion and listening to others. In most observations the emphasis of lessons is on feelings. Teachers' report that a success of the Rory story in terms of children's understanding is that Rory should not blame himself for his situation and empathy for others is built through discussion and reflection. Using Rory to encourage children to talk to an adult they trust if *they* have a worry was evident across all observations; teachers reported this was a key intention of their lessons.

## Discussion

The Rory resource successfully delivers on its stated outcomes; the training attended by teachers has evaluated well, teachers like the resource and delivery of Rory in the classroom has been reported and observed as positive. Looking ahead, and with this positive context in mind, the full evaluation report discusses a number of issues which Alcohol Focus Scotland should consider. These include:

- That the strength of the Rory resource is in the training package and the core elements of the resource pack.
- Delivery of Rory requires teachers to be comfortable and competent in discussing the issue of adult consumption of alcohol with children, particularly young children.
- The training offered in City of Glasgow and West Lothian was undertaken in two ways: as one full afternoon session *or* two shorter sessions one week apart. The areas also differed in that City of Glasgow nominated teachers from a large number of schools to take part, in West Lothian full staff teams participated from a smaller number of schools. The actual experience of the training (for individuals) evaluated well in both settings and in terms of both models, but for those teachers in Glasgow who were identified to represent their school there may be particular challenges about rolling out Rory across their school.
- A challenge faced by any learning resource in the Primary School is *differentiation* within and across classes and ensuring that there is a sense of *progression* in how the school uses material as children grow. From observation it is clear that teachers know their class well and the learning needs of individual children are understood and addressed. While some impressive lessons have been observed it seems that individual participants, schools and commissioners have not yet considered enough how they will use Rory in *subsequent* terms and years to ensure progression.
- For the most part teachers see a good fit for Rory in terms of their work on *health and wellbeing* however teachers also see that Rory can relate as much to other strands of Curriculum for Excellence and associated experiences and outcomes.
- A requirement of the resource is to help build *resilience* and a *protective environment* around the child; this is highlighted by commissioners as an important element of their interest in bringing Rory into schools; via observation the evaluation has identified that the Rory resource is successful in these areas.
- Teachers recognise that support for vulnerable children can be provided in the classroom. Commissioners have expressed a view, shared by AFS, that they want teachers to grow in confidence and skill in terms of identifying where vulnerable children can be supported through their relationship with their teacher. Whether teachers feel able, empowered or confident to do this, particularly if they feel a lack of other community based support, will be an on-going area for discussion and development.
- The Rory resource flows naturally from another AFS resource 'Oh Lila' which is used in nursery/pre-school settings. It would be helpful to build awareness of 'Oh Lila!' amongst P1/P2 teachers. Further up the school it would be helpful for teachers of P6/P7 classes to discuss how Rory might relate to the use of the Young Boozebusters resource (in NHS GGC).

## Next steps for Rory

Continuing to deliver Rory training as it is, and provide participants with the current Rory resource, would mean that many more teachers and children would benefit from an excellent resource. However Rory could achieve more. In this context 'next steps' identify some possible approaches to increase awareness of Rory, improve access to the resource, support teachers to use Rory and make growth sustainable.

Inevitably making the most of Rory means finding additional resources; with the challenge that alcohol's harm to others presents to us as a nation it can only be hoped that the work of Alcohol Focus Scotland, through Rory, presents potential funders, commissioners and partners with an opportunity to build on what works in engaging meaningfully with a key professional group whilst enhancing resilience and protection for vulnerable children.

Next steps for Rory might then include:

- **Refocusing and editing the content of the Rory resource** with a focus on the core elements of the pack.
- **Rethinking learning activities, lesson plans and worksheets** with the intention of providing fewer generic worksheets or lesson plan outlines and supporting teachers to develop bespoke approaches.
- **Clarifying the emphasis on resilience and creating protective environments** so that with a more overt emphasis teachers view Rory in a broader context, raise its importance and encourage consideration of Rory as a tool within a commitment to children's safety and wellbeing.
- **Valuing the role and importance of training.** The resource/funding available for training may define the extent to which a number of teachers in any one school can engage in the training, but where it is only one or two staff any future development of Rory should consider the need these teachers have for continued support, for training resources they can use back in their schools, and access they will need to resources which might also inspire colleagues.
- **Extending the focus in training and subsequent support on some key issues.** Whilst recognising successes it is hoped training and post training support could do even more to increase teacher confidence in identifying children affected by parental drinking, discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parental drinking.
- **Exploring the development of Rory online and building a network of Rory ambassadors.** Rory online would help build a community of practitioners using Rory. Online communities lend themselves to improving communication about a shared interest. AFS should also consider building a network of Rory ambassadors, made up of practicing teachers who know the resource, use it and understand why it is successful. To increase the numbers of Local Authorities, schools and teachers engaging with Rory will require a level of staffing within AFS to promote the resource, deliver training and provide support.

## Full report

### Part 1 Introduction

#### i. About the Rory Learning Resource

The Rory Learning Resource has been developed by Alcohol Focus Scotland. The resource is described as follows:

*Rory is a storybook to help children understand parental alcohol misuse. This learning resource helps those who work with children to understand the impact that alcohol misuse can have on a child within the family setting. Rory is aimed at primary school children and tells the story of a dog who cannot understand why his owner is acting in a certain way, until it is explained to him that this is because his owner has a problem with alcohol. The book can be used by anyone who is in a position to raise awareness and respond to the issues of parental alcohol problems such as teachers or statutory and voluntary support agencies.*

To support delivery and use of the resource in the Primary School setting the Rory resource contains:

- Rory books – a full version and an abridged version
- A Rory glove puppet
- A selection of games (based on traditional board and card games)
- An MP4 player pre-loaded with the Rory DVD, audio book and discussion questions
- Rory stickers
- A 'build a kennel' cut out prop
- A homework book which consists of some games and drawing tasks
- A Resource Pack. This pack contains information about alcohol in Scotland, some discussion of problem parental alcohol use and short sections which support learning and discussion covered in the training programme including: advice for managing disclosures, answering children's questions, information on the roles children can play in families affected by harmful drinking, example learning activities/lesson plans for children from P1 to P7 which include an identification of learning outcomes and links to Curriculum for Excellence Health and Wellbeing experiences and outcomes, activity/work sheets for use in the classroom, and a set of evaluation sheets for children.

