

Early Years



Hello everyone! I hope you have had a good year and this term has gone well for children, especially those starting school for the first time. Now that autumn has arrived and the weather has suddenly turned cold, I am really enjoying the hand heater on my new wheelchair. You can read more about this in my article on page 11.

This edition is full of information for families with children in the Early Years age bracket (0-5 years) and there is the second pull out booklet on financial support starting on page 7.

The Family Information Service is able to offer support for finding the right childcare, and other activities for pre-school children as well as for all families. More information just inside on page 2. There are some useful groups listed on page 14 taken from the Local Offer - a fantastic online directory listing services and events near you. For details on this go straight to page 15! Chris North has been busy running poetry workshops for Portage groups funded by a grant we received from the Big Lottery Fund. Chris has told us about some of the sessions on page 4 with feedback from Worthing Portage on page 5.

Reaching Families have recently produced a set of factsheets which are on their website and they are running more training workshops in the new year - details on page 13.

If you know a family with a child who has Down Syndrome turn to page 6 for details of the Chichester area support group.

Do you need your children cared for while you do your Christmas shopping? Hop, Skip and

Jump in Swan Walk, Horsham can offer immediate respite - turn to page 12.

Wishing you all a good end to 2016, a very Happy Christmas and don't forget to write to Wellspring if you do anything exciting in 2017!



Lizzie Baily

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**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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Wellspring is extremely grateful to Bognor Regis, Chichester, Crawley and Worthing Lions Clubs for their support.

Thanks also to the Thornton Trust for their contribution towards this newsletter.



Family Information Service

The Family Information Service (FIS) is run by West Sussex County Council (WSCC). We provide free, up to date information for parents and carers of children aged 0-19 years so you can make informed choices for your child. We can help you with:

- Finding good quality childcare, including childminders, nurseries, pre-schools and out of school clubs
- Extra help (brokerage service) for parents/carers who are finding it difficult to find suitable childcare
- Early education
- Free childcare places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds
- School pickup services
- Help with the costs of childcare
- Complaints about childcare providers
- Parent and toddler groups
- Leisure activities
- Support groups and services
- Finding your local Children and Family Centre (CFC)
- Toy libraries, sensory toy libraries and Early Years Hubs based at CFCs
- Supporting your child before they start school
- Working in early years and childcare
- Becoming a childminder or setting up a childcare business

Information is available on our website and by phone, post or email. You can contact us as many times as you like and it is always free of charge.

Childcare information

We are the only locally authorised service to receive daily updates from Ofsted, who are responsible for childcare registration. We are impartial, which means we cannot recommend individual childcare providers to you. However, we can help guide your

childcare search by providing information about what questions to ask and what quality childcare looks like. We keep information as up to date as possible by regularly contacting childcare settings directly, as well as the updates we receive from Ofsted.

Extra help to find childcare

Extra help to find childcare (brokerage service) is offered to parents/carers who are finding it difficult to find suitable childcare that meets their child's (or their own) needs. If you are having difficulties with your current childcare arrangements and need to find a new childcare provider we can help with that too. If finding childcare is proving to be difficult please ask for extra support when you contact us.



Leisure activities and family support

Our Family Service Directory is packed full of activities for you and your children, including parent and toddler groups, toy libraries, children and family centres, music groups, library activities, holiday activities and more. You can also find local support groups and services including antenatal and postnatal groups, speech and language drop-in sessions, and sensory toy libraries. You can search the directory online at

www.westsussex.gov.uk/fis

or by contacting us.

What happens when you contact the FIS?

The information we provide is tailored to your family's individual needs. We will ask you for your contact details so we can send you the information you have requested and any supporting leaflets. We will ask you some questions about you and your children to enable us to

search for the best information for you. This may include, for example, your child's age, which school they attend or if you work part-time or full-time. Also, this may help us to identify other services that are available for your children that you may not know about.

To ensure we are offering a service that is helpful for all our customers we also ask you questions about your ethnicity, role (parent/carer etc.) and where you heard about us. You don't have to answer these questions if you don't want to.

You will still be provided with a tailor made list of childcare, support and activities.

Whatever your query, we will do our best to help you, or provide you with details of a service that can.

What happens next?

We will respond to your enquiry within three working days. However, please tell us if your request is particularly urgent and we will do our best to meet it. If the information provided does not meet your needs please contact us again and we will carry out further research. You can contact us as many times as you like and it is always free of charge.



