

Families Matter

Issue 43 September– October 2017

Hello... Welcome to the autumn edition of Families Matter. The summer holidays were over in a flash and now everyone is heading back to school. Have you thought about how safe your car tyres are on the school run? We have some hints and tips to keep your four wheels safely on the road. Or perhaps your young ones are taking their first steps to independence and catching the bus. Gloucestershire County Council have launched a new, accessible, travel app to help make bus travel easier. You can read more about how to get the app on page 3. Half term starts on **23rd October** and there will be plenty of activities taking place throughout the county. Whether you are looking for an autism friendly film screening or a night at the museum – you will find all of that and more on our 'Events' page at:

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

glosfamilies directory

It's never too soon to start planning your childcare arrangements. We know that the summer holidays have only just ended—but half term will be here before you know it. Will you need to find childcare? Or perhaps you will be looking for some family activities to keep everyone entertained.

Glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk contains information about all of the Ofsted registered childcare in Gloucestershire along with information about one off events and holiday clubs. You can search by type of childcare—for example; childminder or holiday scheme or you can search by location. You can even enter your postcode and get a list of the providers closest to your home address. The 'Events' section is updated frequently with one off and holiday time activities so it's worth checking in on a regular basis to see which new activities have been added.

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk



Autism Friendly Cinema

Dimensions, a charity that supports people who experience autism, are working with the Vue cinema in Stroud and Cineworld in Cheltenham and Gloucester to offer autism friendly film screenings. Autism friendly screenings take place at 11am on the first Sunday of each month. The cinema environment will be adapted to be sensory friendly and inclusive; lights will kept on during the screening, volume levels will be reduced, there will be no allocated seating and customers will be allowed to bring their own food.

Dimensions are working with over 60 cinemas across the UK and Ireland. Many families have already enjoyed autism friendly screenings and have commented on the benefits of having a regular family event to look forward to, where they know that their needs are being considered. For more information contact your local cinema or visit: www.dimensions-uk.org.



Family Information Service



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

0800 542 02 02 or 01452 427362

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk



Bulletin Board

- ✚ **Transfer to Secondary School.** If your child is due to transfer to Secondary School in 2018 you will be sent a letter in September explaining how to apply for a place. Don't forget that the closing date for applications is 31st October 2017.
- ✚ **Starting infant school.** The deadline for applications for a place in reception is 15th January 2018. If you haven't received a letter telling you how to apply by December, contact coordinated admissions on: 01452 425407.
- ✚ **Key members.** Keep in touch! Please remember to contact us each year to renew your leisure pass. We also need to know if any of your circumstances change, for example if you move house. You can keep us updated by calling us on: 01452 427362.

On Your Mind

Gloucestershire Clinical Commission Group has been working with children, young people and their families to make life better for children and young people with mental health problems in Gloucestershire. Their studies found that children and young people want to know where they can find trusted advice to help them to help themselves. With this knowledge, the group developed 'On Your Mind', a website for any young person who is struggling with their emotions or a difficult situation in their life. Whether they want support around bullying, information about drugs and alcohol, advice about how to deal with their emotions or to explore anything else that is on their mind, trusted information can be found at:

www.onyourmindglos.nhs.uk

Wallet watch...

The 'two child' rule. Child tax credit rules have changed. If you have two or more children you may not be able to claim child tax credit for any additional children born on or after 6th April 2017. Don't worry if you are already getting help for two or more children, the cut won't affect you. The changes only apply to new claims made for children born on or after the cut off date (6th April 2017). There are some exceptions to the new rule, you may still be able to claim in the case of: multiple births, some adoptions, young parents, kinship care and non-consensual conception. The charity Working Families has produced detailed guidance on the exceptions and the new rules, which can be viewed on their website:

www.workingfamilies.org.uk or you can call their telephone advice line: 0300 012 0312. The new rule does not affect child benefit and you will still be able to claim this for a third child. You will also still be able to get extra amounts of child tax credit if your child is in receipt of DLA. If you pay for registered childcare some of the childcare costs that you have for any children under the age of 15, or 16 if they are disabled, can still be included in your Working Tax Credit. *You must be sure to tell HMRC about any additional children that you have, even if you don't receive child tax credits for them. This will ensure that you receive any entitlements for them that you may become eligible for in the future.*



Childcare Choices. The government has introduced some new ways to help parents with the cost of childcare. Help may be available if you have toddlers, teens or any age in between! For more information about the different schemes available visit **www.childcarechoices.gov.uk**. This website will help you to find out which schemes you may be eligible for and will

guide you through the application process. Don't delay—check Childcare Choices today.

Make your own.... Autumn window picture

Be inspired by the beautiful autumn colours on the trees and make this colourful picture that looks fabulous when the sun shines through it.



You will need:

Clear sticky back plastic. Pressed, dried leaves or leaf shapes cut out of tissue paper. Red and gold glitter. Card in an autumn shade.

