

Family Information Guide



*Information for every
member of the family*

Freephone 0800 328 9148
Website: www.childrensinfo.org

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL LIBRARIES

Libraries are for everyone

Membership is free and gives you access to:

- * Storytime and holiday activities for children
- * Bounce and Rhyme for babies
- * Baby Book Crawl
- * Free Bookstart+ packs for toddlers aged 18-30 months, and free Bookstart Treasure Chests for children aged 3+
- * Children's Activity Clubs
- * Summer Reading Challenge for Children
- * School class visits



PLUS:

- * Free Internet access
- * Reading and writing groups
- * Local history
- * Flower arranging and card making for adults



For information

Call: 01344 423149, or visit:

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/libraries

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PLAYING SAFELY

Every year children are injured and killed in fires. Keep your children safe...

- * **Keep** matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- * **Never** leave children alone in the kitchen when the oven or hob is on.
- * **Never** let children play near a fire or heater.
- * **Make** a fire action plan and practise it with everyone in your home.
- * **Ensure** that children know to "get out" and "stay out" if there is a fire.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service runs a **Firesetters Intervention** scheme which addresses fire setting behaviour in children. For more information, contact 0118 945 2888.

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

www.rbfrs.co.uk



Before you fit your child seat make sure it fits your child

For more details contact the Road Safety Officer on 0118 939 0451 or visit
www.reading.gov.uk/transportandstreets/roadsafety/

Reading
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Children's Information Centre

The Children's Information Centre (CIC) is an independent charity that provides free, impartial information, advice and guidance for families in support of the education of their children. The organisation has been working in Berkshire for over 18 years.

The Family Information Service is the largest of the Centre's projects and is operating in Bracknell Forest, Reading and West Berkshire. Other project work for the Centre includes the Children's Opportunity Group (COG) and several smaller community projects. COG covers the Reading and Bracknell Forest areas.



The Children's Information Centre has NVQ level 3 qualified trained staff in Information, Advice and Guidance. The organisation has achieved the specialist National Association of Family Information Service (NAFIS) Quality Award as well as the universally recognised Investors in People award.

The Centre works closely with parents and carers to support them with information regarding childcare, leisure activities and other needs. CIC also welcomes contact from professionals and businesses who feel they require additional support in meeting their family focused work-life balance policies and aims.

We Are Here To Help You Help Us Help Young People

Do you have someone else's child or children living with you?

They May Live With You Like Part Of Your Family but you still have to notify your Local Authority



If you have, or are going to have, a child or young person below the age of 16 * who is not a sister, brother, grandchild, niece, nephew or stepchild living with you for more than 28 days then you are required by law to notify your local authority that you have entered into a private fostering arrangement. By notifying West Berkshire Children and Family's Service we can offer you support and assistance to:

ensure that the arrangement works well for all concerned. If you think you may be affected by this requirement then we will be delighted to hear from you and explain how the process works. * 18 if They Are Disabled



The Referral & Assessment Team, Avonbank House, West Street, Newbury Berks RG14 1BE.
Ref Private Fostering. It is an offence not to register the arrangement.

Mission Statement

The Children's Information Centre aims to provide accurate information and quality services for parents and carers of children and young people from birth to 19 years (including children with special needs).

Introduction



A message from the Managing Director - Laura Johnson Collard

Children's Information Centre has information about childcare AND has information for children and young people up to 19 years old?

It's true. Answering the helpline or talking to parents in the playground, the Information Officers often start off by discussing childminders and nurseries only to end up discussing dance classes for an 8 year old or homework support for an 11 year old. AND...

...they also have information for young people aged 13+ who are interested in astronomy, theatre or rock music?

...the Children's Information Centre is constantly updating the information that they hold? You can access information in your community with one of the CIC Benefits Information Officers or NVQ trained Information Officers, you can access information on the CIC website (www.childrensinfo.org) or you can call the free helpline (0800 328 9148) and speak to one of the experienced Information Team.

...the Information Team can assist you and your family to find childcare solutions that help you get back to work or to get the training that you have been thinking about doing? They can help you to find out about support for children who are experiencing bullying. They can help you find out about support for children with special needs.

...that each community will have a Children's Centre for children 0 - 5 years old that is linked to Extended Services for children and young people 5+? CIC provide you with information about the services in your area.

...that if you are thinking about how to support your two-year-old or your teenager, the Children's Information Centre can point you to Parenting Support that can help? We have lists of parenting classes on our website and feedback from parents who have attended and have positive things to say.

...that half of the people that use the service call back for something else because they now know that we have lots of other information to share?

... CIC are always looking for volunteers to help them tell parents and carers about the work that they do? If you have liked the information that you have received and wouldn't mind telling other parents, give CIC a call.

Child Protection

It is very daunting to report a child who you think may be the victim of abuse; it is important that you seek expert advice. If abuse is taking place you will be helping to end it. Speaking out is the most difficult step, but the most important.

Talk to somebody you know and trust, but for the abuse to stop, professional help is usually needed too.

Contact an NSPCC Helpline adviser, all of whom are Child Protection Officers on 0800 800 5000. Alternatively, contact your local social services team.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, you should phone the police on 999. Whatever you do, don't keep it to yourself! For further information visit www.nspcc.org.uk

Childcare



Good quality, reliable and affordable childcare is essential for working parents, or for parents who are thinking of returning to work after their baby is born, or when a child reaches school age? Many families need both partners to work – such is the cost of living in Berkshire. Lone parents who want to work have a particularly hard choice to make and with the government agenda of getting people off benefits and into work it will be reassuring to know that good childcare is available.

JobCentre Plus - If you're looking after a child by yourself but thinking about getting back into work, our Lone Parent Advisers can help you explore the options best suited to your situation. For example, they can help you find work part-time, full time or job share and can advise you on training for the job you want.

Going back to work can be a difficult step to make if you're not sure about the financial impact it's going to have on your family. Why not pop into your local JobCentre Plus where we can run a tailored calculation so you can see upfront how having a job could help improve your financial situation. You could also get Working Tax Credits, help with childcare costs and a £250 Job Grant.

Our support doesn't end when you find a new job. In fact, when you start working for at least 16 hours a week, we'll give you £40 a week, tax free. This is on top of your wages for up to a year. Check with your JobCentre Plus personal adviser to see if you're eligible. Phone **Bracknell 01344 744800 Reading 0118 9808200**

Delia Howes - JobCentre Plus District Marketing Manager, Berks, Bucks and Oxon

Local Authorities now have a duty to make sure that suitable childcare places are available for all who need it and they are auditing childcare in their areas to respond to particular demand. JobCentre Plus is a major partner in exploring childcare options for people seeking work, and liaises with the Family Information Service to find suitable vacancies. CIC's Benefits Officer will also help parents access all the benefits they are entitled to when seeking work.

Pre-school

You can choose from childminders, pre-schools and day nurseries for childcare from birth to 5 years. You can even combine more than one if that suits you and the providers. Registered child carers are now highly trained and have to meet national standards set by Ofsted and pass inspection. This will ensure that your child will be safe, well cared for and take part in activities that contribute to their development and learning. Premises and equipment are inspected, and the



Criminal Records Bureau provides checks for all adults who may have unsupervised contact with children. Your first port of call should be with the **Family Information Service** who can advise you, search for the childcare that suits your family and let you know if there are vacancies. You can then look up inspection reports on the Ofsted site and speak to the providers directly to arrange the care.



