

Our Voice



Our Voice Newsletter

Issue 13
Autumn 2012



Welcome

Welcome to the autumn 2012 issue of the Our Voice newsletter, the parent-led organisation seeking to improve services for children with disabilities in Enfield.

We're delighted that the Mayor of Enfield, Kate Anolue, has decided to support Our Voice this year as one of several charities focusing on young people in Enfield.

This time we talk to Enfield mum Sharon who tells us about her son Reiss who has Aspergers and ADHD. Following some ups and downs during his education, he's now doing incredibly well and his family is very proud of him.

The summer holidays may be over but we still want to make the most of the great outdoors before it gets colder. We take a look at some ideas for things to do locally with your children that won't cost a lot.

Beginning the statementing process for your child can be daunting and confusing. Dr Ahmad Ramjhun, Head of Special Needs and Inclusion gives a very clear explanation to guide you through how the process works in Enfield. We also include the usual news and updates from the Joint Service for Disabled Children.

Are you and your family getting enough sleep? If not, you could benefit from our workshops run by sleep practitioner Fazilla Amide. See page 11 for more details.

Carol Mustafa

Our Voice Development Coordinator

What's new

Enfield's Mayor supports Our Voice

The new Mayor of the London Borough of Enfield has chosen to support Our Voice. The Mayor Councillor Kate Anolue has selected youth to be the main emphasis for her charity appeal during her year in office. Midwifery was the Mayor's vocation, now politics and working within the community have become her mission and her inspiration.

After reading an article about Our Voice she decided that her charity would support us as she feels that is very important that parents and families with disabled children are listened to and given as much support as they need.

The Mayor said, "As midwives, we deliver many children but their outcome and future we don't normally know. The plight of these young people is what I wish to highlight in my Mayoral year".



The Mayor with Carol Mustafa

Carol Mustafa ■ Telephone: 07503 161248 ■ Email carol@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk

Please pass this newsletter on to others - parents and service providers - who might find it useful. You can contact us for additional copies by email or phone.

Reiss's story

We spoke to Enfield mum Sharon about how her 16-year-old son Reiss has progressed.

During his pre-school years Reiss was a lively boy who was into everything. Sharon says, "It took a while before we knew he had ADHD although the clues were there. He was a very hyper child, always touching things he shouldn't. Staff at the nursery he went to thought he was just naughty."

Reiss went on to attend mainstream primary school and during Year 2 his teachers thought there was a problem so suggested he have an assessment. Sharon explains, "We went down the route of both an NHS and a private assessment and they both came up with the same diagnosis: Asperger's and ADHD".

Reiss was prescribed Ritalin to help to control his symptoms but the family tried other things first, "We tried homeopathy for the first six months and then different doses of Ritalin with varying side effects. Eventually we found a slow release pill, which seemed to do the trick."

Although he thrived in Year 3, Reiss subsequently experienced lots of ups and downs at Primary School. "He had few friends and was not getting invited round to other children's houses, which was hurtful," remembers Sharon. He then went through a very difficult period when he didn't want to be in the classroom and teachers found it hard to know how to deal with him. Eventually he was expelled from school. "It was a horrible time" says Sharon, "He was not even allowed to enter the school although my daughter was still going there. He felt like a leper."