Helpful Books

All books available from
www.amazon.co.uk

A First Look At: Disability: Don't Call Me Special - Pat Thomas

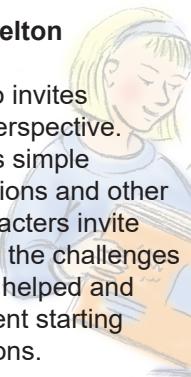
A beautifully illustrated picture book that teaches children about a range of disabilities.

Can I tell you about Autism? - Jude Welton

Part of the Can I tell you about...? series
Meet Tom - a young boy with autism who invites readers to learn about autism from his perspective. The 'Can I tell you about...?' series offers simple introductions to a range of limiting conditions and other issues that affect our lives. Friendly characters invite readers to learn about their experiences, the challenges they face, and how they would like to be helped and supported. These books serve as excellent starting points for family and classroom discussions.

I Have Cerebral Palsy - Mary Springer

Sydney shares her first-hand account of life with cerebral palsy so that others can understand what her life is like. Most importantly, Sydney wants her story to help other kids feel more comfortable around people with disabilities.



There are leaflets available from the Family Information Service including:

- Discover Childcare,
- Discover Free Entitlement,
- Discover Toy Libraries and Sensory Toy Libraries
- Discover Starting School.

Visit www.westsussex.gov.uk/family to download a copy or contact us direct. Our information covers the West Sussex area only. You can find contact details for any neighbouring county's FIS on our website.

You can contact the Family Information Service for further information and guidance about your family's needs.

www.westsussex.gov.uk/family

Tel: **01243 777807**

Email:**family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk**

West Sussex Family Information Service
Early Childhood Service

St James Campus, St James Road,
Chichester,

West Sussex PO19 7HA

Opening hours

Monday – Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm

The Huge Bag of Worries - Virginia Ironside

A compelling picture book which can be used as a spring board into what worries children today.

The Lost Puppy - Kate Gaynor

Designed to help kids with limited mobility to see the positive aspects that using a wheelchair can bring to their lives. By reading this story with a young child, it also gives parents an opportunity to discuss any feelings of anxiety that their child may be feeling.

The Red Beast: Controlling Anger in Children with Asperger's Syndrome - K.I. Al-Ghani

This children's storybook is for children aged 5+, and is an accessible, fun way to talk about anger, with useful tips and guidance for parents on how anger affects children with Asperger's Syndrome.

Special Brothers and Sisters

- Edited by Annette Hames and Monica McCaffrey

A collection of real-life accounts from the siblings of children with special needs, disability or serious illness, ranging from 3 - 18 years old.

Paint Pots of Music and Poetry

Through Wellspring I was awarded a grant by the Lottery 'Awards For All' to provide more of my Poetry Music and Movement Workshops in 2016.

These are now mainly for under fives and I call them 'Paint Pots of Poetry Using Music and Movement'.

After one of my sessions in Horsham, Francesca Rutherford, Portage Co-ordinator said:

"Movement, communication and language related to poetry included: marching, exploring quick and slow, parachute concepts of up and over, on top, thinking about and responding to jumping, bouncing, fast and slow, loud and soft. Joining in songs i.e. The Grand Old Duke of York and sharing balls in the parachute game. 'Ooh bubbles' softly and magically chanted by all 'big ones' 'coloured ones', chasing and catching them. Use of musical instruments explored patterns and rhymes, loud and soft, fast and slow. Joining in the wiggly worm puppet song appealed to many of the children and staff! Use of the bubble wrap to explore texture, sound and vocabulary including 'Oooohhh' 'cracker' and 'pop' sound and thinking about fireworks, making associations".

I work with the senses and a recent addition to this project is using an extremely large sheet of clear polythene, a watering can and small coloured play balls. The children sit underneath with adults



holding the edges. I then pour the water over the top adding the coloured balls, the children look up and listen as we shake the polythene faster and faster getting wetter and wetter. It needs a sunny day of course!

"Splash! Splash! Whoosh! Rain, thunder, storm, rolling, floating"

Our very own poem!

To date I've provided seven sessions to Portage groups; two classes at St. Anthony's School Chichester; a session at Desmond Anderson S.S.C. Crawley; and P.A.C.S.O. Still to come: Fordwater, Chichester Reception class; Mid Sussex

Portage and joint sessions for Portage groups across the county.



