

# Families Matter

A magazine full of news and information to support families

## Featuring the SEND Information Supplement

See [pages 23-28](#) for updates on our SEND improvement journey as well as information on services and the support available to families.



## Foster Carers keep learning

Tower Hamlets foster carers and special guardians make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable children in the borough. They have valuable skills which they are continually developing through a varied professional development training programme. Find out how they got on with a unique learning opportunity delivered by the Parental Engagement Team on [page 12](#).



Read the latest edition of the Families Matter magazine and monthly e-bulletin online at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter)

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# Welcome to the spring edition of Families Matter

This edition is packed with information and updates to inform and support parents and carers and also to guide practitioners in their work with Tower Hamlets families.

We hope you find the Families Matter magazine useful and welcome your feedback and contributions. Please email and tell us what else you would like to see in future editions.

Best wishes,

**Parent and Family Support Service**

## Working with families?

### Sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list

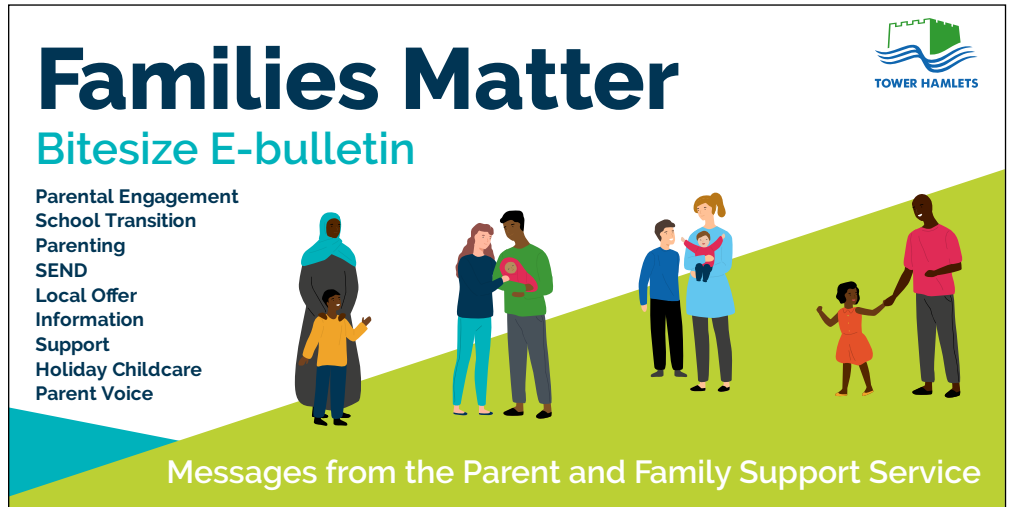
If you are working with families in the borough, sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list to be emailed the latest news and information to support your work. Encourage your colleagues to sign up too.

Email: [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Families Matter: Bitesize E-bulletin

In addition to the regular termly Families Matter magazine, we publish a monthly e-bulletin. It provides regular updates, information, advice and support for all parents in Tower Hamlets.

Parents can sign up via the council's resident subscriber list, choosing 'children and education' as their preferred topic after closing the initial pop-up box and completing the one on the main webpage.



Visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup)

This magazine is produced by the Parental Engagement Team within the Parent and Family Support Service, Children and Culture Directorate. To share news in future editions of Families Matter contact

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*References to 'parents' describes any caregiver responsible for the care, protection and upbringing of a child or young person, including foster parents or connected persons, grandparents, siblings or other family members living in Tower Hamlets.*

*References to 'SEND' is used in some articles as the abbreviation of special educational needs and disabilities.*

## Parent and Carer Council (PCC) parent champions out in the community

The PCC is a forum that helps shape the services that are available to families in the borough. Members of the forum get involved with local consultations, help identify gaps in support and discuss national issues that may be affecting families locally. To join and for more information, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentcouncil](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentcouncil)



PCC members Mahabuba Rahman, Emdad Islam, Lisa Cassidy, Fathimah Rofe and Tahmina Choudhury with Jamie Bird (fourth from the left) and Fatima Khanum (fifth from the left) from the Living Well Commissioning Team

## PCC members at Carers Rights Day celebration

PCC members attended the celebratory event to mark Carers Rights Day at the Mile End Ecology Pavillion on 24 November 2022. Organised by the council and its partners, and co-developed with unpaid carers, there was a range of free activities available on the day.

For information on the support available to unpaid carers of Tower Hamlets residents, visit [ccth.org.uk](http://ccth.org.uk)

## PCC members support Covid Realities book launch

Between 2020 and 2022, two PCC members joined over 100 parents and carers online from across the country to share their experiences of living on a low income. They started working together to develop a manifesto for change.

*A Year Like No Other: Life on a Low Income during COVID-19* is a book that emerged from this collaboration. Co-written with parents and carers, the book provides a compelling account of lives during a national emergency, within the context of the everyday crisis that poverty brings.

The book launch was held in October 2022 and featured participants reading from the book, as well as responses from Kerry Hudson (author), Professor Kate Pickett (University of York) and John Harris (The Guardian).

Well done to Emdad Islam and Mahabuba Rahman for taking part.

For more information and to order the book, visit [covidrealities.org](http://covidrealities.org)



## PCC at Interfaith Week

The Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum's Interfaith Week 2022 event included discussions on the cost of living and how organisations and agencies can work in partnership to overcome challenges to make the borough a better place for all.

For more information, visit [www.faihintowerhamlets.org/events/thiff-inter-faith-week-event-2022](http://www.faihintowerhamlets.org/events/thiff-inter-faith-week-event-2022)

Photo: Fathimah representing the PCC at the event



# Lily plays key role in infant research study

Parent and Carer Council (PCC) member, Lily Islam, has been working on the Nurture Early for Optimal Nutrition (NEON) programme that aims to optimise care practices in South Asian children aged under two in east London.

She has played a key role in this ground-breaking research project, which has been recognised by the Royal Society of Public Health with a special award.



Lily Islam,  
PCC member

The project shows the value of a collaborative approach between researchers, community facilitators and the target population. It recommends that interventions to promote infant feeding, care and dental hygiene should be co-developed with communities and should take into account social and cultural norms.

Research findings also suggest that it may be more beneficial to infants from ethnically diverse communities if interventions are developed that are accepted by these communities.

Find more details at [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hex.13557](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hex.13557)

## Volunteer course opens doors for Rushna

“ I joined the 'Volunteering in Your Child's School' course after a long career break. Once my children were in full time education, I wanted to get back into work. I thought about working in a school, but I had no experience in education – that's what led me to do this course.

