

## Email Update July 2016 (sent 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016)

### Dear Parents' Voice Supporter

Here's another email packed with information which we believe could be useful to parents and other family carers. Apologies that it's going out a little later than intended due to some technical issues. We hope some of this email will be of interest to all of you, whether this is the first update you're receiving or the twentieth. 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/Consultations
- 3) Younger Children
- 4) Health/mental health and emotional wellbeing
- 5) Online Safety
- 6) Special Educational Needs/Disabilities
- 7) Other nuggets of information

#### 1) Parents' Voice news

i) We haven't managed to arrange a Coffee and Chat session for a while (sorry everyone) - but we're going to try holding one in the summer holidays! So, make a date in your diaries for 11am on Tuesday 9th August - we'll send out a reminder with full details closer to the time (and we hope that some of you will be able to join us).

ii) We like to think we're modest, but sometimes we need to say something about what we've done. Some of you follow us on twitter and we think we've been successful at sending out relevant information and reaching parents in Worcestershire using the 140 characters allowed for tweets. People do not always give their precise location but the statistics say around 88% of our Twitter followers are in the UK and our "most active" city is consistently Worcester (UK). We are followed (and sometimes retweeted) by the county's MPs as well as councillors (county and districts), Worcestershire schools, chief officers from the county's health organisations and the County Council, Worcestershire school nurses and other professionals. National "influencers" who follow and sometimes retweet us include childcare experts Sue Atkins and Jane Evans and the Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield!

If you use twitter you can find us by looking for [@parentsvoicewor](#).

#### 2) Local Surveys/Consultations

Please also see Special Educational Needs/Disabilities section.

##### i) [Early Years Speech and Language Provision](#)

Worcestershire County Council have identified two preferred providers to deliver Early Years Specialist Language provision, one for the district of Redditch and the other for the Worcester district. However, Sutton Park Primary School Governing Body informed the Council that they would not be tendering to continue to provide this service. Worcestershire County Council are now proposing to close the Early Years Specialist Language provision at Sutton Park Primary School and identify an alternative provider for the Wyre Forest District.

The County Council is proposing opening new provision at Batchley First School in Redditch. Anyone may object to or make comments on the proposal but their comments must be received by 5:00pm on Wednesday **20th July 2016**.

You can give your views about the proposal affecting Wyre Forest by completing an online survey (there is a consultation document you can read first).

You can find all the information about these proposed changes and the links to give your views here: [bit.ly/1jqA8LP](http://bit.ly/1jqA8LP)

#### ii) 0 - 19 services at Children's Centres

Earlier this year there was a consultation about how these buildings should be used in future. There were 2000 responses and all 18 Children's Centres are staying open. You can download the summary from this consultation here:

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6745/childrens\\_centres\\_consultation\\_summary\\_march\\_2016](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6745/childrens_centres_consultation_summary_march_2016).

A new consultation now needs your views about proposed changes to the 0-19 services delivered in each Children's Centre. You can find the [online survey](#) along with Frequently Asked Questions and a document outlining how each Centre will be used (as well as what services will cease at each one) here: [bit.ly/29mo2hT](http://bit.ly/29mo2hT).

### **The consultation closes on 17th August.**

If you have a child/young person aged 0-19, do consider taking part in this consultation. Anyone who currently uses their local Children's Centre will probably want to comment on the proposed changes. It's also important that people who don't currently visit any Children's Centres also give their views (eg: would the changes make you more likely to use your Local Children's Centre? what service would you like to see there?). If you have visited a Children's Centre in the past you may also like to give your views.

#### iii) [Going to the Doctors survey](#)

[Healthwatch Worcestershire](#) is an independent consumer champion, giving the public, patients and users of health and social care services in Worcestershire a voice. They currently have a [survey about your experiences of going to the doctors](#) which you can find here: [bit.ly/24RmuqY](http://bit.ly/24RmuqY).

They especially want to know what people think about making appointments and visiting the surgery. The survey should not take long to complete and at the end you are asked how you found out about it; please select "Other organisation" and specify Parents' Voice, thank you!

### 3) Younger Children

#### i) Feeding toddlers the right amount

"The vast majority of parents are unwittingly giving their toddlers too much food, putting them at risk of obesity according to new research from leading health and nutrition experts - [the Infant & Toddler Forum \(ITF\)](#).

The findings highlighted the emotional complexities of feeding toddlers: 73% are more concerned that their child does not eat enough - twice as likely as they are to be concerned that their child eats too much. Only 25% of parents worry that their child might become overweight in the future. Just a quarter of parents are 'very confident' about the amount of food to give to their child, and younger parents (aged 18-24 years) are significantly less confident than older parents." (All the above is quoted from the [Infant and Toddler Forum site](#)).

There is an online guide to help parents judge portion sizes for children aged 1 -4 years (and it does note that the amount children eat varies from day to day and that children who are taller or more active will eat more than those who are shorter or less active): <http://bit.ly/29AXTRR>

The Institute of Health Visiting also has some [Parent Tips](#) about how to stop your child becoming overweight: <http://bit.ly/29hn72z>.

ii) The Institute of Health Visiting has several [factsheets](#) for parents (about topics such as feeding, health, behaviour and development) which you can find here: <http://bit.ly/2983D27>.

iii) Sun safety

It's important to make sure everyone enjoys the sunshine and hot weather safely. The following sites may be useful:

- NHS site about keeping babies safe during hot weather: <http://bit.ly/1ftg8Xf> (includes a 3 minute video about applying suncream)

- 14 sun safety tips from Made for Mums: <http://bit.ly/1ftg8Xf>

#### 4) Health/mental health and emotional wellbeing

i) Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust has announced changes to paediatric inpatient services from September 2016, transferring the service to Worcestershire Royal Hospital.

