

# Families Matter

A magazine full of news and information to support families  
Featuring the Let's Talk SEND Information Supplement

## Parent Conference 2023



Over 120 people attended the 14th annual Parent Conference – the first face-to-face conference in three years and the first time the event was held at the new Town Hall.  
Read all about it on pages 3-5

Read the latest edition of the Families Matter magazine and monthly ebulletin online at  
[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter)

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# Welcome to the autumn edition of Families Matter

This edition is packed with information and updates to inform and support parents and carers and to guide practitioners in their work with Tower Hamlets families.

We hope you find the Families Matter magazine useful and welcome your feedback and contributions. Please email us at [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk) and tell us what else you would like to see in future editions.

Best wishes

**Parent and Family Support Service**

## Working with families?

### Sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list

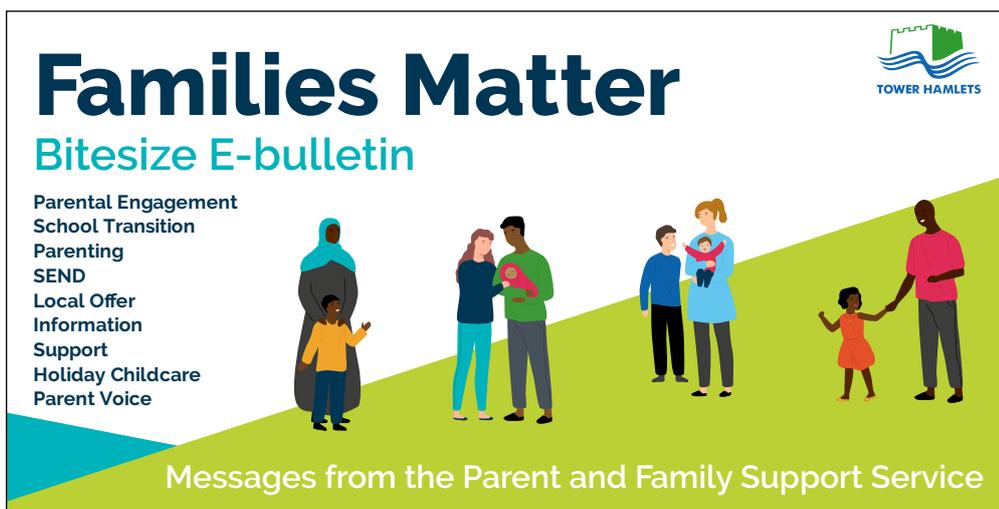
If you are working with families in the borough, sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list to be emailed the latest news and information to support your work. Encourage your colleagues to sign up too.

Email: [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Families Matter: Bitesize E-bulletin

In addition to the regular termly Families Matter magazine, we publish a monthly e-bulletin. It provides regular updates, information, advice and support for all parents in Tower Hamlets.

Parents can sign up via the council's resident subscriber list, choosing 'children and education' as their preferred topic after closing the initial pop-up box and completing the one on the main webpage.



Visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup)

This magazine is produced by the Parental Engagement Team within the Parent and Family Support Service, Children and Culture Directorate. To share news in future editions of Families Matter contact

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*References to 'parents' describes any caregiver responsible for the care, protection and upbringing of a child or young person, including foster parents or connected persons, grandparents, siblings or other family members living in Tower Hamlets.*

*References to 'SEND' is used in some articles as the abbreviation of special educational needs and disabilities.*



Practitioner Sarah McSweeney (centre) demonstrating sewing techniques to parents at the Sewing Hacks workshop during the parent conference

## The 14th annual Parent Conference

Over 120 people attended the 14th annual Parent Conference, which took place at the new town hall in July.

The event, organised by the Parent and Family Support Service, gave parents and professionals (who work with families) the opportunity to come together, find out about interesting developments from keynote speakers and attend some inspiring workshops. Most of the workshops were devised in response to the current cost of living crisis – from how to extend the life of your clothes to getting children on board with the family budget.

It was the first face-to-face conference in three years as well as the first time the event was held at the new town hall in Whitechapel. Everyone

enjoyed seeing the newly repurposed building (formerly The Royal London Hospital) and catching up with old acquaintances, many of whom they hadn't seen in person since before the pandemic.

“

**It was great to have an in-person parent conference again, catch up with colleagues and friends and get a chance to see the new town hall.**

Alison Jones  
Marion Richardson Primary School

”



Parental engagement workers from Tower Hamlets Schools – Alison Jones (Marion Richardson Primary School), Janice Hill-Kocoglu (Harry Gosling and St Paul's Whitechapel Primary Schools) and Jacqui Jenkins (Cubitt Town Primary School) at the Parent Conference.

## PARENT CONFERENCE

### The speakers

#### Denise De-Goze Acting Head of the Parent and Family Support Service

Denise welcomed everyone to the new town hall and the first face-to-face parent conference since 2019.



“

**“It was wonderful to see so many new parents attending the conference for the first time, as well as schools, community groups and some of the borough’s foster carers.”**

”

#### Kate Smith Head of the Healthy Lives Team

Kate shared current health messages for families. She talked about the importance of sleep, physical activity and raised awareness about testicular torsion (for more details, see page 18).

#### Lisa Fraser Director of Education, Children’s Services Directorate

Lisa spoke about the important role parents have and how accessing support is vital.

#### James Thomas Corporate Director of Children’s Services and Deputy Chief Executive of Tower Hamlets Council

James gave an update on the borough’s Family Hubs programme and the importance of the parent-school partnership to help children thrive and achieve.

### The information marketplace

After hearing the keynote speakers and attending the workshops, everyone mingled at the information marketplace, where local services had set up stalls.

Stallholders included:

- The Parent and Family Support Service, which includes the Parental Engagement Team with information on parenting, healthy families and volunteering programmes, plus the SEND Information Advice and Support Service. [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentfamilysupport](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentfamilysupport)
- Tower Hamlets Local Offer with information on services for families [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/localoffer)
- The School Admissions Team [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions)
- Tackling Poverty Team and Resident Support Outreach Team [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice)
- The Recycling Team [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/recycling)
- Healthy Lives Team [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/healthylives](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/healthylives)
- Young Workpath [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/careers-service](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/careers-service)
- The Independent SEND Parents Forum [www.thsendforum.co.uk](http://www.thsendforum.co.uk)
- Toynbee Hall [www.toynbeehall.org.uk](http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk)
- DLR Community Ambassadors [www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/dlr/dlr-ambassadors](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/dlr/dlr-ambassadors)
- The Fostering and Adoption Team, sharing information on how parents can become foster carers [www.fosteringtowerhamlets.co.uk](http://www.fosteringtowerhamlets.co.uk)

## PARENT CONFERENCE

# The workshops



### Made of Money

Quaker Social Action delivered a workshop called 'Made of Money'. It explored the important role parents play in shaping children's attitudes to money. The session provided practical advice to help parents talk to their children about money and get them involved with the family budget.

[www.quakersocialaction.org.uk/madeofmoney](http://www.quakersocialaction.org.uk/madeofmoney)



### Money and Relationships

The Tower Hamlets Reducing Parental Conflict Team delivered a workshop on the theme of money and relationships. Highlighting how financial difficulties can cause stress in relationships, parents were given advice and discussed ways to communicate better to tackle problems together.

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/rpc](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/rpc)



### Healthier Snacks

Practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team talked about the Healthy Families programme and delivered a practical workshop sharing nutrition tips and ways to make small changes to enhance family health. Parents were inspired with creative ideas on how to involve the whole family in creating healthy snacks and they all made sushi sandwiches.



### Sewing Hacks

Continuing with ways to economise, Sunny Jar Eco Hub supported by practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team demonstrated some practical sewing skills so that parents could learn how to mend, alter and extend the life of their family's clothes. A very useful workshop particularly during the cost of living crisis.



