ARE YOU FOLLOWING US?





swhp_familysupport O



Please ensure that you are following us on Instagram to stay informed, inspired, and connected to a wider network of family-focused support.

Be a part of our growing community, committed to strengthening families and your local school partnership.

> Please refer to our **Parenting Course Calendar** detailing local parenting courses attached to this newsletter



FAMILIES FIRST AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN!!!



If you think we as a team / or your family worker is worthy of a nomination for the Families First Awards please click on the link below to see the categories by 5pm - 15th October 2025.

These awards highlight the great work being carried out by your local schools' partnerships and help celebrate the outstanding family support in your local community. A nomination from your school/service would help raise awareness of the work we do and strengthen our ability to reach more families in need. It could also help support our future funding and sustainability.

We thank you for your continued support.

MAKE YOUR NOMINATION HERE

Or by scanning the QR code below:





SOUTH WEST HERTS PARTNERSHIP **ISSUE 209 – SEPT 2025**

Happy September to all our schools and families

Remember your family support worker can help with many of the 'start of term hurdles' students and parents may experience. Some of these include:

- Helping families establish a good routine sleeping, eating, studying, screen time, free time etc.
- Financial signposting or support of essentials such as food and uniform *subject to t&c's.
- Support to complete daunting paperwork
- Support families to build confidence and contacts in a new school community
- Make referrals to more specialist support
- Attend appointments with families and young people to support them and help them understand next steps
- Assist parents and carers to manage homework and new lessons
- Act as a bridge between home and school
- Be a friendly ear for a coffee and chat
- Attendance at parent information sessions or open evenings to discuss ways to support children at home
- Navigating a new world of social media.
- Transition support for new schools/key stages
- Supporting a 'fresh start' if last year was challenging

Don't forget we are always on hand to talk through any concerns you have about any families or students and to direct you to services that may be well placed to help.





Please see details of how you can take part in this years; Christmas 'Health & Wellbeing' Appeal On Page 2

Help us support local families in need this Christmas



WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY IS ON FRIDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2025 PLEASE REFER TO OUR 'TIPS & ADVICE' ON **MENTAL HEALTH ON PAGE 3**







South West Herts Partnership Family Support Service

Christmas 'Health & Wellbeing' Appeal

We will be collecting **brand new items only** that will directly support children's and families' health and wellbeing.



NEW BOOKS for all ages – stories help comfort and connect us

NEW SPORTS EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING (for children) - to keep kids active and included.





WINTER WARMERS (for children & adults) – hats, gloves, scarves, socks, thermals.

TOILETRY GIFT SETS (for children & adults) – to give peace, calm and care.



Your donations will help ease the burden, show families they have support from their local community and remind them they are not forgotten.

If you would like to take part and collect donations on behalf of SWHP, please contact admin@swhp.org.uk. We will arrange for a member of the SWHP team to come in and collect the gifts by THURSDAY, 4TH DECEMBER to allow time for all gifts to be distributed prior to Christmas.



South West Herts Partnership Tips & Advice: CHILD MENTAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

Child mental health refers to the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of children, which influences how they think, feel and behave. Family life, school experiences and trauma are all factors that can significantly impact a child's mental health. Early recognition and support are essential to help build resilience and cope with lives challenges to enable them to grow into healthy, well-adjusted adults.

IMPORTANT FACTS

- Mental health issues are common and can affect anyone regardless of age, genders and backgrounds.
- Most common mental health disorder in children is Anxiety & depression. Prevalent conditions include: ADHD, Autism, Conduct and Eating disorders
- Children with mental health conditions are more likely to struggle academically, experience bullying or exclusion, have poorer physical health and face difficulties in later life.
- Early intervention is crucial for improving outcomes and preventing long term affects. Help & support is available.
- Having strong supportive relationships are vital and can significantly impact mental health.

TIPS/TOOLS

- **Open Communication** provide a safe space use active listening - non-judgemental - show empathy.
- Healthy routines— regular sleep, nutritious meals and limiting screen time.
- **Creative Activity**
 - ⇒ journaling record thoughts, feelings and self-reflection.
 - ⇒ **Art therapy** enable children to express themselves in a non-verbal way through various art forms e.g. painting, collage.
 - Music listening or creating music is a powerful way to reduce stress and improve mood.
- Mindfulness Practices such as mindful breathing or movement can help manage stress and overall well-being.
- Positive Affirmation short positive statements that children can repeat to themselves to help boost self-esteem and confidence.

