

Dear Special Guardian,

I hope you are all well. Please find below July 2024 SGO Support Newsletter.

Please note that Kinship, the national charity for kinship carers, is offering peer support groups and **free workshops**. It is worth keeping an eye on this website as the government has provided funding for Kinship to provide national training for new and established kinship carers which some of you may find beneficial. Details of the Shropshire peer support group, which is independent of the Council/SGO Support Team is on this website and more information on this will be sent out in the next newsletter.

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- Shrewsbury Fire Station open day 17/08/2024

Welfare Support Team - Household Support Fund

This is a reminder that Shropshire Council's Welfare Support Team has funds available to help people with their essential living costs through the Household Support Fund.

They may be able to help people with things like:



- Food
- Energy and water costs (including payment towards arrears)
- Essential white goods
- Essential furniture items
- Essential bills

If you aren't sure whether they can help with an item, please contact them on 0345 678 9078, selecting option 1 to speak to an adviser.

To apply, people should call them on 0345 678 9078, selecting option 2.

For more information on the Household Support Fund at Shropshire Council, see [here](#)

For more information on the Welfare Support Team, see [here](#)

Please also familiarise yourself with the following web pages [Cost of living help](#) and [Unclaimed benefits](#)

Open up – loneliness among children

NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin has launched a new initiative aimed at addressing the issue of loneliness among children in the region.

The 'Open Up' campaign aims to raise awareness about the signs of loneliness and provide practical guidance and support to parents, carers, and children on how to prevent and combat loneliness.

Visit this website for advice for parents and children aged 11-13 years.

[Open up campaign to prevent loneliness in children \(stw-healthiertogether.nhs.uk\)](http://stw-healthiertogether.nhs.uk)



Building Connections – Tackling loneliness experienced by young people

Building Connections is an online service by the NSPCC, for young people up to the age of 19, empowering them to find a way through loneliness.



Young people work with a trained befriender, who guides them and champions them each step of the way. Building Connections gives young people tools that can help them build their confidence and better equip them to manage loneliness.

To find out more and to make a referral please visit the NSPCC website [Building Connections - Support service for young people](#)

Support for Neurodivergent children and young people

When children and young people have needs related to neurodiversity they may require support from a range of services.

There are a range of local support providers that parents/carers and children and young people can access, the majority of which do not require your child to have a diagnosis.



The Healthier Together website has information on the support available for 0-5 years, 5-18 years and a newly launched section for 18-25 years

Click to find out more about the [Support for neurodivergent children and their families](#)

Supporting d/Deaf children

NSPCC Learning has published a podcast episode looking at how the differing language and communication needs of d/Deaf children can affect their safety and the child protection support they receive.



The podcast features a discussion with a panel of experts from the Social Workers with Deaf Children and Professionals Working Group, covering: supporting a d/Deaf child with reporting abuse; potential barriers to identifying

safeguarding concerns; and avoiding assumptions around how d/Deaf children and young people prefer to communicate.

Listen to the podcast: [Podcast: Supporting d/Deaf children - putting the child at the centre of decision making](#)

Listen on YouTube: [Supporting d/Deaf children: putting the child at the centre of decision making | NSPCC Learning](#)

Young carers update

Please find below a link with up-to-date information on the Young Carers offer in Shropshire, which is now run by Shropshire Council.

This offers support for any young person aged from 5 to 17 who help to look after (or 'care' for) a family member who has a physical disability, mental illness, or alcohol/drug addiction.



There are around 650 known young carers in Shropshire, but there are probably lots more children and young people who are caring, but just see this as being part of a family.

If you are working with a family where you think there is a young carer, please consider the support offered through the young carers project, a referral form is on the link below.

[Young carers | Shropshire Council](#)

Children and Young People Domestic Abuse Group Work

Connexus have been funded alongside Women's Aid to deliver CYP group work for those impacted by domestic abuse. This is enabling them to open-up referrals from external agencies again.

They are now able to offer group work to CYP. This can either be Peer group work – in school, the community or virtually or whole family unit work, again in schools, the community or virtually. At the moment they are able to offer the Healing Together

programme or drawing and talking depending on client age/needs etc. They will be offering further programmes of work once training allows.

They can not work with anyone who is still living with a perpetrator of domestic abuse and there needs to be some level of professional involved with the family (if they are not currently supported by SDAS) in order to help monitor and manage risk.