The course helped build my confidence. After the course I started volunteering in a school for six months and gained valuable classroom experience. Now I have a full time paid job in a special school as a learning support practitioner and I love it. The course opened so many doors for me!



## The Volunteering in Your Child's School course

The Volunteering in Your Child's School course can be delivered either as a ten-week Open College Network accredited course or as a five-week non-accredited introductory course.

Delivered by experienced practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team, the course aims

to prepare parents for their roles as volunteers by giving them an insight into teaching and learning in school. Key topics include teaching and learning methods, the National and EYFS Curriculum, communication strategies, professionalism and safeguarding.

To find out more or to book the course for your school or setting,  
email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# Marion Richardson Primary welcomes new volunteers

**Marion Richardson Primary School** has been welcoming parent volunteers who have completed the Volunteering in Your Child's School course.

Delivered by experienced practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team, the course aims to prepare parents for their roles as volunteers by giving them an insight into teaching and learning in school.

The new volunteers were welcomed to the school and awarded their certificates by Parental Engagement Leads, Rumana Begum and Alison Jones, alongside Assistant Headteacher Michelle Bonsor.

The school has been so impressed with the course and the calibre of the volunteers that it has decided to run it again for the next academic year – it already has parents signed up.



Marion Richardson Primary School parent volunteers with their certificates

“

**We want to have skilled volunteers for our classroom roles. So alongside obtaining a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check, we have decided to make the Volunteering in Your Child's School course a prerequisite for classroom volunteers.**

Alison Jones, Parental Engagement Lead  
Marion Richardson Primary School

”

## Volunteering opportunities in Tower Hamlets

Volunteering is a great way to make a real difference in the community. It's also a way to gain skills and experience, build confidence and employability.

There are many volunteering opportunities available in the borough.

The Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets can help find interesting volunteer roles with local charities, community organisations or in the public sector. The service they provide is open to people who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets. They have a variety of roles to suit all ages, backgrounds, interests and abilities.

To find out more or to register, visit [www.vcth.org.uk/volunteering-in-tower-hamlets](http://www.vcth.org.uk/volunteering-in-tower-hamlets)

### Useful volunteering links

- Do-it [doit.life/ours](http://doit.life/ours)
- Volunteering Matters [volunteeringmatters.org.uk](http://volunteeringmatters.org.uk)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action [navca.org.uk](http://navca.org.uk)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) [www.ncvo.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/want-to-volunteer](http://www.ncvo.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/want-to-volunteer)
- Reach Volunteering [reachvolunteering.org.uk](http://reachvolunteering.org.uk)

# Fun with Maths at Marion Richardson Primary

Parents from **Marion Richardson Primary School** have been exploring the power of games to stimulate mathematical thinking and develop higher level thinking skills, like problem solving and reasoning.

They attended the Fun with Maths course where they were introduced to interactive games and practical activities that reinforce key mathematical concepts. The three-part workshop, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, also emphasised the importance of language in early mathematical learning.

By the end of the course the parents were more confident in using mathematical vocabulary and visual resources such as number-lines and hundred squares.



Parent and child using the hundred square on the Fun with Maths course

“

**I learned so much on this course. My child is a visual learner and using the number-line and hundred-square in fun ways really helped him.**

Parent

”



“

**The course was amazing.**

**I would definitely recommend it to parents who want to help their children with reading, understanding and encouraging them to love books. Fantastic sessions where everybody has a chance to talk and share their ideas.**

Tania  
Parent, Mowlem Primary School

”

## Tania builds strong reading foundations

Tania, a parent from **Mowlem Primary School**, has been discovering new ways to support reading at home and to encourage her twin daughters to develop a love of books and reading.

She attended a Key Stage 1 reading course at the school called Reading Foundations, which

was delivered by the Parental Engagement Team.

Tania, who originally comes from Ukraine, where very different methods are used to teach reading, found the course particularly useful because it provided an insight into how reading is taught UK schools.

To book a curriculum based workshop for parents at your school or setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)





## Doorstep Library's online Reading Corner

Online Reading Corner are free reading sessions hosted by Doorstep Library every week during term time.

The sessions are delivered via Zoom by a team of volunteers who share stories, sing songs and explore the magic of books.

There are sessions for children up to the age of 11 as well as special read and play sessions for younger children up to the age of four.

An adult must be present throughout the session with children under five.



For more details, scan the QR code or click [here](#).



## Bags of creativity at Mulberry School for Girls

Parents from **Mulberry School for Girls** have been expressing themselves creatively on a specialist bag decoration course, developed by the Parental Engagement Team.

Over the six-week course the parents developed their initial design ideas from rough sketches into intricate bag designs using a range of mixed media, including fabric paint and embroidery. The parents

took their inspiration from a range of sources, from abstract compositions to letterform art and tropical landscapes.

“

**I really enjoyed the creative process and developing my ideas on the course.**

Parent

”

# Bow School Parent Ambassadors develop creative fundraising ideas

The newly formed **Bow School** Parent Ambassadors came together for its first ever meeting in November, supported by practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team. The ambassadors hope to share their ideas and expertise as well as contribute to the wider school community.

One of the first tasks they set themselves was to develop innovative fundraising ideas for the school. Tapping into the creative flair of parents, it was decided to create a range of hand-crafted items that could be sold.

To help realise this vision, a four-part creative workshop was devised by specialist practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team. The workshop, which was open to all parents at the school, gave parents the opportunity to test out their ideas and create prototype designs for printed tea-towels and hand painted silk scarves.



Parents who attended the workshop with Murude Mehmet (centre) from the Parental Engagement Team

## Could you become a school governor?

There is a campaign to recruit more Black, Asian and multi-ethnic school governors.

It is a big commitment but incredibly rewarding and a great way to make a big contribution to our children and their development.

If you or someone you know is interested email [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

For more information on becoming a school governor visit [www.inspiringgovernance.org/volunteers](http://www.inspiringgovernance.org/volunteers)







## Lansbury Lawrence Parents Group

Lansbury Lawrence Primary School's Home School Liaison Officer would like to thank the parents group members at the school.

“ Here at **Lansbury Lawrence**, we are extremely lucky to have such a committed and loyal parents group.

When I started this group a couple of years ago, I never envisaged it would lead to the amazing group that it is today.

This group was initially a couple of mums who wanted to make a difference in their child's life at school. Today this group has emerged into a large, vibrant, caring, committed and supportive network of mothers who meet weekly.

