Welcome to the seventeenth edition of the Disabled Children’s Register newsletter. The newsletter now comes out twice yearly as we move increasingly to email and SMS updates. Be sure to let us know your mobile and email details to receive the latest news throughout the year.

We especially welcome recently joined holders of the new WAND+ card. This handy ID card, launched in response to DCR members’ feedback, is for young people aged 19-24. We hope it will help avoid the need for lengthy explanations when asking for any existing concessions and assistance within the borough.

Special WAND+ concessions are already available at Places for People leisure centres and at the Aspire Centre. Over time, we hope to negotiate other concessions and welcome any suggestions or contacts to help broaden the offer.

Meanwhile, turn to pages 8, 9, 10 and 11 for more news for WAND+ card holders.
Caring for carers

Free courses from the NHS to help you keep on top of things.

Are you caring for a child, young person or adult with a long term health condition? Would you like to learn more about how you can manage your health and wellbeing using self-management techniques? If so, why not attend a free self-management course, provided by your local NHS

Looking After Me (LAM)
The course is about you making time to look after your own health needs. It aims to help you take more control of your situation and make a difference to your life.
The courses are run over six weekly sessions, on the same day each week with each session lasting for 2 hours 30 minutes, with a maximum group size of 16 participants.

Who is a carer?
If you look after or support a family member, close friend or neighbour who could not manage without your help, you are a carer.

For more information and advice about free courses, call: 020 8812 6750 or email expertpatients@wandsworthccg.nhs.uk
www.wandsworthccg.nhs.uk/localservices/Self-Care/Pages/Wandsworth-Self-Management-Programme.aspx

NEWS:

Dyslexia Awareness Day on 5 October

Aspire2inspire Dyslexia is a charitable organisation based in Wandsworth, bringing awareness of Dyslexia within the community and encouraging entrepreneurship amongst Dyslexics.

They support dyslexic adults who want to return to education, apprenticeships, self-employment and also offer employability skills. Their aim is provide one to one support to adults who want to reach their full potential by identifying their skills and talents and utilising them to the best of their ability.

Come along to their Dyslexia Awareness Day at the Civic Suite, Wandsworth Town Hall on Wednesday 5 October from 10am-6pm to find out more.

For further information, go to: www.a2idyslexia.co.uk or email: liz@a2idyslexia.co.uk or call Elizabeth Kwarteng-Amaning on 07476 012992
Help getting back to work for parents and carers

As a parent or carer, it can be difficult getting back to work after a break looking after young children. This is especially true if you have lost confidence or feel concerned about what level of reliability you can offer an employer if the person you care for needs you unexpectedly.

These were some of the issues discussed at our Getting Back to Work networking session in April, attended by several DCR parent carers. While their work experience might be a bit rusty, the group reflected that they had all developed valuable skills through their caring role and this very experience might help them transition onto new and rewarding career paths they might not previously have considered. A concern was that it would not be easy to find work that is flexible enough, but our first speaker, Peter Kamya, from Wandsworth Workmatch, pointed out that his service can sometimes make introductions and help negotiate a more flexible package with an employer if you have a good skills match.

As well as finding the right job with the right hours and skills match, another major consideration is what the impact will be on benefits, such as housing support. Our second speaker was Lorraine Gayle from the Welfare Benefits Team. She spoke about how to tailor the best approach to this. Lorraine divides her time between the Welfare Benefits Team and the Wandsworth Town Job Centre and is happy to talk to DCR parents and carers who need any help with financial planning for a return to work.

For more information on job searches and preparation for re-entry into the jobs market, see the Workmatch website: www.wandsworthworkmatch.org or talk to Peter Kamya at 07786 173 041/020 8871 5192 or email: PKamya@wandsworth.gov.uk

For more information about the impact on benefits if working part-time, ask for Lorraine Gayle or one of the other advisers at the Benefits Service on: 020 8871 8593, 020 8871 8591, 020 8871 7269

For a copy of our toolkit: Getting Into Work, contact the DCR team (details on front cover)

Meet the team

Claudette Birmingham

Claudette is part of the Office Premises team at Wandsworth Town Hall where her responsibilities include producing staff ID badges. When we first launched the WAND card, the Office Premises team sprang to our rescue, offering to produce the cards for the DCR, using their specialist equipment.

Now we’d like to thank Claudette for producing the WAND+ cards too!
Carers Week comes to Southside

To help highlight national Carers Week, DCR/WAND Parent Champions organised a major display of some of the services on offer to parents, carers and the children and young people they look after. We are grateful to the team at Southside shopping centre for hosting this event.

Southside have been key supporters of the Disabled Children’s Register and WAND card and have this year provided us with a monthly DCR stand in the concourse.