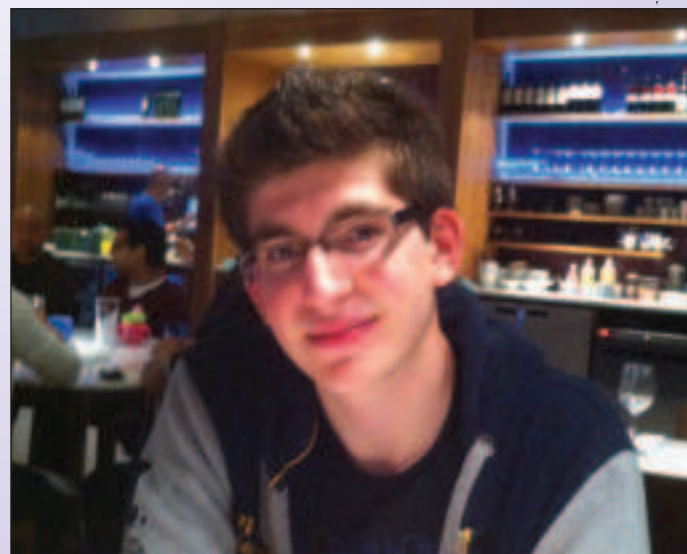
From there Reiss attended an inclusion unit in another school where he did well, eventually integrating into Year 6 and managing to do his SATS. Then came the challenge of finding a suitable secondary school. "Local schools in Enfield were just not suitable for Reiss as he is academically a high achiever and we felt that local special schools were geared too low for his capabilities. We found a dedicated school for children with Aspergers in the New Forest, a couple of hours drive away, which seemed just right for his needs."

However, sending Reiss to their chosen school involved going through not just one but two stressful tribunals as Enfield did not agree with their choice. The family won the right to their choice of school as well as the right to keep him there.

It was a time of huge change for the family and for Reiss, going to a boarding school and only coming home every other weekend and school holidays. The first few years were hard; he was picked on and other children played on his phobias. But eventually he thrived there and it really helped to develop his independence. More recently he has taken part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, undertaken the three peaks challenge and even climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa with a group of boys from the school. He's also taken 9 GCSEs.

Sharon is clearly very proud of his achievements, "There have been times when we were worried he would struggle in later life. But he's turned into such a lovely, polite, intelligent young man and achieved so much. We fought hard to get Reiss into his secondary school and to keep him there. We'll never know how things would have turned out if he hadn't gone there but looking at him now it really feels like it was worth it."

And what are Sharon's hopes for Reiss's future? "He's now due to start sixth form at Woodhouse College in Barnet to study music and English. We hope he will go on to study at university. He's very talented musically so we hope he might pursue that as a career eventually. He's already achieved so much more than we expected."



Summer may be over...

But it's still good to get out and about before the days start getting colder and shorter. Here are some ideas of trips to do locally that won't cost the earth.

Forty Hall



Following a major restoration project, Enfield's Forty Hall reopened its doors to the public at the end of June. Voted one of the most iconic buildings for London 2012, Forty Hall and Estate welcomes all visitors. Following massive Heritage Lottery Fund investment you can now enjoy the newly restored architecture and magnificent interiors of the Hall. There is good wheelchair access and a disabled lift to the first and second floors. There are also disabled toilet facilities.

Opening hours to 31 October are Tuesday-Friday 11am to 5pm, Weekends 12noon - 5pm, closed Monday, open Bank holidays. It closes one hour earlier from 1 November to end March. Admission to Forty Hall and Estate is free.

There are also family events and workshops. Visit www.fortyhallestate.co.uk or call 020 8363 8196 for more information. (Note that the Estate office recommend calling first to check the lifts are operational as there have been some teething problems.)

Playgrounds

Enfield Parks Service looks after over 40 children's playgrounds and attempts, wherever possible, to create good access for disabled users.

One of the best parks to plan a visit with disabled children is Grovelands Park. There is disabled parking available from the Broadwalk entrance with the cafe, toilets and children's play area all within 20 metres or so. The Grovelands play area is well appointed and also includes a wheelchair access roundabout.

There are also two splash pads within the Borough which are immensely popular with younger visitors in the warmer weather. Note though that the Town Park one has 3 or 4 steps leading down to it while the one in Durants Park has level access.

Enfield Parks Service would also be pleased to hear of any feedback from disabled groups in terms of how easy you find it to use our parks and open spaces. You can contact them via the Enfield website www.enfield.gov.uk

Please let Our Voice know what you have found to be accessible or not so good

National Trust

The National Trust looks after and protects over 400 historic places and spaces across the UK. They welcome all visitors to all of their properties and most places have a good degree of access.

