

# SEND Family Newsletter

March 2021 Issue 6

A newsletter for Croydon parents and carers who support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)



## **Mental Health Support Team (MHST) Croydon CAMHS**

Return to School

Now children are returning to full time schooling it is a good time to review your own self-care as well as supporting your child.

### **Self- care for Parents:**

During a crisis we can move into a flight or fight mode, and become stressed, anxious and worried. As time goes on there can be frustrations or increase in low mood. It's also natural that children and young people will be having higher levels of worry, low mood and challenging behaviour during this time.

If you feel stressed at the moment, remember that is a normal response.

Having compassion for yourself and your own worries is likely to help you to support young people with their worries such as returning to school.

When we feel stressed and anxious we can use **coping strategies** to help us get through.

These could include: -

- exercise/going for a walk
- counting to ten/leaving the room
- making time in the day to do things that

making time in the day to do things that are important to you

- sticking to a routine – normal eating and sleeping

## **Supporting your Child:**

There are things that you can do to help your child to face challenges. Think with your child or young person what helpful coping strategies they could use.

Helpful questions include –

- what has helped in the past when you've felt worried?
- shall we google what other people have done?
- what helps you feel less stressed?

It's good to **talk about worries** and **listen** to a child's concerns. Try **making time and space regularly** for your children to talk to you. This can encourage and help your child to:

- develop resilience
- think positively
- ask for help when they need it
- feel like they belong
- find things that help them feel calm
- learn from mistakes
- become better at problem-solving

## **Try some problem solving together:**

- write your problem down.
- brainstorm solutions.
- think about the upsides of the solutions and downsides. Break the problem down into manageable steps.

Helping your child to process their experiences can be helpful in preparing them to return to school. You might ask them for example, what has been different about not being in school and when they return and what will be the same.

## **More Help**

Some children and young people may already be experiencing anxiety difficulties, which may be heightened when returning to school. If you are concerned about a child or because their anxiety is persistent and getting in the way of life (e.g., sleep, going to school, friendships or family life), they might need some more help:

- your GP will be able to offer advice
- if your school has a counselling service or MHST ask for a referral, alternatively ask your school or GP to refer to the CWP Service (Child Wellbeing Practitioner Service) through the Single Point of Access (SPOC) who can help with low mood, anxiety or challenging behaviour.
- Croydon Drop In and Off the Record are Croydon based counselling services.
- talk to your school
- helplines and apps. There are a number of helplines and apps which are helpful for anxiety, low mood and stress.

## **Croydon's Support and Interventions' Team**

Parenting Programmes for Parents and Carers in Croydon

With so many families experiencing additional challenges and stress due to the current Covid pandemic, many of us are struggling to balance work, child care and home-schooling. If that is you, you are not on your own. Croydon's Support and Interventions team offer virtual **Triple P parenting groups** to all parents and carers of children and young people under the age of 18 in Croydon. During the programme, we will share a range of practical tips and strategies with you to manage your children's behaviour. We will also talk about the importance of taking care of yourself and having some well -deserved 'me time'.

**Triple P** groups also offer a great opportunity to meet and hear from other parents in similar situation. You can find out more about the support we provide and how to access our Triple P programme by following the link below:

<https://new.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/early-help-support/parenting-programmes>

## **Parents in Partnership (PiP)**

### **The Willow Tree Club**

The Willow Tree Club offers online Zoom activities for people with additional needs. Activities include, 'I'm in the Band' where they get to play an instrument or duet with our entertainer, sign (Makaton) along to a song, drumming, Spanish, Dance, Music, French as well as learning about other countries in an activity we call 'Wish you were here?' They also have cook along sessions, craft and Rhythm 'n' cups.

Prices for the activities vary. They normally charge £10 per hour, £7.50 for 45 minutes and £6 for half an hour. There are often occasions where the sessions are free. All the costs are clearly displayed on the website.

Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/thewillowtreeclub/>

Website page: <https://www.thewillowtreeclub.com/>

### **PiP - Parent Carer Needs Assessments**

Parents in Partnership have been offering Parent Carer Needs Assessments on behalf of the Local Authority as a pilot project. This comes to an end on 31 March 2021. The assessments for any referrals made before that date will need to be completed by 14 April 2021.

