

Social Networking

Hello everybody! By the time you are reading this I hope that the weather has warmed up and we can all enjoy some fun times outside. I'm really looking forward to not having cold hands and feet!

This edition of Wellspring is looking at the many ways of connecting with friends and finding like minded people online, an overview of these is just inside on page 2. I have reflected on my online friendships as well as real life ones; my article is on page 13. Page 2 also has information about online safety and page 6 has information about Cyberbullying. If you are a young person who enjoys writing, taking photos or making videos, why not post them on the Your Space blog? Details about this are on page 3. Don't forget to let us know too so we can mention you in the next newsletter!

If you enjoy leisure and sports have a look at page 6 to find out how to get your Compass Card for discounts at many facilities. For an opportunity to try fishing with Angling4Education, turn to page 15 where there are also details of the Pegasus Scheme run by Sussex Police. Branching Out is a new service provider for behaviour management, see page 12. Sullivan's Heroes may be able to help you fund adaptations to your house, details on page 11.

This newsletter also contains a special 4 page pull out section in the middle on **Money Matters** with information on different allowances, benefits and support with debts.

We are extremely pleased to have received a grant from the **Big Lottery Fund** for new Music and Poetry sessions run by Adam Gellibrand and Chris North. Turn to pages 4 and 5 to find out more and let us know if you have enjoyed a workshop!



WELLSPRING WEST SUSSEX
- A regular newsletter for children and young people with disabilities, and their parents and carers across West Sussex

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Big Lottery Fund for new Music and Poetry sessions run by Adam Gellibrand and Chris North. Turn to pages 4 and 5 to find out more and let us know if you have enjoyed a workshop!

Lizzie Baily

lizzie@wellspringwestsussex.org.uk

Wellspring is extremely grateful to the Chichester, Crawley and Worthing Lions and Sidlesham W.I. for their most generous donations which have enabled us to print both editions of the newsletter in 2016.



Also **THANK YOU** to the **BIG LOTTERY FUND** for supporting our Music and Poetry Project.



Social Media

Social media is a low cost way of sharing information for local and national support groups to raise awareness of their activities and to maintain links within the group.

Facebook allows users to create and customise a profile with photos, videos, and information about themselves. Users can then communicate with friends and keep up to-date with all their friends' interactions through Facebook's 'News Feed'. It is incredibly popular and used by a wide array of people. It is a great means of facilitating an interactive community.



Twitter enables users to send and read messages known as 'tweets'. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and visible to the author's 'followers'. Twitter is a good means of pushing out short messages quickly. It is easily used on mobile phones.



Blogs are online journals. People can also link their blogs to other websites and blog posts, and allow readers to comment on the original post, which enables ongoing discussions. Blogs are a good way of getting longer pieces of writing out into the wider world.



The 'comments' function can help start discussion and foster a community. There are several sites where you can set up blogs for free, **wordpress.com** and **www.blogger.com**

Youtube is a website on which users can upload and share videos. You may find a new audience, or reach people who are less comfortable using social media.



www.youtube.com

Google Groups - create online and email-based groups where you can have discussions, organise meetings, conferences, or social events among members of a group and read group posts via email, online interface, or both.



Google Hangouts where you can have a live video call with up to 10 friends or choose a contact to start a phone call from your computer. This free service may be especially useful for rare-condition support groups whose members live around the UK and beyond. **www.google.com**



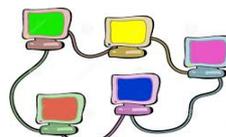
Information taken from Contact A Family – Group Action Pack – Social Networking
www.cafamily.org.uk/media/819593/group_action_pack_social_networking.pdf

Online Security

The nature of social networking means that it carries a degree of risk, interaction is often carried out between people who do not know each other. Blogs are public so be careful what you say and don't be tempted to vent feelings as your details could be discovered even if blogging under an assumed name. What is posted online stays online and may still be available somewhere even if deleted. Blogs are also subject to libel laws; posting something that is untrue about an individual or organisation could incur serious penalties.

It is important to remember -

- Never disclose private information.
- Be wary about who you invite or accept invitations from.
- Be careful about clicking on links in emails or social networking sites.
- People online are not necessarily who they say they are or seem to be.



Information taken from
www.getsafeonline.org
& **www.thinkuknow.co.uk**

Your Space

Your Space is a website run by West Sussex County Council for young people. The site has information on all aspects of life with links to other useful sources.

www.yourspacewestsussex.co.uk

The blog is where the Youth Voice of young people in West Sussex can be heard. It is designed to allow young people and professionals who work with young people the opportunity to showcase their achievements through writing posts for others to read.

