

# November 2023 Newsletter

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## Check in and Chat online Monday 4th December 10-11am

#### Join us online!

If you would like to join other parent carers for an online chat, come along to one of our Check in and Chat sessions. Bring a cuppa, click the Zoom link and tell us how your week has been!

We are all parents like you and we know how useful it is to chat with parents who understand us.

Don't worry if you haven't used Zoom before just <u>click here</u> to download it and then you can join in with the chat!

#### Monday 4th December 10-11 am

No need to book - just drop in on here

Just in case Zoom asks you, here is the password.

Meeting ID: 830 0670 3755

Passcode: 8wFFs5

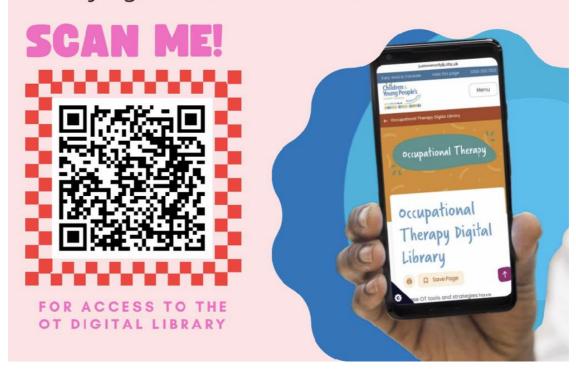


# CHILDREN'S Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

# ITS HERE!

The Occupational Therapy Digital Library is a new digital resource for parents, caregivers, educators and health and social care professionals seeking expert guidance and tools to support children's success in everyday activities.

Scan below to find an extensive collection of articles, videos, interactive activities, and downloadable resources that cover topics such as personal care, toileting, using cutlery, skills for learning and play, sensory regulation and much more.



### Children's Occupational Therapy- new digital library

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The Occupational Therapy digital library is a new digital resource for parent's, caregivers, educators and health and social care professionals seeking expert guidance and tools to support children's success in everyday activities.

scan the QR code above or click on the green button to find an extensive collection of articles, videos, interactive activities, and downloadable resources that cover topics such as personal care, toileting, using cutlery, skills for learning and play, sensory regulation and much more.

Click here for parents and carers resources



Schools Occupational Therapy handbook

The Schools Occupational Therapy Handbook is a resource for schools, early years staff and other health and social care professionals to support participation in home, community, schools, and early year settings. The handbook provides a wide array of evidence-based techniques, activities, and best practices in Occupational Therapy tailored for school settings. The pages have been designed to provide quick reference for use in settings or to share with families. The handbook has been printed and distributed to school and early years settings across Norfolk and Waveney earlier this month.

To register as a professional on Just one Norfolk click here





# Stomp and Stamp survey on how people with a learning disability and autism are given medication for their mind

STOMP stands for Stop Over Medicating autistic people and people with a learning disability and it is for children, young people and adults.

STAMP stands for Supporting Treating Appropriate Medication in Paediatrics and is for children and young people.

NHS England would like to ask autistic people, people with a learning disability, families and carers about psychotropic medication. Psychotropic medication is any medication that affects the mind for example, medication used to treat psychosis, depression, anxiety, sleep problems, ADHD and epilepsy.

NHS England know that health professionals give people these medications when people do not have a diagnosed mental health condition and it may be used to manage what some people describe as challenging behaviour.

If medication is not prescribed for the right reason, then it is called inappropriate medication. This needs to be regularly reviewed and taken away as soon as it is can be stopped. When medication is used for the wrong reasons, it can have side effects like putting on weight and becoming very unwell and this is what the STOMP and STAMP team, Learning

Disability England and Challenging Behaviour Foundation want to stop happening. They would like to get your views to help with this work.

They will not ask you any information about who you are (like your name and address) and you can ask someone who you trust to help you if you need help. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to.

They will use the information you tell them to make plans about what they need to do to change things for the better. Thank you for taking the time to read this and answer their questions.