Over the recent years the group has effortlessly been able to arrange:

- Summer fetes
- Cake sales
- Macmillan walks
- Facepainting
- Movie nights at the school
- Easter egg hunts
- Christmas discos
- Recycled uniform selling
- Foodbank volunteering and so much more.

All these ladies are amazing, and we are very fortunate to have them at our school. Thank you ladies!

Maureen Padmore  
Home School Liaison and  
Deputy Safeguarding Lead  
Lansbury Lawrence Primary School

# Upcoming Careers Live Events 2023

The Careers & Social Mobility Team are hosting a series of careers events through to July. They are being supported by the following partner organisations:

- University of East London
- Queen Mary University London
- London Metropolitan University
- New City College
- Canary Wharf Group.

Each event is themed and will deliver high quality careers guidance as well as support to secondary schools in delivering careers education.

The team will be joined by employers, educational settings and other organisations that support and work with young people. The events are a great way for organisations to promote themselves and to showcase what they do and the services they offer.

Each event will also have speaker sessions running throughout the day to hear first-hand from those in the field and to answer any questions.

The events are open to all Tower Hamlets young people from Year 9, as well as parents and carers.

## TO REGISTER:

### Thursday 23 March Creating a Healthier Future and Shaping the Future



Scan the QR code or click [here](#).

### Thursday 25 May AI to VR – Explore the Future!



Scan the QR code or click [here](#).

### Thursday 13 July The World Needs Professional Services



Scan the QR code or click [here](#).



# THIS PROGRESSION

## Tower Hamlets Careers Live

Thinking about your next step or what industry you'd like to explore? Join us at one of our events.

With six career events showcasing a range of industries that cover pathways from Apprenticeships, T-Levels, University and more. We have it all!

So, if you want to find out about Engineering, Health, IT or just need some inspiration, then speak to your school or college Career Lead.

#THCL

TOWER HAMLETS  
**WORKPATH+**  
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO POTENTIAL



**Building Your Sustainable Future** – Thursday 6th October 2022 – University of East London, E16 2RD

**Creating a Healthier Future** – Thursday 1st December 2022 – New City College, Hackney N1 6HQ

**Working in a Creative World** – Thursday 26th January 2023 – London Metropolitan University, E1 7NT

**Shaping the Future – Public Services** – Thursday 23rd March 2023 – Queen Mary University of London, E1 4NS

**AI to VR – Explore the Future!** – Thursday 25th May 2023 – University of East London, E16 2RD

**The World Needs Professional Services** – Thursday 13th July 2023 – East Wintergarden, E14 5NX





## Ministry of Food at Swanlea School

Parents from **Swanlea Secondary School** have been discovering how cooking from scratch can be good for their health and can save them money.

Parents from the school took part in Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food cooking course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team. The six-week programme emphasises the health and financial benefits of preparing



Yaqub trying Ministry of Food recipes at home

your own meals using fresh ingredients.

The course introduces parents to new ingredients and cooking methods while exploring issues such as portion size and mindful eating. Healthy eating principles are also a key feature with parents being supported to

make small changes to improve the health of their family.

The parents were keen to share what they had learned and even encouraged their children to have a go at cooking some of Jamie's tasty recipes from around the world, which are all low in salt, sugar and fat.

“

It still tastes really nice, even though we used very little salt.



Yaqub

”



# Foster carers develop their cooking skills



Foster carers and special guardians from across Tower Hamlets came together to develop their cooking skills while discovering tasty recipes created by celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver.

The foster carers joined the four-week Ministry of Food cooking course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, at the Parent Advice Centre in Greatorex Street, Whitechapel.

The course, which formed part of the foster carers training programme, gave the carers a chance to catch up with one another and pick up some healthy eating tips that they could share with their families.

As the course progressed, many of the foster carers reported that they had made some significant changes like reducing the amount of salt, sugar and fat in their family's diet.

“

I really enjoyed the course. I will definitely try out these healthy recipes at home.



Myriam

”

## Foster Care Fortnight

Foster Care Fortnight is The Fostering Network's annual campaign to raise the profile of fostering and show how foster care transforms lives. Foster Care Fortnight 2023 will take place from 15-28 May. The theme will be **#FosteringCommunities**.

[www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/foster-care-fortnight](http://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/foster-care-fortnight)

## Become a foster carer

For information on becoming a foster carer in Tower Hamlets, visit [www.fosteringtowerhamlets.co.uk](http://www.fosteringtowerhamlets.co.uk)



# Healthy Families programme inspires change

A refreshed Healthy Families programme is being successfully delivered in schools, children and family centres and community venues across the borough.

The programme, delivered by specialist practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team, has been inspiring parents with healthy eating tips and ways to prepare cost-effective, home-cooked meals.

Over the five-week programme, parents have been making

small, but significant changes, to improve their family's health, such as:

- Cutting down on sugary drinks
- Introducing more vegetables
- Buying less sugary snacks
- Doing more physical activity each day

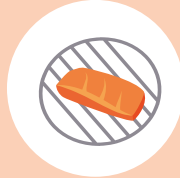
Parents can refer themselves onto the programme or schools and settings can book a Healthy Families programme by emailing [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



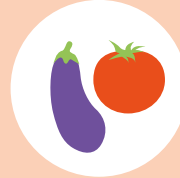
## 10 healthy eating tips



1. Try using a non-stick pan and only one teaspoon of oil when cooking



2. Always go for leaner cuts of meat and don't forget to trim fat before cooking



3. Eat different coloured fruit/vegetables to get a full range of nutrients



4. Use lots of different spices and herbs to flavour your food instead of salt



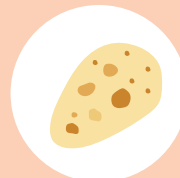
5. Swap white rice for wholegrain which is higher in fibre



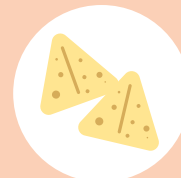
6. Use smaller sized plates – it's a good trick to help reduce portion sizes



7. Try to avoid adding too much butter or ghee when cooking meals



8. Try grilling items such as naan breads and chapatis instead of frying



9. Avoid deep frying and try grilling or oven baking items like samosas



10. Keep sweet treats like cake, biscuits and chocolate for special occasions



# Two opportunities to share your experience of maternity care



## Maternity Voices

The Tower Hamlets Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) helps parents provide feedback on their maternity experience. Their aim is to make the voices of parents heard and to encourage parent involvement in improving maternity services.

