

FamiliesMatter

Issue 49 May 2019

News, information and training to support your work with families

Tower Hamlets Annual Parent and Carer Conference 2019

Over 170 parents and carers attended the 13th Annual Parent and Carer Conference organised by the Tower Hamlets Parent and Family Support Service, which had the theme of 'Empowering and supporting our children to thrive'.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Tower Hamlets Annual Parent and Carer Conference 2019. A special thank you to Councillor Danny Hassell and Christine McInnes, the keynote speakers.



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Parent and Carer Conference

Welcome to the summer edition of Families Matter

The spring school term ended on a high for the Parent and Family Support Service which successfully organised the 13th Annual Tower Hamlets Parent and Carer Conference. It was a fantastic event with over 170 parents and carers attending.

The theme of this year's conference was 'Empowering and supporting our children to thrive'. You can find out more about the conference, the many partners that supported the event and the experience of parents and carers who attended in this edition.

Over the summer we will be launching two new exciting projects in partnership with Tower Hamlets schools: Poverty Proofing the School Day and All Together, the anti-bullying programme. See pages 7 and 12 for more information and to find out whether your school is getting involved.

This packed edition also features articles on Family Transitions Triple P, a new parenting programme to support families experiencing parental conflict and information and guidance to help parents and carers reduce the time their children spend looking at computer screens, tablets and/or smart phones.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for articles in future editions.

Best wishes,
Jill McGinley

Head of Parent and Family Support Service

This newsletter is produced by the Parental Engagement Team within the Parent and Family Support Service, Children and Culture Directorate. To share news in future editions of Families Matter, please contact

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Reference to 'parents' describes any caregiver, responsible for the care, protection and upbringing of a child or young person, including foster parents or connected persons, grandparents, siblings or other family members living in Tower Hamlets.

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Parent and

Key speakers included Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People; Christine McInnes, Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships, London Borough of Tower Hamlets; and Martha Evans from the Anti-Bullying Alliance who also delivered a workshop.

Parents were asked how Tower Hamlets communities can build confidence and resilience in children and young people.



Parents tweeted their experiences throughout the day using #THParentsconference19



Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People said:

"This conference puts parents at the heart of our practice and this has been a valuable way to connect with them."

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Carer Conference 2019



County lines

There were sessions on 'gangs and county lines' presented by facilitators with real life testimonies from St Giles Trust and a workshop about 'emotional first aid', exploring ways to manage stress and anxiety.

"The gangs workshop was really important for me; I didn't know what a county line was."

Feedback from parent who attended the gangs and county lines workshop



Internet safety

Well attended workshops ran throughout the day covering topics such as bullying, cyber bullying, and digital parenting as well as looking at internet safety for the entire family.

"The e-safety workshops should be available to every parent in every school – a fantastic session."

Feedback from parent who attended the internet safety workshop



SUGAR SMART

Parents were encouraged to be 'SUGAR SMART' and given tips on how the whole family can make healthy food choices.

SEND: Power of Parent Voice

There was also a workshop on ways parents who have children with special educational needs and disabilities can be empowered to work proactively with services that support their families.



PCC member wins award

Councillor Hassell presented Parent and Carer Council member, Marie McLeod, with the prestigious Docklands Light Railway 'Outstanding Service to the Community Award'.

Marie set up a community organisation called Depression Changes Minds (DCM) for parents whose children suffer from anxiety or depression and mental health issues. It also runs workshops to raise awareness about mental health in the community. Find out more about DCM on page 14.



Market place

An information 'market place' was set up with community partners including the Docklands Light Railway Ambassadors, the Metropolitan Police, Step Forward and Idea Stores which provided parents with helpful information. Greenwich Leisure gave away over 50 day passes to parents to try a local gym or leisure centre activity.

"I learnt a lot from the cyberbullying workshop such as what to do if your child is a bully, which you don't really think about."

Feedback from parent who attended the anti-bullying workshop

"I heard stories of parents who fought and struggled to get the best for their child. We met many parents who shared the same aspirations."

Feedback from parent who attended the SEND: Power of Parent Voice workshop





Over the past few months I have been pleased to see the range of work that the council does to support and empower our parents. Of course we must provide support when needed but we should also build the resilience and confidence for parents to be leaders in our community.

Through visits to five of our children's centres, I have spoken to parents about the support they have received and seen the rich offer available; from a range of sessions at children's centres to family support workers and educational psychologists working directly with families who need a little more help. I also met with a group of parents who have been supported by the Parents Advice Centre. I appreciate parents giving the time to share their experiences with me so it can help inform the decision making at the council.

Proof of this came in the form of more support for families offered through the Mayor's budget this year. £1m of investment into early years and childcare (including funding for our six outstanding nursery schools and doubling the size of our holiday childcare scheme), continued funding for Early Help, children's centres and free school meals for all primary school children as well as additional investment into our Social Work Academy to ensure we recruit, retain and develop talented social workers to work with our families.

For the first time I was able to attend the Parent Conference, now in its 13th year and with over 170 delegates attending, it clearly continues to go from strength to strength. I was pleased to see so many parents engaged in the sessions that were clearly very relevant for our families. But nowhere is the leadership of parents more evident than in the work of our SEND ambassadors who are working with schools to support parents and separately, at the launch of the borough's new Independent SEND Parent/Carer Forum. I hope that we can continue to provide opportunities for parents to lead change in our borough.

Finally I was delighted to be able to attend my third meeting of the Parent and Carer Council and to hear about the work of parent representatives across the borough and to update members on the current and future work of the council and get their feedback on this.

Here's to parent power!

Cllr Danny Hassell
Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People

Children's social care improvement journey

Since the local authority was judged as inadequate in 2017, the council has been on a social care improvement journey. The final monitoring visit by Ofsted took place in March 2019 and the feedback received was broadly positive, with the lead inspector clear that no inadequate practice had been found.

Assessments were found to have all the components to be rated 'Good'. Achieving this outcome will require a lot of focused work to be done in a short time, but the momentum and will is there to realise this ambition for local children and young people.

What is coming up?

Work is ongoing to develop local approaches to violence, vulnerability and exploitation and school improvement. A scrutiny review took place in April which looked at the exclusions process in secondary schools in Tower Hamlets.

Over the next few months, the Strategy, Policy and Performance (SPP) Team (see also page 6) will be seeking views on subjects such as:

- Community safety
- School exclusions
- Mental health and resilience
- Participation and engagement
- Careers and futures.

For further information, please contact the SPP Team at children.andculturespp@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Children and Culture Newsbites

We want to ensure that parents and carers are kept informed and are able to engage with the council on a variety of topics. In order to help you shape the council's future direction, the Strategy, Policy and Performance (SPP) Team will be providing a regular update about what is happening in key council departments, and how to stay informed.



Recent engagement

Recently, members of the SPP Team carried out focus groups at the following schools to seek feedback on the development of the new Children and Families Strategy. Schools visited included:

- Children's House Nursery School
- Columbia Market Nursery School
- Hermitage Primary School
- Elizabeth Selby Infants' School
- Swanlea Secondary School
- Central Foundation Girls' School
- George Green's Secondary School

Children were asked questions about safety, health and their hopes and dreams for the future. The SPP Team were really impressed by the children's knowledge and suggestions.

When asked what one thing the council could do to make these children's lives better and make them happier, some of the responses were extremely powerful and thoughtful, such as:

- Stop child abuse
- Get more people patrolling to stop accidents and litter – little things make big problems
- Have a heart rate system in case of kidnap.

See our 'SPP newsbites' throughout the newsletter.



Christine McInnes, Divisional Director for Education and Partnerships, presented the award to the school community including staff, children and their parents

A double award success for Children's House

Congratulations to **Children's House Nursery School** for achieving the Quality in Extended Services (QES) and the Quality in Study Support (QiSS) awards at advanced level – the only nursery school in the country to hold both awards at the highest standard – an amazing achievement.