In April, Southside also accommodated a round-table discussion for local businesses about flexible working opportunities for carers in the borough. This was co-hosted by solicitors, Hanne & Co who gave the low-down on employment legislation to support flexible working and carers.

School parking for WAND cardholders extended

Following an initial trial period of six months, the Parking team have approved an extension of the current free parking scheme until January 2017 when it will again be reviewed.

The scheme enables parents to park outside a WAND card holder’s school in order to drop off or collect them in an emergency. So far the scheme has worked well, but be sure to use the designated visitor parking bays which look like this, clearly displaying the WAND card on the dashboard:

Please be sure not to park elsewhere as you may incur a parking ticket!

Councillor Field, the new Mayor of Wandsworth pays a visit to our Carer Week event in Southside
Parent Champions keep on their toes!

A big thank you to our brilliant Parent Champion team. Parent Champions have been busy helping to raise awareness of the DCR and WAND cards at events throughout the borough. They have visited school coffee mornings, school fetes, borough events, drop-in sessions, shops and even a bank. Here is just a selection of things they’ve been up to on your behalf:

Thanks to all our Parent Champions! Faustine Asare, Everal Dowdie, Precious Elaiho, Charlene Ellis, Dorota Flazynska, Angelika Mordel, Issop Koheeaalle, Nusrat Mirza, and Sandra Richards.

If you are interested in becoming a Parent Champion and joining the current team, please contact Lucia Daniels or Eleanor Thain (see contact details on the front of the newsletter).

Hosting a session to disseminate information about our scheme to representatives from the Department for Education and the Family and Childcare Trust

At Wandsworth’s summer Get Active event

With the new Tooting MP, Rosena Allin-Khan and Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London at the Fircroft School Summer Fayre
Get Active this year!

The Get Active event last July highlighted the wide range of sports and other activities that can be found in the borough, including accessible provisions for DCR members.

If you missed out on the event, you’ll find lots of listings on the Family Information Service (FIS) website to suit all ages. Many of the sports and leisure activities offered in Wandsworth can include disabled participants. The information on the FIS website outlines this.

If you think you, or your child or young person would enjoy an activity, you can speak to the organisers and discuss if you, or your child can be included. You may also want to visit the venue to see if you or your child will be safe and happy there.

If you would like to discuss your specific needs in more detail or have any suggestions, Matt Doherty, Sports Development Officer may be able to help you and can be contacted on 020 8871 6857 or email mdoherty@wandsworth.gov.uk

Matt has been planning more activities to start in Autumn 2016 including Learning Disability Tennis at the National Tennis Centre, Roehampton. This is open to all ages and abilities to come and play tennis and have fun. Sessions will be Tuesdays from 6pm – 7.30pm every fortnight. Cost per session will be approximately £4. Also coming up are opportunities for more swimming, dance, archery and trampolining. If you are interested in any of these activities, contact Matt Doherty as per details above to go on his mailing list.

Here are some other examples of what’s on offer this year:

WAND and WAND+ welcome at Aspire Centre, Southfields

The Aspire Centre serves the Southfields and Wandsworth community with high quality sports, dance, drama and other classes and facilities for adults and children as well as space to hire for parties and local clubs. It has great facilities, from the 25 metre 4 lane gala pool to the flood-lit full size 3G astro pitch and a variety of venues that can cater for various sports and activities. Aspire’s aim is to provide the community with fantastic courses that can benefit the general public both physically, mentally and also with life skills at reasonable cost.

For enquiries about any courses or venues, contact them on 020 2875 2603 or email info@aspirecentre.com. Discounts apply to WAND and WAND+ cardholders.

New Multi-sports Autism session

For: Children aged 6-11
Venue: Tooting Leisure Centre
Date and Time: Wednesdays, 5pm – 6pm
Price: £4 (WAND Cardholders £2)

From September 2016, a session catering for children with moderate to high functioning autism is being piloted at Tooting Leisure Centre. For the first few weeks parents are asked to stay on site to ensure the smooth running of the sessions and ensure we have no major issues. Register for sessions and pay on arrival at the reception desk. WAND Card holders can get a discount on presentation of their WAND card.
Disability Sports Coach clubs
Disability Sports Coach multi-sports clubs (11 years to adults) Term time activities from September 2016 - July 2017
Disability Sports Coach run a number of clubs at special rates around London and Wandsworth residents are welcome to visit any of them. In Wandsworth, the local club is held in the new sports hall at Caius House Youth Centre in Battersea. Since winning the 2015 Get Active Wandsworth disability club of the year award, the club has gone from strength to strength. The participants at Club Wandsworth are true sports enthusiasts and a lot of fun is had every session. The energetic volunteers also add to the quality of the session, sports wise and socially. Club Wandsworth has strong links with local tennis, dance and cricket sessions and this year will have specialist taster sessions in all these sports.