The children at Desmond Anderson School were working on the theme of 'The Farmyard' so I used that as part of my session. I took with me a range of materials including big bubble wrap; a Soundbeam; a mixture of puppets; parachute and soft coloured balls; a farmyard building set; fabrics with different textures; socks and eyes to make worm puppets; costumes; tissue paper and material. Together we created a poem about 'under the ground' including of course worms!

At St Anthony's School, I worked with two classes of fourteen year olds. They had either written or chosen poems to 'Lift Off the Page' and for these sessions I took in costumes, fabrics, a synthesiser, musical instruments and props.

One group whose theme was 'someone special to me' worked individually and the second group - who had selected poems including 'Cherry Croak' and 'Teeny Tiny Ghost' - worked in threes or fours.

They all worked so creatively and imaginatively, it was real fun and they really did bring their poems to life.

Chris North came to deliver poetry/music sessions for the children using the Portage Service in West Sussex. Portage is a home visiting educational service supporting preschool children with disabilities and/or significant additional needs.

The service provides children aged 0-5 and their families with a home visitor who offers them a weekly session in the family home. In partnership with parents the home visitor works on the child's development through play using a combination of child led play and structured teaching. Progress is measured in very small steps and every success is celebrated.

We held a number of sessions across West Sussex and all were well attended by children and their families and every session was extremely well received. Chris has a unique ability to engage every child regardless of their disability or individual needs. He is an expert at identifying a child's unique preferences and motivators and he uses these as a starting point for activities. Chris involved all the

Poetry for me is a wonderful vehicle for expression; children and adults coming together and in whatever way is right for them, living joyfully in those moments, painting pictures using sounds and words, using all sorts of different things to explore and try out and - having FUN!!!

Chris North
chris@freedomthroughfun.co.uk

children in group activities using a parachute, water, balls, musical instruments and puppets. He also gave each child individual time with whatever they showed an interest in, and managed to interact with a number of children for whom interactive activities are commonly unsuccessful.

It was wonderful to witness Chris' skill at encouraging and supporting the children to engage and contribute to the sessions. He skilfully models expert practice and, as well as the obvious enjoyment experienced by the children, he also provides parents and carers with ideas for play and interaction with their children.

We cannot thank Chris highly enough for his time and for the wonderful service he provides to our families, many of whom rarely see their children so included and fully engaged.

Tandy Roberts
Worthing Portage

Portage Overview

Portage builds on what the child can do. Referrals can be made by parents or carers, or anyone involved with the child, with the consent of their parent(s) or carer(s). Following a referral, the Portage Coordinator will visit the family to explain in detail what is involved before any commitment is agreed. Families make a choice whether to use the portage service.

Home visitors come from a wide variety of backgrounds - many are volunteers, and all enjoy working with children and their families. They decide with parents on activities which can be practised regularly between home visits. The activities are based upon play, grounded in everyday situations, and provide fun and success for the child. Home visitors may leave an activity chart for parents to keep a record of progress. This helps to plan the next small step.

Contact your local Portage Team. The service is free to all families within the area.

Chichester

Orchard Street Annexe,
Orchard Street,
Chichester
PO19 1DQ
Tel: 01243 536182

Worthing

School House,
Littlehampton Road,
Worthing
BN13 1RB
Tel: 01903 242558

Crawley

Ashdown House, Thomas
Bennett Community
College, Ashdown Drive,
Tilgate, Crawley,
RH10 5AD
Tel: 01293 572480
Email: crawedp@westsussex.gov.uk

Mid-Sussex and Horsham

Junction Road, Burgess
Hill RH15 0PZ
Tel: 01444 243150

Chichester Down Syndrome Support Group

Chichester Down Syndrome Support Group began in 1987. We support 65 families at present, supporting a prenatal family to our eldest of 61 years. We support families in the Chichester District and near surrounding areas.

We are available to support families from the very early stages, through prenatal diagnosis. Although we are parents who volunteer, our committee of 11 have many skills and experience. We are here to listen, answer questions and help others along their journey no matter what point they are at. We are non-judgemental and pro-choice, we are here to help families gain vital, correct information and experience so they feel they can make a well informed choice.

Chichester Down Syndrome Support Group holds a variety of social events throughout the year to allow parents, children and other family members to meet and keep in touch. We hold a very popular New Year Party, Easter party, 21st March World Down Syndrome Day Celebration, summer picnic, various theatre trips, parent social evenings once a quarter and monthly coffee mornings plus many other fun trips for the family to enjoy.