CIC have dedicated Benefits Officers to advise you about funding that you can access for Early Education places and any tax credits you can apply for? Call the **Family Information Service** for lists of childcare. The website also has up-to-date advice at www.childrensinfo.org and links to online searches.



Primary

When your children start primary school it is an anxious time for all, and if you are thinking about going back to work, either part-time or full-time, it is important to know that your child is being well cared for outside school hours.



Childminders provide very flexible care and can usually drop off and pick-up from local schools? Subject to demand, schools, as part of Extended Services, provide activities and care, both before and after school. There are Breakfast and After School Clubs during term time and Holiday Play Schemes during term breaks. Again, all the settings and providers have been trained and Ofsted inspected if they run over 2 hours a session. Their sessions run over 2 hours you will need to be personally assured that standards like child safety are being observed by speaking to the organisers directly.*

*2 hours will increase to 4 hours in September 2008.

Hungerford Nursery School Centre for Children and Families provides the first year of "school", delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum for the children in Hungerford and the surrounding area. It is through a carefully planned and structured educational environment in partnership with parents that children are enabled to reach their full potential. We were designated as a SureStart Children's Centre in August 2006 and we are able to offer the following services:

Nursery School, Squirrels Breakfast and After School Club, Activity Clubs, extended days in conjunction with other local settings, Holiday Playschemes, Parent and Carer Stay and Play and Baby Groups, drop-in sessions, Parenting Support, Adult and Family Learning.

Pauline Reading - Manager of Hungerford Nursery and SureStart Children's Centre



Call the **Family Information Service** for lists of primary age childcare. Our website also has up-to-date information and advice at www.childrensinfo.org as well as links to online searches.

Secondary

As part of Extended Services, and in response to local demand, schools can provide a variety of facilities? When your kids think they're too old for childcare, schools can still provide a 'safe place to be' before and after school hours. Your children will be offered access to a varied menu of study support and enriching activities. The school does not have to provide these services themselves and can attract voluntary and private organisations to run clubs, visits and other opportunities



for young people. The childcare element of tax credits is available up to age 15 (16 for disabled children) if they attend regular Ofsted registered supervised sessions. Some sessions could be run by leisure centres during the holidays or your children can take part in youth activities locally. Talk to CIC's Benefits Officer to see if you are eligible for Childcare Tax Credits.

Remember that activities take place only if there is a demand for them and you or your children need to speak to the school to show interest or to say what you need as a family.

Call the **Family Information Service** for lists of what's happening. Our website also has up-to-date information at www.childrensinfo.org

Telephone: 0800 328 9148

Dickory Docks
Educational Day Nursery and
Nursery School for 0-5 years
Prospect School, Tilehurst
Tel: 0118 959 8252



Wokingham Road, Roundhill, Bracknell, Berks RG42 1PN

Tel: 01344 301316 Fax: 01344 421948

Email: dolphinbracknell@casterbridgeccae.com

Web: www.dolphinnursery-bracknell.com

We are open 8-8 Mon-Fri. 52 weeks a year

Children are 3 months-5 years

We offer included nappies, wipes and formula milk.

Extra curricular activities include 'Theatrebugs' and 'Soccer Stars'

For further info please contact

Natasha on 01344 301316

ChildBase
NURSERIES

Child Base nurseries have a cosy, family atmosphere that children enjoy, with a happy, sociable environment where every child is treated as an individual.



- For children aged six weeks to five years.
- Open from 7.30am to 6.30pm, with core hours of 8am to 6pm, 52 weeks a year (except public holidays).
- We offer full time or sessional basis.
- Six main playrooms and sensory areas with additional sleeping areas.
- Large, fully equipped play area and superb garden with special interest areas.
- Our fees are all-inclusive. They include all food, nappies, milk and extra activities such as music lessons and gym.

Green Park, Reading 0118 931 3115 – greenpark.nursery@childbase.com

Cedar Park, Twyford 0118 934 0118 – cedar.park@childbase.com

Oak Tree, Finchampstead 0118 973 3231 – oaktree.nursery@childbase.com

Pelican, Newbury 01635 46494 – pelican.nursery@childbase.com

Mulberry, Maidenhead 01628 6711116 – mulberry.nursery@childbase.com

www.childbase.com

www.childrensinfo.org

**Our Lady of Peace
Community Centre**
338 Wokingham Road,
Earley RG6 7DA
Tel: 07930 602379
For 2½-5 year olds
Mon-Fri 9.30-12.30pm
Established for over 40 years

Earley Montessori School
offers a stimulating and nurturing
environment for children 2.5 to
5 years. Children are encouraged to
meet their full potential under the
guidance of experienced qualified
staff within a calm structured setting.
For more information please
telephone 01628 820133

Bb
**Good quality
childcare**
Open 7.30am-6.30pm
52 weeks a year
Close to train station
and all local amenities
Tel: 0118 956 0341
Web: www.butterbear.co.uk
Email:
reading@butterbear.co.uk

ACRES OF FUN
Day Nursery
& Pre-School
1 mile from
J13/M4
01635 203300
www.acresoffun.co.uk
Newbury Nannies
(Agency est. 1982)
01635 203399
www.newburynannies.co.uk

Kilnsea Pre-School
Our experienced staff
educates through play in a
secure and safe environment
A large range of arts, crafts & activities
plus song and story sessions. Excellent equipment
for indoor & outdoor play. Any catchment area.
Spaces available for children aged 2.5 - 5 years
20 years in pre-school education. OFSTED inspected.
Qualified staff. Diploma in Pre-School Practice & First Aid
Kilnsea Pre-School, Maiden Place Community Centre,
Maiden Place, Off Kilnsea Drive, Lower Earley,
Reading RG6 3HE. Tel: 07754 847967
kilnsea@hotmail.com

**Alexandra Road
Community Day Nursery**
A unique, non-profit making community nursery with over
30 years experience caring for and nursing children.
Cosy home-like environment. Open 8am - 6pm with
flexible part and full time sessions for 18 months to
5 year olds. Easily accessible by foot or car, just
10 minutes walk to Reading town centre and university.
Great OFSTED report. Above average staff:child ratios.
All staff are fully qualified.
Come and see the difference - call Sarah Clark on
0118 926 2384 to arrange a visit.
35 Alexandra Road, Reading

Little Bears Day Nursery
• High Quality Care • Age 3 Months to 5 Years
• Qualifies & Experienced Staff • Term Places Available
• Flexible Hours 7.45am til 6.15pm • Fees include Nappies &
Milk • Well Balanced Home Cooked Food • Music Class
2.5 Hour Sessions Available For All Eligible 3 & 4 Year Olds
Telephone: 01635 523998/0797 481 4450
www.littlebearsdaynursery.co.uk
6 Northcroft Lane, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1BU

**The Children's House
Nursery**
Park Lodge, Tilehurst Lane,
Binfield, Berkshire RG42 5JL
We offer excellence
in childcare for
children from three
months to five years
in an environment
that is safe, fun and
stimulating.
Based in the heart of
Binfield village, just a
short distance from
the M4.
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or to arrange a visit,
please telephone on:
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Children's
House
day nursery
CIBT
A CIBT nursery

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like to have
some time to
yourself?