## ii. About the evaluation

Alcohol Focus Scotland commissioned TASC (Scotland) an independent company to evaluate the Rory Learning Resource **as it is used in the Primary School setting**<sup>1</sup>. Evaluators attended training delivered as part of the Rory programme and observed delivery in the classroom by teachers in two Local Authority areas: West Lothian and City of Glasgow. The evaluation was supported financially and through the commitment of staff in West Lothian Council and City of Glasgow Council/NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the Rory resource delivers stated outcomes which are.

1. Teachers have enhanced awareness and understanding of the problems caused by alcohol in Scotland.
2. Teachers have greater awareness of the impacts of parental drinking on children.
3. Teachers are able to better identify children who are, or may be, affected by parental drinking.
4. Teachers have a greater awareness of the support available for children affected by parental alcohol use.
5. Teachers have increased confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parents drinking.
6. Teachers view and use Rory as a resource which supports their work with children by:
  - i. Helping pupils who are living with a problem drinking parent feel less confused or guilty about what is happening
  - ii. Encouraging pupils to talk to an adult whom they trust
  - iii. Helping pupils feel compassion or empathy towards other children who may have a difficult home life.

In addition to exploring the extent to which outcomes are achieved the evaluation has considered future development of the Rory resource.

The following approaches were used to collect data during the course of the evaluation:

1. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with commissioners of the evaluation process, who also commission the delivery of Rory locally; in West Lothian and City of Glasgow.
2. Interviews took place with the Alcohol Focus Scotland training facilitator (pre and post-delivery of the Rory resource training for teachers).
3. Evaluators had access to the pre and post training questionnaires completed by training participants.
4. A member of the evaluation team was present at all training sessions.
5. A member of the evaluation team observed delivery of lessons in the classroom by teachers in West Lothian and Glasgow.
6. Follow up information was sought from teachers via interview and email about the experience of delivering Rory in the classroom.

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<sup>1</sup> Rory is also used by workers in children' services (both statutory and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector) in one-to-one work with children. The findings and recommendations of this evaluation should not be considered as applying to that work.

### iii. More about the Rory Resource Training

The Rory Learning Resource training package has the following elements:

- A welcome and introduction which includes a pre-course evaluation form and an outline of the training programme.
- A unit addressing alcohol and attitudes towards alcohol; this includes an exploration of personal attitudes, other social, cultural and environmental issues relating to alcohol use and misuse and an awareness of key policies relevant to the package.
- A unit addressing the effects of parental alcohol misuse.
- An introduction to the Rory Learning Resource.
- A unit on managing disclosures from children in relation to parental alcohol misuse.
- A final unit addressing sources of support
- A final evaluation of the programme.

Training was delivered in each of the two Local Authority areas involved in the evaluation as follows:

In **West Lothian** Rory training was offered to the full staff teams of 3 schools. 34 members of staff from the 3 Primary Schools in West Lothian attended the training; this was delivered in 2 formats. *Training package 1* was delivered to teachers from one school over two sessions of 2 hours, delivered one week apart. *Training package 2* was delivered to teachers from two schools in a one session programme of 3 hours 15 minutes. In terms of observing Rory delivery in the classroom the evaluation team observed delivery in 2 of the participating schools.

In **Glasgow** Rory training was offered to 2 staff members each from 14 schools. 27 members of staff from 14 Primary Schools in Glasgow attended the training; this was delivered in 2 formats. *Training package 1* was delivered to teachers from six schools over one session of 4 hours. *Training package 2* was delivered to teachers from eight schools in a two session programme of 2 hours each, one week apart. In terms of observing Rory delivery in the classroom the evaluation team observed delivery in 5 of the participating schools.

## Part 2 Delivering outcomes

This section of the report explores participant expectations of the Rory resource training, its impact on confidence to use Rory and the extent to which the Rory resource and associated training delivers on a range of stated outcomes which are:

1. Teachers have enhanced awareness and understanding of the problems caused by alcohol in Scotland.
2. Teachers have greater awareness of the impacts of parental drinking on children.
3. Teachers are able to better identify children who are, or may be, affected by parental drinking.
4. Teachers have a greater awareness of the support available for children affected by parental alcohol use.
5. Teachers have increased confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parents drinking.
6. Teachers view and use Rory as a resource which supports their work with children by:
  - i. Helping pupils who are living with a problem drinking parent feel less confused or guilty about what is happening
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### i. Participant expectations of the Rory resource training and its impact on confidence to use Rory

Prior to the training session participants were asked to identify up to three things they would like to gain or learn from the programme; 55 participants (of the 61 who attended across the four training packages) recorded comments, organised below into broad categories.

<b>What would you like to gain or learn from the training session? (55 respondents)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants</b>
<b>Area/Issue identified:</b>	
How to plan/use the Rory resource	35
How to deal with or support children affected by parental drinking	29
How to identify signs of children affected by parental drinking	25
How to raise issues and teach on the issue of alcohol and parental drinking	18
Better awareness or understanding of children affected by parental drinking and the impact on them	15
How to manage disclosure from a child about parental drinking	10
General awareness of problems associated with alcohol	6

The areas teachers identified they would like to get from participating in the Rory training fit well with the outcomes intended by AFS in the Rory training package. In post-session evaluations participants were asked whether what they wanted from the training session was achieved.

<b>Having identified what you wanted to gain or learn; did the training deliver? (56 responses)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants</b>
None were achieved	3
Some were achieved	8
All were achieved	45

25 participants offered further written comments on the training which were positive. Comments included:

- *'A very good course'.*
- *'A very good resource'.*
- *'My initial concern was about how I might raise the issue but I realise now that Rory will give me a secure and safe framework'.*
- *'Some great discussions and activities that have really helped my understanding'.*
- *'The case studies, questions and discussions gave me practical thinking opportunities'.*
- *'Found the presentation and discussions very helpful'.*
- *'I feel I could deliver successfully and sympathetically'.*
- *'I liked how the 2<sup>nd</sup> day revolved around applying the resource and knowledge in the class at our own stage'.*

While one participant commented: *'I do not think I have learned much more than I knew before of what the effects are or how to deal with them'* two other participants commented (immediately post-training) on the need for more discussion of age-appropriate approaches and a recognition that confidence will come with programme delivery:

- *'Felt more age appropriate strategies on dealing with disclosure would be helpful'.*
- *'Think I'd feel more confident after delivering programme a few times'.*

Post training questionnaires asked specifically about confidence in using the Rory resource.