### Keeping Children Safe Online

The Parental Engagement Team delivered the Keeping Children Safe Online workshop. The interactive session gave parents the chance to discuss some of their concerns about internet safety, gave them an insight into their child's online world and provided some useful tips on keeping children and young people safe online.

Interested in a Healthy Families programme, basic sewing skills workshop or an internet safety session for your school or organisation? Email the Parental Engagement Team:

[parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Celebrating father figures at Thomas Buxton

Father figures at **Thomas Buxton Primary School** came together to celebrate FUDGE (father figures, uncles, dads, grandfathers excellence) week and the positive impact they have on children.

During the week, different workshops were held for father figures and the children, including a farm tour, a sports club, a football match and den-building. At the end of the week, everyone came together for an ice-cream treat in the hall.

This celebration week follows MAGIC week (mums, aunts, grandmothers including carers) which recognises and celebrates mother figures.

**Amelia Chau**  
Assistant Headteacher  
Thomas Buxton Primary School



Parent at the new mosaic course at Mulberry School for Girls

## New mosaic course at Mulberry

**Mulberry School for Girls** has introduced a new mosaic course for parents. Delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, it teaches parents how to create their own unique piece of art.

The course provides parents with an engaging way to bond

with each other and build relationships. By working together on their art pieces, they are able to support each other and develop a sense of community.

It also helps parents to build a better relationship with the school. By participating in school activities like this, parents are able to gain a better understanding of the school's values, which has led to a stronger relationship between the school and the parents.

“

**The parents really enjoyed learning a new creative process and produced intricate work of a very high standard.**

Murude Mehmet, Parental Engagement Team

”

**Sabina Khan**  
Parent Liaison Officer  
Mulberry School for Girl



Parents from Marion Richardson Primary School visiting the Tower of London

## Access scheme helps families visit historic sites

The Historic Royal Palaces Community Access Scheme offers free entry, practical advice and valuable support to enable community groups to visit and explore historic sites, such as the Tower of London.

The scheme creates opportunities for people to meaningfully engage with historic sites, inspiring everyone to feel a sense of belonging.

Over the past year, the scheme has allowed 70 families from **Marion Richardson Primary School** to have a free day out at the Tower of London or Kensington Palace.

The scheme offers:

- Group leader training to support group leaders to plan and lead visits
- Free tickets for community groups to visit the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace and Kensington Palace; tickets are valid for one year
- Support from the Community Partnerships Team to help group leaders to engage their groups with the palaces' stories and collections
- Discounted entry tickets for group members to return independently to the palace after their initial group visit.

Visit [www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london/whats-on/community-access-scheme](http://www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london/whats-on/community-access-scheme)

# Family Learning Festival 2023

14 October–  
5 November

Learning as a family can help us to become confident, lifelong learners with all the benefits that brings – from better health to being happier.



Family learning supports children to achieve at school. It can also be transformative, helping us to find new passions and interests, and realise our aspirations through further learning.

The Family Learning Festival is a national celebration to inspire a love of learning in family life. It takes place every year in the autumn and is co-ordinated by the Campaign for Learning. This year's festival hopes to inspire a love of shared learning through curiosity.

Schools, children's centres, libraries and museums are encouraged to put on creative events to showcase family learning.

To find out more, including possible funding opportunities to support festival events, visit [www.familylearningfestival.com](http://www.familylearningfestival.com)

## Sustainable travel accreditation scheme for London schools

Sustainable Travel: Active, Responsible, Safe or STARS is Transport for London's accreditation scheme for London schools and nurseries. It inspires young Londoners to travel to school sustainably and safely by championing walking, scooting and cycling.

The scheme supports pupils' wellbeing, helps to reduce congestion at the school gates, improves road safety and air quality. Sign up your school or setting to the STARS scheme to help us all move towards a healthier, less congested London.



More details and to sign up visit [stars.tfl.gov.uk](http://stars.tfl.gov.uk)



## Outdoor learning at Old Palace Primary

Parents from **Old Palace Primary School** have been reflecting on the fact that children today seem to have fewer opportunities to play and learn outside which could be hampering their development.

They have been discovering the many benefits of outdoor learning in a special three-part course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team. The course promotes the benefits of 'screen-free', outdoor learning and inspires parents to use local outdoor spaces to enrich their child's learning and support their wellbeing.

“

I got so many great ideas from course that will help with my child's learning.

Parent

”

# Starting secondary school in September 2024

Parents who live in Tower Hamlets and have a child in Year 6 (born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013) will need to make an online application via eadmissions portal for them to transfer to secondary school in September 2024.

The closing date for making applications is 31 October 2023.

For support with the secondary transfer and application process see below.

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

## Secondary transfer information meetings for parents

Transition support officers from Tower Hamlets Transition Support Service, together with the School Admissions Service, will be delivering online and in-person sessions for parents of Year 6 pupils, which will provide key information about the application process and explore ways to ease transition from primary school and support secondary transfer.



- Online sessions  
Delivered via Zoom, book through Eventbrite <https://MU24.eventbrite.co.uk>
- In-person sessions in schools  
Contact the Tower Hamlets Transition Support Service to book a place.

For more details, contact the Tower Hamlets Transition Support Service

Email: [transitions@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:transitions@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Tel: 07783 884 869 or 07908 456 660

## New in-year school admissions application portal is now live

The new in-year school admissions application portal (parent portal) has now gone live – parents can apply online at any time and securely.

The School Admissions Team are not providing paper application forms to families other than to those who, for equalities reasons, cannot use the portal and cannot be supported to use the portal.

For families who need support with the online application, the Idea Stores can provide access to computers and staff can support with their use.



See the In-Year Admissions webpage for a link to the portal.

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

# Platform to Talk for the new term

Platform to Talk, the online discussion-based sessions, have launched a programme for the new term. The sessions, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, provide a safe space for parents to come together, share their experiences and get reliable information. The new programme will cover a range of issues that matter to parents or relate to national awareness dates.



## Building Strong Identities

Thursday 12 October  
10-11am

To mark October's Black History Month, this session explores the importance of belonging, culture and identity. Parents can join the conversation and discover how these elements can really enrich their child's learning and self-esteem.



## Bullying Awareness for Parents

Monday 13 November  
10-11am

Parents can join this special Anti- Bullying Week session to become more aware of bullying and the effect it can have on children and young people. They will pick up some useful tips on responding to bullying and discover ways they can support their child to build resilience.



## Encouraging good eating habits

Friday 15 December  
10-11am

Many children can be fussy about the food they eat and it can be a source of anxiety for parents. In this session, parents will be able to share experiences and pick up helpful tips to make mealtimes less stressful for everyone.

For more details and to book your place email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Platform to Talk: Keeping Children Safe Online in Year 6 and 7

Towards the end of primary school and the start of secondary school is a time when many children get their first mobile phone. It's important parents stay informed so that they can protect their children from online dangers.

September's Platform to Talk was all about online safety for this particular age group. During the discussion-based, online session, parents had a chance to share their experiences of parenting in the digital age and gained an insight into their child's online world. They picked up some useful tips about managing screen time conflict and discovered ways to help keep children safe online.

# The Volunteering in Your Child's School course



“

Our parents and carers really value this course as a stepping stone into work in schools. They gain a valuable insight into how schools are run and how they can best support children's learning. Highly recommended!



Lorraine Flanagan  
Headteacher Thomas Buxton  
Primary School

”

The Volunteering in Your Child's School course can be delivered either as a ten-week Open College Network (OCN) accredited course or as a five-week non-accredited introductory course. Delivered by experienced practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team, the course aims

to prepare parents for their role as a volunteer by giving them an insight into teaching and learning in school. Key topics include teaching and learning methods, the National and EYFS Curriculum, communication strategies, professionalism, and safeguarding.

To find out more or to book the course for your school or setting email  
[parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Volunteering opportunities in Tower Hamlets

Volunteering is a great way to make a real difference to your community. It's also a way to gain skills and experience and build confidence and employability.