Why not go further afield and try out some of the other clubs too?
For example, there is a Saturday morning club from 11-12.30 at the David Weir Leisure Centre in Sutton and a Saturday afternoon club from 3-5pm at the brand new Castle Sports Centre at Elephant & Castle. Average cost for a session is £2 and you are welcome to come for a taster session and give it a go. For more details or to discuss your own special needs, talk to Emma Cranston, Club Development Officer at Disability Sports Coach on 020 7021 0973 or check out their website for more details: www.disabilitysportscoach.co.uk

Caius House Youth Club
As well as hosting the Disability Sports Coach sessions on Tuesday afternoons, Caius House Youth Club in Battersea runs a wide range of activities for youngsters from 8 years up to 25 from 4-9pm weekdays and 12-5 in the holidays.
You’ll find all kinds of sports, from football to Kung Fu, cookery, photography, drama, music, DJ dance sessions. These sessions are open to all young people, including those with SENDs, however it is a good idea to call in advance to check the type of session and if it is suitable for your needs.
You are also welcome to book a tour to see what’s on there. The full programme can be seen on their website: www.caiushouse.org or call 020 3818 6210 or email: info@caiushouse.org to book an appointment.

Deaf runners’ club
A weekly session for deaf runners is held on Saturdays from 10-11am at the Millennium Arena, Battersea Park. Contact Lucy Broad at: lbroad@englandathletics.org for further information.
There is also the Disability Sports Coach Community Club which takes place every Tuesday at Caius House from 4.30-6.30pm.
Get Set GO!

Next steps into education, employment or training for young people, aged 14-25 with special needs

What a start, this inspirational event at South Thames College on the 6 July 2016 exceeded all expectations!

Organised jointly by Wandsworth Council and South Thames College ‘Get Set Go!’ was developed to enable young people with special needs to be inspired and supported to make better informed choices about their futures.

Aimed at young people aged 14-25, their parents/carers, service providers, and professionals this was truly an inclusive event. With stands, workshops and presentations it demonstrated the various routes you can take into education, employment or training.

Robyn Steward, author, trainer, artist, mentor and role model, opened the event, talking about how she runs her own business and explaining that she has 10 disabilities including a diagnosis of Asperger’s Syndrome which is a type of autism.

Robyn was followed by Leon and Rachel, two young people in work, talking about how they have been
supported to find, and keep, paid employment.

Schools and colleges brought groups of students aged 14 to 19 and Young People 20+, Parents, Carers and Professionals all joined us for this exciting event.

We had a range of exhibitors covering a wide offer of provision and services. There were stands where you could talk to providers. Workshops on Wikis, a performance by The Baked Bean Company and light refreshments from Share Community.

The Baked Bean performance was engaging and entertaining with an important message about the range of help and services that are available.

Over 25 exhibitors offered demonstrations and advice to at least 200 young people, parents, carers and professionals-teachers, social workers, careers advisors.

Key aspects of the event:

- Your choices after school or college
- Alternatives to education
- Local training and support activities and forthcoming events
- How to find a job or training place
- Local support groups and other services
- Answers to any questions you or your parents or carers may have about your future

And this is the feedback we received:

- 95% of visitors agreed that attending the event has helped them to find out more about what training and support is available for over 16’s,
- 91% intend to follow up contact with one or more of the organisations at the event.
- 95% overall found the event useful.
- 97% of exhibitors agreed that this is a great way to spread the word about their services.
- 98% would consider attending another event like this next year.
- 78% of exhibitors anticipated a likely increase in the numbers of referrals they expect to receive.

Thanks to everyone who took part in the event, especially the young people, exhibitors, parents/carers and professionals and other support services. Talk is already about next year’s event and how it can be even bigger and better! Watch this space for “Get Set GO 2”!

"Brilliant event! Please do again next year"
Two new websites for young people with SEND

Navigate your way round services in the NHS and elsewhere with two useful new websites:

www.getyourrights.org will help you make the most of the National Health Service, particularly when it comes to wellbeing and transitioning to adult health services.

www.cyp.iassnetwork.org.uk was developed by the national network of Information, Advice and Support Services (IASSN), of which the Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service is a member. Its aim is to help young people with SEND better understand what rights they have for accessing information, advice and support across education, health and social care.