Are you
returning to
work?

Do you need
day care for
your child?

Who would
you trust with
your baby?

We provide a safe, caring and happy environment dedicated to offering your child a
stimulating range of activities and experiences to aid their development.
Open weekdays from 8am-6pm, we accept children from 9 weeks - 5 years on a
daily/weekly/monthly basis.

Braken Bears
Day Nursery
Rectory Lane, Brakenhale School,
Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 7BA
For further information please call
Deborah Uphill on 01344 868923

Little Jogs
Day Nursery
Priory Road, Hungerford, Berkshire
RG17 0AR
For further information please call
Elena Allan on 01488 683533

the teepee
day nursery

The best way to find the right childcare is through recommendation,
that's why we're so proud of what our customers say

Visit www.thetepee.co.uk for more information
01344 360601
The Teepee Day Nursery, Pembroke, Bracknell RG12 7RD

- Registered with OFSTED
- Home Cooked Meals
- Unrivalled Environment & Equipment
- Childcare Vouchers Welcome
- High Staff : Children Ratio
- Music, Fun 4 Baby, Gym, French & Soccer Classes



Your child is the heart of our care.

Open 8am-6pm
flexible hours
Mon-Fri

Feel better about your childcare with qualified, experienced staff. Teddies Nurseries, part of BUPA provide nurturing care for children aged three months to school age.

Teddies Nursery, Bracknell
3 Horndean Road, Bracknell
Berkshire RG12 0XQ

teddiesnurseries.bupa.co.uk
0800 980 3801



The Hurst
Community College
Learning and Leisure Centre



Miss Polly's Kindergarten
The Hurst Community College, Brimpton Road
Bourghurst RG26 5NL

Miss Polly's Kindergarten is a Full Day care setting for children 0 - 5 years.

The children are cared for in a safe, happy and stimulating environment. With qualified, professional and experienced staff. Excellent Ofsted. Hot lunches.

We are open 7.30am - 6.00pm 51 weeks a year. We have a large adventure garden.

For more information please ring
0118 9814129
www.hurst.hants.sch.uk/hurstcentre



Sonning, Reading



Open 51 weeks per year from 7.30 - 6.30
Conveniently located just off the A4, Sonning
Catering for children aged 3 months to 5 years
Good OFSTED Report

0118 969 5545
Holme Park, Holme Park Farm Lane,
Sonning, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8ST
www.monkeypuzzledaynurseries.com



Quackers Day Nursery
High Street, Chieveley
Newbury, Berks RG20 8TE
Day Nursery and Pre-School

Open from 8.00am to 6.00pm, 51 weeks of the year.

Full or part time childcare & education for children aged 0 to 5 years. We also offer free education places for children aged 3 and 4 years. Registered and inspected through Ofsted for 60 children.

Homely, happy, safe and stimulating environment.

Qualified and experienced team especially selected for their love of children. Competitive prices.

For more details please contact Jan or Jenna on 01635 247555



Western Elms Nursery
59 Western Elms Avenue
Reading RG30 2AL
Telephone 01189 572 146

e-mail admin@westernelmsnursery.co.uk
Website www.westernelmsnursery.co.uk

Mia 3 years 9 months




Providing Educational Day Care for 3 Months to 5 Years

Offering Ballet & Dance, French, Home cooked freshly prepared meals, Babies individual routines catered for. OFSTED registered, Foundation Stage Curriculum ALL inclusive. Visits welcome.

<p>TIGERS DAY NURSERY</p> <p>Henwick Court, Turnpike Rd, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 3QV Tel: Jane Tubb 01635 528857</p>	<p>TIGERS TOO DAY NURSERY</p> <p>Chequers Court, Station Rd, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 4BR Tel: Debbie Drew 01635 866321</p>
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JUBILEE DAY NURSERY



Celebrating Childhood

Berkshires Best Kept Secret

an educational experience.....

Paddock Road, Padworth, Reading
Berkshire, RG7 4JD
Tel: 0118 9701600
Mobile: 07876 493270
www.jubileedaynursery.co.uk



Jubilee Jets Holiday Club



There is so much to do from biking in the woods, feeding lambs, henna tattoos, trampolining, games and races or just hanging out with friends.

Jubilee Jets is open every school holiday from 08.00-18.00 for children aged 4 to 11 years.

Set in fantastic countryside location

For further information please contact:
Jubilee Day Nursery on 0118 970 1600
Mobile: 0787 649 3270
www.jubileedaynursery.co.uk
Paddock View, Rectory Road,
Padworth Common, Berkshire RG7 4JD

Quality Childcare at Leapfrog in Woodley, Reading!



Leapfrog Day Nursery in Woodley offers care, education and hours of fun!





Open 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday
Individual, fully equipped play rooms
Large outdoor play and garden area
Monkey Music - every week! (term time only)

GOOD OFSTED RESULT!

Call Sarah on 0118 969 1299 or visit www.leapfrogdaynurseries.co.uk
Leapfrog Day Nursery, Loddon Vale Centre, Hurrican Way, Woodley, Reading (next to Tesco's)



Ingleswood Day Nursery, Nursery School & Training College for Nursery Nurses

A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN CHILDREN'S CARE & EDUCATION

OUTSTANDING OFSTED REPORT

- High staff ratio's including Early years Teachers and qualified nursery nurses.
- Exceptional environment and resources
- Nutritious home cooked meals
- Service inclusive of all nappies, meals, baby milks.
- Full & Part time places, flexible extra days.
- Holiday club for children aged 4 – 8 years
- Heated indoor swimming pool with qualified tuition.
- All childcare vouchers and fee reduction schemes accepted.



REGISTERED TO PROVIDE FREE NURSERY EDUCATION GRANT FOR 3 & 4YR OLDS

Stunning nursery facilities in a beautiful setting, providing unparalleled childcare, education, choice and opportunity for children aged 3 months - 5 years.

The Training College is registered with CACHE, and offers free 2 year Modern Apprenticeships in Children's Care, Learning and Development to 16 – 24yr olds.

Sonning Lane, Sonning, Berks RG4 6ST

Telephone Reading 01189 448338



The best way to find the right childcare is through recommendation, that's why we're so proud of what our customers say

At The Wigwam we're privileged to care for your child, we're so passionate about getting it right that with us... you both come first.

Visit www.thewigwamnursery.co.uk for more information


0118 958 1800

The Wigwam Day Nursery, 22 Farnham Road, Reading RG1 4PL

Telephone: 0800 328 9148

Leisure

Leisure and recreation is important to the balanced upbringing of children. Physical recreation is increasingly important as our children become more and more inactive spending time sitting in front of computers!

 The Family Information Service keeps up-to-date information about leisure and recreational facilities in Bracknell Forest, Reading and West Berkshire?

If you want to know about sports, leisure and holiday clubs and other activities going on in your area then the **Children's Information Centre** has detailed lists of what's happening. The website also has up-to-date information at www.childrensinfo.org as well as online search facilities to give you instant ideas at your fingertips.

