

NEWS FROM THE CAN NETWORK

Welcome to the September issue of the CAN Newsletter. I hope that everyone has had a good holiday and your children have returned to school refreshed and ready for a new term. The next big event for your calendar is **The Local Offer Live Day , Saturday 30 September**, 11:00am -4:00pm at St Crispins Leisure Centre, Wokingham. Join us for a fun filled day with lots of free activities for the children, including Quirk's Animal Roadshow, trampolining, bouncy castle, sports activities and a climbing wall as well as a crèche. The event is FREE of charge. Tickets are available on Eventbrite: [Local Offer Live 2017](#). Please book a ticket for each person in your family attending. Also there will be lots of information stalls where you can find out more about services and activities that are available locally as well as members of Wokingham Borough Council giving an update on the new Short Breaks Statement and introduction of direct payments. I look forward to seeing you all there. Remember to search [what's on](#) for details of all the activities on offer. Kind regards, Maria Walker. Email: CAN.Network@wokingham.gov.uk Tel: 0118 974 6818

ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Autism Berkshire

Eton College Action Fair, Saturday, 24 September, 11.00 am - 4.00pm. Come along and say hello to the Autism Berkshire team at our stall at the Eton Action Fair on Saturday, September 24. Admission to the fair, which raises money for good causes in Berkshire and further afield, is £2 for adults and 50p for children. We are looking for volunteers to help run the stall on the day. If you can help, call 01189 594 594 or email admin@autismberkshire.org.uk

Butterflies Friday 8 September Drop in between 1.00pm – 2.30pm. This is a Down Syndrome group who aim to meet once a month, to bring families together over a cuppa, to give each other support, help and guidance whether your child has not even been born, is at pre-school, school, college or working. This event is hosted by **Dingley's Promise**, Kennet Walk Community Centre Kenavon Drive, Reading RG1 3GD. Contact Sian Spence, telephone: 07970381120 or email: hannah.spence@dingley.org.uk

Dingley's Promise . Stay and Play. Friday 8 September, 1.00pm to 2.30pm. All Saints Primary School, Norreys Avenue, Wokingham, RG40 1UX. Luisa Garcia of the Messy Club will be attending with art & craft activities All welcome. £2 (Voluntary donation).

Friday 15 September, 1.00pm to 2.30pm, Kennet Walk Community Centre, Kenavon Drive, Reading, RG1 3GD. Swings & Smiles will be attending alongside Clare Healy a speech & language therapist from CAMHS For more information contact Emma Garcia : emma.garcia@dingley.org.uk

Chill Out Sessions Tuesday 26 September, 5.30pm -7.30pm. The Red Kite Children's Centre, Chestnut Avenue, Shinfield. A session for parents and carers and their children who are on the pathway or diagnosed with Autism. Join us for a chill out session to enjoy calming lights and soothing music, giving you and your child a chance to unwind. Drop in for informal support and advice or just meet other parents and children. A light tea is provided. Telephone 0118 908 8181.

Building for the Future Every Friday, 9.30am – 11.30am. Play group for babies and children (0-4years) with their parent/carer. Our House, Charles House, Toutley Rd, Wokingham RG41 1QN. Telephone: 0118 978 8124. During school holidays we offer Stay & Play drop in sessions, enabling the whole family to relax at the Centre, enjoy our facilities, to socialise and play. Our great, safe and accessible facilities include a soft-play area, sensory room, teen chill-out zone, toys for all ages, an outdoor space and an invaluable, tranquil, parents' room. We also have accessible bathroom facilities with hoist and full size change table. Children remain the responsibility of their parent/carer throughout these sessions. Refreshments provided. For further details please [contact us](#)

Peapods Saturday Club Saturday 9 September, 10.30am to 12 Noon, Our House on Toutley Road in Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 1QN. Come along and relax, have a chat to other Peapods parents whilst the kids play. All the family is welcome (including extended family and carers). For more details contact: angie@peapods.org.uk or phone Angie on [07765 896040](tel:07765896040).

Building for the Future Saturday Club. The third Saturday of the month at **Our House**. 11am - 1pm for children with a Physical disability and Down Syndrome. Children with Autism and similar additional needs at 3pm - 5pm. We provide a variety of activities with themed events as advertised. Children remain the responsibility of their parent/carer throughout these sessions. Siblings welcome. Refreshments are provided. Contact admin@bttf.org.uk for dates and bookings.