To be awarded the QES quality mark, schools need to evidence best practice in terms of their wider support to children, families and the local community, demonstrating how this holistic approach supports pupils' progress and wellbeing. The QiSS award recognises the quality of the school's teaching and learning. Canterbury Christ Church University, who oversee the quality assurance schemes, were pleased to award the school with both quality marks after looking at the evidence the school provided and visiting the school at their recognition meeting.

For more information about QES or QiSS, email fiona.stokes@towerhamlets.gov.uk

"Children's House were delighted to receive both the Advanced QES and the Advanced QiSS Awards in recognition of the work the school does to support children and families.

This achievement was a community effort and we would also like to thank the Parental Engagement Team for their ongoing support with extended services."

Chris Lewis, Headteacher

Poverty Proofing the School Day

Poverty Proofing the School Day is an audit for primary and secondary schools, developed by the charity Children North East with the North East Child Poverty Commission.



The aim of the programme is to remove barriers to learning which exist because of the impacts of living in poverty.

For more information contact **Jill McGinley, Head of Parent and Family Support Service**
Email: jill.mcginley@towerhamlets.gov.uk

- George Green's Secondary School
- Bonner Primary School
- Lansbury Lawrence Primary School
- Malmesbury Primary School
- Harbinger Primary School
- Cubitt Town Infants' School
- Elizabeth Selby Infants' School
- St Paul with St Luke Primary School

The benefits of storytelling



Parents from **St Mary and St Michael Primary School** have been discovering the benefits of storytelling in a specialist, three part workshop delivered by the Parental Engagement Team. They have been learning that storytelling with children is not only a bonding experience, but is also an effective way to introduce new words and to nurture a child's language skills. The workshop links with current research which shows that children who regularly listen to stories have wider vocabularies and are better at writing.



Stories shape our world

The stories we hear as children shape our view of the world. Most young children live their lives in quite a limited environment. Reading and telling stories to children can show them 'far away' places, extraordinary people and eye-opening situations to expand and enrich their worlds.



Stories develop empathy

Scientists have found that children who have stories read or told to them regularly find it easier to understand people – they show more empathy and have better developed 'theory of mind' (the ability to understand that other people have different thoughts and feelings to us). This is essential for understanding other people's behaviour.

To find out more about storytelling or to book a workshop for your setting, contact the Parental Engagement Team on 020 7364 1952.



There's more to maths than counting!

There's no doubt counting is an important aspect of early learning, but there are many other ways parents can help stimulate mathematical thinking in their children.

Parents attending a 'Maths in the Early Years' workshop at **Old Church Nursery School** have been

exploring the value of using everyday materials and practical experiences so that their children can touch and do in order to learn.

The three part workshop, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, also emphasises the importance of language in early mathematical learning. By the end of the course, parents are more confident in using mathematical vocabulary and providing their children with open-ended learning experiences where they can sort, compare, count, calculate and describe.

"Maths is not symbols on a page, it's something you play with, something you do."

**Keith Devlin
Mathematician**

To find out more about 'Maths in the Early Years' or to book a workshop for your setting, contact the Parental Engagement Team on 020 7364 1952.

Tower Hamlets Stories at Rich Mix

'Culture for a Changing City' has been the guiding theme behind Rich Mix's flagship primary school film education programme called 'Pic n Mix'.

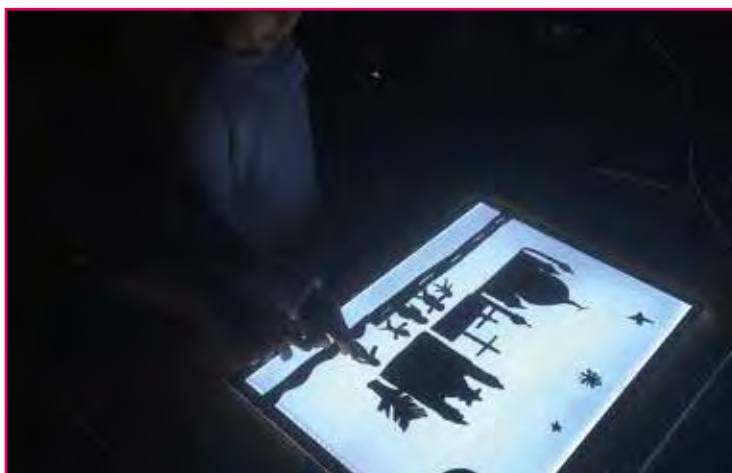
In partnership with THAMES (Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service), this programme is working with children from 18 local primary schools, encouraging them to tell their own Tower Hamlets stories.

To support the programme further, teacher training, free screenings, mentorships and family film workshops are also provided. In a recent family workshop (funded by 'Apples and Pears'), Rich Mix invited families from six schools (**Arnhem Wharf, Bangabandhu, Columbia, Lansbury Lawrence, Marner and St Paul's Whitechapel**) to collaborate and create a film together. A compilation of these 'Tower Hamlets Stories' will be available to view in the summer.

"My Tower Hamlets story was about the importance of neighbours and a friendly community."

Ishrat, pupil from Marner Primary School

For more on this or other programmes at Rich Mix, email tracy.barbe@richmix.org.uk or visit www.richmix.org.uk





BSL for all at Cubitt Town

Staff and parents from **Cubitt Town Infants' and Junior Schools** have been coming together to learn British Sign language (BSL) at the schools' Community House.

The group, which also includes members of the local community, have been studying together since September. Teacher Mohamed has been focusing on everyday vocabulary and preparing the students for their Level 1 Award in BSL.



To find out more about BSL and other courses at the Cubitt Town

Community House, follow them on twitter

[@cubittcomhouse](https://twitter.com/cubittcomhouse)

Tower Hamlets Transitions Summer 2019 Transition Workshops Year 5 and Year 6

Tower Hamlets Transitions advocates early intervention to support children, young people and their families with transitions within education.

Information and advice at key points of transition helps to manage change and supports children, young people and their families to make informed decisions about the next steps of their learning journey.

Free one hour workshops now available for schools to book:

- **Get Set**
(Year 5 parents/carers - children can also attend)
Information and guidance about the secondary transfer application process in preparation for the October 2019 deadline
- **Moving Up**
(Year 6 parents/carers - children can also attend)
Information and guidance to help parents and carers prepare themselves and their child for the move to secondary school.

For more information and to book a workshop

Email: transitions@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Tel: 020 7364 1533



Easter Bonnet Parade at Children's House Nursery School

Every Easter the children, parents and staff at **Children's House Nursery School** come together to put on an annual Easter Bonnet Parade. This tradition started off in New York in the 1870s during the annual New York Easter Parade when people in the city went to 5th Avenue to show off the new clothes and bonnets that they had made or bought for the Easter celebrations.

The tradition grew in popularity and it is now an event adopted by many schools across the world.

At Children's House each parent, child and member of staff makes and decorates a bonnet, either at home or at school.

The whole community looks forward to this event as, weather permitting, the children parade their hats around the local area.

The creativity shown by the community is always amazing and the display never fails to impress the judges. This year the school was delighted to welcome Christine McInnes, Divisional Director for Education and Partnerships, Fiona Stokes from the Parental Engagement Team and Sarah Ndagire, school governor to judge the hats.

They all agreed this was an impossible task as the standard was so high. Well done to everyone for the wonderful effort. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day and children went home with an Easter egg as a treat and reward for their hard work.

We work closely with parents and families

We put the child at the centre of our work and build on their skills and interests

We work in partnership with other services and agencies



Support for private, voluntary and independent settings

The Early Years Inclusion Team offers support to private, voluntary and independent (PVI) early years settings to help develop inclusive practice and plan for children with additional needs. The team consists of four Area Inclusion Coordinators, who are all experienced teachers.

They work closely with the PVI settings to remove barriers to inclusion so that all children can access learning activities. They also encourage close partnerships with parents in order to identify children's needs, plan interventions, review progress and plan transitions. Children and families are always at the centre of the planning process.

"Thank you for taking the time to observe my son and come up with a plan. We have been working together at home on some of the suggestions and they are having a positive outcome."