Exhibitors at Get Set Go included:
- Baked Bean Company
- Workshop 305
- HAIL
- South Thames College
- Aurora Centre
- Hao2
- Orchard Hill College
- WAND+
- WorkRight
- Care Trade
- Connexions
- Share Community
- JobCentrePlus
- Project Search
- WIASS
- The Prince’s Trust
- Generate
- Wandsworth Sexual Health Team
- Wandsworth Chamber of Commerce
- Carney’s Community
- Wandsworth WISE
- Apprenticeships
- Oak Lodge School
- JACE Training
- Let me Play
- Workshop 305
- Healthwatch
- Wandsworth’s Life Long Learning
- Wandsworth Community Learning Disability Health Team

You can find all these providers and links to their websites on the Get Set Go! web page - http://goo.gl/MlO6zl and there is more, on the Local Offer website under “Preparing for Adulthood”

And by one o’clock the event closed and we were collecting up the evaluation forms - there was a prize draw for all completed evaluation forms! This helped us to get back almost 60 from visitors.

We hope to repeat this event next year, and will be looking at the evaluation feedback from all the visitors and exhibitors to make sure next year is even bigger and better.

To find out more, comment on the event and to add your name and/or your organisation to our invitation list next year, please email getsetgo@wandsworth.gov.uk

The variety of providers and stall was great for networking
Getting the most from TfL services

This autumn Transport for London (TfL) are running a new engagement campaign called ‘Come on Board’.

All DCR members are welcome to join us for a special TfL information evening at Wandsworth Town Hall at 6.30pm on Wednesday 23 November.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of London’s accessible transport services, giving customers the knowledge and confidence to travel more widely on public transport. In addition, all of London’s 24,700 bus drivers will receive refresh customer service training, that will include how they should serve disabled customers.

Over the next six months they will be talking to various groups about transport. If you are part of or know a group who would like to contribute, please contact TfLAccessibility@tfl.gov.uk. There are various different services available to those that may need further assistance when using public transport:

- TfL’s Travel Mentoring service offers telephone advice to help plan an accessible route and can provide a mentor for your first few journeys. This service is free of charge and available Monday to Friday.
- TfL’s travel support card gives individuals the opportunity to travel independently by letting station staff know that they need assistance. The card has blank boxes for customers to write their name. You can download and print a travel support card from our website.
- Audio and visual information is used across their bus and rail services, so you’ll always know the status of your service.
- Signage and maps at stations, and on street, make it easier to find your way around and Pedestrian Countdown systems at crossings to show how much time you have to cross the road.

It’s important to plan ahead to avoid any disruption. TfL’s online Journey Planner helps you do this. They also produce a range of maps and guides, available to order online or through their call centre, which provide local rate travel advice.

Find out: www.tfl.gov.uk/accessibility, Call: 0343 222 1234
Email: tflaccessibility@tfl.gov.uk or following @TfLaccess on Twitter.

Something fishy is going on at George Shearing!

With help from a Jack Petchey Silver Award grant, George Shearing members enjoyed a meal at “Fish in a Tie” restaurant in Falcon Road, Clapham Junction.

The George Shearing Centre is for young people aged 13-25 years old with severe learning disabilities and complex needs, providing a safe space to meet up with friends in an informal setting. There are after school, half term and holiday activities on offer, including art and crafts, computers, drumming, pool, football and outings around the borough and further afield.
Finding it hard to get the right information?

Here in Wandsworth, there are a number of specialist groups including the Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service (WIASS), Wandsworth Contact a Family and the Family Information Service, which also manages the Local Offer website. Details of all these services and how they can help can be found at: http://fis.wandsworth.gov.uk.

If you are a parent or carer and want more of a voice about local services, then why not join Positive Parent Action and help make a difference? PPA’s details can also be found on the FIS website.

Can’t find the information you need locally?

If you cannot find what you need to know locally, the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) is the national umbrella body for the disabled children’s sector and has some useful online publications and websites. The CDC brings together professionals, practitioners and policy-makers to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people. They have an online library of resources that you can access to find out more about disability policy and practice which includes a selection of materials specifically written with parents in mind.

CDC legal handbook on Disabled Children

Earlier this year, CDC published Disabled children: a legal handbook - an authoritative guide to the legal rights of disabled children and their families in England and Wales. The authors navigate the sources of law, explaining the difference between what public bodies must do to support disabled children and that which they may do.

The handbook aims to empower disabled children and their families through a greater understanding of their rights and entitlements. It is essential reading for the families of disabled children, their advocates and lawyers, voluntary and statutory sector advisers, commissioners, managers and lawyers working for public authorities, education, social and health care professionals, students and academics.

Each chapter has been adapted into a PDF which can be downloaded free of charge from the resources pages of CDC’s website at www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources.