

Email update November 2015 (sent 18th November 2015)

To all Supporters of Parents' Voice

We apologise for the lack of emails during October and the length of this one (we have a lot to catch up on!). 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
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- 8) We Need to Talk and Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions
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1) Parents' Voice news

At the start of 2015 we had many plans and hopes for developing Parents' Voice activities. Unfortunately this year has proved very difficult for our small committee - in addition to the usual family challenges (such as work and education issues) we've suffered poor health, serious illnesses within our families and bereavements. Although the initial crises may have passed, some of these events have meant major life changes and ongoing adjustments for some of our committee. Since we're all volunteers this has impacted on what we've been able to do for Parents' Voice and consequently some of those plans we made have had to be put on hold.

So, apologies for our recent silence (October was a bumpy month) but we intend to continue and to gradually get back to all those plans we had in January.

For those of you who have enjoyed our occasional daytime Coffee and Chat sessions, we do hope to hold one more before the end of the year; we'll let you know when we've arranged a date and venue.

We appreciate all help given to us by you, our individual supporters, so we're asking if you can do any of the following:

- if you find something useful in our emails please pass them on to other parents (and encourage them to join Parents' Voice - they can just send us an email asking to do so)
- if you attend an event or take part in a consultation because of information we provide, please tell the organisers that you heard about it from Parents' Voice
- "like" us on Facebook and ask your friends if they will too (search for "Parents' Voice" - you should find our friendly purple/white logo)
- follow us on Twitter ([@parentsvoicewor](#))
- share any of our Facebook posts and retweet some of our tweets.

Remember, Parents' Voice is run by Worcestershire parents, for Worcestershire parents. It's completely free to join us (you just need an email address) and our supporters have children of all ages (from babies to young adults) because parents never stop being parents! We are nothing without our supporters and we appreciate you all.

2) Local Surveys and Consultations

i) [Draft Health and Well-being Strategy and Consultation](#)

This will be Worcestershire's second Joint Health and Well-being Strategy. It describes the Health and Well-being Board's vision and priorities for 2016-19. The Strategy sets the context for commissioning of NHS, public health, social care and related children's services - ie: this document influences where money will be spent in providing services.

The strategy has three priorities and focuses on certain groups within those priorities.

- Mental Health and Well-being throughout life; the Board includes under 5s and their parents and also young people in the groups to focus on.
- Being active at every age; the Board includes under 5s and their parents in the groups to focus on.
- Reducing harm from drinking too much alcohol.

On page 14 it is stated that individuals will:

"Take ownership and responsibility for their own health and well-being; be proactive and access those services and resources readily available to them to increase their resilience; use services and resources that are limited and high cost wisely and only when essential."

People are invited to respond to the draft strategy by completing a survey. Responses to the survey will be used to re-draft the strategy and a report on this consultation will be considered along with the final draft by the Health and Well-being Board in early 2016.

This is your chance to say what you think about the strategy, the priorities and the groups that will be focussed on; by taking part you may influence the final strategy.

The survey closes on Friday December 4th.

ii) [Education consultations and reviews](#)

Worcestershire County Council has some current consultations about schools and nursery provision.

These are about

- potential expansion of three schools which would take effect from September 2017 (Red Hill CE Primary, Rushwick, CE Primary and Wychbold First School. The closing date for this consultation is 11th December.

- Remodelling existing State funded Early Years Specialist provision (affecting Fort Royal, Vale of Evesham, Wyre Forest Nursery, Chadsgrove and Batchley First schools).

You can find consultations and details of all Worcestershire County Council reviews here: bit.ly/1jqA8LP

iii) [Under 5's Parent/Carer Survey](#)

Healthwatch Worcestershire is an independent organisation that gives a voice to people who use health and social care services. They want to hear from parents/carers of children who are under 5 years old (NB: this survey is for those with a child under 5, although at the start of the survey you are asked if you have a child under 18 months).

