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# FAMILIES INFOCUS NEWS

Winter 2011/2012

Supporting families of children with disabilities & special needs across Essex

## Back to the 1940's at Quadrant a huge success

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The employees and supporters of Chelmsford Star Co-operative have been working tirelessly since May 2011 to raise much needed funds for our

organisation as their chosen Charity of the Year. Their latest event was another huge success and saw hundreds of people step back in time to the 1940s at the Quadrant, Braintree with a 40s inspired evening including music courtesy of Barry Smith and his Silver Bird, dancing with Martine and A2 Jive. Frank Parker (ex RAF bomber navigator), WW11 artefacts, makeup, hair styles, fashion show, nibbles including corned beef hash, a grand raffle with the top prize of a flying lesson in a Tiger Moth. A fantastic £1,145 was raised on the night. We are delighted to announce that the amount raised from all their fundraising events to December 2011 is over £20,000, a truly outstanding result. A massive thank you from everyone at Families InFocus (Essex) and all the many families that will benefit from your hard work. **THANK YOU FROM US ALL**

**PARENTS' PAMPER EVENING IN CHELMSFORD**  
Alternative therapists will be providing a range of treatments for parents of children and young people with disabilities/ special needs on **Thursday 9th February 2012** at Chelmsford City Football Club, Salerno Way, Chelmsford CM1 2EH (doors open at 6.30pm) This is a very popular event with limited spaces, so book early by filling in the return slip on page 8. **Donation discretional.**



**SPRING PARTY**  
**Saturday 17th March 2012**  
from 3.30 to 5.30pm  
at Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre,  
Salerno Way, Chelmsford CM1 2EH  
Children will be entertained £2.50 per child  
All family members welcome

### New Sponsor of Newsletter Required

We are looking for a new sponsor of our termly newsletters. If you can help or know of anyone who we can approach we would love to hear from you. Please contact Rachel on 01245 353575. Thank you



*Jo Sapstead,  
Kidzspace  
organiser*

**Hi Kids**

Welcome to all our new members. I hope you have all enjoyed Kidzspace so far and have made some new friends. This year is all about having fun and trying out new activities/ experiences. In the last few months we have all enjoyed a production of Horrible Histories, a meal at Frankie & Benny's and Christmas Fun at Lancaster House with the Karaoke machine and Nintendo wii. Here are the forthcoming events to tempt you so book early! **Jo**

<b>Friday 20th January</b> 6.15pm to 8.30pm	No charge	<b>Celebrating Chinese New Year in Maldon</b> Izumi & Bowling at Madison Heights
<b>Monday 13th February</b> 9.45am to 1.45pm	£7.00	<b>Laserquest at Rayleigh Megazone</b> Followed by Meal at the Harvester
<b>Friday 23rd March</b> 6.00pm to 8.00pm	No charge	<b>Crafts/Fun &amp; Games</b> Lancaster House, Chelmsford
<b>Wednesday 11th April (provisional)</b> All Day	£5.00	<b>Surprise! Easter Outing</b> Details to be confirmed

You are advised to book early as we only have a limited number of places on most events. To confirm your booking, we require an updated consent form, completion of reply slip returned with payment (postal orders acceptable if no bank account held). Cancellations are non refundable. If you do not have a consent form or details need updating, please contact the office on 01245 353575. We do not wish children to be excluded due to financial difficulty. Please contact us in confidence as there may be a means of providing help.

**FAMILIES INFOCUS (ESSEX)  
ACTIVITY CLUB**  
at Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre  
Salerno Way, Chelmsford, CM1 2EH

**Join us for FUN every Saturday  
Evening 3.30 to 5.30pm (unless advertised)**

Play activities for children with a disability or special needs and siblings, accompanied by their parents/carers

- Qualified *trampoline* coach available (every Saturday)
- *Free play, games and equipment* (every Saturday)
- *Gymnastics* circuit and coach (21<sup>st</sup> Jan, 18<sup>th</sup> Feb, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 21<sup>st</sup> April)
- *Sports* coach - football (28<sup>th</sup> Jan, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 14<sup>th</sup> April)
- Set in *nice airy, secure and friendly environment* for the children and somewhere *parents, friends, family and carers* can come to *relax, talk* to other parents or *rush about* with the children
  - *Suggested donation £1 per child*

