National Mencap Health Campaign

Treat me well

Mencap’s new health campaign is called ‘Treat Me Well’. This 3 year campaign is all about improving hospital care for people with a learning disability and we’re really pleased to be involved at a local level. In November Southampton Mencap’s Own2Feet Group was involved in two workshops facilitated by National Mencap; the first was entitled ‘Know Your Rights’ and the second was a ‘Campaigning Workshop’ where we learnt more about how to influence change. Hannah Edmonds and Paul Heuze co-presented at the second of these workshops, and Hannah attended training in London in preparation for the next workshop. Both were also very excited to be involved with the national launch in London in February.

Keep an eye out for regular updates on the campaign
Southern Water Community Grants Scheme

A total of £5,000 has been donated to groups and projects in and around Portswood by Southern Water as part of its Community Grants scheme. Along with other organisations, including the Friends of Portswood Rec, Friends of Riverside Park, Friends of St Denys, Yellow Door Solent and Denys Friendlies, Southampton Mencap received £1,000 to support service users with training at their volunteer café, Café Down the Lane, which is open to the public.

The grant scheme was set up in conjunction with the Portswood Wastewater Treatment Works improvement scheme which is designed to reduce the odour produced by the water treatment process. Southern Water is working with partners Galliford Try to carry out the works, which cost £5.5 million.

Buzz Network Families Short Breaks Offer – Isle of Wight – Caravan or Lodge

From the 8th January 2018, Southampton Buzz network families will be able to book a maximum of 10 holidays (10 families) from the IOW Short Breaks service per year. These can be either 3-4 or 7 night stays. More detailed information here: https://www.carersinsouthampton.co.uk/News/buzznetwork-families-short-breaks-offer-isle-of-wight-caravan-or-lodge

Carers Trust Grant Fund

Carers Trust currently has a grant fund open for individual adult carers, aged 16+. Carers can apply for grants of up to £400 for items or activities that will benefit them in their caring role, for example for: breaks for carers, with or without the person they care for • items for the home including cookers, fridges, beds and washing machines • driving lessons and other travel costs relating to caring roles • courses and materials to develop carers’ skills and personal development • home repairs • short-term or time limited replacement care. For more information and to apply https://carers.org/article/grants-available-carers-trust or call 03007 729600 so they can advise you. They will have to complete a supporting statement for you on the application form.

0300 303 2677
Is the new number for the Southampton Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)
Support Buddies
Offering personal support for vulnerable young people and adults in Southampton including learning, active, social and emotional support. A Support Buddy is able to provide one-to-one support and build a strong relationships with the individual on a solid foundation of trust.
Support Buddies will work with a diverse range of young people and adults including those with learning difficulties, challenging behaviours, vulnerable individuals and other disabilities. They understand the unique challenges faced when either leaving school, transitioning to further education or transferring to a day support service.

Their approach means that each individual will receive support that is tailored to their specific needs, however complex those needs might be.

The aim of Support Buddies is to develop confidence and social skills, maintains independence and establishes a routine for each individual.

For further information telephone 07715356062; www.supportbuddies.org E Mail: info@supportbuddies.org Facebook: @SupportBud

Latest newsletter offers support for carers
The Carers in Southampton service based in Portswood for “anyone giving their time, unpaid, to look after a family member, friend or neighbour” has published its latest newsletter offering all sorts of hints, tips and support for carers. Says the Carers in Southampton website: “This issue covers ways to save money with healthy food on a budget, free budgeting mobile phone apps, details of the new Carers Trust CarerSmart discount card and much more. Inside there is also a special feature on visual impairment resources and the Special Care Dental Service at Royal South Hants. You will also find information on staying healthy and some new health apps.” There’s also lots more helpful information and listings on the Carers in Southampton website at https://www.carersinsouthampton.co.uk

This card has been developed so unpaid carers can identify themselves, to support the many unpaid carers in Southampton, and to encourage the business/leisure communities to help make Southampton more ‘carer friendly’. Go to our website to find out more. https://www.carersinsouthampton.co.uk/carers-card
Learning Disability Week is the national week devoted to raising awareness about learning disability. Take action with hospital staff in Learning Disability Week this year.

