



KEYWORDS

The Newsletter for Key Members in Gloucestershire

FEBRUARY 2010



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Happy New Year!! This edition of Keywords has lots of information about half term activities, including the creative arts discounted voucher which we will be running in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council and GLOSS again. This could be the last time that we are running this, so please make the most of the discounted vouchers!! More details can be found on pages 5-7.

We also take a look at your responses to the DCATCH questionnaire which we sent out to you just before Christmas. We had a fantastic response so thank you!! Some parent carers told us that they would like to find out more about personal assistants. Cool2Care have written an article on pages 2 & 3 all about personal assistants and the service they provide so if you are interested in finding out more about how this service works, please take a look! We have provided you with a brief summary of your responses in this newsletter, but a full report will be sent to Gloucestershire County Council at the end of March. We will let you know what their response to this is in the next edition of Keywords (May).

Please remember that **you** can include information in Keywords. This could be tips or useful information that you would like to share with other parents. This is your newsletter so please feel free to contribute! The next edition of Keywords is due out in May, so we would need articles or information from you by the beginning of April. You can email us with information at thekey@glos.nhs.uk or contact us on 08456 583857.

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cool2care

for families with disabled children

Cool2Care have been working in Gloucestershire for 18 months now. We have recruited over 100 Personal Assistants and supported 60 children and young people. We've also provided almost 23,000 hours of support to children around the county. We've asked some of our young people and PAs to tell you about their experiences...

What is a Personal Assistant?

Nicola and Kathryn



Kathryn and Nicola have built up a wonderful relationship. Kathryn cares for Nicola every weekday morning from 7-8.15 am, helping her get up and ready for school. She then comes back in the evening 3 days a week to take Nicola out or find fun activities at home.

"This has been a great experience for me. I have learnt new skills and taken on things I never thought I would be able to do. Nicola's parents, brother and sister all treat me as part of the family – which I love" (Kathryn)

"Kathryn has been fab. She has learnt gastrostomy feeding so apart from driving Nicky's car – she can now do it all" (Nicola's mum).

A Cool2Care Personal Assistant (PA for short)

A Cool2Care PA is a person someone who has been screened, trained and chosen by you as the right person to meet your child's needs. The PA can work out and about or at home. We do not have any eligibility criteria or strict age limits.

Naomi and Vic



My name is Vic and I'm 19 years old. After the summer holidays I needed a Personal Assistant to go out with socially and to help me with my daily needs as I was looking to become more independent.

I was keen that the person was quite young, female and shared my interests. Cool2Care made a profile about me, which I had the chance to tweak and we had two great candidates interested within a week. I was given the opportunity to interview the two PA's and then pick the one that best suited my needs.

I chose Naomi as I felt that she had found out a lot about me before the interview and shared lots of my hobbies. I warmed to her straight away, mainly because I really liked her personality and the approach she took towards me – to support me but not take away the independence that I had gained. When Naomi comes round we have a chat about what has been happening on the soaps. We have cooked meals and cakes, gone shopping and just chatted non-stop as we have so much in common. I find being an employer helpful as I can provide flexibility to the employee and we can schedule when we meet around each other's needs. I feel happy knowing that this is going to be a lasting relationship, unlike the support provided by some agencies where you could get a different worker every week. By being the PA's employer you can bond better with the employee and have a good relationship with them.

Are you interested?!

If you think you might benefit from employing a Cool2Care PA then please get in touch with Agy Pasek – agy.pasek@cool2care.co.uk 07595 607737

If you'd like to apply to become a Cool2Care PA, please contact Kate Chapman – kate.chapman@cool2care.co.uk, **07889 405959**

To see more Cool2Care families from Gloucestershire, check out our video at www.cool2care.co.uk/videos.asp

Following your feedback, we have now introduced a new training course for experienced Personal Assistants. PAs need to have a minimum of two years of demonstrable and varied experience with SEN in order to attend. This now allows us to better meet the requirements of those families whose children are particularly complex or challenging, and who feel more secure knowing that the PA is up for the challenge!

This sounds good, but how do I pay for a PA?

There are several options to choose from.

Direct Payments/Individual Budgets

A common option is to get an assessment of need from social services and see whether you can employ a PA using Direct Payments. To apply for an assessment, contact the Children and Families Helpdesk

Tel: 01452 426565 (8am to 5pm Monday - Friday)

Email: childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Top up

It may be that you want to employ a Personal Assistant for longer than your Direct Payment allocated hours. If this is the case and circumstances permit, you are very welcome to offer your PA additional hours through some other means.