Have your say and be heard...

On this blog young people in West Sussex can make their voices heard. Discuss topical issues with other young people in the forum or write their own blog.

Blog with us

Why not blog with us?! Provide us with information about what you have been up to, whether it be volunteering, working or just having fun with friends. We will then get in touch with you for any pictures you would like to add to your post. If you have videos on YouTube you would like to share with us then please just add the link in the comments box. Thanks and happy blogging!

www.yourspacewestsussex.me/blog-with-us/

Blog Safely

Blogging on Your Space can be fun, however, its important you follow a few simple guidelines so you stay safe online.

- Never publish your contact details online
- Be careful what you write in your blog. It doesn't take much to give away your identity

Here are a few handy hints:

Never give your full name, address, age, telephone number, or school/college you attend. Blog under a pretend name – it's much safer and can be more fun!

Think before you respond to other users

It's great to get comments posted on your blog because it shows people are reading them! However, remember the other user may not be who they claim to be. Someone claiming to be a teenager may be a middle-aged person.

Never plagiarise

Your blogs must be just that – yours! Blogs that are plagiarised will be removed from Your Space.

Do not post offensive blogs or comments

All offensive, obscene, sexist, racist or other dishonest or illegal content is prohibited.

Do not advertise your own or third party services

Reviews must not be used as free advertising. Please limit your comments to an evaluation of the organisation or service only.

Think carefully about

what you are writing

You may write something you later regret. Something that seems 'cool' now may not be so in a few years' time when you are applying for a job or further education. Try not to blog about personal relationships or work related issues. Don't lie and make up stories about others.

Images and video content – think before uploading

Posting images and video content are a great way to liven up your blog and share your experiences with your audience. However, remember, once published anyone can save and store this content. Before uploading anything ask yourself "Would I mind if my teacher, parent, social worker saw this?" If the answer is yes – best not upload.

If you have any queries about blogging, email:

editor@yourspacewestsussex.co.uk



Paint Pots of Music and Poetry

Wellspring is extremely pleased to announce that we have received a grant from the **Big Lottery Fund** to provide free music and poetry workshops to groups of disabled children and young people across the county. Chris North will be running the Poetry sessions while Adam Gellibrand will be leading Music workshops. See below for more information and how to book your school or group in for these exciting projects!



POETRY WORKSHOPS

In its broadest sense, poetry can be totally inclusive and we can use words, sounds, images and rhythms to 'paint pictures in our heads'. It enables children and adults to enjoy being creative together and experience the many flexible forms of poetry, music and movement in all its varied shapes and styles.

I'm passionate about the benefits of this approach and I use a variety of resources to make the sessions live!

Using both the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Key Stage guidelines as a focus, I:

- Use the rhythm of poetry and musical instruments (including voices) to encourage movement and enable participants to experience the feel and texture of the musical 'instruments' they're using to create the sounds.
- Use objects, sounds and words in poems to develop participants' understanding of their part of the world.
- Enjoy the excitement and fun of poetry to encourage listening and attention skills.
- Encourage the joy of poetry in its various forms to develop communication using various methods and resources familiar to the child or young person.
- Use poetry to build and encourage self-confidence, self-awareness and relationships.
- Choose particular poems - or ones we make up - to focus on things familiar to us and



explore them through music, movement and drama.

- Use opportunities for the contents of the sessions to be truly child or young person centred, to encourage confidence and also for everyone to see and hear their contributions to the session.

The needs and abilities of children and young people are diverse and the activities I provide are flexible and 'in the moment'.

My sessions encompass:

COMMUNICATION IN ITS BROADEST SENSE INCLUDING:

Awareness; speaking; listening; confidence; signing; relationships; experiencing different ways to communicate; using our 'selves' to communicate.

MOVEMENT INCLUDING:

Body awareness; marching; walking; skipping; crawling; hopping; sliding; slow & fast. For wheelchair users – fast, slow, backwards, forwards, round and round.



OUR SENSES.

Touch:
Surfaces we touch can be soft, smooth, tickly, bouncy, rough, wet, cold, hot.

I use a variety of fabrics and materials including bubble wrap; brown paper; tissue paper; silk; artificial fur.

Sound :

Using puppets and animals' sounds – cats

purr; dogs bark; lions roar; chickens cluck;
owls hoot; worms slither or slide; fish splash.

Using bowls of water children can:
pour; splash; flick; drip drop; lap
lap; swish.

Bubble wrap can pop and crackle;
like fireworks; a crackling fire.

Musical instruments can scrape;
shake; clang; bang; ding-a-ling, (all
of these are just a few examples).