They do this as a working group of parents and healthcare professionals, using the voice of new parents to help drive change. They gather people's experiences of maternity care

by visiting local hospitals, community centres and parent meet-up groups. Using this feedback, they identify issues, find solutions and bring about change.

MVP are looking for passionate voices to help them – from providing personal experiences to volunteering as a member. Membership involves attending meetings when possible and providing feedback on local maternity projects or initiatives.

To find out more, visit [www.maternityvoices.com](http://www.maternityvoices.com)

## Healthwatch Maternity Choice survey

Healthwatch is a patient champion organisation in health and social care. It works to ensure that local people can voice their experiences of using health and social care services.

Together with other Healthwatch organisations in north-east London, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets is currently running a Maternity Choice survey for anyone who is pregnant or has given birth in the last two years to find out the choices they are making or have made in terms of maternity care and what influences these choices.

This survey follows on from a previous maternity project that was conducted last year in north-east London and from which the findings were used to inform the North East London Maternity Equity and Equality Strategy.

Healthwatch want all women and pregnant people in north-east London to have the best experience when using maternity services.

The survey can be found online at [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/maternity\\_choice](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/maternity_choice)

Paper copies of the survey can also be provided.

[www.healthwatchtowerhamlets.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchtowerhamlets.co.uk)



## Healthy Start

Healthy Start helps families claiming certain benefits to buy healthy food and milk from the tenth week of pregnancy until the child's fourth birthday. Those who are under 18 and pregnant are automatically eligible, regardless of benefit status.

Parents are sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that they can use in supermarkets and other grocery stores to buy healthy food, milk or infant formula. The card is topped up every four weeks. For more details or to apply, visit [www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply)

All children under the age of four and all pregnant and breastfeeding women and up to one year post-natal are also eligible for free Healthy Start vitamins. These can be collected from all children and family centres.

To find out more, including information on how you can find a local Healthy Start vitamin service visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/healthystart](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/healthystart)



## Tower Hamlets Social Prescribing Service



This service supports people to improve their health and wellbeing by providing holistic support. It links people to community, voluntary and health services including:

- Housing and welfare benefits
- Money and debt counselling
- Employment, training and volunteering
- Education and learning

- Healthy lifestyle advice
- Social and physical activity
- Arts and creative activities
- Befriending, counselling and emotional support
- Parental support

Ask your GP, nurse or health care professional for a referral or email [thgpcg.socialprescribing@nhs.net](mailto:thgpcg.socialprescribing@nhs.net)

## Secondary school vaccination

When children are very young, they receive their routine immunisations to protect them from serious diseases such as meningitis and hepatitis. As they grow older it is important that they are still protected from these diseases especially as protection begins to fade.

Year 9 students are offered booster vaccines and those in Years 8 and 9 the HPV vaccine (to prevent against certain types of cancer). These take place in secondary schools and consent forms will be sent home. The forms require completing before any vaccinations go ahead.

For more information, visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them)



Scan this QR code or click [here](#) for a guide to immunisation for young people. Parents can also contact their GP if they have any questions.



## Updated Keeping Children Safe Online

The Parental Engagement's Team's Keeping Children Safe Online programme will continue to be delivered in settings throughout Tower Hamlets this year. The free, online safety sessions give parents an insight into their child's online world while providing some useful tips to help keep children safe while using the internet.

So far, the informative sessions have been delivered either in person or online in nursery, primary and secondary schools and through community networks including the Somali Parent and Carer Network, Parent and Carer Council and a session for foster carers.

The Parental Engagement Team have been busy updating the sessions to ensure the content reflects concerns about online influencers and child mental health. There are now updated sessions for parents with children in early years, primary or secondary school.

To book a session for your school or setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## TikTok self-harm research study

TikTok's recommendation algorithm pushes self-harm and eating disorder content to teenagers within minutes of them expressing interest in these topics, new research suggests.

The Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) found that the platform will promote content including restrictive diets, pro-self-harm content and content romanticising suicide to users who show a preference for the material, even if they are registered as under-18s.

For its study, the campaign group set up accounts registered with an age of 13. The accounts liked and paused briefly on videos about body image, eating disorders and mental health.

This took place over a 30-minute initial period when the accounts launched to capture the effectiveness of TikTok's algorithm that recommends content to users. Content about suicide followed within nearly three minutes and eating disorder material was shown within eight minutes.

“

**Young people's feeds are bombarded with harmful, harrowing content that can have a significant, cumulative impact on their understanding of the world around them and their physical and mental health.**

Imran Ahmed, CCDH Chief Executive

”



For more details, scan the QR code or click [here](#).

## Education Wellbeing Service Parent and School Staff Workshops 2023

The Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service (THEWS) are offering a series of free, online workshops covering a range of topics to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. There are separate workshops aimed at parents and school staff.

To find out more and to book a place, scan the QR code or visit

[www.eventbrite.com/o/tower-hamlets-education-wellbeing-service-49700383293](http://www.eventbrite.com/o/tower-hamlets-education-wellbeing-service-49700383293)



# Encouraging self-harm to be criminalised in Online Safety Bill update

Content that encourages someone to harm themselves will be against the law in the updated Online Safety Bill.

The changes have been influenced by the case of Molly Russell – the 14-year-old who ended her life in November 2017. Molly took her own life after viewing suicide and self-harm content on Instagram and Pinterest. At the inquest in September 2022, the coroner concluded the schoolgirl died while suffering from the “negative effects of online content”.

The update to the bill would create a new offence bringing self-harm content in line with communications that encourage suicide – which is already illegal.

The amendment would mean social media platforms would be required to remove self-harm content and any person found to have posted such content would face prosecution.



For more details, visit [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-63768496](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-63768496)

## Parenting discussion one-off workshops

Parenting discussion one-off workshops have been designed to offer a safe space to discuss shared concerns on specific parenting issues. These sessions allow parents to identify their current challenges and explore strategies to improve the parenting experience, as well as promoting their children's development. Email: [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

DATE	WORKSHOP	AGE RANGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Thursday 16 March</b> 10am-12.30pm Swanlea Secondary School	<b>Triple P Teen discussion group</b>	12-18 years	Getting teenagers to co-operate
<b>Thursday 23 March</b> 10.30am-12.30pm Swanlea Secondary School	<b>Triple P Teen discussion group</b>	12-18 years	Coping with teenagers' emotions
<b>Thursday 30 March</b> 10am-12.30pm Swanlea Secondary School	<b>Triple P Teen discussion group</b>	12-18 years	Building teenagers' survival skills

For more details and to join a session, email [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Parenting programmes booklet

A parenting programme booklet with details of the courses available to support parents has been produced by the Parenting Team. For more information and to download the brochure visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes). A limited number of paper copies can be requested by emailing [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or call 020 7364 6398.



