

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to your North Somerset bulletin for July 2020. We hope you are all well.

Supportive Parents News

Although it might not feel like 'end of term', the Summer holidays are now upon us! We'd like to remind you that we're still here for you during the holidays - our service is open throughout this time. For **Telephone & Email Support**: Our Information, Advice and Support line service is operating as normal but calls are being diverted to an answer machine to enable remote working. We still aim to return all calls within 24 hours, **Monday-Friday, between 9.30 and 4.30pm**. Call us on **0117 9897725** or email support@supportiveparents.org.uk for help and support. We're also offering you support in the shape of the virtual/phone events listed, so do take a look at these and book a place.

Staffing Changes

We are delighted to introduce Victoria Allan, our new Head of Service. Vic joined Supportive Parents on 1st June and comes to us with a vast experience of supporting children with SEND and their parents/carers, having been SENDCo at Bristol's Orchard School for five years.

Vic has recently completed a Masters Degree in Inclusive Education. She said: *"I am really pleased and excited to be taking on the role of Head of Service at Supportive Parents. I am looking forward to being able to continue working in the world of SEND and to being able to contribute to the brilliant work that Supportive Parents is known for."*

At the same time everyone at Supportive Parents says a big thank you to Kathryn Mason, our Deputy Head of Service, for the hard work she has put in over recent months. Kathryn is resuming her deputy role and is our new Local Authority Lead in Bristol.

We're Recruiting!

We currently have two vacancies on our staff team:

- A Local Authority Information, Advice & Support (IAS) Worker
- A Local Area Practitioner with a Children & Young People focus

For details about both these positions and how to apply, please click [HERE](#).

The deadline for applications is Friday 7th August.

Young People's 'Hub':

We've just launched our North Somerset 'Hub' for young people. This gathers together in one place: videos, resources, info about staying mentally and physically well, tips about connecting safely online and more. Take a look [HERE](#).

Don't forget to keep up to date by checking our News Page [HERE](#) or sign up to our Facebook page [HERE](#) and receive regular news and updates.

AGM

A date for your diaries - our Annual General Meeting takes place on Monday 19th October at 7pm. This will be a virtual meeting and all are welcome. Further details about this will follow in due course.

Volunteering

We have a new Volunteer - Charlie has joined us to support our work in North Somerset and Pierre is our first 'Children and Young People's volunteer. Pierre has been helping by making excellent videos which can be seen on the [Hub](#) mentioned above.

If you have some time on your hands or useful skills and experience to contribute, do get in touch with our Volunteer Lead, Jane Franklin, to find out about any current or forthcoming volunteer opportunities with Supportive Parents. Contact Jane by emailing: jane.franklin@supportiveparents.org.uk.

Online Events/Things To Do

- **Gympanzees** have adapted to ways of helping parents at home during this time. They're offering Zoom sessions with different therapists on a number of different topics. They've introduced an online 'hub' with lots of resources and ideas of activities to do at home. They've also introduced a lending library for parents and carers to borrow sensory equipment for use with children at home. Find out more information [HERE](#).
- **Portishead Youth Club** is providing online events on zoom for young people. Please email mail@portisheadyouthcentre.co.uk or call 01275 842461 for more information or visit their Facebook page for more information.
- **'Contact'** are running some virtual family workshops over the summer on a range of topics, for example wellbeing, sleep, speech and language. Please find more information [HERE](#).

Managing Anxiety & Returning to School

- **Virtual Workshop - Monday 10th & Tues 11th August** - Dr Karen Treisman, a highly specialised clinical psychologist will be leading two evening Zoom sessions for parent carers on anxiety and how to support your child or young person in returning to school in September. For further information and to book a place, click [HERE](#).
- **YoungMinds** - For parents and carers, 'Parents Helpline' experts share their advice for coping with the changes at the moment, including tips on [how to support your child returning to school](#).
- **Transitions Guidance** - Supportive Parents have produced a leaflet with some guidance and tips for starting or moving school. Click [HERE](#) to read this.

Education

Education Psychology Helpline Service - *available until 24th August only*

The Educational Psychology Service in North Somerset has been running a Parent/Carer Helpline for the duration of COVID-19. This is available to any parent/ carer in Somerset and North Somerset, who is experiencing issues at home. These might include but not be limited to:

- *Anxiety around COVID-19 and the impact it is having on children and their family*
- *Supporting parents/carers to support their child's emotional needs*

- *Concerns about family relationships*
- *Concerns about friendships, learning, daily structure and activities*

To access the service, please email EPSHelpline@somerset.gov.uk with the following information:

- Your name
- The name of your child's school (or 'EHE' if Electively Home Educated)
- Times and dates that you are not available for consultation

If email is not possible, then call 01823 357000. Please understand that the service is likely to be slower to respond to phone calls. The service aims to offer a consultation within 5 working days of receipt of email.

Department for Education Advice

The Department for Education has provided a leaflet and some short videos for parents regarding children returning to school after Coronavirus and what you can expect.

- The leaflet can be found [HERE](#)
- The film for primary school pupils can be found [HERE](#)
- The film for secondary school pupils can be found [HERE](#).

Mental Wellbeing

Wellspring Counselling - The wellbeing practitioners at Wellspring Counselling are offering free support to children and young people (aged 11-18 year olds). This support is known as guided self-help and involves learning and practicing techniques to help them manage symptoms associated with anxiety and low mood. If this is something you are interested in please contact Krissi at Krissi@wellspringcounselling.org.uk

Have a good Summer.

Best Wishes
Supportive Parents