Pre-school

Children 0-5 years love to play and interact at parent and toddler groups and it's a great opportunity for parents to mix too! Many long term friendships are forged. Lots of

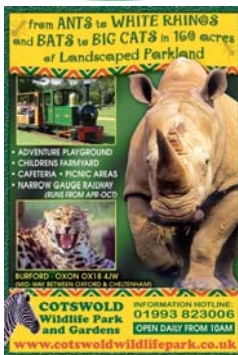


walks are now buggy friendly and there are playgrounds and parks suitable for all ages. There are Soft Play, Gymnastics and Baby Tumble sessions to take part in too. The list is endless for pre-school kids and you can contact the **Family Information Service team** 0800 3289148 or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more.



www.childrensinfo.org

from **ANTS** to **WHITE RHINOS**
and **BATS** to **BIG CATS** in 160 acres
of Landscaped Parkland



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INFORMATION HOTLINE 01993 823006
OPEN DAILY FROM 10AM

www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk

Summer Fun

at the
Hawk Conservancy Trust,
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- Set in 22 acres and with over 100 birds to see.
- 3 flying displays daily
- "NEW" for 2008 watch the spectacular Valley of the Eagles display from "Eagle Ridge" our new amphitheatre where you can get a birds eye view of eagles and vultures.
- Hold a bird, adults fly a hawk, vulture feed, tractor rides, ferret and runner duck racing, wild raptor feeds and much much more.
- Stop for a bite to eat in Duffys, take home a gift from the Trust shop or let the kids let off steam in the adventure play area.
- The Hawk Conservancy Trust, so much to do for all the family



Come and visit and see how
conservation can be fun.
Call 01264 773850 or visit:
www.hawkconservancy.org

ACTIVITIES & HOLIDAY CLUBS



Primary

Children love challenging and exciting things to do that both stimulate their minds and keep them healthy. Someone said that there is never inappropriate weather, only inappropriate clothing! So get out the sunhats or the scarves and wellies and let them enjoy the fresh air. There are also organised activities like swimming, athletics, football (for girls too), tennis and lots, lots more.

In the school holidays there are schemes and clubs kids can go to if parents are working? All this information and more can be obtained from the **Family Information Service** team 0800 328 9148 or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org

Secondary

Kids in senior school don't like to be called 'children', do they? But we know it is an increasingly worrying time for parents who

are concerned about the temptations that come their way at this age. Approaching adulthood, there are lots of leisure activities that teach skills and give older kids the confidence they will need later on in life.



www.childrensinfo.org



WELLINGTON COUNTRY PARK

An oasis of family fun

350 acres of beautiful parkland
surrounding a 35 acre lake

Open 9.30am - 6.00pm*

www.wellington-country-park.co.uk

* High Season Only

- Toddlers Area
- Adventure Playgrounds
- Slides
- Sand Pit Areas
- Miniature Railway
- Crazy Golf
- Picnic Areas
- Nature Trails
- Dog Walking
- Café 1815 & Shop
- Campsite

Adults £6.00 • Seniors £5.00 • Children £5.00 • Under 3's FREE • Family £19.50 (2 adults & 2 children)



Wellington Country Park • Riseley • Reading • RG7 1SP • Enquiries: 0118 932 6444 Email: info@wellington-country-park.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 328 9148

ENTERTAINMENTS

The Best Children's Disco Parties Ever!
Learn the Latest Dance Grooves, Play Games and Have Fun with our Fantastic Female DJs

Mix & Match
Disco Parties 4-12 year olds
• School Discos • Temporary Tattoos • Inflatables
• Balloon Modelling • Face Painting • Nail Art
And so much more!

All Directory Areas Covered *See below for details*

Phone us on 0800 052 6510
www.abentertainments.co.uk

Making Memories

Mobile Paint Pottery Events
Host painting pottery events at your venue
Ideal for: children's parties, toddler groups, nurseries, Rainbows, Brownies and much more! Baby and toddler hand/foot print sets available

More information:
www.paintpottery.co.uk
01635 863309

KRAZY PLAY DAYS
FAMILY FUN CENTRE

When we're all together and can't wait to meet our friends for lunch or after school we're in luck!

NETBALL CLUBS
Come and see us any day from 10am - 12pm. We have a netball club for all ages and abilities. We have a netball club for all ages and abilities. We have a netball club for all ages and abilities.

Whooosh!
Play & Party Centre
Whooosh is a privately owned three hall indoor soft play centre for children under 11 years of age. We are located within Dursley Leisure Centre.

From £1 per session!
Call 01344 96 83 83
for more information
www.whooosh.co.uk

GET SET TO GET WET!

horoeshoe lake
ACTIVITY CENTRE

KIDS HOLIDAY COURSES
Weekly courses for ages 4-15yrs
• KARAOKE, SAILING & WINDSURFING
Starting 14th July
Mon-Fri 10am-12pm

ALL-STAR MULTI-ACTIVITY WEEKS
• KARAOKE FUN for ALL
Starting 28th July
Mon-Fri 9.30am - 11.30am
Single Multi-Activity 10.15-11.30am
www.freetimewatersports.co.uk

Call or Email: The Horoeshoe Lake Activity Team
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PALS is run for 5-18 year olds and we have a team of trained volunteers who are all aged between 16 and 21 years old. There are also three adult members of paid staff and at least one of those will be present at every activity.

There is no cost for joining PALS but there may be a small cost for the activities you choose to attend.

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Will Fletcher, Senior Co-ordinator, PALS

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ENTERTAINMENTS/PARTIES

Organising children's entertainment or a child's party? The **Children's Information Centre** has a long list of entertainers and fun activities, from magicians to makeovers.

They have contact details for a host of entertainers offering clowning and circus skills, discos and mini-discos, bouncy castles, balloon modelling and crafts, face

painting and dance workshops, puppets, quizzes, team games and party games, story telling and so on.

The Family Information Service at the **Children's Information Centre** has dedicated Information Officers keeping track of new and interesting activities or entertainments for a child's party or an event.

Contact the Family Information Service team 0800 3289148 or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more.



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www.childrensinfo.org

Education

Education is not just for children, as we learn all through our lives. As children we learn skills that will help develop our talents and increase our curiosity about the world we live in. The children of today will be the adults that run the world tomorrow and parents are the first teachers in the lives of children.

Parents have been proved to be the strongest influence in their children's lives and there is advice and guidance to help you to support your child in their learning? Young children can easily outstrip their parents in their knowledge of IT for instance, but there are now courses for adults that can help them in these relatively new subjects or to help them brush up on forgotten skills. Contact the **Family Information Service on 0800 328 9148** or visit their website at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more about family learning opportunities local to you.

Pre-school

There is no legal requirement for parents to send their child to pre-school or nursery. However, it is proven that Early Years education helps a child to settle when they start formal education at school.

Early Years places for 3 and 4 year olds are free, funded by your local authority. CIC can tell you about the way funding works in your area and what you can expect. The Foundation Stage of the national curriculum is for children aged 3-5 years, which helps them develop



through play. Pre-schools, nurseries and some childminders are trained to deliver the six areas which include communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills, personal, social and emotional development, creative skills, understanding and knowledge of the world and physical development. To find out more contact the **Family Information Service** or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org



What is Bookstart?