Parent

For more information, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ieys

Primary School Places Review

The council is working with schools to reduce the number of unused school places in parts of the borough. This will ensure that our schools continue to provide the highest standards of teaching, learning and achievement.

Why is the council reviewing primary school places?

There have been lots of changes to the borough's population in recent years. The number of children being born in the borough is reducing and more families are moving out of the borough before their children reach primary school age. This has led to a number of unused places at primary schools across the borough, with schools in some areas finding that they have more unused places than they would normally expect.

The funding that schools receive from central government is based on the number of children they have registered. Therefore, when a school's number of children is lower than expected it receives less funding and this can often mean that the school finds it difficult to retain and or recruit enough teachers and support staff to maintain high standards of teaching and learning.

The council has the responsibility to make sure that its school places are organised in a way that helps all schools to continue to maintain high standards.

What does this actually mean for schools?

We are considering ways in which schools can build on existing relationships. One approach is by a group of nearby schools establishing a formal partnership. This will enable them to reduce the number of unused places in their area by organising themselves in a way that will help them to make the best use of their funding, teaching and other expertise. This type of partnership is called a school federation with a single governing body responsible for the governance of all schools in the federation.

Another approach is for two or more schools to join together to create a new school on one site. This would also reduce the number of unused places and allow the new school to have enough registered children to receive the levels of funding that would ensure there were no teaching or other staff shortages. This is called a school amalgamation.

The approach will depend on the local area and the schools involved.

For a school where the numbers of children are very low and it is not possible for it to join a federation or be part of an amalgamation with a neighbouring school then the council will need to consider whether the school should close. However, the council will only consider this if it is in the best educational interests of the pupils concerned as keeping the school open would inevitably lead to a fall in teaching standards.

The council would ensure that these children could transfer to other nearby schools and that, where possible, staff would have the option to be redeployed within the borough.

What schools will be affected?

The review is focused on schools with high levels of unused places in the west of the borough – in the Bethnal Green, Stepney and Wapping areas. However, we have not yet decided on proposals for the future of schools in these areas.

When proposals are decided they will be for changes to take place from September 2020 at the earliest.

Who will be involved in the decision making process?

There will be no decisions on changes to how schools are organised without first consulting with school communities and the wider public on the proposals. There will be an initial round of consultation for the schools concerned later this term and a further borough-wide consultation in the autumn (timing may vary for individual schools).

These consultations will include events where pupils, parents, staff, and the community are able to share their views, ask questions and raise any concerns they may have.

Parenting programmes timetable Summer Term 2019

Parenting programmes in Tower Hamlets are delivered in partnership – staff from the local authority and voluntary sector work together to ensure parents and carers receive the help and information they need.

Parenting programmes are an integral element of early intervention and prevention in order to ensure children and young people get the best possible start in life to achieve their full potential.

Programme	Age	Additional info	Day	Venue
SFSC*	Birth-18 years	Delivered in Bengali	Monday	Osmani Centre
SFSC	Birth-18 years	Delivered in English Evening programme	Tuesday	Professional Development Centre
Triple P Teen programme	11-18 years	Delivered in English	Tuesday	Haileybury Youth Centre
Triple P Group programme	18 months-11 years	Delivered in English Crèche available	Tuesday	City Gateway Women's Project
Triple P Group Programme	18 months-11 years	Delivered in English	Tuesday	Olga Primary School
SFSC	Birth-18 years	Delivered in Bengali	Wednesday	Swan Housing Community Reach Hub
Triple P Group Programme	18 months-11 years	Delivered in English Crèche available	Thursday	Wapping and Bigland Children's Centre
SFSC	Birth-18 years	Delivered in English Crèche available	Thursday	Mowlem Children's Centre
Triple P Group programme	18 months-11 years	Delivered in English Crèche available	Friday	Overland Children's Centre
Triple P Discussion Group Series	18 months-18 years	Delivered in English	Dates TBC (one-off sessions)	Venues TBC
ADHD Parenting Programme	2-11 years	For parents of a child with a diagnosis of ADHD Delivered in English	Dates TBC	Parents Advice Centre
Emotional First Aid	18 months-11 years	Delivered in English	Dates TBC	Parents Advice Centre

* *Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities*

Parent and Family Support Service

Email: parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk **Telephone:** 020 7364 6398

All Together anti-bullying programme

Free opportunity for your school to become a leader in anti-bullying practice.



The All Together programme is a whole-school programme for schools in England that has evidenced success in reducing bullying and improving pupil wellbeing.

Tower Hamlets is delighted to announce that it is working with the Anti-Bullying Alliance throughout 2019 and 2020 to offer schools in the borough the opportunity to become All Together Schools.

For more information or if you would like to express an interest in the programme, contact the **Parental Engagement Team** **Email:** parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk

A new parenting programme to support families experiencing parental conflict.

The Parental Engagement Team is introducing a new Triple P module to add to the wide range of parenting programmes on offer to families in Tower Hamlets.

Family Transitions Triple P (FTTP) is designed as an intensive intervention programme for parents experiencing difficulties as a consequence of separation or divorce.

Children exposed to conflict between parents are at risk of a range of negative outcomes including:

- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Trouble getting on with others
- Problems settling and achieving at school
- Sleep difficulties
- Poorer health.

The intervention is a parenting programme which aims to prevent adverse outcomes for children following parental divorce or separation and can be delivered individually or with a group of parents. It can be delivered to parents before they complete Triple P Group or Group Teen and it consists of five sessions. FTTP focuses on teaching parents skills to resolve conflicts with former partners and how to cope positively with stress.



Parents or professionals working with them may be concerned that the separation or divorce is upsetting their children or they may want to learn ways to talk to their children and teach them ways to cope with the transition during parental separation. Throughout the five sessions parents will work with an experienced parenting practitioner to:

- improve parents' personal coping skills in managing transition through separation or divorce
- increase parents' confidence in raising children
- reduce parents' level of emotional distress (including depression, stress, anxiety, anger)
- improve parents' communication about co-parenting issues and reduce the impact of parental conflict
- reduce the use of coercive and punitive methods of disciplining children
- improve the parent-child relationship.

FTTP will be introduced in September 2019.

Every Parent's Survival Guide: 2019 Edition

The Triple P Group programme helps parents of preschool and primary school age children understand and embrace key ideas and strategies to help them make positive and lasting changes.

The use of the Every Parent's Survival Guide video is a powerful tool to enhance learning in the group programmes and has now been updated after extensive consultation with organisations, practitioners and parents.

The new guide explains Triple P principles and features:

- more information on emotional self-regulation, corresponding to current research and practice
- more culturally diverse families, from a variety of locations around the world
- examples of dealing with today's pressing issues, such as screen time and social media.

The new video content will be shared with parents attending Triple P Group programmes in schools and settings from April 2019.

To find out more about Family Transitions Triple P, Triple P Group or any of the parenting programmes on offer to Tower Hamlets families, contact

Sharon Sullivan, Parenting Team Manager
Email: sharon.sullivan@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Depression Changes Minds

Supporting parents with children's mental health

Parent and Carer Council member and Mental Health Parent Champion Marie McLeod has recently won several awards for her mental health campaigning. She has set up a peer to peer community group to support families affected by childhood anxiety and depression.

The group meets fortnightly on Thursdays, 7-8.30pm at St Barnabas Church or St Paul's Way Medical Centre.

For more information, email dcmuk@mail.com, visit the Depression Changes Minds Facebook page or call **07446 390 577**.



Parent Champions mental health workshops

To book a mental health awareness workshop led by Parent Champion volunteers in your school or setting, email fiona.stokes@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Mental Health Awareness Week: 13-19 May 2019

Since the first Mental Health Awareness Week in 2001, the Mental Health Foundation has raised awareness of topics such as stress, relationships, loneliness, altruism, sleep and friendship.

This year the focus is on 'Body image – how we think and feel about our bodies'.



Body image issues can directly impact our mental health and affect all of us at any age. During the week, the Mental Health Foundation will be publishing new research and practical advice as well as turning awareness into action by campaigning for change. They also have a range of resources available from posters and booklets to social media graphics and green ribbon pin badges – the international symbol for mental health awareness.