<b>Having now completed the training, how confident do you/would you feel using the resources with children? (61 responses)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants</b>
Not confident	1
Fairly confident	29
Very confident	31

Participants (34 in total) offered further comments on confidence to use the resource as a consequence of participating in the training. For the most part these were positive, highlighting positive views of the different elements of the Rory package as well as an appreciation of the opportunity to explore the resource and how to use it with colleagues:

- *'These resources provide an excellent framework for working with children in the area of alcohol abuse and related experiences of children who have a parent who drinks excessively'.*
- *'Resources are clear, practical and I can see the relevance of using them with pupils'.*
- *'An explanation of materials and possible ideas for lessons has been helpful'.*
- *'Materials are high quality and adaptable for various situations'.*
- *'Good to explore the resources and discuss with peers'.*
- *'Yes, can see how the resources could fit in and relevance'.*
- *'Had the opportunity to see resources, discuss lesson ideas'.*
- *'Some good ideas and starting points'.*
- *'Ideas from other group members on how to deliver'.*
- *'I expect my confidence level would increase as I used the pack – became more familiar with resources'.*

A number of participants also identified issues which indicate the need to engage in further reflection or discussion about how to use Rory, specifically about learner characteristics such as age or additional support needs:

- *'Feel need to work on all the different stages but could do and do well'.*
- *'I will need to differentiate and make it suitable for my class of ASN children'.*
- *'Will need to think how upper school pupils would engage with resource'.*

Whilst a prerequisite of involvement in delivering Rory is that participants have been trained in local child protection policy and procedures, at this point of reflection immediately after training, one participant identified the need to reflect further on the possibility of disclosure from a child about parental drinking as follows: *'Confident using the resource but not sure how I would be if I had a disclosure'*. This issue will be returned to shortly.

## ii. Awareness and understanding of the problems caused by alcohol

Before the training participating teachers were asked to assess their level of awareness of problems caused by alcohol in Scotland.

<b>Are you aware of problems caused by alcohol in Scotland? (60 responses)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants</b>
Not aware	1
Some awareness	36
Very aware	23

Following the training they were asked if this level of awareness had changed:

Has your awareness of alcohol related problems in Scotland changed? (61 responses)	Identified by/ number of participants
No, it has not changed	7
Some change	25
Yes, it has changed	29

While teachers clearly have baseline knowledge about the impact of alcohol in communities and on families the training session has extended that awareness. Some participants (25 in total) offered further comment, focusing mostly on a growing awareness of the scale of the issue in our communities:

- *'The statistics are shocking and shaming'.*
- *'I was surprised at how much worse excessive drinking has got in the past ten years or so'.*
- *'Bigger issue than I first thought. Raised my awareness of how alcohol may affect children in my class/school'.*
- *'Has made me more aware of the widespread and deep-rooted issues with alcohol in Scotland'*
- *'Not aware of the effects upon so many primary aged pupils'.*
- *'Higher awareness of the embedded nature of alcohol in society'.*
- *'Statistics indicate a high proportion of our pupils are being affected by alcohol'.*
- *'Did not realise middle aged adults were highest drinkers /drink related deaths'.*
- *'A few eye openers'.*
- *'I had a fair idea of the problem but was unaware of the difference between Scotland and rest of UK'.*
- *'Reaffirmed some fears but also reassured me of all the help we can give'.*

### iii. Awareness of the impacts of parental drinking on children

Participating teachers were asked whether the training had impacted on their awareness of the impacts of parental drinking on children. Respondents used a scale of 0 – 10 (with 10 as the highest rate of awareness).

- **Before** the training teachers were asked: *At this time, on a scale of 0 - 10 how would you rate your awareness of the impacts of harmful parental drinking on children? They reported a mean score of 6.7*
- **After** the training teachers were asked: *Having now completed the training, on a scale of 0 - 10 how would you rate your awareness of the impacts of harmful parental drinking on children? They reported a mean score of 9.0*

Some participants (31) offered further comment in relation to what this increased awareness means to them. Some comments highlight the appropriateness of methods used in the training session to foster discussion and reflection. Other comments indicate that the training has built on a degree of existing knowledge which means that participants now have a fuller or more nuanced picture of the impact of parental drinking on children:

- *'Raised issues that I had not considered'.*
- *'Yes, I think the content of the course showed how children are affected by parental drinking and that the child is affected at all different levels – social, academic, family life, emotional'.*
- *'Yes I feel I am more aware of the range of issues from low level to high level'.*
- *'Yes, I think I scored myself a little highly before the course'.*
- *'I have more understanding of the effects alcohol can have on children'.*
- *'More aware through the presentations and discussions'.*
- *'Thought more about implications and input on home life'.*
- *'Yes, definitely raised awareness'.*
- *'Yes. Received more information. Able to contemplate different scenario's'.*
- *'Did not think of the whole picture i.e. social harm, confidence etc.'*
- *'I feel more knowledgeable'.*
- *'More aware of the impact on home life, school life, loss of childhood, ability to make relationships'.*

#### iv. Identifying children affected by parental drinking

Participating teachers were asked about their confidence to identify children who are, or may be, affected by parental drinking. Levels of confidence, both before and after the Rory resource training, are reported in the table below.

<b>How confident would you be to identify children who may be affected by their parents drinking?</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants: Before the training (61 responses)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants: After the training (61 responses)</b>
<b>Not confident</b>	38	6
<b>Fairly confident</b>	21	39
<b>Very confident</b>	2	16

In addition to an increased confidence in identifying children affected by parental drinking some participants (23) offered further comment. These comments focus largely on an increase in awareness of the signs which may indicate whether a child is affected by parental drinking as well as seeing Rory as a tool to foster discussion and sharing by children, thus enabling concerns or worries to become more evident.

