

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Child and Family Consultation Service

This service offers guidance for young people and their families referred by GPs, Social Services, Schools and Health Visitors etc.

Wych Elm House, Hamstel Road, Harlow CM20 1QR
(01279) 692300 Fax: (01279) 692323

ChildLine

If you are a child or young person needing help, call the free 24-hour helpline. You can contact ChildLine about anything – no problem is too big or too small. You don't have to give your name. Unless you dial another number after calling ChildLine, the next person who uses that phone could find out who you called by pressing the redial button. So, just dial a different number before you put the phone down.

0800 1111 - ChildLine

There is also a confidential Textphone service, open from 9.30am to 9.30pm weekdays and 9.30am to 8 pm at weekends.

0800 400 222 - Textphone

There is a special helpline called The Line for young people living away from home e.g. if you live in a foster home or a children's home, if you're at boarding school or you've been in hospital for a long time. This line is open 3.30pm to 9.30pm on weekdays and 2pm to 8pm at weekends.

0800 88 44 44

Website: www.childline.org.uk

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child, you can ring the free 24 hour **NSPCC Child Protection Line** on 0808 800 5000. ChildLine was incorporated into the NSPCC as a distinct service in early 2006.

Children's Legal Centre

This service gives advice and information on law and policy affecting children and young people in England and Wales. The website provides answers to frequently asked questions on the following topics:- child employment, child protection, child witnesses, contact, educational maintenance allowance, home alone, parental responsibility, refugee and asylum-seeking children, residence, school attendance and useful contacts.

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ
01206 872 466 – office line, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.
Fax: 01206 874026

Email: clc@essex.ac.uk

Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

The Centre's **Education Law Advocacy Unit (ELAU)** provides free initial advice to children and/or their parents with concerns relating to schools and Local Education Authorities. If you have a complex education law problem and need further advice and representation, the ELAU receives funding from the Legal Services Commission to help people on low incomes. The ELAU will advise if you are eligible.

0845 456 6811 – ELAU Helpline, Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm.

If you contact the ELAU by email at nel@essex.ac.uk and give them your phone number, they will try to call you back within 24 hours.

Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership

This Essex County Council service gives information to parents and carers about early years development and childcare provision throughout Essex. It can help you find a suitable childcare place, give advice on nursery education grants and tell you about additional support for children with special education needs. It also advises people thinking of setting up nurseries, out of school clubs or childminding services or getting childcare qualifications.

(01245) 440400

Email: cis@essexcc.gov.uk

Website: www.essexcc.gov.uk Click on “Learning”

Essex County Council Social Services Children’s Information Service

Social Services inspect and register local providers of childcare e.g. childminders, playgroups, day nurseries and holiday/after-school schemes. They also give advice and support on a wide range of issues relating to childcare.

Essex Social Services, Children’s Information Service, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1YS

(01245) 440400

Email: cis@essexcc.gov.uk

Website: www.essexcc.gov.uk Click on “Learning”

Information about childcare providers may also be found on www.harlow.gov.uk and on www.essexlife.org

Essex Young Person’s and Children’s Advocacy Network

This Network will give you advice on your rights and help you find an advocate. The advocate can collect information for you, make your voice heard, make sure you are treated fairly and help you make complaints.

0800 783 2187

Email: advocate@giveusavoice.com

Website: www.giveusavoice.org

Families Need Fathers

This charity provides information and support to parents, including unmarried parents, of either sex. It is chiefly concerned with the problems of maintaining a child’s relationship with both parents during and after family breakdown.

134, Curtain Road, London EC2A 3AR

020 7613 5060 - office

08707 607 496 – Telephone Helpline (6pm to 10pm week days)

Email: fnf@fnf.org.uk

Website: www.fnf.org.uk

The nearest branch meets at The Royal Steamer, Townfield Street, Chelmsford CM1 1QJ (one minute from the station) from 7.30 pm on the last Tuesday of every month. For more information, contact Neil Grice on

020 7670 1894

Email ngrice@gclimited.com

Freshwaters Contact Centre

The Centre offers a neutral meeting place where the non-resident parent, or other family member, can spend time with his/her children in a safe environment. It helps children to retain a relationship with both parents and also helps parents to retain a relationship with their children.

Venue: The Meadows Centre, Harberts Road, Harlow CM19 4DL.
Every Saturday 10am to 12 noon. No fee but donations are welcome.

Julia Spong, Administrator, Freshwaters Contact Centre, P.O. Box 6774, Harlow CM20 2WD
(01279) 450220
Email: freshwaters.cc@virgin.net

Gingerbread

This is the leading support organisation for lone parent families in England and Wales. Currently there is no branch in Harlow. It gives advice on benefits, childcare, the Child Support Agency, contact, divorce, employment, housing, maternity rights and lone parenthood. Fact sheets relating to the law in England and Wales can be printed off the website.

The Gingerbread Freephone Advice Line is open 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday on 0800 018 4318

Gingerbread, 16-17 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AA
(020) 7336 8185
Website: www.gingerbread.org.uk

Grandparents' Association

This is the only national registered charity for grandparents. It gives practical advice and information to grandparents, especially those who

- have lost or are losing contact with their grandchildren due to divorce, separation or other family problems, including grandchildren being taken into care
- are caring for their grandchildren on a full-time basis
- have childcare responsibilities for their grandchildren
- are interested in the educational and welfare needs of their grandchildren

Grandparents' Association, Moot House, The Stow, Harlow CM20 3AG
(01279) 428040 Office Telephone and Fax
0845 4349585 Advice and Information Line
Email: info@grandparents-association.org.uk
Website: www.grandparents-association.org.uk

Harlow Council Community Services

Sam's Place is a resource for families where there is a child with disabilities. It is based at Foldcroft Family Centre, Harlow. For more information, ring 420929.

