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## **ALL ABOARD!**

Pictured above are young member Harry Collins with sessional worker Kelly Greenwood enjoying a day out at the London Transport Museum. Our Easter Programme also had day trips to the Science Museum, London and the Kent and East Sussex Railway at Tenterden. Closer to home, the children and young people took part in activities including archery, swimming and bowling. Booking forms for our Summer Playschemes are enclosed with this newsletter.

## **GOLF DAY 2008**

This year our Charity Golf Day will take place on **Friday 5 September** at Lullingstone Park Golf Course. In the last eight years approximately £80,000 has been raised which has helped provide development holidays and specialised equipment. Please continue to support this event by purchasing the raffle tickets enclosed. If you cannot purchase the tickets, please return them as they can hopefully be sold elsewhere. For more information on the Golf Day contact Lee Manning on 01322 665474.

# Service Director's Report

There can be little doubt that I'm looking forward to the summer and beyond with a good degree of optimism. Whilst we can but dream of hot balmy days, ice creams and dipping toes in the sea - experience of the British weather tells us that this is unlikely. On the other hand we do absolutely have the reality of major changes afoot as we start to see the unravelling of the flexible short breaks across Kent. There will be some fantastic opportunities to underpin both traditional and innovative new services and clearly we want to be playing our part.

We have been able to introduce a couple of quick wins to start the ball rolling by firstly extending the day at Kidscamp, and bringing in a tea time session for 6 young people each night and secondly to announce that we have two further additions to our staff team within the Children and Families Direct Payment Support Scheme. Janet Grey and Tracey Webb will bring the team up to five and reflects the significant growth in direct payments in the year since we took over the running of the service, and the expectations of yet further increases in line with the roll out of flexible short breaks under the Aiming High for Disabled Children agenda.

Janet in particular may well be known to some of you as she is a parent member of the Parents Consortium and already using Direct Payments very successfully for her son Andrew.

It's also worth a mention on how parents will become involved in all of this with news that Contact a Family in partnership with Serco have been selected to support the delivery of two strands of the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme: short breaks services and parent involvement.

The partnership called Together for Disabled Children will support local authorities and primary care trusts to transform the provision of short breaks and will develop parent involvement to help shape services for disabled children.

Contact a Family are looking forward to working with local parent groups (this is where we come in) to ensure they are part of the decision-making process in transforming short break services. At the same time Serco, with its expertise as a leading operator in the education and children's sector, will be supporting local agencies in their delivery of short breaks to families.

**News on the Core Offer:** As mentioned in our last newsletter the Core Offer gives a national statement of expectation of how services to disabled children and their families will be delivered locally.

**The Core Offer** builds on the standard in the Children's National Service Framework, and whilst primarily the Core Offer refers to education, social care and health services - housing, leisure, transport as well as early years and youth services are also very important for families with disabled children.

## Service Director's Report cont..

You can download much more information at: [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00320/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00320/)

Just about a year ago now the Trustees had a lively debate about introducing a membership fee to the Organisation. I'm sure most will acknowledge that for an organisation to have continuity and sustainability then an income or funding avenues need to apply to the same principles. This is not altogether easy for a charity which relies on time related income streams - essentially two or three year grants.

So it was against this backdrop that the discussion was based, and at our last AGM in September 2007 I did indicate that we would be looking at exploring the pros and cons of introducing a membership fee. Having done this I can give notice that we do intend to go forward with this idea.

The details at this stage are that we will be looking at a yearly subscription of £20 which encompasses the whole family whereby typically we provide advice, support and direct services to parent/carers, disabled children & young people and siblings. The timing around the introduction is still to be finalised and we will give you information about this in due course.

We recognise that this may be contentious with some and supported by others, but would appeal to everyone

to consider just how valuable this income stream is to the Parents Consortium, and primarily in supporting what I consider to be the most important front line service we offer namely, our Information Service.

As always I'm happy to get your thoughts and ideas so please do contact me at Allsworth Court or by email at [milnera@parentsconsortium.co.uk](mailto:milnera@parentsconsortium.co.uk)

Have a good summer.....

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### Adult Education Course Update

A quick thank you to everyone who expressed interest in attending some Adult Education courses we were hoping to run at Allsworth Court. Things have taken a little longer to set up than we hoped but we will be starting 'Learning Through Play' on 19th June. Everyone who was interested in this course has been contacted.

We will be following up with the others in due course and will let you all know once dates have been agreed.

### PLEASE NOTE:

The views, suggestions and articles in this newsletter are those of individual contributors and not necessarily the views of The Parents Consortium or supported or recommended by us.

# Leisure Service Update

## Football Club - Swan Valley

### School Swanscombe

Our older group finished at the end of last term as so many of the group have now joined the Swanscombe Tigers! Well done to all of you.

