



supporting disabled children & their families

Parents Connected

ISSUE 6

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All Change for the Family Information Service

For a while now it has been felt that the name of the Service does not really reflect the work that is done or the variety and nature of the Service. It is not just about giving information but is so much more...

The Service does provide information but also

- Directly supports parents and families
- Sets up and facilitates support groups and drop-ins
- Advises on a whole range of issues affecting families
- Attends review meetings with parents
- Supports and advises on education issues
- Listen to parents fears, anxieties and needs
- Delivers training with multi agency partners

So to reflect this - the name is changing to...

Family Advice Service

...and we will have a new logo to launch the Service.

We are hoping that a change in name to reflect the much wider service we offer, will help us to attract long term funding to ensure it's continuity and stability.

Sadly at the time of writing we have a significant shortfall in the money we need to run the Service as it is now. The Trustees have had to acknowledge that as things currently stand the Service is at **CRITICAL RISK** because of its lack of funding.

Therefore, we have made the very difficult decision, that unless the necessary funding comes in we will need to substantially reduce the service we can offer from 1st October.

So we are hoping our members can support us by talking about what we do, why the service is so important and even contacting your local and County Councillors to get our name in their view.

SERVICE DIRECTORS REPORT



If you are anything like me you'll have your fingers crossed that the recent lovely spring weather is not going to constitute our summer and that we still have plenty of warmth and sunshine to come. It's a particularly busy time at the Parents Consortium as the planning for Kidscamp and the Summer Play Schemes goes into overdrive and it's with some relief that the recent funding uncertainties we faced in that particular area have sorted themselves out.

To save sending out lots of unnecessary paperwork we are asking you to express an interest at this stage for the play schemes. From there we will contact you with further details and booking forms so please do check those details out on the Leisure Services page.

In my now 20 years involvement in the voluntary sector I've never known a time such as this. Uncertainty continues to be in the air and we are facing a difficult period as the squeeze on public sector funding becomes a reality. That's not the whole story and the fact is that many of our projects and activities receive no funding from the Local Authority and we are very reliant on the success of securing grants right through to the generosity of a whole range of organisations, businesses and individuals - who, to make it very clear, keep these running. We are constantly challenged to raise funds to keep them going and have felt, for some time, that we need to get better in the role we play in bringing greater success to that whole range of fundraising efforts.

This extends to recruiting Patrons who might be from the world of celebrities through to business people with the key skills that can support an organisation that has become increasingly complex to run. That commitment of time, energy and expertise will be invaluable and inevitably we can't escape the reality that it will also raise us lots of money to ensure those vital projects which are so important to you and your families can continue.

So I'm pleased to make two announcements. Firstly to welcome Portal Tax Claims as our first business Patron, and secondly in also welcoming Denise Ward-Corderoy to the Parents Consortium. We have as I've said for some time wanted to look at how we can become more community focussed on generating funds and support for the work we do, and to take this forward Denise has recently taken on the role as the Fundraising Officer.

For sure you will be hearing lots more in the coming weeks and months from Denise on how you can help us with that and, for starters, you will find details in this edition of Parents Connected of an event she has scheduled for the 18th September - so please do put that date in the diary.

Moving on, you will recall, in the last newsletter that I set out the thoughts of our Chair, Margaret, following the recent AGM and highlighted how we needed to plan and map the future direction of the Parents Consortium, taking into account new expectations and a whole new breed of parents who will inevitably bring new ideas about what the Organisation should be looking to do for the next generation.

Now I've got to be honest in saying you've let me down a bit and I know you can do better so, I'd like once again to urge you as those with the most vested interest in seeing this organisation achieve new found successes, to consider taking on a more proactive role.

In particular at this moment in time, we want to recruit more Trustees. If this is something you would feel able to commit to, please do give me a call. We are not talking about press ganging anyone, so this will just be a chat so I can outline what it entails and from there if it interests you, we will support your introduction to working on the Board....please do give it some serious thought.

Now I tend not to finish on a downer but unfortunately the opening of the Dragon's Retreat has been hit with yet another setback on the discovery of some rather dirty brown water coming out of our hot and cold water supply. I won't bore you all with the detail but it's to do with rust deposits in the galvanised pipe work. So we now need to get this sorted and the really disappointing news is that the opening of the Dragon's Retreat will need to be put on hold until this is rectified.