Smiles for Sibs Monday 11 September, 6.15pm - 6.00pm, Woodley Airfield Community Centre, Hurricane Way, Woodley RG5 4UX . A group for siblings of children with a learning disability/ASC, aged 8 -13, to have fun and let off steam. Run by **Wokingham Bracknell & Districts Mencap**

Wiggly Worms at Bridges Resource Centre, Wednesday's 6 September, 13 September, 10:00am - 11:30am. This is a new group to complement the existing **Wiggly Worms at Brambles Children's Centre**. Come and explore the excellent facilities of the Bridges Resource Centre, designed for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions. This session is for children with a diagnosis but also includes children awaiting diagnosis. Two skilled Family Workers, Kate and Laura will be there to provide support, along with other families who have had similar experiences to you. For more info call Kate on 07900071017

Reading Games Club Saturday 9 September, 12 Noon, Emmer Green Youth & Community Centre, Grove Rd, Reading. This club for children aged eight to 15 with an autism spectrum condition diagnosis, or on the CAMHS waiting list for an ASC assessment, and their siblings, meets on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month to play games and enjoy a range of other activities. There is a charge of £5 per child, per meeting. For more information about the club and to book, call 01189 594 594 or email contact@autismberkshire.org.uk

The Autism Group . Maidenhead, Saturday, 9 September, 23 September, 2pm - 4:30pm. A fortnightly Saturday Arts and crafts club for young people aged 11 – 25 on the autism spectrum and typically of mainstream ability, open to beginners and talented artists. At the same time there is a **parents support group** . All parents are welcome to attend even if their young person does not participate in the activity group. Both activities are charged at £8 per session

Youth Club @ Addington, Wednesday 13 September, 7.00pm – 9.00pm. The Youth Club @ Addington School runs every Wednesday during term-time. Young people with learning disabilities between the ages of 13 (year 9) and 19 are welcome to come along for a fun filled evening. The cost is only £1 per session. Each week a variety of different activities are planned, including board games, sports, movie nights, pizza making, and more, plus a tuck shop. For more information, contact Ben Willoughby on 07551 159072.

SPORTING ACTIVITIES

One of the Most Exciting Sports of 2012 and 2016 Paralympics is coming to Berkshire!

Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby, Reading Rugby Club and Get Berkshire Active are teaming up with Wokingham Borough Council's Sport and Leisure Team to bring Wheelchair Rugby to the county. We are running FREE taster sessions on 16 and 23 September at 10am to 12 Noon, at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre for anyone over the age of 12, living with a physical impairment, male and female. You do not have to be a wheelchair user to participate and all equipment will be supplied along with coaching.

Autism Berkshire Family Swimming Saturdays, September 2, October 7, and November 4. You do not need to be a member of Autism Berkshire to take part and sessions are open to families living with autism throughout Berkshire. These one-hour sessions, when the lights and music are turned down, take place once a month, on Saturdays at 4pm, at Rivermead Leisure Complex, Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8EQ, and are funded by Children in Need. Advance booking is essential and places are limited. Please ensure you provide details of how many adults and children will be attending each session to ensure sufficient lifeguards are on duty. Register online [here](#)

Aiming High Family swimming in Wokingham Saturday 16 September, 6.30pm to 7.30pm. **Free** family swimming session at The Carnival Pool, Wellington Road, Wokingham RG40 2AF. For details of more dates Email: chelsea.piggott@wokingham.gov.uk

Pan Disability Football Monday 4 September, 5pm to 6pm, Bulmershe Leisure Centre, Woodley. Wokingham Sports team will be running these sessions in conjunction with Reading Football Club for children aged 5 -16. For more information contact : chelsea.piggott@wokingham.gov.uk

Wokingham Waterside Centre is fully wheel chair accessible. Our qualified instructors are available to provide opportunities for children and adults with additional needs and there is specialist equipment available including hoists. The Centre offers a number of activities including katakanuing, kayaking, canoeing and dragon boating. Wokingham Waterside Centre is a unique, riverside, water sport and conference venue set on a picturesque stretch of the river Thames at Thames Valley Park in Berkshire.

ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

New Free Girls Group starting 5 October 2017 for 6 sessions after school. Would your daughter benefit from some extra learning around growing up? Katherine Burns, Learning Disability Nurse, is starting a new group to help girls around managing the changes of growing up including friendships, keeping healthy, body changes and personal hygiene. This group is aimed at girls aged 11 – 14 with moderate to severe learning disabilities and will take place after school in a community setting (to be confirmed). It will run for 6 sessions term time only. Please contact Katherine Burns for further information: 0118 974 6890 or email: Katherine.burns@berkshire.nhs.uk

@ The Acorn – Tuesday 5 September, 7pm – 9pm , The Acorn Community Centre, Wokingham. This is a social group for people 16 years old and over, which includes those with complex and profound needs. People have the opportunity to take part in activities such as wheelchair hockey, Frisbee, Zumba, music or just chill out and talk to friends. There is a small charge of £3 to cover refreshments.