Sight:
Bubbles; rainbows; colours;
shapes; people we know; things around us.

OURSELVES INCLUDING:

Brushing our teeth; washing our faces and
hands; combing our hair etc.

FUN AND ENJOYMENT:

The aim of the session is to provide a positive,
affirming and fun-time, during which everyone
can feel good and happy about
what they're doing.

By the very nature of the diversity
and needs of the group I will
use a range of other varied
experiences to encourage
participation and concentration.
Poetry, rhythm and sensory
experiences will be included in
these activities too.



Chris North

Chris has already been booked for some
Poetry workshops but has 8 sessions
remaining so book in NOW to avoid
disappointment!

Email: chris@fun61418.wanadoo.co.uk
Tel: 01243 774392

MUSIC WORKSHOPS

The sessions run by local Music
Leader Adam Gellibrand will offer a
number of cool music tech activities,
bringing a portable recording studio
to the groups and venues that take
part. We have already run some
taster sessions locally and the results
have been very productive and
creative. The young people wrote
their own lyrics, recorded vocals and
built their own songs with our music
software.



We have our vocal coach Kay
Whiteley on hand for singing and
also have recruited Joe Hewings, a
music tech student from Northbrook
College and brilliant young musician
to help with some of our sessions.

The workshops will give disabled
young people supported access
to equipment such as Logic Pro (a
comprehensive music production
workstation on Mac based systems),
DJ Decks, professional microphones

and recording equipment. We aim to create a
song or rap with each group and create a CD
or mp3 for them to keep.

We have a limited number of funded sessions
available for the year and they are getting
booked up fast so take advantage of this
opportunity and give us a call!

If you are interested in finding out more please
get in touch with Adam.

Email: apgellibrand@hotmail.co.uk
Tel: 07977 715263.



One of our latest
artists who will be
leading some Beat
Boxing workshops
is Dom McMahon
aka 'Krystal Gob'
who is a UK Beat
Box Finalist and
one of the best in

the country. Dom also writes and creates
his own music and alongside Music Leader
Adam Gellibrand he delivers very professional
workshops.



Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying on social networks can happen to any child, but research shows that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are more likely to experience it.

Some tips to help deal with the bullying

- Identify the bully or bullies if you can.
- Stop responding.
- Block the bully.
- Report the bullying to the social network.
- Take a screenshot or photo of the bullying, and speak to the police - it may be a criminal offence.

If the bullies attend your child's school, report the bullying to the head teacher. Schools have a legal duty of care towards their pupils. They must also have a behaviour policy which outlines measures to encourage good behaviour. Some schools have a separate anti-

bullying policy which must be made available to parents, and may be on the school website.

Information taken from www.cafamily.org.uk/news-and-media/dealing-with-cyberbullying-what-every-parent-should-know/

The Breck Foundation has been set up in the memory of Breck Bednar, a 14 year old boy from Caterham, Surrey, who loved technology and on-line gaming. He was groomed via the internet and sadly murdered on February 17th 2014 by someone he met on-line. It's aim is to help other young people to enjoy playing on-line but to be aware of some simple rules to stay safe. Remembering that the friends you make on-line are not like your real friends. "Play Virtual/Live Real".

www.breckfoundation.org

Compass Card

A new initiative from Amaze and West Sussex County Council will help make leisure more welcoming and more affordable for 0-25s with additional needs living or going to school in West Sussex. Modelled on the Compass Card in Brighton and Hove (recognised nationally as a model of best practice), Compass Card West Sussex provides discounts and special offers at dozens of facilities.

You can find out about all the latest offers by downloading the Compass Card West Sussex app to your iPhone or Android phone. It's free, quick to download and simple to use. Just search 'compass card' in the Apple App Store or Google Play. The app lets you filter offers by location, age and leisure type and you can map where everything is too.

You'll need to fill in one of the Compass West Sussex registration forms – but make sure you choose the right one for your child's age – the 0-17 year old version, or the 18-25 year old version (eligibility ends on 25th birthday). You'll find the forms on this page and will need to print them out to complete them.

If you have any queries, email CompassWSx@amazebrighton.org.uk or call Amaze on **0300 123 9186**.

To be eligible for Compass Card West Sussex, children or young people will need to be 0-25 years old (membership expires on 25th birthday); and have a disability or special educational need that has a significant effect on daily living (usually that means they'll be eligible for DLA or PIP and/or have an EHC Plan or moving on plan). They'll also need to be living or going to school in West Sussex, or being 'looked after' by West Sussex County Council's social services. Amaze will manage West Sussex County Council's 'disability register' for 0-25s and it's joining the register ('The Compass West Sussex') that will entitle children and young people with significant additional needs to Compass Card West Sussex. All data will be subject to strict Data Protection legislation.