From 01 April 2021 enquiries should be directed to Children's Social Care.

### **South London inclusive Dance Experience (SLiDE) - SLiDE Dance**

#### **Dance for health and wellbeing**

SLiDE runs a vibrant and engaging online programme of dance classes. They use creative dance and improvisation to boost confidence, benefit health and create connections. The emphasis is on fun and enjoyment with plenty of laughter and time to connect with others. We use a mixture of taught phrases and improvisation tasks when participants are invited to move freely in response to a set of simple instructions.

More information: [info@slidedance.org](mailto:info@slidedance.org)

## **From 1 April 2021 Parents in Partnership will be joining with Croydon Mencap.**

For a number of years PiP has been reliant on securing funding from a variety of sources. This has become more difficult each year and in the current economic climate it has become almost impossible for a small charity like PiP to achieve financial security.

Croydon Mencap is a well-established and respected Croydon charity, providing for the needs of adults with a learning disability, children with additional needs, and their families.

Joining the 2 charities provides greater security for PiP staff and enhances and expands the range of support Croydon Mencap is able to provide.

PiP staff will provide their services from the Croydon Mencap offices in Thornton Heath as 'PiP @ Croydon Mencap'. They will continue to support parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with any kind of additional need and/or disability.

The PiP website, telephone numbers and email will continue to operate after 1<sup>st</sup> April, and once changed, will automatically forward to new numbers /email addresses.

So you can still use- 020 8663 5626

[office@pipcroydon.com](mailto:office@pipcroydon.com)

or contact PiP via Croydon Mencap - 020 8684 5890

[info@croydonmencap.org.uk](mailto:info@croydonmencap.org.uk)

[www.croydonmencap.org.uk](http://www.croydonmencap.org.uk)

## **The Virtual School**

We wanted to make sure that you're aware of all the support and guidance as well as the resources available to you and your children through the Virtual School.

Firstly, we have our own Educational Psychologist, so consultations and support can be accessed quickly when needed. Do ask your Virtual School advisory teacher if this is something you need/are interested in.

Secondly, we run a whole range of activities weekly for children in care via E.M.P.I.R.E. These have been virtual throughout lockdown but watch this space for new events and changes to guidelines. Our "walks for wellbeing" happen regularly and have been really well received by children and young people needing some space to share company and fresh air! If you need a copy of the programme, contact us on the email below and we can share.

Thirdly, we have a whole range of online learning tools and programmes available to support your child's needs. From Lexia (for those with reading difficulties), to My Maths and Literacy Planet, as well as Flash Academy (ESOL) and KUDOS, for careers guidance. All of these can be accessed as part of your child's PPG through your Advisory teacher or at their PEP.

Finally, we're delighted to be trialling the project "Reach 2 Teach" across a number of our children. This is a ground-breaking tool for assessing inclusion and attachment for children who present with "behaviours that challenge" at home or school. A full, multi professional and carer assessment takes place and then the online system generates advice and strategies for supporting the child and meeting their needs in the school (Also suitable for home) setting. We are able to accept new children. If this sounds like something your child may benefit from then do let your advisory teacher know.

Our advisory team and all staff can be accessed by contacting [Virtual.School@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Virtual.School@croydon.gov.uk). We look forward to hearing from you.

## **SEND Transformation Team**

### **Children and Young People with SEND Survey February 2021: *How Are You Coping Through Lockdown?***

Croydon Council's children, families and education team want to make sure that we are doing as much as we can to support children and young people during this time so that everyone feels safe, calm and happy. To help us achieve this we asked our children and young people some questions about how they are feeling and what they think their community can do to help.

We received over 100+ responses some of which are below. We are extremely grateful to our SEND community for taking part. Your responses provide us with invaluable feedback that will help to shape Croydon services for students with SEND. A full report will be published and accessed on the Local Offer.