Bookstart is a national programme that works through locally based organisations to give a free pack of books to babies and young children with guidance materials for parents and carers. It promotes a life-long love of books and is based on the principle that every child in the UK should enjoy and benefit from books from as early an age as possible.

Who is Bookstart for?

Bookstart is for every baby and young child – that's its appeal. We want every baby in the UK to get a Bookstart pack.

- Bookstart is for babies 0-18 months
- Bookstart Plus is for toddlers 18-36 months
- My Bookstart Treasure Chest is for children between 36 and 48 months

How will it benefit my children?

Sharing books with babies and toddlers is a wonderful way to increase language skills and helps children to understand their world. The first five years are the best time for learning to talk and most of a child's language comes from the adults around them. Babies and toddlers who love books

'Parents as First Teachers' is a programme that helps parents of children aged from birth to 3 years? Their support will help you and your child when they start Early Years and formal education at school. Find out from the **Family Information Service** where there is a local programme for you.



begin reading sooner and have a better chance at school.

And what is more important, reading is fun for both children and adults!

What if my baby/toddler/child has not received a pack?

Any baby that did not receive a pack at their 7-9 month health check is eligible for a pack. If your baby did not receive a pack, first contact your local library to check whether there is a local scheme. If there is not a scheme operating in your area, contact Booktrust directly on **0208 516 2995**. Health visitors give out Bookstart Plus packs for toddlers at roughly two years. If you do not receive a pack, first contact your local library. Bookstart Treasure Chests are primarily distributed via nurseries and playgroups. If your child does not go to any pre-school setting, contact your local library and if there is no Bookstart scheme in your area, contact Booktrust.

Booktouch

This is a free pack of books and guidance materials that aims to give a love of books to blind and partially sighted children of 0-4 years. Contact your health visitor for a pack.

Bookshine

Bookshine aims to help deaf babies and toddlers to get 'bookstarted'. Packs contain

two specially chosen books designed to stimulate children's senses, including a touch and feel book and a nursery rhyme book featuring BSL signs.

For further information about Bookstart, contact your local library or visit www.bookstart.org.uk

Want to borrow some toys? Reading Borough Libraries and Reading's Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership have worked together to provide a low cost toy loan scheme for children. The project has been made possible through a grant from the European Social Fund and local initiatives.

Who can join the Toy Library? Schools, nurseries, playgroups, toddler groups, play schemes, after school clubs, childminders, parents and carers. Find out how to join through your local Reading library, go to the Children's Information Centre website www.childrensinfo.org ask a member of Reading Libraries staff or check out the website at www.readinglibraries.org.uk/services/toys.htm

Suzan Davis - Senior Young Persons Development Librarian, Reading Central Library

Primary

As a parent, you must ensure your child receives a full-time education from the age of five. It is an anxious time for most parents and children, and the transition can be made smoother with quality information and advice. Most schools are funded by local authorities, but some are private or specialist. Most children go to a mainstream state school where there is a free place from 5 to 16 years. A small number of parents choose to educate their children at home but there is no direct funding, although some local authorities offer advice and education material. The **Family Information Service** will have details on all types of school and will signpost you to helpful organisations. We can also tell you about admissions arrangements.

Year 1 and Year 2 of primary school are known as Key Stage 1, Years 3 to 6 of primary school are known as Key Stage 2. A teacher will assess your child at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, your child will take national tests in English, Maths and Science. The national curriculum has eight levels. At Key Stage 1 most children should have reached level 2 of the curriculum and at Key Stage 2 most children level 4 of the curriculum. Phone **0800 328 9148** or visit our website at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more about primary education and choices of schools in your area.

Secondary

The transition from primary school to secondary might be difficult when children find themselves the youngest members of a very large school community.

Most children will go to their choice of school, but sometimes places may not be available and they may have to leave their friends behind. Again, parents need the support and information that can guide them through procedures.

Choice Advisers can help by giving practical support to some parents to enable them to make the best choices for their child? The **Family Information Service** can tell you more about Choice Advisers in your area.

Key Stages 3 and 4 cover 11-16 year olds and in year 9 when your child is 14 they will take national tests and teachers will assess progress? The tests are intended to show if your child is working at, above or below the target level for their age. This helps the school to make plans for their future learning. It also allows schools to see whether they are teaching effectively by comparing their pupils' performance to national results. It may be a stressful time for pupils, and parents can help by making sure kids eat, sleep and exercise well.

Changes in education and training will mean a wider choice of courses for 14 to 19 year olds, aimed at giving them the chance to learn in a way that suits them and gain the skills needed for further study and work? A new diploma is due to be introduced bridging academic and vocational learning. From September 2008 some schools will be trialing the new diploma. To find out more about secondary schools and colleges phone the **Family Information Service** on **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org

Adult Education

You can find free or low cost adult classes and family learning programmes in the new Children's Centres which cater for families of



Bracknell and Wokingham College is your route back into the workplace, into a new career or even to university. Or you might want to do a fun one-day class - in art, dance, facepainting or cooking with chocolate, to name but a few!

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Many of our courses are free if you are on benefits and the classes often fit around school hours. So you can do something for yourself but still be there for your children.

For Parents of Pre-School School Children

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A workshop student explains the benefit of the classes like this:

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children from birth to age 5. There are also similar courses run by Extended Services through schools. Parenting courses are also available and can help you through the minefield of bringing up kids. The **Family Information Service** collects details about where and when these courses happen and can signpost you onto relevant help. To find out more phone **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org

For Parents of Primary School Children

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For further information, a prospectus, or to arrange a visit to the
school please contact the Admissions Secretary:


Tel: 0118 944 1005
Email: vmf@blue-coat-reading.sch.uk
Website: www.blue-coat-reading.sch.uk

Reading Blue Coat School, Holme Park, Sonning-on-Thames, RG4 6SU
Reading Blue Coat School exists to provide education for children.
Registered charity number 100091

St. Edward's Preparatory School
Boys aged 4-13

64 Tilehurst Road, Reading RG30 2JH

Pre-prep Department (4-6 year olds)
The Pre-prep, an integral part of the school, is a
friendly and individual department. It aims to provide
a safe, exciting, stimulating and happy environment
where boys can begin their formal education and
develop as well-rounded members of society.



Prep School
From 7-13 years pupils are taught in small classes.
Pupils are prepared for C.E. and scholarships to
independent schools and many boys successfully sit
the Reading School exam at 13+ or 11+.

For more information, contact the school secretary
on 0118 957 4342, www.stedwards.org.uk
Charity No. 309147

Health

Good health is vital for children's and young peoples' successful development. They feel the benefits of a healthy diet and being active, which has been proved to have a positive effect on their learning and confidence. Information and support is available for parents and families of children and young people aged 0-19 years through various organisations and the **Family Information Service** can tell you about them and put you in touch.

Pre-school

Having a healthy baby or young child is usually top of the wish list for any parent.

Help and advice is available for would-be parents, expectant parents and new parents so that you can be reassured from the start? Ensuring your health is the best it can be before pregnancy is as important as health during pregnancy. New parents are often concerned at this stage, and again it is having that reassurance

that is important. Your midwife and health visitor will be a source of good information and, as they are usually attached to you GP surgery, they will know your family. There are breastfeeding support groups and the National Childbirth Trust has baby and toddler groups where mums and dads can meet.

