



187A Portswood Road,
Southampton,
SO17 2NF

MENCAP INFORMATION AND UPDATES

Mencap 'Hear My Voice' campaign



The 'Hear My Voice' campaign is all about giving people with a learning disability and their families the chance to speak to their political candidates.

Southampton Mencap organised a 'Hear My Voice' event recently which brought together local candidates from the Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrats, UKIP and Green Parties who agreed to take part in a question and answer session. They were also joined by a trade union representative from TUSC. The event was co-hosted by Jason Carlisle, Mencap Campaigns Officer for the South East, and Abi Turner, member of Southampton Mencap. This was a great opportunity for people with a learning disability and their families/carers to highlight issues important to them to the people who want their vote. We hope that whichever party is elected later on this year is better able to understand and represent the needs of people with a learning disability and their families through the impact of the 'Hear My Voice' campaign.



For more information or to read the comments on the Hear My Voice website go to <https://www.hear-my-voice.org.uk>

Do you know someone with disabilities or additional needs interested in accessing the gym?

Southampton Mencap is interested in setting up a new service with Active Nation for members where once a week, individuals with learning disabilities/ difficulties can access The Quays Gym, giving them the chance to take part in regular supported physical activity at an affordable cost.

A survey has been created to find out what people think and whether they would be interested in such a service. So please take part and let us know what you think!!

The survey can be found via the website, facebook or following this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3VPCPYH>



INDEPENDENT HOME VISITOR SCHEME

Do you have a learning disability and live in Southampton?

- Do you rarely have any visitors because you have no close family relatives or friends?
- Would you like to talk to someone about your life or interests?
- Would you be interested in someone visiting you at your home on a regular basis?

If so, Southampton Mencap's Independent Home Visitor Scheme may be able to help. **Call into the Mencap Centre for more information or phone 023 8058 4088**

Independent Home Visitors Volunteers wanted!

The aim of the Independent Home Visitor scheme is to build up a relationship which supports the best interests of a person with a learning disability who has little or no contact with friends or relatives. If you have some experience of working with people who have a learning disability or have been/still are a carer, why not become a volunteer for the Independent Home Visitor Scheme? We are looking for people who are reliable, sensitive, understanding and have good communication skills. The role involves working unsupervised and so a good level of initiative and professional conduct is required. We would like to hear from you even if you have as little as two hours a month to spare.



FairPlay Schemes – Easter

Southampton Mencap will be providing FairPlay Scheme Days for both juniors and teens in the Easter Holiday break. They will be from 9.30am-4.30pm at the Southampton Mencap Centre in Portswood and the cost for each session is £10.50.

- **FairPlay Junior (ages 5-11)**- Tuesday 7th, Wednesday 8th, Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th April
- **FairPlay Teen (ages 11-17)**- Thursday 9th, Friday 10th, Wednesday 15th, Thursday 16th April.

Existing members and new attendees are welcome but please note there is an application process for all new members which takes approximately five working days from point enquiry. To book a place or to find out more information, please ring **023 8058 4088** or email activities@southamptonmencap.co.uk.

FairPlay Junior Saturday Club

We currently have spaces available at our FairPlay Junior Saturday Club. This runs throughout the school term on alternate Saturdays 9.30am-1.30pm at a cost of £6 per session. A number of fun activities are available, including cooking, sports, arts and crafts and group games. To book a place or to find out more information, please ring **023 8058 4088** or email activities@southamptonmencap.co.uk

Activities Information Directory

Keep an eye out for our brand new 'Activities Information Directory' which is intended to make your life easier when it comes to booking any of the Mencap activities throughout the year.

Available on our website:
www.southamptonmencap.org. Or phone Mencap for a copy



Is there a mainstream club or setting you would like your child to access in Southampton? Perhaps your child is already attending an activity in the community but you feel the staff at the setting could do with some extra training or support to understand your child's support needs?

The **Access2Play Service** is completely free for any child or young person aged 5-18 and we are here to help. The service supports the inclusion of children/young people with additional needs into a range of mainstream play/leisure activities. The aim of this service is to enable groups to become more inclusive.

To find out more, please contact Mencap for further information.

For this service we are **RECRUITING:**

1. Play Facilitators

If you are a great communicator with experience in the field of play and/or disabilities, and if you are passionate about the rights of **ALL** children to be able to access universal play activities, we have the perfect job for you! Southampton Mencap is now recruiting **Play Facilitators**. <http://www.southamptonmencap.org/vacancies/>

2. Volunteer Play Mentors

We are looking for play mentors who can provide some additional support to a child/young person who needs ongoing encouragement to join in with the activities. Play mentors may be placed in different groups across the city but we will aim to place them closest to home. We would like to hear from you if you have at least an hour and a half a week to spare.

Full training and ongoing support is available for all volunteers. **For more information please call 023 8058 4088.**

USEFUL INFORMATION

ASSESSMENTS AND THE CARE ACT

Carers UK have produced a paper on Assessments and the Care Act. This factsheet contains information about the new system of care and support that will come into place in England on 1 April 2015. The Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 strengthen the rights and recognition of carers in the social care system, and will both come into effect in April 2015.

New rights entitle carers and the people they care for to a clear right to an assessment of their needs regardless of their income and finances or their level of need. Young carers and the parents of disabled children are also included in the new system. The benefit of having an assessment is that it will identify care and support needs and provide information and advice about services aimed at meeting those needs.

