

Harpenden Children's Centre Newsletter



A Sure Start Children's Centre

MAY/JUNE 2010

www.hertschildrenscentres.org.uk/harpenden

Hello again!

May into June is my favourite time of year, nature is at its best, seedlings and new green leaves, froglets, baby bunnies and fledglings taking those first hesitant flights; and best of all the hopeful anticipation of a glorious summer. For those of you planning to get away this summer, read on and you will find some useful advice on holidaying with young children, but don't forget the magic and wonder on your doorstep. A short walk from our centre is Batford Springs where you can find fish from tiny sticklebacks to trophy size barbel and bream. Curiously, sticklebacks are hardest to find and require a long handled net and a lot of luck, but if you do go dipping make sure it is the net and not the children that get 'dipped'. The sounds, smells, feel and wonder of nature are positive memories that stay with children for ever, get out there enjoy these simple but wonderful experiences.

Still on the subject of the wonders of new life, Jackie is leaving us on 13th May in preparation for the arrival of a new Pulford in July. Jackie has been a key contributor to the successful development of the Children's Centre and she will be greatly missed whilst on maternity leave, but all being well she will back in 12 months time. I am sure you will join me sending Jackie our good wishes. Hopefully the next newsletter will have news of the new arrival along with a photo. I am very pleased to announce that we have appointed Sarah Brighton to cover Jackie's leave. Sarah's work pattern will be much the same as Jackie's but will also cover school holidays. Sarah lives in Harpenden and is the mum of five year old twins. I am confident that Sarah will be a great asset to the centre and we are delighted to have her on board.

Finally, we would love to hear from any parents who would be interested in helping us determine the way forward for the children's centre. We need parent representation on our governance group to help ensure that we best use our resources to improve outcomes for Harpenden Children. Ideally we would like representation from both of our children centre areas. The governance group meets about four times during the year and I promise there is no other big commitment. Please contact me for an informal chat if you think you might be interested.

Regards
Pat Everett, Centre Manager

Hertfordshire Health Walks is a countywide programme of regular, free, volunteer-led walks. Why not get the buggy out and join the next Harpenden Walk in August; Meeting at the Football Pitch Car Park, Cravells Rd., Harpenden every Tuesday @10.30am. Visit www.hertsdirect.org/healthwalks for more information.



SureStart

Sure Start is the Government programme to deliver the best start in life for every child. Harpenden Children's centre is a Surestart centre bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support.

Enjoy an evening of fine Thai dining whilst supporting local children in need.

Present this voucher when dining at the **Thai Cottage** in Wheathampstead and Harpenden Children's Centre will receive a donation of **25%** of your total food bill.



Thai Cottage
Authentic Thai Restaurant & Takeaway
43 The High Street, Wheathampstead AL4 8BD
01582 033751/43
Offer available all week.
Parking available at rear of restaurant

PLEASE EMAIL: promos.harpenden@hertschildrenscentres.org.uk TO ACTIVATE THIS VOUCHER

Turn Reluctant Readers into Book Lovers, and Struggling Readers into Confident Ones

What exactly is a reluctant reader? There are several different types according to the experts. They include: children who are intelligent and interested in reading, but don't read well; children who seem to have no interest and, as a result of not reading regularly, are falling, or at risk of falling, behind; and children who are dealing with specific learning problems that impede their ability, and willingness, to read. Then, there is the most frustrating type of all: the child who reads well but has little interest in doing so. If your child is a reluctant reader, or a younger child not yet at the stage of reading, what can you do to foster a love of books and reading? Fortunately, there are a number of resources that are available to assist you.

- Parents and carers play a vital role, as their attitude is often the strongest influence on a child. Enthusiasm is catching so let them see you enjoying books and never imply reading is a chore.
- Read aloud to your child as often as you can. This is important because it introduces him to a much wider and more literary vocabulary than the limited number of words used in everyday speech.
- Find books about subjects that capture your child's interest, ones with appealing pictures and let your children choose their favourites. It may often be the same one, that's okay, repetition is good.
- Tape yourself as you read a book to your child. You can create a bank of stories for those times when you are unable to read to him yourself. Borrow audio books from the library.
- Visit libraries and bookshops with your child. Teach him to use books as a point of reference to find out about things that he enjoys, you would be surprised how many 5 year olds can read tyrannosaurus!
- Set aside a time for reading each day when you can be alone and undisturbed with your child, If you are distracted, he will be even more so. Make sure it is seen a special time not a chore.
- Read in new places: in the bath, in a den behind the sofa or up a tree!
- When your child starts to read independently, you're still needed. Most reluctant readers like a companion when they're reading to themselves. So why not sit beside him and read your own book?

If you're stuck for ideas and need a fresh look at child's play, why not visit our Book Library or speak to a member of staff – we're here to help!

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It's our 1st Holiday with a New Baby – Help!

Although travelling with a baby on holiday can seem like an intimidating task, especially for first time parents, if you plan well and follow a few basic guidelines, your baby's first holiday abroad can be a wonderful, stress free experience. Within a month or two, new parents will be almost frantic for a holiday, and with a little preparation, travelling with a baby on holiday will be the easiest family holiday you will have for many years!