Properties close to Enfield include: Fenton House in Hampstead, Sutton House in Hackney and Shaw's Corner in Ayot St Lawrence. To find out more about the access facilities at these and other NT properties download the free Access for all guide at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/accessforall

There is an entrance fee to properties or you can pay an annual fee to become a member and enjoy year-round entry.

Trent Country Park

Trent Country Park covers 413 acres and is managed by London Borough of Enfield. It forms part of London's green belt and is a large open space to come and enjoy some fresh air and take a picnic. There is car parking near to the Trent Park Cafeteria and Main Drive (Lime Avenue). The café is open from 11am all year round.



The Swiss Lodge Visitor Centre provides information and advice including guided walks or nature trails. The Wildlife Rescue & Ambulance Service Animal Centre is just behind the visitor centre and home to rescued animals including deer, foxes, hedgehogs, rabbits and birds, as well as some farm animals, such as goats, pigs, rabbits, ducks and chickens.

Trent Country Park, Cockfosters Road, Enfield
Tel: 020 8449 2459

News from the Joint Service

Janet Leach, Head of the Joint Service for Disabled Children in Enfield gives an update on service developments.



Once again we have had a really busy six months working together on lots of exciting projects - in which many of you and your children have been involved.

Update on capital funding

We have used the capital funding received from the Government to improve disabled children's access to local leisure facilities throughout the borough including:

- Contributing funding to the Formont Centre's swimming pool
- Contributing funding to Cheviots refurbishment including improving the soft play room and the musical playground
- Providing a dividing wall at Memorial Hall in Edmonton to improve the playscheme facilities
- Refurbishing the Ball Pool at the Ark
- Buying 2 adapted mini buses
- Investing in Raglan School, making the venue more accessible and improving the Art Room for our holiday playschemes
- Refurbishing the soft play facilities at Raynham Children's Centre
- Purchasing hoists and changing beds for play schemes and for Florence Hayes Playground
- Purchasing large and small harnesses for aeroplane travel - which can be loaned from Cheviots
- Purchasing specialist equipment for various sport clubs and playschemes including bikes, computer games, camping and martial arts equipment

If you would like more information about any of these initiatives please contact Kerry Stanton at Cheviots Children's Centre.

Specialist bikes

In April the charity 'Wheels for All' visited Waverley School with a range of specialist bikes and trikes -

children and parents had a great time trying them out. We have now allocated funding to purchase a range of these which will be based at Waverley School and available to all our children and their families. Sue Roberts is working with our colleagues in the Parks Department to see what could be done to make Durants Park more



accessible. It has also been suggested that Waverley's swimming pool could be made available at the same time as the bikes so families could enjoy a ride and a swim together! The Cycle project also offers an opportunity for the Joint Service to work with local businesses, and possibly attract sponsorship. Many of you have told us how much you support this idea so we will keep you posted on our progress.

Working in partnership and developing services together

In May we met with parents to talk about future services and short breaks. You asked us to:

- Provide a regular update on short breaks – so everybody knows what is available and doesn't miss out – coming this autumn our first short break newsletter – with contributions from parents, children and young people
- Produce a map showing where all the various activities are located within the borough – this will be included in our first short break newsletter
- Give you more information about Personalisation, Personal Budgets, Direct Payments – ideas for 'pooling' personal budgets and Adult Services – further parent workshops will be held this autumn
- Improve our communication with you to ensure that you all know about the opportunities available for families in Enfield – Our Voice and the Joint Service will check that all our mailing lists are up to date so families don't miss out on

information. The Our Voice newsletter will be circulated electronically to all schools – special and mainstream as well as hard copies being distributed

- Provide you with more information about the SEN/Disability Green Paper document – the Next Steps – we will arrange parent workshops in the autumn and spring to provide an update on national progress and to tell you how Enfield is working with parents to deliver the forthcoming changes.