Once your child starts a pre-school or nursery there are staff that can help with guidance, and these settings will also have links with the health service. A trained registered childminder will have the same information. To find out about a healthy lifestyle for you and your child, contact the Family Information Service team on **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more.

Primary

Once your child starts school your health visitor remains a source of information and guidance, and the school nurse will also be available. You will find that schools will be promoting good health with healthy school lunches and physical exercise.



Telephone: 0800 328 9148



In addition to learning, play is important for a child's development and local authorities now have Play Strategies to make certain children and young people have appropriate free quality play facilities in your area? Healthy eating can be a concern for parents, and children can be quite 'faddy' at this age. The Family Information Service booklet 'Help! My Child Won't Eat', offers top tips for mums and dads of primary school kids. Contact our Family Information Service team **0800 328 9148** or visit our web-site at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more.

Secondary

As your child gets older your part in their life doesn't get any less, just different. You have to deal with raging hormones, moods and general concerns about the attraction of drugs, alcohol and sex! Very often a teenager will listen to anyone except their parents. Having the right connections and knowing organisations that can help is useful. Older children are still growing and developing

and the correct food that gives them fuel for the day is vital. A good breakfast is the basis for a healthy diet and will cut out the need to snack it's not just an old wives' tale but a reality! Other meals will top-up this important first meal. Regular physical exercise, whether it is dancing to pop music, walking to school or playing a sport should take up an hour a day. Exercise can release exam tensions too!

Schools, health services and voluntary organisations can help families and children with their concerns about drugs, alcohol and sex. There are also youth organisations and several useful websites that can offer your children direct guidance and advice. Your health visitor will still be around as they support the whole community and can be reached through your GP surgery.

The Family Information Service collects and researches information and can give advice to parents and young people by pointing you to the relevant organisations that can help?

Phone **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org


www.childrensinfo.org

Support for families

Families are diverse, from lone parents to large families. They can be extended to include grandparents and other relatives and even sometimes close friends. When a child is born, mums and dads are not given a manual and as every child is different it would be of little use anyhow! At some time we all need support, and at the least, reassurance. Some families need specialist support if their situation is complex and difficult. Most need the comfort of knowing that their parenting skills are enriching and developing their child in a healthy way. Sometimes families need support, for instance, when adults are ill and the situation affects the child, or if parents split up, or when a loved one dies and children feel bereaved. In almost every case there is help and support to meet your needs.

 The Family Information Service works with other organisations and can help you find the right support for your situation? You can arrange a confidential meeting with an Information Officer trained to provide the information, advice and guidance you seek and they can put you in touch with the experts in that field. If you have children aged 0 – 19, phone **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at **www.childrensinfo.org** to find out more about the help and support available to you and your family.

Pre-school

 A new and exciting source for help and support for families of children under 5 years is a Children's Centre? There should be one near you and there will be many more coming.



Katesgrove Children's Centre continues to deliver a comprehensive programme throughout the week whilst at the same time, building work to extend the Centre is in progress. The new building will be finished in the early autumn and there will be a lot more hall space and crèche facilities with an outdoor play area.

Meanwhile, on Thursdays, there is a welcome group aimed at offering health advice and support to families with young children who are newcomers to the UK. This group operates during term time from the yellow portacabin in Katesgrove lane between 10 and 12.

Please ring **0118 975 0819** for more information on the Katesgrove Children's Centre programme.

Debbie Stone – Manager of Katesgrove SureStart Children's Centre, Reading

...

The Parents as First Teachers programme aims to support parents to ensure that their children learn, grow and develop to realise their full potential. If you are the parent or carer of a child 0-3 years, a PAFt worker can support you to:

- observe and understand your child's development

Children's Centres bring services to you locally and they will respond to the needs of the immediate community. The Family Information Service works with all Children's Centres and will visit them regularly to provide information to parents. Information Officers will know the services provided at each centre and the people who run them. In fact, CIC work very closely with other organisations so that together they can give families what they need.

- increase your confidence and parenting skills
- enhance your relationship with your child
- recognise the important role you play in your child's development
- meet new friends with whom you can share experiences
- discuss any concerns you have about your child's development

For details of your nearest Centre please go to **www.childrensinfo.org** or call the Children's Centre Development Officer on **01635 503418**.

Mandy Yellen- Children's Centre Development Officer, West Berkshire



Contact the Family Information Service to find out about Children's Centres in your area and about any other support available. Phone **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at **www.childrensinfo.org**

Early Education Places

The government funds local authorities to ensure a free part-time early education place is available for every three and four year old in an Ofsted inspected setting. Free places can be provided by a variety of providers in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors including registered childminder networks.


Currently three and four year old children are entitled to free early years education, comprising 12.5 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year (the equivalent of the school year). This will rise to 15 hours per week, term time, by 2010. Parents do not contribute towards this minimum entitlement but may be charged fees for any services or childcare that is additional to the free place.

All children, are entitled to up to 2 years of free early years education before reaching statutory school age. The Children's Information Centre can guide parents through the process.

Primary


When your child starts school you will find that the school will be able to offer the same sort of support that Children's Centres give, but appropriate to your child's age and development. These are called Extended Services and will again be developed to fit the needs of the local community. Clusters of schools will work together to organise swift pupil referral to other services like health. Schools will encourage the whole community to use their facilities more and external organisations, like adult learning providers, will be able to use the school building, subject to the school's usual procedures for lettings.



 Extended Services will also provide Breakfast and After School Clubs and Holiday schemes based on demand. Contact the **Family Information Service** to find out about Extended Services in your area and about any other support available. Phone **0800 328 9148** or visit the website at www.childrensinfo.org

Secondary

The transition from primary to secondary school can be stressful and as your youngster becomes a teenager and heads towards adulthood there are often a number of concerns that families have. Childcare is now mostly through 'play' or 'sport' activities within secondary schools or through Extended Services, but again the offer is subject to demand.

 There are close links with health services, including sexual health, as well as local youth organisations? Connexions personal advisers are available to help young people make choices in their lives, and work along with them.

Tax Credits

A Tax Credit isn't a tax - it's money that you receive regularly. And it isn't deducted from your tax bill either - in fact you can get it even if you don't pay tax. Tax Credits can be paid to you through your wages or straight into your bank, building society or Post Office account.

You can claim if the child or young person is:

- aged 16 or under, up to 31 August after their 16th birthday
- aged under 19, or under 20 in certain circumstances, if they're still in full time education (up to and including 'A' levels, NVQ level 3 or Scottish Highers), or approved training like Entry to Employment, Skillbuild or Get Ready for Work

If you share responsibility for a child or young person there are certain considerations. If you're a couple living together then you have to make a joint claim - whether you're married or civil partners or not. If you're separated or your civil partnership has dissolved, the person with main responsibility for the child or young person should claim.

If the child or young person lives with more than one family, the family with main responsibility for them should claim.

Child Tax Credits

Child Tax Credit is a means-tested allowance for parents and carers of children or young people who are still in full-time non advanced education or approved training.