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/resources





Guest speaker at Somali Parent Forum

The Somali Parent Forum provides Somali parents and carers in Tower Hamlets with information, advice and guidance. Parents discuss key issues and occasionally listen to guest speakers.

In February, senior social worker Jama Abdi was invited to speak to the group and explain how Tower Hamlets Social Care Service works. The well attended session concluded with some insightful discussions around the importance of safeguarding children and the need to establish positive working relationships between parents and social workers.

The Somali Parent Forum meets on the last Tuesday of every month during the school term at **Malmesbury Primary School**. The upcoming dates for the summer term are:

Tuesday 25 June 2019

Tuesday 16 July 2019

To find out more about the Somali Parent Forum, email hussein.hussein@towerhamlets.gov.uk or call the Parental Engagement Team on **020 7364 6398**.

A family-centred approach to children's therapy services

A team of therapists and therapy assistants (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy) are pioneering a family-centred approach to supporting children (aged 0-5 years) with special needs in Tower Hamlets.



The collaboration of these professionals is called the Primary Service Provider Team. The approach is already used in 28 states in the USA, Australia and parts of Singapore.

How does it work?

Each family has one consistent therapist linking them with the multi-professional team. The therapist is present at every visit and joint visits are routinely used. The child's progress is reviewed regularly with the whole team.

The therapy takes place in the child's own home and other familiar settings. This provides the child with a sense of security – it is from this safe base that the child can learn, develop and enjoy family life. The team recognises that parents know their children well, so they actively include them in all the decision making, planning and support. The aim is that by collaborating in this manner, children will be better supported

and more able to participate fully in everyday activities.

This approach reduces:

- Duplication of services
- Conflicting advice from different professionals
- The need for multiple appointments.

“The key thing about having one person is that there are no muddy waters – we know exactly who to go to!”

Father

For more information and further literature on the approach visit www.wcmt.org.uk/users/elenamoore2017

For more information contact **Frances Badenhorst**
Email: frances.badenhorst@bartshealth.nhs.uk

Barts Health 
NHS Trust



In the news this term... Omnibus survey of pupils and parents/carers

The findings from the Department for Education's latest omnibus survey, covering topics such as GCSE reform, mental health, provision of free sanitary wear and careers advice, have recently been published. For more information, visit

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/786040/survey_of_pupils_and_their_parents_or_carers-wave_5.pdf

Parents become 'salt aware'

Parents from Central Foundation Girls School (CFGS) have been learning that excess salt intake is linked to high blood pressure and an increase in the risk of stroke and heart disease. This and other health messages were key features of a Ministry of Food cooking programme that the CFGS parents embarked upon.

The eight week programme, devised by Jamie Oliver and delivered by specially trained practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team, emphasises the health and financial benefits of cooking from scratch.

The course at CFGS corresponded with Salt Awareness Week, so course facilitators, Peter Gill and Murude Mehmet, made sure they highlighted the health risks associated with a salty diet.



"I had no idea there was so much salt in the food I was buying. Now I cook everything from scratch, it's far cheaper and I know exactly what's in it!"
Parvin



Did you know...

Salt in our food system has reduced over the last 15 years leading to a 15% reduction in the average salt intake in the UK. However, we're still consuming more salt than is healthy. The average intake in the UK is 8g per day compared to the maximum recommended amount of 6g (about a heaped teaspoon).

Make small changes

- Prepare your own food to control how much salt you add
- Avoid adding salt when using naturally salty ingredients like anchovies or olives
- Season food with herbs, spices and citrus instead of salt
- Taste your food before adding salt – you might not need to add any
- Get used to having less salt – our taste preferences adapt over time.

Become 'salt aware':

- Read the labels – salt is often hidden in foods you might not expect. Look for green on the front of the pack or less than 0.3g salt per 100g
- Be mindful of high salt ingredients like soya sauce, fish sauce, mustard, cheeses, stocks, cured and processed meats.

"Parents are always shocked when we mention that 75% of the salt we eat is already in the food we buy. It can really motivate them to ditch the ready-meals in favour of home cooked meals using fresh ingredients."

Peter Gill, Parental Engagement Team

Get SUGAR SMART

The SUGAR SMART campaign aims to raise awareness of hidden sugars, improve dental health and to promote healthy eating. Led by the council's Public Health Team, the initiative hopes to empower families to make healthier choices.

The logo consists of the words "SUGAR" and "SMART" stacked vertically in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a solid orange rectangular background.

In Tower Hamlets, almost a quarter of pupils are overweight when they join Reception; this rises to almost half by the time they reach Year 6. Levels of tooth decay are also high, with about a third of five-year-olds with one or more cavities. It's important we address these health issues to ensure a healthy future for our children. By launching SUGAR SMART in Tower Hamlets, we can work together to make healthy eating the natural choice.

Organisations, schools, families and individuals across the borough are being asked to join SUGAR SMART by reducing their sugar consumption – a major cause of childhood obesity.

Join the SUGAR SMART movement now and pledge to reduce your consumption of sugar at www.sugarsmartuk.org.

For more information or if you are interested in becoming a SUGAR SMART Ambassador, contact the Tower Hamlets SUGAR SMART lead
Email: manal.adam@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Parent Support and Health



Community Parents provide best start

Every baby deserves the best start in life and every parent deserves the best support. Community Parents workshops take a holistic approach to pregnancy and parenting support.

Through hands-on learning activities and group reflections, the workshops help pregnant and new mothers to believe in themselves as well as to bond and attach more securely with their babies. Through weekly themed sessions, participants explore issues including healthy eating, self-care strategies, baby bonding techniques, labour and birth preparation as well as parenting skills.

"It is a nurturing, encouraging environment that's friendly and makes you feel comfortable. That's important to me as a first time mum-to-be."

2018 participant

Community Parents run free workshops three times a year. Pregnant and postnatal women are welcome to attend with their non-crawling babies. For more details, email CPEnquiries@island-house.org or call **020 7531 0314** to register.



In the news this term... London transport network bans junk food adverts
Posters for food and drink high in fat, salt and sugar will begin to be removed from the Underground, Overground, buses and bus shelters from March 2019. A short report from the BBC can be found here www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-47318803

National Stalking Awareness Week

National Stalking Awareness Week took place 8-12 April 2019. It exists to raise awareness about the crime of stalking. Each year the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and the National Stalking Consortium promote a different theme. This year's campaign was focusing on the impact stalking has on victims' mental and emotional health as well as their physical safety.

What is stalking?

Stalking is one of the most frequently experienced forms of abuse. It is not romantic – it is an obsession and it is a crime perpetrated by one individual to another that is unwanted.

Stalking is persistent and repetitive, unwanted behaviour and can consist of any type of behaviour from regularly sending flowers/gifts to following a person, loitering, damaging property, malicious communications and or physical and sexual assault. If the behaviour is persistent and unwanted, causing a person to feel harassed, fearful or anxious, then it is stalking.

What impact does stalking have on the victim?

Stalking can lead a victim to experience psychological trauma including:

- Denial
- Confusion
- Self-doubt.

What the law says

Stalking is against the law in the UK. On 15 March 2019, the Stalking Protection Bill received Royal Assent becoming the Stalking Protection Act 2019.



Facts and figures

1 in 5 women and **1 in 10** men in the UK will be stalked in their lifetime



80.4% are **female** victims and the majority of perpetrators are male (70.5%)



Up to **100** incidents can occur before a victim reports stalking to the police



40% of victims are stalked by an **ex-partner**; in many cases the partner has been abusive during the relationship



Ex-partner stalking carries the **highest risk** of escalation into physical violence



On average a stalker will contact **21** people connected to the victim. This can include family, friends, employers, neighbours, gym and social venues



Contacts should you or the families you work with need more information or support
Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service Tel: 020 7840 8960 Email: info@paladinservice.co.uk
National Stalking Helpline Tel: 0808 802 0300

Local Early Help Pilot

The council is piloting a community-based approach to Early Help until August 2019. The initiative will include **Marner, Overland and Mile End Children's Centres** and will build on the current Early Help services provided across the borough.