We will continue to talk to parents, children and young people to ensure that we work together to improve all of our services. This autumn we will be asking our Parent Forums to work with us as we tender for more holiday playscheme and out of school activities ready for 2013/14.

Short break activities



This year we have had more inclusive and specialist short break activities taking place than ever before. Children and young people have been enjoying themselves at – Cheviots, Dazu, Capag, Westlea and Churchfield play schemes, Baraccudas, Funny Feet and Sticky Fingers.

We are also using Crossroads Care, Marego and Noah's Ark among other agencies to support children and young people to enjoy short breaks in different settings.

We have continued to increase the number of families who have breaks and family support services. In 2010/11 we reached 805 families. Between April 2011 and March 2012 we reached 815 children and young people. We will

continue to promote our services to ensure that no family eligible for support misses out.

Inclusive activities

Here's Shaun Barratt's action-packed update on inclusive activities this summer.

The Joint Service has been working successfully with a number of inclusive partners to offer young disabled people in the borough the greatest possible choice of fun activities.

As ever the Young People's Consultation Group has been instrumental in guiding the Joint Service towards what the young disabled community wants from its youth service providers. As previously mentioned in this newsletter we have put on a number of exciting and diverse projects in youth centres in the borough throughout term time. This has meant that young people are now confident in accessing their own local youth activities during the summer holidays.

The Youth Support Service is an inclusive service and it seeks to continuously improve its support to young disabled people aged between 13 and 25.

Young people who had previously attended specialist activities now regularly attend Monday sessions at the Allan Pullinger centre in Southgate. As Peter Smith of Enfield's Youth Support Services states,

"Monday nights are generic sessions and we have a range of young people that attend. These sessions are young people led and focus on what the young people want to do. We do a range of activities from cooking, film work, photography, multi media, DJing, music making / production, games consoles, pool, table tennis, arts and crafts, group work games and discussions, IAG, tee shirt designs and so on.

Through discussions with the young people we are able to plan off-site activities and run these during the school breaks, for example during the summer our off-site trips include tops golf, bowling, karting, water sports including knee boarding, water skiing, dough-nuting and the banana boat ride. We are also offering 2 residential, the first to Gilwell Park Epping and the second to Wales. Both residential will cover a range of adventurous activities which will give participants new experiences and challenges. All of the above are typical to what the centre has to offer all young people that attend on a regular basis."

For the first time a group of young disabled young people are to attend the residential with support and they are going to write an article describing their experiences for our new short breaks newsletter.

A further twenty young people have also accessed the youth support services Summer Uni programme. This is a hugely diverse programme of activities open to all young people in the borough. We have ensured the young people have the necessary support in order that they can enjoy activities as diverse as African drumming, Bollywood dancing, trampolining and mask making.

As part of the offer, the youth support service ensure that all young people that engage can achieve accreditation.

We have also developed a great partnership with the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation to run a teen camp this summer. The Tottenham Hotspur Foundation has been able to host the camp at White Hart Lane which has been a wonderful experience for the young people to use the football stadium as their base for activities. Twelve young people have been active on the programme and have been enjoying practical football activities and working with coaches in order to plan their own activities, with themes of healthy lifestyles.

As part of the camp Tottenham Hotspur Foundation staff have been able to engage the participants in another local programme which has been traditionally a mainstream football opportunity. This has meant that Tottenham Hotspur Foundation staff have mentored the young people and worked with them to be able to play and be part of the mainstream environment along with other young people.

Individuals have made specific progress: Oliver, 17, has been able to engage in a new environment and with a new activity very well and tells the staff regularly that he is looking forward to the next session, Cameron, 15 has been able to travel to the sessions independently and has arrived early on a regular basis, Caner, 12 has been able to attend every session and has taken part in each activity delivered and has loved going to the Spurs ground.