We hold various fundraising events which helps us subsidise speech therapy for our children and young adults; we feel this is extremely valuable as children with Down Syndrome can have more complex speech delays. We provide occasional workshops for parents and professionals in early years settings and schools, hold Makaton workshops, drama workshops and collaborate with other groups and professionals in the area to help our families find the best support to suit their needs.

Please contact membership secretary Jessica Archer for more information or support.

Tel: **07500 775596**

Email: **sussexrose@hotmail.co.uk**
www.facebook.com/groups/chichesterds/

Worthing Kids and Dapper Snapper

support families in Worthing

Call: **07570 768893**

Email: **info@wkds.org**

Post: PO Box 4917, Worthing, BN11 9XW
<http://wkds.org/wkds/>



Money Matters - part 2

Benefits and tax credits for families with a disabled child

Carers Allowance (CA)

Tel: **0345 608 4321**

The main benefit for carers, it is means tested and taxable. You must spend at least 35 hours a week caring, your child must get Disability Living Allowance for personal care at the middle or high rate and you must also earn less than £100 per week after expenses.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Tel: **0345 712 3456**

The main benefit for a disabled child and only available up to age 16. May help with the extra costs of looking after a child who has difficulty walking or needs more looking after than a child of the same age who doesn't have a disability.

Child Tax Credit

Tel: **0345 300 3900**

Claimed by anyone who is responsible for a 'dependent child'.

The amount you get is based on your family circumstances and your annual income (unlike other means-tested benefits there is no limit on the amount of savings you can have). Your award may be higher if you have a child on DLA or PIP, or who is registered blind.

Working Tax Credit

Tel: **0345 300 3900**

Extra money for families with children where someone is working a required number of hours. The amount you get depends on your circumstances

and annual income, but there is no limit on the amount of savings you can have.

Child benefit

A payment if you are responsible for a dependent child.

Each benefit and tax credit has different eligibility criteria.

Contribution-based benefits are based on national insurance contributions

Means-tested benefits - low income, with savings of less than a certain amount.

Tax credits you must either have children or be in work - and the amount will depend on the household income but not savings.

Non-means-tested benefits – eligibility criteria not related to work, income or savings.

Benefit cap

A limit on certain benefits that you can get if you are working age and only affects those getting Housing Benefit (HB) or Universal Credit (UC).

Families with a dependent child on DLA or Personal Independence Payment will remain exempt from

the benefit cap, as will families who work sufficient hours to be eligible for working tax credit (regardless of whether this is actually paid or not). Anyone who is getting Carers Allowance will be exempt from the cap. This will help protect some parents whose disabled child stops being treated as a dependent. You will also be exempt as a carer if you have an underlying entitlement to CA, and also if you get UC with a carer element.



Dealing with Debt

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. My Money Steps (www.mymoneysteps.org) is a free online debt advice service from National Debtline, it is confidential and simple to use.

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.

Work out a budget

The first step to taking control of finances is by doing a budget, this means listing all the money that comes into a household (income) and all the money that goes out (expenditure). 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.

Income includes wages, benefits, tax credits, pensions.

Expenditure includes mortgage or rent, household bills, travel, phone and internet, clothes, leisure, insurances.

When working out income, include any DLA for a disabled child but when working out what you spend include an equivalent amount for disability related expenditure. If creditors say that the DLA should be used to pay off any



debts, make a list of all the extra costs associated with your child's disability. DLA should not be regarded as spare money, it is intended to cover the costs of a child's extra care and disability needs.

Check if you can increase your income

Benefits and tax credits – are you claiming everything that you are entitled to? Check for eligibility to Carers Allowance and Council Tax Reduction Grants from charities – some charities help families with a disabled child who may need household items or disability equipment.

Employment rights and tax – check that you are on the correct tax code, have the correct personal allowance, check for Marriage Allowance and the minimum wage.

For help and advice Contact a Family has a free helpline on **0808 808 3555**

Look at ways to cut costs

Energy bills - Paying by direct debit, changing utility supplier.

There are hardship funds to help people who are on certain benefits or a low income who may be struggling to pay their bills. Some, such as Scottish Power Hardship Fund are for Scottish Power customers only and others, such as E.ON Energy Fund are for customers of any energy company, contact your supplier to find out if they have a fund and how they help their customers who are in debt.