This is the last time for many years that your family holidays shall not be influenced by the constraints of school holidays, so why not travel slightly off peak, when prices are lower, crowds are dispersed and the midday heat is less intense for your new born to endure. When going on holiday with a baby, your own private space is absolutely priceless. The freedom and space provided by a private holiday rentals means that you can give your baby the attention and care you need, without limitation.

There are certain things needed for a baby's first holiday. Recommendations are that babies don't fly for 6 weeks after birth, which is perfect, as that is roughly how long it will take to get all the things needed for your baby's first holiday. Babies born after 1998 will need their own passport, and it is strongly advised that you get travel insurance and an E111 (for European travel). If you are worried about travelling with a baby on holiday, visit your GP to ensure you get any immunisations your baby may need as well as gaining important information and advice about things like sun cream factors, feeding and travelling whilst abroad. A list of baby essentials on holiday can be found at HolidayWithBaby.com.

Flying is usually seen as the biggest hurdle when travelling with a baby on holiday, but taking a baby on holiday abroad by air is not nearly as daunting as it may seem. Airlines, including British Airways will take babies after 48 hours of birth, (if you feel up to it), but guidelines recommend waiting for at least 4 weeks. Some airlines are more welcoming of babies, providing the essentials for babies on holiday, especially when the flights are not fully booked. BMI are often considered the best for going on holiday with a baby. If you pack a bag of baby holiday essentials for the flight, there should be few problems, as the sound of the engines usually puts babies to sleep, especially on night flights. Feeding during take off and landing will also help smooth your baby's experience, helping overcome sensitivity to changes in cabin pressure.

Other practicalities:

- think about how you're going to take formula on the plane given the liquids rule.
- will there be a fridge in your room to store bottles in or will you make them up individually (you should be able to contact the hotel about this and the kettle question)
- take a thermometer, basic medicines suitable for a 4 month old and maybe a book like What to Expect (which has a good section on common illnesses and symptoms) with you
- if the hotel is providing a travel cot, does it provide bedding or just the cot?
- how are you going to shade your baby in the pram?
- is it worth pre-booking excess luggage as it may be cheaper to pre-book it than pay for it when you turn up
- have you put your baby onto your EHIC card?

A holiday with a baby is definitely do-able but you just have to be a bit more organised and have slightly different expectations. Good luck!



**Helping Families to
Be Healthy, Stay Safe,
Enjoy & Achieve, Make
a Contribution, &
Achieve Economic
Well-being**

Regular events taking place at Harpenden Children's Centre

Day	Session	Venue	Cost	Time
Monday	Childminders Group	Magpie Room	Free	10am – 11am
	Opportunity Class	Magpie Room	Supporting young children with significant delay or learning difficulties Referrals only / Free	1pm – 3pm
Tuesday	Monkey Club	Magpie Room	Supported Mother & Toddler Group By Application Only / Free	9.30am – 11.30am
	Post-natal classes	Chaffinch	Free informal themed sessions, call for programme	
Wednesday	Toy Library	Magpie Room	Registration Fee & Hire Cost Applies	9.30am – 11am
	Baby Massage	Chaffinch Room	£5 for 5 sessions	10.30am – 11.30am
	Baby Clinic	Chaffinch Room	Free	1pm – 3pm
	Opportunity Class	Magpie Room	Referrals only / Free	1pm – 3pm
Thursday	Monkey Club	Magpie Room	Referrals only / Free	9.30am – 11.30am
	Opportunity Class	Magpie Room	Referrals only / Free	Every 2 weeks 1pm – 3pm Starting from 14 th Jan
Friday	Post-natal drop-in Older babies drop-in	Chaffinch Room Magpie	Free	10am – 12pm

Other Upcoming Events

First Aid; Due to popular demand, we are going to run another Saturday **First Aid** session. To be held on Saturday 25th September from 10am – 12pm, this is a basic 2 hour session in the morning which may be followed up by a resuscitation course if attendees are interested. Phone for details.

Tiny Tots Tunes Classes are held on Mondays at **at All Saints Church, Station Road, Harpenden.** ★**Tiny Tots (10.45am to 11.45am)** ★**Toddling Tots (9.30am to 10.30am)** - starts 10th May and if you can't make Mondays, **Toddling Tots** classes also run on **Fridays** in Kimpton at Kimpton Memorial Hall, Hall Lane, Kimpton (10 to 15 minutes drive from Harpenden) at 9.45am. **For further information please contact Pippa on 07769 694178.**

Understanding your Toddler Our new session for parents of younger children starts in June running every Monday for 6 sessions [7th 14th 21st 28th and July 5th 12th] from 7.15pm – 9.15pm. **For further information please contact our office on 01582 713872 to make a booking.**

New Library Session; Our Parent Support Workers will attend Harpenden Library every Tuesday from 10am – 12pm. Feel free to pop along to discuss issues like your child's well-being and playing & reading with your child.