

SEND Weekly Newsletter

15 May 2019



Issue 38

Mental Health Awareness Week and taking care

It's Mental Health Awareness Week and the theme for 2019 is Body image - how we think and feel about our bodies.

Concerns over body image are just one of many pressures that can affect young people and have an impact on their mental health. A group of young people in Somerset have written their own tips on looking after your mental health which provide excellent advice on coping strategies when life feels like an uphill battle!

The Mental Health Lifehacks tips are [available here](#) and there are other resources, including The Little Book of Mental Health Lifehacks. Also this week Somerset County Council has formerly approved the Somerset Plan for Children, Young People and Families for 2019-2020.

Supporting children and young people, keeping them safe and improving their lives, is one of the most important roles the Council and its partners in health and the police undertake. Children and young people were at the heart of drawing up the plan, which is there to help them achieve this.

It highlights issues such as difficulties in education, lack of opportunities, bullying, abuse, exploitation, poverty and self-harm .

You can [access the plan here](#).

For more information on Mental Health Awareness Week [visit here](#)



Mental health training for schools

There's a mental health training programme available for schools organised by Somerset County Council and its health partners. The Sessions are led by specialists from the Education Psychology Service and Mental First Aid England.

The courses cover:

- Self Harm
- Mental Health First Aid
- Eating Disorders

These are aimed a helping schools adopt a whole school approach to wellbeing, including supporting children and young people with low level mental health problems.

You can find out [about the courses here](#).



Hospital passport - views needed

The SEND Engagement and Participation Team and Somerset Parent Carer Forum are working with others to review Hospital and Health Passports in Somerset.

A Hospital Passport is used by people with additional support needs who might need hospital treatment.

The passport is designed to help people to communicate their needs to doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals.

Please could you share this survey with anyone that you work with who might have an additional need of any age.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QS5C8TP>

It shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes to complete and it will really help the team with this work going forwards.

The deadline for completing the survey is **Friday 24 May at 12pm.**

Support group on the way

A new coffee morning group is starting up.

The group is called & Breathe and is for parents or carers of children and young adults with learning disabilities.

It starts on Wednesday 4 September 9.30 to 11.30am and will run weekly during term times. It will be based at The Hub, 13 Buckland Road, Yeovil, BA21 5EA.

There'll be informal sessions and guest speaker sessions.

Visit the group's [Facebook](#) page for more details or email breatheyeovil@outlook.com

Deafness and hearing loss - raising awareness

When you're communicating with a child or young person who has hearing loss did you know you need to think about where you're standing?

If you're in front of a window there might be a shadow across your face.

This was one of the key reminders flagged up during Deaf Awareness Week (6-12 May) by Somerset County Council's Children and Young Persons Sensory, Physical & Occupational Therapy (SPOT) Services (SPOT).

This was a national event launched by the UK Council on Deafness aimed at raising awareness of deafness and hearing loss.

They list celebratory role models - from presidents to rock stars to inspire and inform.

[You can find loads of tips and information as well as role models here.](#)

To mark it the SPOT team issued advice to schools, parents and other professionals.

An important issue covered was the danger of headphones and how children and young people with hearing loss turn up the volume to compensate which can cause further damage.

The team recommends the



use of direct input audio shoes and leads. The audio shoe (pictured next to main image) attaches to the bottom of the hearing aid and can be connected to the audio source without needing to use headphones.

You can contact the SPOT team on OTCWDSERVICE@somerset.gov.uk