We now run the following age group only:

- 7 - 11 years - 5.15pm - 6pm

Unfortunately, we are not taking on any new players for this club as it has now come to the end of its funding, therefore we will be ending this club in July.

We would like to thank The Charlton Ability Counts team for all their help and support over the duration of this club.

## Kidsclub - Allsworth Court

This club runs on Thursday evenings (term time only). Sessions run from 4.30 to 6pm and are open to members aged 5 - 12. Kidsclub have a successful programme of activities, producing interesting art and craft projects, cookery, sports etc.

## Kidsclub - Sprints

This Kidsclub based at Sprints Youth Centre, Northfleet, runs on Wednesday evening (term time only). Sessions run from 5 - 6.30pm and are open to members aged 5 - 12. There is plenty to do at this club; there is a sports hall downstairs and a different activity happening in every corner upstairs!

## Youth Clubs

We now only hold a Youth Club at Allsworth Court, term time only on Wednesday evenings, which is open to member's aged 13 - 19. The club runs from 5 - 7pm.

Young people may still attend the Youth Club at Sprints by calling Northfleet Youth Centre directly on 01474 351451. We no longer need to assist with the running of this club as we have succeeded in our goal of developing an integrated club, which runs extremely well.

**The Youth Club and Kidsclubs run in partnership with VSU Youth in Action and therefore no personal care can be provided.**

## Music Club

Our Music Club is based at Allsworth Court on Saturday mornings. We run two music sessions from 10am - 11am and from 11am - 12pm.

**We have places available at all these clubs!**

## Siblings Club

We are very happy that we managed to secure enough finances to run this club for another term. The club will now end just before the summer holiday. It is for this reason that we are unable to offer any new places for this club.

**All club places are subject to a completed care plan.** If you require a care plan please contact the LRR office, they will be happy to send you one.



# Leisure Service Update

## Kidscamp

We are making some exciting new changes to the Kidscamp Service this summer. Our normal day will now end at 5pm, an extension of 1 hour. But that's not all! We will also be giving up to six young people a day the opportunity to stay with us until 8pm and have dinner. Due to these changes we have increased the charge of Kidscamp slightly, please look out for these changes when you receive your booking information for summer, which will be sent separately to Kidscamp members.

## Playschemes - For young people who do not access Kidscamp

Our Easter Playschemes were again very popular running from White Oak Leisure Centre in Swanley, and Cascades Leisure Centre in Gravesend. Positive feedback has been given.

This summer we will be running from Cascades Leisure Centre for ages 5 -15 and White Oak Leisure Centre for ages 8 -13. We will not be running this service on **Bank Holiday Monday 25th August**. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and will inform you if circumstances change. Please use the booking form enclosed and return immediately. Places will only be confirmed if an up to date care plan has been completed. **Please do not apply for a place unless this has been done.**

Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> July - Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> August	<b>Cascades Leisure Centre</b> Gravesend 9am - 3.30pm	<b>8-15yrs</b> Cost of £6.50 per day
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>Cascades Leisure Centre</b> Gravesend 9am - 3.30pm	<b>5-7yrs</b> Cost of £6.50 per day
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>Cascades Leisure Centre</b> Gravesend 9am - 3.30pm	<b>8-15yrs</b> Cost of £6.50 per day
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> - Fri- day 22 <sup>nd</sup> August	<b>Cascades Leisure Centre</b> Gravesend 9am - 3.30pm	<b>5-7yrs</b> Cost of £6.50 per day
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> - Fri- day 22 <sup>nd</sup> August	<b>White Oak Leisure Centre</b> Swanley 9am - 3.30pm	<b>8-13yrs</b> Cost of £6.50 per day
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> - Fri- day 29 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>White Oak Leisure Centre</b> Swanley 9am - 3.30pm	<b>8-13yrs</b> Cost of £6.50 per day

## Monkey Bizz

Our Christmas party will be taking place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December this year.

# INFORMATION SERVICE

## AUTISM AND ASPERGERS

### SUPPORT GROUP - Gravesend and Swanscombe

These are held alternate months at The Riverside Childrens Centre, Dickens Road, Gravesend and The Oast House Day Centre, St Pauls Close, Swanscombe from 10.30am to 12.30pm

25 June - Swanscombe

16 July - Gravesend

24 September - Swanscombe

22 October - Gravesend

26 November - Swanscombe

17 December - Gravesend

**PLEASE NOTE** The Oast House Day Centre cannot accommodate young children. Parent/carers with no available childcare are most welcome at the Gravesend Group and the Drop In.

## DROP IN

Families are welcome at our informal monthly drop in sessions held at Allsworth Court between 10am and 12 noon. An opportunity to relax, chat to other parents over a coffee and share information.

