

# Bulletin



[www.familycarers.org.uk](http://www.familycarers.org.uk)

Tel: 07747 460727

19<sup>th</sup> September 2013

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Welcome to this week's Bulletin from the National Family Carer Network. You are receiving this because you are members of our organisation. If you no longer wish to subscribe, please contact [info@familycarers.org.uk](mailto:info@familycarers.org.uk).

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**National Family Carer Network**  
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NFCN is an umbrella organisation that aims to promote the voice and rights of family carers supporting a person with a LD. Its membership comprises both organisations and individuals but we cannot be responsible at any time for the views expressed by our members unless explicitly promoted by us.

# National

## 1. Isn't it time we had 'the conversation' ...?

September 16<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> is [Sexual Health Week](#), and while campaigners across the country encourage us to talk openly and honestly about sex, there is still one group of people who are often overlooked. Young people with learning disabilities have a right to good, well-rounded advice around sex and relationships. It helps protect them against abuse and exploitation, as well as allowing them to explore their sexuality in a safe, well-informed way.

Netbuddy would like to introduce Gill Leno to their Netbuddy team. Gill is a PSHE Specialist Therapist, working with young people who have a wide variety of physical and learning disabilities, as well as autistic spectrum disorders.

Gill will be answering your questions on the [Netbuddy forum](#) about everything and anything. If you are supporting someone with learning disabilities – or you have a learning disability yourself, Gill is happy to answer any questions you may have about sex and relationships. Want to know how to start 'the conversation'? ... want to get your facts straight? ... want to know what the law says?... want to talk about appropriate behaviour? If there's anything you'd like to know, you can drop her a line [here](#).

To find out more about Gill and why she is so passionate about good Sex & Relationship education, you can read her blog [here](#).

## 2. Connecting people with learning disabilities and their communities

Cuts to support for people with learning disabilities have been in the news all too frequently in recent months.

These cuts make it difficult for people with learning disabilities to leave their homes and participate in activities they enjoy, and this can reduce their quality of life significantly.

The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities believes that meaningful community connecting can help. For more information, please visit their website [here](#).

If you work with people with learning disabilities and want to know how to help connect people to the community, please read about their next workshop on 1<sup>st</sup> October [here](#). Places for this workshop are still available.

You can also read more about Community Connecting in Paul Swift's recent [blog](#).

### **3. Choice Support becomes first provider to sign the Driving Up Quality Code**

Choice Support is the first provider organisation to sign up to the [Driving Up Quality Code](#), a voluntary code of conduct written as a response to the abuse at Winterbourne View. It has been created by the Driving Up Quality Alliance, led by the Housing and Support Alliance (H&SA), made up of national member organisations that collectively represent 80% of all learning disability service providers in the country.

You can read more on the Choice Support [website](#). You can also read more about the Driving Up Quality Alliance [here](#).

### **4. 16 to 19 accountability consultation**

The Department for Education is seeking views on proposals for improving the way in which providers of education and training for people aged 16 to 19 and young people up to the age of 25 with learning difficulty assessments are held to account.

Click [here](#) to read the consultation document.

For more details, and how to respond to the consultation, click [here](#).

The deadline for responses is 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

### **5. Black and Minority Ethnic communities, mental health and criminal justice**

A new briefing published by the [Centre for Mental Health's](#) Bradley Commission finds that community groups are key to engaging black and minority ethnic (BME) groups that are disproportionately represented both in mental health care and in the criminal justice system.

A new independent Commission, chaired by Rt Hon Lord Bradley, is carrying out a five-year-on review of the Bradley Report, which looked at how to support people with mental health problems or learning disabilities in the criminal justice system. The Commission is reviewing the progress made in achieving the recommendations made in the Bradley Report and examining how some of the recommendations can be implemented following the major changes that have taken place in health and criminal justice services since 2009.

For full details, please visit the Centre for Mental Health's website [here](#).

You can also read the briefing [here](#).

## 6. Petition: Government Policy on Disability Living Allowance

Dorothy Jump, a family carer and member of the National Family Carer Network has set up a petition to stop the change to indefinite claims on Disability Living Allowance Benefit.

To find out more about the campaign and to sign the petition, please click [here](#).

## 7. New Guide for Kinship carers

[Grandparents Plus](#) has joined forces with [Mentor](#) to produce an essential new guide. The Kinship Care Guide for England is a resource written for grandparents and other family and friends (kinship) carers who are raising children who can not live with their parents. It is also designed to be useful for social workers and others who work with kinship carers.