The Local Early Help Pilot will bring together children's centres, the Parent and Family Support Service (PFSS), health visiting, schools, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), community and voluntary sector organisations as well as youth provision, to ensure that families are offered the right services at the right time.

It is hoped that through this kind of collaboration and by using the restorative practice approach, risk factors such as neglect and language delay will be identified early so that the right support can be put in place.

To find out more about the Local Early Help Pilot contact

Jo Freeman
Joint Area Coordinator,
Children's Centres
Email: jo.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Karen Simpson
Early Help Coordinator
Email: karen.simpson@towerhamlets.gov.uk

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/earlyhelp

Tower Hamlets

Safe After School

Information for parents

Choosing a private tutor, coach or independent after school club? Some things to consider...

There are many reasons why a parent might want to employ a tutor or send their child to an independent after school activity or club. It may be to help their child improve potential exam grades, to assist with schoolwork in general, to learn a musical instrument, to play a sport or to study religious texts.

It is important for parents and carers to know that there are no regulations governing tutors or many after school activities (unless it is an Ofsted registered childcare provision).

While many tutors and coaches are skilled at developing a child's learning and development in a particular subject, they do not need qualifications to work in this field. In fact, a person can be barred from teaching or commit an offence which makes them unsuitable to work with



children yet still offer their services as a tutor or coach.

Local authorities and schools cannot provide a list of approved professionals who work as tutors or coaches. Therefore, it is the parents' responsibility to make sure the tutor is qualified and does not pose a risk to their child.

High quality tutors, coaches, clubs and organisations will always welcome questions about their activities, the safety of their environment and care of your child.

Questions you may want to ask:

- Does the activity/class/club have a website or leaflet I can read?
- How long has the activity/class/club been operating?
- How many staff support the activity?
- How many children and young people attend?
- Does the location, travel and the timing of the activity work for my child and family?
- Can I visit the session before my child starts and stay to observe the sessions my child attends?
- Can I see their DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate?
- Can I read a copy of the policy on safeguarding children?
- Can I read a copy of the health and safety policy?
- Can I have a copy of the code of conduct for staff, volunteers and children?
- Are all staff trained in safeguarding and first aid?
- What emergency procedures are in place?
- Who do I speak to if I have any concerns?

The Parental Engagement Team are offering schools free Keeping Children Safe information sessions to support the Safe After School programme. To book a session or to get copies of this flyer, call 020 7364 1952.

Screen time - how much is too much?

Professionals working with parents are frequently asked their opinion on what a safe amount of screen time looks like. A recent report from the Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health has not found any compelling evidence that screen time is harmful – so it seems there's no definitive line on what is safe. There are, however, some key points that parents you work with should consider.

Five things parents should know about screen time

1. Not all screen time is the same

Not all online activities are equal: doing something creative or learning new skills are very different from mindless scrolling on social media.

If there are benefits to the activity and it isn't interfering with school work or having an effect on their mood, then try not to obsess over the numbers – there's probably no need to panic.

2. Set limits

Most parents will want to set some kind of limit. Around one to two hours daily during the week and a bit longer at the weekends is considered about right for teens – after that the benefits gradually taper off and the negative effects increase. Younger children, aged four to seven years, should probably spend no more than an hour a day online – this can increase to around an hour and a half as they get older.

3. Boundaries work if you stick to them

Get children involved in the process so that they understand why setting limits is important.

Once you've agreed the limits, stick to them, but bear in mind that teens might need to spend longer online to complete their homework.

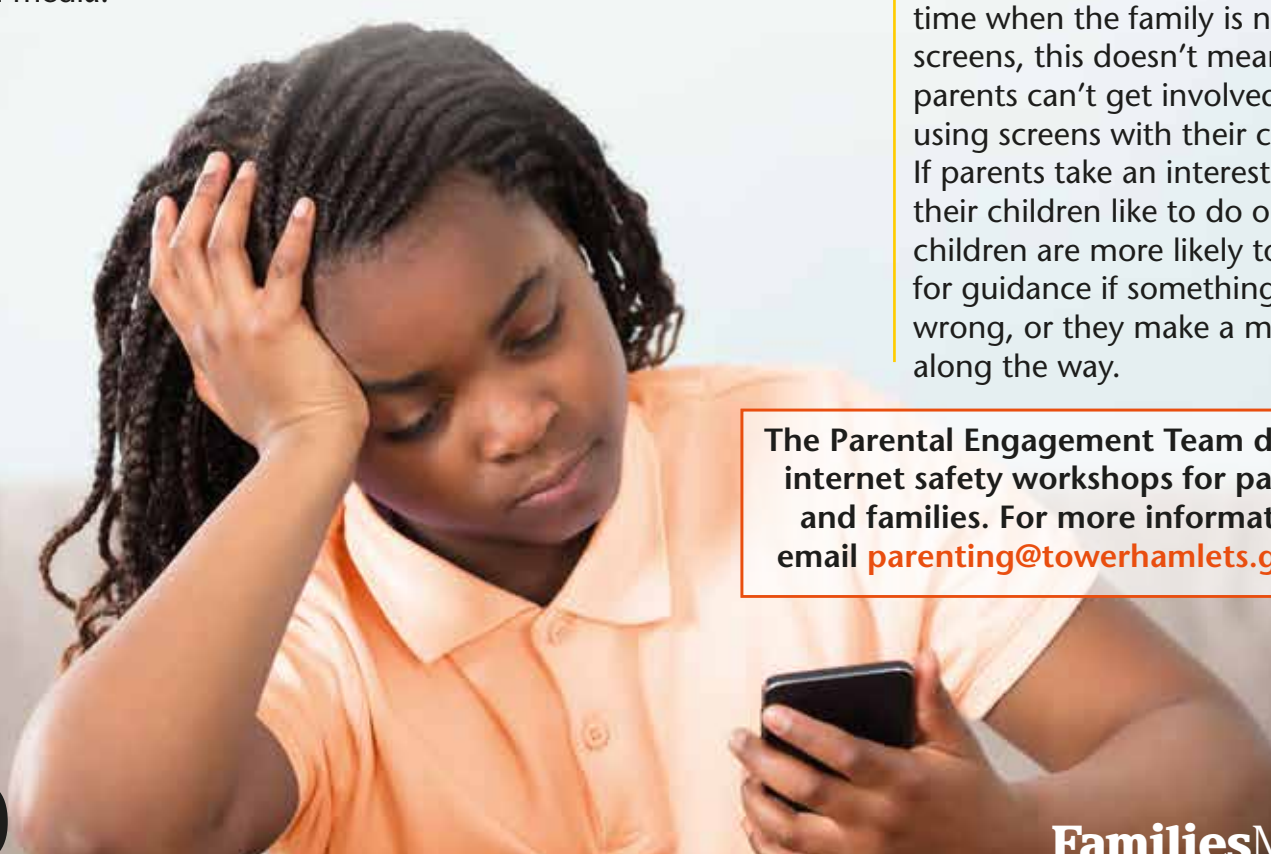
4. Look out for negative effects

Keep an eye on how children's screen time may be affecting other areas of their life. If they're spending time with friends and getting enough sleep and exercise, then it's likely that they already have a healthy balance. Talk to children about what they're doing online and get them to think about how it makes them feel. They may actually agree that staying up late gaming is making them too tired for school, or admit that scrolling through social media is starting to affect their self-esteem.

5. Have family screen time together

Although it is good to set aside time when the family is not using screens, this doesn't mean that parents can't get involved in using screens with their children. If parents take an interest in what their children like to do online, children are more likely to ask for guidance if something goes wrong, or they make a mistake along the way.

The Parental Engagement Team delivers internet safety workshops for parents and families. For more information, email parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Meet Benedicta Dikeocha Tower Hamlets Hate Crime Projects Officer

Could you tell us a little about your role as Hate Crime Projects Officer?