*\*PLEASE NOTE: There will not be a club on 14<sup>th</sup> January or 10<sup>th</sup> March as the centre has events. We are also closed on 7<sup>th</sup> April, Easter Saturday.*

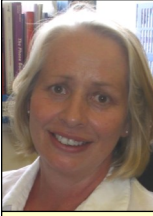
For further details please phone us on **01245 353575**  
email: [karen.fif@btconnect.com](mailto:karen.fif@btconnect.com) or come and visit

**NEW!!! DISABILITY MULTI SPORTS**  
*for children aged 6 years old +*  
at Chelmsford Sport and Athletics Centre, Salerno  
Way, Chelmsford CM1 2EH  
*Children will participate in a range of sports from individual to team sports. Children of any disability are welcome, however if one to one aid is required then the child must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or carer*  
**Wednesday 4th January to Wednesday 28th March (not 15th February) 4.15pm to 5pm**  
Course Code: DATH Price £32.50  
To book phone 01245 605666, visit or book online [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/sportsbookings](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/sportsbookings)

**Special Needs Support Group & Play Sessions**  
**for young people and their families aged up to 19 years** at Play Rascal Indoor Play Centre,  
Gorse Lane Industrial Estate, Telford Road,  
Clacton on Sea, C015 4LP  
**Every last Thursday of the month 6pm to 8pm**  
**£5 per young person**  
*(discount for siblings who come along too)*  
*For more information telephone Rob at Play Rascal on 07891 597611*



Julie Neilson, adviser for Chelmsford

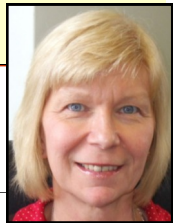


Hilary Popiolek, adviser for Colchester (part) & Tendring



Denise Poole, adviser for Braintree, Harlow, Epping & Uttlesford

Please contact us in confidence on 01245 353575 if you require any advice, information or support on issues of concern about your child including benefits and educational matters.



Pat Kent, adviser for Colchester (part), Maldon & Chelmsford (part)



Amanda Whitehead, adviser for Basildon, Brentwood, Castlepoint, & Rochford

**Ambitious about Autism**

Families InFocus (Essex) is supporting **Finished at School**, a campaign calling for more and better educational options for young people with autism once they finish secondary education. The campaign aims to secure more opportunities for young people with autism aged 16-25 to develop skills, gain employment, live more independently and ultimately have the life they choose. There is more information at [www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk) where you can also pledge your support for the campaign, email your MP asking him/her to support the campaign, read the Finished at School report and read personal stories.

**Come along to our drop ins, have a pamper, a coffee, tea and a chat. Pre-school children welcome too**

Lancaster House, 140 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford	Every Wednesday in term time 10am to 12 noon. <b>Therapist available every 1st Wednesday of the month offering reflexology &amp; massage.</b>
Baptist Church, Coggeshall Road, Braintree	Every first Thursday of the month between 10am and 12 noon. <b>Therapist available offering reflexology &amp; massage.</b>
United Reformed Church, Newland Street, Witham	Every second Thursday of the month between 10am and 12 noon. <b>Therapist available offering reflexology &amp; massage.</b>

**NEW FOR 2012:** We are delighted to announce a new activity group to be run with the Children's Centre during holiday time on a Tuesday 10am to 11.30am at the Galleywood Heritage Centre, The Common (off Margaretting Road), Galleywood, CM2 8TR. The group will offer support for parents/carers whilst the children can explore activities on offer. Siblings welcome. The group will meet on Tuesday 14th February 2012 and then 3rd and 10th April.