The SGO Support Team can explore this service if appropriate.

Playtime with Books

A new free programme in Shropshire for parents and carers to explore books with children aged 10-24 months in a fun and playful way.

Includes online learning sessions, free books home and one to one support calls.

To find out more please visit this website: [Playtime with Books - Participant Contact Form](#)

Playtime with Books

A new, **FREE** programme in Shropshire, supporting parents to explore books with their 10-24 month old children in a fun & playful way!



Here's what we offer


5 online learning sessions that you can watch when it suits you


4 free books to keep, sent to your home


3 1-to-1 videos calls with a facilitator, who can support you throughout



What do other parents think?

"It helped me to build on the good techniques I was already trying and gave me some new ideas about how to share books with my child"

Mum of 1 year old

"This program has really helped us learn to enjoy books together on a deeper level. We feel more connected!"

Dad of 2 year old

"Amazing. For me and for my little one. We grew and we learned a lot together whilst on the programme"

Mum of 2 year old

Scan the QR code or click the link to sign up by July 2024. Limited spaces available.



If you have any questions, please call 07514665962 or email playtimewithbooks@educ.cam.ac.uk

www.tinyurl.com/pwbcontactform

 **nesta**

BeeU Service Update

We are really pleased to update you on how the BeeU emotional wellbeing and mental health service will be supporting children, young people and their families for the year ahead (2024/25).



The BeeU service commissioned by NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and delivered by Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) provides:

- Emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people (0-25)
- Neurodevelopmental assessments for children – autism for 5-18 year olds, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for 6-18 year olds
- Community Eating Disorder Services for 0-18 year olds

From April 2024 MPFT will enhance the BeeU service offer, with additional investment from NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. MPFT will bolster its capacity by growing the BeeU team, with more registered mental health professionals able to respond to the increased demand; and developing the prevention offer available in schools and communities.

You can read more about BeeU here <https://camhs.mpft.nhs.uk/beeU>

Support for parents/special guardians of children moving up to a new school

Moving up and changing school is a big change for children and parents or caregivers. It's a new stage of growing independence and separation. Fears and worries are normal as well as excitement, as with each stage of childhood development. Parents can help children cope with and overcome their fears, and to nurture them to feel brave and capable.



In Our Place has some great resources around Moving Up which can be accessed [here](#).

Views sought on short breaks services for children and young people with disabilities

Families and practitioners in Shropshire are being asked to share their views by taking part in a survey on Short Breaks services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).



Short breaks (previously known as respite) enable children to have fun and take part in activities and social opportunities whilst giving parents carers some time away from their caring responsibilities. Short breaks can include activities such as sports, arts, music, trips, clubs, and overnight stays. It also provides children and young people with activities that will help prepare them for adulthood.

The survey has been designed in partnership with Parent and Carer Council Shropshire (PACC) to collect the views and experiences of families of children and young people with disabilities and find out how they may benefit (or have benefitted in the past) from short breaks provision, what works well, what could be improved, and what SEND families would like to see in the future.

To find out more and to have you say click [here](#).

Wellbeing resources for parent/carers of children with Autism

[Autism Central for Parents and Carers](#) have launched a new series of six webinars on looking after yourself as a parent or carer of an autistic person.



Learn about the impact of self-critical thinking, and what we can do to be more compassionate with ourselves.

There are 6 episodes, covering:-

- Am I doing this all wrong?
- Dealing with other people
- Looking after yourself
- Not what I signed up for
- Why do I feel so drained?
- I can't relax

Click here to access these [Wellbeing resources for parents and carers](#).

Spring 2024 Meet and Chat SEND drop-in sessions hosted by Early Help

During March and April 2024, Early Help once again hosted a cluster of SEND drop-ins across the county.

Meet n Chat SEND

Six SEND sessions ran in a range of settings including at our Oswestry and Shrewsbury Early Help Family hubs, a Community Information drop-in at Highley Library and at St Peter's Primary school in Wem. These were attended by sixteen parent carers who were able to speak with a range of professionals including members of the SEN team, the Designated and Associate Clinical Officers for SEND, a BeeU Assistant Psychologist, Neurodiversity practitioners, members of our Early Help team and representatives from PACC. Autism West Midlands,

SEND IASS, the FIS and SEND Local Offer were in attendance at some of the sessions.