You can find out more about this on the [FAQ page](#) set up about the change:

[bit.ly/29g72it](http://bit.ly/29g72it)

ii) Shelf Help ([Reading Well](#) books)

There are 35 books available in all Worcestershire libraries, which have been specially selected to help young people cope with the pressures of life.

Shelf Help can be found in your local library, and they're free to borrow.

[Reading Well](#) is a collection of books that can help young people boost their confidence and help with difficult feelings and experiences.

The 35 books have all been chosen by young people and health experts. They contain information and advice as well as personal stories about dealing with feelings such as anxiety, depression or stress, or experiences such as bullying.

Click on the link to find out more: <http://bit.ly/29mus0U>

iii) A [film](#) has been made for and by children who have a parent with a mental health problem. It was made in collaboration with Devon Partnership NHS trust and deals with the possible impact a parent's mental health issues can have on a child (and where they can get support). You can watch the [film](#) here:

<http://bit.ly/298hKBM>

iv) The Mental Health Foundation has [free downloadable resources](#) to help look after your mental health. These include dealing with fear and anxiety and their top 10 tips. You can find the resources here:

<http://bit.ly/28QMJq2>.

v) Respect Yourself has published information by Dr Pam Spurr about [understanding and managing anxiety](#); you can find it here: <http://bit.ly/29no4Jn>.

[Respect Yourself](#) is an independent organisation which creates daily messages and works in partnership with other UK charities and organisations to help get important messages across to young people (13 - 25) to make a real impact in their lives, their community and their world.

vi) Apparently half a million children in the UK aged 5 - 16 regularly wet the bed. Although parents worry about this, it seems that only 14% seek professional advice about it. The company Bedwetting Doctor has an [article](#) about who you can talk to about this, as well as some free downloads (eg: progress chart, information leaflet about bedwetting). You can find the article here: <http://bit.ly/28XqIH3>.

### 5) Online Safety

i) [Thinkuknow](#) is an education programme from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command. They are encouraging parents to talk to their children about sex and the internet, saying "Research tells us that having a supportive parent or carer can make all the difference in helping a young person learn to stay safe, but talking to your child about sex, relationships and the internet can be daunting." They have given the [story of Romeo and Juliet](#) a modern twist, showing how the lives of these young lovers might play out online today - you can watch it here: [bit.ly/29aYUtX](http://bit.ly/29aYUtX)

ii) Pokemon Go is the latest craze with many youngsters (did you know that there's an age limit)? Netmums have 7 things you should know to help decide if it's safe and suitable for your child: <http://bit.ly/29Tgwi0>.

The NSPCC have also put together a [parent's guide to Pokemon Go](#) which you can find here: <http://bit.ly/2a625pJ>

iii) YouNow is a live streaming service, broadcasting live video feeds online. [Thinkuknow](#) has a [downloadable guide](#) for parents here: <http://bit.ly/28WMbeV>.

iv) The NSPCC has some advice here for parents about talking with their children about online pornography here: <http://bit.ly/28KQKOP>.

### 6) Special Educational Needs/Disabilities

i) Babcock Prime have been providing specialist support in Worcestershire schools for the last academic year. The eligibility criteria to qualify for support and the support allocated is being reviewed; we believe schools have been contacted and may have commented.

The details are in a document on the Babcock Prime site. Parents can send in comments about this, as can other interested parties such as support groups. You can find the document here: [bit.ly/29PKgJP](http://bit.ly/29PKgJP).

Although it's 22 pages long there are separate sections for various conditions, eg: autism, hearing impairment, so you may not need to read the entire document.

ii) We have received details of a new Parent Reference Group which is being set up by Worcestershire County Council and SENDIASS "to establish effective two-way communication and working between parent carers, young people, service providers and other stakeholders" about SEN services in the county.

The group will meet 4 times a year and meetings will last approximately 90 minutes and be informal. Individual parent-carers can join and support groups can also send a representative.

If you would like to know more, please send us an email and we'll forward the full email to you (this doesn't commit you to doing anything). Initially feedback is needed by 27th July about whether you think it's a good idea (so if you'd like the full email, please let us know ASAP).

iii) The Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research (CEDAR) at Warwick University is conducting [research for the Department for Education about Disagreement Resolution](#). If you have recent experience (since September 2014) of seeking to resolve a disagreement about an issue relating to special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) through the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) or otherwise you could take part.

You can find out more about this research and how to take part here: <http://bit.ly/29bBM46>.

### 7) Other nuggets of information

These are a few items which just don't fit neatly in to any of the above topics!

i) The Children's Commissioner for England has issued some advice about what parents or family carers can do to help stop bullying: <http://bit.ly/29gmvup>

ii) If you receive Tax Credits you must renew by 31st July; if you don't, payments will stop and money may be reclaimed from April 2016.

iii) Citizens Advice provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. The Citizens Advice website has a number of [downloadable factsheets](#), including information about tax credits, volunteering, maternity rights, rights of working fathers, rights of same sex couples, adoption, a budget sheet - and much more. You can find the full list and download any of the factsheets here: <http://bit.ly/29agZIW>.

iv) If you need to talk to your child/teenager about a difficult topic, you may find this [advice](#) from the NSPCC useful: <http://bit.ly/2a4Ozo1>.

Enjoy the sunshine and we hope to see you at our Coffee and Chat in August!

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

Sue and the Parents' Voice Committee

#### **Parents' Voice - Worcestershire**

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