**FAMILIES INFOCUS (ESSEX) WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

**Play and Special Support**

# PASS

★ 10.00am - 12.00 noon (Term time only) ★

1st Friday each month at Brightlingsea Children's Centre, YMCA Hall, 55 High Street, Brightlingsea, CO7 0AQ

3rd Friday each month at Walton Youth Centre, Standley Road, Walton on the Naze, CO14 8PT

PASS is a **FREE** group for parents and carers who are or whose children (0-19) are affected by a diagnosed or undiagnosed medical condition, disability, special educational or additional need.

**SENSORY EQUIPMENT SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS TIME FOR YOU - FREE CRECHE**

Toy Library sensory loan scheme also available

**Contact: 01255 679990 for details**

Families InFocus (Essex), in partnership with Maldon Children's Centre present the...

# Maldon Support Group

....offering support and information for parents and carers of children with a disability, special or additional needs. Have time to socialise, sharing ideas and experiences whilst the children explore the toys and activities provided

For more details please contact ;  
Pat Kent at Families InFocus on 01245 353575  
or Maldon Children's Centre on 01621 851590

**VENUE:**  
United Reform Church, Market Hill, Maldon, CM9 4PZ

Every Third Wednesday of the month 12.30-2.30pm Term Time Only

Therapist available offering Reflexology & Massage

**! New Venue for Laindon !**

**parent forum**  
For families who have a child with additional needs

**When?**  
10am – 12 noon  
Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012  
Then first Tuesday of the month  
Term Time Only

**Where?**  
Millhouse Junior School  
Tavistock Road  
Laindon  
SS15 5QF

We would like to invite you to our **B.I.G** (Basildon Inspiration Group) parent forum.  
**Come and find support, friendship, information,**

For more information please contact:  
Amanda at Families InFocus (Essex) on **01245 353575**

The Government, responding to campaigners concerns, has announced that disabled people living in residential care homes and colleges will continue to have their additional mobility needs met through Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and the Personal Independence Payment (PIP). This announcement follows the publication of Lord Low's review which found that:

- DLA mobility is vital in order for people in residential care to maintain independence, and a lifeline to the community.
- There is no evidence of duplication of funding in relation to mobility needs being met by local authorities and those being met by DLA mobility.

Campaigners were very concerned about the impact of the proposal to withdraw this vital

benefit from disabled young people, aged 16 - 25, living in residential schools and colleges. The Minister for Disabled People, Maria Miller said of her decision:

"The reasoning behind the original decision was to ensure there were no overlaps in funding leading to double payments. We have spent the last few months gathering information and evidence and visiting disabled people in care homes to find out directly from them how their mobility needs are actually met in practice. "However, I have always been clear that I would not make any change that would stop disabled people from getting out and about. Which is why after listening to the strong concerns of disabled people and their organisations, I have taken action and decided not to remove the payment."

## Children and teenagers to benefit from successful adult mental health therapy

The government has announced that it is investing £32 million in psychological therapies, including talking therapies, for children and teenagers with mental health problems. One in ten children aged 5-16 years has a clinically diagnosable mental health problem and mental illness in childhood and adolescence which can impact on their future life chances. The investment is allowing psychological therapies to be specifically adapted from successful models for adults to fit children and teenager's needs.

**Hot News:** In Essex, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are hosting events in conjunction with Essex County Council offering referrers to CAMHS the opportunity to shape priorities and plans for future CAMHS targeted early intervention provision and to promote a new single referral pathway for access to all Tiers of CAMHS. Good news, we will keep you updated.

### Rethink Siblings Network

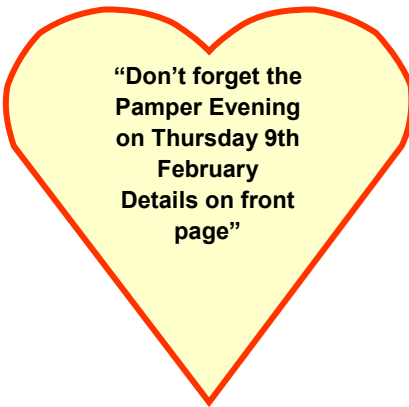
Rethink Mental Illness has a network with resources, advice and guidance for 14-18 and 19-25 year olds who have a brother or sister experiencing mental health problems. They also have blogs, stories, videos, factsheets, support groups and an online forum where siblings can share experiences and advice. Siblings can also call their helpline on 0300 5000 927 (Monday to Friday, 10am - 1pm).