Tax credits are based on your household circumstances, so you'll need to give HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) information about:

- your income
- your partner's or civil partner's income (if

you have one)

- the children in your family

Families with children can claim Child Tax Credit if their income is no more than £58,175 a year (up to £66,350 if you have a child under one). The amount you get depends on various things, including your annual income. The payment is made up of two elements:

- a family element paid to any family with at least one child and worth up to £545 (2007-2008 tax year)
- a child element paid for each child in the family and worth up to £1,845 (2007-2008 tax year)

You may get more if you care for a child under one or a disabled child.

Working Tax Credit

If you're in work but on low pay, you can apply for Working Tax Credit to top up your earnings. You can claim this whether you're employed or self-employed and

- usually work 16 hours or more a week
- are paid for that work, and
- expect to work for at least 4 weeks and who are
- aged 16 or over and responsible for at least one child, or
- aged 16 or over and disabled, or
- aged 25 or over and usually work at least 30 hours a week

Your Working Tax Credit will be worked out with your Child Tax Credit. The amount of tax credits you receive will depend on your annual income. The **Children's Information Centre's** leaflet 'Tax Credits Your Questions Answered' can help simplify what you may be entitled to. Their Benefits Information Officer can also provide one-to-one specialist advice to help you and your family directly.

Calling Mums, Dads, Grandmas and Grandads! Become a CIC Volunteer with the Children's Information Centre!

We are always in need of people who have a few spare hours to help us in our work. You call the tune with how much time you want to give us, it can be regular or on the occasions when we need extra help.

Why not give us a call and we can tell you more about the opportunities we have for volunteers. Phone **0800 328 9148**

New Benefits Service at the Children's Information Centre.

The Children's Information Centre is the information and research charity for families. We have dedicated staff members working for the organisation in the role of Information Officer, providing free assistance for families with benefit issues. Staff members have a background working in the public service sector and have spent many years helping people with benefit difficulties.

Whilst a large part of this role will be to support families' concerns with returning to work, the Benefits Information Officer will also be looking to bring local information together, with the assistance of colleagues, to support every member of your family. Our Information Officers hold one-to-one drop in sessions in local Children's Centres, where everyone can come along and find out more about how the Children's Information Centre is there to support you and your family.

If you would like to get in touch with an Information Officer about benefits and welfare, you can call confidentially, on **07824 474036** or **0800 328 9148** or email enquiries@childrensinfo.org

Connexions Berkshire provides impartial information, advice, guidance and support to young people as they move through their teenage years into adulthood and working life. Our key purpose is to help young people aged 13-19, and up to 25 for those who have learning difficulties and disabilities, to engage in education, employment and training (EET), so that they become successful adults.

Working in partnership with others, we aim to:

- Provide all young people with the help and support they need to make a successful transition to further stages in EET and into adulthood
- Offer young people impartial information, advice and guidance on learning and career options, as well as broader personal issues
- Raise young people's aspirations and motivate them to achieve their full potential
- Help young people overcome barriers to their progression in learning and work, including issues such as:
 - o Housing
 - o Relationships
 - o Bullying
 - o Health matters (including sexual health)
 - o Substance misuse
 - o Offending behaviour
- Help parents, carers and families motivate and support young people in accessing learning, employment and personal development opportunities and

make successful transitions from one stage to the next

For further information visit:

www.connexions-berkshire.org.uk or call 0845 408 5001.

Chula Bishop- Communications and Consultation Manager, Connexions Berkshire



Telephone: 0800 328 9148

Special Needs

In general, whatever the need, it is likely that you'll be able to find at least some advice, and at best some specific support. Just about every disability or condition that affects a child has a support group. You may have a child with a disability or you as a parent have a disability and need advice or guidance. You may have responsibility for a child in your care, or with special medical needs or special educational needs. Your disabled child might be approaching puberty and needs support at this time. Feel assured that there is advice, support and guidance and that the **Family Information Service** can help you find it locally, or nationally.

The Children's Opportunities Group (COG)

If your child needs extra support to socialise, the Children's Opportunities Group (COG) may be of assistance. COG, a project run by the **Children's Information Centre** in Reading and Bracknell Forest, aims to support children and young people aged 5-19 years who have a disability in accessing social and leisure facilities. COG works with kids that have physical disabilities, sensory impairments, behavioural disorders, learning disabilities or speech impairments.

Many children and young people with extra support needs cannot attend activities that others take for granted without some help. Families may struggle to meet these needs when there are so many other demands upon them.

COG recruits and trains committed volunteers aged 16+ and matches them with these children and young people, offering them the opportunity to enjoy new experiences, form new friendships and get involved with the community.



What's in it for COG kids?

- Inclusion into universal play activities
- Support and guidance from a responsible friend
- A sense of independence
- Freedom to grow and develop
- An opportunity to achieve goals and ambitions
- Time out for the family

The choices of activities are driven by the needs and wants of the child. The safety of the child is of paramount importance. A project co-ordinator will offer support and guidance to all families, whilst all volunteers are subject to character reference and a criminal records check, and must complete a rigorous 3 day training course.

To find out more contact the **Children's Information Centre** on 0800 328 9148 and ask to speak to a COG Co-ordinator.

Pre-school

When parents find out that their child is disabled or is diagnosed as having special needs they can feel isolated and alone. They want information about their child's disability and contact with people who understand what they are experiencing.

www.childrensinfo.org

Local Children's Centres greatly improve the lives of families with disabled children by providing appropriate information and services, such as health, education, family support and care? Contact the **Children's Information Centre** to find the closest Centre to you.

Your midwife and health visitor will support you from day one. Once your child enters a nursery or pre-school there will be staff trained to give your child the best support. Likewise, there are specially trained childminders to provide childcare for your child.

Parent Partnership – About one in five, children experience some difficulties when at school. They may have learning difficulties, communication or interaction difficulties, behavioural difficulties or a disability that impacts on their learning. It is recognised that positive parental involvement in a child's education improves their outcomes. It is therefore, very important that parents of children who have special educational needs, understand how their children can be supported in school. Parent Partnership services work independently from local authority professionals. They are required to be impartial and give accurate information to parents about SEN procedures thus enabling them to work in partnership with their child's school. The outcome of this partnership allows children to have the best possible educational experience.

There is a Parent Partnership Service in every local authority. The services are required to support in a variety of ways, eg helping parents to prepare for a school meeting and going to meetings with them;



writing a report for the statementing procedure and explaining the requirements of the law.

If you think the Parent Partnership could support you and would like more information please contact:

Bracknell PPS **01344 354011**; Reading PPS **0118 939 9821**; West Berkshire PPS **01635 519779** – answer phone

Avril Verity - Parent Partnership Co-ordinator, Reading

Primary

When your child reaches school, support continues with organisations working locally in partnership. Every school has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). You should be able to speak to the school directly about your child's needs, or with your local authority's education department. Parent Partnership is a service that works independently from local authority professionals. They will be impartial and will work with parents and the school to resolve any concerns. Leisure opportunities are also available for special needs kids and the **Family Information Service** can help with telling you about them. We have an Information Officer who is an expert on Special Needs information and would be available to speak to you. We also have a Benefits Information Officer who will help with any entitlements you may be able to access. Phone: **0800 328 9148** or visit our website at www.childrensinfo.org to find out more about Special Needs, including our Special Needs Resource Guide directory.



