

Oxfordshire School Readiness newsletter

May 2021 - Issue 10



If you have resources and information you would like me to share in this newsletter, please email SchoolReadiness@Oxfordshire.gov.uk by the 27th of every month.

This month we have a focus on mental health and well-being, thank you to colleagues who have sent in valuable resources to share.

Mental Health and Well-being

Connect with Nature [here](#). It highlights [Oxford City Farm](#) as one of the successful organisations in the Mental Wellbeing Grant Fund. Oxford City Farm provides opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with farming and food production, animals, nature and each other. The project will run community farming volunteer sessions to enable people to experience the positive effects and benefits that nature has on mental wellbeing. Read the full case study [here](#).

Oxfordshire Mind's virtual walks

There are lots of ways in which spending time in nature can be positive for our mental health and wellbeing. From gaining a sense of peace and a boost to our self-esteem, to improved concentration. New and exciting research is happening all the time that adds to our understanding of how our natural environment affects the health of our bodies and minds. The benefits are often related to how our senses connect us to the environment around us, from the shapes in nature we see to the

scents that trees give off and the soft fascination that nature can stimulate which helps our minds rest.

Oxfordshire Mind's Walking for Wellbeing project offers a variety of virtual walks which offer a sensory description around a picturesque location, with pictures and an audio recording to help transport you to that place. To see virtual walks click [here](#)

Other useful well-being links:

- Why gardening is good for your mental health post-pandemic
<https://happiful.com/gardening-good-mental-health-post-pandemic/>
- Sir David Attenborough | Mental health and nature
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h29z-l3XTIk>
- Nature 'more important than ever during lockdown'
<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-56889322>
- Can hearing birdsong help boost our mental health and wellbeing
<https://www.euronews.com/living/2021/03/31/how-has-birdsong-helped-us-to-stay-calm-during-lockdown>
- Gardening just twice a week improves wellbeing and relieves stress
<https://www.sciencefocus.com/news/gardening-just-twice-a-week-improves-wellbeing-and-relieves-stress/>
- Jill's story: Ecominds and Wellbeing Comes Naturally
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68QvtTfQGyo>

Every Mind Matters

There is a new article on the [COVID-19 hub](#) that gives you [tips on how to cope with anxiety about coming out of lockdown](#). There is also updated [Every Mind Matters resources](#) to help conversations about mental health and the things in our daily lives that can affect it.

The Better Health - Every Mind Matters [website](#) has recently been refreshed to help people access our content more easily.

Men's health webinar

This webinar will be looking at how we can remove barriers to men accessing services and support in Oxfordshire for both their physical and mental health. All the details can be found below, please help us open discussion about this critical subject.

Learn about the local provisions and resources available to your male patients within the community and at work. The webinar will feature talks by Oxfordshire Public Health Team, NHS Health Checks, Achieve Oxfordshire, Man v Fat, Samaritans, Oxfordshire Mind, The Lion Barbers Collective and Healthwatch Oxfordshire.

Name: Removing Barriers to Support Men's Health in Oxfordshire

When – Thursday 20th May 1-2 pm

Where – Zoom, an invite link will be sent to you upon signing up.

To sign up click [here](#)

Anna Freud Centre resources

Recent National Trust [research](#) found a link between feeling connected to nature and having improved wellbeing. Click [here](#) for resources about nature and mental health in their toolkit.

Early Years Conference: The many faces of parenting infant:

This exciting online conference, held during Infant Mental Health Awareness week, will explore and celebrate the many people involved in raising children from conception to age five. These parents and carers can be forgotten from professionals' minds and excluded from services, which ultimately impacts their parenting capacity, as well as the emotional wellbeing, mental health and development of their children. Click [here](#) for further information.

Strong Home Learning Experience to support children's learning and development

Fun fitness for all the family

Sign up and start playing Street Tag, a fun, free app that's turning Oxfordshire into a virtual playground. Play as individuals, as a family or with friends, and enjoy the great outdoors. [Read more](#)

Clear Sky has a new project

Our new project 'Baby Bonding' is based on an established programme that runs across the world and which is now part of the Clear Sky family. Baby Bonding is a 6-week programme to support babies, toddlers and their new parents. We will run Baby Bonding courses to support new families who have experienced a tough first year, without normal support during lockdown. To help support this project click [here](#)

National Smile Month.