**Employment Spotlight**

“My name is Justin Allen and I have a learning disability. I work at the British Heart Foundation in Southampton on Monday and Wednesday and I also go to the British Heart Foundation in Eastleigh on Saturday. In these two stores I help sell pens, heart badges, bracelets and raffle tickets. I love my job because I help find a cure for heart disease across the UK. The work I do makes me happy and allows me to meet the public. Please say hello next time you see me!”

**Certificate of Achievement**

Victoria Curtis

has successfully completed the Employment Support Team Employability Course

Awarded on: 1st December 2017 by: Martine van den Heuvel and Dan Stickland

For further information on employment training courses phone Martine on 023 8091 7816 or email martine.van-den-heuvel@southampton.gov.uk

If you are a parent or carer of a child with a learning disability we can help you with the vital task of providing financial stability for your child’s future. We offer free and impartial information to help you when considering your options. Contact us for assistance, or just for an informal chat about your situation and what options may be available to you. Phone us on 0207 696 6925 or email willsandtrusts@mencap.org.uk.

Constipation
People with a learning disability still face health inequalities and are not having their health needs identified or accessing appropriate services to meet these needs.

Did you know that between 33% and 50% of all people with a learning disability regularly suffer from constipation? 98% of these people are prescribed medication for constipation. These numbers are quite astonishing, especially when we realise that for most people constipation can be an avoidable condition. Healthy bowels for most of us are maintained with the right balance of nutrition, hydration, exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Historically, people with a learning disability have often not achieved this balance. If you consider that many people have lived in long stay hospitals, this becomes less surprising; these people were not being given fair opportunity to maintain a healthy bowel.

The message for families and professionals alike is this, and bears repetition: Constipation is potentially a life threatening condition – ‘talk about it’

Postural Care
Postural care People often assume that distortion of body shape is inevitable for people with multiple disabilities, but this is not the case. Body shape distortion is preventable with correct positioning and can even be corrected later in life. Failure to protect body shape can have serious consequences for a person’s health and quality of life, and can even cause premature death. It can result in many health complications such as:

- Contractures – where the tightening of muscles prevents the person straightening their limbs;
- Scoliosis – curvature of the spine; breathing difficulties; poor digestion; constipation; pressure on internal organs

Everyone who supports someone with multiple disabilities, or commissions services for them, needs to know about postural care. You can help spread the word. The following booklet was developed by The Postural Care Action Group; a group of organisations and individuals working to raise awareness about the importance of protecting body shape and can be downloaded from https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-11/Postural%20Care%20booklet.pdf Alternatively you can order copies of the booklet by emailing publications@mencap.org.uk or phoning 020 7696 6900.

Treat me well: what we want
- Training for all hospital staff
- Reasonable Adjustments
Good News

We are delighted to announce that Southampton Mencap has been successful in the re-tender to Southampton City Council for the Carers in Southampton service. Southampton Mencap will be working with No Limits to deliver the service to children, young people and adults who give up their time, unpaid, to look after a family member, friend or neighbour. For further information on how the service can help you or someone you know, please contact 023 80582 387.

Short Breaks Review and Redesign

Southampton City Council has been conducting a consultation to seek views of parents and carers on proposed changes to the short break service offer for children with disabilities or additional needs and proposed changes to the eligibility criteria which allows access to these services.

The consultation has involved a number of focus group meetings held with the Southampton Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) who have collected views for the wider parent carer population through a number of platforms including short surveys, social media and in direct contact with families.

Schools (both in mainstream and special) and colleges have also been involved so that the views of children and young people are included as part of the process. Additionally there have been links with neighbouring local authorities to look at their Short Break Offers and this has supported the focus groups thinking for how Southampton’s offer could look in the future.