One fantastic outcome is that a small group of individuals have approached Tottenham Hotspur Foundation staff and shown an interest in volunteer coaching. The staff who received these enquiries did not prompt them; the young people have simply seen what the coaches do and have asked how they can become involved.

Other members of the group have approached Tottenham Hotspur Foundation staff and asked about how they can join a sports club so that they can take part on a regular basis. These two areas of development are obviously a great step forward in such a short space of time. We have a sports mate programme program open to all young disabled people which means that if a young person wants to engage further in a sports activity in the borough the foundation will supply all the necessary support to help them to access it successfully.

Bizzibops dance and theatre group goes from strength to strength culminating in a summer workshop at Raglan School. This group is open to all ages and we have received fantastic feedback from the young people and their parents. Bizzibops is an Inclusive Dance and Creative Arts workshop led by professional artists in a fun and welcoming atmosphere for all young people aged 8 years and above. There is an opportunity to present a "work share" of the activities you have taken part in to parents at the end of each term.

At the Joint Service we appreciate that for young disabled people it can be a daunting prospect to access youth activities on their own. With this in mind the Joint Service and its partners have made enormous strides to make the young people's experience of youth activities a positive one. We ensure that the young people can access with their friends and not alone and with the all necessary support in place to have a great time. Do you know someone who may benefit from these opportunities? If so please contact Shaun on 07534 987327 or why not pop down to one of our venues and see for yourself! As ever we are keen to know your views on this and all other inclusive opportunities so please keep us informed.

Thanks to Shaun and all our Youth Services for arranging such a great programme.

Transition Help for Communities Project (THFC)

I am delighted to report that this partnership project developed by Enfield's Joint Service for Disabled Children and Health and Adult Social Care, together with the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation and our local special schools is continuing to be delivered. It is a 10-week programme designed to provide personalised developmental support for disabled young people who are undergoing changes in their lives, raising their aspirations before they leave school and providing an opportunity to grow and develop their independence skills.

This year 2 programmes have been delivered for 26 young people from Waverley, Durants, Oaktree and Westlea Schools. The feedback from school staff supporting the young people to access the programme has been really positive. We plan to continue running 2 programmes a year providing an opportunity for all young people from special

school to engage in this exciting programme as they embark on their adult life. Our next programme will begin in October 2012.

Based on the successful delivery of the pilot programme and using the knowledge and expertise acquired, a training resource toolkit has been produced and is available as an example of good practice. For more information contact our Transition Development Manager on 0208 379 5738 or ineta.miskinyte@enfield.gov.uk.

Cheviots Update

I would like to thank Sue Roberts and her team at Cheviots who have worked to ensure there has been as little disruption as possible to services whilst they have been based at Arnos Grove. We are hoping to re-open Cheviots in the autumn – there will be a 'grand' opening ceremony and of course you will all be invited.

Finally, thanks to all our parents for your time, feedback and ideas – we can't improve without you - and thanks to all the inspiring children and young people who play such a crucial role in telling us how to 'get it right' for them.

Here is a great photo of our Young People's Consultation Group meeting with Nick De Bois MP. The young people really appreciated Nick taking the time to answer their questions. An interesting debate was had by all. Watch out for their update in the first edition of our short breaks newsletter.



Statementing explained



Are you confused about the statementing process? Dr Ahmad Ramjhun, Head of Special Needs and Inclusion at the London Borough of Enfield outlines Enfield's approach.

The Statutory Assessment/Statementing Process

Parents and/or schools can make a request for statutory assessment if they feel that their child's needs require more help, resources or expertise than are available in schools. Children would normally be experiencing severe, long term or complex needs and be at School Action Plus, which means that there would be some evidence that in spite of "purposeful measures and intervention over time", they are not responding or making progress. When such requests are made, we have to consider these very carefully based on all the evidence available and make a decision within 6 weeks.

During term time, we discuss requests for statutory assessment at our SEN Panels which meet weekly. These Panels make a recommendation to the LA which then has to make a decision on whether or not to proceed with statutory assessment. We send this decision to parents within 2 weeks of the Panel meeting.