- *'Raised awareness of how children may present if parents have problems'.*
- *'I think I am more open to awareness of issues and features'.*
- *'More aware of the signs'.*
- *'I think through using the resources it provides more discussion and starting points to identify a problem'.*
- *'The PowerPoint and discussions highlighted how children may behave'.*

One respondent commented on the need to remain attuned to more subtle signs of worry or distress: *'I still need to be attentive and be there, just in case'.*

#### v. Awareness of support for children affected by parental alcohol use

Although ‘*awareness of the support available for children affected by parental alcohol use*’ is a stated outcome of the Rory resource training the current pre-training questionnaire does not ask participants about pre-existing levels of awareness, nor does the post-training questionnaire ask similarly if training has impacted in this area. However, as reported earlier, in relation to what attendees wanted from the training (see page 4) 29 (of the 61 participants) did state, in a number of ways, that they hoped that the training would provide an opportunity to learn how to deal with or support children affected by parental drinking. Typically teachers said they hoped the training would help them in these ways:

- ‘*How to assist a child coping with the ups and downs*’.
- ‘*How to respond to concerns*’.
- ‘*How to offer support*’.
- ‘*Helping strategies for children*’.
- ‘*Strategies for supporting children who are affected by their parents drinking*’.
- ‘*How to support young people who have a background where alcohol is a major feature*’.
- ‘*Practical activities to help support children –known or otherwise- who come from less than perfect backgrounds*’.
- ‘*Learn more about how to support children who come from homes where there is alcohol problems*’.

Again as stated earlier teachers have reported that for the most part, what they wanted to gain or learn from the training session has been achieved; it is fair to assume that in responding positively they were also referring to this set of expectations about the training.

Via observation and in conversation with teachers at the training session it was clear that while the intended outcome is *awareness of support for children* the teacher’s concern is also for *actual* support for children. This is discussed further part 3 of this report.

#### vi. Confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parental drinking

While the intended outcome is to impact in the area of *confidence and skills* in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and in managing disclosure about parental drinking pre and post training questionnaires ask specifically about *confidence*. Levels of confidence in relation to both areas, both before and after the Rory resource training, are reported in the tables below.

<b>How would confident would you be about raising the issue of parental drinking with a child/young person?</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants: Before the training (61 responses)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants: After the training (59 responses)</b>
Not confident	46	6
Fairly confident	15	39
Very confident	0	14

<b>How confident would you be to manage a disclosure from a child/young person about their parents drinking?</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants: Before the training (61 responses)</b>	<b>Identified by/ number of participants: After the training (55 responses)</b>
Not confident	27	3
Fairly confident	32	34
Very confident	2	18

Post-training evaluations reflect an increase in confidence in both areas. Participants offered further comment in relation to these outcomes (24 in relation to confidence about raising the issue; 17 in relation to confidence about managing disclosure). These additional comments indicate that increased confidence is connected to an enhanced knowledge base about alcohol and parental drinking alongside a confidence in the use of Rory materials as the tools which support engagement/learning. Comments from teachers included:

- *'I know now what to say to the child to help'.*
- *'Feel the information and knowledge gained along with resources would increase my confidence'.*
- *'Feel more prepared for the range of questions that may arise'.*
- *'Was unsure at first but feel better equipped'.*
- *'Useful further tips –still quite a sensitive issue to handle/approach'.*
- *'I would use the resource to help me to raise the issue'.*
- *'More aware of how to approach this'.*

Comments about increased confidence do address issues of *skills* and *tools* for work in this area, although future training evaluation would benefit from clearly addressing the issue of skills in evaluation forms.

Related to discussion of confidence (to discuss parental alcohol use with a child or manage disclosure) training participants also highlighted the need to use Rory materials in ways that are specific to the group of children who they work with, in other words starting with the materials but developing bespoke approaches; this issue of differentiation and progression is discussed further later. Teacher's comments included:

- *'I have learnt to be general about certain things and not too specific or personal. Obviously, it would all depend on the child/stage and background known'.*
- *'Would use resources – different approaches as appropriate'.*
- *'Think this is dependent on the age. I teach P1 and it would need to be dealt with very carefully and at an appropriate level'.*

In one particular response a teacher identified that managing disclosures of this nature is a demanding part of the teaching role: *'Having been in this position it is very difficult and no amount of training can prepare you for the emotional journey on all sides'.*

## vii. Rory as a resource which supports work with children

Much of the outcomes stated for the Rory resource are about teacher awareness, knowledge, confidence and skills. A final intended outcome of Rory is also about teachers, but additionally it addresses the impact on children. The stated outcome is that:

Teachers view and use Rory as a resource which supports work with children by:

- Helping pupils who are living with a problem drinking parent feel less confused or guilty about what is happening.
- Encouraging pupils to talk to an adult whom they trust.
- Helping pupils feel compassion or empathy towards other children who may have a difficult home life.

Observation in the classroom has seen Rory used in whole class lessons and by children working together in groups and doing individual work. Using Rory begins with the telling of the story, most often using the short film where the story is read by the narrator, but on some occasions with the teacher as narrator. Some schools have chosen to show Rory in an assembly, indicating that children will work with the Rory story across the school and back in their own classes. Across observations and in interviews teachers reported positive reactions to Rory. One teacher commented: *'You could have heard a pin drop, quite a moment'*.

A starting point for Rory is often in a 'circle time' context with the story followed by opportunities to talk, prompted by questions from the teacher. This group discussion often highlighted the degree to which children are exposed to adult's drinking, as one teacher commented: *'Scary how many pupils contributed to the discussion and knew about the effects of alcohol and had seen adults in a poor state'*. In classes of children as young as P1 and P2 children talked about alcohol use and also about specific brands of alcohol consumed at home.

In terms of the stated outcome, teacher feedback and observation of practice has evidenced that in delivery the resource helps pupils affected by parental drinking, encourages pupils to talk to adults, and supports compassion and empathy in the following ways:

- Central to using the resource is the exploration of what is happening to Rory, how Rory feels – confused, guilty - and where and how Rory gets support. Teachers have been observed using whole class approaches (sometimes set up in a circle time format) to ensure understanding, encourage personal reflection, expression of opinion and listening to others. In most observations the emphasis of lessons is on feelings, and teachers (both in observation and in interviews) report the importance of their role to be aware of how children are engaging, particularly those individuals for whom there is some knowledge or concerns about aspects of family or community life. In terms of the intention that Rory helps pupils who are living with a problem drinking parent feel less confused or guilty about what is happening one teacher indicated *'I hope it would encourage this; it gives an opening, even general discussion about parents drinking, not necessarily as a worry, it just allows a space to talk about alcohol, a space'*.