Independently

If you don't have Direct Payments, you can still employ a Personal Assistant. Cool2Care families have funded PAs through their own incomes, with the support of benefits or through compensation money. To see a comprehensive list of funding options, please go to http://www.cool2care.co.uk/families_how_to_pay.asp



Parent Carer Participation

Parent Participation continues to evolve across Health, Education and Social Care services. The conference “Participation the Way Forward” is one example of this but parents are involved in many ways including the design of SEN settings, the shaping of the Complex Needs Strategy and the setting of the priorities in proposed budgets.

However Parent Participation is not all about hard work, it is also about mutual support and sharing of information. The recent Transition Support group and Training sessions proved very successful in this so we are organising more in the future. The Parent Carers Forum on “The Way Forward” at The Guildhall examined parents’ experiences of services and our hopes for the future which proved a very positive experience. Our next Forum is at the Guildhall on April 28th and we hope to see you there. In the meantime if there are any specific issues or concerns you would like us to address please do contact me.

Over the past few months parents have benefitted from numerous offers and deals including free white goods. If you are not receiving emails from me it is because I do not have your correct email address so please update me before you miss out. Finally we are organising a Parent Carer trip to Motown Magic at Cheltenham Racecourse on Friday March 11th. Tickets have been greatly subsidised by Carers Gloucestershire’s Short Breaks Fund so if you fancy an evening out do get in touch to learn more.

If you know of any parent carers who are still not signed up then please encourage them to do so. Contact **Deborah Livingstone** on **01452 872245/386283** or email dlivingstone@carersgloucestershire.org.uk

Gloucestershire Parent Carer Voice Conference

Maisemore Village Hall, December 6th 2010

There was a fantastic turn out to this event on an extremely cold Monday back in December! Despite the cold weather, Parent Carers turned up to the Conference ‘*Participation, the way forward*’, benefitting from a jam packed agenda for the day.

Professor Luke Clements, Key note speaker, started off the conference discussing ‘**Disabled Children, Good Practice and the Law**’. Professor Clements discussed the various acts governing social care services today. He went on to describe how more people received services from Social care in the 1970’s than they do today. This is due to budgets not increasing for social care services. Despite changes in society and the impact of the current economic climate, the acts underpinning the law have not changed.

Professor Clements went on to describe Carers as being the most socially excluded group in the UK. Furthermore he described how he anticipates legislation to change in the future, reflecting carer’s rights, particularly in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act and also around work and the unfair treatment of Parent Carers in paid employment.

Following on from Luke Clements there were workshops headed by Michael Richardson on Health, Alison Cathles on Social Care and John Hattersley on Education and Special Educational Needs settings, where parents were able to discuss their hopes, fears and concerns. The afternoon concluded with feedback and parents’ views are now being considered for the future of services in Gloucestershire.

If you would like to find out more information about your rights as a Carer, there are 2 Free books available on the internet; ‘**Carers and their Rights – the law relating to carers**’ is available to download from the Carers UK website www.carersuk.org (type in the title of the book in the search field). The second handbook entitled ‘**Disabled Children: A Legal handbook**’ is available to download at www.ncb.org.uk/cdc/resources/legal_handbook.a.spx. If you have any difficulty getting hold of these resources visit www.lukeclements.com or contact **The Key** on **08456 583857** if you don’t have access to the internet.

Half Term Activities

Creative Voucher Scheme – February 2011 Half Term

The Key, Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucestershire's Arts Education Agency (Gloss) are working together with major arts providers across the county to provide inclusive creative activities at discounted rates for Key families during the February half term. **Only one voucher per disabled child in a family will be issued on a first come first served basis.**

Please note to receive a discount on any of the activities listed below, you **must** surrender your voucher on payment (either when you book or for drop in workshops on the day). Places are limited on each activity (with exceptions of drop in workshops) so early booking is recommended.

Cotswold Area – New Brewery Arts, Brewery Court, Cirencester, GL7 1JH

As a Key member you can claim a £5 off voucher (on a first come first served basis) towards the cost of the following activities:

If I woz an artist....? - Be free to make whatever you choose from a range of exciting materials – paint, glitter, fabric, card etc.

Date: Tuesday 22nd February

Time: 1.00-4.00pm

Cost: £5 (Free with voucher).

Age Range: All ages welcome

No booking necessary, payment required on the day.

Throw a Pot – Have a go on the potters wheel, its good (not so clean) fun for all the family and you can have your pot fired and collect it later.

Date: Saturday 19th February

Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Age Range: All ages welcome

Cost: £5 (Free with voucher). Drop in event so payment required on the day.

