

# Families Matter

Issue 42 May - June 2017

**Hello...** We've had some beautiful Spring weather recently which is perfect for spending time with the family in the great outdoors. If you'd like some inspiration for new places to visit, check out our What's On section for some ideas. There is also information below on how you can keep your little (and not-so-little) ones safe when you're in crowded places over the summer. Over the next few months, lots of families will be able to take advantage of 2 new schemes to help with paying for childcare. You can read more details on whether you are entitled to claim Tax-Free childcare or your 30 Hour entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds here. Don't forget, if your child would like to sit the entrance exam for grammar school in September, you must register in June. Follow our Facebook page **Family Information Service - Gloucestershire** for reminders and other news. If you would like us to include your details in Families Matter or would like this newsletter emailed to you directly, email [familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk).



## Safety First...

**My Buddy Tag** is a child safety device that helps keep children safe and gives parents some peace of mind when away from

home. The Tag is worn on the child's wrist or ankle and works via Bluetooth with an app downloaded to your phone. You will receive an alert if the tag moves beyond a distance set by you or if it is submerged into a foot or more of water. The Tag also has a panic button that your child can press to alert you if they are in danger, and if they do get lost, you receive an email with their last known location. Once your child's Tag is paired with your phone, other Tag users will not be able to pick up your child's signal. You can track and personalise more than one Tag at a time within the app, and if you want to share the Tag, you simply disconnect your child from your phone so other caregivers can connect to the signal. It has a coin screw fastening to help prevent it from being removed easily by the wearer. My Buddy Tag lasts for over a year and costs around £40 from Argos, Amazon and other large retailers. Visit [www.mybuddytag.com](http://www.mybuddytag.com) for more information.

## DearAlbert

Dear Albert is a **free** national helpline, staffed by specialist, qualified drug and alcohol counsellors to support individuals and families in crisis with drugs and alcohol. They support clients into treatment following an in-depth triage assessment, and work closely with other substance misuse charities, private rehabs, local authorities and signpost to free local services. They can work to address resistance to support and increase motivation for change. Their specialisms include peer mentoring, a network of support via social media and the character 'Our Albert' which aims to communicate specifically with young people through their magazine. Dear Albert welcomes substance clients with SEND needs, such as mental health, emotional health, learning disabilities, behavioural difficulties and physical disabilities through the often challenging road to recovery. Call the helpline on **0800 8803 153**, open every day of the year, 8am-10pm or visit [www.dearalbert.co.uk](http://www.dearalbert.co.uk) for further information or advice.



## Family Information Service



If you would like to receive your copy of this newsletter automatically or have any suggestions, email us at [familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk).

0800 542 02 02 or 01452 427362

[www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk)



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

## Bulletin Board

### 📌 Online chlamydia testing for 16-24 year olds

Online testing provides greater anonymity for young people who want to get tested. Simply visit [www.freetest.me](http://www.freetest.me) to order a **FREE** test kit that will arrive in discreet packaging through the post and will include a postage paid return envelope. Results are sent by text or email.

### 📌 Treasure Seekers Hub, Gloucester

The new hub on Westgate Street has launched. Pop in to their 'Make and Take' and create a work of art to take home with you. Choose picture frames, money boxes, stencils, beads, buttons or paint - whatever you like, all for £4 including a drink. Call 01452 228489 for more information.

### 📌 Grammar School registration open dates

Register between 1st-30th June to sit the Grammar School entrance exam in September for 2018 entry.

**FREE  
CAKES  
FOR KIDS UK**

**Free Cakes for Kids** is a community service run by volunteers who bake birthday cakes for children who would not otherwise have one or whose family would find it difficult to provide one for

them. They provide a **free**, friendly and confidential service and have a team of volunteers who bake and deliver a homemade cake in the child's favourite style to ensure they don't miss out on their special day. In order to receive a cake, the child must be referred by a professional. When the cake is ready, it is handed over in a mutually convenient public place, like a supermarket or community centre. Free Cakes for Kids covers most areas of the county, including Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, the Forest of Dean and Gloucester. Email Zonnie Burton at [freecakesforkidsgloucester@gmail.com](mailto:freecakesforkidsgloucester@gmail.com) for more information or 'Like' them on Facebook.