# Tower Hamlets Parent and Family Support Service

## Parenting programmes

Parenting programmes are a source of support for all parents and offer an opportunity to share experiences, develop an understanding of child development, build positive relationships and learn to deal with challenging behaviour.

PROGRAMME	AGE	INFORMATION
<b>Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities (SFSC)</b>	2-18 years	Aims to increase parental self-esteem and confidence and reduce child behavioural difficulties. Five sessions, shortened version adapted for online. Also available in Bengali and Somali. Evening programme in English. Thirteen weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Teen</b>	12-18 years	For parents to build positive relationships with their teenager or for those who have concerns about problem behaviour, non-cooperation and aggression or wish to prevent behavioural problems from developing. Nine weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Group</b>	2-11 years	For parents who wish to build positive relationships with their child, increase self-confidence and develop their skills and techniques for dealing with difficult behaviour. Eight weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Family Transitions</b>	All parents	For parents who are experiencing personal distress after separation or divorce, which is impacting on their parenting. Six weekly sessions.
<b>Triple P Online</b>	2-11 years & 12-18 years	An individual online programme for parents to access and complete at their own pace. Practitioner support and guidance to complete the programme is available on request.
<b>Emotional First Aid</b>	All parents	Offers an overview of mental health and wellbeing in relation to parenting. Learn strategies to manage anxieties, identify stress factors, gain a better understanding of ourselves and promote a healthier sense of wellbeing. Six weekly sessions.
<b>Speakeasy</b>	5-18 years	For parents to develop the skills and confidence to talk to their children about growing up, relationships and keeping safe. Explores how Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is taught in schools and the influence on children from media and peers. Four weekly sessions.
<b>The Parent Factor in ADHD</b>	5-16 years	A programme for parents with children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The course will cover information to help understand the diagnosis and treatment, strategies to support your child and manage difficult behaviour and how to advocate on your child's behalf within the education system. Nine weekly sessions.
<b>Early Repair</b>		Early repair is a brief awareness two-day group programme for fathers identified as using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control). Early Repair is for fathers who are assessed as being a lower risk in accordance with the Tower Hamlets risk matrix. Professional referrals only.

### Triple P discussion groups

For parents of children aged 2-11 years

- Encouraging positive behaviour
- Managing fighting and aggression
- Developing good bedtime routines
- Hassle-free mealtimes with children

For parents of children aged 12-18 years

- Coping with teenagers' emotions
- Reducing family conflict
- Getting teenagers to co-operate
- Building teenagers' survival skills

#### Get in touch

Email: [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk) Tel: 020 7364 6398

To book a place or to make a referral download a referral form, scan the QR code or visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes)



# Tower Hamlets Family Group Service



The Family Group Conference Team

The Family Group Conference (FGC) service supports the involvement of families in decision making. FGCs are a cornerstone of Tower Hamlets' Better Together, restorative practice approach.

FGC co-ordinators bring together parents and the wider network to make plans for their child's care. Having the opportunity to make a family plan around a child increases family resilience and confidence in facing future difficulties. Co-ordinators also promote participation through advocacy, enabling children and parents to both have a voice in their child protection meetings.

Other Initiatives:

## Family and friends group

For parents and others who are experts by experience, who have accessed the service. It wants people who have used the service to help with its future development.

## Lifelong links service

This service supports the wider family's continued involvement for children placed outside the network so they can be offered a lifelong support network into adulthood.

## New mediation service

This is an important part of the Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) strategy.

For more details, including how to make a referral, or to find out if an FGC co-ordinator can support the family you are working with, email Jane Towey, FGC Manager at [familygroup.conference@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:familygroup.conference@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## FGCs: Supporting Early Help

The FGC team are keen to work with services and schools to support early help as well as child protection.

## Prints of inspiration

The Leaving Care Team at Kitcat Terrace would like to say a huge thank you to Nelly Duff and East End Prints for helping to brighten up a venue used by our young people.

They have both donated art prints to go up on the walls. The prints are adding colour and inspiration to the environment for everyone who visits.





# Platform to Talk programme

Platform to Talk, the online discussion-based sessions, have a programme for the rest of the academic year. The sessions, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, provide a safe space for parents to come together, share their experiences and get reliable information. The programme will cover a range of issues that matter to parents or relate to national awareness dates.

## Revise Wise

**Friday 10 March**  
**10-11am**

Revision is key to making learning stick, yet many students don't know how to do it well. Discover how to support students to develop good learning habits. You will learn the most effective revision methods to ensure students perform at their best during exams.



## Supporting Students Through Exams

**Friday 28 April**  
**10-11am**

Students need to feel well to perform at their best during exams. You will discover ways to help boost their wellbeing including how to manage stress. You will also pick up the best exam techniques that could make all the difference to their grades.



## Self- Care for Mental Health

**Friday 12 May**  
**10-11am**

This special Mental Health Awareness Week session will help you understand your own emotional needs so that you can develop positive emotional health. Share your experiences with other parents and pick up some practical self-care tips.



## Growing Up and Change

**Friday 16 June**  
**10-11am**

Join this session to discover how to talk to children about growing up, the changes happening in their bodies and relationships. You will get an insight into the pressures children face today and pick up some important tips to help keep them safe.



## Good Start at Secondary School

**Friday 14 July**  
**10-11am**

Help your child get off to the best possible start at secondary school by attending this informative session. Learn how to help your child manage any anxiety they may be feeling and pick up some practical tips so that everything goes as smoothly as possible in September.



To browse the Platform to Talk collection or to register for a session, email: [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk) click [here](#) or scan the QR code.



# Early REPAIR Course

## WHAT IS THIS COURSE?

Early REPAIR Course (ERC) is a brief awareness raising course for fathers who have been identified to be using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control) at a level currently considered to be low risk.

The course is delivered in two day long group work sessions a month apart with a 1-1 session in between.

### Day 1

- Denial, minimisation and partner blame, disclosure and what that felt like
- Impacts (mainly impacts on children)
- Sore points, signals, time outs and basic de-escalation strategies

Four weeks of keeping a log of sore points and use of techniques plus one 1-1 meeting

### Day 2

- Review logs
- More on impacts on children
- Review sore points and safety plan for future

For more information or to make a referral, email [parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## WHO WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND THE PROGRAMME?