Access free printable resources:

- GoZen.com/printables/
- Free Occupational Therapy Worksheets and PT Re sources - Your Therapy Source
- https://connect.kooth.com/for-families

We can offer support with mental health and emotional wellbeing (school referral only):

- We can support with CAHMS/PALMS referrals.
- We can provide emotional support with 1:1's, Drop-in sessions, Coffee mornings and group work.
- We can provide workshops in emotional wellbeing, exam stress, protective behaviours and transition.
- Produced the SWHP 'All About me Game' to use with our schools and promote self-esteem, help relationships and support young people's sense of self-worth.



SIGNPOSTING

- ⇒ NHS https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/contact-us/outof-hours-helpline/
- ⇒ https://www.hertsmindnetwork.org/servicesfor-young-people/
- ⇒ https://www.justtalkherts.org/just-talkherts.aspx
- ⇒ https://www.childline.org.uk/
- ⇒ https://firststepsed.co.uk/



https://www.southwesthertspartnership.org.uk/

Please visit our website as above or click on the QR code and start following us for more guidance, support and signposting.





COMMUNITY COLLABORATION



We were pleased to welcome Michaela Foster Osborne, Director at Home-Start to our recent team meeting. Home-Start are a non-judgemental early intervention service for parents/carers of under 5s. They are a standalone charity (responsible for their own funding) and have been established for 32 years.

Support criteria is as follows:

- Have at least one child under the age of 5 yrs old
- Living in Watford, Three Rivers, Hertsmere area
- Their home is safe for a volunteer to visit (i.e., DA perpetrator is not living at/accessing the property)
- ⇒ Support can be in-person or online
- ⇒ Cases are matched with volunteer on suitability
- ⇒ Staff speak 24 languages across the team
- ⇒ Waiting list depends on the right volunteer for the right case but on average 26 weeks

Referrals are made via their website https://home-startwatford.org.uk/referrals/ and can be for a variety of reasons such as;

- Loneliness & isolation
- First time parents or new babies
- Lone parenting
- Ill heath, disability or special needs
- Or just facing a tough time and need a little 'helping hand'

Their 4 core services are:

- Home visits
- Family Group Work
- Counselling
- Peer to Peer Support

Phone: 01923 248010

SWHP mentioned in The Independent!!

The Independent Blog by Chloe Combi on: (Not going) back to school: Inside the UK's epidemic of school refusers



Once, children who didn't turn up at school were dubbed truants, their records were marked and parents were punished. But today, more than a million children and teens are persistently absent.

Chloe goes on to mention that Ella Deanus is a Family Support Manager at South West Herts Partnership in Hertfordshire and works on the frontline of the teenage mental health crisis going into schools in the borough and working one-on-one with students exhibiting a whole range of challenges - just one of which is school refusal. "They have real success in tackling the issue of serial absenteeism and school refusal and she explains, "you must have a triangulated approach – parents, school and the young person all working towards the goal of attendance. You need to look at the push and pull factors at home and school. For example, a love of art can push then to school; pull factors can be a friendship issue, so they hate lunchtime. An identified adult at school to support and liaise helps. Home life needs to be routine (visuals, written etc) and expectations clear – don't give screen time if they're supposed to be in school but if they go for an agreed time let them have their downtime.



Email: enquiries@home-startwatford.org.uk



PARENT/CARER COFFEE MORNINGS 2025

For all parents/carers of children with SEND Tuesday 21st October 2025 10-11.30am Tuesday 2nd December 2025 10-11.30am

ASDA WATFORD COMMUNITY ROOMS ST ALBANS RD, WATFORD WD24 7RT

Please join the DSPL9 Triage team to find out about the support available locally and to meet other parents and carers of children with SEND. We will also be welcoming professionals from Children and Young People's Mental Health Services, SPACE Herts and Add Vance across the year. Attendance to be confirmed at a later date.

If you would like to attend or to find out more please email us at admin@dsplareag.org.uk or enquiries@dsplareag.org.uk



Firework Nights

1st November at Cassiobury Park organised by Watford Borough Council. Live music with Vibe 107.6FM from 6pm Display will start at 7.30pm.

2nd November at **Bushey Metropolitan Club. Book** www.busheymetropolitanclub.co.uk



Halloween Story Boat 30th & 31st October **Rickmansworth Waterways Trust**



Batchworth Canal Centre. Rickmansworth



45min cruise with spooky story telling, fun & games.