## Wallet Watch...

Two new schemes are being launched this year to help working parents with their childcare costs. To be entitled to either Tax-Free Childcare or 30 Hours for 3 and 4 year olds, you must earn at least £120 per week, but less than £100,000 per year. This applies to both parents individually if they are living together.

### Tax-Free Childcare

If you're a working parent with children under 12 (or under 17 for disabled children), you can open an online account to pay for registered childcare. The government will top-up the money you pay into the account, so for every £8 you pay in, the government will add an extra £2. You can receive up to £2,000 per child, or £4,000 if they have a disability. From 28th April, this scheme will begin to be rolled out with parents of the youngest children being invited to apply first.

### 30 Hours for 3 and 4 year olds

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours per week (term time) of free childcare. From September, children who have had their 3rd birthday by 31st August and whose parents meet the criteria above, will

be able to claim for an additional 15 hours, totalling 30. These hours can be stretched over the school holiday weeks, depending on your childcare provider, and used at more than one setting.

### Find out more

If you would like to find out more, or if you don't meet the criteria above and would like to know what other help is available, visit [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk). There is a link on the website where parents can register to sign up to either or both schemes.

New offers in 2017 with

**Childcare Choices**

**Tax-Free Childcare\***  Up to **£2,000 per child, per year** for children under the age of 12 and £4,000 for disabled children under 17.  
\* UK-wide

**30 hours free childcare\***  30 hours free childcare for **working parents of three and four year olds.**  
\* England only

[childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)  HM Government



**Dramatic Change** Drama Group for people with and without disabilities, are looking for new members. The group, run by Inclusion

Gloucestershire, takes an issues-based approach to developing information, advice and awareness-raising on things that are important to people with disabilities, through drama and film productions. Their productions are co-produced by people with lived experience and they have made films on topics such as sexual abuse and supported living. Despite the serious nature of their films, the drama group have lots of fun, play drama games and have roles for everyone. If you are a budding actor, you might want to be in front of the camera, but there are plenty of things that you can get involved with backstage too, such as costumes and filming. Their next project is about getting the right support to stay healthy and is part of 3 pieces of work for Gloucestershire County Council. The Drama Group meets on Tuesdays 11am-1pm at Manor House, Barnwood Road, Gloucester. For more information, Tim Heaven on **01452 623120** or email **timh@inclusion-glos.org**.

## Make your own... Father's Day Card

Sunday 18th June is Father's Day, so why not have a go at this easy keepsake card to give to Dad, or anyone else who is special to you?

### You will need:

- ♥ Card
- ♥ Pens
- ♥ Glue or tape
- ♥ Scissors
- ♥ Whatever you want to decorate the card with -- buttons, sequins, stickers, paint, pom poms or crayons.



Fold your card in half and draw around your hand. Cut around your hand so that you have 2 hand shapes. On the front of 1 hand, write "I love you..." in coloured pens or stickers. Cut a long strip of card and fold it in to a concertina. Write "...this much!" along the folded strip and glue or tape each end to a cut out hand. Make sure the thumbs line up when the card is closed. You can then decorate your card however you like.

From [www.dodoburd.com/homemade-fathers-day-gifts](http://www.dodoburd.com/homemade-fathers-day-gifts).