No booking necessary, payment required on the day.

Clay Flying Animals – Create some fun flying animals from clay and fly them from your ceiling at home.

Date: Thursday 24th February

Times: 10.00am -11.30am (5-7 year olds) & 1-2.30pm (8-12 year olds)

Age Range: 5-12 years

Cost: £12 (£7 with voucher).

You need to book in advance by phoning 01285 657181, online at www.newbreweryarts.org.uk or visit us.

Explore the Mermaid and the Selkie – Before the performance, come and create strange oceanic creatures and bring them to life through drama and art techniques.

Date: Saturday 26th February

Time: 12.30-2.00pm

Age Range: 7+

Cost: £10 (£5 with voucher)

You need to book in advance by phoning 01285 657181, online at www.newbreweryarts.org.uk or visit us.

The Mermaid and the Selkie – A performance of beautiful projected artwork, fishy puppets, storytelling and original music and songs on piano, banjo and concertina.

Date: Saturday 26th February

Time: 3.00pm

Age range: Children aged 5+ and their families

Cost: £7 (£2 with voucher)

You need to book in advance by phoning 01285 657181, online at www.newbreweryarts.org.uk or visit us.

All workshops will take place at New Brewery Arts, Brewery Court, Cirencester, GL7 1JH. If your child has any special requirements, please get in touch with New Brewery Arts before the activity. Please contact Gwen Rogerson on **01285 657181** or email education@newbreweryarts.org.uk for further details or queries.

Gloucester Area – Gloucester Folk Museum, 103 Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2PG

During the February half term, the Gloucester Folk Museum is running a range of **FREE** activities. There is no need to contact The Key for a voucher, as all admissions to the following activities are **free to all**:

Gloucester Mosaics – The Romans knew Gloucester as Glevum, a colonia famous all over the Roman empire. Design your own mosaic to celebrate what you love about Gloucester.

Date: Saturday 19th February

Time: 11.00am – 4.00pm

Age Range: All ages are welcome

Cost: FREE

Old Spots and Gloucester Cows – Try your hand at sculpting two of Gloucestershire's most famous animal breeds in clay.

Date: Tuesday 22nd February

Times: 11.00am – 1.00pm & 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Age Range: All ages are welcome

Cost: FREE

Pin Cushions – Gloucester's biggest industry in around 1800 was pin making. In fact part of the Folk Museum used to be a pin making factory. Make your own pin cushion in celebration of this bygone industry.

Date: Wednesday 23rd February

Times: 11.00am – 1.00pm & 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Age Range: 5+

Cost: FREE

Dress up and draw – see what you would have looked like in the costumes of people that used to walk the streets of Gloucester. There will be lots of Art materials on hand for you to draw each other in your favourite costumes.

Date: Thursday 24th & Friday 25th February

Times: 11.00am – 4.00pm

Age Range: All ages are welcome

Cost: FREE

Medieval Calligraphy – The city centre of Medieval Gloucester was the site of a number of monasteries. Try your hand at being a monk for a day and have a go at some Medieval writing.

Date: Saturday 26th February

Time: 11.00am – 4.00pm

Age Range: 5+

Cost: Free

All of the activities listed above are taking place at Gloucester Folk Museum. Please note that the ground floor is wheelchair accessible, but the rest of the Tudor building is not. The toilets are not really wheelchair accessible either. There is no need to book a place on the activities listed above, you can just drop in on the day. For further details please contact **Gloucester Museums Service** on **01452 396139** or email sarah.orton@gloucester.gov.uk

Forest of Dean Area – Cinderford Artspace, The New Mercury, 3 Woodside Street, Cinderford, GL14 2NL

Cinderford Artspace are running two workshops which both take place on Wednesday 24th February. As a Key member you can claim a £5 off voucher (on a first come first served basis) towards the cost of the workshops, which would make both workshops FREE!!!

The workshops are open to young people aged 8-12 years of age and cost £5 (**FREE with voucher**). The Art workshop will run from 10.30am – 12.30pm and the Circus Skills workshop runs from 1.00pm – 3.00pm. For further details, or to book a place, please contact **Sally Gibson** on **01594 825111, ext 4** or email sally@cinderfordartspace.org

Tewkesbury Area – The Roses Theatre, Sun Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5NX

As a Key member you can claim a £10 off voucher (on a first come first served basis) towards the cost of the following activities:

The Chronicles of Narnia 2 Day Drama Workshop – a fantasy adventure workshop in which participants imagine they are transported to the magical land of Narnia. The workshop culminates in a short performance for family and friends.