- The strength of Rory as seen by teachers is its focus on feelings, supporting other work teachers already undertake. Some teachers, particularly of younger children, identify that promoting empathy towards others is complex (although very young children show empathy toward Rory) but nonetheless see this as a relevant learning aspiration across Rory's use in the Primary School. Teachers recognise that children have an awareness of the home circumstances of other children that they might not have. Teachers report that a success of the Rory story in terms of children's understanding is that Rory should not blame himself for his situation.
- Using Rory to encourage children to talk to an adult they trust if *they* have a worry was evident across all observations; teachers reported this was a key intention of their lessons. Children across different stages were encouraged to think about, or volunteer the name of, a person or people to whom they would go if they had a worry or a concern. The teacher him/herself is often named by children in these discussions.

In the course of observing the delivery of Rory in the classroom there is clearly a range of confidence and approach. Delivery of the Rory story is always impactful, in some settings however it has been observed that the use of worksheets and the board/card games have meant a loss of energy or engagement by children (more of this in the discussion section which follows). There has also been some truly inspiring teaching and learning observed:

- In a P5 class (the observation was the second of 3 lessons using Rory) the lesson took a **literacy** focus; the children had read the book but in this lesson watched the DVD. The children remembered the 3 elements a story has – setting, characters and plot. They discussed what they thought were the most important elements of this story (and why), for example if they thought that the characters were most crucial they could discuss the role that each character played, including Rory's friends and their impact on Rory. In their exploration of setting, character and plot they had to show insight and empathy for Rory and conversation strayed into who they would go to for help and support. Finally the class ended with each child writing a Haiku (a form of poetry they had also studied) which summarised Rory's story, allowing each child to focus on the element of Rory's experience that mattered to them. Children then stood and read their Haiku poems, discussing the very individual approach each had taken within the format.
- In a P3 class the children watched/listened to Rory's story. The emphasis on the lesson was about **empathy** for others; the teacher described this as an important part of the schools ethos. Before starting the teacher drew children's attention to the learning intentions/targets for the lesson which included: *realising how the behaviour of other people affects us; choosing to seek advice is important; we can say nice things to others who are sad; choosing to do something fun can make you feel better*. In the telling of the story children were asked to reflect on Rory's feelings and as well as sad they could see that Rory was also frightened, hurt and worried. The children also showed compassion for Fred who they thought might be stressed or might be 'an alcoholic man'. Back in their group the children drew pictures of Rory while they talked about what made them happy and sad, what made them feel better if they were sad, and who they can go to if they feel sad.

## Part 3 Discussion

In **part 2** of this report it has been evidenced that **the Rory resource successfully delivers on its stated outcomes; the training attended by teachers has evaluated well, teachers like the resource and delivery of Rory in the classroom has been reported and observed as positive**. Looking ahead, and with this positive context in mind, this discussion section seeks to raise a number of issues which Alcohol Focus Scotland should consider.

### i. Rory's story and associated resources

To restate the positive views on the training package and the Rory resource itself teachers have commented as follows:

- *'I'm more positive now that I've used it. I like it. I thought it might be quite limited but now I see what it does, it does it very well. A great wee resource'*
- *'I've never been on a course where I've been handed such beautiful, fantastic resources, even though I've adapted them and made them my own it was great'*

It is important to reflect further on what elements of the Rory package are those which teachers use and why. At the heart of the success of the resource is the story itself. Teachers have commented:

- *'What a great starting point'*
- *'This story grabs the children, they relate to it'*

Over time AFS have added to the core story, so that in addition to two versions of the story in book format the resource now comes with a Rory puppet, an MP4 player (pre-loaded with the DVD and resource pack), a hard copy of the Resource Pack (with contextual information for teachers as well as lesson plan ideas and worksheets) and a set of games themed as a Rory games based on board/card games children will likely know (snap, ludo, snakes and ladders).

In all the classes observed teachers had prepared their own approach, starting with the story (either in the lesson observed or in a previous lesson, mostly using the DVD), perhaps using the Rory puppet in the younger classes, then encouraging class discussion and setting children a task they had designed. On occasion teachers used the worksheets provided in the Resource Pack. When discussing which parts of the Rory resources have proved most relevant and useful to their class, teachers value the storybook, the DVD, the puppet and for some teachers the worksheets.

In terms of the **worksheets**, and via observation of classes where they were used, it is the view of the evaluators that what had usually started as an engaging lesson, where children were enthralled in the story and then able to take part in discussion changed when the worksheets were introduced. The worksheets felt like time-fillers and left some children bored and detached. In addition, worksheet content – for example, asking children to think about their behaviour or that of others, or times when they have felt happy or sad – seemed to take children from reflection and discussion which *enhanced* emotional literacy and wellbeing and messages about seeking help to a more task oriented, detached place. This is

not to say that small group or individual tasks cannot flow from the story or whole class exercises, rather teachers who set questions or tasks for their children based on their knowledge of the children and building directly on their use of the story (rather than generic worksheet tasks) kept children engaged. It is understandable that a resource like Rory might make some suggestions as to how to progress beyond the telling of the story, but perhaps identifying and sharing really good practice from the field – Rory in action – might inspire others to develop meaningful tasks rather than photocopy standard activities.

The **MP4** (connected to a smartboard) has been used to show the DVD or for some teachers to draw down images/worksheets but has not been used as an MP4 as such, rather more like a portable USB memory stick, several teachers said they would prefer a simple stick. On occasions where teachers had used **the board/card games** they struggled to give children enough time to complete these, in younger classes some children did not have the skills to play them, in other classes children got a bit overexcited, wanting to win, and the relevance to the Rory story was lost.

It would be helpful then to review the content and purpose of what the Rory resource is (in terms of content) and does. Teachers commented:

- *'All the value of this resource is in the talk, not the worksheets'.*
- *'It's important to give children space to talk, not always asking them to write things down'.*
- *'The games don't add anything. I asked the children, 'what did you learn from the game?' They said 'well, nothing, it's just a game'.*

In short, the Rory resource works well when teachers use the core resource – book, puppet, DVD – and use images or parts of the story to prompt children to think and talk more, and where possible connect to other learning. The core Rory resources are excellent. Thinning down the resource to these key elements would reduce cost and encourage teachers to think creatively about what their Rory based lessons are about.