Go to <http://amazebrighton.org.uk/services-and-support/the-compass-card/compass-card-west-sussex/> for more information.



Money Matters

Benefits

Carers Allowance

This allowance is £62.10 a week to help you look after someone with substantial caring needs. You don't have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for. You must be 16 or over, spend at least 35 hours a week caring for them, not earn more than £110 a week (after taxes, care costs while you're at work and 50% of what you pay into your pension) and not be in full-time education. The person you care for must be getting the daily living component of PIP or the middle or highest rate care component of DLA. Carer's Allowance is taxable and can also affect other benefits.



Disability Living Allowance

This is a tax free benefit for children made up of two components, care and mobility. It is not means tested and the child may qualify for one or both parts. It may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who is under 16 and has difficulties walking or needs more looking after than a child of the same age who doesn't have a disability. They will need to meet all the eligibility requirements.

Personal Independence Payment

PIP is a tax free benefit for adults aged 16 to 64 and helps with some of the extra costs caused by long-term ill-health or a disability. It is not means tested and can be paid whether you are in or out of work and



consists of a daily living component and a mobility component, you may qualify for one or both parts. PIP uses a points-based system to decide whether someone qualifies for the benefit, and if so, at what rate. As well as completing claim forms most people will also be asked to attend a face to face assessment with a health care professional.

Council Tax

The three main schemes that can help to reduce the amount of council tax you are expected to pay are:

- the disability reduction scheme - if someone in your household is 'substantially and permanently disabled' you may qualify for a reduction in the banding of your council tax bill
- council tax discounts - council tax bills are always based on the assumption that there are at least two adults in the household. Some occupants are not counted for council tax purposes, for example children under 18, therefore a single parent with children under 18 would qualify for the 25% single person's discount.
- local council tax reduction schemes – these are means tested to help people on low incomes with their council tax bill, each local area operates an individual scheme.

Contact your local council to see if you are eligible for any of these schemes.

Housing Benefit

Help to pay your rent if you're on a low income. Housing benefit can pay

for part or all of your rent. How much you get depends on your income and circumstances. This can be paid whether you're unemployed or working. If you are a council or housing association tenant, your housing benefit will be cut if you have more bedrooms than your family is seen as needing.

This is commonly described as 'the bedroom tax'.

While the housing benefit rules allow for an extra bedroom that is used by carers looking after a disabled adult, the rules do not currently allow for an additional bedroom that is needed by an overnight carer looking after a disabled child.

However, in January 2016 the Court of Appeal in the Rutherford case found that treating a room used by a child's overnight carer as a 'spare room' discriminated against disabled children needing an overnight carer.

As a result of this case, the government will now have to either change the bedroom tax rules to allow for extra rooms used by overnight carers or appeal the Rutherford decision at the Supreme Court.

If you are affected by the bedroom tax because of this issue further advice can be obtained from the free helpline at Contact A Family **0808 808 3555** Monday to Friday 9.30am - 5pm



Universal Credit (UC)

This is a new benefit for people of working age and will replace most of the means tested benefits for those people. It will be paid both to people who are out of work and to those in employment. Currently families with a child on DLA or PIP are exempt from UC in most parts

of the UK. The only exceptions to this are in areas where a UC 'digital service' applies. In a digital service area, a family with a disabled child will be asked to claim UC if they try to make a new claim for one of the means-tested benefits or tax credits that UC is replacing.

For example, if they lose their job and try to claim income support, they will be asked to claim UC instead. This UC claim will then also replace any housing benefit and tax credits they also receive. There is a roll out programme for UC for 2016 which includes 38 job centres across the country. Once the digital service is extended to these job centres, then anyone in that area making a new claim for a means-tested benefit or tax credits - including families with a disabled child - will be asked to claim UC instead.

It is expected to apply to new claimants in all areas by June 2018.

For the time being, existing claimants of the benefits that UC is replacing will not be affected if they do not try to make a new claim - even if they live in a digital service area. However, between 2018

and 2021 the government intends to move all existing claimants of means-tested benefits and tax credits onto UC.

Information taken from www.gov.uk and Contact A Family.

Please see these websites for more details about eligibility and the rates payable for these benefits or phone the free helpline at Contact A Family on **0808 808 3555**

www.gov.uk/carers-allowance

www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance

www.gov.uk/pip

www.gov.uk/housing-benefit

www.cafamily.org.uk

Challenging Benefit Decisions

If you want to change a DWP benefit decision, you have to ask the DWP to look at the decision again before you can appeal. This is called mandatory reconsideration. You must normally ask for a DWP decision to be looked at again within one month of the date of the decision. Check the decision letter for details of how to apply for a mandatory reconsideration.