Here are some suggested criteria:

1. The risk assessment did not classify the father as high risk.
2. The family are not at child protection (CP) tier.
3. The father admits to some physical domestic violence (DV) if there have been allegations of violence, and some coercive control if that has been alleged. We do not expect full disclosure.
4. The father has signed the referral description of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and also had to agree to attend.
5. The victim has not indicated that the conditional non-escalation / stepdown would place her or the children at significant risk.
6. The father has sufficient cognitive and language capacity to take part in the course.
7. There are no factors such as substance abuse or mental health which would prevent the father from benefiting.







## Tower Hamlets Family Hubs

### What are Family Hubs?

Family Hubs are a new way of bringing together all the support families may need from birth-19 (or 25 if they have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). It is a way of joining up to improve access to services, the connections between families, professionals, service providers, and putting relationships at the heart of family help.

The support is provided by voluntary, community and faith organisations working together with local authority services. The hubs will provide services at times that meet families' needs, both online and in person, in settings where families feel most comfortable

### Our shared vision

Every child, young person and family feels included in their communities, is happy and

healthy, and can easily get any help they need to thrive and reach their potential.

### Our shared mission

Early Help in Tower Hamlets is delivered through a Family Hub approach.

It is a community of families and services that are working together to provide timely support for families by helping create opportunities to improve the lives of children.

### What is the Early Help & Children and Families Service doing?

The team are currently in the first stage of the Family Hub development process. They are gathering information to outline the needs of children, young people and families and engaging with stakeholders to understand how best Family Hubs can meet their needs.

## New Family Hubs pilot

A pilot Family Hub approach has started in the Southwest Locality. The Tower Hamlets Early Help & Children and Families Service has been working with partners and residents to ensure the hub will:

- Provide better access
- Ensure that residents are better connected to the services they need
- Ensure that residents have better relationships with service providers
- Have a trusted and knowledgeable person available

For more information, email [lesley.jallow@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.jallow@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

For more information and how to get involved, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familyhubs](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familyhubs)



## Let's Talk SEND Updates and Information

Information on previous and upcoming Let's Talk SEND events and updates on the borough's SEND improvement journey can be found on the [Local Offer](#).

### Welcome to this edition of the Let's Talk SEND supplement.

I am pleased to highlight the success of the most recent Let's Talk SEND event in November which was co-produced with the Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum and the borough's Parent and Carer Council. It was great to meet and hear from so many parents and carers on the day and share the progress we have been making to improve services in the local area.

This edition features important updates on our plans to improve the support available for families waiting for an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessment and the progress made to tackle waiting times. We are also pleased to share plans to transform Early Years Speech and Language Therapy, including the early positive impact of pilot schemes in the borough.

Finally, I would like to touch on the Youth Achievement Awards ceremony held before Christmas (an event organised by young people



for young people) and was pleased to see young people with SEND well represented in the award nominations and receiving recognition. I am delighted to report that Sornnaly Hossain (Chair of the SEND Our Time Youth Forum), was recognised with a Young Inspirational Leader award on the night.

**Steve Nyakatawa**  
**Director of Education**  
**London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

Let us know what you would like to see in our next 'Spotlight On...' as part of the termly Let's Talk SEND supplement. Email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

For more information, visit [www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send)

More information on the support available to families can be found at [www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com](http://www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com)

### TERMS

**SENCOs** are also referred to as SENDCOs (Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators) in some schools.

**SENDIASS** refers to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service.



Scan the QR code or click [here](#) for the SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2021.





## Let's Talk SEND Information Market Place

Over 70 parents and carers attended the Let's Talk SEND information market place event, organised by the Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum and Tower Hamlets Parent and Carer Council.

The event provided an opportunity for the Local Offer and Family Information Service, the NHS, DLR, Young V&A and others to connect with families and share information about their services. Parents attending valued the chance

to speak with leaders from Tower Hamlets and hear about the planned improvements to SEND services.



If you missed the event, scan the QR code or click [here](#) for the presentations from the Director of Education, Steve Nyakatawa, and SEN Service Manager, Lewis Teasdale.

[www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send)



**Updates on autism and speech and language therapy from James Courtney,  
Senior Commissioning Manager, Children, Young People and Maternity,  
Tower Hamlets Children's Integrated Commissioning Team**

## Autism – updating families on progress

The waiting time for an autism assessment for local children and young people is currently just under two years. Local families have expressed their concern about having to wait so long.

This problem was raised in the 2021 SEND inspection. Since then we have worked hard to improve local services including:

- Barts Health NHS Trust has recruited additional therapists and has worked to simplify the autism assessment process.
- More than 25 children and young people now receive an autism diagnosis decision each month – this is three times more than in 2021
- The London Autism Clinic, an independent organisation that provides NHS Services, has been funded to deliver 20 more assessments per month
- To support families while they are waiting for an assessment, social communication navigators will offer one-to-one appointments for families at local children and family centres
- This approach will be tested in the Southwest locality in the spring and then all of Tower Hamlets later this year. Families can still access support at their local children and family centre.

To learn how to access a children and family centre, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/childrenandfamilycentres](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/childrenandfamilycentres)

To find out more about autism support for families on the Local Offer, visit [www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/information-and-support-about-autism](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/information-and-support-about-autism)



### Early Years Speech and Language Therapy – an update

Families have asked for speech and language therapy that is local and easy to access.

Barts Health and the Early Help & Children and Families Service have been testing group sessions for parents and children in children and family centres in Tower Hamlets.

The Play and Connect group sessions are now running in three centres – Meath Gardens, Chrisp Street and John Smith.

The groups support children aged two to five with suspected autism or social communication difference. Feedback from families and professionals has been good, and the new sessions mean families can access support more quickly.

Therapists are also supporting Little Talkers sessions for children with speech, language and communication needs. These sessions run in all 12 centres.

The 2021 SEND inspection also raised issues with access to speech and language therapy treatment for three- to five-year-olds.

The council has agreed to fund more therapists to deliver better support for families.

There have been workforce challenges which has delayed launching the service, but the council are aiming to provide services from this spring.



# Youth Achievement Awards

The Youth Achievement Awards were held at Queen Mary University in December 2022. Organised by the Young Mayor's Team, Youth Council and supported by the Young People's Service, these awards are an opportunity to celebrate and recognise the commendable actions shown by young people in all areas of Tower Hamlets.

Awards are presented to young people who have overcome barriers and have shown commitment, improvement and passion in a particular area. Several members of the Our Time All Ability Youth Forum won awards for their work.