National Smile Month is a charity campaign all about championing the benefits of having good oral health and promoting the value of a healthy smile. Between **17 May and 17 June**, the Oral Health Foundation will be raising awareness of important health issues and ready to put a smile on everybody's face, click [here](#) for resources.

How much sugar

Do you know how much sugar you should be having in a day?

@communitydentalservices have put together a poster to tell you how much sugar is recommended depending on your age. Watch out for those hidden sugars! Click below to access the poster



How much sugar_
(3).pdf

Supporting children's resilience

NASEN has produced two documents to support parents with their children's resilience, which appear to have a broader remit than just children with SEND. [Top tips for parents](#) and [Working together to build resilience](#) through relationships.

Ideas to share with parents

Story, songs and information links which you might like to share with parents.

- Nick Butterworth reads his new story about Percy The Park Keeper - [One Springy Day](#)
- [Mr Tumble Songs - Five Little Speckled Frogs - YouTube](#)
- [A Busy Day for Birds story time videos - Book Trust](#)
- [BBC iPlayer – Number songs - Days of Spring](#)
- [How A Caterpillar Becomes A Butterfly](#)

I CAN supporting families

Are you concerned about your child's speaking skills? [Visit our website](#) and discover our range of resources and factsheets to help you support your child with speaking and understanding.

Early Identification

Are you thinking of re-starting and developing support services for new and expectant parents as lockdown restrictions are lifted?

This [guide](#) is to support organisations and individuals who provide structured support for pregnant people and new parents of children under the age of two during COVID-19 and throughout the easing of restrictions. It covers considerations for delivering support for new and expectant parents in five different formats:

- Outdoor meetings
- In-venue 1:1 support
- In-venue group support
- Home visits
- Support in healthcare settings

Due to the changing nature of the pandemic, please consult gov.uk for any updates on the appropriate guidance.

Update from our Health Visitors

The health visiting service has been offering all universal Healthy Child Programme contacts since January 2021. These are antenatal, new birth visit, 6-8-week review, 1st year and 2nd year developmental reviews. 2nd year developmental reviews happen between 24 – 30 months, so please reassure parents that children will be invited for a review at some point between these ages. The reviews are offered face to face or virtually depending on parental preference and health visitor assessment.

All teams around the county have a daily telephone duty line in working hours and all early years settings have a linked HV team. Do encourage parents to contact us if they have any concerns about their child's health or development or if they haven't had an invite for a 2nd year review and their child is coming up to 30 months of age.

We have revised the 2-year communication pathway between the health visiting service and early years settings. The revised pathway along with HV team contact details can be found [here](#)

High quality provision

The Peep Transition course

This course provides a flexible way that Peep-trained practitioners can combine the information that your setting already shares with new families, with info and ideas from the Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP) that will support families to develop strong relationships with your staff, and enhance their home learning environment.

- If you're not Peep-trained – [Peep Learning Together Programme Training](#) is for anyone working with families with children from birth to school age, wanting to increase parental knowledge and confidence in how to support their child's learning and play in day-to-day life. It's a 2-day course and includes online access to the whole Peep Learning Together Programme (74 child development topics, including the Peep Transition topics) – usually £395 + vat pp, but only £250 + vat pp for people working in Oxfordshire. The next [online LTP course dates](#) for practitioners run over four mornings (9.30 – 12.30pm): **14 – 17 June** or get in touch about other dates: training@people.org.uk
- If you are Peep-trained – you can find info on the Peep Transition course in the login Members Area on our website: www.people.org.uk. It includes session plans and handouts for six suggested topics (including *the importance of support and encouragement* and *Talking and listening with children*). Sessions would typically last about an hour and include a talk time about the topic (and any information about your setting), singing and story time, and a simple activity or ideas for parents and children to try together in the setting and/or at home.

The Department for Education has published the updated Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework for 2021. The new statutory framework applies from 1 September 2021. Until then, the current framework applies. Read a summary of the EYFS changes [here](#) from the Early Years Alliance.