Dates: Monday 21st & Tuesday 22nd February

Times: 10.30am-4.30pm (both days)

Age range: 8-11

Venue: Tewkesbury Church of England Primary School, Chance Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5RQ

Cost: £30 (£20 with voucher)

How to Book: Call the box office on **01684 295074**

TRONimation Animation for Gaming 2 Day Digital Animation Workshop – a workshop which leads participants through the process of designing a concept for a new computer game.

Dates: Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd February

Times: 10.30am – 4.30pm (both days)

Age range: 11+

Cost: £30 (£20 with voucher)

Venue: The Roses Theatre, Sun Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5NX

How to book: Call the box office on **01684 295074**

If you would like to book a place on the workshops above contact Roses Booking Office on **01684 295074**. Alternatively if you have any questions or would like further information about the workshops please contact Maggie (Youth and Community Director) on **01684 853069** or email tpdirector@rosetheatre.org



Activity Club for Everyone (ACE) in Stroud

ACE is aimed and delivered for the benefit of children, young people and adults with physical, sensory and learning disabilities and their families in the Stroud District. All activities are delivered by a fully trained ACE Co-ordinator who provides an inclusive enjoyable environment for children, young people and adults to participate in.

ACE activities include Boccia, New age Kurling, Parachute games, Football, Tennis, Badminton, Circle Tennis, Circle Games and many more.

ACE Multi sport sessions take place on Wednesday's from 4.30-5.30pm at Stratford Park Leisure Centre. The sessions are for under 18's and the cost is £3 per child, per session.

ACE will also be running Easter and Summer Holiday programmes. For more information about these, or for further details of the multi-sports sessions, please contact Charlotte Galling, ACE Co-ordinator on **01453 754304** or email charlotte.galling@stroud.gov.uk

Other Activities in the Stroud area...

Hip Hockey – Monday's 7-8.00pm at Stratford Park Leisure Centre for Over 16's. The cost is £3 per session. For more information contact **Fiona Maffey on 07827 860387** or email fionamaffey@affinitytrust.org

Stroud District Council Annual Sports Ability Festival
Young disabled people from Stroud Schools will participate in Stroud Annual Sports ability Festival at Stratford Park Leisure Centre. The date and time is yet to be confirmed. For more information please contact **Charlotte Galling on 01453 754304** or email charlotte.galling@stroud.gov.uk

Allsorts Support Group

Allsorts Support Group is for parent carers of children with additional needs. We normally meet on Friday at Parliament Children's Centre, Stroud. Please see details below of special meetings come up soon:

Tuesday 1st March - A wellbeing morning for carers of children with additional needs. Come and join us to find out more about Allsorts and our services in the area. We'll have a masseuse on hand to help relax you and information from a 'Special yoga' teacher, as well as information about trips, activities and the youth club. This will take place at Park Children's Centre, Stonehouse from 10am-12noon.

Saturday 19th March – A Saturday Support Group!! For any parent carer (or grandparent) of a child with additional needs. Come along to find out more about Allsorts Support Group. This session will take place at Stroud Youth Centre, Ryeleaze Road from 1.30-3pm.

For further details contact **Serena Green on 07794 009663**.



Useful Websites

begrand.net – a useful website that provides information and help to grandparents. It is funded by the Department for Education, recognising the crucial role that grandparents can play in a child's life. The website provides; information and support on everything to do with grandparenting, confidential online advisors trained to deal with legal and social problems and a place for grandparents to talk to each other about the issues that matter. There's lots of great support and information online for parents – but not much tailored to grandparents who are providing care. The site is accessible 24 hours a day and all the information is free. There are online advisers ready to help with serious social issues and the site is packed with ideas to keep children safe and healthy.

www.disability-grants.org – a directory of grants for disabled adults and children, their carers and families, including grants for children, equipment and housing.

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk – an online service directory of children and young people's services in Gloucestershire, produced by Gloucestershire County Council.

www.guide-pals.glos.nhs.uk – The website for health, social care and disability information.

www.keywords.org.uk – don't forget to take a look at the newly developed Key website. The website has a section for parent carers, a website for teenagers and even a useful website for providers of activities (Aiming High Network) which you might find useful. There is also a latest news section on the home page which is updated regularly so take a look!

www.movingupgloucestershire.com – A useful website produced by Connexions which contains details about information and support, places to go and things to do and details of what to do after you leave school including training, further and higher education courses.

www.netbuddy.org.uk – a website that would be of interest to anyone caring for a child with learning disabilities. The website has tips and ideas from parent carers and professionals working with young people about sleep, routines, health and hygiene, managing behaviour and much more. You can even suggest useful tips to put on the website that work with your child, to help other parent carers.

www.netmums.com – a website full of parenting information and advice.

www.nhs.uk/change4life - A website that gives you information about healthy eating and exercise for the whole family.