To read the factsheet follow this link: <http://bit.ly/1yBWQWh>



Autism Wessex will be holding drop in sessions for adults with Asperger's and Autism at the 3AC every Thursday from 2-4pm. The sessions cost £1 each per session, light refreshments are included (first session is free). This is a great opportunity to socialise and meet new people. There is support for members at all sessions. Please feel free to turn up or contact us for more details:

Telephone: 01305 213135 Email:

advice@autismwessex.org.uk

Third Age Centre, 11 Cranbury Terrace, Southampton , SO14 0LH

Tel: 023 8071 1700

Parent Voice Guides and Factsheets Disability Living Allowance (DLA):

Applying for DLA – Disability Living Allowance – can be a very daunting process especially if it's the first time you have completed the form, if your child is newly diagnosed or if you haven't been given a diagnosis yet. However there is support available – both nationally and locally - if you need it.

We have put together this factsheet to signpost you to that support and also to give you some tips and advice on completing the form.

To view the factsheet <https://www.gov.uk/dla-disability-living-allowance-benefit> or call **030 0303 8603**



POLICE have come with up a new use for the licence disc holders that every car carries on its windscreen - one which could save lives. The switch from paper tax discs for cars to the new electronic version has meant that the familiar transparent plastic envelopes have become obsolete - but PC Dave Wise and colleagues have thought up a new use for them.

They have come up with an emergency contact information and medical alert card.

PC Wise said: "This is a really useful replacement for your tax disc. If a driver is involved in a collision or has a medical emergency whilst at the wheel, a first responder will have easy access to vital medical information and we can quickly contact next of kin. "The way the disc folds in on itself means all the information is kept private until needed by emergency services personnel." The policing team, based in Malvern, Worcestershire, put the template for the form on their Twitter account, @MalvernCops. It can be easily printed out, cut out, filled in, folded up and placed in the holder. However if you do not have access to twitter than please contact Southampton Mencap where we will have some printed off.

Being Me – a New Resource for Child Bullying

Being Me is a free anti-bullying classroom resource that seeks to celebrate difference and promote inclusion by giving young people in years 5-8 an invaluable insight into the potential challenges being faced by their peers. It offers young people five powerful diary entries and short stories that aim to raise awareness of bullying and give readers a greater understanding of what life is like for other children: life with autism; life as a young carer; life at the end of homophobic taunts, or life when you're the most able or gifted and ostracised as a result. To find this resource visit: <http://www.autism.org.uk/News-and-events/News-from-the-NAS/Being-me.aspx>



ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS FOR PEOPLE AGED 14 AND OVER WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

Did you know that people with a learning disability, aged 14 and over are entitled to a free health check? Most surgeries have now registered and are trained to conduct health checks which should take between 30 minutes and an hour to complete. If you haven't yet had a health check ask your GP to arrange this. When this has been done you should be given a Health Action Plan giving you details of what you need to do in the future to keep fit and healthy. If you experience any problems with arranging an annual health check please contact:-
Jenny Jones – CQUIN Project Nurse on 023 8029 4420



SOUTHAMPTON LOCAL UPDATES

SOUTHAMPTON INFORMATION DIRECTORY (SID)



Provides Information and support for adults, children and young people and those that are caring for them
Information and support for adults and those that are caring for them.
For much more information go to: <http://sid.southampton.gov.uk/>

UPDATE RE CONSULTATION FOR CLOSURE OF SOUTHAMPTON DAY SERVICES

AND RESPITE SERVICE - Services for some of Southampton's most vulnerable residents will be closed despite a six month-long battle to save them...

Labour council leaders have now voted to go ahead with plans to close some council run Day Services and a Respite Centre. However, Labour Council Leader Simon Letts has given his assurance that services will not close until assessments of individuals have been carried out and alternatives found, meaning they will not close until much later than originally planned. The plans were announced last summer before consultation was carried out with service users and their carers. A final decision had been reached by Labour council bosses in December, but it was stalled after the Conservative opposition called the decision in for further scrutiny. Labour chiefs said they need to plug a black hole of £31m in the council's budget for 2015/16 - and the £1.2m adult social care cuts will now go towards meeting that figure. Many of the carers of the 300 people affected have fought the plans at a series of meetings where council chiefs have come under fire for the way the plans have been handled. At the January cabinet meeting they were accused of not having assessed service users or their carers before putting forward the closure plans. Council officers said new assessments would need to have been carried out anyway before any changes to the services, and again insisted that suitable alternatives were available. At the council cabinet meeting on 20th January councilors voted to approve the plans, which also means that many jobs are likely to be axed. It had been hoped the cuts could be phased in by April, but it is more likely the services will now close from the summer onwards, with assessments only likely to be completed by June.

LEARNING DISABILITY HOUSING STRATEGY

The Government wants more people with learning disabilities and their carers to have a greater choice and control over where and how they live. There is evidence that:

- People with learning disabilities want and can live successfully in many different kinds of housing including owning their own homes.
- Many people live with others in residential settings and may want to move to their own place
- Many people with learning disabilities live with their families. The reason they have to leave is often because of an emergency like the illness or death of a carer.
- More and more people are living with older carers, so there needs to be better planning for the future.
- Studies have shown that there are good and bad points about every type of housing. Things like staff training and management style are as important the type of housing you live in.
- Valuing People says that no types of housing should be counted out.

In Southampton we have written a housing strategy which was updated in 2012 – click on the link below to view [LD Housing Strategy- www.southampton.gov.uk/images/housing](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/images/housing)

More information about Housing can be found on the Learning Disability Partnership Board website www.friendlypeople.co.uk

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