There are many volunteering opportunities available in Tower Hamlets.

The Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets can help you find interesting volunteer roles with local charities, community organisations or in the public sector. The service they provide is open to people who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets. They have a variety of roles to suit all ages, backgrounds, interests and abilities

### National volunteering websites

- Do-it - [doit.life/volunteer](https://doit.life/volunteer)
- Volunteering Matters - [volunteeringmatters.org.uk](https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action - [navca.org.uk](https://navca.org.uk)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations - [www.ncvo.org.uk](https://www.ncvo.org.uk)
- Reach Volunteering - [reachvolunteering.org.uk](https://reachvolunteering.org.uk)
- NHS England - [volunteering.england.nhs.uk](https://volunteering.england.nhs.uk)

To find out more or to register, visit the Volunteer Centre's website.  
[www.vcth.org.uk](https://www.vcth.org.uk)

# The Tower Hamlets Parenting and Schools Partnership hubs

The Parenting and Schools Partnership is a collaboration between Tower Hamlets schools and the Parental Engagement Team. The school hubs offer a range of universal evidence-based parenting programmes, which are delivered by experienced practitioners and available to all Tower Hamlets families.

The hubs allow parents to connect with other parents, creating a sense of community and a space where they can share their parenting experiences.

The current school partners – **Central Foundation Girls' School, Mulberry School for Girls and St John's Primary School** – host a rolling programme of parenting courses each term for all parents within the local community.

Popular courses include Triple P (Positive Parenting Programme) and Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities and cover all aspects of parenting. Parents learn new strategies and are empowered to become more resilient and confident in their parenting abilities.



On completing the programmes, many parents report that they communicate more effectively with their children and feel more confident in handling challenging situations. The programmes give them a better understanding of their children's needs resulting in improved relationships.

For more information or to refer yourself for a parenting course visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes)

## Emotional First Aid course for parents

The Emotional First Aid course helps parents to notice the early signs of anxiety and encourages them to identify things that could enhance their emotional wellbeing.

Over the six-week course, parents have the chance to share their experiences with other parents and pick up practical self-care tips which are the foundations to good mental health.

For more details and to join a course email [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



### Why we all need to practise emotional first aid

Watch Psychologist Guy Winch's inspirational TED talk on how to practise emotional first aid: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2hc2FLOdhl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2hc2FLOdhl)

## Children and Families Safeguarding Services merge

The Early Help Hub and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) have merged to create one integrated team – the Multi-Agency Support Team.

This team of professionals will be responsible for all aspects of safeguarding children and family support in Tower Hamlets.

The merger has happened in response to the recommendations from the Greater London Authority peer review that took place in 2022. The newly formed team will ensure that children, young people and their families receive the right service at the right time, preventing confusion and making it easier to access services.

The team is operating from the Town Hall in Whitechapel and a new single pathway for referrals has been developed. It has replaced the two previous pathways for the Early Help Hub and MASH. This will ensure a more joined-up approach between services.



## The Better Together framework

In 2022, the Supporting Families Division (Early Help, Youth Justice and Young People's Service and Children's Social Care) launched the Better Together framework.

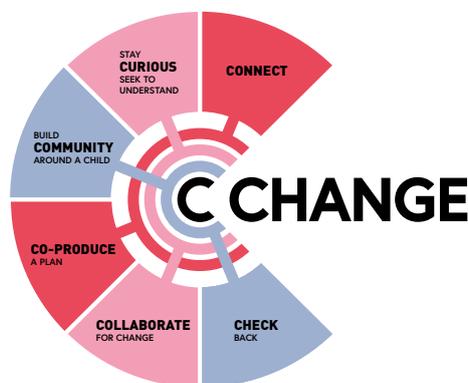
This sets out how children, young people, their carers and people involved in the network of support can work together effectively. It is based on restorative practice, systemic and trauma informed approaches.

The framework's C-Change approach:

- **Connect**
- Be **Curious**
- Build a **Community** around the child,
- **Co-produce** plans with those affected by them
- **Collaborate** to bring about change
- **Check** back to see if it's making a difference.

The framework's commitments

- Be open and honest
- Listen to understand
- Value families' experiences
- Work to prevent harm and repair damage
- Empower people with support



Book a Better Together training session;  
[learninghub.towerhamlets.gov.uk/course/view.php?id=716](https://learninghub.towerhamlets.gov.uk/course/view.php?id=716)  
 or email [learning.hub@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:learning.hub@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# The Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) Programme

Some conflict between parents is normal. It can even be healthy for children to see their parents argue but then sort out their disagreements.

However, when conflict is frequent and poorly resolved, it can be harmful for children. That's because the home environment no longer feels safe for them. Even if parents have separated, conflict may still be present, leaving children feeling upset.

Tower Hamlets is integrating the Reducing Parental Conflict programme into its services and approaches. It is also working closely with the Early Intervention Foundation to build and share the evidence base.

RPC uses the following interventions:

- Family mediation (see page 15)
- Family Group Conference (see page 15)
- Triple P Family Transitions (see table on page 16)
- OnePlusOne programme

The RPC Team are also able visit professionals team meetings and/or training days to raise awareness of the programme. For further details [earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Resources available at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/rpc](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/rpc)



## RPC Support from OnePlusOne

### Arguing better

Arguing Better is an online course to help parents understand the impact arguing has on children.

The course was created by relationship experts from OnePlusOne, to help parents to communicate in ways that are helpful rather than harmful. It is free for Tower Hamlets residents.

### Getting it right for children

When parents separate, it's easy for children to get caught in the middle of their arguments and disagreements. There is a free online course which is available to parents living in Tower Hamlets. The course has been designed to help separated parents to co-operate so they can get it right' for their children.



For more details visit [www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents](http://www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents)

## Early Help Family Group Conferences (FGC)

An FGC is a meeting where families and their friends are supported to get together to make plans for their child(ren). The conference can help families through difficult times – when parents are ill, struggling to meet their child's needs or worried about their child's behaviour and wellbeing.

The aim of the conference is to put a plan in place and provide early help support so that parents can cope better and children feel supported by the family.

FGCs are coordinated by an independent person called a Family Group Conference coordinator. The coordinator will make sure that parents are fully consulted about when and where the conference takes place, as well as which family and friends should attend.

### The three parts of an FGC

#### Information giving

Usually someone who already works with the child will attend to talk about their involvement. They will explain what support is available. This person is called the Information Giver.

Parents will have a chance to ask questions and gain a better understanding of what they need to consider when making the plan. It can then be created in the private time session.

#### Private time

The family will then be left in private to discuss and put together a family plan.

It is important that everyone has a chance to express their ideas and offer what support they can for the child. The coordinator is on standby to help if needed.

#### Presenting the plan

Once the plan is made, it is presented to the FGC coordinator. Any requests for additional support or resources can be discussed at this point.

A date is set for an FGC review and the coordinator then sends the plan to everyone who attended the conference.

To make a referral for an FGC email:  
[family.groupconference@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:family.groupconference@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Family mediation – a case study

**Family mediation is a free service that can be useful for families who are experiencing conflict. It can help them learn positive ways of resolving ongoing issues.**

**The following is a case study which shows how effective the mediation process can be for families.**

The parents are separated. The dad has looked after 'Jason' (two years old) when mum has been unwell due to mental ill-health. This affected his ability to stay in employment. They argued over who should look after Jason.

They started family mediation hoping it would help them decide who should be the primary carer for Jason and they also wanted to argue less.

The family mediator first met each parent individually. This gave each of them a safe space to be listened to without judgement. They reflected on the situation. They decided what they would like to talk about in the joint session.

In the joint session each parent expressed their emotions and views. The mediator ensured they were not interrupted and that each said what they wanted to say before allowing them to move on to talk with each other.