## **ii. Discussing alcohol use with younger children**

Engaging with the Rory resource requires adults to consider the degree to which they feel comfortable and competent in discussing the issue of adult consumption of alcohol with children, particularly young children. Teacher's responses to levels of confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child were reviewed pre and post training (see page 9) and while the shift from being 'not confident' to 'fairly confident' is significant some teachers need further support. This perhaps explains why for a small number of teachers in the West Lothian cohort of participants (particularly those teaching younger children) there remain concerns about discussing alcohol use explicitly with children. While these teachers report that children have a good response to Rory, they like the character and want to hear about him, some teachers in West Lothian schools made the decision to stop the story before the issue of Rory's master drinking alcohol is introduced and they have removed questions or reference to alcohol in worksheet tasks; preferring to focus on Rory's feeling of sadness, asking for help and helping others (although the context for these feelings is removed). However other teachers in West Lothian report that the full story has been used and that children understood that Fred was drinking alcohol and that this affected how he

cared for Rory. While teachers report that they do not want to overstate alcohol as the core issue they feel this context is important and allows them to look at feelings and seeking help.

None of the Glasgow participants using Rory with younger children had concerns about the centrality of alcohol and its impact on Rory's care. In observation of delivery with P1, P2 and P3 children it was clear that young children have some knowledge of alcohol. Children talked about brands of alcohol, they volunteered information about adults drinking and 'getting drunk' and they understood that for Rory his care was affected because his owner was drinking too much alcohol.

Some teachers (of classes across the school) in West Lothian schools also report that they removed the Alcohol Focus Scotland logo from Rory worksheets which they copied for use in class; their view is that they do not want parents/carers to think they are supporting a particular agency's view or that as a teacher/school they think *their* community has a particular problem more than any other. For this small number of teachers there is clearly some work to do to reassure them about AFS approach and role in terms of education as well as a need to remind any commissioner/school/agency using the resource that identification of the source/publication of the resource is part of the contract entered into when professionals attend training and purchase the resource.

### **iii. Training issues**

#### **a. Participation in training: full staff teams or nominated teachers**

The two areas engaging in this evaluation project – West Lothian and City of Glasgow – chose different approaches to training and roll out of the Rory resource. In West Lothian whole school teams participated and in Glasgow schools nominated 2 members of staff to attend a shared training event. To some extent choices made about participation in training may be pragmatic/cost driven (more schools, less cost per school, broader impact) but whole school training might be assumed to impact more deeply on a school's engagement with both the resource and issues at hand. The actual experience of the training (for individuals) evaluated well in both settings but for those teachers in Glasgow who were identified to represent their school and take the Rory resource back there is certainly a strong sense that they now become the person/people responsible for delivering Rory; there do not seem to be set formats or opportunities for feeding back to others, ideas that those who are trained then use some 'snowball' approach to training others has not yet emerged and the teachers who have represented their schools in the Glasgow training are predominantly those with responsibility or interest in delivering aspects of their schools PSE/Pastoral/health and wellbeing curriculum.

Other issues might influence how AFS or a commissioner might view the issue of training for all, or for some nominated/specialist staff. This might include whether the focus of Rory is on the child's experience/learning (so best delivered by a confident knowledgeable teacher) or whether the use of Rory is about affirming the role of the class teacher as someone who the child can talk to about worry or concern (about parental drinking or other concerns); one noticeable issue is that in observation of classes led by a PSE/health and wellbeing lead

teacher the class teacher often left the classroom to do other work or have non-contact time.

#### **b. Practical arrangements; structuring training as one or two sessions**

In both settings training was offered in 2 distinct packages; one full session of between 3.5 and 4 hours and two half sessions of around 2 hours (one week apart). There was no difference in terms of participant evaluation, regardless of the way their training was structured, but for the AFS training facilitator, and as observed by the evaluators, those teachers who attended the 2 sessions had clearly had some time to reflect on the material presented in session 1; session 1 material being largely contextual information about alcohol consumption and alcohol's harm to others.

A practical point is that the AFS facilitator had experienced some difficulty in negotiating a full 4 hour slot within a teacher's working week and although training time is precious two 2- hour slots are perhaps more achievable.

Finally, teachers across all 4 training sessions observed have commented on the skill and warmth of the AFS training facilitator. Having reviewed content of the training input in some detail with the AFS training facilitator the evaluators also recognise the quality of the training package; we are able to make some comments about content which are intended to support on-going improvement (this will be done in a practical feedback session).

### **iv. Locating Rory in the life of the school**

#### **a. Developing a view of Rory as a long term resource for the school: considering differentiation and progression in children's learning**

The Rory Learning Resource is viewed by AFS as a resource which commissioners and schools can use to enhance teacher awareness about the impacts of parental drinking on children, increase confidence in responses to concerns as well as support children to seek help and feel compassion toward others. To do this it is understood by AFS and by commissioners that engaging with Rory means ensuring that the training and delivery in school is not seen as a 'one-off' event but rather a planned, integrated and cross-curricular approach; a way to recognise that the home and community circumstances of some children can mean they are adversely affected by harmful parental drinking and that it is everyone's responsibility to get it right for every child.

A challenge faced by any learning resource is being able to use the material/package with children of different needs and experiences (**differentiation** within and across classes) and ensuring that there is a sense of **progression** in how the school uses the material as children grow, ensuring that when Rory is used it is not simply repeating previous encounters.

From observation it is clear that teachers know their class well and in both whole class inputs (usually telling the story) and in work undertaken in small groups or on their own the learning needs of individual children are understood and addressed. In both observation and in interviews teachers have reflected on how Rory resources might be used dependent on the class they teach, considering: *How do they usually work together? How are they*

*today? What do particular children need? Do they get more out of group discussion or individual or small group work?*

In terms of progression, while one teacher commented “*Maybe kids just need to meet Rory once or twice*”, when they do meet him teachers understand that the expectations of children and the scope of what they do must change and reflect their experiences, interests and abilities. Progression might mean that the abridged Rory story might be used with the younger children while older children can extend work into other aspects of Scotland’s relationship with alcohol or alcohol’s harm to others or maybe as peers support younger children in their learning with Rory. As stated earlier, across delivery observed, and that discussed in interviews, teachers tend to start with the core resource (story/puppet) but adapt worksheets or structure their own lessons; giving a sense of a relevant, more bespoke approach. While some impressive lessons have been observed it seems that individual participants, schools and commissioners have not yet considered how they will use Rory in *subsequent* terms and years; this issue of planning and progression is understood by AFS as a challenge which needs to be addressed in the relationship with commissioners and schools.

