

# GRAPEVINE

The paper for parents and carers of children with special needs in Southwark

**December  
2007**

## **In Brief**

### **Time for me**

Contact a Family Southwark's  
AGM p1

### **News and updates**

Joint Area Review p2  
Sunshine House p3

### **Speaking up and moving on**

Advocacy p4  
Transition project p5

### **Stage and Screen**

A night at the theatre p6  
Autism Friendly screenings p6

### **Advice and information**

Children's Centre drop-ins p7

### **What's on**

Lots of things to do p8



## **Time for Me**

All parents and especially those of children with additional needs, tend to put their children first and ignore their own wellbeing. In the long run this can be counterproductive for both parents and children.

That is why Contact a Family Southwark chose 'Time for Me' as the theme for its 10<sup>th</sup> AGM, held on November 16<sup>th</sup>. After a brief business meeting, CiCi Collins, personal development trainer and life coach, gave a thought-provoking presentation on how to take account of your own needs. Both parents and professionals were encouraged to get up from their seats and through games and interactive activities, show attention and care for one another. As you can see from the picture, people were really enjoying themselves!

Over lunch there was a chance to have taster sessions of massage and hand reflexology. A number of stalls gave out information on healthy living and leisure activities.

Contact a Family Southwark's Annual Report for 2006/7 is now available and copies will be circulated shortly. If you'd like a copy please ring Naomi Gilbert on 020 7277 4436 or email [naomi.gilbert@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:naomi.gilbert@cafamily.org.uk)

Grapevine is produced by an editorial team at Contact a Family

**contact a family**  
for families with disabled children

incorporating  
**The Lady Hoare Trust**

Southwark Office  
020 7277 4436

# News and updates

## Joint Area Review for Southwark

Southwark is preparing for the Joint Area Review (JAR), which will happen in March and April 2008. The JAR is a single coordinated inspection of all publicly funded services for all children and young people in Southwark. The JAR will evaluate the way local services contribute collectively to the outcomes for children which include: staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

The JAR inspection team is made of inspectors from a number of different inspections bodies from across health, education, social care and others - and will focus their work on the most on the vulnerable children, such as children with learning difficulties and disabilities, looked-after children and those with a Child Protection plan.

The JAR involves various pieces of work and inspectors will be based with us for 2 weeks, starting 31 March 2008, when they will visit a variety of services and provisions across voluntary and statutory sectors. This is also when they will ask to talk to individual or groups of parents/carers and young people, as well as managers and front line staff.

If you have any questions, please contact Sophie Charro, JAR Manager

Tel: 0207 525 3950 or email: [sophie.charro@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:sophie.charro@southwark.gov.uk)

You can also find out more about the JAR at: [www.southwark.gov.uk/jointareareview](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/jointareareview)

### Respite consultation

Do you use Southwark's home-based respite service? Would you like to be involved in improving this service? Look out for your invitation to a consultation day on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008. This will be run by Contact a Family on behalf of the Children with Disabilities and Complex Needs Team.

## Jummy takes up the reins

Jummy Dawodu was appointed head of specialist child health and disabilities, Southwark children's services in July. Her role is to manage the new integrated services that have moved into Sunshine House. Until her appointment, she was locality director of Peckham and Camberwell for nearly five years. Jummy previously lived and worked in the area and is delighted to take on her new role based in Sunshine House.



Jummy said: "Moving to Sunshine House is an enormous opportunity. It's an opportunity for our children and their parents to have services delivered to them under one roof, and to have the delivery of those services really coordinated. It is an opportunity for us fully to involve service users - children and parents - in the allocation of our resources and the design of our services to them."

## Kids on the move



The KIDS Southwark Teams have just moved from East Dulwich Road and Peckham Settlement. They are now based at Gloucester Primary School, Daniel Gardens, off Sumner Road, London SE15 6ER.

Telephones and computers are still being sorted out. In the interim you can make contact via Kids London, 49 Mecklenburgh Square WC1 2NY. 020 7520 0405

# News and updates

## Sunshine House up and running

In the last issue of Grapevine, we reported that Sunshine House was about to throw open its doors. We are pleased to say that most of the services are now installed and parents and children are using the centre. Although the official opening is still to come sometime next year, Southwark PCT held a local celebration event on 15<sup>th</sup> November. This was an 'unofficial' opening for parents, children and local professionals. I was very keen to attend as my last visit had been at the topping out ceremony when the building was a mere concrete shell.

A good spread was laid on for us and I was able to catch up both with families and with professional colleagues. It is certainly going to be very useful having so many different services under one roof. Mee Ling Ng, Chair of Southwark PCT, had hot-footed it from Buckingham Palace in order to be there. (She had just received an MBE). She thanked many people in her speech, but most importantly the Parents' Council and the other parents, children and young people who had been involved in helping shape the interior design and the artwork.