The mediator supported them to agree a list of things to discuss and provided the structure for them to have the discussions.

The outcome of the mediation was that the parents agreed on care arrangements for Jason (50/50), a support plan for mum's mental health and a plan for dad's return to work.

They found common ground and wrote in their agreement "we both love our son and want him to be well looked after".

To find out how mediation can support your family or a family you are working with email  
[earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk)  
Tel: 020 7364 5006

## Tower Hamlets Parent and Family Support Service

# Parenting programmes

Parenting programmes are a source of support for all parents and offer an opportunity to share experiences, develop an understanding of child development, build positive relationships and learn to deal with challenging behaviour.

PROGRAMME	AGE	INFORMATION
<b>Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities</b>	2-18 years	Aims to increase parental self-esteem and confidence and reduce child behavioural difficulties. Five sessions, shortened version adapted for online. Also available in Bengali and Somali. Evening programme in English. Thirteen weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Teen</b>	12-18 years	For parents to build positive relationships with their teenager or for those who have concerns about problem behaviour, non-cooperation and aggression or wish to prevent behavioural problems from developing. Nine weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Group</b>	2-11 years	For parents who wish to build positive relationships with their child, increase self-confidence and develop their skills and techniques for dealing with difficult behaviour. Eight weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Family Transitions</b>	All parents	For parents who are experiencing personal distress after separation or divorce, which is impacting on their parenting. Six weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Online</b>	2-11 years & 12-18 years	An individual online programme for parents to access and complete at their own pace. Practitioner support and guidance to complete the programme is available on request.
<b>Emotional First Aid</b>	All parents	Offers an overview of mental health and wellbeing in relation to parenting. Learn strategies to manage anxieties, identify stress factors, gain a better understanding of ourselves and promote a healthier sense of wellbeing. Six weekly sessions.
<b>Speakeasy</b>	5-18 years	For parents to develop the skills and confidence to talk to their children about growing up, relationships and keeping safe. Explores how Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is taught in schools and the influence on children from media and peers. Four weekly sessions.
<b>The Parent Factor in ADHD</b>	5-16 years	A programme for parents with children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The course will cover information to help understand the diagnosis and treatment, strategies to support your child and manage difficult behaviour and how to advocate on your child's behalf within the education system. Nine weekly sessions.
<b>Early Repair</b>		Early repair is a brief awareness two-day group programme for fathers identified as using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control). Early Repair is for fathers who are assessed as being a lower risk in accordance with the Tower Hamlets risk matrix. Professional referrals only.

## Triple P discussion groups

For parents of children aged 2-11 years

- Encouraging positive behaviour
- Managing fighting and aggression
- Developing good bedtime routines
- Hassle-free mealtimes with children

For parents of children aged 12-18 years

- Coping with teenagers' emotions
- Reducing family conflict
- Getting teenagers to co-operate
- Building teenagers' survival skills

### Get in touch

Email: [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk) Tel: 020 7364 6398

To book a place or to make a referral download a referral form, scan the QR code or visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes)



## Shout out to the Parental Engagement Team



Ayesha Khanam Rashina Begum Ruba Talukdar

Practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team have been recognised for the crucial support they provide to families in the borough.

Family Support practitioner, Rashina Begum, who provides support in schools such as Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Primary School, has been commended by the chair of governors at the school as well as by James Thomas, Corporate Director of Children's Services, for the commitment she has shown to the families she has been supporting.

“

**The support you provide is mind-blowing. The governing body is incredibly grateful that we have you on our school's team. It means so much that you are able to provide practical as well as emotional support to families who are often at a loss to know where to turn.**

Jo Faulkner, Chair of Governors, Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Primary School

”

In addition, parenting practitioners, Ruba Talukdar and Ayesha Khanam, also received a shout out from James Thomas in recognition for their work in delivering a highly successful Emotional First Aid programme for parents.

The course helps parents to notice the early signs of anxiety and encourages them to identify things that could enhance their emotional wellbeing. The two practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team were commended on how they facilitated the course – giving parents space to share their experiences and providing them with useful tips to foster good mental health.



## Celebrating Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities success

Parents celebrated completing a 12-week Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting programme in Bengali. The programme was held at the Parent Advice Centre and Overland Children and Family Centre and were facilitated by parenting practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team.

Parents from all backgrounds attended, shared their experiences and participated in group discussions. Their achievements were celebrated with an end of course party where homemade food was shared, and parents took some time to reflect on the progress they had made over the 12 weeks.

“

Parent quotes

**My relationship with my children has improved since starting this programme.**

**I praise my children which has improved our relationships.**

**I can manage my emotions and behave better.**

**I argue less with my daughter and manage conflict situations better.**

”



## Testicular health in boys and young men

The North East London Cancer Alliance is funding a project aimed at raising awareness of testicular health problems that can be experienced by boys and young men. Testicular cancer rates start to rise in the mid-teens, while testicular torsion (twisting) rates start to rise even younger, at around age 11.

Both conditions can be treated easily if diagnosed early but can become more serious if left for too long before medical intervention, potentially resulting in the removal of a testicle and/or advanced cancer.

The project aims to reach all boys in North East London with NHS-approved testicular health education. It hopes to raise awareness among parents too, so that they know what to do if their son raises any concerns with them.

For more details and to find out what to look out for, visit [www.testicularhealth.info](http://www.testicularhealth.info)



## Have Your Say: Violence Against Women and Girls in Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets Council are gathering information to help with future planning for services, programmes, and other projects that aim to reduce different forms of violence against women and girls in Tower Hamlets.

Share your views on how we can prevent and reduce violence against women and girls in the borough by taking a short survey. The survey is open until **Tuesday 10 October**.

To take the survey, visit <https://forms.office.com/e/TUg7NsuNMZ>



### What does 'violence against women and girls' (VAWG) mean?

It includes a range of crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls – these include domestic abuse, sexual violence, exploitation, stalking, honour-based abuse (female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and honour killings), digital or online abuse including (revenge porn, upskirting), among others.

### The #HaveAWord campaign

The London Mayor's public health approach to tackling violence against women and girls puts the focus of responsibility on men and boys to change the way they perceive, treat and talk about women. The Mayor's #HaveAWord campaign aims to help men and boys to step-in by saying "maaate to their mates" when they witness language and behaviour towards women and girls that crosses the line.

As part of the campaign, the Mayor of London has released a short film that can be used as a tool to help determine when, where and how to call out inappropriate language.

For more details and to watch video, visit [www.london.gov.uk/maaate](http://www.london.gov.uk/maaate)

## Health Spot

Health Spot is a free and confidential GP service for young people in Tower Hamlets. It puts young people in control of their health care by offering appointments with doctors who are experienced in supporting young people.

Staff are friendly and non-judgemental so that young people can talk to them freely about any of their health concerns.

To book an appointment email [treasurer@wearespotlight.com](mailto:treasurer@wearespotlight.com)

Tel: 07734 346 127

For more details visit [www.wearespotlight.com/health-spot](http://www.wearespotlight.com/health-spot)

## Stoptober

Stoptober is back this October with a new national campaign designed to encourage and support smokers to quit for good. While smoking rates have declined in recent years, over five million people in England still smoke and it remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and death.

The theme for this year's campaign is 'When you stop smoking, good things start to happen', reminding smokers of the many benefits of quitting and providing useful tips to help them on their quitting journey.

Visit [www.thestoptober.co.uk](http://www.thestoptober.co.uk)

## Vaping resources for secondary schools

With a rise in the number of children vaping, Better Health have created teaching resources aimed at helping Key Stage 3 children understand the impact that vaping has on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Written by teachers and featuring films co-created with young people, they encourage discussion about nicotine, what vaping is and the impact it has on both young people and the environment. The flexible resources can be used individually during form time or together as a full lesson plan.

They are available to download free on the School Zone website and there is a teacher email and social media toolkit to promote the teaching resources through your networks.