Agreeing to Statutory Assessment: The Process

Where the evidence is clear, we agree with requests and therefore start the assessment, aiming to complete this within the next 10 weeks. Parents are sent an "SEN Service - Parents Information Pack". This includes information on the following:

- The SEN Service - including contact details
- Enfield special schools and units
- Words or abbreviations that we use
- Useful contact telephone numbers
- Descriptions of different types of SEN
- What happens during an assessment including the people who may be involved
- Information about Statements and Notes in lieu.

We include forms for parents to record useful telephone numbers and to keep their own records. We also inform them that the Department for Education (DFE) has published a booklet on the statutory assessment process which is available online. In addition, we provide a leaflet on Enfield's Parent Partnership Service from whom they may want to seek further help and advice. We are currently working towards making all this information available on the Council website and this should be available during the autumn term.

All Local Authorities use standard letters in which they explain the statutory assessment process. We try to write ours in such a way as to guide parents and others through the statementing process, giving them timescales, names of contacts and other sources of help and advice.

We have a total of 18 weeks allowed by law to complete these assessments so that we have to decide whether to issue a "proposed" Statement or Note in Lieu within this period.

Difference between a Statement and a Note in Lieu

Statements

We issue a Statement which is a legal document, binding on the LA, whenever a child requires help and support which is "additional to and/or different from the provision normally available in schools". Most of our assessments tend to lead to a Statement which describes the child's needs in Part 2, the provision required in Part 3 and the school or type of placement to be made in Part 4. Parts 5 and 6 include information on non-educational needs. Where parents are happy with the contents of the Statement the process can be concluded shortly afterwards. There are times when further discussion and negotiation is required in order to clarify any issues or concerns and in the majority of cases, this is resolved so that the Statement can then be finalised. A Final Statement is then signed by an LA officer and it is at this point that the Statement becomes binding on the LA. It is also at this point when parents, if they remain dissatisfied, can appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal against the LA decision. They have 2 months from the date that the Statement is finalised to do so.



Notes in Lieu

A Note in Lieu is normally issued whenever it is decided that a child does not require a Statement of SEN for his/her needs to be met. This is very rare in Enfield though there may be times when we wish to undertake a statutory assessment which does not result in a Statement, but in a Note in Lieu instead. This may help us clarify the child's needs and the provision required and the Note in Lieu can then set out the findings accordingly. Although the Note in Lieu does not have the same force or status as a Statement, it can serve as a useful document to guide any intervention or provision that a child might need in school. Notes in Lieu are reserved for children for whom the LA decides it does not need to issue a Statement.

Declining/refusing to undertake a Statutory Assessment and/or to revise contents of a Statement

Whilst it is for the LA to decide whether or not to undertake a Statutory Assessment and on the contents of a Statement, parents have a right of appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal whenever they are unable to agree with the LA's decision.

The LA's SEN Panel

Like other LAs, we have an SEN Panel set up in accordance with the guidance in the DFE SEN Code of Practice (2001). This serves as an advisory and moderating group, consisting of a range of professional practitioners, with knowledge, training, experience and expertise in SEN. It is a multi-disciplinary group and can include headteachers, SENCOs, educational psychologists, school improvement colleagues and other officers.

The SEN Panel is an internal LA meeting specifically set up to consider requests for SA and provision for children with SEN. It considers a whole range of information and evidence, including any parental submission. Such information from parents/carers is normally directly in writing or through information gathered at meetings, eg with LA officers, EPs, schools.

The Panel is not an appeal panel as it is purely advisory. It is the LA's role and responsibility to make decisions, based on the advice that it receives. However, parents can ask the LA to reconsider and review its decision and on these occasions, such

requests are re-submitted to the Panel, especially if any new or additional information has become available that might help this process.