bPhap Saturday Youth Club Saturdays, 9.30am to 1pm. MAPP Centre 22 Mount Pleasant, Reading. The purpose-built Berkshire Phab centre is open to children every Saturday. For children with and without disabilities - a chance to socialise together. Activities include computers, arts, music, sensory room and outdoor play. £3 per session. There is also a week day club Monday to Thursday, 10am to 4pm. Aged 18 and over. £17 per day (part-day available), lunch £3.50

The Friday Alternative Wednesday 6 September meet at 7.00pm for a meal at Nando's, 29 Market Place, Wokingham. This is a Twice monthly social group for adults aged 16+ with Asperger Syndrome or high functioning Autism. The group usually meets between 7 pm and 9 pm but times vary depending on activity. Participants enjoy various activities such as pub meals, visits to museums, bowling, cinema trips and outings. The group members choose the activities. For further details please contact our office on 0300 777 8539.

The Three Frogs, Thursday 21 September . A social group for adults (17+) on the Autistic Spectrum. Come and join us for an informal night out where you can make friends, enjoy a meal and have a chat. Partners, friends and carers also welcome. Venue: The Three Frogs Pub, 222, London Road, Wokingham, RG40 1SW. Usually on the third Thursday of every month. For more details contact: 3frogs@asdfamilyhelp.org or call/text Jayne 07733 601755

Challengers Youth Scheme Reading Reading Youth schemes run every Saturday for ages 13 -18. 10am to 4:00pm. £20 per day. There are spaces at every Youth scheme for young people who need 1:1 support and who website. Details on the **[Challengers Booking Site](#)**.

197 Club .

Monday, September 4, 6.30pm-9.30pm. Meet at the [Outlook](#) for drinks, a meal and chat. This is a social group for over 18s who have a diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition and their carers. For more details, contact the office on 01189 594 594 or email 197club@autismberkshire.org.uk

Level Up club., September 2, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Emmer Green Youth & Community Centre - Grove Road, Reading, RG4 8LN . The club is open to young people aged 16 to 25 with autism spectrum conditions who live in Berkshire. It meets on the first and third Saturdays of each month to play video and board games, including Pokemon TCG. There is a charge of £5 per person, per meeting. For more information about the group or to request an application form, call 01189 594 594 or email contact@autismberkshire.org.uk

Wokingham Youth Group. Saturday September 16, 1:15 pm to 3:15 pm. Wokingham Youth Centre, 35 Reading Road, [RG41 1EG](#). This group offers an opportunity for children and young people aged eight to 17 with autism spectrum conditions or who are on the waiting list for an assessment and their siblings, to get together and enjoy ball games, table tennis and pool, board games and art & craft activities. The aim is to develop communication and social skills in a fun, playful and creative environment and make new friends. The group is led by Garrick Rahal, an experienced youth and support worker, who also runs our Bracknell CAYP Group. Sessions are held fortnightly on Saturdays. (Not in the holidays) For more information and to book, call 01189 594 594 or email admin@autismberkshire.org.uk

Paul's Karaoke, Wednesday 13 September and Wednesday 20 September, 7.30pm – 9.00pm at the Rose Street Methodist Church, Wokingham . The group is open to anyone over the age of 16 who has a learning disability. There is a small charge of £3 per session to cover costs.

What's on at the Cinemas

Vue's next autism friendly film screening is Spark on Sunday 24th September at 10.15am

ODEON's next autism friendly film is Cars 3 on Sunday 24 September at 10:15am

Showcase's next autism friendly film is Thomas & Friends: Journey Beyond Sodor on Sunday 10 September at 10am,

DROP IN SESSIONS FOR PARENTS/CARERS

ASD Family Help. ASD Family Help Parent/Carers Monday Support Group , Monday, 10:30am to 12:30pm. The Monday Support Group is based at Woodley Youth and Community Centre , Hurricane Way, Woodley, RG5 4UX. Pop along for a FREE coffee or tea and a biscuit. Bacon Rolls are also available for £1. Younger children welcome.

ASSIST Drop in Sessions. Tuesday 12 September, 9.30am to 12 noon Come and join the ASSIST team alongside parents and carers of children with ASD, to chat, share ideas and problem solve. Stay for the whole session or just 10 minutes. No Booking required.

Sing if You Care. The VoxChoir is returning on Tuesdays at a new time of 1pm-2.30pm on Tuesday 5 September. The VoxChoir would like to invite all carers from Wokingham to join them for a FREE weekly gathering having fun with supportive people, making friends & feeling good. The VoxChoir meets at The Scout Hut (close to the adventure play area) Pinewood Activity Centre, Old Wokingham Road, RG40 3AX, Wokingham. The sessions end with tea and cake and some social time with new friends.
Contact: info@voxskool.com or call/text: 07776 133507

CARERS' LUNCH, Tuesday 12 September, 12.15pm– 2.00pm, Rose Street Methodist Church, Rose Street, Wokingham . Lesley Buckland, Commissioning Specialist - People, Strategy & Commissioning Department at Wokingham Borough Council will be attending our lunch this month. She will be talking about the Carers strategy & asking for your feedback. Please come along to give your views and/or to find out more and meet other Carers. For catering purposes, please contact us by Monday 11th . Email admin@wokinghammencap.org or telephone 0300 777 8539.

