



pipNews

Autumn 2010

Supported by

Croydon Council

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Phone: 07899893976

(please note the old PIP number - 8651 6198 - is no longer in use)

Hello to all you parents and carers out there.

For those of you who don't know us, we are Parents in Partnership (PIP). We are a charity run by, and on behalf of, parents of children with special needs and disabilities. PIP has been in existence for 18 years now, and has grown and evolved in that time. Please take the time to catch up with what we have been doing, and see if we have any services that might be useful to you.



The PIP team

PIP has changed dramatically in its lifetime, and one person who has overseen all developments is our Chair of Trustees, Daphne Jones. We were delighted when she was awarded an MBE earlier this year for her services to families of children with disabilities, a well-deserved recognition of her dedication. This is tinged with sadness, as Daphne has decided the time has come to retire from her position after many years of service. We wish Daphne a very happy retirement!

PIP faces an exciting future with a new Chair, Jackie Sanders. Jackie has many years of experience, both as the mother of a child with complex needs, and a trustee of the Garwood Foundation, and she and other PIP trustees will do their best to continue the good work.

From the Chair of Trustees

"Time has rushed by for me since we began our group in 1992. I never anticipated that there would be paid staff in those early days and if we had not had a massive interest in making the Face to Face project work, we would probably have remained a group of interested parent carers who wanted decision makers to listen to us.

We relied on volunteers for so much early on and I have continued in that tradition until now. But family life has demands that cannot be ignored or

neglected, so to have staff managing services on our behalf is our only way forward at present. There is a review locally of what can be afforded, and it could be that PIP's work is seen as non-essential by decision-makers coping with other demands on funding.

In 1992 we decided that we were not going to be "done to" we wanted a say and I don't think that things have changed. However, nothing can be taken for granted and all of you will have to shout louder if PIP is

to continue to support parent/ carers.

I am moving away from working for PIP completely. Poor timing in many ways, but it is the end of 18 months of planning. It is new, younger families who need to be in charge of developments.

I could list many things that PIP has achieved over my 18 years and be excited that much more is happening now than ever.

For many years we have dreamed of having more support in the early years and for



counseling to be part of it. Now we have re-

ceived 12 months funding for counselling. So, we have to keep out there "nagging" as we have always done, to get the message through that we know what we are talking about.

So, I will be thinking of you all and hoping that things work out for PIP, but more importantly for the parents we represent and serve."

Daphne

Support from the start

Hi, I am Kat Edwards and I work with parents of children under 16.



I meet parents around the borough to identify any problems they might be facing with their child. This can include topics such as benefits, short breaks, behaviour strategies, getting a diagnosis, housing and education. Together, we try to ensure they are accessing everything they

are entitled to and they are personally referred to relevant agencies. Parents often say it can be very isolating to have a child with a disability. They lack the skills to cope with the responses of others and find it hard to understand their own feelings. I direct parents towards professional support and information which can boost their self-confidence and encourage them to ask for help themselves when they need it.

My work with parents consists of an initial meeting to discuss general problem areas where I can provide details of who to contact and how to do so. I follow up with parents regularly where necessary and forward any relevant news or upcoming events by post or email. Should any parent or carer need support in any area relating to their child, I can be contacted on **07825 108328** or pip.katedwards@yahoo.co.uk.

Transition — Support into adulthood



Hello, my name is Tansy and I've been working for PIP as the Transition Worker since February

this year. I enjoy working with parents around the changes that occur as young people become older; signposting them to appropriate services, liaising with professionals on their be-

“Transition” means change, and in this context means the biggest change of all, as our children become adults. Planning for their adult life can start in Year 9, and continue until the age of 25.

half and attending meetings with them or just talking through the issues and being a listening ear. Transition can affect many areas in life such as what your young

person will do when they leave school, moving from children's to adult services, benefits changes, options surrounding living arrangements, issues around relationships and much more. If you would like any further information or just to chat, call me on **07795 373348** or email pip.tansygoodall@hotmail.com I look forward to hearing from you.

Courses

PIP runs a variety of helpful training courses for parents. We are currently repeating our popular course aimed at parents of teenagers: *“From childhood to adulthood - towards independence”*.

After this, we will run a *“Positive Parenting”* course. This is aimed at parents of younger children. For more information, visit our website, or phone **07899893976**



Hira Bhandari is our new PIP counsellor. She offers a free confidential

service for parents of children under 5 years old with Special Needs, including physical, sensory or learning disability.

Counselling

Counselling is a way of using planned time with a trained professional in a confidential, non-judgmental environment. It is an opportunity to talk and think about a wide range of feelings and issues both past and present.

If you decide counselling might be helpful, find out more by contacting Hira on **07775 665786**

Representing your views

Part of PIP's work is talking to those people in the Local Authority and Health services who are working with our families. This is something which PIP has done since the original small group of parents got together. They wanted a say in decisions which were made on their families' behalf, and PIP today continues in that tradition. Over the years, PIP has developed good relationships with many services and PIP is now regarded as an equal partner in

many areas. This does not just mean the PIP team, but all those parents whom we represent. This means all of us! Natalia Sali and Alison Colgate, PIP managers, attend lots of meetings where they represent the views of our families, to ensure that the best possible decisions are made for **all** our children.