We are, however, always willing to meet with parents and to work in partnership in order to find ways forward, engaging in any helpful mediation or consultation, as appropriate. We also welcome the involvement of the Parent Partnership or any other mediation service, if required. This often helps us to convey back to the SEN Panel any additional information that parents want to be considered. We would, of course, always prefer to resolve any issue locally to obviate the need for appeals.

Facilities and arrangements for parents who do not speak English or for whom English is a second or additional language

We arrange translation into all languages where this is required. When meeting with parents, we arrange for interpreters to be present where there is a need.

Transport for Children and Young People with SEN

Parents request transport via SEN Services. This is allocated to children and young people who meet our eligibility criteria as detailed in the Council's Home to School and College Transport Policy. All applications are considered individually, i.e. based on their individual merits in accordance with the relevant legislation with regard to transport eligibility.

Communication with parents

We appreciate that parents who have children with SEN may find any assessment or aspect of the statementing process stressful and endeavour to work with them in a supportive and helpful way. We try to make all our communications clear and comprehensive, either by letter or on the telephone. We also meet with them where this is helpful, especially where there is need for further explanations. Although we have to let parents have our decision in writing as quickly as possible, we try to include as much information as we can to confirm the LA position, including the reasoning. We also invite parents to contact SEN Services either in writing or by telephone whenever anything is unclear. This advice is included in all our correspondence with parents.

Did you know?

Family Fund

Family Fund is the UK's largest provider of grants for low-income families with disabled or seriously ill children. They help ease the additional pressures families face. They can help fund essential items such as washing machines, fridges and clothing but will also consider grants for sensory toys, computers and family breaks.

Applications for a Family Fund grant can be made by the parent or carer of the disabled child or young person. Young people aged 16 and 17 can make an application in their own right. Applications should be made per family.

Visit www.familyfund.org.uk for more information or to download an application form.

Have you made a Will?

About half of all people over the age of 45 have not made a Will. It's vital to make one to ensure that your assets go to those you wish should have them.

WSL Limited is offering Our Voice readers a fixed fee of £100 for a couple's Will, and £85 for a single person (the usual prices are £165 and £120 respectively).

Guardianship and legacy issues are vital to everyone - particularly parents and homeowners. It is vital that you as parents get the highest level of guidance and support when having your Will produced.

A member of The Society of Will Writers and with over 20 years' experience, WSL offers a home visit at a time to suit you (including evenings and weekends) by a fully qualified Legal Consultant.

In addition, they offer:

- a professionally written, legally binding, Will
- inheritance tax and guardianship guidance
- a £50 donation to Our Voice for every Will purchased by an Our Voice member.

Contact: **WSL Limited**,
The Willwriting Specialists, Canal Court,
154 High Street, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 8JA.
Tel: 0208 380 0335
Website: www.wsl-ltd.co.uk

Flying to see Janet

Travelling by plane can be a stressful experience for anxious children and their parents. Prepare your child for the unfamiliar sights and sounds of the airport experience in advance with this new fun and gently humorous picture book. Children join Janet as she learns what to expect at each stage of a plane journey from packing and getting ready to leave home, to travelling to the airport, checking in, going through security, boarding the plane, taking off, turbulence, using the on-board toilet, landing, and baggage reclaim. The emphasis is on coping with sensory issues, and the book provides welcome ideas for distractions and suggestions for activities to relieve boredom during the flight. It includes a useful list of practical hints and tips for parents. With bright illustrations, and a timeline on each page allowing children to keep track of where they are on their journey, this book is aimed at ages three to twelve, and will be especially useful for those on the autism spectrum.



Written by Laura Vickers. Published by Jessica Kingsley, June 2012. Price £9.99 available from www.amazon.co.uk

Holidays for people with disabilities

Bond Hotels in Blackpool offer holidays for people with disabilities, their carers, families and friends. You can enjoy:

- a live cabaret every night
- three fully accessible venues to choose from
- ensuite wet floor showers
- arrange support with CQC registered carers
- free use of mobility equipment
- caring and dedicated staff.