Visit:  
[campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/mental-wellbeing/overview#vaping](http://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/mental-wellbeing/overview#vaping)



## Lily helps author new recipe book

Parent and Carer Council member, Lily Islam, has been working on the Nurture Early for Optimal Nutrition (NEON) project that aims to optimise care practices in South Asian children under two years in East London. The project, funded by University College London and led by Professor Monica Lakhonpal, has been recognised by the Royal Society of Public Health with a special award.

The latest phase of the project has involved the production of a recipe book that Lily has helped author. The resource was developed to provide culturally-tailored recipes for babies from six months to two years. It features over 30 healthy recipes specially devised for South Asian children.

More details, visit [www.acesoghc.com/neon](http://www.acesoghc.com/neon)

Scroll down to the end of the webpage to see the toolkit section for resources and recipes.

Email: [lilyislam77@gmail.com](mailto:lilyislam77@gmail.com)

## HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAMME CELEBRATION

# Celebrating the Healthy Families programme

The success of the Healthy Families programme was showcased and celebrated with over 70 parents and school staff at a special event held at Mile End's Ecology Centre in July.

The event, organised by the Parental Engagement Team, gave participants from the programme and school staff a chance to reconnect with course facilitators and network with professionals from local health services.

School staff and parents gave presentations about the lasting impact of the programme and the Healthy Family Ambassadors' work in spreading the healthy living message within the community was recognised when they were awarded their Healthy Family Parent Ambassador (HFPA) certificates.

### About the Healthy Families programme

The Healthy Families programme is a fun informative and practical course devised and delivered by the Parental Engagement Team in schools, community centres and children centres. The successful programme has been inspiring parents to make positive lifestyle changes that benefit the health of the whole family.

Over the last year, the team have been busy developing the programme. In response



Parents listening to speakers at the Healthy Families celebration



The Healthy Families Parent Ambassadors receiving their certificates

to feedback from parents that they wanted to put into practice all they have learned over the five-week course, a cooking element was introduced and has been well received.

Feedback from parents attending children and family centre sessions also led to additions to the programme. Co-production sessions with

parents who wanted their pre-school children to be involved led to a series of parent and child activities being developed.

Sessions on fussy eating, promoting good oral health, healthy snacks and dealing with tantrums have all been integrated into the Healthy Families programme.

To book a Healthy Families course for your setting or to refer yourself for the programme email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAMME CELEBRATION

## The speakers

**Denise De-Goze**, acting Head of the Parent and Family Support Service, welcomed everyone to the event. She outlined the history of the Healthy Families programme and highlighted some of the key achievements including the Healthy Families Parent Ambassadors training. She also talked about collaborations with the Ministry of Food cooking course and Public Health.



**Shahin Choudhury**, Parental Engagement Lead at Swanlea Secondary School, spoke about the impact of the Ministry of Food programme the Parental Engagement Team. She shared how parents were inspired by the programme to make small changes to their cooking habits by cutting down on salt and oil to create affordable tasty dishes from scratch.



**Luisa Del Gatto** talked about how the Bags of Taste initiative have inspired over 12,000 people to improve their health. She explained how they have been transforming the lives of people living in food poverty by giving them vital help and practical support they need to buy and cook tasty, healthy and affordable food.



**Michelle Ting** from Kent Community Oral Health provided some key oral health messages for families. She shared some positive news reporting that the oral health of children in the borough has been improving in recent years and gave details of training available for parents to become Oral Health Champions.



**Villiana Fernandez**, Healthy Families Parent Ambassador, spoke about how the Healthy Families Parent Ambassador training programme helped her to develop the confidence to inspire others to make changes that can improve health outcomes. She also signed up over 25 potential Healthy Families Parent Ambassadors for training.



**Alison Jones**, Community Cohesion Coordinator, and **Rumana Begum**, Family Support Worker, from Marion Richardson Primary School, talked about the impact of the Healthy Families Programme. They mentioned some of the initiatives they have devised to improve health and wellbeing, such as the walk and talk group they have established at the school.



**Sarah McSweeney** and **Murude Mehmet**, Health Families facilitators from the Parental Engagement Team delivered a lively and interactive myth busting session. They shed some light on some common health, diet and nutrition misconceptions. Audience members were fascinated to learn that some commonly held beliefs were actually false.



# HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAMME CELEBRATION

## The information marketplace



Practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team were on hand to talk about some of the exciting projects they have been involved in to improve health and wellbeing in the borough.  
[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentfamilysupport](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentfamilysupport)



Advisors from Nour were available to talk about the support they can offer to victims of domestic violence and the work they do to raise awareness within the community.  
[www.nour-dv.org.uk](http://www.nour-dv.org.uk)



Researchers from the Nuture Early for Optimal Nutrition (NEON) programme explained the work they were doing to mobilise local communities to help improve nutrition in early childhood.  
[www.acesoghc.com/neon](http://www.acesoghc.com/neon)



Staff from the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) provided free resources, travel advice and encouraged families to explore all the borough has to offer over the summer holidays using the DLR.  
[www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/dlr/dlr-ambassadors](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/dlr/dlr-ambassadors)



Healthwatch Tower Hamlets explained about their champion programme that aims to make sure decision makers hear the voice of the community and use their feedback to make improvements to health and social care services.  
[www.healthwatchtowerhamlets.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchtowerhamlets.co.uk)



Oral health experts from Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust provided free resources, tips on maintaining good oral health and oral health champion training.  
[www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/dental-services/oral-health-promotion-resources](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/dental-services/oral-health-promotion-resources)



Parents and children learned all about the health benefits of being active and physical activity. They enjoyed using the smoothie bike and pedal power to create delicious smoothies that contributed to their 'five a day'.



Instructors from the Boxing Fighting Academy provided expert boxing tuition to willing volunteers and promoted boxing as a great way to build endurance and get fit.  
[www.thaiboxingfightersacademy.com](http://www.thaiboxingfightersacademy.com)

# The Parental Engagement Team at Jamie Oliver Headquarters in Islington

Denise De-Goze, acting Head of the Parent and Family Support Service, joined a panel of Ministry of Food partners from around the UK at Jamie Oliver headquarters in Islington as part of their social impact report celebrations.

The event was hosted by Instagram influencer, author, cook and campaigner, Max La Manna. He questioned the panel about the impact of the Ministry of Food programme on the communities they work with.

Denise outlined some of the key Ministry of Food success stories in Tower Hamlets, where the Parental Engagement Team have been delivering the programme for ten years. She highlighted the breadth of coverage, talking about the diverse groups and settings where the programme has been delivered – from the borough's Holiday Childcare Scheme to schools and women's refuges, as well as work with targeted groups like foster carers and Healthy Families Parent Ambassadors.



“

**It was great to be able to share our Ministry of Food success stories with others and show how it has impacted on the families we work with.**

Denise De-Goze

”

To find out more about the Ministry of Food cooking programme email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# New Early Years Healthy Families sessions

These new one-off sessions take place in schools, early years settings and children and family centres. They give families a chance to take part in fun activities and explore ways to make small changes to routines and eating habits in order to improve their health.

Workshop themes include:

- Oral health
- Children's emotional health
- Eat Well, Feel Well (what's in our snacks)
- Active Families, Healthy Families
- Eat Well, Feel Well (eat to thrive)

Parents receive goody bags, top tips, recipes and information on health services in Tower Hamlets.



For more information email [denise.de-goze@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:denise.de-goze@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies  
Making a positive difference through Talking Therapies

## Raising Happy Babies

Free 6 week psychology course

Open to residents or those with a GP in Tower Hamlets, for first time mothers with a baby under 6 months

This course will help you to:

- Learn about your baby's social and emotional development.
- Look after yourself and your partner as new parents.
- Adjust to the transition to life with your baby.



Take the first step and contact us today!



Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies  
71 Johnson Street, London, E1 0AQ  
0207 702 7641  
[www.towerhamletstalkingtherapies.nhs.uk](http://www.towerhamletstalkingtherapies.nhs.uk)



We care  
We respect  
We are inclusive

**NHS**  
East London  
NHS Foundation Trust

Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies  
Making a positive difference through Talking Therapies

## Psychological Perinatal Support

- Webinars
- Computerised Therapy
- Groups
- Virtual/ in person 1:1 Therapy

We offer a range of psychological support to suit our patient's therapeutic goals.

Our clinicians are trained to work with parents and caregivers in the perinatal period, (to those who are pregnant or have a child under 1).

We aim to assess perinatal individuals within two weeks and offer treatment within four weeks.



Take the first step and contact us today!



Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies  
71 Johnson Street, London, E1 0AQ  
0207 702 7641  
[www.towerhamletstalkingtherapies.nhs.uk](http://www.towerhamletstalkingtherapies.nhs.uk)



We care  
We respect  
We are inclusive

**NHS**  
East London  
NHS Foundation Trust

# New digital game for children's anxiety



Help children build resilience and overcome their fears and worries!



A new NICE recommended mobile game app for 7-12 year olds



Lumi Nova is a new NHS-funded service designed to support young people aged seven to 12 years who are experiencing worries or mild to moderate anxiety.

It is ideal for children who may:

- Lack confidence to try new things
- Struggle to face simple everyday challenges
- Find it hard to concentrate
- Have problems with sleeping or eating
- Have negative thoughts about what's going to happen
- Avoid everyday activities, eg going to school, seeing friends

## What is Lumi Nova?

Lumi Nova is an intergalactic adventure game to support young people to fight fears and manage worries.

Whilst exploring planets, customising characters and earning treasure, children break their fears and worries down into manageable steps, learning life-long skills and building resilience.

The app is a National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended first line treatment option.

It is free for families in Tower Hamlets at

[www.luminova.app/elft](http://www.luminova.app/elft)

## Parents and Professionals: Join an upcoming webinar to find out more

If you would like to meet the Lumi Nova team, learn more and ask any questions, why not join an upcoming webinar:

### Professionals Lumi Nova Discovery Session

Thursday 17 October,  
2.30-3pm  
Thursday 2 November,  
11-11.30am



To book click [here](#) or scan the QR code.

### Parents Lumi Nova Discovery Session

Thursday 2 November,  
6-6.30pm  
Thursday 7 December,  
6-6.30pm



To book click [here](#) or scan the QR code.

For more information visit [www.luminova.app](http://www.luminova.app) or email [luminova@bfb-labs.com](mailto:luminova@bfb-labs.com)

## Spooky family fun this October half term holiday

There is Halloween arts & crafts, pumpkin carving and adventure play in our parks and adventure playgrounds for all the family.

For more information, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parkevents](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parkevents)



# Positive Ofsted feedback for the Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme

An Ofsted inspection took place at the Holiday Childcare Scheme held at St Anne's and Guardian Angels Primary School in April. The scheme received the highest grade under the current Ofsted framework, with positive feedback and comments from the inspector in the published report.



“

The enthusiasm and excitement displayed by children in the scheme are captivating.

”

“

Staff are excellent role models and demonstrate exceptional conduct and behaviour, which children copy.

”

“

Staff have exceptional partnerships with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of all children.

”

“

Leaders, managers and staff go above and beyond to ensure a positive culture and ethos of safeguarding.

”

For more information on the Holiday Childcare Scheme and to read the latest Ofsted reports visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs)

## Summer fun at Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme

The Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme took place over the summer holidays at St Mary and St Michael Primary School. The scheme supported parents over the holiday period by providing four weeks of fun activities for children aged 3 to 13 years old.

Each week, the children took part in activities based on a different theme. Themes included the environment, championship week, superheroes and the circus.

The summer scheme had:



**2,584**

sessions  
booked

**298**

children  
supported

**239**

total families  
supported

**199**

working  
families  
supported

**66**

LBTH schools  
represented in  
bookings

To read the full Holiday Childcare Scheme Summer newsletter visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs) (click on newsletters).

## National Play Day at the Holiday Childcare Scheme

National Play Day was celebrated at the scheme on 2 August.

This year's theme was 'playing on a shoestring – making every day an adventure'. Activities on the day focused on low-cost or no-cost play adventures that children can enjoy.

As part of the celebrations, the scheme continued their partnership with the Young V&A museum in Bethnal Green. The children were invited to the museum for a special National Play Day session where they made the most of all the free play opportunities.



For more details about the museum visit [www.vam.ac.uk/young](http://www.vam.ac.uk/young)

## Global Learning at the Holiday Childcare Scheme

The holiday childcare scheme has been to work in partnership with Global Learning London. The not-for-profit organisation facilitated thinking circles during the summer scheme. The children enjoyed thinking deeply about things like how we can

make the world a better place. The sessions aim to cultivate optimism and action for a more just and sustainable world.

For more details about Global Learning London visit [www.globallearninglondon.org/our-story](http://www.globallearninglondon.org/our-story)

For more details visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs)

## Need childcare over the October half term holiday?

The Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme is Ofsted registered and provides childcare for children aged three to 13 years. The next scheme will take place during the October half term at St Mary and St Michael Primary School.

Bookings open on:

- **26 September** – for working parents living in the borough
- **3 October** – for non-working parents living in the borough
- **10 October** – for parents living outside the borough

Bookings close **Tuesday 17 October** or earlier once bookings are full.



For more details visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs)

## Get involved with play estates!

London Play would like to recruit residents who would be interested in helping to get more children playing outside in their communities. They want to hear from parents and children, including families who have children with SEND to get their input in developing the programme.

Playing has numerous health and developmental benefits for children as well helping the community to get to know each other whilst having a great time.

They want to make use of underused, communal spaces on housing estates and get the community together for the purpose of play!

If you are interested in getting involved or for more information, email Kevin Siaw, Public Health Programme Manager at [kevin.siaw@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.siaw@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

[www.londonplay.org.uk/current\\_work/play-on-estates](http://www.londonplay.org.uk/current_work/play-on-estates)

Click [here](#) to watch a video from Play Wales that really captures the importance of play from the child's perspective. Share with parents and colleagues.



## Thinking of becoming a childminder?

Are you at home looking after your own children? Have you ever thought of becoming a childminder?



Childminding could be the career for you if you:

- Love working with children in your own home
- Can be flexible and adaptable
- Would like to run your own business
- Are committed to providing good quality childcare.

To find out more, attend an upcoming information session where you will find out about the process of becoming a registered childminder. The session will help you decide if childminding is the right career choice for you.

To book your place on a childminders information session,

Email: [EECTraining@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:EECTraining@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



## Let's Talk SEND Updates and Information

Information on previous and upcoming Let's Talk SEND events and updates on the borough's SEND improvement journey can be found at

[www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send)



### TERMS

**SENCOs** are also referred to as SENDCOs (Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators) in some schools.

**SENDIASS** refers to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service.

Let us know what you would like to see in our next 'Spotlight On...' as part of the termly Let's Talk SEND supplement. Email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

More information on the support available to families can be found at [www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com](http://www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com)

# Let's Talk SEND information event

Parents and carers are invited to the Let's Talk SEND information event this autumn, with stalls and updates from services which support children with SEND or an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Co-produced with the Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum, the event is an opportunity for parents and carers to be updated on the borough's SEND improvement journey and its future plans. They will also be able to meet a range of education, health and community service providers.

### Let's Talk SEND Information Event

**Thursday 30 November**

**10.30am-1pm**

**(with updates from senior leaders from 11am)**

Brady Arts and Community Centre,  
192-196 Hanbury Street, E1 5HU

For more information, email

[parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



# Upcoming SEND workshops for parents

## Education, Health and Care Plan workshop

The Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information, Advice and Support Service will be delivering a workshop for parents that will explain about the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) process.