If you disagree with the outcome of the reconsideration, you can then appeal directly to an independent tribunal. You must send a written appeal directly to HM Courts and Tribunal Service, not to the DWP. This is known as direct lodgement.

If you decide to appeal, your appeal must arrive at the Tribunal Service within one month of the date on your mandatory reconsideration notice. For decisions made by HMRC the time limits for mandatory reconsiderations are:

- 30 days from the date of the decision for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit decisions

- one month from the date of the decision for Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance decisions. Information taken from **www.gov.uk** and **www.citizensadvice.org.uk**

Information about Debt

Priority Debts

- Mortgage
- Rent
- Council tax
- Gas & electricity
- Magistrates' court fines
- Parking penalty charges
- Child maintenance
- Social Fund loans
- Benefit overpayments
- Tax credit overpayments
- Tax debts
- Hire purchase/conditional sale
- TV licence

Non-Priority Debts

- credit-card debts
- personal loans
- bank & building society loans
- charge cards
- catalogues
- personal debts to friends and family
- doorstep-collected loans
- payday loans
- water rates
- business debts



Priority debts are those that carry the most serious consequences if you don't pay them, they are not necessarily the largest debts or the ones with the highest interest rate. The consequences of not paying non-priority debts are less serious.

Budgeting is important because it helps you:

- see what money you have coming in;
- see what money you have going out;
- pay your essential bills on time;
- work out payments to any debts you may have; and
- plan your future spending.

If you are struggling with debt it can be hard to know where to turn. There are lots of free confidential help and advice services available across the UK, there's no need to use a fee-charging debt management company.

It is never too late to get advice.

Sources of Help

National Debtline: 0808 808 4000
www.nationaldebtline.org

Citizens Advice:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Free, independent, confidential and impartial debt advice through their web chat service.

Step Change: www.stepchange.org
Online service providing expert advice, budget support and solutions for managing debt.

Turn2us is a charity that helps people in financial need get access to benefits, charitable grants and other financial help.

www.turn2us.org.uk or **0808 802 2000**

Healthy Start
www.healthystart.nhs.uk

With Healthy Start, you get free vouchers every week to spend on milk, plain fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, and infant formula milk. You can also get free vitamins. Pregnant or have children under the age of four? You could qualify if you're on benefits, or if you're pregnant and under 18.

Budgeting loans are available to claimants who have been on an income-related benefit for at least 26 weeks. The loans help cover costs of essential items for which it is difficult to budget
www.gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits

Lions Clubs

Lions Clubs were founded in Chicago in America in 1917 by a business man called Melvin Jones who organised a group of business men to club together and with their expertise collect money for charitable causes. This project has grown throughout the world and we have an LCIF project which is supported by all Lions Clubs – we send money to America and if there is an international emergency, money is available immediately from the LCIF fund – Lions are often the first on the scene for earthquakes, flooding etc., we have water purifying facilities which are immediately available in these kind of emergencies, taking dirty water and processing it so that it is drinkable. There are Lions Clubs throughout the world and although each one is autonomous we support a variety of projects which improve and benefit all. One of these is LIBRA (this stands for Lions International Blood Research). You can find more details



regarding this specific project on the web and Lions clubs all over the UK support this. Internationally we have supported sight related projects for many years, starting with our close association with Helen Keller when the Lions instigated the use of the 'white stick'. Chichester Lions have a workshop at Apuldram where old spectacles are sent to us, not only from Lions Clubs, but from Opticians, and other charities; these spectacles are graded and eventually find their way to developing countries, details of this project can be found on our website www.chilionsorg.uk

All Clubs are involved in local fund raising so that money can be donated back into the community. Many of these donations do not hit the headlines because the people concerned have social problems and are off the radar. We have a District website which is www.lions105SE.org.uk

*Corina Hall
Chichester Lions*

Sullivan's Heroes

Sullivan's Heroes charity launches, to build brighter futures for disabled children

A new charity, which has been set up to help fund home adaptations for disabled children, has recently launched.

The idea of Sullivan's Heroes was born during the process of Fiona and Richard Smith adapting their own property for their disabled son, Sullivan.

Discovering there was little in the way of financial assistance for families and their disabled children who require these essential adaptations to live comfortably and safely in their homes, they subsequently set about fundraising through various initiatives to meet the costs of the adaptations. Tragically, Sullivan passed away in January 2015 shortly before the work on their home was completed. Since then, Fiona and Richard have strived to build brighter futures for other families in their son's memory through the vital fundraising work of Sullivan's Heroes.