Preparing for the revised EYFS framework: live Q&A session with Dr Julian Grenier – full recording and additional support

Following on from the live webinar this week you can see the full session recording along with a summary of key themes, messages and common questions and concerns. This is available to view at the nace [webpage](#) – and please do share it with colleagues who may also benefit.

The Outdoor Practitioner is FREE to read and download from the Muddy Faces website. The Outdoor Practitioner is filled with feature articles, case studies/projects, activities and includes contributions from organisations who are passionate about being outdoors. [Click here to see the Spring Edition!](#)

Are you signed up to the Early Childhood Unit bulletin?

The NCB Early Childhood Unit (ECU) works to sustain and improve the quality of services for young children through direct work with children's services and settings, and through its national networks. Follow the [link](#) to find out more about our early years work. The ECU Bulletin provides news and information for the Early Years sector, including research, policy and resources. Please click on the title link to see more details of each item. Note that some external websites may charge to download or view some documents featured in the Bulletin. To subscribe, fill in their [subscription form](#) online

Information-sharing and high-quality transitions through life

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) grant application process for the summer holidays is now open for Oxfordshire - the closing date is 21st May. For more information click the link [here](#)

New Office for Health Promotion to drive improvement of nation's health

The Government have recently announced a new Office for Health Promotion which will lead national efforts to improve the health of the nation by tackling obesity. Today, the problem of excess weight gain in young children is widely recognised as a worldwide epidemic with serious long-term health consequences. We know that the process of obesity can start as early as conception and is established by the time children start school. Check out our resources from the Infant and Toddler Forum [here](#).

Calorie labelling on menus to be introduced in restaurants, cafes and takeaways - News Story

Legislation to make [calorie labelling on menus and food labels mandatory for large out-of-home food businesses](#), which include restaurants, cafes and takeaways.

From April 2022, businesses in England with 250 or more employees will be required to display the calorie information of non-prepacked food and soft drink items that they prepare for their customers.

This will help to ensure people are able to make more informed, healthier choices when it comes to eating out or ordering takeaways.

This is part of the government's strategy to tackle obesity and improve the nation's health. Read the full story [here](#).

Food Active Resources

Download resources [here](#) . To support the Great Big Junk Food Debate with young people. Sign up to the Healthier Place, Healthier Future newsletter to stay up to date with all the latest news from the programme – via the Food Active webpage [here](#).

They include: Lesson plans for children: Sugar and health, Food waste, Environment (rubbish and climate), Junk food marketing.

Activity books for children aged: 8-10 years old and 11-12 years old.

Active Oxfordshire Leadership Forum

Session One: 11-1pm: Healthy Place Shaping Systems Evaluation in Cherwell - Promoting Effective System Working across Oxfordshire - *Co-chaired by Alan Webb, Chair of Active Oxfordshire and Rosie Rowe, Healthy Place Shaping Lead for the County Council*. You can book Session One through Eventbrite [here](#)

Session Two: 2-4pm: Building Back Better and Fairer too - *Co-chaired by Paul Brivio, CE of Active Oxfordshire and Laura Price, CE of Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA)*. You can book Session Two through Eventbrite [here](#)

On the internet... (Childnet)

'On the internet' is a learning-to-read book for children aged 4 and above. The large, bright illustrations show all the different ways that the internet can be used for.

Find On the internet [here](#)

Other Childnet books for younger children include:

- [Smartie the Penguin](#) (3 to 7-year olds)
- [Digiduck's Big Decision](#) (3 to 7-year olds)

Children Heard and Seen

The last 12 months have proven to be a challenging yet brilliant year for Children Heard and Seen. Double click the PDF below to see the brand-new Impact Report for 2020-2021. The report outlines all of the fantastic steps taken this year, as well as showing the vision for supporting children in the future.



children heard and
seen Impact Report

Childcare Vacancy

There is a vacancy for a Family Centre Leader and a Family Centre Administrator at the Red Kite Children Centre. See adverts below for further information.



CA Ad and short
JD.pdf



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JD.pdf

Ofsted/DfE updates

The DfE have published updated guidance for schools and local authorities on [how to use their Pupil Premium funding](#), including reporting procedures and online statements.