4 July, 12 September, 3 October, 7 November and 5 December

## PHYSICAL AND COMPLEX NEEDS SUPPORT GROUP

This group meets at Allsworth Court on the following dates, we are looking for new members to come along and give the group ideas of what YOU would like ie days out, workshops etc.

11 June, 9 July, 10 September, 8 October, 12 November and 10 December

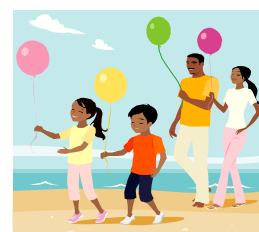
## ADHD SUPPORT GROUP

This group is currently suspended.

## BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC SUPPORT GROUP

Please telephone Naresh on 01474 544257 or Raj on 01322 321355 for more information.

10 July at YMCA Dartford, 17 July at Riverside Childrens Centre, 21 August at Riverside Childrens Centre, 4 September at YMCA Dartford, 11 September at Riverside Childrens Centre, 16 October at Riverside Childrens Centre, 23 October at YMCA Dartford, 13 November at Riverside Childrens Centre, 20 November at Riverside Childrens Centre.



# INFORMATION SERVICE

## COFFEE MORNING WITH AUTISM OUTREACH WORKERS

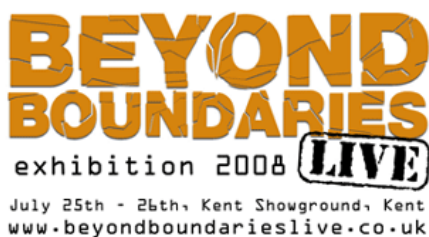
Our next joint venture with Linda Jackson and Jackie Washington will be at the June meeting of the Swanscombe Support Group. Make a note in your diary to come along to The Oast House Day Centre at 10.30am and take the opportunity to chat to them both about strategies that can be used at home. Parents of children with ADHD are welcome to join us, however as stated on page 6 the Day Centre cannot accommodate children.



## USEFUL WEBSITES

One of our members has kindly passed on details of a website and forum that she has found very useful with its advice and support. The website is a meeting place for all people who care about autism and want to raise awareness, share ideas and information. Take a look at [www.autism-awareness.org.uk](http://www.autism-awareness.org.uk)

Another website that offers online support for **ALL** disabilities is [www.special-mates.co.uk](http://www.special-mates.co.uk) This service has been developed by a team of Clinical Psychologists to support parents of children with disabilities.



This exciting FREE event will be taking place at Maidstone, Kent on the 25th & 26th July at the Kent Showground. The event will be offering endless opportunities for disabled people of all ages, their families, carers and professionals to touch, test and compare the latest commodities.

For every registered visitor, the organisers are going to donate £5 to the National Autistic Society's three branches in Kent! To get the £5 per visitor, you will need to register for a place online ([www.beyondboundarieslive.co.uk](http://www.beyondboundarieslive.co.uk)) or telephone 0208 971 8286 quoting the promotional code NAS005.

A wide range of products, services and interactive activities to the disability sector including sports, the arts, career advice, cooking, holidays, rock climbing, test driving and lots more will be available. A series of seminars featuring celebrities such as Dame Tanni Grey Thompson will also be running. An event not to be missed!



## Contact Details

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Email: [admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk](mailto:admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk)

## THE PARENTS CONSORTIUM

*Supporting disabled children &  
their families.*

[www.parentsconsortium.co.uk](http://www.parentsconsortium.co.uk)

 **the  
parents  
consortium**  
supporting disabled children & their families

The Parents Consortium was established in 1996 by parents who believed that services for disabled children would only be truly responsive if they were directly accountable to the parents, carers and young people themselves.

The young people who use our services are those with any form of physical, learning or sensory impairment. We provide appropriate activities for children of all abilities, which may mean full-time one-to-one support for some of the children. Above all, we provide lots of fun!

Our facilities are open to families, schools, hospitals and other organisations. We cater for parents and siblings too,

We are an independent charitable company, with membership open to parents/carers with a disabled child aged 0-19 living in the Dartford, Gravesham or Swanley areas.

Our funding comes through grants, donations, charitable giving and a supportive community/business sector working alongside Kent County Council Social Services.

## Equipment For Hire



### Short Term Hire

We have available to hire an all terrain Hippocampe Wheelchair. This

item folds flat into a bag which makes it ideal when travelling. This item can be used on the sand and can go into the sea and is suitable from around the age of 8 through to adults.

We also have a Crellings Harness (model 27) suitable for use on an aircraft. This can be hired for holidays.



If you would like any further information about either of these items, please call the Information Service.