

Early Help Partnership Newsletter

Welcome to the latest issue of the Early Help Partnership Newsletter. We aim to share the latest information and updates on Early Help Services and projects available across Worcestershire. Please feel free to share more widely within your organisation/s.

To submit a feature in the next issue, please email earlyhelppartnership@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

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YSS Worcestershire Young Carers

YSS has delivered the Worcestershire Young Carers service since 2003. We support young people aged 7-25 who care for family members at home. Care is typically for a parent, sibling or on occasion, a grandparent who have physical or emotional health needs or drug and alcohol dependencies. Typically, a care role comprises practical care and/or emotional care such as being shoulder to cry on or a motivator. When assessing a young person, we look for a role that is beyond what is expected of a person of that age.

Worcestershire Young Carers offers a range of support to ensure that its service users lead the best possible lives alongside their role at home. We offer 3 key levels of service depending on the level of care taking place and the impact it is having. Firstly, we invite young carers and their families to join our vast communication network and this gives them a feeling of belonging and of being part of group of people who are there for them. We regularly send information out via email, post online, run competitions, and run weekly social media drop ins so young carers can communicate with us. We also send out a quarterly newsletter.

The next level of service that we offer is respite activities. For those that qualify, we deliver monthly youth clubs across the county and offer activities and trips during the school holidays. In many ways, this is our most important service as it gives a large number of young people the opportunity to be kids again and have a vital break from their care role. Importantly, it also enables them to catch up with other young carers and share their lives with other people who understand what they are going through. Feedback from young people has consistently told us that this is the thing they appreciate most about our activities.

The third thing that we offer, is 1-1 support. Once a young person is referred to us, one of my keyworkers will complete a formal assessment with the family and ascertain what is happening at home. Often, they will establish that the impact of the care role is so significant that a young person will need a period of 1-1 support to help them to address some of their issues. When doing this, we look at the whole family and so may not only help the young person but may also sign post a parent on to a service that can help them.

We welcome referrals to our service and this can be done via <https://www.yss.org.uk/refer-to-young-carers>

If you would like to discuss a young person before making a referral, then please email youngcarers@yss.org.uk and a member of the team will call you back.

Starting Well Partnership Pack

The Starting Well Partnership have developed a Professionals Guide with information on the services they offer and key contact details: [Professionals Guide to Starting Well Partnership \(startingwellworcs.nhs.uk\)](https://startingwellworcs.nhs.uk)

West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre and Purple Leaf

West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre offers support for survivors of sexual violence and abuse, providing a range of services including:

- Advocacy
- Adult Therapy
- Children's Counselling Service
- Helpline Service
- Psycho-social Education Interventions
- Advice, assessments and intervention for children and young people who present problematic and harmful sexualised behaviour
- Training for professionals

These services are free, confidential, and non-judgemental to individuals who have received any form of rape or sexual violence at any time in their lives.

For more information please visit: <https://www.wmrsasc.org.uk>

The Purple Leaf Education Programme increases young people's awareness of sexual abuse and exploitation, by equipping them skills, knowledge, and tools to be able to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships and behaviours.

This bespoke service is available for young people aged from 8 to 18 years, each individual session can be tailored for the relevant age groups and cover the following modules:

Consent, Relationships, Uncomfortable Feelings, Gender, Sexual Exploitation, Sexualisation, Social Media and Criminal Exploitation.

For more information please visit: <http://www.purpleleaf.org.uk>

West Mercia Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy (ISVA) Service

The ISVA service will support Victims/Survivors aged 5 years and over or their non-abusing family members who live in Worcestershire (or any area of West Mercia).

Three services areas available for survivors of current and/or non-recent sexual violence regardless of whether the crimes have been reported to the Police.

Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) who work with individuals aged 18 and over who have experienced any form of rape or sexual abuse at any time in their lives.