For children of all ages (accompanied by an adult)

To book click on link below https://rwt.org.uk/events/halfterm-fun-for-kids-with-ahalloween-boat-trip/





A variety of family films are being shown at Watersmeet Theatre, Rickmansworth this half-term.

https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/film







Watford Town Centre

TRICK orTREAT Show 31 October 5PM - 6PM The Parade event space (by the pond) TRICK orTREAT Trail - 31 October 10AM - 4PM The High Street & Parade

For more info: https://watfordtowncentre.com/eventtrtrick-or-treat 28th September

The Forties **Experience: Open Day**

10.30am - 4pm No need to prebook. Come and see their 1940s rooms and play with their collection of 1940s toys and games and take a ride in their WW2 Jeep.

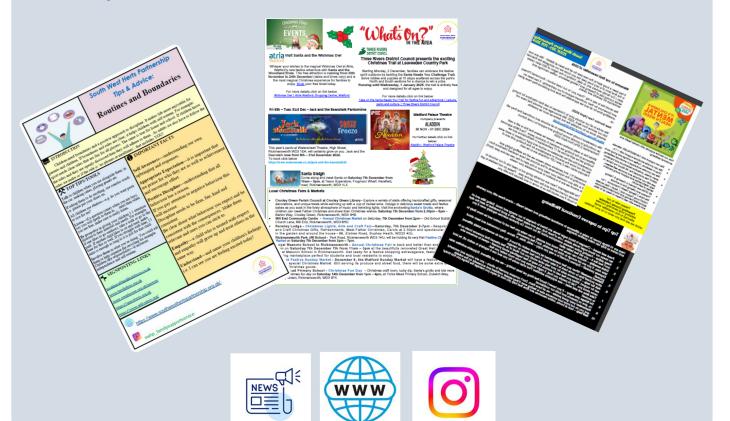
Lincoln Field, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey, WD23 2ES

FREE ACCESS TO SIGNPOSTING SUPPORT



For the next 2 years, SWHP have received funding from county to provide a signposting service to all our schools within the Partnership area as follows:

- Providing all schools within the partnership area with a half-termly newsletter.
- Providing a calendar of local parenting courses.
- Providing a 'What's On' page for families over the holiday periods and an annual 'Summer Planner'.
- Access to the SWHP website detailing further advice & Information with signposting to other services.
- Access to the SWHP social media page detailing regular updates on local services and events for families.



Working with families to support and empower in making positive change

What can we offer you?

SOUTH WEST HERTS PARTNERSHIP FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

ALL SCHOOLS THAT BUY INTO OUR SERVICE WILL RECEIVE:

- * Their own allocated experienced and knowledgeable family worker(s).
- * A year round service.
- * Shared knowledge from our team of SFWs with their own champion areas.
- * All SFWs have become Warmth Champions to advise on cost of living.
- All Staff are trained in **Drawing & Talking Therapy.**
- * All staff are trained in Core Mediation Skills and we have a fully accredited Mediator



Home Visits - these are invaluable in assessing a family's needs and very often uncover other issues that are perhaps not known to the school



You could have a school family worker **based in your school** for a specific number of hours per week



Families First Assessments - we are able to act as lead on Families First Assessments



1:1 Drop-in sessions for pupils or parent/carer(s)



Coffee Mornings for parent/carer(s) providing information on topics such as; Routines & Boundaries, Positive Parenting, School Anxiety, Online Safety etc.



Workshops & Group Work - providing informal workshops/ group work for pupils or parent/carers in areas, such as; emotional wellbeing, exam stress, transition and protective behaviours. We have created workbooks to provide & support pupils that attend with information and strategies that they can take away with them.

SWHP have formed good relations with local organisations and access funding and donations where identified. This has included; being set up as a referral agency with **The Trussell Trust** to refer people in crisis to their local food banks, being granted **Household Support Funding** by **Hertsmere**, **Three Rivers & Watford Borough Council** to distribute white goods, food and clothes vouchers etc. and receiving Christmas donations from local supermarkets.

How do we evaluate the service?

As well as sending County surveys to our schools and parent/carer(s), we use our own evaluations which are sent out to parent/carer(s), schools, child/ young person at the close of each case along with the HCC Parent and School survey. The results help us to identify and make improvements to our service which we incorporate into our development plan and staff targets.

100% of schools completing evaluations since April said that they would recommend our services to other schools

"The main strength of South West Herts Partnership is its offer to our school and families and its sustainability over the last 12 years. SWHP has consistently provided family support workers to my school who have built very strong relationships with SLT, staff, parents and children in their support work. A key strength of their family support is their vast knowledge of organisations, agencies, networks for parents and children in the surrounding areas of our school. Our Family Support Worker gives a lot of signposting support along with home visits and setting up FFA's and running TAF's, applying for funding for vulnerable children and parents. She is always available and quick to respond and there is good cover for our school when she is on annual leave. Our parents have always fed back very positively about the support they have had from our family support worker, both past and present."