It doesn't mean the work stops in getting the service registered with OFSTED. We will be finalising all the furniture and equipment installation so we really are keeping our fingers crossed that it will finally be ready and delivering over night short breaks in the very near future.

Kidsclub - Allsworth Court

This club runs on Thursday evenings (term time only). Sessions run from 4.30pm - 6pm and are open to members aged 5 - 11yrs inclusive. A waiting list is in operation.

Kidsclub - Sprints

Kidsclub based at Sprints Youth Centre, Northfleet, runs on Wednesday evening (term time only). Sessions run from 5pm - 6.30pm and are open to members aged 5 - 11yrs inclusive. There is plenty to do at this club including games in the sports hall and a variety of activities happening in every corner upstairs! We currently have spaces at this club.

Youth Club - Allsworth Court

The Youth Club at Allsworth Court runs term time only on Wednesday evenings. The club is open to member's aged 12 - 19 and runs from 5 - 7pm. We currently have spaces at this club.

Young people may attend a Youth Club at Sprints by calling Northfleet Youth Centre directly on 01474 351451.

No personal care can be provided at these clubs.

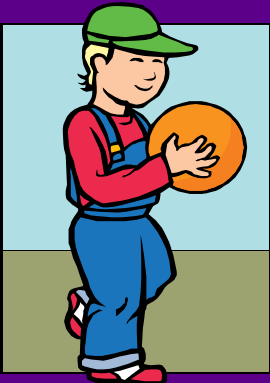
Siblings Club

Our Siblings Club is still running very successfully at Cascades Leisure Centre on a Saturday morning 10am- 12pm for young people aged 5 - 11 yrs and 1pm - 3pm for 12 - 17 yrs. Please contact office for details.

All club places are subject to a completed support plan. If you require a support plan or any further information please contact the LS office on 01322 665474

Kidscamp Summer 2011

Summer Kidscamp will be operating this year and information will be sent out shortly on how to book places.



Summer Playscheme 2011

Please note that to save money on sending out unnecessary paperwork we are requesting that parents contact us to express an interest in your child/young person attending.

Please see below a list of dates and venues. If you are interested in the scheme please contact the Leisure Services on 01322 665474 or email leisureadmin@parentsconsortium.co.uk for a booking form which we will then send or email out to you.

For young people who do not access KidscampSUMMER PLAYScheme 2011

Monday 25 th - Friday 29 th July	White Oak Leisure Centre, Swanley 9am - 4pm	8-13yrs - £8 per day
Monday 1 st - Friday 5 th August	Cascades Leisure Centre Gravesend	8-15yrs £8 per day
Monday 8 th - Friday 12 th August	Cascades Leisure Centre Gravesend	5-7yrs - £8 per day
Monday 15 th - Friday 19 th August	Cascades Leisure Centre Gravesend	8-15yrs - £8 per day
Monday 22 nd - Friday 26 th August	The Bridge Dartford	5-9yrs - £8 per day

Please note:

Places will be allocated on a first come first serve basis.

INFORMATION SERVICE

ADHD Support Group News

Our ADHD Support Group in Gravesend takes place between 10 am and 12 noon in the Family Room at Raynehurst Community Primary School, Cerne Road, Gravesend, DA12 4BN.

Dates are as follows:

Tuesday 6th September

Tuesday 11th October

Tuesday 29th November

We also have a group in Dartford who meet at Family Action, 16 Larch Road. DA1 2LF.

Dates are as follows:

Wednesday 21st Sept 2011

Wednesday 9th November 2011

This Group runs from 10 am—12 noon

Additional sessions for the Autism and Asperger Group Gravesend.

Parents asked if we could consider holding this group each month in Gravesend. Riverside Children's Centre have been kind enough to offer us a room to facilitate this. Therefore as from September 2011 this group will meet on a monthly basis.

Autism and Aspergers Support Group

These informal and friendly groups are held at The Riverside Centre, Dickens Road, Gravesend and Family Action, 16 Larch Road, Dartford. DA1 2LF

Forthcoming dates for Gravesend are:

Wednesday 14th September 2011

Wednesday 19th October 2011

Wednesday 16th November 2011

Wednesday 14th December 2011

This group runs from 10:30—12:30

Forthcoming dates for Dartford are:

Tuesday 13th September 2011

Tuesday 1st November 2011

This Group runs from 10 am—12 noon





Please welcome the latest addition to the Information Team. Our Information Co-ordinator Donna gave birth to little Riley back in February.