If you can't pay your mortgage

Always contact the lender first, explain the situation, they will discuss options

and offer suggestions such as temporary payment arrangements, payment holidays, longer term, switching to interest-only.

Support for mortgage interest – if on certain benefits, may get help with mortgage interest payments called Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) paid direct to lender.

Universal Credit – help with mortgage interest payments if have no earned income.

Key things to avoid. Speak to a free debt advice service before resorting to these options.

Taking out an additional loan to pay debts. These loans can be very expensive and are often secured on the home, so putting it at greater risk.

Handing back the keys. Responsibility for the mortgage payments are still with the owner until the home is sold.

Selling the property without having a place to live. The local council may not help if a person is considered to be intentionally homeless.

Sale-and-rent-back schemes. The property is sold to a company and then rented back from them. Always talk to a debt counselling service first before considering this option.

home. How much you can get depends on household income and household savings above £6000.

Family Fund

Tel: 01904 621115

The UK's largest charity providing grants for families with disabled or seriously ill children and young people.

Free road tax for your car and Blue Badge

You can get a 100% rebate if you qualify for, or have a child aged three or over, who qualifies for either DLA mobility component at the higher rate or PIP mobility component at the enhanced rate. A 50% rebate is made where someone



qualifies for PIP mobility component at the standard rate. The car must be used to meet the disabled person's needs. You may qualify for a blue badge if your child is under three and has a condition which means they either need to be accompanied by bulky equipment or kept near a vehicle at all times.

Sources of Help

Benefits Advice Service

Tel: 07850 240874

For families and carers of children and young people, up to age 25, with special educational needs and disabilities in West Sussex. Support with form filling, reviews, appeals, tribunal representation. One off or on-going advice or support.

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Free, independent, confidential and impartial debt advice through their web chat service.

Contact a Family

Tel: 0808 808 3555

www.cafamily.org.uk

A national charity for families with disabled children providing information, advice and support, bringing families together so they can support each other and campaigning to improve their circumstances, and for their right to be included and equal in society.

Disabled Facilities Grant

Contact your local council

You may be able to get a grant from your local council if you have a disabled child and need to make changes to your

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.

Making Sense Of It All Handbook

Tel: 01903 502649

Handbook written by and for parent-carers of children with special needs and disabilities in West Sussex. Contact Reaching Families for a copy.

Money Advice Service

www.moneyadviceservice.org

National Debtline

Tel: 0808 808 4000

www.nationaldebtline.org

SEND IAS – 03302 228 555

Provides impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Step Change

www.stepchange.org

Online service providing expert advice, budget support and solutions for managing debt.

Sullivan's Heroes

www.sullivansheroes.org

Offers support and financial assistance for families raising essential funds towards vital home adaptations for a disabled child.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

A £500 grant for those who have recently given birth or adopted a child, and are on certain benefits.

The Debt Counsellors Charitable Trust

www.debtc.org

A telephone based specialist debt advice service for anyone living in England.

The Kelsey Trust

Tel: 01483 222750

Helps youngsters up to age 21 in West Sussex and surrounding counties who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress and may be mentally and/or physically disabled. Grants to provide or pay for items, services or facilities.

The Rockinghorse Charity

Tel: 01273 330044

www.rockinghorse.org.uk

Aims to make life better for sick children in Sussex. Provides cutting edge equipment that the NHS cannot cover and also helps to make medical and respite facilities for children and young people as comfortable, friendly and accessible as possible.

The Variety Club Children's Charity

www.variety.org.uk

National charity that provides practical, tangible help that makes an immediate difference to children who may be coping with sickness, disability or disadvantage. Help may include providing wheelchairs, sensory play equipment, life-saving monitors or a specially adapted car seat.

Turn2us

Tel: 0808 802 2000

www.turn2us.org.uk

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

West Sussex Credit Union

www.westsussexcreditunion.co.uk

A fast, safe and secure way of borrowing money at a reasonable rate.

Information taken from

www.cafamily.org.uk

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

www.gov.uk

www.nationaldebtline.org

www.mymoneysteps.org

*and **www.moneyadviceservice.org***

Lizzie's New Wheels

In my last article, I talked about the pros and cons of social networking and how since I have grown up, have connected with families with special needs children via Facebook. When I wrote that article I hadn't realised the positive power that another feature of networking could have...

