

Families Matter

Issue 11
January 2012

Hello...

Happy New Year, we hope you all had a very happy and safe holiday. There are lots of things to look out for at this time of the year - Primary School application forms need to be in by 15th January, so if you need any last minute advice, give us a call or ring Choice Advice on 01452 426843. Tuesday 21st February is Pancake Day - take a look at our healthy ideas on the next page to enjoy your pancakes at breakfast time and make sure you get off to a good start in the morning! Follow us on Twitter and Facebook for more news. As we look forward to the coming year, now is the time for setting your resolutions. Perhaps you want to eat more healthily, give up smoking, use the car less or even spend more quality time with the family. Maybe you are having a sort out to make space for all the new presents to go away? If so, see the information on Little Bundles below for how you could help them. Whatever your resolution is, small changes can add up and make a big difference, so good luck!



Family Lives is a charity that has over three decades' experience in helping parents deal with the changes that are a constant part of family life. Many people play active roles in the raising of children within any family, from Dads, Grandparents, stepparents and non-

resident parents. Family Lives can support everyone to achieve the best relationship possible with the children that you care about. They recognise that the best way to support families is to provide FREE professional, non-judgmental support and advice in a way that all members of the family can access. You can access their service by:

- Calling Parentline on **0808 800 2222**, 24 hours a day
- Visiting their website with links to their dedicated sites for parents of teenagers or children affected by bullying **www.familylives.org.uk**
- Going along to various parenting/relationship support groups

All aspects of family life that include all stages of a child's development are covered, such as issues with schools and parenting/relationship support, family breakdown, aggression in the home, bullying, teenage risky behaviour and mental health concerns of both parents and their children. For more information on support groups near you or how you can volunteer to support other parents, call the local office on **01453 768160**.

Top Christmas Recycling Tips!

★ Check **www.recycleforgloucestershire.com** for information on kerbside Christmas tree collections in your district.

★ Take cards along to your nearest Marks and Spencer to help the Woodland Trust raise money to plant trees, or to the Cobalt Unit HQ in Thirlestaine Road, Cheltenham until 20th January.

★ Use the front of cards to make memory or matching games, paper chains or bunting ready to decorate next year.



Gloucester Little Bundles



Gloucester Little Bundles is a volunteer-run project which is part of the Gloucester branch of the National Childbirth Trust.

They provide emergency packs of toiletries, clothing and equipment to pregnant women and families with children up to the age of three. It is a referral-only service, so

Midwives, Health Visitors, Social Workers, Children's Centre staff and other professionals can make referrals via their website **www.gloucesterlittlebundles.org**. Perhaps you are having a clearout after Christmas and have new but unwanted toiletries, or baby equipment that is in good condition but no longer needed. If so, please consider donating them to Little Bundles, as they are getting more referrals all the time. There is a 'donations' section on the website so you can check what is most needed and how to get your items collected. Little Bundles are currently only able to operate within the GL1, GL2, GL3 & GL4 postcode areas. You can contact them for more information by calling **07769 355219** or by emailing **info@gloucesterlittlebundles.org**.



Family Information Service

If you don't know who to ask...ask us!

0800 542 02 02 or 01452 427362

familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk



Wallet Watch!

Save money by.... insulating your house. If your home is poorly insulated and does not have a working central heating system, the government Warm Front scheme could help with grants to make it more energy efficient. This will save you money on your utility bills too! You could be eligible for a grant if you own your own home or rent it from a private landlord and claim the following benefits:

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance that includes a work-related activity or support component
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

You must also have one of the following:

- a pensioner premium
- a disability or severe disability premium
- an award of child tax credit with disability element
- a child under the age of five living with you

To apply, call **0800 316 2805** and an advisor will go through the form with you there and then. If your application is successful, an engineer will come out to your home to see what improvements could be made. After this appointment, they will decide what further action to take. You will not need to pay anything if the work done can be covered by the



grant available, which is up to £3,500. Read more at www.direct.gov/warmfront.

What's On?

Saturdays 7th & 21st January and 4th February - **Saturday Breakaway** at Greyfriars House, Gloucester, 10am-3pm. £5 per session including lunch for 11-18 year olds with or without a disability. Fancy trying rock climbing, circus skills, crafts or laser tag? Choose what you want to do and make new friends!

Thursday 12th January - **Booktime and Crafts** at Fairford Library, 10.30-11.30am. FREE to attend, come along with your pre-school children.

Wednesday 18th January - **First Steps Family Support Seminar with National Autistic Society** at Highnam Community Centre, 10.00am-2.30pm. Free information and advice for parents and carers who have a child aged 5-11 with a recent diagnosis of ASD. To book a place call Karen Abdy on 07425 624592.

Thursday 9th February - **Chinese State Circus** at Cheltenham Racecourse, 7.30pm. Tickets are £22.50, call 0844 579 3003 to book.

Saturdays and Sundays throughout February - **Floodlit Swan Feeds** at Slimbridge, 6.30pm. Learn about the journey the thousands of swans take each winter and see them feed in floodlight on 'SwanLake' from the warmth of the observatory. £5 adults, £3 children.

Find more 'What's On' and February half term events at www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/whatson.

Farmhouse Breakfast Week 22nd-28th January 2012

'Shake Up Your Wake Up' is the annual campaign to highlight the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast. Did you know that breakfast eaters are more likely to be slimmer than people who skip breakfast?

Breakfast eaters are also less likely to suffer with stress or depression than breakfast skippers. It is really important to boost energy levels to help with concentration at school

and at work. Here are some fun and healthy ways to get a bit of variety into breakfast time with the kids:

Breakfast Fajitas!

Grill up some sausages, bacon, plenty of tomatoes and mushrooms, scramble some eggs and let the kids help themselves to fill up their own wraps fajita-style.

Breakfast Pizza!

A bit more time consuming but a good one for the weekend - make up a packet of wholemeal or grain bread mix according to the instructions on the packet, but when it is ready, roll it out flat like a pizza base. Spread a layer of tomato puree over the top. Chop up some mushrooms, tomatoes



and slices of ham or sausage and scatter all over the base with some grated cheese. Make 3 or 4 wells in the toppings and crack an egg into each one. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes at 200C or gas mark 6.

Breakfast Trifle!

Put a handful of muesli into the bottom of a little clear dish and pour a tablespoon of apple juice over it. Spoon a layer of yoghurt over the muesli and decorate the top with fruit.

Pancake Day Practice!

Puree frozen or fresh berries in a blender and drizzle over your breakfast pancakes. You could mix extra berries into the batter, or mix in crushed almonds, pecans or walnuts for a healthy crunch.



Uthink -

You Are Not Alone

Uthink is a support service for young people aged between 14 and 25 who have a brother or sister with behavioural, emotional or any other mental health difficulties. Hearing the stories of others can help make more sense of personal experiences and also shows that you are not alone. Rethink Mental Illness' sibling website at www.rethink.org/siblings includes blogs, personal stories and videos by siblings so young people can learn about the experiences of others, and share stories and feelings in an open environment. Other brothers and sisters are also available to talk to on the online forum and there are links to other services.