My role involves raising awareness on hate crime amongst the local community, professionals and our partners. I do this through a combination of coordinating projects, training, workshops and outreach sessions. I also deliver the Hate Crime Champions training and coordinate local events for National Hate Crime Awareness Week.

What is the 'No Place for Hate' campaign about?

The campaign is about making Tower Hamlets a safe place for everyone who lives, works, or visits the borough. We want a borough that is free from all forms of hate. Through our pledge project we ask people to make a stand against hate crime by signing our pledges. This commits them to undertake a range of actions such as challenging discriminatory behaviour within themselves. Through our champions training we recruit local people to be ambassadors in their community – targeting marginalised communities.

What's the difference between a hate crime and a hate incident?

A hate crime is any criminal offence where the victim or someone else believes the crime is targeted because of the victim's race or ethnicity, religious beliefs (or non-belief), gender, gender identity, disability, age, sexual orientation or any other actual or perceived difference. Hate incidents are incidents that do not constitute a crime but cause harassment, alarm or distress such as name calling.

Reporting a hate crime

Emergency – call **999**

Non-emergency – call **101**

Online

www.report-it.org.uk

In person at your local police station

To your landlord/housing provider

Support

Victim Support –

020 8555 8254

Galop – LGBTQ

Real – Disability

Tell Mama – Islamophobic

Community Safety Trust (CST)

– anti-semitic

What advice would you give to professionals working with families who may have experienced a hate crime?

I'd encourage them to report it. Only by reporting can action be taken against those responsible. There are support services available locally and nationally. Even if they do not know who the perpetrator is, emotional and practical support can be provided and the information can be used as intelligence to target any hot spots.

It seems like hate crimes are on the increase, is that true and why do you think that is?

Government figures show that hate crimes have increased nationally, with race hate remaining the highest. Often hate crime reporting peaks when there are national or international events such as terror attacks. However hate crimes in general remain under-reported, with some strands like disability and transphobic hate crime being most under-reported. It could be that people are more aware and feel confident to report, but it is difficult to say for sure. On a positive note, the majority of people in Tower Hamlets do live peacefully together. It is still a minority of people who commit hate crimes.

**CALL 999 IN EMERGENCIES
AND 101 FOR NON-EMERGENCIES
OR CALL VICTIM SUPPORT ON 020 8555 8254**

**WHAT IS HATE CRIME?
HOW TO REPORT AND GET SUPPORT**

FamiliesMatter
Tower Hamlets Parental Engagement Team



Tower Hamlets Parent and Carer Council

Working together -
giving families a voice



What is the Parent and Carer Council?

The Parent and Carer Council is Tower Hamlets main family forum. Parents and carers are welcome to come along, listen to other parents and key speakers and give their views about services that are available to parents across the borough.

Get involved

☎ 020 7364 6495

✉ parentcouncil@towerhamlets.gov.uk

🌐 www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentcouncil

Parent and Carer Council meeting

At the last Parent and Carer Council meeting, Councillor Danny Hassell gave a presentation on work in his Children, Schools and Young People portfolio.

Parents also heard from the SEND Parent Ambassadors (see page 24) and information on the newly relaunched Tower Hamlets SEND Parents Forum, an independent forum to support families who have children with special educational needs and disabilities (see page 26).

Parents also gave their input on tips to keep children safe after school. A leaflet has been created to be shared with parents (see page 19).



The next meeting is on Saturday 6 July 2019.



In February the Parental Engagement Team held a very special celebration for parents who passed the Volunteering in Your Child's School course. During the 11-week course, which is accredited by the Open College Network London (OCNL), parents learned about the structure of the school day; how to support children's learning; as well as important issues such as safeguarding. In addition, they were required to produce and submit a portfolio of work in order to receive their accredited award from OCNL.

Parents from **Woolmore and Thomas Buxton Primary Schools** came together to celebrate their achievements at the special event, which was attended by Councillor Rachel Blake. She presented the proud parents with their awards, praising them for their hard work and thanking them for their commitment to supporting the learning of local children.

Since completing the course, many parents are now volunteering and five have gained sustainable employment in schools.

For more info about the Volunteering in Your Child's School course, email denise.de-goze@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Let's have a wrap party! New volunteers at Woolmore

Woolmore Primary School ran a 12 week accredited Volunteering in Your Child's School course delivered by the Parental Engagement Team late last year.



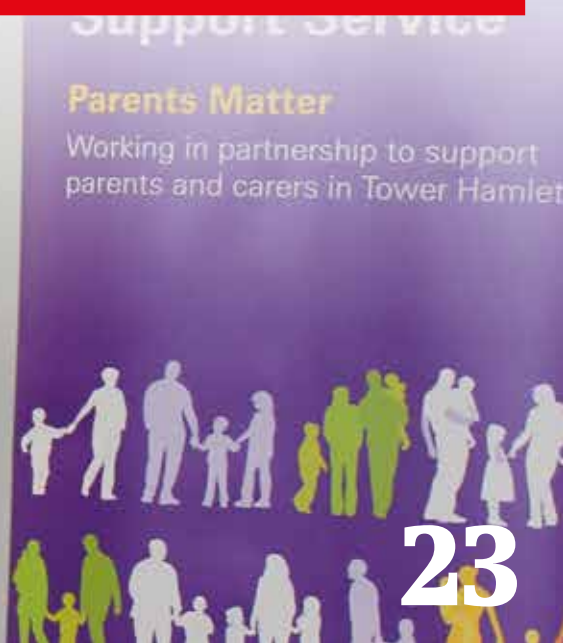
After the final session, it really was a case of "that's a wrap", as the 13 parents who had completed the course gathered for one last time. Their final task was to wrap up presents which were then handed out at class Christmas parties – books for the children to enjoy over the holiday.

The parents were invited to the special celebration alongside other schools in February where they received their accredited certificates. Two of the parents gained employment in the school after the course finished and others are now volunteering at the school. The volunteers will then be working on supporting programmes such as reading with the children.

Woolmore has increased in size over the last three years and now has over 500 pupils on roll. Parental engagement has always been important to the school, and the course was a good way to put some of this work on a more formal footing and emphasise that education is a lifelong pursuit. Parents have gained knowledge, skills and confidence which they are now reinvesting in the school and children.

The parent volunteers are now very much part of school community.

Volunteers' Week takes place 1-7 June 2019.
For more information visit www.volunteersweek.org



Local Offer launches easy to use QR code

The Local Offer is your guide to information and services in Tower Hamlets for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and all families in the borough.

Its aim is to empower children and young people, parents, carers and professionals to be aware of and be able to access a wide range of relevant services in the local area.

Have you looked at the Local Offer recently?

With regular updates of important local and national stories, information regarding childcare and exciting events that are happening in your area, visit www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk or take advantage of the new unique QR code which will take you straight to the website without having to search for it. Just access the Play Store or Apple Store on your mobile phone and download a FREE QR code reader and scan the QR code.

Or join us on Twitter [@thlocaloffer](https://twitter.com/thlocaloffer) and let us know about any events you are attending or any news you want to share.



SEND Ambassador, Tahmina Choudhury, talking to parents about the programme at the recent Parent and Carer Council meeting

SEND Parent Ambassadors

The SEND Ambassador programme is an initiative that attempts to improve the inclusion of SEND families living within the borough and is supported by the Parents Advice Centre.

SEND Parent Ambassadors are driven by passion to change people's views of special educational needs and disability.

The programme aims to achieve this by delivering a range of presentations at various settings across the borough. SEND Parent Ambassadors share their own experiences and provide information about SEND and the services available to families within the borough, as well as being able to promote the relaunch of the Local Offer.

"When I saw the SEND Parent Ambassador leaflet it immediately caught my eye, and I thought the opportunity to train to be a SEND Ambassador was brilliant. I went to the programme and left feeling ecstatic and wanted to start immediately."
Yasmin Ahmed, SEND Parent Ambassador

"As parents of SEND children, we understand the struggles of raising children with complex issues which makes us best equipped to provide a supportive environment and a positive outlook for other families."