In the spring I was assessed by Wheelchair Services for a new electric wheelchair. My Permobil had served me incredibly well for 19 years but things were starting to malfunction and due to the age, parts were difficult to service. I was shown the chair that I could have but after a test drive at my house and outside on the farm, it was obvious that it would not cope with the rougher terrain.

I then went to Kidz to Adults South in Reading, a mobility exhibition which was well worth visiting (next year's show - 8th June 2017) and it was incredible to see all the different equipment that is now available. There were so many small children whizzing about in electric wheelchairs. I tested out the newest model of Permobil and did a very speedy race along the car park! I came home knowing that this was the right chair for me and after a test drive at home a couple of weeks later, I told my cousin who immediately set up an online Crowdfunding page to raise the funds I needed.

I could not believe how many people were interested in and responded to the campaign and I was overwhelmed by the generosity I received – a lot of donations were from people I didn't know and many were anonymous!

Within 8 weeks we had raised all the money needed, including a voucher from the NHS and a grant from the Joseph Patrick Trust (the funding group of Muscular Dystrophy UK for wheelchairs and equipment).

On 26th September my new Permobil F3 Corpus was delivered. I think the old chair was ready to retire as it had been playing up a lot the week before! I am now able to raise my seat to standing height which is extremely helpful when I am talking to friends and I can lie the whole seat back with one joystick movement. The top outdoor speed is 8mph

but I have promised everybody I will only drive this fast on smooth surfaces with nobody in my way!

The suspension of the whole chair is fantastic which is really helpful when I have been down our field and makes the whole day more comfortable too. Two brilliant new additions are the hand heater in front of my joystick so my driving hand never has to freeze again (!) and the USB charger so I can plug my phone or Kindle in when I am out!

At the beginning of October my parents and I attended the Muscular Dystrophy UK National Conference in London. While in London our taxi driver was so busy admiring my new Permobil, he forgot I was driving backwards

down the ramp and I fell off it sideways. It didn't matter as I was so pleased he loved the chair! We had a fantastic day at the conference which had a very positive atmosphere. It was a lovely surprise to properly meet 4 year old Stanley and his parents after knowing them on Facebook for over a year.

Stanley has Congenital Muscular Dystrophy like me and we also both have Permobil electric wheelchairs!

It was brilliant for me to be able to share my experiences with people at the conference and to again see children happily buzzing around in their wheelchairs. It brought back such happy memories of my childhood in my Turbo chair which gave me so much independence and mobility in the garden and school playground. Having an electric wheelchair enabled me to develop friendships normally and growing up in a safe army barracks, my sister, brother and I had a gang of 8 friends and two Labradors who we shared lots of outdoor adventures with. At half term I went to my first South Coast Muscle Group tea party (run by MDUK) in Crawley. Again I met more lovely families and shared concerns and ideas. I am hoping to have a more local meeting one day but at least in my new Permobil I am able to travel more comfortably!

Lizzie Baily

lizzie@wellspringwestsussex.org.uk



Hop, Skip and Jump

The Hop Skip and Jump Foundation are delighted to have launched a brand new care centre for the disabled in the heart of Horsham's Swan Walk retail development. Following from the successful launch of a similar centre in Swindon, this centre is the second of its kind in the country, bringing immediate respite care to Horsham town centre. The new unit is situated in a great location close to the likes of Wilko and M&S.

Care in the High Street was launched at a reception held by Samantha Cameron at 10 Downing Street last year and has received Mrs. Cameron's full support: 'Hop Skip and Jump's commitment to helping families cope with the challenges a disabled child brings is amazing, whether at their three dedicated centres, or through the new 'Care in the High Street' facilities. I passionately support Hop Skip and jump in their vision to offer these services right across the country, for every family who needs them.'

The new Horsham centre contains a soft play area, sensory facilities and a fully accessible wet room and changing facility, meaning that Hop Skip and Jump can cater for children with a variety of complex disabilities and special educational needs. Hop, Skip & Jump is a charity that provides flexible and immediate respite care for children and young adults with special needs. Our Horsham location is located in Swan Walk and has been growing since opening in mid 2015. The need for our service is in such high demand that we are now looking for a larger location to offer even more services. We are more than a crèche or babysitting service. We are a place to go when you have nowhere else to turn. We are a safe and judgement free zone for all families with special children and young adults of any age. Hop, Skip & Jump is the only charity that offers respite care that is truly flexible and immediate.