As well as fundraising to provide grants for families towards their child's home adaptations, where the costs exceed that of a council grant awarded – a situation which happens all too often; the charity also provides a website platform where families can facilitate their own fundraising towards the building costs.

Sullivan's Heroes are seeking donations from individuals and companies alike to ensure ongoing grants can be met for families and their children. They are delighted to already have received enormous support from ethical pet retailer Pets Corner with the help of a £6,000 donation, plus a further pledge from the company to donate £5,000 per year.

Other companies have also generously donated both funds and resource, such as Hawkeye Design who built the charity's website; Treetop Design and Print who have produced promotional material; Watson Associates and InVent Health. The charity have also received support from individuals undertaking sponsored events and activities. Sullivan's Heroes are very excited to already have two families signed up who they are helping in fundraising towards their child's new fully accessible bedroom and bathroom, and they look forward to helping many more families in the future.



Richard Smith said "It has taken us over 18 months to overcome all the hurdles to get Sullivan's Heroes off the ground, but we are absolutely delighted that we have now been able to realise this incredibly important resource in our son's memory for families who are in the same situation we were, with nowhere to turn.

He added "We don't have the skills to save lives, but we certainly have the ability to change lives and that is what we are setting out to do, just like the many people who have helped us as parents and Sullivan throughout his life."

Fiona and Richard would like to thank all those that have helped them get to this point, and please do get in touch with them if you have any fundraising events, activities and ideas you'd like to share; or if you would like to apply for a grant or to fundraise through Sullivan's Heroes.

To find out more about Sullivan's Heroes or to donate, please visit: www.sullivansheroes.org

Branching Out

Branching Out is a specialist service provider for children and teenagers needing social skills development and behaviour management strategies. The service has been developed to benefit children who are academically able with some subjects at school and require support and teaching to understand the social world. Branching Out applies the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) to systematically teach a variety of social skills which will then be actively translated into their everyday life. ABA is a teaching format primarily used as an early intervention programme for children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. The effectiveness of this method of teaching for such individuals has been validated by multiple research, follow up and replication studies. As an ABA therapist for over six years I have observed the benefits and have been impressed by the gains achievable.

When working as an ABA consultant I specialised in the advanced level of early intervention (the levels of programming include early, intermediate and advanced). In some cases, their abilities would increase to the level the support would begin to be phased out. When a child's support is being reduced the importance to generalise the skills they have learnt are at the upmost importance. Children learning at this level will typically understand some subjects taught at school especially the subjects that have a concrete understanding such as maths and science. The topic utilised to the highest degree in everyday life, and continually changing remains the biggest challenge: social skills.

One of the biggest challenges when teaching social skills is that social rules develop and grow over time, and change depending on the child's environment. Branching Out's services teach social independence. This is not just to teach a child the social skills in their current everyday life, but to teach them to continue to learn these skills without support.

I believe that a child otherwise indistinguishable from their peers, but with limited social understanding can be in a more vulnerable position in the community. At the level where children and teenagers are beginning to be accepted in social groups, without any outwardly obvious difficulties they can be more susceptible to negative interactions. This is why I am dedicated to providing the teaching and support to bridge this gap in their understanding of the world at large.

In the format of an after school tutor and/or a school support assistant, a specialist consultant in social communication and behaviour management trains the family and team to implement a teaching method that is the most effective for the individual concerned, providing supervision to progress the programme as their skills develop. 'Branching Out'

focuses on teaching social skills building blocks with the object of achieving independence for the learner.

Areas that may require development include, understanding other people's perspectives, the ability to imitate others to a high degree (such as intonation, emotions and body language), visualisation (this skill is an effective tool to gather knowledge based on clues presented), and regulated emotions. The ultimate aim to free the recipient to branch out into society.

"Thank you for all your help with our daughter. You have helped her grow in confidence and make the world less confusing. By giving her practical strategies and techniques which she can use on a daily basis to help her overcome difficult situations and anxieties, life has become easier for her. Due to your input she has blossomed into a happy, confident child who is doing well at school and with her friends. We can't thank you enough."

A Parent

Further information can be found on our website www.branchingoutcommunication.com or by contacting us directly.

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Email: branchingoutcomms@outlook.com

Holly Smith BSc



Lizzie's Social Networks

*Make new friends
And keep the old,
One is silver
And the other's gold.*

childhood friends, now living in Australia and Spain who we hadn't seen for 20 years but they still remembered our childhood games. At this time we were also upheld by so many friends coming to visit us at home, helping with cooking, cleaning and keeping us cheerful.