Tahmina Choudhury, SEND Parent Ambassador

The programme started in January and so far 19 parents have been trained. Sessions have been delivered in ten schools as well as workshops at the Parent Conference and the Family Learning Day, reaching over 300 parents and carers.

If you are interested in SEND Parent Ambassadors attending events in your setting, please contact **Abdul Razak** at the Parents Advice Centre on **020 7364 6481** or email abdul.razak@towerhamlets.gov.uk for further information.

Your guide to information and services for families in Tower Hamlets



LOCAL OFFER

[@thlocaloffer](https://twitter.com/thlocaloffer) localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk

Guide to information and services in Tower Hamlets for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and **all** families in the borough



Advice, Information and Support Services



To find out more please visit the Local Offer website www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk or call us on **020 7364 6495** or email fis@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Aspiration day at Canary Wharf

With offices across five continents, Clifford Chance is one of the world's most distinguished law firms. It's a company with a social conscience, keen to reach beyond its Canary Wharf base. Their outreach work involved inviting local students with disabilities to a special Aspiration Day in February to inspire and raise ambitions.



The young people, aged between 15-19 years, mingled with law and finance professionals from the company and picked up some useful tips about pursuing a career in that arena. The motivational talk from the Human Resources Team together with the guided tour of the offices and the magnificent lunch left the young students with the feeling that anything is possible.

Teams across the council are working in collaboration to increase the range of 'into work' programmes for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

For more information and details of future aspirational events, contact the Special Educational Needs Team
 Email: specialeducational.needs@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Important dates and events for parents

Date	Venue	Details
Friday 7 June 2019 10am-12pm	Parents Advice Centre	Transition session for parents of Year 4 and 5 children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) Information on the transition process, independent travel training and the Local Offer. Also a presentation from SEND Parent Ambassadors. Email: pac@towerhamlets.gov.uk Tel: 020 7364 6481
Monday 10 June 11am-1pm	Café Vert, George Green's School	Consultation Workshops: SEND and how it is funded Discussions at each workshop will cover: how money for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is used, ways to change some services and ways to help 16-25s with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
Tuesday 11 June 10am-12pm	Spotlight, Langdon Park	For further information and to confirm your place at one of the workshops please contact Abdul Razak. Email: abdul.razak@towerhamlets.gov.uk Tel: 020 7364 6481
Saturday 15 June 2019 11am-1pm	Spotlight, Langdon Park	
Saturday 15 June 2019 10.30am-1.30pm	Poplar Baths, 170 East India Dock Road, Poplar	Dads' Network Play Day event A free event to engage fathers with their children's play, learning and development by promoting positive parenting and support for fathers and male carers. In partnership with Idea Store Chrisp Street.
Saturday 6 July 2019 10am-1.30pm	V&A Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green	Parent and Carer Council meeting The borough's main family forum and key consultation vehicle to support borough-wide consultation with parents and carers.



In the news this term... London Post-16 SEND Review released

The report summarises the outcomes of a London-wide review to identify the post-16 SEND education supply gap in London. The report identified good practice in Tower Hamlets around support and progression to employment.

www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_send_post-16_review_0.pdf

Tower Hamlets SEND Parent/Carer Forum relaunch success

It was a great start for the Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs and Disability Parent/Carer Forum (THSPCF) at their relaunch in March at the Ecology Pavilion, Mile End.



The THSPCF is a collective of parents and carers of SEND children and young adults who formed an independent group. They received a grant from the Department for Education and their main aim is to ensure voices of parents and carers across Tower Hamlets are heard and used to influence the design, delivery and development of services that matter most to parents of SEND children.

New parents were keen to get involved to make sure the group reaches, consults and informs as many parents as possible. The THSPCF then works with other local groups, the council and health partners to improve services for SEND children and their families.

They kicked their relaunch off with a brilliant event attended by over 100 parents and professionals. Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People, came to support the event and spoke with parents about the strategic picture in Tower Hamlets.

Other speakers included Daniel Devitt, who works cross departmentally, talking about 'joined up thinking' and his role in the 'Born Well, Grow Well' initiative. Short Breaks were also covered and a parent from the forum's management team spoke about why parents needed to join the THSPCF and how they could benefit from taking an active role.

Parents and carers at the event signed up to join the relaunched THSPCF so their views and experiences can make a difference in the future.

For more information contact
Email: thsend2018@gmail.com
Tel: **07498 573872**

Exciting new projects for young people in Tower Hamlets

The Young People's Advice Centre (YPAC) has been working on loads of exciting new projects to help young people, including those up to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Young people have been participating in different projects and activities to learn new skills, get more confident and make new friends.

Fourteen young people from Tower Hamlets took part in a game design project that kick started with a trip to the Victoria and Albert Museum in January. The historic institution donated tickets to its video games exhibition to the Our Time All Ability Youth Forum to support them to learn how to make educational games.

The six week game design project explored how games are made and gave participants the chance to make their own games which can be played in schools and colleges. If you are a school, college or youth group who would be interested in playing some of these games, please get in touch.

Our Time

Our Time is an all ability youth forum, for 16 to 25 year-olds with SEND. The forum was developed by young people from Tower Hamlets in partnership with YPAC, which provides independent and impartial information, advice and support.

Other projects and initiatives

- YPAC and Our Time ran a film making project over the Easter holidays to help young people improve their film making and campaigning skills
- Our Kitchen continues to run every Wednesday, 4.30-5.30pm, and is always open to new members
- The Our Time Ambassadors are working on a campaign to raise awareness around anti-bullying
- Our Time is working in partnership with **Morpeth Secondary School** on a mentoring project.

If you would like to hear more about Our Time, or the Young People's Advice Centre, contact

Email: charlotte.latimer@towerhamlets.gov.uk
ourtime.yf@gmail.com

Tel: **020 7364 4982**

Web: www.ourtimeyf.com

Holiday Childcare Scheme

The Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme offers Ofsted registered childcare for children aged 3-13 years old.

The Scheme offers a limited number of subsidised places for children requiring additional support or referrals from social care or schools.

To find out more and to apply for a place contact us

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs

020 7364 0523



The Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme

The Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme is Ofsted registered to provide childcare for children aged 3 to 13 years. It takes place in Tower Hamlets schools and parents/carers have an option to book places from 8am-6pm or 9am-5pm. There is a cost per day per child which is subsidised by the council.

The scheme provides a quality, safe and inclusive childcare service as well as stimulating play-based activities for all children. Highly qualified staff plan a range of engaging activities based on the children's interests. These include cooking, sports, creative arts and crafts, Zumba, games, reading, role play, construction and much more. Activities take place both indoors and outdoors and children are free to choose their own activities based on their own unique needs and interests.

Over the coming year, the scheme will be exploring opportunities to expand its provision and increase the number of places parents can apply for.

If you are a parent/carer looking for childcare during the school holidays or a professional referring a child for a place, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs

International Women's Day event at the Mulberry and Bigland Green Centre

The **Mulberry and Bigland Green Centre** hosted an International Women's Day event on 13 March, to promote and celebrate women and highlight the need for gender equality.



Over 200 people attended the event, which included workshops, engaging information stalls and musical entertainment in the afternoon. For those who needed just a few minutes respite, pampering was also available.

Workshops included yoga, dance, song writing, podcast making, video making, creative activities, enterprise skills, history of the local area and more. Over 100 people attended the workshops in the morning.

One attendee commented, "I didn't know how to use my camera, it has just been lying there, useless. The workshop was great, adapted to our needs and very educational – will take my camera out when I get home".

The event was generously funded with the help of Tower Hamlets Events and Alternative Arts.

Play-house family festival

On Monday 27 May, Rich Mix will be staging Play-house, their annual family festival, at All Points East in Victoria Park. The creative hub is keen to continue their outreach work in community settings outside their Shoreditch base.



The day's programme will focus on multilingualism – sharing stories across generations and speaking up as activists. There will be spoken word and arts workshops as well as early year's storytelling and creative play. All the day's creative ideas will be captured in a unique 'visual minutes' wall.

