

SIGNPOSTplus Information Snippets

Northern Devon and Surrounding Areas

22nd December 2020



COVID Winter Fund Scheme

In response to the calls for school meal support for vulnerable children over the school holidays, a COVID Winter Grant Fund has been made available to local authorities and district councils to support families experiencing financial hardship over the 2020-21 winter. Children eligible for free school meals will be issued with food vouchers and district councils will be able to support families through their hardship grants (see article on page 2). Early Help will also be able to help families in this situation with a grant of up to £100 per family to support them to buy food and pay utility bills over the winter.

If you are experiencing financial hardship this Winter then please contact Early Help so that you may receive this and other financial support to improve your situation. The hardship does not need to be COVID related or recently acquired but repeat requests for help may be best supported through Early Help partners to sustainably improve the family's financial situation.

The criteria set by Early Help is as follows:

- You are a family (at least 2 people where at least 1 person is either pre-birth or up to 18 yrs old)
- You are not eligible for hardship grant funding through your district council or you have not yet applied.
- You are experiencing financial hardship linked to or independent of COVID (e.g. unemployed, furloughed, being made redundant)
- You need financial help to pay utility bills or buy food and essential items for your family.

You can contact Early Help by contacting one of the following mailboxes:

Northern Devon: Earlyhelpnorthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Southern Devon: Earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Mid and East Devon: Earlyhelpmideastsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Exeter: Earlyhelpexetersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

If you are not sure which locality your family is located in please contact any one of these emails and include location in your opening email.



Parent Carer Forum Devon December Update:

Dear Parent Carer

As we come to the end of this very unusual year we wanted to give you, our members, a summary of where we are now, what we have been doing to represent your voices, and our plans for the future.

As a new forum we've mainly been working on growing our membership in various ways, and now have over 300 members on our Facebook group

(www.facebook.com/groups/parentcarerforumdevon) and nearly 200 on our mailing list. We have also strengthened the membership of our steering group and are very pleased to introduce you to the current members, details of whom can be found on our website here:

<https://parentcarerforumdevon.org/meet-the-steering-group/>

As well as growing the forum we have been representing the parent voice in many places, through our membership of the SEND transformation group and workstreams, presenting to the Devon Children and Families partnership, by being part of the recruitment panel for the 0-25 team and the chief officer for children's services, through co producing pandemic comms with the CCG, education, health and care, and by hosting online sessions with parents and senior managers. Further details can be found at: <https://parentcarerforumdevon.org/news/>

So what about the future for the forum? Well, we are continuing to work on growing, the more of us involved the more amplified our voices are! From joining the Facebook group here to taking part in one off consultations .. to attending meetings, to joining our steering group, no matter what your skills or capacity there is always a place for you here. Please feel free to share this as widely as you can so that we can represent as many parents as possible. If you would like to get involved let us know (details below!).

We are also planning a regular series of open meetings between parents and service managers, aiming for one a month. Some of these will be themed around particular issues parents are having at the time and some of these will be more general. More details of these to come soon, so keep an eye out for future mailings, and please let us know if there is something you think is an important theme to cover.

Alongside these will run our regular steering group meetings (on a termly basis), minutes of these will be posted on our website. We are also hoping to keep us all connected by sending regular newsletters. We are aiming for at least one each half term, but again we would really appreciate it if any of you wanted to help with this, particularly if you have any design skills!

If you would like to get involved in the forum we would love to hear from you! Please let us know here:

<https://forms.gle/xpBcqQ7va4xAuigz9>

And finally, watch out for the next newsletter, we have some really exciting new projects for 2021 and can't wait to tell you about them!

YOUNGMINDS **YoungMinds Crisis Messenger**
If your child needs to talk to someone, they can text the YoungMinds Crisis Messenger for free 24/7 support across the UK. Text YM to 85258. Find out more here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help/youngminds-crisis-messenger/>



Support for People and Families

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic is continuing to put a huge financial strain on some families but help is available. If you know someone who is worrying about money and how to pay for basic household essentials, please encourage them to apply for extra assistance through funding made available via District Council's hardship funds.

You can find out more about what support is available in Devon, including how to apply for financial help, where to find foodbanks and community larders, free meals during the school holidays and what to do if you're on a low income and need to self-isolate:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/support-for-people-and-families/>



Internet Matters - Free Online Advice

on dealing with issues that could be affecting your children;

Download a Free Expert e-Safety Guide for advice on your child's online safety, Free Tips and Advice including setting up devices safely, Listen to Expert Advice, Explore Privacy Settings, Watch Online Resources. Find out more here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>



YMCA Exeter – Children and Young People's Wellbeing Service.