This was a song we used to sing as a round when I was a Brownie. As the theme of this edition is Social Networking, I have been thinking about what this means.

Since I joined Facebook in 2007 I have been able to reconnect with lots of old friends around the country and other parts of the world. It's brilliant to keep in touch with school friends and see photos of their lives now, and how some people haven't changed a bit since they were eight years old! I feel I know my school friends' children and husbands even though we've never actually met!

I have made online friends with other people who have Congenital Muscular Dystrophy like me, as well as parents of children with the condition. I find this really helpful as we share experiences. I love connecting with the parents as we always wanted to know other people with Muscular Dystrophy when I was younger, when it was almost impossible to find out about other families. There are various groups on Facebook I have joined too, to keep up to date with developments and news in the disability world. I also love being part of groups where I can share thoughts on television programmes; I feel I know lots of people through the 'Addicted to Neighbours' group!!

When my older sister Alexandra died at the end of August last year, we were able to quickly let all our friends know in all parts of the world, in America, Germany and New Zealand to name a few, either by email or through Facebook. We were overwhelmed by the replies we received; many were from people we hadn't seen for years but all sent wonderful memories of times they had spent with us. We were particularly touched by messages from two



As I find it difficult to physically go out and meet friends, being able to communicate with everyone via my computer and phone is fantastic for me. One of my best friends Antje lives in Germany and we chat on Skype and email regularly but our best times are her holidays here. In December 2014, my best childhood friend Joanna got married and I was asked to be one of her bridesmaids with Alexandra my sister, and several of Joanna's other friends and family. This really was a golden day in our friendship history; as I was following her up and down the

aisle, I couldn't believe it was actually happening as we had often played weddings when we were children! I am very lucky that Joanna's husband Freddie has also become a very special family friend too. Joanna and I keep in contact regularly via text, Skype and Facebook. Both friends are very good at sending letters and cards by post which are so exciting to receive.

Facebook and other forms of online networking were developed at just the right time in my life and have enriched my friendships. I love to hear my text alert on my phone, I love getting messages and comments on Facebook, I love hearing Skype calls, I love letters in the post... I love my friends!! Most of all I am really thankful for all my special friends and cousins who do come and visit me and my family on a regular basis. Spending real time and sharing special times with friends, chatting, playing games and laughing is the richest form of support for me.

Lizzie Baily
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Reaching Families

Making Sense of Adult Life

Following on from the success of Reaching Families' parent guide Making Sense Of It All, the charity have now published a follow on book for parents of young people with special educational needs and disabilities making the transition to adult life.

The new book covers a range of subjects including adolescence and emotional life, benefits and money management, further education, training and employment, moving to adult health & social care, housing and independent living, social and leisure activities, etc. The book also contains a directory of over 400 local and national organisations and an extensive jargon buster.

Thanks to funding from two charitable foundations Reaching Families are now able to give both of their books to parents at no cost (other than £2.50 postage and packing). Both books are available to order from the charity's website:

www.reachingfamilies.org.uk

Making Sense of Adult Life

A guide to transition for parents of young people with special needs and disabilities in West Sussex



Reaching Families

Foreword by David Webb

Training Roadshow

- Our workshops are aimed at parents and carers of children with additional needs and/or disabilities
- We regret we cannot accommodate children at any of the workshops
- There is no charge for our workshops, however we welcome donations to contribute to the costs of running the sessions. We suggest a donation of £3

Making Sense of Challenging Behaviour

Explore ways to respond to your child so that positive behaviour is encouraged and challenging behaviours are reduced.

6th June 9:45am-12pm

Venue: **Bersted Community Centre, Bognor**

Understanding DLA & Recent Changes to Benefits

Understand Disability Living Allowance and the move to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) at 16.

16th June 9:45am-12pm

Venue: **Southwick Community Centre**

Making Sense of Support at School

SENDIAS will talk about what schools need to be doing if your child has SEN support. EHCP needs assessments and the Local Offer will also be covered.

22nd June 9:45am-12pm

Venue: **Broadfield Community Centre, Crawley**

Making Sense of Children's Sleep Difficulties

Identify types of sleep difficulty and look at ways that could help improve your child's sleep.

27th June 9:45am-12pm

Venue: **Woodlands Mead School, Burgess Hill**

To book a place on any of these workshops please call or email one of our training & outreach co-ordinators.

Email: admin@reachingfamilies.org.uk or call Charlotte: **07864 599474**

Rosemary: **07704 037664**

Michele: **07470 005734**

Reaching Families

Pegasus Scheme

If you have speech or communication difficulties, registering for a Pegasus card could help you in an emergency.