## Money Management Training

**MoneySuperMarket.com** and **The National Autistic Society** have teamed up to produce a **FREE** online training resource designed to help people on the autistic spectrum to manage their money, although it may also be useful for their family and friends. The Managing Money module helps identify the learner's current strengths, as well as challenges they may experience when dealing with their finances. The module covers topics such as savings, budgeting, managing debt, using bank accounts, paying bills, insurance, borrowing money, using cash machines (ATM) and where to go for independent financial advice. The module can be completed in one sitting, or visited as many times as the learner needs to. There are many interactive features within the module, demonstrating the potential difficulties that can be faced, explaining some of the jargon and complex vocabulary used in banking and how the common pitfalls can be avoided. Some of the other interactive tools include:

- £ Animation about safety when using an ATM
- £ A virtual, interactive ATM to practice basic skills
- £ Printable information sheets and worksheets to help manage budgets
- £ A password-creating exercise
- £ Video clips by other people with autism sharing their experiences
- £ Further links and references

Visit [www.autism.org.uk/about/benefits-care/managing-money.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/about/benefits-care/managing-money.aspx) to access full details and the link to the learning module. Please note, the module is for information only and specific advice should be sought from the organisations and services it refers to.

## What's On?

All these events and activities, plus many more **FREE** things going on over the half term can be found on our website [www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/events](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/events)

Saturday 6th May, sessions starting at 10am, 11.45am, 2pm & 3.45pm - **Tudor Birds of Prey: Live Animal Event** - John Moore Museum, Tewkesbury. Meet a kestrel, buzzard, peregrine falcon, barn owl, eagle and little owl, and learn how important these birds were to the Tudors. Adults £4, children £2 available in advance or on the door.



Saturday 20th May, 12-5pm - **Paws on Patrol** - Gloucester Park. Bring your pooch along to enjoy dog and family friendly activities in the park! Novelty dog show, agility, police dog demonstrations, bouncy castle, face painting, football and much more. **FREE!**

Saturday 27th - Monday 29th May, 10am-5pm - **Tall Ships Festival** - Gloucester Docks. Come and meet Captain Jack Sparrow and his pirate crew, play games, listen to live music and try some nautical activities. Adult festival pass (including access to ships, Gloucester Waterways Museum & Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum for all 3 days of the festival) £7, under 12s **FREE**.

Saturday 27th May - Sunday 4th June. Saturday, Sunday and Monday 11am-5pm, Tuesday-Friday, 10am-5pm - **Fossil Hunt** - Stratford Park, Stroud. 20 fossils are hidden around the Museum in the Park and beyond, can you find them all? Head to reception at the museum to get started! **FREE** activity.



Tuesday 30th May, 10.30am-2.30pm - **Holiday Craft Activities** - Holst Museum, Cheltenham. Drop in arts and crafts over the half term, no need to book. Adults £5, children **FREE** with paying adult.

Friday 2nd June, 11am-2pm - **World Jungle Family Fun Day** - Chantry Centre, Dursley. **FREE** event, fun for the whole family.



Tuesday 6th - Sunday 11th June - **Science Festival** - Cheltenham. Workshops, shows, discussion, talks and comedy, plus a **FREE** hands-on Discover Zone for all ages. From 'What Babies Think' to 'How to Stay Connected to your Connected Teen' to Memory Games, Mechanical Colour Wheels and the Utterly Revolting Science Show, there is something for everyone to enjoy. Prices, times and venues vary, check [www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/science](http://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/science) for full programme.

Sunday 25th June, 11am-3pm - **"Go Wild" Community Fun Day** - Robinswood Hill, Gloucester. Bring a picnic along and enjoy a day of fun activities for the whole family. Suitable for wheelchair users and those with limited mobility. **FREE** entry, some activities or refreshments may charge.

## Useful Contacts

School Admissions 01452 425407

Free School Meals 01452 425390

SENDIASS 0800 158 3603

Ofsted 0300 123 1231

Child Law Advice Line 0300 330 5480

Tax Credit Helpline 0345 300 3900

Child Benefit 0300 200 3100

Local Welfare Provision 0330 123 5550

Citizen's Advice 08444 111 444

Jobcentre Plus 0345 604 3719

Shelter Housing Advice 0808 800 4444

Teens In Crisis 01594 546117

Child Maintenance Options 0800 988 0988

Non-emergency NHS 111

Non-emergency Police 101

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse and Support Service 0845 602 9035

Family Lives 0808 800 2222

Bullying UK 0808 800 2222

Childline 0800 1111

Contact A Family 0808 808 3555