[Ofsted: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rolling update](#)

Ofsted- Supporting SEND

This study was developed to explore how the needs of children and young people are met in mainstream schools and how approaches vary between providers.

Read more [here](#)

COVID-19 updates

[COVID-19 RESPONSE –SPRING 2021](#)

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#)

[COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities](#)

[Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do](#)

[Step 3 COVID-19 restrictions posters: 17 May 2021](#)

[A poster displaying information about COVID-19 restrictions in England from 17 May.](#)

Safeguarding

[Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Health colleagues have developed a [protocol on bruising in babies and children who are not independently mobile](#). Bruising in pre- or non-mobile babies and children is unusual (2.2% of babies who are not yet rolling). A number of serious case reviews have identified situations where children have died because practitioners did not appreciate the significance of what appeared to be minor bruising in a pre-mobile infant.

A leaflet for parents/carers: [What's going on? Information for parents and carers about bruising to pre-mobile babies and children](#), has also been developed. Both can be found on the OSCB [physical abuse webpage](#).

Articles/News/Reports/Research

The Covid Generation: Mental Health Pandemic in the Making.

New report claims that the pandemic has exposed shocking disparities in the quality and provision of mental health services for the UK's children and young people.

Recommendations of the report include:

- Cross-national strategy, prioritising the best initiatives of a devolved UK including a Joint Policy Statement by the four Children's Commissioners, a collegiate approach on behalf of the four Home Nations and a permanent global standing Post Covid Forum with membership across the international spectrum; possibly convened by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) in the first instance. The Forum would work collectively to draw lessons from this pandemic and to deter another. The mental health and wellbeing of children and young people would be paramount in all strategies.
- New and substantial Government funding, ring-fenced for children and young people's mental health; marrying resourcing with need and levelling up historic under-funding
- Effective economic support for disadvantaged families to include a Strategic Review of benefit systems and school meal provision as a recognised vital component in children's mental health and well being

See the full recommendations of the report [here](#)

Infants' language more advanced than first words

Babies can recognise combinations of words even before they have uttered their first word, a study suggests, challenging ideas of how children learn language.

Researchers say the study is the first to provide evidence that young children can pick up and understand multiword sequences before they can talk or begin producing such combinations themselves.

Dr Barbara Skarabela School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences highlights the below:

Previous research has shown that young infants recognise many common words. But this is the first study that shows that infants extract and store more than just single words from everyday speech. This suggests that when children learn language, they build on linguistic units of varying sizes, including multiword sequences, and not just single words as we often assume. This may explain why adults learning a second language, who tend to rely on individual words, often fall short of reaching native-like proficiency in the way they string words together into phrases and sentences.

Further information can be found [here](#)

Greater screen time linked to behavioural issues in toddlers

A new study suggests that pre-schoolers who have more than one hour's screen time a day have an increased risk of developing social and behavioural issues. The study was conducted in Finland where researchers looked at the development, health and mental wellbeing of 699 children from birth to the age five. The team found that at 18 months, toddlers spent an average of 32 minutes a day on an electronic media device. Toddlers who had greater screen time – of more than an hour – were 59% more likely to have problems making friends and connecting with others socially by the age of five. Read the full study [here](#)

Back in lockdown: girls' and young women's hopes and fears for the future.

Girlguiding looks at the experiences of girls and young women during the national lockdown that began in December 2020. Analyses survey data from 1,881 Girlguiding members aged 4-18-years-old. Findings include: 53 per cent said the coronavirus pandemic had negatively affected their mental health; concerns about falling behind academically, and challenges around learning from home; 79 per cent of young women think the government hasn't done enough to listen to the concerns of children and young people. Read more [here](#)

The impact of Covid-19 on School Starters: Parent and school concerns about children starting school (Interim briefing 1)

The Education Endowment Foundation (EFF) is carrying out research aiming to understand the experiences of children attending reception in the academic year 2020/2021; and if, and how, they are different from the experiences of previous cohorts. Read more [here](#)

For up to date information

[COVID-19 Gov guidance](#)

[E-newsletter](#)

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