The workshop will explain:

- What is an EHC Plan?
- What is the purpose?
- What is the process?
- What makes a good EHC Plan?

**Tuesday 10 October**  
**10am- 12.30pm**

John Smith Children's and Family Centre,  
90 Stepney Way  
E1 2ES

## 'What is SEND?' workshop

SENDIASS are offering a workshop for parents to discuss key issues about SEND.

The workshop will:

- Define SEND
- Discuss the law and guidance regarding SEND
- Outline the support available for children with SEND.

**Thursday 2 November**  
**10am-12.30pm**

Wapping & Bigland Children and Family Centre, Richard Street  
E1 2JP

For more details or to book a place, email:

[towerhamlets&citysendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:towerhamlets&citysendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

[towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Tel: 020 7364 6489

## Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum



The Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum is pan-disability. Members work with families and professionals from the council and health services to ensure the views of parents, carers and young people contribute to the design and delivery of services.

Join other parents and carers of children and young people with SEND (0-25 years) for coffee and talk about the issues that are important to you.

For more information, email  
[thesendforum@gmail.com](mailto:thesendforum@gmail.com)  
[www.thsendforum.co.uk](http://www.thsendforum.co.uk)



## Inclusive play for SEND parents and young people

Public Health want to hear from parents and children and young people with SEND on what inclusive play looks like for them.

If you are interested in getting involved, would like to invite Public Health to speak to a group on this topic or for more information, email  
[kevin.siaw@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.siaw@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# Highlights from Our Time All Ability Youth Forum Newsletter

## Join Our Time Youth Forum

Come and join Our Time, the forum for all young people in Tower Hamlets, aged 14-25. We meet regularly to play games, have trips and do arts and crafts. We also have the voice to speak to leaders about what you want to see happening to make changes for young people in Tower Hamlets.

## Youth Voice Matters Conference in Manchester

We attended the Youth Voice Matters conference which helps young people to develop their participation skills and recognise the impact that they can have when taking part in local and national decision-making about SEND.

## The SEND Improvement Board

The SEND Improvement Board is a group of leaders in Tower Hamlets and community representatives who work together to improve life for people with SEND and their families.

At the board, Our Time representatives, Sornally and Yaomin shared updates about the work we did in the last year and our views about how things are for young people with SEND in Tower Hamlets.

## Let's Talk SEND Post 16

The Tower Hamlets SEND department and Tower Hamlets and City SENDIASS hosted a



Our time members arriving at Manchester for the Youth Voice Matters Conference

Let's Talk SEND Post-16 Options event in May.

Parents, carers and young people with SEND met senior leaders in Tower Hamlets and to hear from different professionals and services about the support available when preparing for adulthood. Our Time talked to young people and their parents about opportunities for them to get their voice heard.

## Connection Coalition – Loneliness and Mental Health

Yaomin Ali, Vice Chair of Our Time, represented Our Time and shared ideas about how to challenge loneliness for young people with SEND. We heard ideas from different services about how to address loneliness and mental health challenges.

## Every Chance for Every Child Forum – Bullying and Mental Health

Every Chance for Every Child is

the name of the Tower Hamlets Children and Families Strategy 2019 – 2024. This is a plan to help improve lives for children and families.

This forum is a chance for different leaders, professionals and community representatives to see how well the plan is going.

Members from Our Time did a presentation about what are some of the issues young people with SEND face when it comes to bullying and ideas for how this can be improved.

To find out more or to join the Our Time Youth Forum, email [ourtime.yf@gmail.com](mailto:ourtime.yf@gmail.com) or call **020 7364 7127**.

Read the latest Ourtime Youth Forum newsletter [here](#) or click on the QR code.



# Our Time priorities for the year

Our Time achieved a lot in 2022/23, including:

- Being part of the disability fun day
- Running sessions at Spotlight Youth Centre
- Meeting with the Education Scrutiny Committee
- Meeting with Mayor Lutfur Rahman
- Going to the Youth Voice Matters conference in Manchester
- Attending the PAN London Strategic Managers Group, the ALDCS Health Professionals meeting and the London SEND Summit.
- Some Our Time members won a Youth Achievement Award 2022.



## Top five priorities for the year

PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
<b>1. Pan London Strategic Managers Group</b>	We want to work with professionals to develop the SEND support system across London and a pan-London young person's forum.	We agreed to give advice to other councils on setting up a SEND forum, getting young people involved and sharing ways of providing support to young people with SEND.
<b>2. Anti-bullying</b>	We are going to do work on anti-bullying by running workshops at educational settings and youth projects.	We will be working closely with other support services to address any issues related to bullying to support all young people accordingly.
<b>3. Film making/ Our Time</b>	We are going to make films about independent living with SEND, services at YPAC, including Our Time Forum, and being a young person SEND ambassador.	We have had discussions around making these films and how to use them to make SEND more visible. We will get a professional film maker to do the filming.
<b>4. Running a Boys/ Girls Group separately</b>	We want to have separate groups for boys and girls as some young people are more comfortable with people of their own gender.	We will be working on offering sessions to boys and girls separately which may help to make some young people feel more comfortable. In these sessions, we will offer some support and advice on how to stay safe.
<b>5. Promote Our Time</b>	We want to get more people involved in Our Time to increase participation and involvement with the work that we are doing.	We will be visiting educational institutions and other youth projects to recruit more young people. We will consult with young people to find out more about what sort of activities and events they are interested in as they join Our Time.

# October is Black History Month

October is Black History Month. It's a chance to recognise and celebrate the contributions of black people to British society. This year, Black History Month is dedicated to honouring the achievements of black women who are often the forgotten heroines.

The theme of 'Saluting our Sisters' highlights the crucial role that black women have played in shaping history, inspiring change and building communities. This year's celebration will showcase pioneering black women who have made remarkable contributions to literature, music, fashion, sport, business, politics, academia, social and health care and more.



For local updates click [here](#) or scan the QR code.

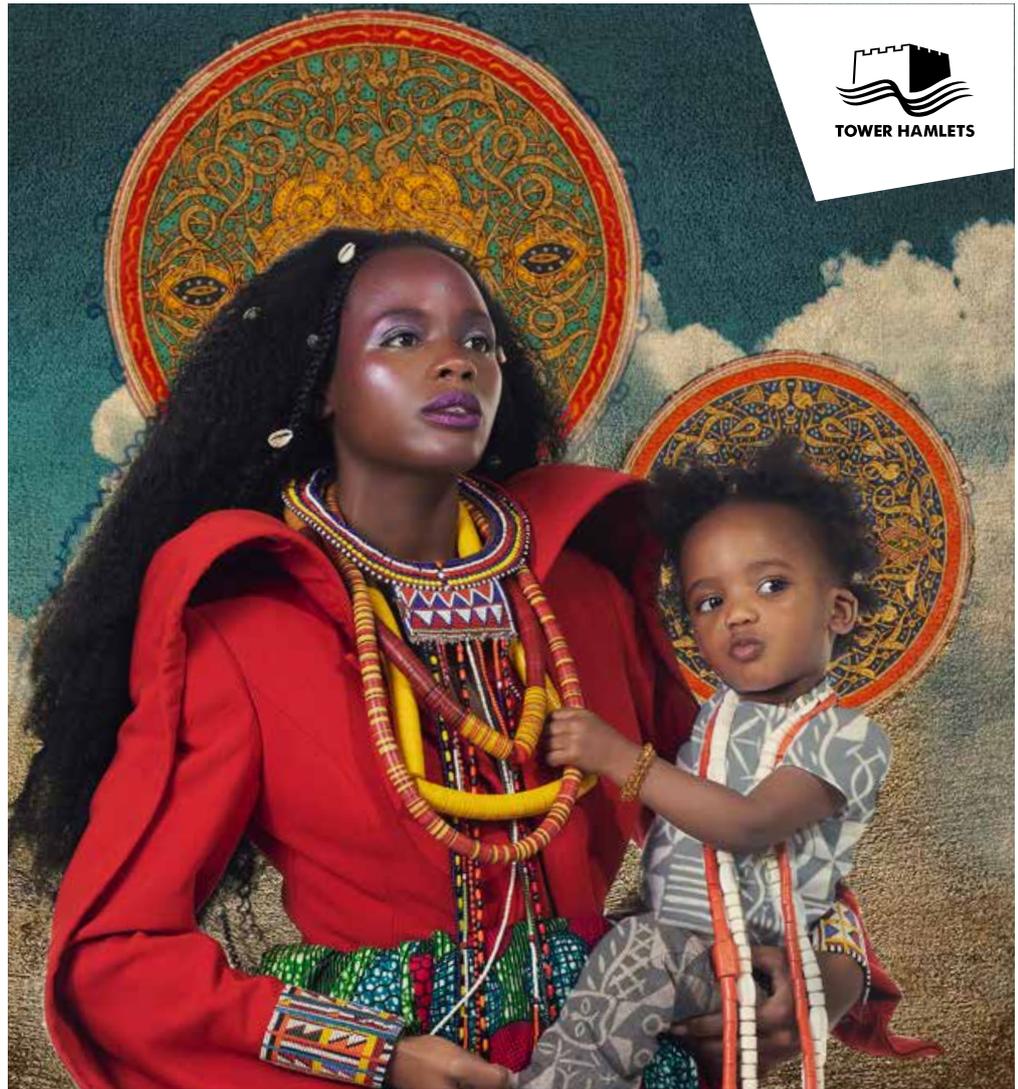
For more details, visit [www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk](http://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk)