You can find the survey here: svy.mk/1Px6AJI

A reminder about another local survey which we've mentioned previously:

iv) Children's and Adolescents' Mental Health

Healthwatch Worcestershire wants to know what parents and young people think about mental health services for young people, especially the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Worcestershire.

If your child (or teenager) has needed some help with mental health or used CAMHS during the last 12 months do take part in Healthwatch's (anonymous) survey for parents/children: svy.mk/1CTvz5d

This HealthWatch survey is continuing until further notice so you can still take part.

3) National Surveys/Consultations

There are a number of current national surveys and consultations - if you think one of these surveys would be relevant to someone you know, please pass on the details. You can find details of a Sense survey under Special Educational Needs news.

i) [GCSE and A-Level Reform: Geology, Politics and Physical Education](#)

This consultation closes at 5pm on 15th December. It concerns revised content for GCSE Physical Education and A-level Geology and Politics. It will affect the subject content from September 2017. Parents' views are wanted, as are those of young people.

You do not have to respond to questions about all the subjects to take part (so if there's one particular subject you do have views about, do take part).

You can find the documents (including a downloadable response form) about this consultation and a link to respond online here: bit.ly/1WYukLI

ii) [Implementing the English Baccalaureate](#)

The Department for Education is seeking views about the government's proposals on how to get at least 90% of pupils to take GCSEs in the EBacc subjects. This consultation closes at 5pm on 29th January 2016.

Parents' views are wanted, as are those of pupils.

You can find the documents (including a downloadable response form) about this consultation and a link to respond online here: bit.ly/1S3Gps2

A reminder of two national surveys we have already told you about:

iii) [Teen Issues - a parent's perspective](#)

Family Lives would like to know what understanding parents have of the issues young people are facing with regards to relationships, sex and the digital age. They have a [short survey for parents](#) to complete (just 11 questions).

You can find the survey here: svy.mk/1L8NF3w

iv) [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) [Warm Home Discount](#)

For winter 2015 to 2016, some people can get £140 off your electricity bill through the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The money isn't paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, usually between September and March.

Check if you qualify here: bit.ly/1LvghYf

5) [Anti-Bullying Week](#)

Anti-Bullying Week 2015 is taking place between 16th and 20th November. This year the theme is Make a Noise.

You can find out more here: bit.ly/1STHxPR

The [report](#) from our own 2013 Worcestershire bullying survey is still available [here](#) or you can find a [summary](#) here: bit.ly/1H2MeQf.

6) Special Educational Needs news

i) [The SEND Journey: A Parent's guide to Who's who and What's what](#)

Worcestershire County Council and SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) are offering some short information sessions for parent carers about the SEND system. These information sessions are aimed at parent/carers of children and young people with additional needs. They are designed to give you an overview of the SEND system.

The free sessions take place this week in Bromsgrove. Booking is advisable but not essential. Find out more here: bit.ly/1O12LHk

ii) [Sense Play Survey](#)

Sense is a national charity supporting people who are deafblind and those with sensory impairments. Sense is running a public inquiry into the provision of play opportunities for children aged 0-5 with multiple needs in England and Wales. They want to identify whether young disabled children with multiple needs have enough opportunities to access play, and if there are any barriers to them doing so.

They have set up a survey for parent carers of children with multiple needs; it should take about 10 minutes to complete.

The deadline for responses is 27th November. You can find the survey here: svy.mk/1j2aQnl

7) Health News

i) Maternity Services in Redditch

From 5th November Redditch's maternity services were temporarily moved from the town's Alexandra Hospital to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital in Worcester due to staff shortages.

You can read more about this here: <http://www.woresacute.nhs.uk/>

ii) Sexual Health Services

Worcestershire County Council is holding an event about Sexual Health Services in Worcestershire. Parents and young people can drop in at the Horizon Centre, Midland Road, Worcester WR5 1DS any time between 2pm and 3.30pm on Thursday 19th November for an informal chat. How can the service be made more effective? Do you have any suggestions for improvements or comments on the current service? Drop in and have your say!

iii) NHS South Worcestershire CCG public meeting

NHS South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is formed of 32 GP practices across South Worcestershire. It is responsible for arranging health services for local patients. A number of the CCG's meetings are held in public and anyone can attend.

