

What's New for Carers?



Details of events and activities at the Carers Support Centre in May.

GENERAL
ELECTION
2015



It won't have escaped your attention that there is a general election next week: both Carers UK and the Carers Trust are encouraging all carers to vote and make their voices heard.

Some help for undecided voters:

- BBC News has a handy [Policy Guide](#) to help you decide which party best represents you and your interests.
- [Vote for Policies](#) helps voters make decisions based on policies not personalities.
- All the main parties have published [easy read manifestos](#).
- Every Disabled Child Matters has published [suggested questions to ask local candidates](#) if they knock at your door.
- Mind has produced a guide: [Mental Health in the Manifestos](#).

Local News and Events

Positive Steps

Mind in Croydon is holding its third Positive Steps charity walk event in Lloyd Park on Saturday 9 May, starting at 10am.

The event aims to raise awareness about mental health and the importance of wellbeing.

For more information or to register go to www.mindincroydon.org.uk/positive-steps.



Promoting Good Mental Health

[Croydon Imagine](#) is holding an information session on promoting good mental health and wellbeing on Tuesday 12 May, 11am - 12 noon, at Croydon Central Library.

Come along and find out

Mental Health Carers Support Groups

Mind in Croydon has launched a new support group for carers of someone with a mental health problem.

The group is meeting on Thursday 7 May, 2.30 - 4.30pm, at Shirley Community Centre, Shrublands Avenue, Shirley CR0 8JA and will then meet every two weeks.

For more information contact Angela Christinis (020 8688 1210, angela@mindincroydon.org.uk).

The Croydon NSF Carers Support Group meets every third Wednesday of the month, 7 - 9pm, at Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) Resource Centre, 82 London Road, West Croydon CR0 2TB. The group offers empathy, advice and a safe place to talk over a cup of tea.

Carers are welcome to just turn up on the night, but for more information call 07518 043 222.

Autism Friendly Dining

[Croydon Care Solutions Autism Service](#) has been working with the Hospitality students from Croydon College to develop an 'autism friendly' evening of gourmet dining.

On Tuesday 19 May, the [Chef's Bar and Restaurant](#) will be open solely for individuals (children or adults) with autism and their family and friends to enjoy a fine dining experience.

Meal times will start from 6pm (last orders taken at 7.30pm) with the restaurant and bar closing at 9.30pm.

A three-course meal will cost £10 for adults and £8 for children. The menu will be tailored to suit varying needs and you can discuss any dietary requirements in advance by contacting the restaurant.

To book a table (required) or to ask for or discuss the

more about Imagine's services and how they can transform lives.

For more information call 020 8253 7078.

evening's menu in advance please email chefs@croydon.ac.uk or call 020 8760 5830.

If you would rather talk to a member of the Autism team about this event please call 020 8255 5473 and ask to talk to [Matt Catchpole](#) or [Paul Wallingford](#).

Free Training for Carers

Assertiveness & Building Confidence
Tuesday 5 May, 10am - 3pm

Diabetes - your questions answered
Thursday 21 May, 10.30am - 1pm

Siblings: a course for parent carers
Tuesday 2 June, 10am - 3pm

Caring for an Older Adult
Thursday 18 June, 10am - 12 noon

All training is held at the Carers Support Centre.

How to Book

For more information or to book a place contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

Any Croydon carer aged 16+ can attend these training sessions.

PIP Training

Parents in Partnership (PIP) holds training sessions at the Carers Support Centre:

Makaton 1

Thursdays 14 & 21 May, 10am - 12.30pm

Anne Chapman, Paediatric Speech & Language Therapy Team Leader, will be teaching Makaton - a method of communication using signs, symbols and speech to parents of children of any age.

Wills & Trusts Seminar

Tuesday 19 May, 10am - 1pm

Renaissance Legal will be helping parents to consider how best to provide for their child if they are no longer there to care for them, and how wills and trusts can be used to protect vulnerable children and young people.

This seminar is for parents of children aged 14+.

To book for these sessions contact PIP on 020 8663 5626 or email office@pipcroydon.com.

Carers, Wellbeing & the Internet

The [Family Fund](#) is looking for carers (not just parent carers) to take part in a focus group session on Tuesday 12 May 10.30am to 12 noon at the Carers Support Centre.

The purpose of the group is to contribute to research on the mental health and wellbeing of carers, and to what extent carers use the internet as a means of support and information.

It will be a very informal session, with refreshments and a light lunch provided. A small voucher will be given to those attending as thanks for their participation.

ZSL London Zoo

Tickets are still available for the special children's days at ZSL London Zoo on Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 May.

These days are for children with special needs and their families and friends - there will be increased specialist facilities and numbers of staff, as well as special interactive events and discounted entry.

For more details and to book tickets go to www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/whats-on/special-childrens-day-2015.

For more information or to sign up contact
Clare Kassa (01273 748362,
Clare.Kassa@FamilyFund.org.uk).

SEN Volunteers Needed

Croydon Family Lives SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) provides information, advice and support to parents/carers and to young people with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

SENDIASS is looking for Independent Parental and Youth Supporters (IPYS) to provide information, advice and support to parents/carers of children with SEND or to the young person.

SENDIASS will provide training and on-going support which will enable the IPYS to provide effective advice and support over the phone, at meetings with the school or local authority, or possibly via home visits.

If you are interested and would like further information email
virginijas@familylives.org.uk or come to a coffee morning for new IPYS on Wednesday 13 of May, 10am to 12 noon, at Waddon Youth Centre, 85 Waddon Way, Croydon CR0 4HY.