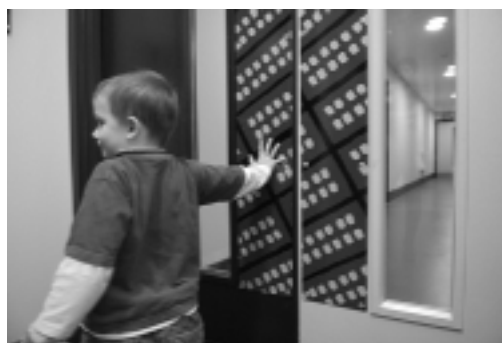
A team of Sunshine House staff then led batches of people in guided tours around the building, from the basement to the fifth floor. The state of the art facilities include a gym, activity room, sound proofed room for hearing

impaired children as well as the expected consulting rooms. On the top floor is a suite of meeting rooms with stunning views over the rooftops of Camberwell.

As befits its name, Sunshine House is far from being a cold and clinical place. Thanks to Guy's and St Thomas' Charity, artwork was commissioned for the new building and forms an integral part of the design.

There are two main strands to the artwork. The Dutch artist Milou van Ham has created a series of sculptures based on words and sounds. These are in the open spaces of the building. Near the gym look out for the sound words 'buzz', 'boo' and 'whheeee' or, if these are too noisy, 'shhhhhh'. In the entrance hall the words are on the theme of hiding and finding. Look closely to see SHOW, COVER, CLEAR, LOVE, OPEN and SECRET spelt out in the letters hanging from the ceiling.

Jacqui Poncelet, a local artist, has used some of the architectural features of the building in her work. Look out for the sideways bricks by the entrance and the small brick motifs on the walls. Jacqui's brightly coloured door plates serve as markers to help children find their way around.



As well as these, there's lots more to look for, talk about and interact with. Next time you visit, keep your eyes open.

Obviously with a new building and people beginning to work together, things may take time to settle down. Why not write to Grapevine with your views and those of your children?

*Lesley Black, Contact a Family*

*Photographs by Richard Bailey, Left – Entrance hall sculpture; above – door plate art*

# Speaking up and moving on

## Cambridge House Advocacy Team Child and Young Person Advocate

We are an independent service working with children and young people up to the age of 19 years living in Southwark. We may be able to help if your child or young person needs someone to:

- Support what they want to say
- Help secure their rights
- Represent their interests
- Involve them in decisions that affect them
- Write reports or letters on their behalf

This might be to do with school, college, leisure, travel, housing or health.

If your child or young person is not able to express what they want we can still work with them through non-instructed advocacy processes.

- We do not persuade clients to make certain decisions or suggest they should agree with others
- We do not decide what is in someone's best interests
- We do not mediate or counsel
- We do not offer befriending support

If you think your child or young person would like an advocate to work with them contact:

Linda Cleverly  
Cambridge House Advocacy Team  
131 Camberwell Road,  
London, SE5 0HF

lcleverly@ch1889.org  
020 7358 7007

### Transition Workshop

Contact a Family is planning a Transition event in the spring for parents of teenagers. More details in the next Grapevine.

## Where next?

Many of the families who joined Contact a Family Southwark in its early years when their children were young, now have teenagers who are fast turning into young adults. Once children's services end at age 19, it can be hard for parents to know where to turn. It's good to be able to highlight two particular services that bridge the divide. On the next page you can read about 3 Cs transition service which works with young people aged 15-21 and their families.

Below are details of a new information drop in run by Southwark Carers. Southwark Carers defines a carer as "someone who looks after a relative or friend who is frail, disabled or ill." That includes parent carers, whatever the age of their children.

If you are the parent of a teenager with additional needs, you may want to think about joining Southwark Carers if you haven't done so already.

## Southwark Carers information drop-in



**When?** Every Wednesday 3pm to 5 pm

**Where?** The Rainbow Room, Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road SE5 0HF.

This is a good opportunity to:

- Use the library and meet our information worker
- Find out about our services and register with us as a carer
- Make an appointment to see one of our workers for advice or advocacy

To find out more, ring 020 7708 4101 or email [info@southwarkcarers.org.uk](mailto:info@southwarkcarers.org.uk)

# Speaking up and moving on

## Three Cs Transition Project

Helping teenagers move on to adult life can be a struggle, especially if your son or daughter has special needs or a disability. Too often, once they leave school or college, young people are left without any support. They sometimes become more reliant on their parents at a time when other young people are increasing their independence and moving away from home.



A new project in Southwark may be able to help. This is run by 3Cs, an organization that has a long track record in supporting people with learning difficulties or mental health problems.

The aim of the project is to support young people from the age of fifteen to twenty one and their families/carers to make a smooth transition from children's and educational services in to adult services using Person Centred Planning and its principles. Young people will be helped to think about what they want out of life and then given the tools to achieve it by signposting, direct support or co-ordinating services. The plan might relate to things like going to college, getting work, leisure activities or leaving home. The young person will be at the centre of the planning, but families will also be heavily involved.

The project will particularly target the group of young people who are unlikely to meet the criteria for social services adult disability teams. This group may seem to function fairly well but still remain very vulnerable and may need help to live independently.

If you are interested in the project, contact Hassan Fahri at 3Cs on 020 8269 4340

email: [hassan.@threecs.co.uk](mailto:hassan.@threecs.co.uk)  
[www.threecs.co.uk](http://www.threecs.co.uk)

## Travel training

One of parents' main anxieties as children get older is how to increase their independence whilst ensuring they stay safe. Disabled children are often more vulnerable than their peers so may be denied the opportunity to learn to travel independently. Some parents would like to train their children to travel safely on their own but are not sure how to go about it.

Help is at hand in the shape of a new booklet written and produced by Southwark Parent Partnership. This has useful tips to set you on your way. To get a copy, ring Parent Partnership on 020 7525 2886/2866 or call in at John Smith House to collect a copy



## Resources for transition

### Preparing for adult life



Contact a Family UK \*have just issued a new version of their factsheet on Preparing for Adult Life and Transition. If you would like a copy, please ring Contact a Family Southwark on 020 7277 4436 or Contact a Family National helpline on 0808 808 3555.

### Progress magazine

This is published 3 times a year and is aimed at 13-15 year old with additional needs and their parents. In each issue there's information on education, advocacy, employment, housing, money, holidays, social life, mobility and legal help. Every issue also has its own particular focus which this time is education. Contact a Family has copies of the current issue and some back issues. Please get in touch if you would like one. You can also view it online at: [www.progressmagazine.co.uk](http://www.progressmagazine.co.uk)

# Stage and screen

## A night at the theatre!

On a very stormy evening on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> of July I was very kindly invited by Mei Si from Contact a Family to attend the launch party for the Mousetrap Theatre Project (formerly the Mousetrap Foundation). After dodging the ominous weather my daughter and I met Mei Si in the Cambridge Theatre Saloon in Covent Garden, which was very sticky due to the humidity outside. I grabbed an obligatory glass of wine and Sadie had some orange juice before the speeches were made.

The Mousetrap Theatre Project is a charity that tries to reach the most disadvantaged families in order to give them a night out at a discounted price. There is a range of shows for families to see. You can choose from 3 different shows and they will do their best to give you your first choice. Although applications for this year are now closed, Mousetrap Foundation runs a similar scheme every year so try next year if you have not applied before.

Most of the shows are mainstream musicals at West End theatres. It may be worth calling Mousetrap to find out further information about each show, in order for you to make a judgement on which show may suit your child's special needs. For example, you may want to find out if the lighting and the sound would be too overwhelming for children with sensory needs, or perhaps if the theatre is accessible for wheel chair users...etc.

I also think it would be a good idea if parents and carers get in touch with the charity individually to tell them about their child's disabilities because I don't think there is enough for children with sensory disabilities or attention disabilities and I think their charity should reach out to children with all types of disabilities and they need to be made aware of this. I raised the issue of sensory disabilities in the question and answer session but feel there is definitely a need for more awareness on their part.

After the launch party we were given complimentary tickets to see *The Lord Of The*

*Rings* at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane just round the corner. It was a fantastic show and I would urge anyone who hasn't seen this musical to go and see it. It is a real feast visually and sonically and the cast seemed to have boundless energy. I was truly amazed. We thoroughly enjoyed the night out.

*Elizabeth Trescher, parent*

## Critics needed

Are you and your family going to a play, film or pantomime over the Christmas holidays? Why not write and tell us about it or send us a picture? We'd especially love contributions by children and young people.

Sharpen those pencils now!

## Autism friendly screenings

Picturehouse cinemas have some autism friendly screenings coming up in the Christmas holidays. The lights are turned up slightly and the sound turned down. It's also fine for children to move around if they need to.

### Greenwich Picturehouse

ENCHANTED (2007, PG, 107 min)

11.00am, Saturday 15 December

10.30am, Saturday 22 December

### Ritzy Picturehouse, Brixton

BEE MOVIE (2007, U, 92min)

11am, Thursday 27  
December



Tickets for all screenings are £2.50 per person  
(No concessions or free tickets for carers)

Call 08708 505 703 or visit  
[www.picturehouses.co.uk](http://www.picturehouses.co.uk) to book online

# Advice and information

## Children's Centre advice sessions

Contact a Family is running regular advice sessions in Children's Centres for parents who have children with additional needs. There's no need to book, but feel free to ring the office first to make contact if you want.