Update on Respite Provision for Southampton Residents

Southampton City Council has conducted an initial analysis following feedback from the carer engagement event (where carers were invited to view and comment on the possibility of 32a and 32b Kentish Road being used for respite) and the expressions of interest in a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the main building. Consideration is being given to reopening four bedrooms in the main building to provide a respite service rather than to refurbish 32a or 32b. The timescales will be dictated by the Care Quality Commission registration process. The summary of options currently being worked on will contain more details, including the work that is underway to determine whether the council will directly provide this service by using its own staff or whether this will be commissioned from others, pending completion of the CAT process.

Timebank

Local people coming together to help each other and themselves. For every hour of time given to someone, you will receive one time credit to spend when you need help. To find out more call Gwyneth Baker 07795 050294 (West) or Lynda Barnes 07931 223137 (East).
Southampton City Community Learning Disability Team Carers Group

Southampton City Community Learning Disability Team is looking for family carers who want to get involved in discussions about improving services for adults with learning disabilities.

There are up to three meetings a year for those who can get to Thomas Lewis House, 236 Empress Road, Southampton, S014 0JY. (A small car park is available on site, alternatively park on Horseshoe Bridge which is close to Thomas Lewis House).

The next meeting will be on 8th May 2017 at 10am, and the discussion topic will be on the Care Programme Approach (CPA) which is a way that services are assessed, planned, coordinated and reviewed for people with a range of related complex needs.

Consideration is also been given to setting up a Southampton carers’ online Facebook group which would share relevant news/resources; gain feedback on any new projects/initiatives being set up by the Southampton Learning Disability team, enable carers to make links with each other, and for carers to post any feedback/thoughts on current issues impacting on them or the person they care for. This would not replace the face to face meetings but offer another way of engaging with carers who cannot attend. The Facebook page will have an administrator and would be private to those who register as Southampton Carers Group members. No personal information would be shared on the group and this could not be used to get specific clinical advice or make a referral in to the team.

For more information or to register your interest either contact Southampton Mencap on 023 8058 4088 or get in touch with Izzy, Claire or Rachael on 023 8231 0300 or e-mail them at hp-tr.scldt@nhs.net

Employment Support Team

The Employment Support Team is the council’s employment support service and can offer help, advice and support to people who are disabled or disadvantaged, to find work or training. The team deliver employability training in different venues across the city. If you are interested in attending please contact them to find out when the next course is running.

Email: employment.support.team@southampton.gov.uk
Telephone: 023 8091 7585
Textphone users: 18002 023 8091 7786

Southampton City Council Telephone Contact Numbers

General enquiries Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm: 023 8083 3000

Emergency contact outside of these hours: 023 8023 3344
The 2018 Activities Directory is now out, containing a wealth of information on activities for the coming year. To receive a copy of the directory give us a call on 023 8058 4088 or download it from our website www.southamptonmencap.org.

**LiveWire Club**
**Working Towards Their Gateway Award!**

Members of Southampton Mencap’s LiveWire Club have been working hard to complete their Bronze Tier Gateway Award, and part of their project was to create their own birdfeeders! As you can see, these colourful and whimsical creations really did take a lot of time, construction and imagination, and we’re sure you’ll agree the final result was worth it! Gateway Award participants have tried a lot of new skills and projects these last few months, including a trip to Longleat Festival of Lights!

A fantastic time was had by all at this magical event.
Cafe Kitchen Project

Our new Mencap Kitchen Garden Project was launched in July this year through funding received from the Healthy Living Grant. The purpose of the project is to develop the area behind the Café to create a patio area to provide extra seating for the café in the summer, and to utilise the space to grow herbs, vegetables and fruit to use in the café recipes and develop a “Grow it, Cook It and Eat It” approach. Alongside this we’re also working with our members to develop an Eat Well Cookbook. Our 3 trainees Paul, Paul and Gary-John led by Marc, and supported by 2 volunteers Tony and Saif have all worked very hard indeed to give this project a fantastic beginning.

It’s brilliant. It’s great to be outdoors and not stuck indoors all day. We’ve been doing fencing, digging and sweeping leaves. And we’re hoping to soon start doing some local peoples gardens. I’ve learnt to focus on tasks, and keep going until they are finished. It’s helped me see that I might want to have a job gardening in the future. **(Paul J)**

I’ve learnt how to use all sorts of new tools like a post digger, heavy duty staple gun and wire cutters. And I’ve learnt the skill of how to paint straight on paneling. It’s good to work as a team, and I’m looking forwarding to be able to work in people’s gardens. It will feel like a proper job. **(Paul H)**

I’ve really enjoyed coming – no matter what the weather. I’ve definitely become more focused, and learnt to take it more seriously. So now I know to come dressed for the job in hand. It’s helped me see how you have to adapt when you are in a work place. **(Gary John)**

**And their leader, Marc’s, thoughts so far:**
I can see real progress in all of the trainees. When they started there was a certain lack of concentration. But now I can confidently give out jobs and know that they will be focused and will finish the job in hand. I am very proud with how well they are all doing.
Southampton University Music Department

Our Home Kitchen group and Café Down the Lane trainees attended a Christmas concert at the university on 8th December. They set up a stall where they sold a range of Christmas goodies. This included Christmas shortbread, mince pies and cheese scones all made by the Café trainees and Home Kitchen members. The Handy Crafts group also made and sold a wide selection of Christmas Craft goods – these included cards, gift cards, place card name cards as well as a range of gifts. The sales and donations on the day totaled almost £300.

Thank you to everyone involved!

Own2Feet
Learn, Work & Play

Own 2 Feet continue to enjoy a wide variety of enriching activities. In the classroom they learnt about the Titanic producing a fantastic display.

They continue their community action work, as litter-pickers keeping the lane as litter free as they can – an on-going task! And Active Ability came to teach the group Bocca. This is a truly inclusive bowls style game.
Volunteering Opportunities

Southampton Mencap’s volunteer base has been growing in recent months and we now have dedicated volunteers across all our activities. We love the energy and enthusiasm that volunteers bring to our clubs, playschemes, day services and more.

Are you interested in supporting Southampton Mencap in a practical way? If so, we are actively seeking volunteers to help in a number of ways:

- Within our evening clubs, day services or holiday activities for children, young people and adults with a learning disability
- Being a Home Visitor to people living away from home who have no contact with family members, friends or visiting carers
- Acting as a mentor caseworker for the Carers in Southampton service
- Serving refreshments at carer events and functions
- Helping out with admin and office duties
- Gardening
- Fundraising

We appreciate any time you can give to volunteering so Southampton Mencap can offer you flexible voluntary work in a wide variety of roles. From a few hours a week to a couple of days each month, we can suit your availability. For further information get in touch with the Activities Manager on 023 8058 4088 to find out more.
2018 Carers Lunch Meetings

28th February
28th March
25th April
23rd May
20th June
18th July

12 pm – 2 pm at the Mencap Centre

Call 023 8058 4088 or check our web-site
http://www.southamptonmencap.org/

Carers Lunch Topic for 28th February 2018

Becky Sparkes – Strategic Health Facilitator LD
Annual Health Checks and the NHS Cancer Screening Programme

Anna McMurray – Patient Liaison Nurse
How the Patient Liaison Team can support patients with a learning disability when in hospital

There will also be an opportunity to hear about the Treat Me Well campaign and to raise any other health issues.

Phone 023 8058 4088 to confirm your attendance

We hope you have found this newsletter interesting and informative. We welcome all feedback on its contents. If you have any articles or news relevant and helpful to children, young people or adults with learning disabilities and their families and carers which can be included in future editions please let us know when we will do our best to include these.

If you have not received LD News directly from Southampton Mencap and would like to be added to the mailing list, or alternatively no longer wish to receive it, please let us know. You can telephone 023 8058 4088 or e mail admin@southamptonmencap.co.uk

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Disclaimer – articles in this newsletter do not necessarily carry an endorsement from Southampton Mencap