The theme of the Spring sessions was Neurodiversity. Twelve of the parent carers who attended spoke with the BeeU Assistant Psychologist. With chats with SEN team representatives also popular. 31% of parent carers were signposted to make further contact with PACC to find more information out about their Buddies group, Healthy Lives programme and just what further community support they offer. These Spring sessions saw an increased number of families who were already being supported by Targeted Early Help attending showing an increased awareness and understanding of SEND by our Targeted Early Help team.

Feedback from parent carers has been limited but those who have responded have rated the sessions 5 out of 5 for being informative and all said they would recommend attending the Meet and Chat SEND drop-in sessions to others. The BeeU Assistant Psychologist said that it has enabled them to speak to a good number of parent carers and professionals who liaised with them have gained a better understanding of BeeU pathways. The SEN team continue to enjoy attending the sessions, enabling them to meet face-to-face with parent carers and in some cases children and young people.

As we move to business as normal with our Early Help service, we plan to continue to hold these Meet and Chat SEND drop-in sessions regularly across the county.

New Pathfinder services for survivors of sexual violence

The Pathfinder service is the latest addition to the services available in the West Mercia region for people who have experienced sexual violence and are experiencing trauma-related mental health problems as a result. It's available to anyone aged 18 or over across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. It's important that you, and others in your organisation, are aware of the Pathfinder Service, and how to refer someone who you think may need it.

Who provides it?... and what does it do?

This new service is being delivered by [Axis](#), a local organisation that provides counselling and support to survivors of sexual abuse. They're working in partnership with the NHS to deliver this.

Who is the Pathfinder service available to?

The service is for adults (18 and over) who have experienced sexual violence and are experiencing trauma-related mental health needs as a result. There are some

circumstances where people might not be suitable for Pathfinder, but the team can advise the individual if this is the case.

Making a referral

Making a referral to Pathfinder is actually very easy. All you have to do is contact Axis:

- by phone: 01952 278000 or 07548 826104
- by email: pathfinder@axiscounselling.org.uk

The referral can be made by a professional or by the individuals themselves. Upon referral, Axis can guide that individual through the process of applying for the Pathfinder services, while advising as to the most suitable services available that best fit their needs.

What happens after a referral is made?

Once a referral is made, an assessment will be made by a trained member of the Pathfinder team. They will then decide what the most suitable service is for that individual. It might be one-to-one counselling, group work or another element of the Pathfinder resource.

Other useful information

- [The Survivor Pathway](#) is an online resource for anyone wanting to know more about sexual violence support services in the West Mercia region.
- Training for professionals - a comprehensive programme of FREE trauma-based training on working with survivors of sexual violence is available. It's suitable for anyone who works in wider services that engage with people who have experienced sexual assault and/or abuse. To find out more or to register your interest, please contact Axis.

Free – Keeping children safe online workshop for parents

The new NSPCC Keeping Children Safe Online workshop provides parents and carers with information about how to support their child in their online world.

The 40 minute pre-recorded presentation covers topics such as online bullying, mental health, and social media, as well as signposting to resources and organisations for help and support.

[Access the workshop on YouTube](#)



'This workshop was very helpful and I spoke again to my 14-year-old last night, but this time with more knowledge.' Parent who attended a workshop

Ziplt App - Decommissioned

Please also be aware that the [Ziplt App](#) has been decommissioned by the NSPCC. Children and young people can access information/support on the Childline website about sexting. Click [here](#).

The includes information on and access to the [Report Remove Tool](#); which helps children and young people under 18 in the UK confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet.

New Family Info Newsletter

Shropshire's Family Information Service (FIS) have recently launched a newsletter to keep you up to date with essential family news, recommendations, and handy info all direct to your inbox each month. Plus, there'll be special school holiday editions with loads of ideas to help keep the boredom at bay!

Please sign up to keep up to date with information for children, young people and families in Shropshire. Click to sign up [here](#).



Early Help Drop Ins – How can we help you?

We know that families often need help and support, which is why there are a number of Early Help Drop Ins running throughout Shropshire.

At an Early Help Family Drop-In, parents can access a warm and welcoming space, expert advice, information, and support - all for free!