Instructions:

Cut the middle of the card out to make a frame. Lay the sticky back plastic on the table, sticky side up. Place the frame on the plastic and cut around the edges. Stick your glitter and leaves onto the plastic to make a picture. Finally, put your picture up on the window and admire your handiwork.

www.activityvillage.co.uk

Independent travel for all

Missed the bus? The new 'Glos Talk' app can help you to reach your destination on time.

Gloucestershire County Council have launched the test version of a new, accessible, app to help everyone who needs bus information in the county.

'Glos Talk' is a talking (or text only, if you prefer) app that allows you to find your nearest 12 bus stops, provides audible bus arrival and departure times, informs you when to alight from the bus that you are using and can pinpoint the exact location of nearby buses. Having this information easily to hand can make independent travel easier for all passengers, young and old alike.





The app is free to download to Android, iPhone and Windows from your app store.



Child care – tyre care

The summer holidays are over and if you had a busy time driving around on day trips now would be the ideal time to check your tyre safety. Car tyres are the only part of the car in contact with the road, making their maintenance essential for road safety. Worryingly, more than one in four carers may be driving with illegal or poorly maintained tyres.

TyreSafe, the UK's tyre safety charity, is launching a new awareness campaign aimed at all those who drive with children on board. So whether you are a parent, grandparent or guardian, follow TyreSafe's helpful guide for checking tyre safety:

-  Simply place a 20p coin into the main tread grooves of your tyre. If the outer band of the 20p coin is obscured when it is inserted, then your tread is above the legal limit.
-  If the outer band of the coin is visible, then your tyres may be illegal and unsafe and should be checked immediately by a qualified tyre professional.

When taking the test, remember to check at least three locations around each tyre. As the test is so quick and easy you can stay safe by checking your tyres at least once a month.

Alternatively, you can ask a tyre professional to check your tyres' air pressure, condition and tread depth. For more information about keeping your tyres, and the children on board, safe visit: **www.tyresafe.org**.

Be Amazing—Be A Home-Start Volunteer

Parents and grandparents have the experience needed to make great volunteers! Do you have 2 – 3 hours a week that you could spare to help a local family to get back on their feet and develop the skills needed to cope with family life? Home-Start, an independent registered charity that works with families in Quedgeley and the Stroud District, are looking for volunteers to help make a real difference to family life. Each volunteer will have the opportunity to attend the popular volunteer preparation course. The course is 40 hours and normally runs over 10 weeks. Courses tie in with the school day and you are guaranteed a warm welcome within a group of caring people. The next volunteer training course is starting soon – so if you think that this is something you would like to do, get in touch: 01453 297470, enquirieshomestartsd@gmail.com



What's On?

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



FREE inclusive swim session. Sunday 3rd September @ Freedom Leisure, Cinderford, 4—5pm. Work on your swimming confidence or splash around in a relaxed and friendly environment. Carers and family members also swim for free. Separate changing space available on request. For more information contact Steph Moreland: 07710 708870.

Dinosaurs Exhibition. 4th September—28th October. Ever wondered what a T-Rex ate for lunch? Or fancy walking through a dinosaur swamp? Then look no further than the Museum of Gloucester this autumn. Go along and explore the fascinating world of palaeontology. Entry charges apply. Call: 01452 396131 for more information.

Cheltenham Disability Athletics event. 16th September at Prince of Wales Stadium, Tommy Taylors Lane, Cheltenham, GL50 4RN. 10am—2pm. Places must be booked in advance, for more information contact Peter at cheltdisabilityathletics@outlook.com.

Bussage Bear Hunt. 17th & 17th September. Join the third annual Bussage Bear Hunt! Go along on a woodland adventure and finish up with tea and cake. The bear hunt leaves from Bussage Primary School, GL6 8FW at 2pm, maps cost £3.50.

Museum by Torchlight. 26th & 30th October. Explore the Wilson Art Gallery and Museum in Cheltenham like you've never seen them before! With the lights extinguished and torch in-hand, seek out objects and clues in a special scavenger hunt for young detectives. Spaces limited, so booking advised. Age 5 - 12 years—01242 774548, artgallery@cheltenhamtrust.org.uk.

Useful Contacts

School Admissions 01452 425407

Free School Meals 01452 425390

SENDIASS 0800 158 3603

Ofsted 0300 123 1231

Child Law Advice Line 0300 330 5480

Tax Credit Helpline 0345 300 3900

Child Benefit 0300 200 3100

Local Welfare Provision 0330 123 5550

Citizen's Advice 08444 111 444

Jobcentre Plus 0345 604 3719

Shelter Housing Advice 0808 800 4444

Teens In Crisis 01594 546117

Child Maintenance Options 0800 988 0988

Non-emergency NHS 111

Non-emergency Police 101

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse and Support Service 0845 602 9035

Family Lives 0808 800 2222

Bullying UK 0808 800 2222

Childline 0800 1111

Contact A Family 0808 808 3555