Clarissa Mitchell, trustee for Hop Skip and Jump said '*We are really excited to have opened in Horsham. We have, for a long time, identified a real need for this kind of care in West Sussex and can't wait to get started helping some of the most vulnerable people in the county. We are very grateful to Horsham Town Council, The North Horsham Council Local Committee and Sussex Masonic Charities for their support in this new venture.*'

Hop Skip and Jump have worked in partnership with AVIVA Investors, Simons Group and Horsham District Council to redevelop the unit in Swan Walk which has long stood empty. Opened right in time for the summer holidays, the new care centre now brings vibrant new life to Horsham town centre and help families in desperate need of support.

If you haven't visited our Horsham Centre, please come in and say hello from Monday-Saturday: 10am – 6pm and Sundays 10.30am – 4.30pm. We also offer after-school respite care from 4pm – 6pm every evening during the week. Pop in and see us soon, we'd love to meet you!

We welcome everyone and you can even hire our space for your next party or get together. We are here for the community and love being a part of Horsham.

If you would like us to meet you straight from the car park, please do give us a call to let us know when you will be arriving and we will come and meet you directly. If you have any special requirements or there is anything we can do to help, please don't hesitate to let us know!

For more information, please contact Ashley McKEAN.
Tel: 01403 263660
Email: supervisor.horsham@hopskipandjump.org.uk

Reaching Families

Fact Sheets

Reaching Families and Amaze Brighton have come together to produce a series of fact sheets written for parent carers by parent carers. We have created a range of sheets on specific conditions, which combine clinical information with local information on what projects and services are available to help children, parents and families. Our tips sheets cover a variety of key topics such as DLA, PIP, choosing a school and EHC Plans and signpost parents to local information and support, as well as further reading and useful links.

Parent carers have been involved in all stages of the project, from identifying topics to cover and helping to edit content. We would welcome feedback from parents and professionals on our fact sheets. If you have any comments or recommendations for additional content please contact our project manager Brian O'Hagan at info@reachingfamilies.org.uk

Download the factsheets from www.reachingfamilies.org.uk/factsheets.htm

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 Sensory Processing Difficulties

Find out about different sensory processing difficulties and learn about ways to help your child/young person.

17th January 9:45am-12pm

Venue: BroadfieldCommunity Centre, Crawley

Making Sense of Adolescent Behaviour

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

24th January 9:45am-12pm

Venue:Treehouse Children and Family Centre, Bognor

Commission Us - Reaching Families are also available to deliver tailor made training to suit the particular needs of schools, parent support groups, other charities, etc. If your group would like training on a specific subject we can manage and deliver this for you including sourcing and commissioning trainers, marketing, administration, booking venues, organising catering and refreshments, follow up evaluation, etc. If you would like to discuss training for your school or group please contact our Project Manager, Brian O'Hagan for an informal discussion of your requirements.

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 January 9:45am-12pm

Venue: Woodlands Meed School, Burgess Hill

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.

1st February 9:45am-12pm

Venue: Jubilee Community Centre, East Grinstead

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 Rosemary: 07704 037664

or Michele: 07470 005734

Reaching Families

Useful Information

Autism Parent Empower

We offer West Sussex families FREE places on our 12 week programme. Our intervention is delivered using principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis, Nutrition and Empowerment. We believe that early intervention is crucial for all children with Autism and we work on increasing communication, reducing maladaptive behaviours, toileting, play, self care and general wellbeing. Extended family and siblings are also included to make sure the whole family unit feel empowered and supported whilst making solid friendships.

Crawley Town Hall, The Boulevard,
RH10 1UX

Tel: **01293 763062** or **07931 219555**

Email: info@autismparentempower.org
www.autismparentempower.org/

Forest School Tots

Forest School Tots takes place weekly in Hotham Park. Much like our successful Forest School programme for Primary Schools, Forest School Tots involves playing in the woods, making woodland craft and enjoying the fun that nature has to offer. Drop in sessions are £2 per child, no need to call ahead, just come along. Non-walkers are free.

Tel: **01243 778202** or **02392 479762**

Home-Start Arun

Home-Start Arun is a local charity, supporting families with young children where the parents are experiencing difficulties or struggling to cope.

