

Essex Family Support Service

E-Bulletin June 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 Barnado's 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.

Nature Activities



This month's E-bulletin is focusing on our environment and how we can actively make changes to have a positive impact on the world we live in. Enjoy these fun and educational activities.

Wild Sleep Out

What could be more exciting than a night under the stars?

Sleeping outside can be thrilling. You'll experience many wonderful new things that you would not have noticed from indoors. There are all kinds of wildlife that wakes up when it gets dark along with a sky twinkling with stars, planets, satellites, planes and if you're lucky, shooting stars.

Bird Watching

Spread your wings into the wonderful world of birds and get spotting! Which birds do you share your neighbourhood with?

Our gardens, countryside and even towns and cities, are full of amazing birds. From acrobatic blue tits and charismatic robins to noisy magpies and cheeky gulls - birds are our most visible and vocal wild friends and no matter where you are, birds and their unique behaviours make for fascinating viewing!

Find a comfy spot to perch at home looking out of your window over your garden, neighbouring park or even just the trees in your street and see what you can spot! Alternatively, you might be able to spot birds when out and about on a walk.



Build a Bird Bath

Having some water in your garden can provide a 'stage' for birds to entertain you as they drink and bathe. Install a watery oasis, sit back, and enjoy the show!

Birdbaths give our feathered friends a safe and reliable source of fresh water in cold and hot weather. Blackbirds and starlings will often take a dip, while woodpigeons may just sit in the water to cool off. Bathing helps birds keep their feathers in tip-top condition. You may even notice bumblebees flying down for a refreshing drink! You can install a birdbath at any time of year, but summer is a particularly critical time when water can be scarce for birds.

A bird bath is bound to be a splash-hit with your feathered friends and is relatively easy to build! You'll require:

1. A shallow, watertight bowl, such as an upturned dustbin lid or large circular plant tray. The perfect birdbath will have very shallow sloping sides, a maximum depth of only 10cm or so and be as wide as possible - ideally more than 30cm across.
2. Some stones or gravel.
3. Bricks to raise the bowl up if it doesn't have a base.
4. Rain or tap water.



Build a Bug Hotel!

Create a hotel full of different natural materials, to provide hidey-holes for creatures galore! The size and construction of your bug hotel is only limited by the materials you have available and your imagination! Minibeasts are very relaxed tenants and will find the places that appeal to them as long as there are lots of nice nooks and crannies to explore, and some nice rotting bark to munch on. If you build a solid foundation, you can always add to your hotel in stages later or whenever you have the right materials to hand.

What will you need:

Old wooden pallets and bricks. After you've used your bricks and pallets to make a solid structure, what you put inside is up to you! There are loads of great natural materials you can use - most of them are things that you can find lying around!

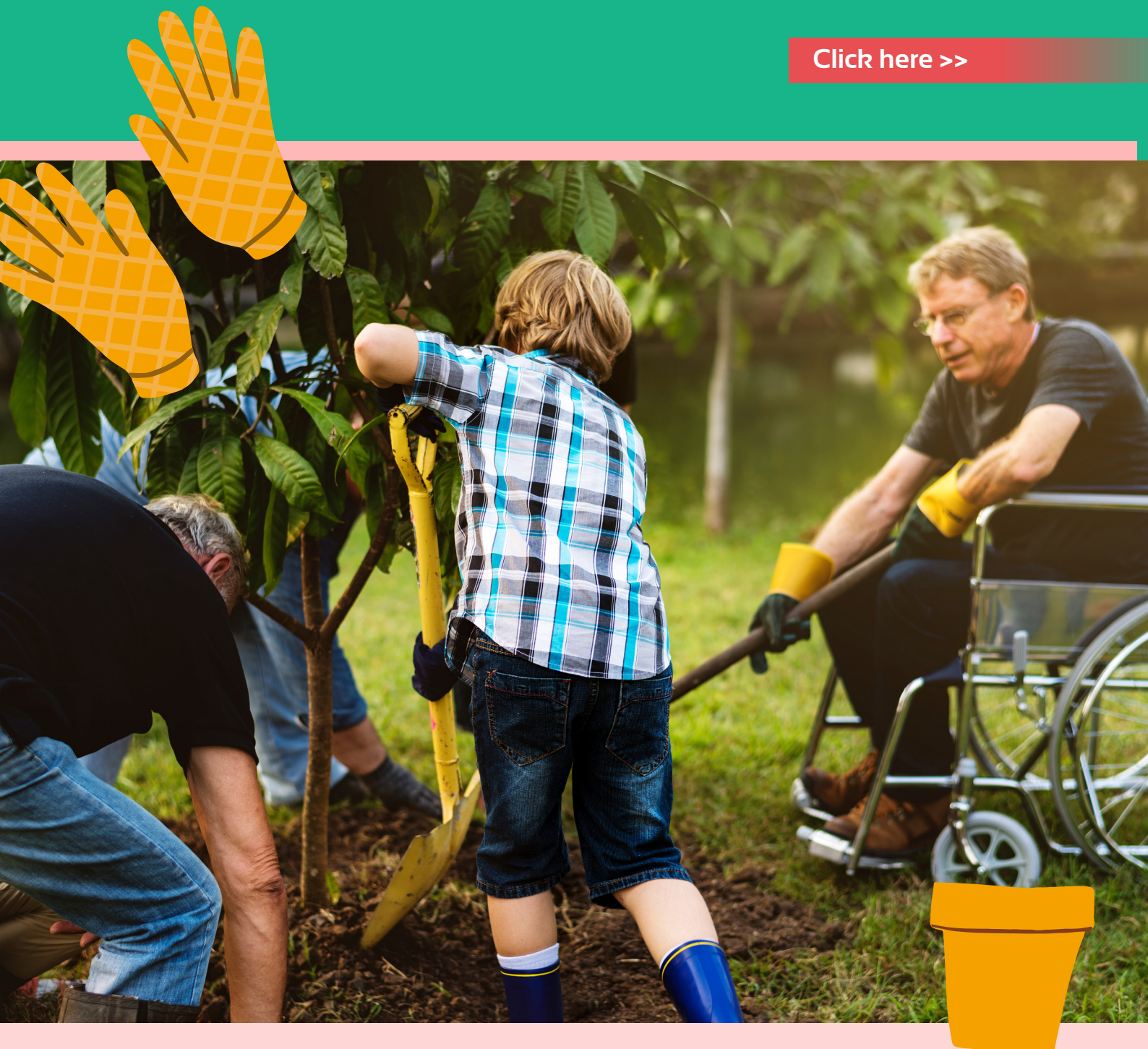
Here are a few suggestions:

Strips of wood	Woodchips	Old logs	Soil
Straw	Old terracotta pots	Bark	Hollow bamboo canes
Moss	Old roofing tiles	Pinecones	Dead hollow plant stems
Dry leaves	Bricks	Sand	A sheet of roofing felt

How our gardens and the plants around us can help the environment

Some people have large gardens, others have tiny gardens or balconies. Regardless of how large or small your growing space is and whether it's an outdoor space or space within your home, we can all grow to help the environment. Plants are essential for the planet and for all living things. Plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen from their leaves, which humans and other animals need to breathe. Living things need plants to live, they eat them and live in them. Plants help to clean water too. This video by Learn Bright explains just how awesome trees are, the more trees we grow, the better our environment will be!

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For indoor spaces, grow house plants to improve the air quality of your home, try growing Rubber Plants, English Ivy, Parlour Palms, Snake Plants, Spider Plants or Peace Lilies in a pretty plant pot. Or maybe grow herbs such as rosemary and basil so that you can use them in your cooking.

In our gardens or outdoor spaces, there's no end to the gorgeous things we can grow. Try and plant things with more than one use, for example, an apple tree or a plum tree will help improve the air quality, will have blossom for the bees and other insects, nesting and shelter spaces for birds and will produce free and tasty fruit for your fruit bowl. If buying and planting a fruit tree it's a good idea to visit a local nursery and ask for expert advice or do lots of research online first, it's important to choose the right tree for you and your space.

Growing your own veg is a great idea, you don't need to be an expert. The veg grown in our gardens has no environmental transport impact whatsoever, and there is no plastic packaging! Gardeners World have this advice for those who are new to growing veg and who have limited space or require low maintenance options.

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Growing beautiful flowers will attract a whole variety of bees, butterflies, and other awesome creatures to your garden. In the UK insects are in dramatic decline and it's important that we all do our bit, no matter how small, to boost their numbers. You can even try growing flowers that you can eat or add to ice cubes for pretty summer drinks. Roses, pansies, nasturtiums, marigolds, violets, and geraniums, once washed, can all be used.

Special Environmental Days



What is World Environment Day?

World Environment Day is held on the 5th June every year.

It isn't a public holiday, but an awareness day set up and run by the United Nations. It promotes the awareness and protection of the environment. It was first set up in 1972 and was first held in 1974. Each year has a different theme, and this year's theme is solutions to beat plastic pollution. Click on the link to find out more about how you can take part in this

[Click here >>](#)

What is Global Wind Day?

Global Wind Day is celebrated every year on the 15th June. It's an international awareness day, raising awareness around the importance of wind energy and its potential to change the world and how people use energy. Supporting wind energy means investing less in fossil fuels, which will reduce carbon footprint, leaving the air clearer for us all. You can support Global Wind Day in many ways, such as by flying a kite, asking your school to hold an assembly, or sharing information on social media.



What is World Ocean Day?

World Ocean Day is an international awareness day that takes place every year on the 8th June to raise awareness of the importance of our oceans and how they sustain a healthy planet. The ocean covers 70% of our planet and absorbs around 30% of the carbon dioxide produced by humans. It is the world's largest ecosystem. Events will be taking place all over the globe. To find out more information about World Ocean Day or to find an event taking place near you

[Click here >>](#)

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Environmental Fun Facts

The environment around us is full of amazing features and provides a wide range of benefits such as the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe. Sometimes we can take our planet and the environment around us for granted. Here are some environmental facts that you may not know:

1. Recycling one aluminium can saves enough energy to run a tv for three hours.
2. Although there is no exact figure, it is estimated that more than 15 billion trees are cut down every year due to deforestation and paper production.
3. It can take 4,000 years for a glass bottle to decompose when it is left in the environment, with a plastic bottle taking 450 years to decompose – that's a long time!
4. Germany has one of the highest recycling rates in the world.
5. UK legislation dictates that 95% of a car has to be recycled when it's scrapped.
6. Sea levels have risen by nearly 10cm in the last 25 years.
7. Scientists have estimated that there are around 8.7 million species of plants and animals in existence however only around 1.2 million species have been identified and described so far!
8. The ocean is a continuous body of salt water that covers more than 70% of the Earth's surface.

You can find lots more information about our planet and the environment.



[Click here >>](#)

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Activities to teach children about climate change

Talking about climate change and how to maintain a sustainable family routine with children is incredibly important to do. However, it can be tricky to know where to start with the ever-increasing options of how to go green!

Recycle and re use for home-made crafts
The recycling bin is a great place to turn to for craft inspiration! Here are some ideas to get you started.



[Click here >>](#)

Plant a garden

Growing your own organic food helps save on the distance food has to travel to get to you. Plus, teaching kids to garden is such a beneficial experience! Join a community allotment scheme if you don't have your own garden. Children's emotional wellbeing is often positively improved with time spent outdoors.

Conduct a science experiment

Teach your children a little bit of science by taking old, broken crayons and some aluminium foil outside on a sunny day and watch the sun's energy in action.

1. To prepare, place foil on a baking sheet or plate.
2. Strip the crayons of their wrappers and then set the crayons down on the foil.
3. Step back and wait as the sun slowly melts the crayons.
4. Once melted, bring inside, and let solidify to the point you can fold the wax without it dripping. If it's no longer malleable, bring outside for a couple of minutes and try again.
5. Once the wax can bend without breaking or dropping, roll your melted wax to make a straw-like crayon. Let it sit until fully hardened



Collect Rainwater

With the ever-increasing cost of our utilities, you might be thinking of how you and the children can grow your own veg without it costing the earth. Children can water plants or fill up a water table with rainwater that has been collected outside. Residents in Essex can benefit from a subsidised scheme via Essex County Council.

Make a compost bottle

This bottle compost is a great way for kids to see composting in action. A clear 2-litre bottle makes it easy to watch the composting process as it happens. This recycled science project is a great way for kids to learn about composting in a hands-on way.

The instructions can be found here:



[Click here >>](#)

Awareness days in June:



1st – 30th June Pride Month

1st – 7th June Volunteers Week

12th – 16th June Loneliness Week

12th – 16th June Men's Health Week

19th – 23rd June Small Charities Week

19th – 23rd June Cervical Screening Awareness Week



THANK
YOU!

#VolunteersWeekScot



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 or up to 25 with additional needs) to take part in new activities, develop new skills and build their confidence.

For further information or to apply please give us a call on 01206 505250 or email families@community360.org.uk





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](https://twitter.com/community360org)
W: www.community360.org.uk