#### **b. Locating the work**

For the most part teachers see a good fit for Rory in terms of their work on **health and wellbeing**; however as was indicated earlier some teachers see that Rory can relate as much to other strands of the curriculum and associated experiences and outcomes (see our example on page 12). As also stated earlier (in terms of who attends Rory training) it appears that where one or two members of staff are nominated to take a training place then this may often be someone who has some responsibility for delivering health and wellbeing themed work with children. Locating Rory as such is not a problem in itself, it perhaps helps teachers and schools find a home for the material. However there is still some way to go, in the context of Curriculum for Excellence, for health and wellbeing to be seen as *everyone’s* responsibility. It might be a concern if opportunities are lost to see the cross-curricular potential the resource has if ‘Rory sessions’ are only delivered as one-off inputs during ‘health weeks’ or in the context of ‘health projects’.

Perhaps another context for Rory needs to be made more explicit, with location of the resource in terms of building **resilience** and a **protective environment** around the child; this has been highlighted by commissioners as an important element of their interest in bringing the Rory resource into schools. It is also highlighted in the training provided but not as a headline issue. Thinking about resilience and protective factors in discussion and via observation the evaluators can identify that the Rory resource is successful in doing these things for children:

- It encourages children to talk about their feelings.
- It encourages children to think about the experiences and feelings of others (empathy).
- Through empathy with Rory’s experiences (he is not to blame, Fred is drinking, this impacts on the care and attention Rory receives), children are helped to understand that they are not responsible/should not feel guilty about what happens as a consequence of adult behaviour.

- It gives children permission to ask for help and encourages them to think of who they would go to if they had a worry or a concern.
- They are reassured that adults who drink alcohol in a way that harms them or others can get better.

And it does these things for teachers:

- Builds awareness of the impacts of parental drinking on children and increases capacity to identify children who may be affected.
- Increases confidence and skills in discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parents drinking.

#### **v. Support for children**

As stated earlier, teachers want Rory training to provide an opportunity to learn about how to deal with or support children affected by parental drinking. But more than an *awareness* of support for children they want to know what is *actually available* and need opportunities to consider further what *their* role is. One training participant asked: *'But if a teacher wants to raise an issue where do they get support?'*

Teachers recognise that support for vulnerable children can be provided in the classroom/school, but there are some concerns (expressed across discussion in the training sessions) that opportunities for lower tariff interventions or general support for vulnerable children affected by parental drinking by other agencies is difficult to identify. In one specific conversation observed by the evaluator this left staff worried that when a need was identified the response (if not a formal child protection referral) became the teacher's responsibility. One teacher reflected that once an issue was known or made explicit it would often fall to her to respond because there was simply a lack of other supports for a child.

Of all the Rory resource outcomes an *awareness of the support available for children affected by parental alcohol use* points to a significant role for teachers in relation to listening, being supportive and building resilience in the context of delivering broader health and wellbeing outcomes for children. In discussion with Local Authority commissioners (who purchase Rory and have funded this evaluation) the role of the teacher in identifying, supporting and enabling the child affected by parental drinking is essential. Notwithstanding the need to know and follow child protection procedures where that is thought necessary, commissioners have expressed a view, shared by AFS, that they want teachers to grow in confidence and skill in terms of identifying the space (between no recognition/response and a child protection response) where vulnerable children can be supported through their relationship with a caring, confident, knowledgeable professional. Whether teachers feel able, empowered or confident to do this remains an important question, particularly if they feel that they also need good external support and resource to do this job, and as yet do not know where to find it.

## vi. Connecting Rory with other resources and with Curriculum for Excellence

For commissioners the Rory resource flows naturally from another AFS resource 'Oh Lila' which is used in nursery/pre-school settings. It would be helpful to build awareness of 'Oh Lila!' amongst P1/P2 teachers. Further up the school (in NHS GGC only) it would be helpful for teachers of P6/P7 classes to discuss how Rory might relate to the schools intention to use a further local resource Boozebusters.

In interviews and in observation, school staff made explicit links between the Rory resource and *experiences and outcomes* identified in Curriculum for Excellence, particularly those in the area of Health and Wellbeing<sup>2</sup>. In the Rory Resource pack model lesson plans also identify the appropriate code for a number of *experiences and outcomes* from Health and Wellbeing. Interviewees agreed that any school-based resource is required to make such links and through observation it is clear that in most lessons teachers display before the class (and then review at the end of the lesson) what their learning outcomes/intentions are.

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<sup>2</sup> The title 'experiences and outcomes' recognises the importance of the quality and nature of the learning **experience** in developing attributes and capabilities and in achieving active engagement, motivation and depth of learning. An **outcome** represents what is to be achieved. More about health and Wellbeing within Curriculum for Excellence here: <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/healthandwellbeing/eandos/index.asp>

## Part 4 Next steps for the Rory Learning Resource

Continuing to deliver Rory training as it is, and provide participants with the current Rory resource, would mean that many more teachers and children would benefit from an excellent resource. However Rory could achieve more. The following suggestions for 'next steps' identify some possible approaches to increasing awareness of Rory, improving access to the resource, supporting teachers to use Rory and making growth sustainable.

Inevitably making the most of Rory means finding additional resources; with the challenge that alcohol's harm to others presents to us as a nation it can only be hoped that the work of Alcohol Focus Scotland, through Rory, presents potential funders, commissioners and partners with an opportunity to build on what works in engaging meaningfully with a key professional group whilst enhancing resilience and protection for vulnerable children.

### **i. Refocus and edit the content of the Rory resource**

The core Rory resources are excellent – the book, puppet and DVD. As suggested in the earlier discussion section, thinning down the resource to these key elements would help to focus on what it is hoped to achieve from the resource and reduce production costs. This would mean:

- Losing the board and card games, the build a kennel cut out prop, the Homework book and Rory stickers.
- In terms of the MP4 player (pre-loaded with the Rory DVD, audio book and discussion questions) this should be replaced by a portable USB memory stick.
- The Resource Pack currently contains information addressed in the training programme, some example learning activities/lesson plans and activity/evaluation sheets; rather than a hard copy booklet and this could all be contained in the USB (or available as downloads, or reconsidered more fully, see further ideas in this section including consideration of Rory as an online resource).