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Pathological demand avoidance Conference, Thursday 12 October 2017, Hilton Hotel, Drake Way, Reading. Information on PDA is extremely limited and there are very few forums for learning about the disorder. This conference is a rare opportunity to hear experts in the field discussing the latest strategies and best practice.
Register online

Epilepsy Awareness Workshop

This is an awareness day for parents and carers of people with learning disabilities who have epilepsy on Friday 29 September. There will be talks and stands from various professionals explaining how Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust supports an individual in their service who has epilepsy. There will also be some companies showing how they can offer support to people with epilepsy. Tickets are free and lunch will be provided. Book at **Eventbrite**

[Carers Forum](#)

Do you live in Wokingham Borough and care on an unpaid basis for someone who would not be able to manage daily life without your support? If so you are warmly welcome to attend the Carers forum and have an opportunity to feed into what happens locally for Carers. The Forums purpose is to listen to local Carers views and to evaluate and assess the service development locally. The forum will be held on the following dates, Tuesday 3 October 2017, 10am -12Noon and Tuesday 9 January 2018, 10am-12 Noon. Venue: Meeting Room, Wokingham, Fire Station, Easthampstead Rd, RG40 2EH, there is parking right next to the fire station. If this sounds of interest to you please contact us to confirm your attendance at Wokingham Outreach Carers Service on **0118 324 7333** or ask@berkshirecarershub.org

MISCELLANEOUS

Homeownership opportunities for people with disabilities (HOLD schemes)

Did you know that someone with a disability who relies on benefits for their income can secure a mortgage and part-buy a home of their own? It's all thanks to a Government approved housing model called HOLD (Home Ownership for people with Long-term Disabilities) and, since 1999, MySafeHome Limited has helped almost 1,300 people turn their hopes into homes. "The idea of shared ownership has always appealed to us as a family: a home chosen by us, tailored to our daughter's needs and supported by a specialist housing association, offering long-term security. We cannot thank MySafeHome enough for getting us on to this pathway." The words of a Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts Mencap member who MySafeHome were recently privileged to support. To find out more please contact MySafeHome Limited on 02476 402211 or email enquiries@mysafehome.info

Job vacancies

[Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts MENCAP](#)

Smiles for Sibs Co-ordinator • Wokingham, Average 3-5 hours per week - £10.50 per hour

We have a vacancy for a Co-Ordinator to supervise and lead in providing activities at the club, playing games, and occasionally organising trips off-site, e.g.: to the cinema, bowling or laser quest. To attend training, meetings, outings and special activities as required.

Playworkers Wokingham & Bracknell, 2 hours per week - £7.00 per hour (16-18 year olds)

We have a vacancy for a Playworker at our Smiles for Sibs group in Wokingham. We also have a vacancy for a Playworker at our Bracknell Smiles for Sibs group, which runs on Thursdays (term-time only) between 4.30pm and 6.15pm at Braybrooke Community Centre, Bracknell. The Playworkers will assist in providing activities at the club including playing games, arts & crafts, cooking, outdoor activities and occasional holiday day trips.

Closing date for applications for these two vacancies is Thursday 14th September 2017 at 12 noon

Office Co-ordinator Binfield. 20 hours per week - £18,200 pro rata (based on 35 hr wk). A 'Jack of all trades' to provide administrative support to enable the day to day functioning of the Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts Mencap office and to assist on other projects as required.

Closing date for applications for this vacancy is Wednesday 13th September at 12pm

Interviews will be held on Thursday 28th September 2017

Please contact the office on 0300 777 8539 for more information about these posts and to request an application form.

Resources

[Autism Eye](#)

[Wokingham Local Offer](#)

[ASD Family Help](#)

[ASSIST](#)

[AUTISM EYE](#)

[BAS](#)

[Berkshire Phab](#)

[Building for the Future](#)

[Changing Places](#)

[Contact a Family](#)

[Dingley's Promise](#)

[Disability Information Service Reading \(Disc\)](#)

[Me2 Club](#)

[National Autistic Society](#)

[Oakwood Youth Challenge](#)

[Parenting Special Children](#)

[Peapods](#)

[REACH Wokingham](#)

[RDCS](#)

[Scope](#)

[SENDIASS](#)

[The National Autistic Society](#)

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[Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership Board](#)