In 2012, they are starting free programmes for siblings across England which will offer siblings the chance to learn about mental illness, meet other siblings, get support and learn ways to support their brother or sister. If you are a sibling, you can refer yourself to the programme, or others can also signpost siblings or find out more by contacting: [siblingsprogramme@rethink.org](mailto:siblingsprogramme@rethink.org)

### USEFUL WEBSITE RESOURCE

The Den ([www.theden.me](http://www.theden.me)) is a website designed specifically for young people on the autism spectrum and their friends, developed by The Autism Education Trust (AET), an organisation which supports and promotes effective education practice for children and young people with autism. The Den is an information hub - not a social networking site and users are not able to message each other via the site.

It aims to address some of the questions and worries which all young people face, tackling issues such as health, relationships, work, study, travel, home life, the law and money. Information is presented to appeal to young people with autism, relying on visual content to communicate through videos as well as text. The site also benefits from Widgeit Point - a symbol communication system designed specifically for users with SEN that translates words into symbols. For more information visit the site, phone 020 7903 3650 or email: [theden@autismeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:theden@autismeducationtrust.org.uk)



“Don't forget  
**Spring Party**  
**in Chelmsford**  
 on Saturday  
 17th March  
 Details on front page”



Tom Cocklin of Absolutely Bouncy Castles has kindly agreed to give a discount to any of our families who hire one of his bouncy castles. He has a large selection, ideal for all occasions, children's parties, garden parties, corporate and fund raising events!

For more details Tel 01245 260954 Mobile 07973 662445 or visit [www.abouncycastles.co.uk](http://www.abouncycastles.co.uk)



## Families InFocus (Essex)

*Supporting families of children with disabilities and special needs*

Present talks by

Jeannie Gordon, *Ministry of Parenting*, and Lorna Byrne, *Registered Learning Disabilities Nurse*

### Anxiety and low self-esteem in children with learning difficulties

#### What parents/carers can do to help

Advice and information on anxiety and improving self-esteem in children with learning difficulties at

**The Pavilion, Essex County Cricket Ground,  
 New Writtle Street, Chelmsford CM2 0PG**

On

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012**

**10.00 am to 12.00 noon**

In partnership with



### Does your child have challenging behaviour?

Tips for managing challenging behaviour in children with learning disabilities at

**PARC (Essex), Great Notley Country Park,  
 Great Notley, Braintree CM77 7FS**

On

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**7.30 pm to 9.30 pm**

### Biographies

**Jeannie Gordon.** *Jeannie trained as a psychiatric nurse with both residential and community experience of working with young children, adolescents and their families. Since 1987, she has worked in a multi-agency setting offering parenting programmes. These include all the Incredible Years Parenting Programmes, Group Skills training, and is author of the FLASH (families learning about self-harm), and STOP (Supporting together Offenders Parents) programmes. Jeannie also holds an MA in Teaching and in 2009 was commissioned as a consultant to the National Academy of Parenting Practitioners. Jeannie is currently the Director of the Ministry of Parenting CIC.*

**Lorna Byrne.** *Lorna trained as a psychiatric nurse with both residential and community experience of working with young children, adolescents and their families. Lorna also trained as a Registered Learning Disabilities Nurse (RLDN) and has experience as a ward manager as well as community manager for Children's learning Disabilities services. Lorna has trained and delivered the Incredible Years Programmes, Dina school children's programme, and the FLASH programme (families learning about self-harm). Lorna has also led on adolescent and children's groups in sexual behaviour, anger management and self-esteem. Lorna is currently the manager of the Longview Adolescent unit (North Essex Partnership foundation Trust).*

Contact Karen at Families InFocus (Essex) for more information or to reserve your **free** place (tel: 01245 353575 or e-mail [karen.fif@btconnect.com](mailto:karen.fif@btconnect.com)) or complete reply slip on Page 8.