- You give us your details when you register with Pegasus which we save in a secure database.
- You will then be issued with a personal identification number (PIN) you can use when calling the police.
- If you need to call us, you tell us your PIN and we can access your details right away.
- This means that you don't have to spend time giving your name and details and you can quickly get on with telling us why you called.
- Pegasus is not just about contacting the police by phone, you can also show your card to a police officer, member of police staff or other emergency services staff should you require assistance in person.
- When you show the card to someone, this will let the officer or emergency services worker know that you may require additional help and support.

Who can register?

- Anyone who has a disability or illness that may make it hard to communicate with the police in an emergency or difficult situation can register for a Pegasus card.
- Registering for Pegasus is free and any information you give is held securely.
- Every year, we will contact you and check with you that your details on the database are correct.

- You may change or update your details at any time.
- The information you give will be stored securely and will help us to give you the best possible service.
- If you ask us, we will share your Pegasus information with other participating agencies e.g. East Sussex Fire and Rescue, South East Ambulance Service, West Sussex Fire and Rescue and local authorities.



What are the Pegasus terms and conditions?

- Your information will be stored on a database that is owned by Sussex Police.
- The database will be secure.
- Only some people will be able to access it, including police officers and staff working within the Control Room.
- We may share your details with other people, such as other emergency services, to enable them to help you.
- If you are under 18 years old then you must have your parent or guardian's consent.
- Once a year we will write to you to check the information.

To register for your Pegasus card, fill in the online form here: www.sussex.police.uk/contact-us/accessible-contact-methods/pegasus-scheme/

Angling4Education

This is a unique opportunity to learn how to fish, enjoy the natural environment and enjoy a series of exciting days out for children and young people with disabilities.

Angling4Education are proud to be offering this series of angling taster days throughout 2016-17.

Participants have an opportunity to give the sport a go and start to develop their knowledge, skills and experience in order to become successful anglers. All permits, licenses, equipment and bait are provided as well as light refreshments.

Course Dates and Times

All session run from 10:30am - 1:30pm
Wed 1st June - More House Farm Fishery
Thurs 2nd June - Mill Farm Fishery
Wed 10th August - More House Farm Fishery
Wed 17th August - Mill Farm Fishery
Wed 24th August - More House Farm Fishery
Wed 31st August - Mill Farm Fishery
Wed 26th October - More House Farm Fishery
Thurs 27th October - Mill Farm Fishery
Wed 22nd Feb 2017 - More House Farm Fishery

If you would like any more information regarding the courses or Angling4Education visit www.angling4education.com or contact us on:
Tel: 01273 968126 Mobile: 07795 410812
Email: info@angling4education.com

KnowledgePower Ltd & Wellspring

KnowledgePower provides advice about website accessibility and support for improving your website's usability.

Contact george@knowledgepowerltd.com with your website address for suggestions and support.

Wellspring Editor Lizzie and George @ KnowledgePower are working together to update our Parents' Resource Booklet published in 2009 and Transition Guide from 2011 and are making both available as an online directory of services on the Wellspring website.



We will be emailing all contacts to ensure all details are up to date. Visit www.wellspringwestsussex.org.uk/resource-directory.html to check your listing. If you would like your organisation, club, group or service listed in our directory and you haven't been in it previously, please email your full details to lizzie@wellspringwestsussex.org.uk

Wellspring West Sussex is online!
Visit www.wellspringwestsussex.org.uk
and let us know what you think!

You can "Like" Wellspring West Sussex on **Facebook** and keep up to date with events coming up!

Please support us through www.easyfundraising.org.uk - every time you shop on Amazon and many other sites, a percentage will be donated to us!

You can make a donation to us via Localgiving www.localgiving.com/wellspringwestsussex - £5 pays for 5 copies of the newsletter to be printed!

Please confirm that you would like to receive future copies of the newsletter in printed format or whether you are happy to be notified when the next newsletter is available to view on the website above. Send your Name, Postal address and email address with your preference to the address below or email lizzie@wellspringwestsussex.org.uk



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The **next edition** will be
Early Years + Money Matters Part 2
If you would like to contribute any articles or letters
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Wellspring West Sussex has a child protection policy in operation and copies can be made available on request. Any disabled child or young person in West Sussex who expresses concerns about what may be happening to them will be encouraged to contact one of the nominated agencies for help. This policy is also available on the website www.wellspringwestsussex.org.uk

The information here is for your guidance and is not a recommendation by Wellspring West Sussex. Comments expressed within Wellspring West Sussex do not necessarily reflect those of the committee or the funding agencies.