The guide costs £14.95 per copy plus £2.50 p&p or £7.95 per copy plus p&p for 20 copies or more. For Kinship carers who are members of the Grandparents Plus Support Network the guide costs £7.95 plus p&p.

For more details and to order, please visit the website [here](#) or call 020 8981 8001.

## London

### 8. Learning Disability Today Conference and Exhibition Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2013 Olympia Conference Centre, London

Learning Disability Today is an event for everyone involved in the lives of people with learning disabilities. At the event you can find out about many of the organisations working in the Learning Disability sector.

The main seminar topics include:

- Evaluating Services and Outcome Measures
- A Person Centred Approach to community Building
- Mental Health Services for People with Learning Disabilities
- Employment – Access to work, support to keep a job
- A life with Autism
- Personalisation

Delegates can also visit the Families Zone, where you can get invaluable information and insight on support for family members.

Cost: £25 + VAT. Free places for people with learning disabilities, unwaged, full-time students, unpaid carers, unpaid volunteers, and natural supports.

Click [here](#) for the visitor programme and booking form and [here](#) for the easy read version. You can also find full programme details on the [website](#).

## 9. Good sexual health for people with learning disabilities

The [Family Planning Association](#) (FPA) delivers a training programme to support adults and young people with learning disabilities to understand sexual health issues.

They also work with the parents and carers of people with learning disabilities and the professionals who support them.

Their current programme is in partnership with Westminster NHS and runs in the London Borough of Westminster.

Full details can be found on their website [here](#).

## South East

### 10. Autism and Technology: Digital Bubbles?

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013 4.00pm till 7.15pm**

**University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9QH**

The British Psychological Society, Wessex Branch, is hosting a mini-symposium to explore whether technology has to be something that isolates us all in digital bubbles, or whether it can work as a positive support for social interaction in autism.

Two speakers: Dr Nicola Yuill (University of Sussex), and Dr Sarah Parsons (Southampton University), discuss this from different angles.

There will be a display of posters showcasing their latest research on the topic and a 'meet the researcher' session. There will also be an informal discussion of the role of technology in autism.

This is a **free** event, but advance booking is required. [Click here](#) to book your place. More details can be found on the website [here](#).

If you have any queries, please contact the Branch Administrator ([Wessex@bps.org.uk](mailto:Wessex@bps.org.uk)).

## South West

### 11. Family weekend and surgery options event

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October**

**Whitemeads Country Park, Whitemead Forest Park, Parkend, Lydney,  
Gloucestershire, GL15 4LA**

This fun and informative event from [Epilepsy Action](#) is targeted at families with children and young people with epilepsy. Taking place over two days at Whitemead Forest Park, there will be two workshops/discussion forums. The first is based around the surgical experience for children, young people and families. On the second day it will be focussed around living with epilepsy as a family and also, the impact on childhood learning.

The workshops will be led by paediatric epilepsy specialists, Epilepsy Action staff and volunteers and an epilepsy specialist nurse.

Entertainment and fun activities will also be available and everyone attending will have access to the park's leisure facilities. You will also have the opportunity to meet other families in a similar position and share experiences.

Food and refreshments will be provided. If you wish to stay overnight, accommodation is available directly from the park (telephone Chris Hiley on 01594 560400) or there are alternatives in the local area. You would have to book and pay for this yourself.

For booking details please visit the Epilepsy Action website [here](#).

### 12. The Big Health Day

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September 10.00am – 3.30pm**

**Eden Project, Bodelva, Cornwall, PL24 2SG**

Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group has organised a free Big Health Day for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to get involved and share views about health and wellbeing services.

There will be workshops and activities for all, as well as the launch of a new DVD called 'Your way to getting involved with Health Services'.

Click [here](#) to read the event flyer.

If you would like to go along, please contact Hannah Woolley by email: [hannah.woolley@kernowccg.nhs.uk](mailto:hannah.woolley@kernowccg.nhs.uk) or call 01726 627535.

## North West

### 13. Autism: a Hands on Approach Conference 2013

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 8.30am – 4.30pm

Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport

The 10<sup>th</sup> annual national conference will cover a range of topics, including:

- How will the New Guidelines Effect Services my Child should be Able to Access?
- Toddler ADOS / Family Wellbeing
- Commissioning Adult Services/ How to Set up Adult Services
- Sex and Sexuality /Girls and ASD

Cost: Parents: £35. Professionals: £100

For more details and how to book, please see the event flyer [here](#).

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*If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please submit articles in plain English of no more than 230 words to [info@familycarers.org.uk](mailto:info@familycarers.org.uk). We reserve the right to edit the articles to fit the newsletter whilst retaining the overall information. Due to the number of articles we receive we cannot guarantee inclusion of contributions.*