- **Sornnaly Hossain** won first place as Inspirational Young Leader for her work chairing the Our Time Forum. Sornnaly gave a powerful speech about the obstacles that she has managed to overcome
- **Yaomin Ali** won first place in the Group Youth Sports Award with the Tower Project Football Team
- **Yunus** won first place in a group category with the Solar Academy
- **Yasmin Nessa Awal** won second place in the Group Youth Arts Award with the Spotlight Drama.

**Well done to all the young people who won an award.**

To see video highlights of the award ceremony, and to see Sornnaly accept her award, visit <https://vimeo.com/780829671>

For more information, email [hasan.faruq@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:hasan.faruq@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

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**The Youth Achievement Awards are all about celebrating the different ways in which our young people achieve so much for themselves, for their families and for our communities.**



James Thomas, Corporate Director, Children and Culture

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## SEND Support Group

- Come and meet other parents
- Share information
- Younger children welcome
- Monthly guest speakers

### For more information contact:

Tower Hamlets & City SEND IASS, 30 Greatorex Street, Whitechapel, London E1 5NP

☎ **020 7364 6489**

✉ **TowerHamlets&City.SENDIASS@towerhamlets.gov.uk**

✉ **@TH\_IASS**

🌐 **<https://www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com>**



## Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum



The Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum is pan-disability. Members work with families and professionals from the council and health services to ensure the views of parents, carers and young people contribute to the design and delivery of services.

Join other parents and carers of children and young people with SEND (0-25 years) for coffee and talk about the issues that are important to you.

For more information, email [thesendforum@gmail.com](mailto:thesendforum@gmail.com), call 07498 573872  
[www.thesendforum.co.uk](http://www.thesendforum.co.uk)

## SEND workshops for parents

- **Education, Health and Care Plan Workshop**  
Tuesday 14 March, 4.30-6.30pm  
John Smith Children and Family Centre, E1
- **Annual Review Workshop**  
Wednesday 15 March, 10am-12noon  
Parent Advice Centre, E1

To book a place call 020 7364 6489 or email [towerhamlets&city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:towerhamlets&city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# Our Time Youth Forum



Our Time is an all-ability forum for young people with SEND. It was set up to make changes to the SEND support system and for members to meet new people and gain new experiences.

Joining is a great way to build confidence, find out more about SEND and promote inclusion for all young people. There are lots of opportunities for members, like becoming a volunteer,

attending events and even going on trips.

Our Time Forum meetings are held at Spotlight in Langdon Park on the third Thursday of each month.

To find out more, visit [www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/young\\_peoples\\_zone](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/young_peoples_zone)

Below is some recent news from the forum.

## Disability Awareness fun day

The Disability Awareness fun day took place at Victoria Park in July, with the aim of promoting awareness of people with disabilities. It also provided an opportunity for people to connect with support services and engage with others who also have a disability.

Our Time members ran a stall where they promoted the forum. They also took part in activities like face painting, running, mini tennis, crafts and much more. It was a great way to explore and enjoy themselves – forum members felt it was a productive day.



## Mayor visits the Our Time All Ability Youth Forum



The Our Time All Ability Youth Forum is run for and by young people between the ages of 14-25 with SEND to ensure they can make their voices heard, gain new experiences, make friends, build confidence, understand their rights and campaign for change. Our Time regularly goes to meetings to share their views at a strategic level.

During November, Our Time met the Mayor of Tower Hamlets, Lutfur Rahman. Before meeting the Mayor, Our Time discussed what they wanted to change in Tower Hamlets. The Mayor asked about what Our Time does and what they want to achieve and the young people shared their views about equality, opportunities and safety for young people with SEND.

Our Time shared their views at the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee meeting about the planning and management of children and young people's services, with a round of applause at the end. They also attended the London Strategic Managers group to explain Our Time's work. They may even become consultants to other local authorities looking to set up their own SEND youth forums.

Young people can learn more about Our Time and join the forum by calling 020 7364 7127 or emailing [ourtime.yf@gmail.com](mailto:ourtime.yf@gmail.com).




# Let's Work SEND – jobs information fair

Let's Work is a unique event designed, developed and operated by young people with SEND. The event focuses on stimulating greater engagement between employers and young people.

Lets' Work enables young people with SEND to make better informed decisions about their futures and will convert engagement from the event into increased volunteering, work placement and paid employment opportunities.

The event is organised in partnership with The Tower Project JET Service, the council, Central London Careers Hub, and the Prince's Trust.


The organisers will be hosting a video CV workshop sharing top tips on how to create an engaging and professional short clip, which captures attendees skills, attributes and personality.



**LET'S WORK**  
A jobs information fair for all SEN Learners

Thursday 4 May 2023  
9:30am-3:00pm  
The Art Pavilion, Mile End Park,  
Clinton Road, E3 4QY

For more info contact: [events@letswork.org.uk](mailto:events@letswork.org.uk)



It is anticipated that Let's Work 2023 will be an essential date in the timetable for all young people with SEND aged 14-25 and parents and carers.

For more information or to book your place, email [events@letswork.org.uk](mailto:events@letswork.org.uk)



## Travel mentoring service for disabled passengers

Transport for London offers a free travel mentoring service for disabled passengers that aims to build confidence in using public transport.

The service may be useful for people who are reluctant to use public transport, but want to try it out, or people who have recently become disabled and want help navigating the network.

You can get help with:

- Planning an accessible route
- Making a journey
- Becoming an independent traveller
- Using mobility aids across the network
- Managing travel anxiety.

Find out more at <https://tfl.gov.uk/transport-accessibility/learn-to-use-public-transport>

## Premier League Kicks sessions

Young people with SEND can join free physical activity sessions with Premier League Kicks at Mile End Stadium. The sessions for eight to 18-year-olds are delivered in partnership with West Ham United Foundation and are a great way to get fit, unwind and meet friends in a safe environment.

Sessions take place at Mile End Stadium on Saturdays, 1-2pm.

For more details and to book your place, email [communitysport@westhamunited.co.uk](mailto:communitysport@westhamunited.co.uk)



# Half Moon Theatre's drama clubs for young people

Half Moon Theatre offers weekly after school drama clubs during term time in community spaces around the borough. They are relaxed spaces where young people from Years 7, 8 or 9 use drama to build confidence, make friends and explore issues.

Although the focus is on the process rather than the product, the groups can choose to work towards an informal end of term sharing. Skilled facilitators structure each term to suit the needs of the group, nurturing their skills.