Joint Drop-in with KPPN (Kent Parent Partnership Network)

We will be holding a Drop-in session on Thursday 30th June at Gravesend Community Hospital, Bath Street, Gravesend from 10am–12 noon. This is an opportunity to drop-in to discuss any issues relating to your child's disability.



Our Facebook Page is updated regularly with news about Support Groups, Clubs, Information, Events and anything that may be of interest. Just press the Like button to receive regular updates.

Sleep Problems

Sleep deprivation can have a devastating effect on families. Disabled children are more likely to have sleep problems than other children. Often there are simple measures that can be put into place to help to overcome the difficulty.

Common causes of sleep problem include:

- Too much sugary food during the day
- Becoming too hot or too cold
- Being hungry or thirsty
- Having a nappy that needs changing
- Experiencing bad dreams
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Unwell
- Uncomfortable

What might help

- Make the bedroom a relaxing place
- Keep a sleep diary
- Have a regular bedtime routine

For more information please go to:

<http://www.scope.org.uk/help-and-information/cerebral-palsy-and-associated-impairments/sleep-difficulties-children>



Can you help?

We are looking for the following items for our garden here at

Allsworth Court:

Water Butt

Artificial flowers

Chinese lanterns

And as always.....

Volunteers to help maintain the garden.



12 Seater

Accessible Minibus

For Hire

If you would like to hire our minibus, please
contact the general office on
01322 668501.

Family Day Out

Following the success of previous Family Day Trips, we are hoping to offer a trip to Whipsnade Zoo or Colchester Zoo on Saturday September 24th.

There will be limited places available which will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Therefore, can you please let us know if you would like to put your name down for this event and number of family members. Due to the limited number of spaces, we can only offer this to the disabled person and immediate family. There will be a nominal charge for each person, to be decided once funding is secured.

To express your interest, can you please email fundraising@parentsconsortium.co.uk or alternatively call Denise Ward-Corderoy on 01322 668501 option 5

I would like to introduce myself to those who don't already know me. My name is Denise Ward-Corderoy and I have recently joined the Parents Consortium as a Fundraising Officer. Some of you may already know my daughter, Nicole, who is fortunate enough to access some of the wonderful activities provided. I know only too well the importance of these services and how the fundraising activities by all can help to keep these going. We are always on the lookout for new ideas to make money, or if you would like to support us, then email me on fundraising@parentsconsortium.co.uk or call me on 01322 668501 option 5. I would love to hear from you. I would also like to stress that just by signing the Gift Aid forms, you can help us even more without it costing you anything. As long as one member of the family is working, then please do sign. If this is not the case, then mark this on the form and send back so we do not trouble you any further. Over the next few weeks, I shall be visiting the clubs and activities with Gift Aid forms where I can explain further. I look forward to meeting you all.

One such fundraising opportunity that we really need your help is on Sunday 18th September.



Kelly's Storage, who have a self storage warehouse in Erith, have set up a department devoted entirely to organising family orientated sporting events to raise money for local charities. They have offered to organise an event for The Parent's Consortium. A charity 10K/5K Run/Walk will be held in Joydens Wood on the 18th September and all money raised will be going directly to the Parents Consortium. This is a fantastic opportunity and we hope to raise as much money as possible to keep our services running. In order to do this, we desperately need our families, donors and workers to participate. You can run, walk or simply help us to marshall this event. The whole family is welcome, with an accessible 2K walk for families and wheelchairs, picnic areas and entertainment. To register for the event, please logon to www.kellystore.org. If you would like some more information or wish to volunteer on the day, please contact me at fundraising@parentsconsortium.co.uk or call me on 01322 668501 option 5. Posters and Flyers will be coming to a door near you !!

Other Fundraising Events For Your Calendar

Saturday June 4th, A big thank you to Sam Dowler, one of our sessional workers who participated in the aptly named 'Hell Rider' event and raised valuable funds for the Parents Consortium. If you would still like to donate then logon to :

www.justgiving.com/SamDowlerPC



Friday September 16th, we are pleased to be organising our 12th Annual Golf Day at Lullingstone Park Golf Club. If you would like to support this event either by coming along for a game of golf, sponsoring a hole or donating a prize, please contact Lee Manning on 01322 665474.