St Giles Open Morning

St Giles is a school for pupils aged 4-16 years with physical disabilities, complex medical needs, complex speech and language difficulties and associated learning difficulties, moderate (MLD), severe (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

St Giles is having an **Open Morning** on Wednesday 20 May, 10 - 11.30am.

For more information on St Giles visit
www.st-gilesschool.co.uk.

Access Council Training

The Council organises a programme of training for its employees, and is opening up some sessions to carers:

Pressure Ulcers

What pressure ulcers are, their causes and treatment and how to prevent them.

Wednesday 10 June, 9.45am - 12.45pm
and 1.45 - 4.45pm.

For more information or to book a place email stephanie.cattermole@croydon.gov.uk.

Room Hire - Change of Contact

We have a new member of the team at the Carers' Information Service: Steph Roane has joined us as the Sales and Marketing Assistant (working hours Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 1.30pm).

Steph is now in charge of all room bookings at the Carers Support Centre (the contact was previously Alison Brewster).

To find out more about room hire at the Carers Support Centre, or to make a booking, you can call Steph on 020 8663 5600 or email stephanieroane@carersinfo.org.uk.



National News

Awareness in May

Action on Stroke Month

Throughout May

Mental Health Awareness Week

11-17 May

Dementia Awareness Week

17-23 May

Carers' Creative Writing

Carers UK has published an anthology of poems and short stories written by carers, and exploring the highs and lows of caring for a loved one.

For more information or to buy a copy visit www.carersuk.org.

The book costs £5, or £3 for Carers UK members, plus £1.20 postage and packing.

Council Acted Unlawfully

The High Court has found that Sandwell Council acted unlawfully in taking the care component of Disability Living Allowance into account as income when assessing applications for a Discretionary Housing Payment from people affected by the bedroom tax.

Read more at www.cafamily.org.uk.

Carers UK

Carers UK is the UK's only national membership charity for carers. It offers a range of services, including an advice line, online forum, factsheets, research reports and policy briefings.

Recent research reports:

[Caring into later life](#)

[Alone and caring](#)

[Quality of care and carers](#)

[Caring and isolation in the workplace](#)

Recent briefings:

[Care Act 2014 and carers: opportunities for change](#)

[Budget 2015: what it means for carers](#)

[Care Act 2014: eligibility for care and support](#)

No Voice Unheard, No Right Ignored

The Government is consulting over how to strengthen the rights of people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health issues so they can live independently, be included in their community, and make choices about their own lives.

To find out more or take part in the consultation go to

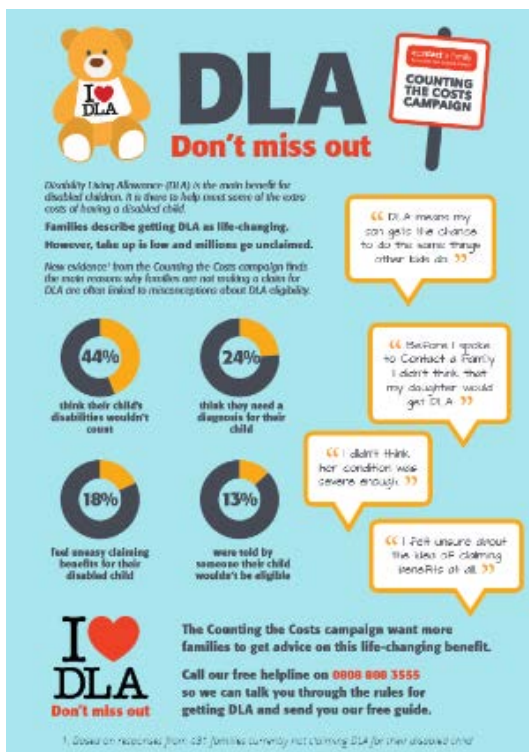
<http://consultations.dh.gov.uk/learning-disability-autism-policy/no-voice-unheard-no-right-ignored>.

DLA Mythbuster

It costs more to raise a disabled child, and [Contact a Family](#) is urging parents to claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for their child, and not let stigma around claiming benefits put them off.

Contact a Family has tackled some of the most common [myths about claiming DLA](#).

They have also created a [DLA Mythbusting podcast](#).

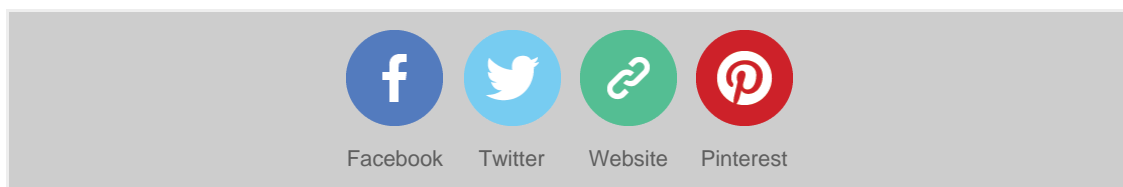


More information on DLA:

[Claiming Disability Living Allowance for Children \(brief introduction\).](#)

[Claiming Disability Living Allowance for Children \(guide for parents\).](#)

Disability Living Allowance: claiming the higher rate mobility component for children with learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders.



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THE WHITGIFT FOUNDATION
CARERS' INFORMATION SERVICE

The Carers' Information Service was set up by the Whitgift Foundation in 1997, and provides information, advice and support to Croydon's carers.

[Find out more about us.](#)

The Carers Support Centre is the result of a partnership between Croydon Council and the Whitgift Foundation.

The Centre is open Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm, and carers are welcome to drop in for information and advice on their caring role.

[Find out more about us.](#)

Carers Support Centre

We also have rooms to hire, ranging from a two-person consultation room to a large meeting room that can hold over 50 people. For more information call Steph Roane on 020 8663 5600, or email stephanieroane@carersinfo.org.uk.