Children & Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) who work with children and young people aged 5 to 17 years. The ChISVA service also works with individuals aged 18 to 25 years who have additional needs. [Please click here for more information.](#)

Family Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (FISVAs) who work with supporters of survivors, most commonly parents, partners, and family members. The FISVA role enables the youngest survivors of sexual violence, those aged 5 and under, to receive support through the FISVA engagement with their parent or carer. [Please click here for more information.](#)

Third party (agency) and self-referrals are accepted and can be made via the WMRSASC website: [Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service | West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre \(wmrsasc.org.uk\)](http://www.wmrsasc.org.uk)

Harmony at Home

Harmony at Home is Worcestershire's partnership approach to the Reducing Parental Conflict Initiative.

On the 20th November 2020, Harmony at Home launched a toolkit which was co-produced with partner organisations across Worcestershire. This resource has been developed specifically for professionals working directly with parents and/or families in conflict.

A number of free tools, materials and exercises are available on the Harmony at Home webpage for practitioners across Worcestershire:

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20676/reducing_parental_conflict/1997/toolkit_for_professionals

Harmony at Home understands all relationships can experience challenges, difficulties, and breakdown, especially with the pressures of being a parent. A webpage has been developed specifically to support families with advice, tips and information for parents and carers who may be together, separating, divorced or co-parenting.

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20676/reducing_parental_conflict/2350/reducing_parental_conflict_parents_and_carers

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

WHAT IS A LADO?

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children. This involves working with Police, Children's Social Care, employers, and other involved professionals. The LADO does not conduct investigations directly, but rather oversees and directs them to ensure thoroughness, timeliness, and fairness. Ordinarily, to ensure impartiality, the LADO will not have direct contact with the adult against whom the allegation has been made, or the family of the child/children involved; but will ensure that both these parties have information regarding outcomes. The regional LADO procedures can be found at:

<http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/ykpsy/statutory-child-protection-procedures/allegations-against-staff-or-volunteers>

WHEN SHOULD YOU CONTACT THE LADO?

You should contact the LADO within 1 working day of an incident arising where it appears that an allegation or concerns about a person who works with children, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (education staff)

The Safeguarding Lead in your organisation will need to assess whether to contact the LADO prior to discussing the concern with the individual, this will be assessed on an individual basis and should not happen if this will increase the level of risk to a child/ren. If the assessment determines that the level of risk will not increase, then initial fact-finding enquiries can be completed prior to contacting the LADO.

HOW TO CONTACT THE LADO?

If you need to make a formal referral, please visit the Worcestershire Children First website and follow the link to the online portal to make your referral – link: [Are you worried about an adult who works with children?](#) | [Are you worried about an adult who works with children?](#) | Worcestershire County Council The LADO Team can be contacted on 01905 846221 or LADO@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk however all referrals must come via the portal.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CONTACT THE LADO?

When you make a referral to the LADO, they will contact you as referrer to give you initial advice and guidance, you will also receive a response to your referral in writing either via secure email, portal or post.

In some cases, the Allegations may mean a Position of Trust Meeting is convened, this is independently chaired by the LADO and a record of this meeting will be provided to those in attendance. The LADO will:

- Advise employers/organisations on how to monitor and support the accused member of staff or volunteer during the process
- Monitor how the allegation impacts on other children and on the accused person and whether the allegation is part of a wider investigation

All LADO activity will be recorded securely on Children's Social Care Liquid Logic system.

FAMILY FRONT DOOR:

There may be a separate referral made to the Family Front Door to consider child protection enquiries in respect of connected children, you may then be involved with these enquiries in respect of attending a Strategy Discussion.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE POSITION OF TRUST PROCESS?

The LADO will manage and oversee the investigations of the employer, Social Care and Police (where appropriate). Following this they will recommend whether the allegation is substantiated (taking-into-account the views of the employer, Social Care and Police). After each Position of Trust meeting a record of the meeting will be sent to everyone involved. Subsequent Position of Trust meetings may need to be held to review the investigation process.

When, having heard all the evidence, the LADO believes the allegation is substantiated, they will advise on what action should be taken next and at what level. The LADO will decide, with the employer, whether an onward referral needs to be made to the appropriate regulatory body and the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service), if the accused person is deemed to be a future risk to children.

ESCALATIONS:

If the LADO disagrees with the outcomes of an employer's investigation, they will escalate this to your individual safeguarding lead. If you disagree with the advice/outcomes given by the LADO, this can be raised directly with the Group Manager for the Service, Daniel Gray:

dadams@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Boloh – The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Family COVID-19 Helpline

Our Vision is to see Black Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young people develop their inner strength to respond to the challenges of the pandemic. We know that we are unable to this without working in partnership with you, so please talk to us if you need any further information by making contact via:

Free phone: [0800 151 2605](tel:08001512605)

Email: Boloh.helpline@barnardos.org.uk

Website: helpline.barnardos.org.uk/

Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic children and families have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and are facing significant challenges to their emotional health and wellbeing.

Children and young people from these communities continue to be the hidden victims of the pandemic, which has exacerbated existing inequalities. These children have experienced more trauma, such as death and illness and rising hate crime due to COVID-19, leading to anxiety and other mental health difficulties. All are likely to increase further as their parents continue to be on the frontline and risk continued exposure to Covid-19 or they could be experiencing financial burdens and unemployment.

What children, young people and parents/carers can expect when they make contact?

Children, young people and parents/carers will receive a response on the telephone or web chat from one of our team of specialist advisors who work in a culturally informed manner and are knowledgeable about the lived experiences of children and young people and parents/carers from these communities.

Where it is identified during the initial call with the child, young person or parent/ carer that they would like to continue having further discussions with the helpline advisor on another call, they would be given the option of being called back at a convenient time by the same helpline advisor.

During these discussions, the helpline advisor will work to explore with them if they would like to be referred to the Helpline's therapeutic support service. The aim of this continued support by the helpline advisor is to ensure they provide continued support, advice and signposting to other organisations and work towards achieving an overall reduction of the negative impact of Covid-19, and its aftermath, on personal and family life.

Once referred to the psychotherapist, they will provide six sessions for the child/young person. These sessions are also available separately for parents/carers. Six therapeutic sessions will be offered and if additional sessions are required this could be arranged. The sessions which will take place over the phone will be either once or twice a week, depending on the needs and circumstances of the family. The first and sixth session will be for 45 minutes to allow for an initial baseline assessment to be made of three key challenges the family or individual are facing, with the final session to discuss and note progress made during the service.

Sessions two to five, of 30 minutes each, will comprise therapeutic support to address the key challenges identified in the first session.

The team of qualified therapists either have a lived experience of coming from a Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic community, or have prior professional experience of delivering therapeutic support to service users from communities the Helpline aims to provide a service. All therapists have specialist training in delivering culturally sensitive support.

Can support be provided in different languages?

Our helpline advisors can provide a service in English, Urdu, Hindi, and Punjabi. In December 2020, the languages available will expand to include Amharic, Tigrinya, and Mirpuri.

The therapeutic sessions can be provided in the following languages: English, Bengali, Hindi, French, Punjabi, and Greek.

How do I refer a family to the Helpline?

You can provide the child, young person, or parent/carer with the Helpline's number and ask them to get in contact. They can also make contact via the web chat which can be accessed via the website.

You can also talk to the child, young person and parent/carer about the Helpline and contact us on their behalf to discuss referring them to access the service, but this must be done with their consent. Once you make contact, the helpline advisor will discuss what support could be provided based on the information you have provided. Once there is confirmation that the child, young person or parent/carer consents to the referral, the helpline advisor will obtain their details and contact them.

Better Health, Every Mind Matters – Bitesize Wellbeing Resources

A number of resources have been developed to support in the teaching of PSHE, RHE and RSHE to Upper KS2, KS3 and KS4 students.

These resources and lesson plans are ready to use and the content has been co-created with teachers and young people, covering topics such as:

- Physical and Mental Wellbeing
- Unhelpful thoughts
- Building connections
- Worry
- Social media
- Sleep
- Dealing with change
- Transition to secondary school
- Puberty
- Bullying and cyber-bullying
- Smoking and alcohol
- Online stress and FOMO
- Exam stress
- Body image in a digital world
- Forming positive relationships

These resources can be accessed via the following link: [Mental wellbeing | Overview | PHE School Zone](#)

NSPCC's new tool for navigating conversations with children about abuse

Attensi have collaborated with NSPCC Learning on the development of a 3D learning tool to support adults when talking to children about abuse.

This resource offers gamified 3D interactive simulation to support people who work or volunteer with children and young people.

'**Talk to Me**' has been designed to help adults build confidence when speaking to children and young people about difficult topics such as abuse, whilst ensure children feel heard.

This free tool enables learners to:

- Access simulated scenarios and interact with fictional child characters
- Learn how to respond to the children and build their trust to help them talk about their experiences to successfully complete each scenario
- Build knowledge and confidence to talk about children about abuse.

The scenarios built into this tool are school based and focus specifically on domestic and sexual abuse.

'Talk to Me' is free for anyone up until December 2021 and can be visited as many times as you like. For more information and to access 'Talk to Me', please visit: [Learn to navigate difficult conversations with children about abuse with 'Talk to Me' | NSPCC Learning](#)

Families First Support Service

Practical and emotional support for families in Worcestershire with a parent in prison or about to be sentenced.

Launched by YSS at the end of last year, Families First supports children and families from the point of arrest through to prison release, helping to reduce the emotional turmoil and anguish experienced by so many children and families across the county.

At present there are no systems in place to help identify and support these families affected by parental imprisonment and children and young people are too often the hidden victims of crime.

A number of studies have highlighted the devastating impact that parental imprisonment can have on children:

- **Stigma or bullying** – Children may experience stigma, bullying, feelings of shame and unwelcome attention from the media leading to isolation.
- **Poverty**
- **Higher risk of mental health issues** – The sudden removal of a parent can create feelings of separation and loss similar to bereavement. Children may develop anxiety around the potential loss of other family members or about the welfare of their imprisoned family member.
- **Failure to achieve** - Children with a parent in prison are at higher risk of poorer academic achievement, poorer attendance at school and exclusion. The average distance travelled by families to visit a male prison is 50 miles so prison visits can often lead to unauthorised absences in their school record.
- **More likely to offend themselves** - 65% of boys with a convicted parent go on to offend.

Families First provides support and guidance in a safe space, to enable the whole family to cope with the demands of having a partner, and parent, in prison.

Referral criteria

- Families must reside in Worcestershire
- Belong to a family with at least one child between 0-19 years
- Have a child in the family whose parent is in prison or about to be sentenced

Referrals are welcomed from organisations as well as self-referrals from families - please email for a referral form: familiesfirst@yss.org.uk

Family Learning Courses

Family Learning Courses are now ready for families to book on for FREE for April – July 2021. Please find below a list of the courses available with a link which takes you directly to the booking page. As usual, the courses are currently FREE for any parent or carer regardless of their income.

Professionals are able to signpost or book families on directly themselves too - to support the family. All courses are still online only and are all 8 weeks in length with 1.5 hour sessions per week. Adult Learning support families to join our Zoom courses using their phones, tablets, iPad, or laptops before the course starts. They can also offer bespoke courses in schools for parents too with a minimum of 6 parents needed to run a course of any subject depending on parents' needs.

Further information on how to book courses is available on their website at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/courses and for any enquiries or support for families to book please call the Adult Community Learning Team on 01905 728537.

Courses Just for Parents to Support their Child with School:

[Phonics in Early Years for Parents](#)

[Literacy in Early Years for Parents](#)

[English in Key Stage 1 for Parents](#)

[English in Key Stage 2 & 3 for Parents](#)

[Maths in the Early Years for Parents](#)

[Maths in Key Stage 1 for Parents](#)

[Maths in Key Stage 2 & 3 for Parents](#)

[Transition Support for Parents](#)

Courses for Parents to do with their Child:

[Science for Dads and their Lads](#)

[STEM course for Parents and their Child](#)

[Cook with your Family Course](#)

[Cook with your Teenager Course](#)

[Yoga for Baby and Me Course](#)

[Sign-a-story for Families](#)

Courses Just for Parents to Support their Child at Home:

[SHAPE – Improving Health & Exercise for your Family](#)

[Art Introduction Course for Parents](#)

[Family Memories COVID-19 Time Capsule Course](#)

[E-Safety Family Course for Parents](#)

[Cooking on a Low Budget Course for Parents](#)

Supporting you with Special Needs & Disabilities:

[Sign along Foundation Course for Parents](#)

[SEND – Understanding Autism](#)

[SEND – Strategies for Positive Behaviour](#)

[SEND – Managing Mindfulness for Parents](#)

Hereford and Worcester Fire Service – Virtual Awareness Sessions for Partners

Safe and Well Awareness training is available to be delivered to partner agency staff/volunteers. This training would be appropriate for any organisations who visit potentially vulnerable households and is designed for partner agency staff, professionals and volunteers who are in contact with, care for or visit, older people, people with disabilities or additional needs, vulnerable families and members of our communities in their homes. It promotes and increases staff skills and encourages them to identify potential fire hazards, understand how to deal with the risks and how to refer vulnerable households on to the fire service for a free visit.

Our training package is **FREE**. The primary aim of the Service is to reduce the number of accidental dwelling fires, fire-related deaths and injuries across Herefordshire and Worcestershire through effective partnership working.

We can also discuss options for carrying out visits to ensure we are best meeting the needs of those being referred to us. For example, we may arrange to carry out the visit with a member of your staff or family who is trusted, to remove any potential barriers. We can also offer support if there is a specific threat or risk of arson to a household.

The referral form for partner organisations to use can be accessed here:

<http://www.hwfire.org.uk/about-us/the-fire-service/safe-and-well-referral/>

Fire Safety Talks

If you know of any **community groups** that have **online sessions** that would benefit from a **fire safety talk**, please get in touch and we can arrange to deliver awareness sessions on how to stay safe from fire.

Please note the awareness session and the fire safety talk are 2 very separate presentations. There is some overlap, but they have been created to target specific audiences.

Safe and Well Checks

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) offer a FREE Safe and Well Check – a Home Fire Safety visit that's tailored to an individual's needs. The visit will provide the person with actions and advice to help make their home a safer place and protect them and their family from the risks of fire.

It will:

- provide them with a fire escape plan to follow, should the unthinkable happen. We may also fit smoke alarms and specialist equipment if required.
- identify any health and care needs that require signposting to local services to help ensure safety and wellbeing.

This service is free of charge. Our visits are aimed primarily towards those who may be more at risk of a fire in their home, such as older people living alone or people with mobility issues, sensory impairments, or additional needs. We are also keen to support if there are concerns around hoarding.

Anyone can call Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service on 0800 032 1155 or visit <http://www.hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice/home-safety/request-visit/> to request a free visit or further information. Please be aware there are eligibility criteria to qualify for a visit.

There is also further information about fire safety in the home on our website - <http://www.hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice/home-safety/>

University of Worcester Continuing Professional Development Courses

The **University of Worcester** are running a number of Continuing professional Development courses this Spring:

- [Adverse Childhood Experiences: Supporting Families in your Settings post COVID](#) – Online
- [Creative Approaches to Teaching and Learning: Holistic Curriculum](#) - Online
- [Pedagogical and Subject Knowledge Enhancement for Teaching Assistants](#)
- [Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs \(SLCN\)](#)
- [Including Refugees and Asylum Seeking children into your settings](#)

These courses can be booked online: <https://webengine-01.worc.ac.uk/schedcpd/>

For any enquiries please email cpdeducation@worc.ac.uk or visit www.worcester.ac.uk/cpdeducation