Any information they collect will be used to help them understand how to make services better for people but they will never share personal data including your name, address or contact details.

But if you would like to be updated about the work you can ask to join engagement teams mailing list to be updated on the work we do in the learning disability programme at NHS England.

If you are filling this out for someone else, please capture the opinions of the person you are supporting to the best of your ability.

To watch a video about the survey on You Tube click <a href="here">here</a>

To look at an Easy Read leaflet about STOMP and STAMP click here.

The survey closes 26 Feb 2024

To complete the Stomp and Stamp survey click here





# Do you need help appealing against a refusal to issue an EHC plan?

IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice) have created a refusal to issue pack which gives a detailed guide to preparing for and carrying out this type of appeal. You'll also find useful template letters that might help you to obtain evidence to support your appeal.

To view the pack click here

# Autism Friendly Meet Up For Adults



# The First Thursday Of Every Month 3pm-4pm

#### This is a free event with no need to book

If you would like more information please speak to a member of staff or email: watton.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk
Telephone: 01953 881671





Autism Acceptance autism friendly meet up for adults at Watton library

This is a free event with no need to book. Its on the first Thursday of every month at 3pm-4pm at Watton Library. If you would like more information please speak to a member of staff, or phone the library on 019538811671

To email Watton library click here





jobcentreplus

Jobs, careers, training and support exclusively for young people with care experience - ask your job coach for details.



Care leavers wanted- Jobs, careers, training and support exclusively for young people with care experience

The New Care Leaver Covenant Website was launched this month and aims to support care leavers in the UK.

The website is the result of Spectra Connect and other organisations working in partnership with the DWP and aims to support care leavers in the UK.

The new website not only advertises job vacancies and apprenticeships aimed at care leavers but also benefits such as:

- Discount codes for well-known brands
- Free eye-tests
- Discounted gym memberships
- Reduced price/free tickets to events such as England football matches
- Days out to Merlin theme parks and attractions

There are also links on the site to support and mentoring available for care leavers.

Click here to visit the Covenant website





# Are you a kinship carer?

A kinship carer is someone who is raising a relative's or friend's child.

Kinship Group for kinship carers in or around Norwich to come together.

Come and join us

**Norwich Area Kinship Carers** 

Old Lakenham Community Centre Monthly, Third Wednesday 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

> Harwood Road Lakenham Norwich NR1 2NG

Please contact Carole, before attending, on the details below.

A chance to meet, listen, share and support one another. All kinship carers and special guardians are welcome.





# Interested to find out more?



Scan with your phone camera for more info compass.kinship.org.uk kinship.org.uk

norwichareakinshipcarer@outlook.com

Kinship is the working name for Grandparents Plus, which is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under numbe 4454103 and registered as a charity under number 1093975

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All kinship carers and special guardians are welcome.

Join them at Norwich area kinship carers group

Old Lakenham community centre

30/11/2023, 14:29 Family Voice Norfolk

#### Harwood Road Lakenheath Norwich NR1 2NG

Every month on the third Wednesday from 10am to 11:30am

Please contact Carole before attending, on the details below

To email Carole please click here

Click here for the Kinship carers website





## AIR: nature-inspired online wellbeing sessions

At Green Light Trust they use the Power of Nature to support disadvantaged and marginalised adults, children and young people who may be struggling, for whatever reason, to move forwards in life.

#### What's Involved

Course participants are invited to join online group sessions, one day a week for 10 weeks. Hosted by experienced Green Light Trust staff, weekly sessions are designed to:

reduce isolation and anxiety improve mental and physical wellbeing increase confidence and self-esteem give a sense of structure and belonging improve social and communication skills engage people with the natural environment instill renewed purpose

Group interactive activities include: group video call meet up session, nature learning through video and chat, sharing of nature videos and/or photos from outdoor activities, online lunch together, and craft activities you can do at home.