A free psychological wellbeing service for 5-

18 year olds offering support and intervention for low mood, anxiety and behavioural difficulties. The team of Wellbeing Practitioners use CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) techniques and goal-setting to build up emotional wellbeing and resilience in young people and their families. To speak to someone on the team Tel: 01392 410530 or email: wellbeing@ymcaexeter.org.uk Find out more at the website:

<https://www.ymcaexeter.org.uk/cwpwellbeing/>



Guides to Christmas Bubble Rules (last updated 19th

December): Includes; Large Print, Easy Read and the Guide translated into other languages:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family>

RNIB **RNIB Resources for Mental Wellbeing During Coronavirus.**

Many blind and partially sighted people have faced anxiety, sadness and, even, fear about the unique challenges they have experienced since the pandemic reached the UK in March. In light of this, RNIB Sight Loss Advice Service has worked with Mind, the mental health charity, to offer free emergency mental health sessions over the phone by BACP-registered counsellors with sight loss experience, to give emotional support during these difficult times. Find out about this service and other resources available from RNIB here:

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/advice/sight-loss-and-wellbeing/wellbeing-coronavirus>

Hope Programme – Virtual Hope for carers.....



Virtual HOPE
for Carers



Life as a carer can be stressful, tiring and incredibly lonely at the best of times, but now more than ever.

If you're currently self-isolating/shielding and trying to cope, let us introduce you to the Virtual HOPE Programme.

The online version of the HOPE Programme provides virtual support for people helping them to cope better, feel more in control, and be more resilient in these difficult times.

We are looking to support people who are in a wide range of caregiving roles.

To attend this course you will need:

- Access to the internet
- Access to Microsoft Teams
- A Webcam and Microphone
- A PC, Laptop, Tablet or Smartphone



Register your interest today!

To register or for more info, please call 01803 210493 or email hope.devon@nhs.net
<https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/hope-programme>



The next course will be starting on 7th January 2021. Find out more and register for a place here: <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/hope-programme/book-onto-a-hope-course/>



PDA Society Frequently Asked

Questions. This is a quick link guide to the most frequently asked

questions the enquiry line service receives about PDA ... <https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/what-is-pda-menu/faqs/>



Cerebra – Mental Health Support for you and your family. Whether it's being able to spot the signs of anxiety and pain in a child with complex needs or looking after yourself as a parent or carer, Cerebra have free downloadable resources that may be of help for both you and your child's emotional and mental health. Find the resources here:

<https://cerebra.org.uk/latest-news/mental-health-support-for-you-and-your-family/>

youngSibs For brothers and sisters of disabled children and adults

YoungSibs – Siblings and Christmas

YoungSibs have a feature article on Christmas, with lots of useful information on tough stuff at home if you think that you might find Christmas hard. YoungSibs also have some great ideas for how you can have fun with your family or play games with your brother or sister. Read the full article here: <https://www.youngsibs.org.uk/siblings-and-christmas/>



Covid 19 Symptom Checker

Symptoms checker



Only people with COVID-19 symptoms need to get tested –
A high temperature
OR new, continuous cough
OR loss or change to sense of smell or taste

Visit 111.nhs.uk/covid-19 if you're not sure.

Symptoms	COVID-19 Mild to severe	Cold Gradual onset	Flu Rapid onset
Fever/high temperature (37.8°C or above)	Common	Rare	Common
New cough	Common (usually dry and continuous)	Sometimes	Common (usually dry)
Recent loss or change to sense of taste or smell	Common	Rare	No
Fatigue	Sometimes (common in children)	Sometimes	Common
Sneezing	No	Common	No
Aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
Runny or stuffy nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Diarrhoea	Rare (sometimes for children)	No	Sometimes (for children)
Headaches	Sometimes	Rare	Common
Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No

Do it for your **FamilySchoolDevon**



This is the last information snippets of 2020 - the next mailout will be on 7th January 2021. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas.

Stay Up-to-Date with the latest Coronavirus news and figures plus the local support available to you at:

<http://soc.devon.cc/GNmi2>

We always welcome feedback....

Let the SIGNPOSTplus team know if you have any opinions on what works and what doesn't work with our information sharing. If you have any ideas for improvements or if you have anything else you would like to share email amandasmithson@nhs.net



Find us on Facebook....like the SIGNPOSTplus page for regular updates on all things related to children with additional needs.

An archive of recent snippets can be found at the [SIGNPOSTplus page](#) on the Children and Family Health Devon website

If you no longer wish to receive these bulletins please let me know and I will remove your details from the mailing list.

Disclaimer: The information in these snippets is for general information purposes only and is provided by various organisations. Whilst we endeavour to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability or availability with respect to the information, products, services or otherwise included in this publication for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk.

Useful Emergency Contact Numbers:

NHS Helpline: 111 Use 999 if a medical emergency

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, if you are concerned about your own safety or that of a child or young person: 0345 155 1071

National Domestic Abuse Helpline (Devon): 0808 2000 247 (24 hours) Use 999 if you are in immediate danger.

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger, for free 24/7 support across the UK if you are a young person experiencing a mental health crisis. If you need urgent help text YM to 85258

Samaritans (24 hours): 116 123

Citizens Advice Bureau National Helpline: 03444 111 444