The next Governing Body meeting is at 2.30pm on 26th November in the Committee room at Pershore Civic Centre. Members of the public will be able to ask questions but they must be submitted before the meeting by email to Nicola.allen@worcestershire.nhs.uk.

The agenda and papers should be available on the [NHS South Worcestershire CCG website](#) before the meeting.

iv) Antibiotic Awareness

European Antibiotic Awareness Day is on 18th November, during Antibiotic Awareness Week.

You can find out more and learn about becoming an Antibiotic Guardian here: bit.ly/1HWwtjR

8) *We Need to Talk and Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions*

9th November - 9th December is We Need to Talk Month. During We Need To Talk month Worcestershire's Speech and Language Therapy service will be encouraging everyone to take time to talk, listen and play with children. There are tips and resources from the Get Worcestershire Talking Campaign and a Gigglebox joke telling competition in conjunction with West Midlands Safari Park. You can find out more here: bit.ly/1WQqK5Q

Worcestershire Speech and Language Therapy have published the following dates 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).

Thurs 19th November, 10.30 - 11.00 am - KIDDERMINSTER
Tree Tops Children's Centre, Birchen Coppice Primary, Woodbury Road, DY11 7JJ

Thurs 19th November, 11.00 - 11.30 am - BROMSGROVE
Sunnyfields Children's Centre, Charford First School, Lytteton Avenue, B60 3FG

Fri 20th November, 11.00 - 11.30 am - PERSHORE
Abbey Park First School, Abbey Road, WR10 1DF

Mon 23rd November, 10.30 - 11.00 am - KIDDERMINSTER
Chestnut Children's Centre, Franche School, Chestnut Grove, DY11 5QB

Mon 23rd November, 2.15 - 2.45 pm - REDDITCH
Cherry Trees Children's Centre, Batchley First School, Cherry Tree Walk, B97 6PD

Mon 23rd November, 2.30 - 3.00 pm - EVESHAM
Spring & Orchard Vale Children's Centre, next to Evesham Nursery, Four Pools Lane, WR11 1BN

9) Reports and Information roundup

Finally, a number of items in brief:

- i) Worcester City Early Help have used Youtube to publicise their top 5 priorities: bit.ly/1KXdArA.
- ii) The Family and Childcare Trust have published a report about how family friendly different areas are. You can find and download the report here: bit.ly/1McjhJj.
- iii) The Children's Society have published the Good Childhood Report 2015. This is the result into children's subjective wellbeing and indicates generally how happy children are. You can find the report here: bit.ly/1MvxJwe.
- iv) Public Health England revealed that a recent Start4Life poll shows many new mothers feel uncomfortable about breastfeeding in public, despite broad public support. You can find details here: bit.ly/1MKNBuS.
- v) Another survey has found that two in five parents (40%) experienced a mental health issue during or after pregnancy with their first child. You can read about this here: bit.ly/1PorWsV.
- vi) The charity Shelter says that 100,000 children will be without a permanent home at Christmas. You can read their bkog here: bit.ly/1WqX5Ad.
- vii) You can find an updated list of abbreviations and terms used (especially by teenagers) online or in text messages here: bit.ly/1M0ejfq.
- viii) There are details to help remove embarrassing Facebook or Twitter posts here: bbc.in/1ODXAOT. You can also find help and advice for young people who may find themselves in a situation where they have put a sexting mage or video online and have lost control over who it's being shared with: bit.ly/1NKhSbG.

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

Parents' Voice - Worcestershire

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Twitter: [@parentsvoicewor](https://twitter.com/parentsvoicewor) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ParentsVoice.co.uk>

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