### **ii. Rethinking learning activities, lesson plans and worksheets**

The focus of the Rory Learning Resource must be on equipping teachers with the awareness, confidence and skills they need for delivery whilst also impacting on their awareness and support for children affected by harmful parental drinking. Teachers have evidenced that their approach draws on the materials we have identified are core (the book, puppet, DVD) and what they deliver are, to varying degrees, bespoke lessons reflecting the needs of their class. Overuse or overdependence on worksheets has been identified as problematic and so to maintain the purpose and integrity of the resource, it would be useful to support teachers in using core resources creatively. Rather than providing generic worksheets or lesson plan outlines this could be supported by providing teachers with graphics, images, formats they can cut and paste easily; by providing teachers with the opportunity to share what they have done with *their* class they can then help motivate and inspire others. The training session already provides a space within which participants can begin to map out how they might use Rory in their classroom, developing Rory as more of an online resource/community (see below) would allow teachers to share their approaches further.

### **iii. Clarifying the emphasis on resilience and creating protective environments**

The evaluation has evidenced that the Rory Learning Resource supports work in terms of resilience and creating protective environments for children, but evaluators have a sense that this is not explicit enough in materials about Rory, in training or in the ways which teachers talk about the resource. Rather teachers see Rory as a 'health and wellbeing' resource. Teachers are understandably somewhat concerned about raising the issue of harmful parental drinking and managing disclosure, perhaps a more overt emphasis on how Rory underpins a commitment to ensuring resilience and protection for every child would help locate Rory in a broader context, raise its importance and encourage consideration of Rory as a tool within a commitment to children's safety and wellbeing.

As discussed earlier it is hoped that teachers grow in confidence in fulfilling their role as a support for children affected by parental drinking, but it would also be helpful to inform them more about other statutory or voluntary sector services and supports children, young people or families might access. As one example, in none of the classes observed did teachers point to or remind children of the services which ChildLine offer.

### **iv. Valuing the role and importance of training**

In this current evaluation two training packages were observed; sessions for a whole staff team and sessions for nominated teachers from a number of schools. For those who took part both were successful, but clearly each will have different impact back in the school, as discussed in the earlier discussion section of the report.

It is clear that training which supports the use of Rory in the classroom is crucial to its success. The impact of the training on key areas (discussed in detail in part 1 of this report) shows that if not all, then at least some staff within a school need to have taken part in the Rory training. We have already identified that the resource/funding available for training may define the extent to which a number of teachers in any one school can engage in the training, but where it is only one or two staff any future development of Rory should consider the need these teachers have for continued support, for training resources they can use back in their schools, and access they will need to resources which might also inspire colleagues. Perhaps training for teachers who are returning to schools where they are the only or one of two trained members of staff needs to explicitly consider how they will go back to school and introduce and sustain interest in the resource.

### **v. Extend the focus in training and subsequent support on some key issues**

The evaluation has shown that there have been important gains in confidence when it comes to identifying children affected by parental drinking, discussing parental alcohol use with a child and managing disclosure about parental drinking. But there is still room for improvement in increasing how confident teachers feel and it may be helpful to consider how these particular issues can be more of a focus in training and post-training support. In addition, training and post-training support must continue to address concerns that teachers have about discussing alcohol/parental drinking with younger children. In training sessions none of the participants said that they would edit the Rory story to omit reference to Fred's drinking, nor did they say they would delete the AFS logo, but in a small number of instances this happened back in school; this points to teacher concerns and it would be important to ensure these come out in training.

## **vi. Explore the development of Rory online**

We would suggest that while the core Rory resources (the book and DVD) should only be available in hard copy and via the memory stick provided to teachers who have attended Rory training (as a result of a Local Authority contracting to work with AFS) developing Rory online would help build a community of practitioners using Rory, provide flexibility, improve accessibility and reduce the costs of producing some materials (after an initial investment). Increasingly teachers are using online materials and CPD online, the use of GLOW<sup>3</sup> may not be consistent across all teachers and schools, but whatever the next phase of GLOW looks like online materials, training and the development of issue or topic based communities is likely to be the way forward.

Elements of Rory online could be public or accessed via a password. Short DVD clips or training packages could be offered to introduce Rory or to act as refreshers for teachers trained in Rory's use, or to support teachers who have received training to then get involved in onward delivery to their peers. Whilst a dedicated site could offer a range of prompts and supports for teachers designing their Rory class inputs it could also be a place where teachers could upload their Rory lessons and projects. An online resource could also be the place to respond to FAQs about using the material as well as featuring a particular focus on an important aspect of Rory in a given month/term. Rory online could also be a place for children to upload their pictures, stories, poems and any other work produced as part of their use of the resource.

Online communities lend themselves to improving communication about the shared interest, so that perhaps a termly Rory e-newsletter would help sustain and build connections. Supporting Rory online would take AFS staff time; to keep an online resource live and encourage colleagues to share practice requires support. Thinking of Rory online as sitting at the heart of a community of practitioners leads us to the final point to consider.

## **vii. Build a network of Rory ambassadors**

AFS would like to increase the numbers of Local Authorities, schools and teachers engaging with Rory. To do this would not only require a level of staffing within AFS to promote the resource, deliver training and provide support (for example through an online resource) but could also usefully consider the use of a network of Rory ambassadors, made up of practicing teachers who know the resource, use it and understand why it is successful. Rory ambassadors might have a role to play in spreading the word about Rory by engaging in initial conversations with colleagues in other schools about the resource, by attending parts of training programmes where they can talk about how they have used Rory and dealt with some of the challenges which colleagues new to the resource identify. Perhaps they could be available online to respond to queries or questions about practice. Again, such an initiative requires staff support so that ambassadors feel supported, engaged and empowered.

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<sup>3</sup> GLOW is Scotland's national intranet for schools. It provides a space for personalised programmes of work and a place to share thinking on a particular issue as well as curricular resources. All teachers and children should be able to access GLOW through their own account. Although use of GLOW has differed across Local Authorities and decisions are to be made about future of the initiative there is likely to be continued investment by Scottish Government. <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/usingglowandict/glow/whatis/index.asp>