The two hotels and holiday homes offer a wide range of accessible holidays 52 weeks a year. Find out more at www.bondhotel.co.uk

To request a brochure or check availability call 01253 341218 or email sales@bondhotel.co.uk

Events

Are you and your family getting enough sleep?

Does your child take ages to get to sleep? Or wake up regularly during the night? Or wake up really early, too early for you? Are they over 12 months? Has this problem lasted more than a few months?

If so, this programme really could be what you and your family need!

There is much scientific evidence to show that lack of sleep can badly affect children's development as well as their behaviour, and reduce the ability of adults to deal with stress, which in turn can affect their health and ability to cope.

Many parents of children with additional needs just think this is something they have to "put up with", and is part of their child's "condition". But that's not true!! You CAN improve your child's sleeping habits and in turn those of your family, even if your child has special needs.



So don't suffer in silence...come along to our free workshop where we will discuss your issues/concerns and provide you with ways to deal with them. It does take effort and commitment, but it also pays off. We have arranged two further follow up sessions, where you can come back and discuss how your child's sleep pattern is going and get further support to build on the improvements.

The workshop and surgeries are being run by qualified Sleep Practitioner, Fazilla Amide, who also has a child with special needs. Using these techniques, she has significantly improved her own son's sleep and also that of others....

The Joint Service funded the sleep counsellor training for Fazilla as well as a number of staff from the Joint Service and Waverley School and will be working together to support families who have children with sleep difficulties.

Book now as places are limited. The workshops and surgeries will be run at Cheviots Children Centre, 31 Cheviot Close, Enfield EN1 3UZ on the following dates:

Friday 9th November 2012:	12 noon - 14:45
Friday 7th December 2012:	12:30 - 14:30
Friday 18th January 2013:	12:30 - 14:30

If you wish to book your place or have any queries, please telephone **Megan Steven on 0208 363 4047**, email megan.steven@enfield.gov.uk, or telephone **Carol Mustafa on 07503 161248**, email carol@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk.

We'll need to know your contact phone/email address, name and age of your child, their condition and brief details about the nature of their sleep problem.

Workshop feedback

Following our last newsletter advertising our parent's workshop "Getting the balance - how to stay sane", we had good attendance during the whole programme which proved to be a great success.

The parents really enjoyed having some well deserved time out and a chance to chat about their issues and challenges, with a real opportunity to understand how they could improve things for themselves and their families.

Here are some of the comments we received:

- "I think everyone should attend this course"
- "You think of things in different ways, that you never thought of before"
- "Very good content, thought provoking"
- "I thought it would be hard to sit for that long, but it was fast paced and interesting!"
- "Really helpful, practical and useful!"

The parents all felt that it was time well spent, confirming they gained really practical benefits from it. Look out for further sessions, if you think you too could benefit!

Free workshops for parents of disabled children

When Contact a Family's research on relationships, No Time for Us, was published, it revealed the shocking fact that 53% of parents with disabled children experienced some or major difficulties, or the complete breakdown in their couple relationship.

Family Life is a two year project which aims to address this issue. CAF will be developing short sessions to deliver to parents focusing on family relationships (the couple, siblings and the wider family) as well as practical information about where to get specific support.

Holding a workshop could be a great way to get parents involved and we have a network of local support groups to attract people and get the word out. Workshops for parents of disabled children will help parents recognise the combination of emotional and practical pressures that impact on their family life and the effect on their relationships.

These sessions are free - call us today to discuss what would work for your setting by contacting Karin Beeler on 020 7608 8726 or email familylife@cafamilylife.org.uk

Our Voice/Enfield Disability Network meetings

Providing an opportunity for parents to network with professionals

Our Voice and the Joint Service will inform parents/carers about the new meetings in the near future. Check our website at www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk for up-to-date details.



Our Voice with the Mayor at a sponsorship event in Enfield Town Park showing continued support for the organisation.



www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk