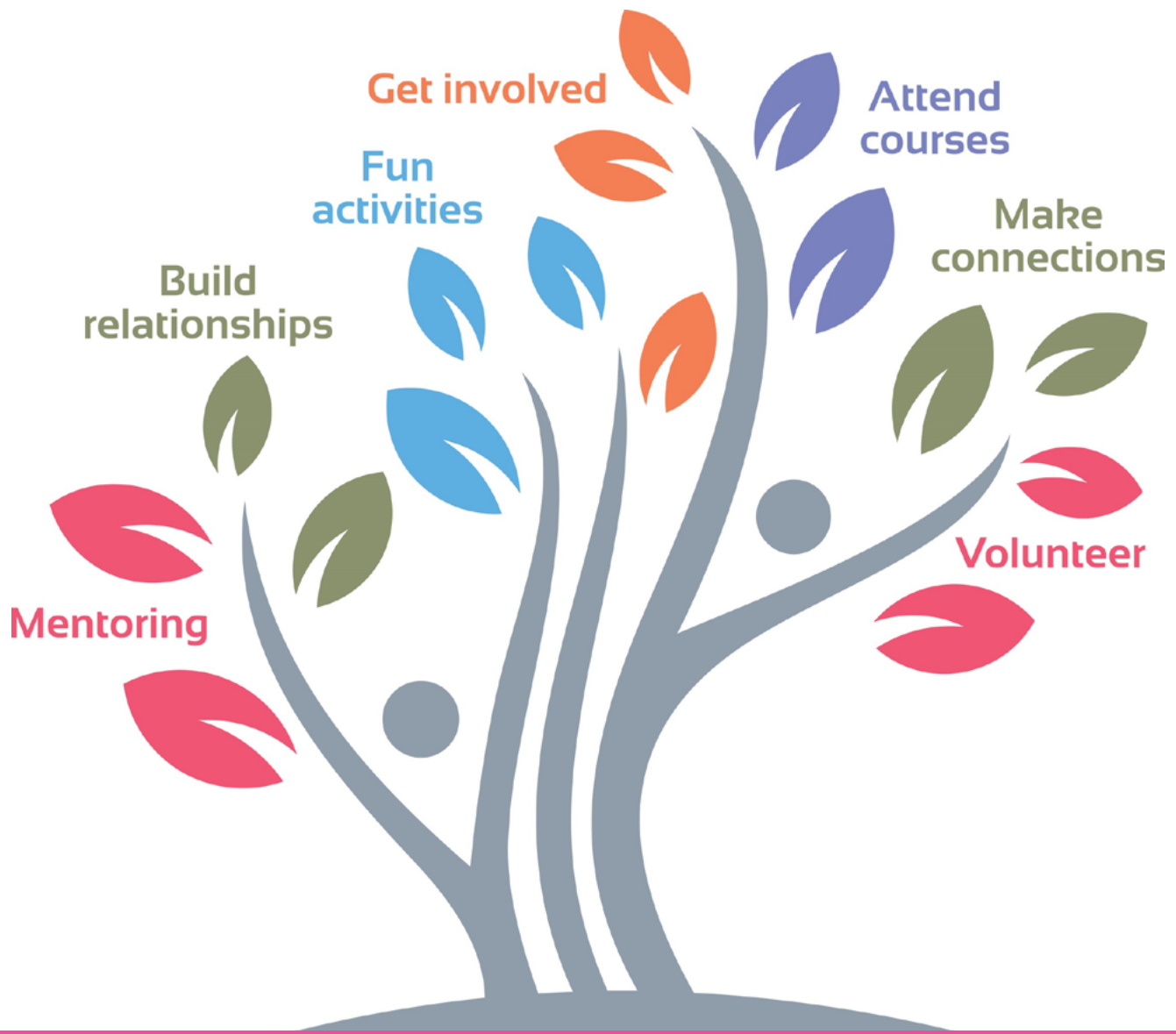


Essex Family Support Service

E-Bulletin March 2023



Community360 are working in partnership and collaboration with other charities and groups across Essex to deliver this service as part of the wider Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service. We've partnered with HCRG Care Group and Barnados and want to provide as much support as we can to you and your family.

Our team of staff & volunteers are here to provide one to one support for you & your family. For details on how to refer to our service, see the last page of this bulletin.

We look forward to hearing from you.

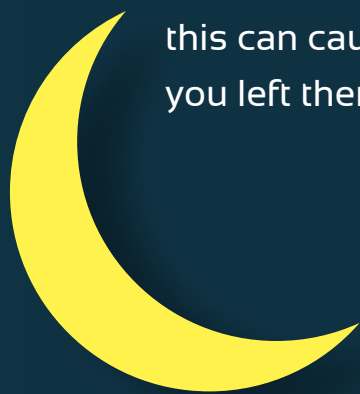
Sleep and the changing of the seasons

Whilst Spring brings the relief of lighter evenings and warmer days, the change of routine and clocks can often cause disrupt the sleep routine of children, in particular ones with additional needs.

Our circadian rhythm works in 90-minute cycles, briefly waking us to assess our environment to make sure we are safe. This harks back to the days of our ancestors when we needed to be aware of the dangers in everyday life, such as getting eaten by a mountain lion.

Whilst we no longer need to worry about mountain lions, the smallest change in a child's environment can cause them to wake throughout the night. It can be something as simple a noise that was there when a child went to sleep.

After a sleep cycle the noise that was comforting them is gone, this can cause the child to be concerned that they are not where you left them causing panic and waking up.



This can be particularly difficult with the changes of the clocks where the light in a child's room could affect their ability to stay asleep, meaning a 4am wake up alarm call for you. This could lead to the days being affected by meltdowns and emotional dysregulation.

Having a sleep issue is surprisingly common. At any given time up to 40% of adults and 50% of children (this rises to 80% with a SEND diagnosis) have difficulties with their sleep. Yet in a recent survey, almost 60% of adults felt there was a lack of support for sleep issues.

The National Sleep Helpline can help with your sleep problems.

[Click here >>](#)

Easy Easter Nests



Ingredients

200g milk chocolate, broken into pieces.

85g shredded wheat, crushed.

2 x 100g bags mini chocolate eggs.

You'll also need cupcake cases.

Method

STEP 1 - Melt the chocolate in a small bowl placed over a pan of barely simmering water. Pour the chocolate over the shredded wheat and stir well to combine.

STEP 2 - Spoon the chocolate wheat into 12 cupcake cases and press the back of a teaspoon in the centre to create a nest shape. Place 3 mini chocolate eggs on top of each nest. Chill the nests in the fridge for 2 hrs until set.

Enjoy!

Easter Holiday Activities

Active Essex run their ActivAte programme throughout Essex during the school holidays.

The programme is designed for children aged 4-16 years old who are eligible for benefits based free school meals and from low income working families who benefit from this extra support. Some clubs may offer paid spaces that run alongside Essex ActivAte.

[Click here >>](#)

Each club delivers a variety of physical and enrichment activities, fun food education and a nutritious meal. The clubs are designed to promote physical and emotional wellbeing.

Follow this link for more information including clubs in your local area and how to book your child onto a club.

[Click here >>](#)

During the Easter holidays there are lots of lovely activities and events available to enjoy with the family throughout Essex. Why not go on an easter egg hunt or an organised Easter trail in one of the local country parks? To see what is available in your area, take a look at the following link:

[Click here >>](#)



Springtime Crafts

With Springtime comes bright, beautiful colours. The birds are chirping, and lambs are bleating and we're all grateful for the arrival of warmer weather and longer, lighter days. But, with Spring also comes Spring showers, so for those rainy days, here are a few fun Spring crafts to do together.

Easy Pipe Cleaner Daffodils and Tulips

[Click here >>](#)

Paper plate Bee

[Click here >>](#)

Clouds and Rain Weather Windsock Craft

[Click here >>](#)



Volunteer with Essex Family Support Service

Could you help families improve their health and wellbeing in your local community? We are looking for volunteer mentors (aged 18+) to join Community360 and the Essex Family Support Service to engage and inspire families who need support for up to a 10-week period, providing weekly sessions to focus on their needs and providing signposting and guidance. You would be encouraging families and children (aged 8-19) to take part in new activities, develop new skills and build their confidence.

For further information or to apply

[Click here >>](#)



Eastlight Tenancy Support

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, Eastlight Community Homes is offering eligible residents financial support towards the cost of their oil, gas or electricity through their Tenancy Support Fund.

The fund aims to provide Eastlight tenants with extra financial support to help ease the pressures they might be facing. For more information, including eligibility criteria, please email TenancySupportFund@eastlighthomes.co.uk

[Click here >>](#)

Eastlight have also funded a telephone-based Tenant Support & Well-being Service (TSWS), which provides a safe space for residents to seek independent and confidential advice on a variety of matters, including debt, mental health, childcare issues, bereavement & loss, and much more. This free service is available 24/7, 365 days a year, and can be reached by calling 0330 094 8845.

Eastlight tenants can also access this service online
Username: eastlight Password: tenant

[Click here >>](#)

The Essex Family Forum

The Essex Family Forum (EFF) is a Parent Carer Forum, an independent community interest company, made up of a group of parents and carers of children and young people (0-25yrs) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Everyone who works or volunteers with a parent carer forum is also a parent or carer of a child or young person with SEND. EFF aims to ensure the services in their area meet the needs and improve outcomes of children and young people with SEND and their families.

[Click here >>](#)



A toolkit for teachers: Autism, ADHD and Mental Health

A toolkit for teachers: Autism, ADHD, and Mental Health book by Kierran Pearce | Youth Service SEND and Multi Schools Council Lead:

This book has been designed with young people who have learning differences and includes the things they want teachers, parents and the public to know. The book hopes to fill the gap that we currently see across society in our understanding towards young people with SEND. While building understanding, the book also looks to offer strategies and approaches that have been suggested by young people themselves.

This is a unique approach to supporting young people with SEND. Too often we can think we know best – but do we really know what our young people want or need without asking them first? Focusing on autism and ADHD, the book also features positive approaches to supporting young people's wellbeing.



[Click to learn more](#)

[Click here >>](#)

What can you do to make it through Spring?

The changing of the seasons and the start of the warmer months is generally associated with growth, rebirth, and a frenzy of flowers pushing out of the deserted, thawing, soil. We see shining faces and blue skies across all media platforms, claiming that simple #spring-cleaning is the key to mental well-being and a sunny disposition. However, the changing of the seasons is not the end all cure for seasonal depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses. In fact, the spring and early summer months see the highest rates of suicide, and many people experience increased depression and anxiety..

Carry on reading for some great tips and advice.

Find Routine:

Despite the changes spring might bring, try to find at least one consistent activity for your week to look forward to. This could look like Monday evening walks with your dog, a Friday lunch with friends, or a few dedicated hours to self-care each Sunday.

Focus on sleep:

While this is much easier said than done, try to prioritize sleep! Set two alarms, one that tells you to GO TO BED, and one that tells you to WAKE UP. Try to keep it consistent throughout the week.

Ask for help:

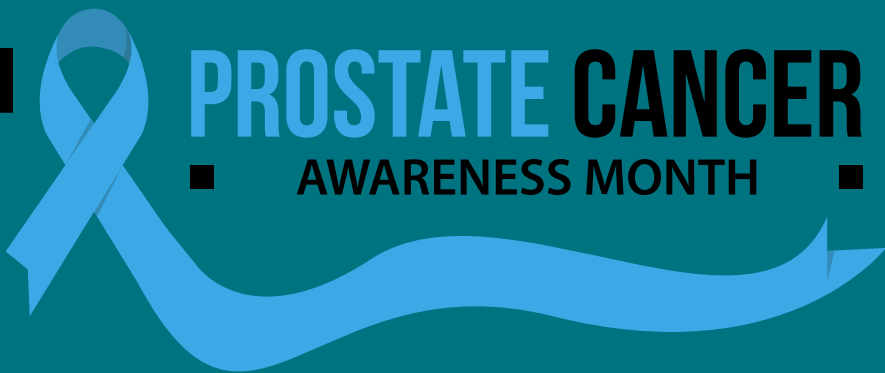
If you know spring is a difficult time for you, reach out to friends or family for a support system. Seek out a therapist or treatment to help you process your feelings.



Awareness weeks in March:

**MARCH
2023**

PROSTATE CANCER
■ AWARENESS MONTH ■



**DISABLED
ACCESS
DAY** **16th March
2023**

My Social PrescribingDay

One Colchester
Community Hub
4-6 Long Wyre Street
CO1 1LH

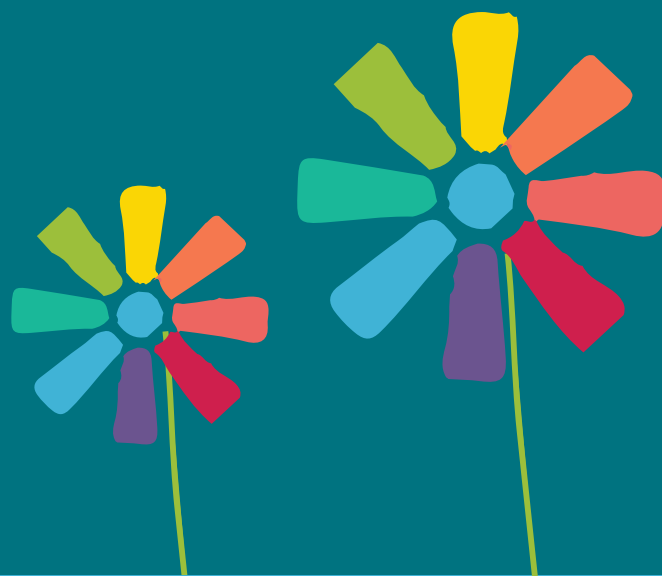
**8th March
2023
11am – 3pm**

**Come and join us on 8th March in the run-up
to National Social Prescribing Day which is
on the 9th March 2023**

MOBILITY - social inclusion, befriending,
engagement, empowering individuals.

SUPPORTING - GP Surgeries to home,
discharge from Hospital and back into
the community.

PROVIDING SUPPORT - for the
Colchester and Braintree regions



See a day in the life of a Social
Prescriber and how they can
support you and your family to
improve your health and wellbeing
in a non-clinical or non- medical,
holistic approach.

Walk through an interactive health
and wellbeing environment – see how
we support in the hospital/GP
surgery/community including 2
wellbeing walks, green social
prescribing activities and much more.



Get in touch!

Please let us know what you would like to see in the next edition.
How can we help you and your family?

You can call us on:
T: 01206 505 250

Or you can email us at:
E: families@community360.org.uk

You can also find us online:
f [community360org](https://www.facebook.com/community360org)
@community360org
W: www.community360.org.uk