DCATCH Results

A huge thank you for the fantastic response we had from you in completing the DCATCH (Disabled Children's Access to Childcare) questionnaires!! 24% of Key families responded to the survey which exceeded our expectation, so thank you once again for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. One lucky member received a £30 Marks and Spencer's voucher, which was sent out to them just in time for Christmas.

Your responses will be analysed and then sent to Gloucestershire County Council at the end of March. We will report back to you in the next edition of Keywords (May) to let you know what their response to this is. However for now, we thought it would be useful to provide you with a brief summary of your responses.

In summary, **67% of respondents said that they don't use childcare**. Why is this?

- **42%** told us that they have **no need to use it**
- **31%** told us that there is a **lack of suitably trained childcare providers in the area**
- **17%** told us that it was because of the **cost**.

34% of respondents do use childcare. What type of childcare do you use?

- **36%** use **family members**
- **36%** use **'other'** forms of childcare (including specialist services & mainstream out of school providers)
- **19%** use **day nurseries**
- **10%** use **childminders**
- **9%** use **playgroups**
- **4%** use a **nanny**
- **1%** told us they use a **personal assistant**

For those who do use childcare, we asked you to tell us about your experience. Most respondents said that their experience was **'Excellent'** (46%), followed by 34% rating it as **'Good'**. Only 1% of respondents said their experience was **'poor'**. So for **those respondents who do use childcare, their experiences overall are very positive**.

We asked you to tell us what needs to be done to help you find the right childcare?

- **37%** told us they need more **help and support**
- **29%** told us that childcare needs to be more **affordable**
- **29%** told us that there needs to be **more information** about childcare and childcare options

Most parent carers told us that main reason that they use, or would use childcare is to have a break (**51%**) followed by **49%** needing to, or wanting to, return to work.

By looking at the responses overall, most Parent Carers told us they want to use childcare, but there are several issues preventing them from doing so. These are:

- **Training.** Lack of suitably trained childcare providers. More training is needed
- **Cost**
- **Little or no provision in some areas in the county.**
- **Parents confidence in using childcare**
- **The age of the child as this affects the childcare options available to you. There is little provision available for older children (teenagers)**
- **Lack of information about what is available**

Below is some examples of what you told us about childcare provision for disabled children:

"I live in North Cotswold with little to no provision"

"The day nursery my son attends is excellent. It took a long time to find thought. The process was frustrating and stressful"

“The cost of childcare can be a shock to parents. They need to be given plenty of information about help with paying these costs”

“I use an excellent childminder and have done for 3 years now although not on a regular basis at the moment. My son loves going and has so much fun interacting with other children there. I have never had a bad experience with a childminder but know others that have. I would highly recommend her to anyone and maybe more advertising access could be made available to childminders that doesn't cost them a lot”

“I would love someone to come out and help me find out about childcare for a 15 year old boy – there's nothing in the holidays for a full time working mum and even when they finish full time education what is there? How are we supposed to work, may as well just give up and have nothing. Sorry, but I do find this sad, on the internet there's nothing once they reach 18. Do they just vanish into thin air!! There is no benefit help for two parents who both work”

“More detailed information on who can help care for my son with special needs. Maybe arrange an information evening with speakers, or people from the childcare provisions to discuss with parents on what's available”

“Need more specialist childcare that can take and have the knowledge about special needs children. Most childcare is not at all suitable for disabled children due to lack of knowledge and fear”

“The extra help he gets at (day nursery) is really fantastic and very beneficial. With learning difficulties I think it's easy for a quiet child to be overlooked. The extra sessions my son gets at (day nursery) for children with additional needs are really fantastic. I am so impressed with the professionalism of the staff and their knowledge and expertise. The early intervention has undoubtedly helped my son immensely. Pay them more!”

We sent out a leaflet to all Key members before Christmas called ***‘Childcare Information for Parents with a Disabled Child in Gloucestershire’*** which is a leaflet that has jointly been produced by The Family Information Service and The Key. We hope some of the information in this leaflet helps you with some of the queries you have around paying for childcare and where to go to get help to find suitable childcare. If you still have any further queries, please call **The Family Information Service on 0800 542 0202** (Freephone) or contact us at **The Key on 08456 583857**.

We also received some queries about respite care, or short breaks. If you need help accessing activities for your child, then please contact us at **The Key on 08456 583857**.