### Walworth and Borough & Bankside

Coin St Family and Children's Centre

10-12 every **Tuesday** from 15<sup>th</sup> Jan

Bishop's House Children's Centre

10-12 **Friday** 11<sup>th</sup> Jan, then on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month

### Bermondsey and Rotherhithe

Kintore Way Nursery School

9.30-12 every **Wednesday**

South Bermondsey Children & Parents Centre Tenda Rd

9.30-12.30 every **Friday**

### Camberwell and Dulwich

Dulwich Wood Children's Centre

1.30-3.30 pm **Wednesday** 16<sup>th</sup> Jan, 30<sup>th</sup> Jan, 13<sup>th</sup> Feb, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb, 12<sup>th</sup> March

Sunshine House

9.30-12.30 every **Wednesday** and **Thursday**

#### Extra - this term only

2 sessions at the Grove Nursery

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan and 20<sup>th</sup> Feb (Nutrition Workshop with Crèche)

### Peckham and Peckham Rye & Nunhead

Rye Oak School and Children's Centre

9.30-12 **Fridays** 11<sup>th</sup> Jan, 25<sup>th</sup> Jan, 8<sup>th</sup> Feb, 7<sup>th</sup> March

Nell Gwyn Nursery School and Children's Centre

9.30-12.30 every **Monday** except school holidays

## Seminar - Stroke in Children

The Sickle Cell & Young Stroke Survivors and The Stroke Association are holding a free joint seminar between 10am and 2pm on Thursday, 31 January 2008 at Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0HF. The seminar is for GPs, hospital, social services and community staff, educators and parents of children with sickle cell.

The focus will be on the particular needs of children who suffer stroke and highlight ways in which services may be better targeted to meet their needs. Light refreshments will be provided.

Contact Sandra Field, Regional Manager, The Stroke Association on 020 7940 1340 or email: sfield@stroke.org.uk

## Contact a Family library

Our bookshelves here at Contact a Family Southwark are looking rather depleted. We'd like to have them well stocked again by the time we have the official launch of our new resource room in the spring, so please check your shelves or the pile gathering dust in the corner:



**Still missing**

Amongst others, the following books or videos are still out on loan: Caring for a Child with Autism, Autism and Asperger Syndrome - Preparing for Adulthood, Martian in the Playground, Outside In, Small Steps Forward, Understanding ADHD, Dyspraxia - the hidden handicap.

Please return them so that others can use them too. We do know who has borrowed books, so expect a phone call in the New Year if we haven't heard from you.

# What's on

## Albrighton Saturday Kids' Club

*Grapevine has received the following information from the Albrighton Saturday Kids' club, which would like to include more children with disabilities.*

"We have just opened a sensory room, which will we open from 10am to 12.30pm. We have a dedicated worker for the sensory room and our saturday staff are made up of experienced play workers, nursery nurses, a teacher and a speech and language therapy student.

We welcome any families who may benefit from this resource and we would love to support any child with a disability to access our facilities. The saturday club costs £1 per session. We have cereals, fruits and other healthy food for free, a sports coach, arts and crafts for all ages, cooking lessons and more...

Our club is held every Saturday in the Albrighton Centre, Albrighton Road, East Dulwich, SE22 8AH"

For more information, contact Steve Hedger on 020 7737 6981

### Contact a Family events

Contact a Family is planning a programme of events for next term. This will include workshops, pamper days and family activities in half-term. For full details see the events flyer which will be sent out to all Contact a Family members in mid January.

We are also planning an official opening of our new resource room in the New Year.

### Gift Horse Play Club – venue needed!

Saturday morning club for children with autism aged 0-11, their families and carers

The Gift Horse Play Club is not meeting at the moment as it has outgrown its former premises and is looking for a new venue. We plan to restart as soon as we find somewhere.

For more information or if you know a suitable venue:

Contact Maureen by phone on 07726 340 407 or email: gifthorseplayclub@yahoo.co.uk

### Activities for under 5s in your area

Each locality in Southwark has lots of activities for parents and young children based in and around the new children's centres. Did you know that in Camberwell and Dulwich alone you can do activities ranging from Storytelling, Tiny gym or Twins club to Parent & toddler groups, Toy libraries or Knitting Café?

To find out what's on, drop in at your local Children's Centre. You can also ring the Family Work Team at Contact a Family on 020 7277 4436. If you are anxious about going along to an activity with a child who has additional needs, a Family Worker can make the initial contact for you or go with you the first time.

### Autism and Puberty

Southwark Autism Support will be running a workshop at Spa School on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008. For more information contact Elaine Mulligan on 020 3049 8013

Grapevine is published 5 times a year by an independent editorial group based at Contact a Family, Walworth Methodist Church, 54 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EN. It is printed by SGHMS.

Please send contributions for the February issue to the above address by 25<sup>th</sup> January or by email to southwark.office@cafamily.org.uk