Participants will also be able to benefit from one to one phone conversations with a member of Green Light Trust staff, to discuss in confidence any issues they may be having with their wellbeing.

#### Help with technology to access AIR courses

Prior to the first week's session, Green Light Trust staff will contact everyone in the group individually to introduce themselves and ensure everyone is set up and able to get online. They are able to provide a free smartphone and data should it be needed – just let the team know when booking a course.

#### Who they support

Fully funded places on the AIR courses are aimed at adults, children and young people who have experience of the following types of issues:-

Poor Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
In Recovery from Alcohol or Substance Misuse
Victims of Violence, Trauma or Abuse
Special Educational Needs (SEND)
Behavioural problems
Long Term Unemployment
Disengaged or excluded from Education
Social Isolation/Social Anxiety
Chronic Illness or Physical Disabilities
History of Offending
Ex-Military Personnel

To find out more click here

To find out more about The Green Light Trust courses for 2024 click here







# Welcome to the Recovery College

Are you interested in attending free courses about wellbeing, mental health and recovery?

Are you experiencing mental health challenges and would like to learn from others that may have shared lived experiences?

Are you supporting someone that is experiencing mental health challenges?

If the answer to any of these is yes, attending the NSFT Recovery College may be for you.









#### What is the Recovery College?

The Recovery College provides free educational courses on mental health and recovery.

Our courses aim to empower people to become experts in their own lives.

All of our courses are created and delivered jointly by people with their own lived experiences of mental health and professionals.

#### Who can attend?

- Anyone aged 16 or over that lives in Norfolk or Suffolk.
- You may have an interest in developing a better understanding of your own mental health.
- You may experience mental health challenges or long-term difficulties.
- Carers, supporters, NSFT staff and staff members from the third sector can also attend.

#### How do I sign up for courses?

Email: RecoveryOnline@nsft.nhs.uk Visit: nsft.nhs.uk/recovery-college nsft.nhs.uk/recovery-college

**❷** @NSFT\_RecoveryC

NSFT Recovery College



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To read the first Recovery College newsletter click <u>here.</u>

#### How do I sign up for courses?

Email the Recovery College

Visit the Recovery College website





# Can you help Contact develop their new charity strategy?

Contact needs your help to develop their new strategy for 2024 and beyond. It's incredibly important to hear from as many parent carers as possible about the support you need from Contact. To help, they are asking parent carers to fill in this short 5-minute survey.

Thank you – the views of parent carers really matter to Contact, and they are very grateful for your time in completing this survey.

The survey





### Calling all Dads, Grandads, Uncles and all male carers!

EPIC Dad, Encourage, Provider, Instructor, Carer.

Come for a monthly fun morning with your kids there's loads to do for 0-18 year olds, come and play together, meet other Dads in the area and have fun!

Every second Saturday of the month 10:30am-12pm

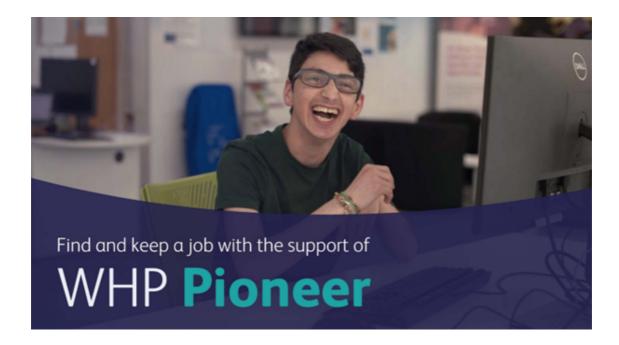
Snacks provided, suggested donation £1 per family.

#### Next session is on December 9th

#### Oak Grove Chapel NR3 3NT

For more details email Oak Grove Chapel

## 



# Work and Health Pioneer (WHP) – new employment support offer

Is your young person not in work or training but would like to get into employment?

The Shaw Trust have a new scheme, WHP Pioneer, that could support them.

WHP PIONEER is fully funded by DWP that provides personalised and holistic support for participants to find sustainable work through career guidance, upskilling and training with continued progression services once in-work.

WHP Pioneer offers support for up to 15 months plus optional in-work support of up to 6 months.

Here's a glimpse of the specialist support available: Participants – will receive specialist one-to-one support from a dedicated Employment Advisor including:

- ✓ Job specific CV and cover letter creation.
- ✓ A wide range of health-related interventions.
- ✓ Mock interviews.
- ✓ Access to digital careers platform.
- √ Travel planning.
- ✓ Ongoing in-work support.
- ✓ Career progression and development support once in-work. And much more.

To find out more click here to go to the website





# Proposals to changes within the Short Breaks service are discussed with councillors

Proposals to increase the range of Short Breaks for children with disabilities and open them up to siblings and other family members were discussed by councillors recently.

Norfolk County Council wants to change how it supports children with disabilities, by funding Short Breaks that best meet children's needs, are closer to their homes and can support their wider family.

It follows consultation over the summer, which looked at moving from a model that assigns a specific budget to a family, based on a child's disability, to a new approach that would look at a child's needs and work with their family to find the right activities to help them flourish.

The budget for Short Breaks will continue to be £3.5m per year and the council has pledged that children will not have their activities reduced. The approach, which is also used by other local authorities, is much more focused on children's outcomes and interests, rather than their disability. It also means the council has greater flexibility to buy services for multiple children from some activity providers, meaning that more children could benefit from a break.

The council wants to expand the activities it buys for families, to offer more options and flexibility. This might mean changes in some of the funding parents receive to buy activities directly, but the value of the package of breaks will remain the same, or increase.

Part of the council's strategy is also to support existing activity providers to support children with disabilities, where it is appropriate for the needs of the child, so that they can access fun

inclusive activities in their own community alongside their peers.

The proposals and the feedback from public consultation was discussed by the council's People and Communities Select Committee when it met on the 17th of November.

Cllr Fran Whymark, Chairman of the People and Communities Select Committee, said: "Short Breaks provide fun activities for children and respite for their families. We know that they are a real lifeline for families, which is why it's important that we get any changes to what we are offering right and why we consulted with families who use the service before implementing any changes.

"I welcome any proposal which focuses on looking at what is best for individual children, and their families, and which provides greater choice and more local activities, particularly given the rural nature of Norfolk."

Norfolk County Council ran a consultation with families between 27 June and 2 August and had more than 200 responses, 43% of people agreed or strongly agreed with the change in the assessment process and 31% disagreed or strongly agreed. The remainder didn't answer, didn't agree or disagree, or didn't know. Eighty-two percent agreed or strongly agreed that activities should be opened up to family members, including siblings.

Cllr Penny Carpenter, Cabinet Member for Children's Services at Norfolk County Council, said: "I completely understand that some parents will feel apprehensive about any changes we might make to Short Breaks because they want the very best experiences for their child.

"I want to reassure them that that's what we want too, and we want to work with families to plan Short Breaks that can best meet their children's needs, rather that basing a child's needs on a sum of money and then matching that to activities. Although the money on the pre-payment card could change for some families, the provision and range of activities won't. We want to make sure children are getting the support that is right for them."

If agreed, the changes would apply to new children accessing Short Breaks from April 2024. Other children would move to the new model gradually, as their package comes up for review.

To go to the Short Break pages on the Local Offer click here





# All about cancer health screenings for people with a learning disability

Opening Doors are hosting some free sessions at The Forum in Norwich. It will be a safe space for people to learn about health screenings. There is no need to book. You and a supporter can pop along on the day.

Apologies the breast cancer one has already happened. But the next available ones are:

Cervical cancer in women on the 30th of January 2024 1pm- 2:30

Bowel cancer in men and women on the 4th of April 2024 10:30am-12

Testicular cancer in men on the 30th of April 2024 10:30am-12

For more information please call opening doors on 01603631433

Or to email Opening Doors click here





## Did you know the Government has a scheme called the 'Disabled Students' Allowance' for higher education?

• It offers students with a learning difficulty, health problem or disability extra money for higher education!

**Eligibility** - You can apply for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if you live in England and have a disability that affects your ability to study, such as a:

- specific learning difficulty, for example dyslexia or ADHD
- mental health condition, for example anxiety or depression
- physical disability, for example if you have to use crutches, a wheelchair or a special keyboard
- sensory disability, for example if you're visually impaired, deaf or have a hearing impairment
- long-term health condition, for example cancer, chronic heart disease or HIV

#### You must also:

- be an undergraduate or postgraduate student (including Open University or distance learning)
- qualify for student finance from Student Finance England
- be studying on a course that lasts at least a year

#### Who is not eligible

-You cannot get DSA from Student Finance England if you're:

- an EU student who is eligible for fee support only
- eligible for NHS Disabled Students' Allowances (this is a separate scheme)
- getting equivalent support from another funding source, like from your university or a social work bursary
- on a higher or degree apprenticeship course

To visit the Gov website click here





### The Nancy Oldfield Trust festive cruises

Join the Nancy Oldfield Trust for a festive cruise this December.

Trips are running on December 7th, 12th and the 18th at 1:30 from their base at Neatishead, Norwich NR12 8BJ.

The boats will be ready for Christmas with music, hot drinks and mince pies for you to enjoy.

To book your place, please call them on 01692630572.

The suggested donation is £17 per person

The £17 is a suggested donation. If funding a visit is problematic, they do have bursary funding available to support anyone who needs it (not means tested). They would need to

mention this at the time of booking though.

The trips are available for a group to book (max 8 people), or individual places can be booked.

To visit the Nancy Oldfield website click here





#### Share your experience, your insight, and your passion for better children's healthcare!

Join our Parent Carer Voice





# Cambridge Children's Hospital - share your experience, your insight, and your passion for better children's health care

Cambridge Children's hospital want you to join their parent carer voice and say,with our Outline Business Case approved, in principle, the Cambridge Children's Hospital project team is now working full steam ahead to look at our clinical models of care and how the hospital will operate, for patients, families and staff. This will be the first specialist children's hospital for the East of England, with a unique vision of treating mental and physical health together, alongside world-leading research.

We would like to invite parents and carers from across the region, with experience of caring for a child in hospital and/or mental health services, to join our Parent Carer Network. This will allow us to have a large group of willing people that we can call on as different pieces of work arise. Being able to easily contact parents and carers with specific experiences will allow us to be more targeted and effective in our approach to engagement.

By joining the Network, we will be in touch with you as and when opportunities that are relevant to your experience arise. There is no obligation to get involved, but if you do you will be offered reimbursement for your time and expenses. (Information attached). Some of the work may be face to face, while other elements might take the form of a survey, an email or even a phone call. You can find the sign up form here or on the QR code above.

This may look like a mighty form, but is made up of quick answer questions. There is also space at the end to tell us additional information that may help us understand your experiences better.

For more information on the hospital click here





# Contact-recording of a webinar on supported living for people with learning disabilities and autism

Aimed at people who are looking to make long term plans who are currently in, or approaching transition into adult services. This session was presented by Steve Harris from Progress Housing Group and covers; how supported living works for people who want choice and control over where they live and how they are supported, the transition period and options for young people and families including residential care and supported living, how housing, care and support works together, specialist organisations and services they can offer and LA and NHS responsibilities, funding housing and support and how this links with housing and support provision.

To view the slide show here

To view the webinar recording click here





### **Drawing Competition**

## For Young People with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)



Do you like drawing?



If you do, enter this drawing competition and you could be in with a chance of winning a £20 Love2shop voucher!



Draw a picture of something you do that makes you happy and send it to us by Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023.



Norfolk County Council is asking children and young people to share pictures of what makes them happy to publish in the new SEND plan.