You can chat to a range of services who will help you to access the support you need. Services like:

- Early Help Family Workers (who can work with your family to provide support tailored to your needs)



- Parenting Support (for support around child development, behaviour, sleep and relationships)
- Services that can help with finance, housing, health domestic abuse and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

You can find your local drop-in by visiting the [Shropshire Family Information Directory](#).

Parenting Help and Support Line

Being a parent can be tough sometimes. We are here for you with a friendly listening ear and practical advice on everything from behaviours that challenge to sleep issues. No judgment, just support, through this anonymous and confidential service.

Call 01743 250950 Monday - Thursday, 9.30am - 4.30pm or Friday, 9.30am - 3.30pm or email: parenting.team@shropshire.gov.uk



The Parenting Team continue to provide a wide-ranging offer, from the extensive series of universal [online modules](#) (Access code Darwin18), to virtual and face to face Understanding Your Child, Understanding Your Teen, Sleep Tight workshops and more, all listed on our [Family Information Directory](#)

If you



Connecting with other kinship carers who understand what you're going through can make such a difference.

Join a support group:

At our **in-person support groups**, you can meet up with kinship carers who live near to you. Whether you need to cry, hug, laugh or just listen, your fellow kinship carers will be there for you. Just **type your postcode or town** into the search bar and we will show you the group closest to where you live.

If you would prefer to meet online or you can't get to a group in-person, we have lots of **online support groups**, too:

[Join an in-person support group](#)

[Join an online support group](#)

Connect with other kinship carers:

“It feels like **it's a weight lifted** because you know **you're not on your own...** You can talk about something to another kinship carer that other people don't understand.”

Graham, single grandparent kinship carer, **sharing how support groups have made him feel less alone.** You can listen to Graham's story and other kinship carers' experiences on our [new podcast series Kinship Together](#). 🎧

Special interest groups:

We understand that kinship carers come from many different backgrounds and situations. That's why we have our [special interest groups](#), so you can find others facing similar situations. These include the [Men's Kinship Carers Group](#), and our group for kinship carers who are [Caring for Kinship Children on Your Own](#).

[Browse special interest groups](#)

Talk to a kinship carer on the phone:

Feel more comfortable chatting over the phone? We understand. You can chat to one of our trained kinship carer volunteers through our [Someone Like Me service](#).

[Find out more about Someone Like Me](#)

Come along to a workshop:

At our [free online workshops](#), you'll get **tips and information from specialists** with lots of experience working with kinship carers and families. You'll learn alongside other kinship carers who understand the issues you are facing.

Kinship has launched a [brand-new podcast series - Kinship Together](#) - **stories, experiences and advice for kinship carers**.

Kinship Together is a **podcast just for kinship carers** that **features conversations with people who are going through the experience themselves**. It highlights the importance of peer support between kinship carers – to share experiences and get much-needed emotional support. It provides first-hand insight into life as a kinship carer – the **challenges and the moments of joy** which make it all worthwhile.

[Listen to 'The Kinship Together Podcast'](#)

One plus one – offer free courses, for carers/parents who are experiencing conflict in their relationship, they can access:

- Arguing Better
- Me you and baby too – when a new baby is introduced to the family dynamics.
- Getting it right for children – for parents who are going through a separation.

Parents/carers can access the courses online, and for free. If one to one support is required the SGO Support Team can explore an EHAAT referral.

Oneplusone.org.uk

Childhood Trauma

This poem was originally written to explain a bit about what it means to be trauma informed when working with children and young people who have been through tough stuff. It also comes with a trigger warning for anyone who has experienced any sort of trauma. We're all just kids that got older.

[I Wonder If You See Me - A Spoken Word Poem About Childhood Trauma - YouTube](#)



Shropshire
Fire and Rescue Service

SHREWSBURY FIRE STATION OPEN DAY

17TH AUGUST 2024

TO ENSURE AN INCLUSIVE EXPERIENCE, WE WILL HAVE A DEDICATED HOUR FROM **10:00 AM TO 11:00 AM** FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) VISITORS.



THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE WELCOME FROM **11:00 AM TO 3:00 PM.**



OUR OPEN DAY WILL INCLUDE:

- LIVE DEMONSTRATIONS
- FOOD STALLS
- FACEPAINTING
- ACTIVITIES
- TOY STALL
- FIRE CONTROL VISITS
- CHARITY RAFFLE
- TEA ROOM & SEATING AREA



SUPPORTING THE
The Fire Fighters
Charity