## Platform to Talk session for Black History Month

To mark Black History Month, October's Platform to Talk session will explore the importance of belonging, culture and identity. Parents can join the conversation and discover how these elements can really enrich their child's learning and self-esteem.

**Thursday 12 October**  
**10-11am**

For more details and to book your session, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH OCTOBER 2023

Celebrate the richness of Black culture and heritage through a varied programme of events and activities. Music, walks, talks, exhibitions, workshops and more. SEE, LISTEN, CREATE, EXPLORE, ENJOY

Photo © Asikò



📍 THevents 📱 TowerHamletsEvents 📷 TowerHamletsNow #THBHM  
[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/blackhistorymonth](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/blackhistorymonth)



## New app to report hate crime

Zoteria is a new, free app that aims to help the LGBTQIA+ community and the wider public to tackle the issue of LGBTQIA+ hate crime.

The app allows people to report hate crimes, either against themselves or on behalf of someone else, and access support from LGBTQIA+ charities. For more details click [here](#) or scan QR code.



## Young Tower Hamlets

The council has invested £13.7 million into its Youth Service, including a rebrand and expansion. This follows a reduction in funding to youth services both locally and nationally.

The new service – Young Tower Hamlets – will feature a youth space in every ward and provide a programme of free opportunities and support for young people across the borough.

The focus will be on:

- Supporting young people's post-16 transition into education, training and employment
- Increasing young people's participation in universal 'safe spaces'
- Preventing young people from offending and entering the criminal justice system
- Increasing employment opportunities for residents in both paid and voluntary youth work roles.



Zaynah Alom, Chair of Tower Hamlets Youth Council, at the launch event

To find out more visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News\\_events/2023/July/Council-launches-new-youth-service-with-youth-space-in-every-ward.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2023/July/Council-launches-new-youth-service-with-youth-space-in-every-ward.aspx)

## Help shape Young Tower Hamlets

Young people can give their views on the borough's youth service.

Complete the young people's survey at: [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YoungTowerHamlets](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YoungTowerHamlets)

Parents can also share their views at: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/youngtowerhamlets](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/youngtowerhamlets)

For more information email [ythlondon@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:ythlondon@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## National Databank now at Idea Stores

Digitally excluded residents can now access free mobile data at Whitechapel and Chrisp Street Idea Stores. Tower Hamlets Idea Stores have signed up to the Good Things Foundation's National Databank, which provides free mobile data, texts and calls to people in need via their network of digital inclusion hubs.

Tower Hamlets residents who are over 18 and struggling with their mobile data can now drop into the Whitechapel and Chrisp Street Idea Stores at the following times and a member of staff will be able to help.

VENUE	DAY	TIMES
Idea Store Whitechapel	Mondays	2-3pm
	Wednesdays	2.15-3.45pm
	Fridays	11am-12noon
Idea Store Chrisp Street	Tuesdays	2.15-3.45pm
	Thursdays	2-3pm
	Fridays	11am-12noon

For more details, visit [www.ideastore.co.uk/our-services/national-databank](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/our-services/national-databank)

To join the National Databank, visit [www.goodthingsfoundation.org/databank](http://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/databank)

# Training and events calendar

## Parental engagement information and training for parents

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Tuesday 10 October 10am-12.30pm	<b>Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) workshop</b> A workshop for parents to provide key information about the EHCP process. Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>
Thursday 12 October Monday, 13 Nov Friday, 15 Dec 10-11am	<b>Platform to Talk online sessions</b> These virtual sessions cover a range of topical issues from health and wellbeing to family life, parenting, school and more. See page 10 for details. For more details, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>
Tuesdays 17 October 21 November 12 December 16 January 10am-12noon	<b>Somali Parents and Carers Network meetings</b> This network meets monthly and provides opportunities for Somali parents and carers to discuss key issues around education, health and wellbeing, get information and hear from guest speakers. For more details, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>
Thursday 2 November 10am-12.30pm	<b>'What is SEND?' workshop for parents</b> The Tower Hamlets & City Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) are offering a workshop for parents to discuss key issues about special educational needs and disability (SEND). See page 29 for details. Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>
Saturday 18 November 10.30am-1.30pm	<b>Parent and Carer Council meeting</b> The borough's main family forum and key consultation vehicle to support borough-wide consultation with parents and carers. <a href="http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentcouncil">www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentcouncil</a>
Thursday 30 November 10.30am-1pm	<b>Let's Talk SEND: Information sessions for families</b> An opportunity for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND to hear from senior leaders about the Local Area SEND system and find out more about plans following the SEND Local Area Inspection. Parents and carers can also share their experiences to help improve communication throughout the SEND system. Email: <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>
Thursdays Fortnightly Term time only 10am-12noon	<b>SEND Parent Support Group</b> This group offers parents and carers of children or young people with SEND, support and information around key themes/relevant issues and an opportunity to meet other parents and carers of children with SEND. Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>

## Parental engagement information and training for practitioners

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Thursday 9 November 1.30-3.30pm	<b>Working with Families: Multi-Agency Seminar</b> This multi-agency forum aims to improve the exchange of information and increase links between organisations and practitioners working with parents/families in Tower Hamlets. For more information, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>

# Do something amazing by becoming a foster carer



**Local children need loving and supportive foster carers now.**

Tower Hamlets Council offers carers lots of support including fantastic training opportunities and financial support of up to **£850 per week** (per child depending on age). Foster carers also receive 50% off their council tax bill and a generous referral scheme offering £1000 for every carer who they refer on to be successfully approved to foster.



Call: 020 7364 1246  
[www.fosteringtowerhamlets.co.uk](http://www.fosteringtowerhamlets.co.uk)

Your guide to information and services for families in Tower Hamlets

# LOCAL OFFER

@thlocaloffer [localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk](http://localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk)



Guide to information and services in Tower Hamlets for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and **all** families in the borough



## Useful contacts



For a list of local and national advice services, providing free information for Tower Hamlets residents on welfare benefits, debt, housing and other matters, scan the QR code or visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice)

Specialist advice agencies and solicitors firms also provide legal aid services to eligible clients.

## Help for households

**The government is offering help for households.**

To find out what cost of living support you could be eligible for visit

[www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds](http://www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds)

Help for Households