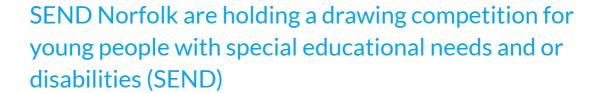
This plan aims to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND.



Email your name, contact details and your picture to: csparticipationteam@norfolk.gov.uk



or send to Freepost RTCL-XSTT-JZSK, Drawing Competition, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH.



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### Norfolk SEND survey results 2023 summary

The SEND survey captured the views of parent/carers and those working with children and young people, and children and young people themselves.

Education and learning were listed as the most important thing that parents/carers wanted to see developed or improved for their child in the next 12 months.

Many parents said they found it hard to get the right support for their children and young people.

Cllr Carpenter added: "I sympathise with parents and carers who might be finding it difficult to get the information or support they need for their children. Things are improving but demand continues to rise and it is putting pressure on our teams, the NHS and schools and early years services. Our new school and community teams are now in place, helping schools and nurseries to put in place the right support for children with SEND earlier. The feedback from the latest survey will help to inform how we develop services further over the next year."

To see what parent carers told NCC.

To see what children and young people told NCC.

To see what <u>professionals</u> told NCC.

#### To read more details click here





### Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)

The prevalence and impact of allegations of FII (a term adopted by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCHP) to replace 'Munchausen syndrome by proxy')

#### **Press Release**

The findings of a major research project concerning the prevalence and impact of FII allegations has been published by the Cerebra Legal Entitlements and Problem-solving (LEaP) Project based at the School of Law, Leeds University.

The research involved an analysis of data obtained from a survey of 387 parent carers, freedom of information requests and on-line searches of local authority websites.

#### The Report's 'Key Messages'

- The major finding of the research is one of family trauma. The making of an FII allegation often causes devastating and life-long trauma to those accused and to their children.
- FII allegations against parents of disabled children appear to be widespread and increasing. Parents in at least 74% of English children's services authorities have experienced FII allegations and authorities in Scotland and Wales were also reported as initiating allegations of this nature.
- Disabled parents appear to be four times more likely to be accused of FII than non-disabled parents suggesting a significant risk of widespread unlawful discrimination against disabled people.
- 50% of allegations of FII were made after a parent carer had complained about the actions of the relevant public body.
- Most FII allegations (84%) resulted in no follow up-action or were abandoned and in 95% of the cases the child(ren) remained living with the parent.
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) 2021 FII guidance is likely to give rise to a very high number of 'false positives' (people being wrongly accused of FII).
- NHS practitioners were the source of most FII allegations, followed by schools and then local authority children's services.

Launching the report, Professor Luke Clements said:

"The evidence suggests a significant increase in the numbers of parents – especially disabled parents – being inappropriately accused of FII. These allegations have a devastating and often life-long impact on families – including their children: the very people the system is supposed to protect. There is an urgent need for a radical overhaul of policy and practice in this field".

The research report calls for:

• Urgent revision to the RCPCH (2021) FII guidance including: (1) to address its failure to recognise the harm to parents and children caused by allegations of FII; (2) to address the danger that its 'alerting signs' may have an unlawful discriminatory impact on disabled parents; and (3) to acknowledge that its 'alerting signs' (of FII) are unsupported by any peer reviewed research.

To read the full report click here



There are so many ways you can get in touch with Family Voice Norfolk...

- You can contact our Membership Secretary Kate on 07950 302937 or at membership@familyvoice.org.uk
- Or message us via:
  - www.familyvoice.org.uk
  - **f** FamilyVoiceNorfolk
  - familyvoicenfk

- Or write to us at Family Voice Norfolk, c/o Ayton House, 11 Ayton Rd, Wymondham NR18 0QQ
- Or join our Family Voice Members Chat Room on Facebook here

Family Voice Norfolk Ayton House 11 Ayton Road Wymondham Norfolk NR18 0QQ

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