We can only do this work with your help. We listen to what you tell our Outreach workers and what parents are asking when they phone or email for help. We are particularly grateful to those parents who make the time to respond when we ask for feedback about services.

If you would like to tell us about your experiences give us a call, or email at the usual address.

pip.croydon@hotmail.co.uk

Aiming High for Disabled Children

This was the programme put in place by the previous Government to improve the lives of families of children with disabilities.

Parents told the Government several things. They would like more of a say in decisions which affect their families; a better transition process between children's and adult services; and more opportunities for a short break, or respite.

In response to these concerns, several things happened. Parents and Local Authorities everywhere have been encouraged to talk to each other by the development of local parent forums - as PIP has done for years! Money was given to Local Authorities to develop a better Transition experience for young people, and work is going on in Croydon to achieve this.

"The vision behind Aiming High for Disabled Children is for all families with disabled children to have the support they need to live ordinary family lives, as a matter of course."

Local Authorities were also given money to fund extra breaks for families. Have a look overleaf at how to access the different schemes which have been fully or partially funded by Aiming High.

South London Forum

Now that all areas have a parent forum, a network has been established so that there is representation of our families up to national level. PIP is part of the South London cluster which feeds into the London forum, feeding in turn into the national forum, a group working with the Government on



Daphne and Alison at the first South London forum

policies which affect our families.

Focus Group

You might like to join our parent focus group if you are interested in talking with local services providers and representing parent views. We will be holding monthly meetings in the evenings and during the day. Topics to be tackled include SEN issues and the future of social care provision. If you would like to know more, phone Alison on **07899893976**

pip.alisoncolgate@hotmail.co.uk

Aiming High Short Breaks

PHAB Saturday Club

Aimed at: 12-18 year-olds.
Disabled and non-disabled, including siblings

Offers: activities for young people to gain valuable skills and have fun whilst parents and carers take a break.

Contact Janine Williams: 020 8667 9443
janine.williams@phab.org.uk

Mencap Treetops Children's Centre

Aimed at: 6-12 year-olds
Offers: after school, Saturday and holiday activities

Contact Debbie Pettitt: 020 8689 8170
croydonmencap@btconnect.com

Barnados Mentoring Service

Aimed at: 16-25 year-olds.
Offers: Mentoring support eg - travel training, money management, social skills, preparing meals etc
Referral through children's/adult social care or transition services.

Action for Children Befriending Service

Aimed at: 10-18 year-olds.
Offers: One to one personalised befriending
Contact Ed Whatley: 0207254 9408/07903 780317
edward.whatley@actionforchildren.org.uk

Croydon Sports Development

Aimed at: 8-18 year-olds with mild/moderate disabilities.
Offers: a range of sport and leisure activities
Contact Pearl Sethna: 020 8760 5592
pearl.sethna@croydon.gov.uk

Crossroads Saturday Club New Addington

Aimed at: 11-18 year-olds with learning disabilities.
Offers: Early evening youth club activities
Contact Croydon Crossroads: 020 8688 4499
www.croydoncrossroads.org.uk

Royal London Society for the Blind

Aimed at: young people 14+ with a visual impairment
Offers: a variety of activities, get-togethers and information sessions
Contact Sue Rivett: 0207 808 6187
sue.rivett@rlsb.org.uk

Wheels for Wellbeing

Aimed at: 5-18 year-olds with a range of disabilities
Offers: cycling activities in a safe environment
Contact Janet Paske: 020 7346 8482
janet@wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk

Horizon Care and Welfare Association

Aimed at: children and young people from Somali and Muslim backgrounds
Offers: outreach support and activities
Contact Anab Osman: 020 8665 0921
horizoncareandwelfare@hotmail.com

Rutherford's Aiming High Saturday Club

Aimed at: children and young people aged 5-19 who have profound and multiple learning disabilities and/or complex medical needs.
Offers: a range of fun activities
Contact Amanda Cox: 020 8688 7560
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Whizz Kidz Ambassador's Club

Aimed at: 10-18 year-olds with physical disabilities
Offers: new sports, wheelchair skills, music and drama activities
Contact Fiona McNaught: 02977 986129
ambassadors@whizz-kidz.org.uk

Spectrum Arts Activities - now called Zoom!

Aimed at: children, young people and families with mild/moderate disabilities
Offers: drama/music/film activities and outings
Contact Paul Johnson: 07906 276207
zoom@spectrumarts.org

NAS Befriending Service

Aimed at: children with autism/Asperger's Syndrome
Offers: 3 hour weekly befriending one to one support
Contact Christine Sellick: 020 8662 4664
christine.sellick@nas.org.uk

Whitgift SNAP

Aimed at: 5-25 year-olds
Offers: Extended SNAP play-scheme at Easter, and an extra week in the summer
Contact Jane Bird: 020 8405 6933
jane@whitgiftsnap.org.uk

NAS Activity Sessions

Aimed at: children with autism/Asperger's Syndrome
Offers: swimming and trampolining clubs
Contact Mellissa Muscat: 0208662 466
mellissa.muscat@nas.org.uk