Something Special magazine launched in April 2011.
 A monthly magazine based on the CBeebies television programme
 Something Special.
 Especially for children with learning and communication difficulties.
 Uses MAKATON signs and symbols.

Protac Ball Blanket

The Protac Ball Blanket originated in Denmark. It is a blanket filled with loose balls that are used to help stimulate the sensory system, including the sense of touch and body awareness. The adult blanket provides the most weight (approx 7kg) therefore helps to provide the strongest stimulation whereas the junior blanket is somewhat lighter at 3.5kg for those who need a milder stimulation.



the autism show

24-25 June 2011 | ExCeL, London
 Connecting the Autism Community

in partnership with
 Hesley Group

in association with



The Autism Show has been launched for the estimated two million people in the UK who live and work with autism on a daily basis but all too often don't know where to turn for answers. As we enter an era of austerity in public services, this need has never been greater.

More details can be found online online at:

<http://www.autismshow.co.uk/>

A big thank you to all the organisations and individuals who have generously supported us.....

- Erith Contractors LTD - £250.00.
- Continued Support from Probus - £189.00
- Colin Sanders of Magic Fountains who kindly replaced old equipment within the garden.
- The HOP Farm Family Park - Donation of a family ticket
- Walnut Hill Nurseries Ltd who donated an amazing selection of plants for our multi-sensory garden
- Golfwear 4 Birdies, Bromley who kindly donated a Golf Bag for our upcoming Golf Day on September 16th.
- Dartford Lions Club - £725.00 towards Easter KidsCamp .
- Mrs Gill Fish who kindly hosted some hospitality events raising a sum of £520.00.
- Lumos who following a training visit to Allsworth Court donated £100.00
- HES Stuart Greener - £200.00 support from 2010 Golf Day
- Ashley Weller - Golf Vouchers for the 2010 Golf Day
- David Hobbs - Golf Vouchers for the 2010 Golf Day
- Rev Tim Crome and Sheila Sanderson - £38.94, Christmas tree event
- Ladbrokes PLC - £1000.00 towards our Short Breaks Unit
- Glaxo - £150.00 vouchers
- Chris Watson from Safety Glass Industries - who helped tremendously with free work and advice on our minibus.
- Lee Tuppins from Stanford Coach - also for their tremendous work and advice on our minibus.
- Simon at ABC IT Computers, Barnehurst for their excellent IT Support.

**northern
rock**

In April, Jane Hopkins, Business Development Manager for Northern Rock, organised a virtual Easter Egg Hunt and encouraged friends and colleagues to take part. People paid £1 per entry and chose a town from a pre-prepared list where they thought the Easter Egg was hidden. The towns then went into a draw and one lucky winner went away with a fantastic Fair Trade Easter Egg.

The competition raised £100 from the entries and this amount will be matched by the Northern Rock Foundation giving a grand total of £200.

For further information about Northern Rock's mortgages, savings and insurance products please log on to www.northernrock.co.uk or pop into the Bromley branch at 36 Market Square, Bromley BR1 1NF

PLEASE NOTE

While every care is taken with the newsletter, the Parents Consortium can't be held responsible for any errors or omissions, nor accept any responsibility for any goods or services mentioned.

The Parents Consortium

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Telephone: 01322 668501

Email: admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk

Website: www.parentsconsortium.co.uk

Charity No: 1054129

The Parents Consortium was established in 1996 by parents who believed that services for disabled children would only be truly responsive if they were directly accountable to the parents, carers and young people themselves.

The young people who use our services are those with any form of physical, learning or sensory impairment. We provide appropriate activities for children of all abilities, which may mean full-time one-to-one support for some of the children. Above all, we provide lots of fun!

Our facilities are open to families, schools, hospitals and other organisations. We cater for parents and siblings too,

We are an independent charitable company, with membership open to parents/carers with a disabled child aged 0-19 living in the Dartford, Gravesham or Swanley areas.

Our funding comes through grants, donations, charitable giving and a supportive community/business sector working alongside Kent County Council Social Services.