You can write to them care of Mrs Christine Selby, Respect Team
Co-ordinator, Unit 10, Staple Tye, Southern Way Harlow CM18 7PJ

Home Start Harlow

This group uses volunteers to visit families in their own homes to offer support, friendship and practical help to families with children under five who are experiencing difficulties.

Sue Drake, Sewell House, 349 The Hides, Harlow CM20 3QY
(01279) 451669 Fax: (01279) 411441
Email: homestartharlow@btconnect.com
Website: www.homestart.org.uk

Kidscape

This service helps to prevent bullying and child abuse. It is for the parents, guardians or concerned relatives and friends.

Children experiencing these problems should ring Childline on 0800 1111.

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH
020 7730 3300 Fax: 020 7730 7081
08451 205 204 Helpline
Website: www.kidscape.org.uk

North Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (NEPFT)

They have useful information on their website to support parents of children with behavioural problems. Topics covered include self-harm, aggression, anti-social behaviour and conditions such as attention deficit disorder. They may also be able to offer one to one support from a parenting professional or parent group support programme. Contact Jeannie Gordon or Justine Peckston at:

Child and Adolescent Directorate, Holmer Court, Essex Street, off Headgate, Colchester,
Essex C03 3BT
01206 287288
Email: jean.gordon@nepft.nhs.uk or justine.peckston@nepft.nhs.uk
Website: www.nepft.nhs.uk

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

If you're worried about a child's safety or welfare, ring 0808 800 5000.

One Parent Families

Their Lone Parent Helpdesk and website give free confidential advice and information to help lone parents and their children. Topics covered include life changing events such as bereavement, splitting up, youngest child reaching 16, maternity, paternity and adoption, entering employment, becoming a student etc. It gives advice on benefits and tax credits and on problems with children, housing, illness or disability, legal issues, money issues, immigration and residency and violence in the family.

One Parent Families, 255 Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2LX
020 7428 5400 Fax: 020 7482 4851
0800 018 5026 Helpline number
Website: www.oneparentfamilies.org.uk/helpdesk

Parent Line Plus

This charity runs a 24 hour national freephone helpline staffed by parents to offer support to anyone parenting a child – the child's parents, grandparents, foster parents, step-parents or other close friends or relatives. It offers confidential help and information and also runs parenting courses.

0808 800 2222 Minicom: 0800 783 6783
Email: There is a confidential link from the website
Website: www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Parents' Aid (South Essex)

Parents' Aid is a charity that works with families who are receiving support from the Social Services or who are at risk of social exclusion. It helps families to overcome difficulties that might lead to a child being taken into care. It aims to help families stay together. If the children are already in care, it seeks to re-unite the family. Parents' Aid can support and guide you through a child protection investigation or court proceedings. It has campaigned for changes in the law and helped to improve local Social Services' procedures. Parents' Aid offers telephone advice to Harlow residents and there is also useful information on its website.

Parents' Aid, 11 Sonters Down, Rettendon Village, Chelmsford CM3 8EU
(01268) 763631

Website: www.parents-aid.org.uk

ParentsCentre

This website focuses on all the important issues facing parents, from choosing a school for your child to dealing with bullying, from homework tips to safe internet links. It works together with Directgov- the government's official online resource.

www.parentscentre.gov.uk

Pre-School Learning Alliance

This educational charity specialises in the early years. It offers advice and support to parents and people setting up and running pre-school groups.

Eastern Region Head Office, Pre-School Learning Alliance, Ground Floor, Century House, Market Street, Swavesey, Cambs CB4 5QG
(01954) 232327

Website: www.pre-school.org.uk

Rainbow Services Playbus

This is a free service offering toys, games and activities for families with young children. The bus is open from 3.15 to 4.30 pm as follows:-

Mondays	Potter Street
Tuesdays	Brocklesmead
Wednesdays	Northbrooks
Thursdays	The Stow
Fridays	Summers

For more information call Rainbow Services on 01279 308153.

Sure Start Harlow Children's Centres

Sure Start is a government programme that aims to make life better for pre-school children, parents and communities by bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support.

For the Staple Tye area

The Tree House Children's Centre, Parnall Road, Harlow CM18 7NG
(01279) 436284 Fax: (01279) 435199

www.surestart.harlow.org

For the Hare Street and Town Centre area

The Meadows Centre, Harberts Road, Harlow CM19 4DL
(01279) 773900 Fax: (01279) 773932

Toy Library (Sure Start Tree House Children's Centre)

The Toy Library has a wide range of good quality toys suitable for young children of all ages and abilities. It offers parents and carers a friendly environment in which to stay and play with their children and choose items to borrow. It is **only** for families and groups who live near or are based near the Sure Start Children's Centre in the Staple Tye area. There is no Toy Library at the other Sure Start Children's Centre in Harlow.

Jacky Kelly, Toy Library Project Co-ordinator, The Tree House Children's Centre, Parnall Road, Harlow CM18 7NG

(01279) 772620

Direct Line

(01279) 436284

Tree House Centre main line