#### **What have you enjoyed doing in lockdown?**

*Playing games, texting friends, chores, helping out around the house, going for walks, cooking spending time with family, sleeping eating and watching TV*

#### **How are you feeling about lockdown?**

*Anxious, not very happy, finding it difficult, missing friends, extended family. Missing face to face learning.*

#### **How can Croydon support you?**

*Encouraging people to stay home, provide facemasks, online bullying support, encourage people to be vaccinated, have more resources*

## School Health Service

**Health Assessments & Referrals:** Nurses continue to see children and young people who are referred to our service for health assessments, advice and support.

**Health Care Plans & Advice:** If you require advice regarding the health of your pupils or students, a nurse is able to visit your school, or offer telephone and online advice, so please feel free to contact us.

**Medical Needs Awareness Training:** We are offering schools bespoke training sessions according to their needs. This can be done either in person, in a COVID secure way, or virtual.

**Health Information & Resources:** Information of websites and organisations offering support and advice on Mental Health and Common Medical Conditions, can be found on Pages 2 & 3 of this newsletter and on our website.

For all other enquiries, please contact the School Health Team:

**Email:** ch-tr.croydonschoolnurses@nhs.net

**Telephone:** 020 8274 6391

**Clinical Service Lead for School Nursing:** Julie Critcher

## Immunisations –A Public Health Priority

NHS England have confirmed that priority should be given to the National Immunisation Programme.

Croydon School Immunisation Service are holding clinics and school sessions in a COVID secure environment.

We are keen for schools to enable the nurses to run these vaccination sessions as previously planned and are happy to discuss the infection control measures taken to ensure safety for the school

Immunisation Team Contact Details

**Email:** ch-tr.immunisationteam@nhs.net

**Telephone:** 020 8274 6453

**Clinical Service Lead for Immunisation:** Sinead Hylton

## Croydon School Nursing & Immunisation Website:

<https://www.croydonhealthservices.nhs.uk/school-nursing> Email: ch-

tr.croydonschoolnurses@nhs.net

Support for Young People

It has been recognized that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on children and young people. Here are some organisations and websites that will help in supporting them.

Local Services:

**Off The Record** <https://www.talkofftherecord.org/need-help-now/croydon-young-peoples-service/>

**Croydon Drop-In:** Tel: 020 8680 0404 Email: [enquiries@croydondropin.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@croydondropin.org.uk)

**Talkbushelpline:** 07592 037823

**CAMHS Crisis Line** 0203 228 5980 Monday -Friday 5pm -10pm, Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays 9am -9pm

For advice out of hours: SLAM Mental Health Crisis Line on 0800 731 2864 or NHS 111

Is a confidential text messaging service that enables young people, **aged 11-19** years old, to send questions to our School Health Team.

Students can text the Croydon School Nurses on **07520 615205**

National Services

**Young Minds** <https://youngminds.org.uk>

**Place2Be**<https://www.place2be.org.uk>

**Kooth**<https://www.kooth.com/index.html%20>



**The Mix** (Website, Telephone/Texting service, Apps for Teens) <https://www.themix.org.uk>

**Barnardo's** <https://www.barnardos.org.uk>

**Childline.org.uk**(Telephone: 0800 1111) <https://www.childline.org.uk>

**NHS website: Depression in children and teenagers** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/children-depressed-signs/>

**Child Bereavement UK** <https://www.childbereavementuk.org>

**Health For Teens** <https://www.healthforteens.co.uk>

**Health For Kids** <https://www.healthforkids.co.uk>

Screening Services

Following guidance from Public Health England, the National Child Measurement and Vision Screening programmes have been postponed due to the pandemic.

If you are concerned about your child's vision, please make an appointment at your local optician.

These appointments are FREE of charge.

If you have any queries about our service, please contact the School Health Team.

Email: [ch-tr.croydonschoolnurses@nhs.net](mailto:ch-tr.croydonschoolnurses@nhs.net)

## Get in touch

**Croydon SEN Enquiries:** [senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk) **SEND Local Offer**

Services, advice, information and what's on in and around Croydon  
[localoffer.croydon.gov.uk](http://localoffer.croydon.gov.uk).