**Thank you to all our supporters**

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:  
Chelmsford Star**

**Co-operative and everyone who has taken part in the many fundraising activities and events during the year.**

**St Clere's School, Stanford-Le-Hope**

**for raising over £500 from various fundraising events. Special thanks to pupils James Dowsett, Lois Fitt and Megan Wilkins.**

**Plume Adult Music School**

**for choosing us to benefit from their summer charity concert which raised over £200.**

**Lynn Vine**

**for completing the Moonlight Colourthon half marathon walk and raising £50 in sponsorship.**

**THANK YOU ALL**

**Welcome to Carol Avis who has recently joined our team of Trustees.**

**We are delighted to have you on board.**

**We say goodbye to Fiona Shanahan who has stepped down as a Trustee to spend more time with her lovely family. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication. We wish you all the very best for the future.**

**Raising Funds in Partnership with Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society**

**Shop at a Chelmsford Star Co-operative store and earn money for us!!**



Supporters are given a reward card (not a credit card) which, when produced at the till in any Chelmsford Star Co-operative store will earn **cash** for Families InFocus (Essex). (Excludes tobacco, lottery, stamps, mobile top-ups and pay point).

**WHERE TO USE IT**

The Community Card can be used in any **Chelmsford Star Co-operative** store including: Food stores, 'quadrant' department stores (Braintree and Chelmsford), Funeral Services and Travel Centres. Check website [www.chelmsfordstar.coop](http://www.chelmsfordstar.coop)

**HOW TO GET A CARD**

If you would like a card please complete the tear off slip on page 8 and return to us.

## Supporting Fundraising Events

Thank you to everyone who supported the recent Rotary Club Shopping Evening at Quadrant Chelmsford which was a huge success and raised £1,155 for Families InFocus (Essex).



Chris Fegan, Vice President of Chelmsford Star Co-operative & Rotary Club Presidents presenting cheque to Rachel Ellis, Director

## Supporting Future Chelmsford Star Co-operative Fundraising Events

**21st March 2012 Exclusive Shopping Event (with discounts) for W.I, friends and families with Italian Theme at Quadrant Chelmsford. Food demonstration by QVC Chef Malcolm Harradine. Tickets £10**

**17th April 2012 Quadrant Chelmsford Charity Spring Fashion Show. Top High Street brands, including menswear. Tickets c£6**

**Can you Help?**

**Models required of all shapes and sizes!!!**

**To reserve tickets or for more information about either event please telephone us on 01245 353575, complete slip on page 8, email: [familiesinfocus@btconnect.com](mailto:familiesinfocus@btconnect.com) or check website [www.chelmsfordstar.coop](http://www.chelmsfordstar.coop)**

**If you would be interested in helping with fundraising events and activities, either on a one-off basis or regularly, or would like to join our friendly fundraising committee or discuss other ways you might be able to help us, please contact Rachel on 01245 353575. THANK YOU.**

**Thank you to those parents who have already opted to receive their newsletter by email helping to save us money. If you would also like to receive future issues by email please contact Karen Mathews on 01245 353575 or send an email to [karen.fif@btconnect.com](mailto:karen.fif@btconnect.com)**