"The Play-house was revitalising and I enjoyed every part of it."

Grandad at 2018 Play-House

For further information about Rich Mix's schools, families and community work, email tracy.barbe@richmix.org.uk

Festival of Communities – 15-16 June

The Festival of Communities is returning for its fourth year on the weekend of 15-16 June, taking place in Stepney Green Park on the Saturday and the Queen Mary University Mile End Campus on the Sunday, from 11.30am-4.30pm on both days. Organisations that wish to showcase their projects and services over the festival period can contact the festival organisers at www.qmul.ac.uk/festival/get-involved/community-organisations-and-projects

'It's your life' celebrate the suffragettes



Local charity, It's Your Life, based in The Glasshouse Community Centre on Old Ford Road, is celebrating the completion of its 'Increasing Diversity in Politics' project, which aims to improve local women's understanding of democracy and citizenship in the UK.

Taking inspiration from the suffragettes struggle for the right to vote for women, the project has motivated local women and young people to become active participants in our democracy so that they can make a difference in their communities. In addition to presentations on the history of the suffragette movement, the project explored contemporary issues such as how local and central government works; how to register to vote; and the importance of using your right to vote.

To support the project and to celebrate the pioneering work of the suffragettes, a major collaborative art piece was created. Local women worked closely with textile artist Aziza Elarragui to create a striking, large scale banner based on the theme 'Votes for Women', the suffragettes and their East End roots.

"Now that I have completed the programme, I will definitely get one thing right – all my daughters will be encouraged to vote once they are old enough."

Siraad, parent participant

To find out more about the work of 'It's Your Life' visit www.itsyourlife.me.uk

Join the Summer Reading Challenge in Idea Store!

The Reading Agency and Libraries present



The Summer Reading Challenge 2019 theme is Space Chase, an out-of-this-world adventure inspired by the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing!

Come to the Idea Store and find out about the exciting range of FREE space-themed activities for children and families over the summer and join up to the challenge.

Pop into your local Idea Store or Library from the 1st of July to pick up a leaflet for further details or visit us at www.ideastore.co.uk/SRC



Supported using public funding
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

spacechase.org.uk



Dads' Network

Tower Hamlets

Dads' Play Day Event



A free event for fathers/male carers and their children.

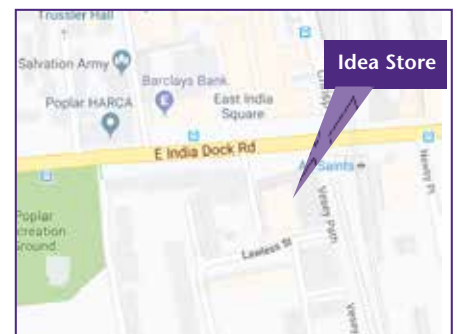
Saturday 15th June 2019
10.30 to 13.30

Idea Store Chrisp Street at Poplar Baths,
170 East India Dock Rd, Poplar, London E14 0ED

Tower Hamlets Dads' Network supports and encourages dads and male carers to strengthen relationships with their children through positive parenting and play.

This event is for LBTH residents with children up to age 13 (no lower limit).

Find out about family activities at your local leisure centre



Games

Arts & Crafts

Gym passes

Story Time

Other Fun Stuff!

For the latest news and information on upcoming events, join the Tower Hamlets Dads' Network by emailing parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk or calling the Family Information Service on 020 7364 6495.

FamiliesMatter

This event is organised by the Tower Hamlets Parental Engagement Team.



Home Educators Rising Stars



Following the success of the relaunched information event in April 2018 for parents who electively educate their children at home, a second event was arranged for the autumn term.

Delivered by the Education Safeguarding Team in partnership with the Parent and Family Support Service, the second event was hosted at the Rich Mix in the Bethnal Green/Shoreditch area. It also celebrated the wide ranging achievements of the children in the Rising Stars awards, including GCSE successes, artistic endeavours and sporting championships on both a local and national stage.

Parents attended a workshop on supporting children to develop their writing skills at different ages and a session on looking after yourself as a parent.

The School Health and Wellbeing Service also provided information on how home educators can access their service that is normally delivered via schools.

Families were also provided with an opportunity to network with each other and find out about various family support services in the borough.

While parents attended the workshops, their children aged 4-16 took part in creative activities based on the work of Adam Dant, an internationally renowned artist, who was exhibiting his work at the Rich Mix. Adam also kindly came along to the session to meet the children and young people and to introduce his work which features inspirational illustrations of maps to the group.



Awards at Rich Mix



“The workshops for children were excellent. This is really important if you are going to get people to come back.”

Parent

“It was great to get information on services we were not aware of. Thank you.”

Parent

Thank you to the Rich Mix for hosting the event and sharing their programme of activities with the families.

For more information, call the Parental Engagement Team on **020 7364 1952** or email fiona.stokes@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Information of Adam Dant’s exhibition at the Rich Mix, ‘A Journey to the Heart of East London’ can be found at <https://richmix.org.uk/events/a-journey-to-the-heart-of-east-london>

The next event will be held at the V&A Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green on Monday 9 September 2019.



Training

Early Help Training

Our vision for Early Help is that every family should get the right support at the right time to ensure that needs are addressed quickly thus preventing further escalation or crises and ensuring that resources are put to the best possible use.

To support services/practitioners to successfully deliver Early Help, there is a range of learning and development opportunities which include e-learning, classroom based training and other opportunities.

Training is available to all professionals across the children and families partnership including:

- Local Safeguarding Children's Board
- Schools
- Children's centres and day care providers
- GPs/health visitors and other health professionals
- Employment agencies
- Housing providers
- Police, probation and fire services
- Early Help Services

- Private and voluntary sector organisations
- Lead workers and staff involved in 'Team around the Family' meetings
- Other staff who come into contact with families.

The training programme includes the following topics:

- Early Help practice and assessment skills training
- Early Help assessment technical/systems training
- Effective multi-agency working – role of the lead professional
- Integrated working for Early Help managers
- Restorative practice training
- Reducing parental conflict training programme
- Trauma based training.

E-learning

A number of e-learning and awareness modules are being developed for all Early Help service providers:

- Early Help e-awareness
- Whole family working
- Role of the lead professional.

For more information including upcoming training dates and instructions on how to book visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/earlyhelp
Kobita Begum, Early Help Workforce Development Co-ordinator
Tel: **020 7364 2154** Email: kobita.begum@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Multi Agency Training

The LSCB commission a range of training courses which are open to all professionals working with children and families in Tower Hamlets. Courses include:

- Child protection and safeguarding children in Tower Hamlets (Advanced)
- Contextual safeguarding
- Cultural Competence
- Impact of the Toxic Trio
- Managing difficult conversations with children and families
- Multi-agency working to safeguard children in Tower Hamlets
- Responding to child and adolescent neglect
- Safeguarding children and young people from being exploited on the internet.

For full details of all courses, please visit the Tower Hamlets LSCB website: www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/training

Parent and Family Support Service

Wednesday
12 June
2019
1.30-4pm

Parenting Practitioner Refresher Workshop: Update Your Skills and Practice

A session for staff who want to improve their skills in delivering parenting programmes and an opportunity to network with other parenting practitioners to share best practice. This session will focus on the Violence Prevention components of Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities and Triple P. We will explore new resources to support discussions around risky behaviour, gang related activity and knife crime. This session is for practitioners who have completed training in an evidence based parenting programme.

Wednesday
19 June
2019
1-4pm

Working with Families: Multi-Agency Seminar Understanding and Responding to Children's Challenging Behaviour

This multi-agency forum aims to improve the exchange of information and increase links between organisations and practitioners working with parents/families in Tower Hamlets.

For more information, charges or to book a place, contact Husna Begum
Telephone: **020 7364 1952** Email: husna.begum@towerhamlets.gov.uk

All places will be confirmed one week before the course/session.

Late or no notice of cancellation may result in a charge to your school or setting.