For more details visit [www.halfmoon.org.uk/after-school-drama](http://www.halfmoon.org.uk/after-school-drama) or email [jen@halfmoon.org.uk](mailto:jen@halfmoon.org.uk)

## New after school group for girls

A new, weekly after school opportunity for girls has launched in Mile End. Girls Friendly Society (GFS) is a space for girls to meet new friends in a relaxed, girls-only environment.

The group hosts a range of fun activities for girls aged six to 11, including crafts, life skills, games, trips and workshops from inspiring visitors. Workshop themes include coding, cooking, sports, podcasting, activism, fashion design and writing. Visitors have included authors, app designers and actors.

The programme is designed to develop girls' self-confidence, life skills and resilience through

being part of a supportive, non-judgemental group. GFS aims to tackle, at a local level, the effects of gender inequality on girls and young women. GFS believes that every girl should feel valued and proud of who she is.

There are spaces for new members at GFS Mile End, so if you know a girl who would like to join, ask them to sign up and spread the word.

**GFS Mile End**  
**Tuesdays (term time)**  
**5.30-6.45pm**  
**Bernie Cameron Community**  
**Centre, E3 4LX**  
**For girls aged six to 11**



For more information and to register for a place visit  
<https://girlsfriendlysociety.org.uk/gfs-groups/group-finder/mile-end>  
 Email: [mileend@girlsfriendsociety.org.uk](mailto:mileend@girlsfriendsociety.org.uk)





Rehan Jamil, *Use Your Words*, 20 Nov 2022 as part of A Season of Bangla Drama

## Centre Stage hosts 'Your Voice'

From 12 January to 16 March, every Thursday at 6pm, Centre Stage are hosting 'Your Voice' – a series of workshops with an end of project performance at the Brady Arts Centre.

Young people will have the chance to develop their skills in song writing, spoken word, poetry, rap and performance.

They will learn how to use media, sounds and visual techniques, while developing their creativity and confidence.

Their social skills will flourish by collaborating with others in the creative process.

On 11 March, there will be a live show to celebrate International Women's Day with the theme being 'embrace equity'. There will also be a special guest headline act and other industry specialists providing feedback to the young performers.

For more details, visit [www.towerhamletsarts.org.uk/?cid=75399](http://www.towerhamletsarts.org.uk/?cid=75399)



## Learn how to braid hair

The Nurture Academy are offering parents the chance to learn how to braid hair and become confident with natural hair-styling by attending a six-week guided learning course with trained tutors.

Sessions will take place in the Bow area and are free but places are limited. To book your place, email [admin@nurtureacademy.org.uk](mailto:admin@nurtureacademy.org.uk) or call 07956 162 056.

## Cutting East

Youth-led Cutting East Film Festival 2023 returns to the Genesis Cinema on Friday 10 and Saturday 11 March. The council is excited to be partnering with Mile End Community Project and Phakama to deliver this project, which has been curated by a local group of talented 16 to 21-year-olds.


Participants have programmed, designed and curated this film and arts festival with a great line-up of free activities, including films, spoken word, Q&A, and exhibitions for all the family to enjoy.

Stick the dates in your diary and come along and support the young people.

For further details, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/arts](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/arts)

# Training and events calendar

## Parental engagement information and training for parents

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Fridays 10 March 28 April 12 May 16 June 14 July 10-11am	<p><b>Platform to Talk online sessions</b></p> <p>These virtual sessions cover a range of topical issues from health and wellbeing to family life, parenting, school and more.</p>  <p>To book your place scan the QR code or click <a href="#">here</a>. For more details, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Tuesdays 7 March 23 May 20 June 11 July 11am-1pm	<p><b>Somali Parents and Carers Network virtual meetings</b></p> <p>This network meets monthly and provides opportunities for Somali parents and carers to discuss key issues around education, health and wellbeing, get information and hear from guest speakers.</p> <p>For more details, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Thursdays Fortnightly Term time only 10am-12noon	<p><b>SEND Parent Support Group</b></p> <p>This group offers parents and carers of children or young people with SEND, support and information around key themes/relevant issues and an opportunity to meet other parents and carers of children with SEND. Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Tuesday 14 March 4.30-6.30pm	<p><b>Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) workshop</b></p> <p>A workshop for parents to provide key information about the EHCP process. Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Wednesday 15 March 10am-12noon	<p><b>SEND Annual Review workshop for parents</b></p> <p>A workshop for parents to discuss key issues about an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Annual Review including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What should happen before, during and after an Annual Review</li> <li>● What key questions/topics should be covered during the review meeting</li> <li>● Ensuring a child's EHCP is ready for transferring to secondary school.</li> </ul> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>

## Other events to look out for from the Parent and Family Support Service

DESCRIPTION
<p><b>Annual Parent Conference</b></p> <p>Further information on dates and how to book places for parents will be available shortly.</p>
<p><b>Let's Talk SEND: Information Sessions for Families</b></p> <p>An opportunity for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND to hear from senior leaders about the Local Area SEND system and find out more about plans following the SEND Local Area Inspection. Parents and carers can also share their experiences to help improve communication throughout the SEND system. Email: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>

For more information contact the Parental Engagement Team on **020 7364 6398**  
or email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



### Induction to other agencies

These are bite-sized sessions that introduce professionals to a range of organisations that can help in your work with families. To book your session visit [www.learninghub.towerhamlets.gov.uk/index.php](http://www.learninghub.towerhamlets.gov.uk/index.php) and enter 'Induction to other agencies' in the search bar.

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Tuesday 28 February 28 March 2-3.30m	<b>Induction to Eva Armsby Family Centre</b> An overview of the centre's three main areas of work – the Positive Change Service, working with those affected by domestic abuse; the Parenting Assessment Service; and the Contact Service.

For more information, contact Marie Larvin. Email: [marie.larvin@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:marie.larvin@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Useful contacts



For a list of local and national advice services, providing free information for Tower Hamlets residents on welfare benefits, debt, housing and other matters, scan the QR code, click [here](#) or visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice)

A number of specialist advice agencies and solicitors firms also provide legal aid services to eligible clients.

### Support for Ukrainian families

For information on the support available for Ukrainian families who have recently arrived in the borough, including information on the Barnardo's Ukrainian Support Helpline, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/homesforukraine](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/homesforukraine)



Your guide to information and services for families in Tower Hamlets

**LOCAL OFFER**  
@thlocaloffer [localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk](http://localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk)



Guide to information and services in Tower Hamlets for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and **all** families in the borough



### Help for households

The government is offering help for households.

To find out what cost of living support you could be eligible for visit [www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds](http://www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds)

Direct family support can be found at [www.helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs](http://www.helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs)

