

Email Update February 2016 (sent 29th February 2016)

To all Supporters of Parents' Voice

First, we apologise for the longer-than-usual period between emails. It's the time of year when many of us suffer with colds and bugs. So it's not surprising that most of the Parents' Voice committee have been spending time looking after unwell members of their families as well as coughing and sneezing themselves! (Remember, we're all volunteers so we fit in Parents' Voice activities alongside work and family life.)

We hope some of this email will be of interest to you. You are welcome to share it (or parts of it) with your friends or groups, but please mention that it came from [Parents' Voice](#) if you do, thanks.

- 1) Parents' Voice news
- 2) Local Surveys and Consultations
- 3) National Surveys
- 4) County Council Director for children, families and communities appointed
- 5) Internet Safety
- 6) Health
- 7) The Future of Family Incomes: children affected by a benefit freeze
- 8) Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions

1) Parents' Voice news

i) A draft action plan for our activities was put together at our meeting on 14th January; this will be finalised within the next few weeks and we'll keep you updated on our plans. If you have any suggestions for future activities please let us know (email: info@parentsvoice.co.uk).

ii) Coffee and Chat sessions will resume soon. We loved meeting some supporters during 2016 and we think everyone who came along enjoyed the chance to have a friendly chat, sometimes about specific topics and sometimes just a general chat about being a parent. In 2016 we hope that even more parents will come along (and we also hope to maybe make the sessions more regular).

iii) We have been contacted about possibly organising a talk for parents and an event, both about internet safety. This is still in the "possibility" stage; we should know more after talks in mid-March.

2) Local Surveys and Consultations

i) Thank you to everyone who took part in the two important local consultations about 0-19 services for families in Worcestershire and the use of Children's Centres.

Worcestershire County Council is now going through the responses (there were rather a lot); we will let you know what the outcome is.

ii) Worcester City Early Help launched a new [health survey](#) last week. It's intended for anyone who has attended an activity at a Worcester Children's Centre and it's very short (just 6 questions). However, it only runs for one week. so if you have been to a Worcester Children's Centre do take part as soon as possible (we don't know the deadline date but believe it's 1st or 2nd March).

You can find the [survey](#) here: bit.ly/1T8ZjlA.

3) National Surveys/Consultations

There are a number of current national surveys and consultations which we have already told you about - if you think one of these would be relevant to someone you know, please pass on the details. The first consultation closes next Tuesday.

i) [Wraparound and Holiday Childcare](#)

The Department for Education is seeking views on draft departmental advice about how schools should respond to requests regarding wraparound and holiday childcare.

'Wraparound childcare' is childcare that schools provide outside of normal school hours, such as breakfast clubs or after school.

Parents' (or carers') views are wanted.

This [consultation](#) closes at **11pm today** 29th February 2016.

ii) [The Big Nappy Survey](#)

Go Real is a not-for-profit project that promotes the use of reusable nappies through a range of activities. This [national survey](#) is a research project to find out which nappies parents choose to use and why.. They "don't mind if your baby/toddler is still in nappies, or if your children have grown up and moved out. If you are a parent and have used nappies, cloth or disposable." So if you're a parent reading this email you can take part in this [survey](#).

You can find the survey here: bit.ly/1QyxhhP.

iii) Ofsted Parents' Panel

Ofsted are setting up a Parents' Panel. You can find out more about this and take part in their survey here: svy.mk/1Mxo8nj

4) County Council Director for children, families and communities appointed

Worcestershire County Council has appointed Catherine Driscoll as the director for children, families and communities. She has over 30 years public sector experience in the NHS, higher education, the voluntary sector and local government, and is a former head of adult social care at County Hall. .

The post became vacant after Gail Quinton in September left for an executive director's role at Coventry City Council after six years as Director of Worcestershire's Children's Services.

5) Internet Safety

i) On Safer Internet Day (9th February) , the UK Safer Internet Centre published the **Creating a Better Internet for All** report, a study of children's experiences of online empowerment and online hate. The study found that 94% of the young people who took part believe that no one should be targeted with online hate.

You can find the full report, an executive summary, appendices and young people's advice here: bit.ly/1QoYizp

ii) BBC News reported that more than three-quarters of children aged 10 to 12 in the UK have social media accounts, even though they are below the age limit. You can read details here: bbc.in/1Q50ZW5

iii) You may find this [Parents' Guide to Instagram](#) useful: bit.ly/1oGcVbc

iv) There are further resources and advice about internet safety here: bit.ly/1LdOx5e

6) Health

i) A [government petition](#) asking that all children (at least to the age of 11 years) are offered the meningitis B vaccine has had over 813,550 signatures. The Government responds to all petitions that get more than 10,000 signatures and any petition with 100,000 signatures is considered for a debate. The [petition](#) ends on 16th March and at the time of writing there has not been a response or a date set for a debate.

ii) Eating Disorders Awareness Week ran from 22nd - 28th February. Here are 3 links which you may find useful if you are concerned about somebody's eating:

[Parent's Guide to Eating Disorders](#)

[What not to say to someone recovering from an eating disorder](#)

Eating Disorders

This link may be useful for older young people/adults

[Eating Disorders at work](#) (BEAT - includes a link to their survey results)

iii) Children's Mental Health Week ran from 8th - 14th February. Here are 6 links which you may find useful if you are concerned about somebody's mental health:

[Teenage depression \(Family Lives\)](#)

[Worcestershire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services \(CAMHS\)](#)

[Parents' Guide to depression](#) (Charlie Waller Memorial Trust)

[Tips for parents about building resilience](#) (Place2Be)

[Everyone has a mental health](#) (by Natasha Devon, MBE, the Government's first ever Mental Health Champion for schools)

[Details of the Children and Young People's mental health and well-being taskforce](#)

iv) [St John Ambulance](#), a national first-aid charity, has produced a [nursery rhyme song/animation](#) to help people learn baby CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). You can find it on their [site](#) here: bit.ly/1RBfV4t

vi) [February's SW Bulletin](#) which aims to provide you with the latest news from [NHS South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group \(CCG\)](#) is online here: bit.ly/1SbZ4VB

7) The Future of Family Incomes: children affected by a benefit freeze

On 23rd February the [Guardian reported](#) that more than 7 million children living in low-income families will be affected by a four-year freeze to their benefits. The article was based around a report by the Children's Society called [The Future of Family Incomes](#). You can download the report here: bit.ly/1WikoRM.

8) Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions

The following dates have been published by Worcestershire Speech and Language Therapy for their Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions. Parents of pre-school children can go along for general advice and if appropriate refer their child.

Please note that these dates have been publicised as taking place; we are not responsible if any are cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances (we will try to let you know if we learn of any changes).

Mon 7th March, 10.30 - 11.00 am - KIDDERMINSTER

Brookside Children's Centre, Comberton Primary, Borrington Road, DY10 3ED

Mon 7th March, 10.30 - 11.00 am - STOURPORT ON SEVERN

Half Crown Wood Children's Centre, St Bartholomew's Primary, Princess Way, DY13 0EL

Thank you for reading this email and for your continued support, we really do appreciate it :)

Parents' Voice - Worcestershire

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