Tel: **01903 889707**

www.home-startarun.org.uk/

Louise Perkins Speech and Language Therapy

I am an Independent Paediatric Speech and Language Therapist, I work with preschool, primary and secondary age children. I can provide assessment, advice and activities for children's speech sounds,

understanding and use of language as well as memory and social skills. I work closely with nurseries, schools and families and can carry out regular therapy sessions directly with children. I provide a free telephone consultation prior to the initial session. Please contact me for fee information.
Tel: 07988 729566
Email: louise.perkins@live.co.uk

Merrylegs Assisted Riding (My Ride)

Provides regular pony riding sessions in term time for young children with a variety of difficulties. We have highly qualified instructors and our volunteers attend various training sessions as required, e.g. First Aid . Any instructor, trustee or volunteer can be available to discuss a child's progress, and/or any problems and queries week by week.

Tel: **01798 813173** or **01798 865 305**

Octopus Family Centre

Octopus Family centre is a state of the art venue fully adapted for families with additional needs. The centre has 4 rooms of various sizes available for hire and fully equipped kitchens. In recent months the centre has been used for children's parties, soft play, group activities and meetings and forums. Our facilities include: health and safety approved wet room with hoist and changing bench. Sensory room available.

Tel: **07767 611622** or **07867 556898**

www.octopusfamily.com/

Play and Learn Plus

All children learn a wide range of skills through play. Similar to our universal Play and Learn Together sessions, Play and Learn Plus is specifically designed for children with additional needs/disabilities.

Tel: **01243 777807**

Story Magic

Story Magic is a sensory story session for children with additional needs and disabilities. There are lots of props for the children to touch, hear and even smell! Held in the large foyer area of the children and family centre which is on the left as you go into the library. Please note that this event is run by the Children's Library Team in partnership with Special Families and we are promoting on their behalf. Wheelchair

accessible venue. Parents should stay with their children for the session. Pay and display parking available opposite the library.

This event is run by Special Families East Grinstead

Tel: 01342 332900

Email: kim.tucker@westsussex.gov.uk

Information taken from West Sussex Local Offer www.westsussex.local-offer.org

Local Offer

What is the Local Offer?

Our Local Offer website helps you find nearby services related to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and tells you what you need to know to start using them. You might have never used SEND services before, or you might have years of experience with them, either way, this tool should work for you.

In West Sussex we recognise the value of working together to share our expertise and knowledge and put it all in one place on our Local Offer. We would like you to be part of the continuing development and improvement of our Local Offer.

Children, Young People and their families can:

- suggest events, services and information that are not yet on our Local Offer. This can be done by contacting your Local Offer Officer: localoffer@westsussex.gov.uk;
- ask services to get listed and post their events;
- share experiences of services on the Local Offer by leaving a comment on service summary cards;
- share information and events on Facebook/ Twitter and
- share top tips and advice which can be posted on the 'Tips & Advice' page.

Professionals can:

- tell children, young people and their families about the Local Offer;
- suggest events, services and information that are not yet on our Local Offer: contact the Local Offer Officer and
- share information from the Local Offer with families they are working with using their Pinboard.

Service Providers can:

- add their service(s) and continue to review their information to ensure it stays up to date;
- post their events / workshops / training on the calendar;
- share their services/events posted on our Local Offer via Facebook/Twitter and
- encourage children/young people / their families to share experiences of using their service.

All can:

- give feedback about the Local Offer website and gaps in service(s) provision within the county via 'Feedback button'.

www.westsussex.local-offer.org

local Offer

Awareness4All

Awareness 4 All design and make awareness stickers for any disability or condition.

All awareness stickers are made for Non Profit, and larger quantities can be purchased for a lower price making these perfect for fundraising or charity events or simply to raise awareness.

All items are made to order and we ship worldwide.

Please contact us with your ideas and suggestions and we can design something to suit your requirements.



Email: admin@southcoastdesigns.co.uk
www.awareness4all.co.uk/



Wellspring West Sussex is online too!
 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!

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
 Thank You!



Please write to us at:

Wellspring West Sussex,
 c/o 26 Goldsmith Road,
 Worthing
 West Sussex
 BN14 8ER

The next edition will be
Health & Fitness

If you would like to contribute any articles, photos or letters to this edition, please send or e-mail to
lizzie@wellspringwestsussex.org.uk

by 28th February 2017.

Printed by Shanks Printers & Finishers: 01903 716442

Typeset and designed by Lizzie Baily:
lizzie@wellspringwestsussex.org.uk

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.