



**A project of Exeter Community Initiatives**  
 Registered Office: 14 York Road, Exeter EX4 6BA.  
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# Autumn 2008 Newsletter

## Fun Day in the Park

On the 30th September 2008 Flying Start held its first Fun Day in Belmont Park. Despite a rainy day children brought their parents and carers along to enjoy the many activities on offer.

Baby Oasis ran a Play Tent—why not visit Baby Oasis on a Monday afternoon at St Sidwell's Community Centre

Devon Early Years had a Badge Making Stall

Lots of Flying Start Balloons were given out

Children enjoyed a voyage of discovery around the world with Calabash Club Storytelling

Magic Shows from Uncle Bobby

Organic Arts ran some educational activities to raise awareness of rural Issues

And more!



Flying Start would like to thank everyone who turned out in their raincoats and wellington boots to join in the fun.

# Update from the Flying Start Team

I would like to welcome all the new families and thank those who have worked with us over the past few months. The new staff have been busy over the summer and during this period we have supported 33 families in addition to regular groups/activities being organised.

Well done to everyone. Typically, the support workers work with families to help them put together plans and make them happen. Once the families have gained the skills and confidence to work independently, the support workers back out and move on to help new families. Advice, information and support have been offered with topics such as encouraging positive behaviour, housing problems, debt and accessing activities and services. This is all confidential and families come to us via self referral, friends and family as well as professionals. Please let us know of any people who may need support.

Helen and Becci have been kept busy as a result of all the new activity, with Becci taking on the challenge of organising the Fun Day. She rose to this superbly and the day was an immense success due to her efforts. Thank you to all of those who came and joined us. Helen has managed to do her job, stand in when other staff were not available, design posters for all the events and keep us all in line. Bravo!

Other new developments include a Parents Group meeting once a fortnight on Thursday afternoons. The group looks at local issues which affect families with young children. If you would like to come and join in, just let us know and we'll book a crèche space for you. Then just come along. We would love to meet you. In addition, there is going to be an exciting 'twist' happening soon, with a dedicated group for young parents to get together being set up. More news soon!

Turning our minds to more autumnal issues there are some exciting events to get you and the family moving. The colder weather presents a great opportunity to wrap up, get out crunch leaves and have fun. We will be running weekly pram pushes on Wednesday mornings. There is also a Playday at Haldon Forest on 29th October (01392 666224 for more details). The outreach service will be out and about in your area with some crafts. Watch for the flyers and come and join us.

Karen Watkins – Community Outreach Worker

## Young Parent's Group

New group for young parents due to launch in January 2009.

We are interested in hearing from young parents (under 21) with any suggestions or ideas for activities/sessions.

Our aims are:

- To give advice on parenting and other topics.
- To provide life skills advice and practical sessions.
- Peer support for each other.

If you are interested in getting involved contact either Amy or Emma on 01392 666224.



# Sweet Dreams



Sleep is important to all of us. When we sleep, we rest and gain energy for a new day. But sleep does much more than that. When we dream, we process all the events of our daily life.

After a night without enough sleep, we can all feel exhausted and irritable. But after a good night's sleep, we feel rested, refreshed and full of energy. No wonder that it is so important to parents that their child sleeps through the night. It impacts on the entire family's life and wellbeing.

Lack of sleep is one of the main reasons parents seek help from doctors and health visitors in the early years. It is estimated a quarter of young children have severe sleep problems. Some of these are present from birth, while others occur at certain times in your child's life – such as teething or after an illness.

Research has suggested that difficulty settling to sleep is present in 22 per cent of nine-month-olds, 15 to 20 per cent of toddlers aged between one and two, and 16 per cent of children aged three and above. Frequent waking during the night is a problem for 42 per cent of nine-month-olds, 20 to 26 per cent of toddlers aged between one and two, and 14 per cent of children aged three and above.

Almost all babies have erratic sleep patterns when they are new born, which most parents expect, but in the latter half of the first year new problems can occur. For example, waking during the night occurs in about 50 per cent of children who had previously been sleeping through.

General tips to help make a successful bedtime routine:

- Decide on a set bedtime routine and stick to it as far as possible
- Choose relaxing activities before bed
- Try not to let your child have late afternoon naps
- Put your child to sleep while they are still awake
- Avoid taking your child into your bed.

If you've always rocked, stroked or sung your child to sleep when he first goes to bed, he may find it difficult to get back to sleep on his own if he wakes in the night. When you go in to comfort him, keep the lights low and use a soft voice. Don't encourage play. You'll probably need to do this several times.

## **Average Sleep Needs:**

12 months – 13.5 hours : 2 years – 13 hours : 3 years – 12 hours : 5 years – 11 hours  
Remember these are only averages.

All children are different and may show considerable variations.



## Contact Centres

Contact centres provide an independent, supportive and safe environment for children from separated families to have contact with their parents, siblings or other important people in their lives. They are child-centred environments that provide toys, games and facilities that reflect the diverse needs of children affected by family breakdown.

Contact centres are confidential and offer an environment where families can feel safe and valued.

Exeter Little House Contact Centre, as part of the Grapevine project, provides a whole range of contact arrangements depending on the individual family's needs. Their main aim is to work constructively with families through regular reviews to enable a more independent contact arrangement. For more information about Little House Contact Centre telephone them on 01392 491902.

For more information about other contact centres in the area please contact Flying Start Children's Centre on 01392 666224.

## Make Your Own Playdough!

Looking for something fun and creative to do on a rainy day? Why not try this recipe?

2 tsps cream of tartar  
1 cup plain flour  
Half cup salt  
1 tblsp oil  
1 cup water  
Few drops food colouring

Mix to form a smooth paste.  
Cook slowly in saucepan until dough comes away from sides of pan and forms a ball.  
When cool enough, knead a bit.  
Put pan to soak immediately.  
Voila!



# Counselling

Hi, I am Cathrine, the new Counsellor for Flying Start.

When I was asked to write a brief article about Counselling my first thought was, "How do I be brief about Counselling?"

In its simplest form Counselling is one person listening to another and trying to understand what it is like for that person to exist in and experience their world.

That is what I try to do when a person comes to me with his or her distress. I try to empathically understand what is happening for you, what is creating your distress and look at how we can help make a difference to your life, by way of making changes.

This maybe about letting go of old patterns of behaviour or thought processes that are no longer useful or even make things difficult for you in your relationships; finding new strategies or resources to deal with anxiety, depression or low self-esteem or looking at issues that affects our daily lives.

Counselling is a joint experience. It takes time to build up a relationship of mutual honesty, trust and respect and only when this happens can a therapeutic change take place for that person.

A counselling session will usually last about 50 minutes. In the first session we would look at confidentiality, what your expectations are for counselling and if I can meet those expectations; how I maybe able to help you and then you can decide if I am the kind of person you can work with.

It won't be all tears and heartache, there is often humour in counselling, whilst still maintaining respect and mindfulness of where you are in your experience.

To be in a counselling relationship is to be in relationship with yourself, a journey of self discovery and always a great honour for me, to be alongside of you.

With my very Best Wishes  
Cathrine



## Did you know?

Your Children's Centres helps families work towards the Every Child Matters Outcomes for their children. These are:

Stay Safe  
Be Healthy  
Achieve Economic Well-Being  
Enjoy & Achieve  
Make a Positive Contribution

# Twins Group

The twins and multiple births group in Exeter is run by local parents. It is fun for the children and provides support and a social network for mums and dads. We meet every Thursday 10-11.30 at Sylvania Hall [www.sylvaniahall.co.uk](http://www.sylvaniahall.co.uk) Healthy snacks are provided for those who would like it for £2 per family, otherwise the cost is £1.50. If you are interested in joining us please contact Vicky on 01392 666921 [vfsquier@hotmail.com](mailto:vfsquier@hotmail.com). We are also considering running a group on a Tuesday morning, although this is not up and running yet. If you would be interested in this group please contact Cath on 01392 259429 or [jhs719@aol.com](mailto:jhs719@aol.com)



# Toy Library & Clothes Shop

**25p per item**  
**Open every Thursday**  
**10am—4pm**



Fairbanks Family Centre  
90 Polsoe Road  
Exeter  
EX1 2HW  
Tel: 01392 423441



# Small Grants

Do you run a group within St James, St Davids, Newtown, St Leonards or Duryard which could benefit from a grant from Flying Start? (Benefit is defined as improving one or more outcomes for children in line with the Every Child Matters Outcomes.)

Funding is available to help sustain current community run activities or to enable new community activities that have the capacity to get going. Funding can be for small capital expenditure or contribute to revenue costs for one year only. These could include rent, utilities, training, travel and/or childcare costs to enable training or activity, crèche support. The maximum grant available is £1,000 for established groups and up to £500 for new groups.

# Teddy Bear Picnics

Don't come to us – we'll come to you!

Flying start team ran a series of Teddy Bear Picnics over the summer as part of our outreach service. The team went out for a couple of hours, taking toys and books with them, to some areas around the centre of Exeter. We met lots of families and told them about our services. The children had great fun and enjoyed themselves immensely. They played parachute games and ball games with their families and shared their picnics. We have been invited back and hope to do some visits for "Autumnal crafts" over the next month or so. Watch out for our flyers.



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## Two New Groups

Group for Children with additional needs. Meets Tuesday mornings in the Adventist Church on King William Street. Siblings welcome. For more information contact Erzsebet on 07785272143.

International Playgroup starting at St Sidwells starting on Tuesdays after half term. Everybody welcome. For more information contact Flying Start Children's Centre on 01392 666224.

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## Weekly Pram Push

Fancy toning up over the winter?

Weekly Pram Push starting 10am on Wednesday 22nd October. Meeting outside St Sidwells Centre. Everyone welcome—why not bring a friend? Toddlers on buggy boards please.

Free Pedometer for everyone taking part!

For more information contact Flying Start Children's Centre on 01392 666224.

# Courses and Drop Ins

## Healthy Eating

We are going to be offering healthy eating courses in January which will be provided by the X Centre on the Quay. The last one was a great success and proved extremely useful to those taking part.

For those with alternative leanings, Peter Brown will be offering courses in the new year on healthy eating and holistic health from the Ayurveda perspective. These are supported and concessions are available.



## New Mums

New Mum's Group on Wednesdays 11.00-12noon at St Sidwell's Community Centre. Six week course. Contact Paula on 01392 207497 for more information.

## Smoking Cessation

Smoking Cessation drop in each Thursday 11.00-1pm at St Sidwells Community Centre. Go on give it a go!

**Disc** Childcare information  
Devon's family information service

- childminders
- day nurseries
- holiday clubs and schemes
- out of school clubs
- pre-schools and playgroups
- parent and toddler groups

**0845 155 1013**  
[www.devon.gov.uk/disc](http://www.devon.gov.uk/disc)  
[discinfo@devon.gov.uk](mailto:discinfo@devon.gov.uk)

**Children and Young People's Service Directory**  
Devon County Council

- places to go and things to do
- help and advice
- leisure and play
- sports

**www.devoncsd.info**  
**0845 155 1013**  
[discinfo@devon.gov.uk](mailto:discinfo@devon.gov.uk)

Gentian Curle - Manager  
[gentian@eci.org.uk](mailto:gentian@eci.org.uk)  
Helen Murphy - Administrator  
[helen@eci.org.uk](mailto:helen@eci.org.uk)

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Western Way, Exeter, EX1 2DE

St Sidwell's Centre  
Sidwell Street, Exeter, EX4 6NN

**Tel: 01392 666224**  
**We look forward to hearing from you**