Secondary

Adolescence is a hard time for most children, dealing with physical and emotional changes amidst the pressures of education and preparation for adult life and its responsibilities.

Local authority and health professionals will be able to help families through these times. 'Aiming High for Disabled Children: better support for families' states how partnerships will work to achieve a better deal for families with disabled or special needs children.

The Disabled Children's Team and Special Educational Needs Team (SEN) work closely together as part of the Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Service within Children's Social Care in Bracknell.

The Disabled Children's Team respond to children with complex needs working closely with other agencies to minimise the effects of a child's disability and to give them the opportunity to lead lives that are as normal as possible. The Team support children and their parent/ carers to

maintain children in their family and to ensure that children are safe.

Most children will have their special educational needs met in their local school using generally available resources.

However those with more complex needs, (around 2% of children) may be subject to a statement of special educational needs. In this instance the SEN Team is responsible for arranging additional provision such as providing supplementary resources to a mainstream school or arranging a placement in a special school.

For further information contact:

Disabled Children's Team **01344 354041**

SEN Team **01344 354048**

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Simon McKenzie - Head of Service, Learning Difficulties & Disability,

Children's Social Care, Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Health and social care assessments and the parenting role

A disabled person has the right to ask for an assessment of their health and social care needs and if you have parenting responsibilities (for a child under 18) the assessment of your needs should also cover the support you need to carry out these responsibilities. If you are a parent-to-be, you can let the social services team know about your situation before your baby is born to help them plan your support. You will need to contact Adult Services.

Remember, social services are not there to assume that you are unable to cope or that you will not be a good parent. Instead, decisions about the support offered should focus on how to help you in your parenting role and not 'what you cannot do'.

It's important to remember that your assessment as a disabled person/parent is about your needs. If you receive the right support, your child's needs will be met without the need for services from the 'Children and families team'.

Assessments:

It's a good idea to prepare for an assessment by making a list of the type of support you need. For example:

- help to care for your baby in your home, for example, help at bath time
- equipment, like adapted pushchairs
- changes to your home
- help with getting your child ready for, and to, nursery or school

Source: Directgov www.direct.gov.uk

Local Authority helplines:

Bracknell Forest 01344 351500,
Reading 0118 955 3600,
West Berkshire 0845 6014726

Parents with a disability

Are you a parent with a disability yourself who needs support in bringing up your children?



Disabled Parents Network (DPN) is a membership organisation of and for disabled parents who believe that disabled people have the right to have children and to be properly supported to carry out that right.

Who we are here for

- All disabled parents, including parents with a physical or sensory impairment, parents with learning difficulties, Deaf parents, parents with long term illnesses and parents with mental health issues;
- Disabled people looking to become parents;
- Family, friends and supporters of disabled parents;
- Health, social work and other professionals and organisations working with disabled parents.

What we do

We offer a range of services and support, including:

- A helpline which is operated by disabled parent volunteers.
- Contact with other disabled parents.
- A website with lots of news and information.
- A series of 10 information briefings bridging the gap between information about disability and information about parenting (free to disabled parents, £25 to others)
- A quarterly newsletter sent to members.

We also

- Campaign for improvements in services to disabled parents.

Telephone: 0870 241 0450.

email: [information@](mailto:information@DisabledParentsNetwork.org.uk)

DisabledParentsNetwork.org.uk

www.DisabledParentsNetwork.org.uk

Simone Baker - Vice-Chair, Disabled Parents Network

Other support websites:

Disability, Pregnancy and Parenthood International

www.dppi.org.uk



The **Children's Information Centre**, through our **Family Information Service**, is constantly improving its collection of information for parents, carers and professionals. To do this effectively, we need to chat to our service users, and that means you!

We want you to let us know the sort of information you want and how you'd want to receive it. This could be by phone, e-mail, post, through our website, in a local venue or privately in a meeting with one of our trained Information Officers.

If we are missing any information that you would expect us to hold, please let us know. You can phone us, e-mail us or contact us via our web-site.

Telephone: 0800 3289148 e-mail: enquiries@childrensinfo.org
website: www.childrensinfo.org

Pregnancy

The results are confirmed, you are pregnant! Whether the news of this new addition to the family is a joy or a surprise, as a mother-to-be your mind will be crowded with loads of things to think about. This can be overwhelming at the best of times and with raging hormones it's no wonder that you will sometimes feel you need a little help!

Top of the list of helpful people will be at your local surgery and the ante-natal support from your own GP and midwives. If the experience is new to you it certainly isn't for them, so don't feel bad about telling them how you feel and asking them any questions. You won't have been the first to ask!

Of course, there is lots of information available elsewhere like our Family Information Service 'New Mum's Pack'. We haven't forgotten the dads either who can play a unique part in the 9 months ahead. The idea that they've already done their bit is a fallacy!

During your pregnancy you will experience a number of anxieties and joys. Your body will be going through changes and, usually, this is all very normal. You'll be able to talk to other mums, not forgetting your own! You'll need to make some adjustments to your life – no more carrying heavy weights for instance, but that could be a blessing! You may have to make some changes to your working life whilst you are pregnant and make some plans if you intend to go back to work after your maternity leave.

The Children's Information Centre and the Family Information Service can tell you about the various support, both emotional and financial, you can get. We can also help you to find childcare that will suit your family when you return to work.

Once your baby is born the support goes on through your Health Visitor and through the many Parent and Toddler groups and other organisations. Again, here at the Children's Information Centre we are able to give you all the information you need and sign-post

you to the 'experts'. A good source of help and support will be your local Children's Centre. CIC can tell you where that is. Ask for the 'Be Healthy' packs for under 5's. In short, now your baby here CIC will be here to help you in all aspects of parenthood up until your 'baby' is 19 years old!

Phone on 0800 328148 or e-mail: enquiries@childrensinfo.org or visit our website: www.childrensinfo.org for more information.



Telephone: 0800 328 9148

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Home-Start Bracknell Forest - Volunteers Wanted!

Home-Start is a charity that supports families with young children facing difficulties. Volunteers offer friendship and practical help to families at home on a weekly basis. If you are a parent or grandparent who has 2 hours a week to spare please join us in doing something really worthwhile and rewarding, your parenting skills could make all the difference to a young family. No qualifications needed, just a love of children and the ability to listen!

Support and training is given and expenses paid.
To find out more, please ring Pauline for a chat on
01344 860025.

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British Red Cross

First aid courses that fit your needs
Contact 01296 739300
bucks@redcross.org.uk

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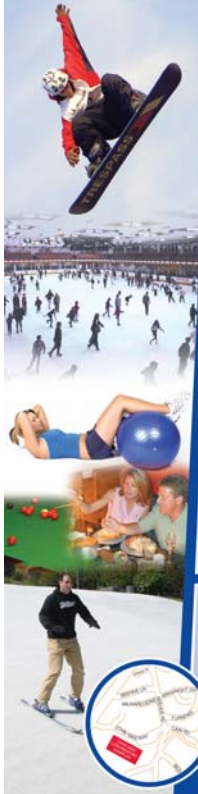
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