DATE	ACTIVITIES	VENUE	TIME
<b>KIDZSPACE EVENTS (See Page 2)</b>			
Friday 20th January	Bowling & Meal	Madison Heights, Maldon	6.15pm - 8.30pm
Monday 13th February	Laserquest	Rayleigh Megazone	9.45am to 1.45pm
Friday 23rd March	Crafts, fun & games	Lancaster House, Chelmsford	6pm - 8pm
Wednesday 11th April (provisional)	Surprise Easter outing	To be confirmed	All day
<b>OTHER EVENTS (See Page 3)</b>			
Every Wednesday in term time Therapist available 1st Wednesday	Drop-in sessions. Coffee, tea and a chat	Lancaster House, Chelmsford	10am to 12 noon
During School Holidays on Tuesday 14th February, 3rd & 10th April 2012	Drop-in sessions. Activities for children. Siblings welcome	Galleywood Heritage Centre	10am to 11.30am
Every first Thursday of the month Therapist available	Drop-in sessions. Coffee, tea and a chat	Baptist Church, Coggeshall Road, Braintree	10am to 12 noon
Every second Thursday of the month Therapist available	As above	United Reformed Church, Newland St, Witham	10am to 12 noon
Tuesday 10th January 2012 and then first Tuesday of the month Refreshments available	As above	Millhouse Junior School, Tavistock Road, Laindon	10am to 12 noon
Every first Friday of the month Free crèche, sensory equipment	As above	Brightlingsea Children's Centre, Brightlingsea	10am to 12 noon
Every third Friday of the month Free crèche, sensory equipment	As above	Walton Youth Centre Standley Road, Walton	10am to 12 noon
Every third Wednesday of the month Therapist available	As above	United Reform Church, Market Hill, Maldon	12.30 to 2.30pm

**PLEASE INDICATE WHICH EVENTS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN: (PLEASE SEE OVERLEAF FOR OTHER EVENTS)**

**KIDZSPACE (SIBLINGS) EVENTS**

- I will be coming to **Chinese New Year** on **Friday 20th January**
- I will be coming to **Laserquest** on **Monday 13th February** and I enclose ..... (£7 per child)
- I will be coming to **Crafts, Fun & Games** on **Friday 23rd March**
- I will be coming to **Easter Outing** on **Wednesday 11th April (TBC)** and I enclose £..... (£5 per child)

**TOTAL PAYMENT FOR KIDZSPACE EVENTS £.....(include in total overleaf)**

**Name (s) of child(ren)..... Age(s).....**

.....

**Please send consent form to .....**

**Tel No.....**

DATE	ACTIVITIES	VENUE	TIME
<b><u>FAMILY EVENTS</u></b>			
Every Saturday (unless advertised)	Saturday Activity Club	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre, Chelmsford	3.30 to 5.30 pm
Saturday 17th March (see front page)	Spring Party	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre, Chelmsford	3.30 to 5.30 pm
<b><u>PARENTS/CARERS</u></b>			
Thursday 9th February (see front page)	Parents' Pamper Evening	Chelmsford City Football Club, Salerno Way,	Doors open 6.30pm
Wednesday 22nd February (see page 5)	Talk 'Anxiety and low self-esteem in children - what parents can do to help'	The Pavilion, Essex County Cricket Ground, New Writtle Street, Chelmsford	10.00am to 12 noon
Wednesday 21st March (see page 6)	Exclusive Shopping Evening with Italian Theme	Quadrant Chelmsford	6pm to 9pm
Wednesday 28th March (see page 5)	Talk 'Does your child have Challenging Behaviour?'	PARC, Great Notley Country Park, Great Notley, Braintree	7.30pm to 9.30pm
Tuesday 17th April (see page 6)	Charity Spring Fashion Show	Quadrant Chelmsford	6pm to 9pm

PLEASE INDICATE WHICH EVENTS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN: (PLEASE SEE OVERLEAF FOR OTHER EVENTS)

Name (s)..... Address..... Tel No.....

**FAMILY EVENTS**

Spring Party on Saturday 17th March. No of Adults..... No of Children.....(ages.....) Payment enclosed £..... (£2.50 per child)

**Pamper Evening on Thursday 9th February**

I wish to secure .....place(s) (any donation at your discretion) £..... enclosed (if applicable)

**TALKS**

'Anxiety & low self-esteem' on Wednesday 22nd February. I wish to secure ..... place(s)

'Challenging behaviour' on Wednesday 28th March. I wish to secure ..... place(s)

**Fundraising Events (Please send me further information)**

'W.I. Exclusive Shopping' on Wednesday 21st March.

'Charity Fashion Show' on Tuesday 17th April.

I would like to learn more about being a 'Catwalk Model' Name..... Size.....

**Community Card**

Yes, I would like a Chelmsford Star Co-operative Community Card.

**TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED** (KIDZSPACE/FAMILY/PARENT EVENTS/OTHER) £.....