St Paul's C of E VA Primary and Nursery School

Getting the best out of our service



To all our schools that have bought into our service this year and want to get the most out of the service, we recommend



Your allocated hours/our staffing capacity

- We strongly advise you to use the service evenly across the 3 terms approx. 33% per term.
- We cannot guarantee worker capacity if this is not followed especially in the last term if you 'save' hours until then.
- Hours cannot be carried over (remember: if you do not have cases for us, we offer Drop-Ins, Coffee Mornings or Workshops as another way to utilise our service).
- If you are referring more cases than outlined within your service level agreement amount —
 please discuss your priorities with your family worker to see, if possible, with current cases
 e.g. able to hold more by providing bi-weekly or telephone support etc.

Referrals

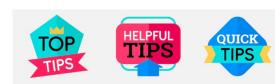
- Parents/carers should be contacted and agree to speaking with us before a referral form is sent.
- All referral forms should be signed by an appropriate member of staff with all the contact details filled in correctly with realistic outcomes identified.
- Where possible, a 3-way planning meeting should occur at school or on Teams with school, parent/carer and your family worker present – this may not always be possible, e.g.: due to parent working hours, disengagement with school etc. but should be aimed for in order to identify outcomes.
- A review meeting must be held on Teams or in school at the 6 9-week mark; this is to
 establish if successful work is happening and identify if work needs be continued or can be
 closed.
- Where possible, identify cases that fall into 'early help' or families that are actively seeking to make changes – we always endeavour to support families you refer to us but high-needs cases that may have had multiple services involved or entrenched long term issues may not achieve all the desired outcomes.

School Contacts

• Provide 1 or 2 contacts at school for your allocated family worker – it can become confusing for school if there are a lot of people liaising with us. Please complete your Service Level Agreement and return to the Business Team with the required information.

Hours to accommodate need

- Staffing is planned around schools' requirements at start of service year (April), please consider your schools' needs to ensure the required hours have been purchased for the year ahead
- We can provide you with details of your historic usage to aid decisions on your level of need.
- You may be able to buy in additional hours if you reach your allocated amount (charged at higher rate per hour) but this will be dependent on our staffing capacity at the time.



Meet the SWHP Team

Business & Senior Management Team



Carly Maddison
Business Manager

Carly.maddison@swhp.org.uk 07872 991558



Ella Young Partnership Co-ordinator

Ella.y@swhp.org.uk 07872 991538



Dave Bell Family Support Manager

Dave.b@swhp.org.uk 07872 991576

Allocated Schools Bushey Heath Highwood Parkgate Infants Parkgate Junior Queen's St Pauls



Ella Deanus Family Support Manager

Ella.d@swhp.org.uk
07872 991577
Allocated Schools
Eastbury Farm
Rickmansworth Park
Rickmansworth School
St Peter's
Watford Grammar School for Girls
Yorke Mead

School Family Workers



Caroline Vine-Lott School Family Worker Caroline.v@swhp.org.uk 07872 991566

Allocated Schools

Field Junior Fairfield
Greenfield Newberries
St. Johns (Radlett) St. Meryl
The Grange Watford Field Infants
Watford Boys Woodhall



Danielle Harman School Family Worker Danielle.h@swhp.org.uk 07872 991571

Allocated Schools

Arnett Hills Chorleywood
Christchurch Harvey Road
Highwood Maple Cross
Rickmansworth Park St Marys
The Grove

The Grove
Watford Girls Grammar
EBSA Project



Debbie Greenfield School Family Worker Debbie.g@swhp.org.uk 07872 991561

Allocated Schools

Breakspeare Croxley Danes
Little Green Meadow Wood
The Russell The Reach
St Anthonys
Watford - St John's

School Family Workers



Debbie Wingfield School Family Worker Debbie.w@swhp.org.uk 07872 991546

Allocated Schools

Coates Way Kingswood Infant
Kingswood Primary Malvern Way
Parmiter's Shepherd
St Clement Danes St Joan of Arc
St John's Catholic



Rebecca Lathwell School Family Worker

Rebecca.l@swhp.org.uk 07872 991568

Allocated Schools

Central Knutsford
Parmiters
The Grove Academy
Warren Dell
EBSA Project



Sam Ward School Family Worker

Sam.w@swhp.org.uk 07872 991578

Allocated Schools

Alban Wood Ashfield
Bournehall Bushey Manor
Cassiobury Infant Cassiobury Jnr
Chater Infants Chater Junior
Bushey & Oxhey Holy Rood
Merry Hill Oxhey Wood
The Orchard

