

# Welcome

This is the first edition of what we hope will be a quarterly newsletter to inform staff working within the health economy in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire of the childcare provisions and services that are available to them.

Since the creation of the NHS Childcare Strategy almost 3 years ago, considerable funding has been poured into childcare and much work has been done within Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire to enable staff to manage their childcare and enhance their work/life balance. Workplace nurseries have been and still are being built; funding has been put into holiday playschemes to provide fees at reduced rates; along with many other new childcare initiatives.

If anyone has any queries relating to childcare, you are welcome to contact any of the childcare co-ordinators listed below, who will be happy to help, in any way they can.

## CONTACTS

### Childcare Co-ordinators across Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire:

**Barbara Leon-Hunt**, Childcare co-ordinator for West Hertfordshire, based at Watford General Hospital, Tel: 01923 217356 Mob: 0788 795 2086.

Email: [barbara.leonhunt@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:barbara.leonhunt@whht.nhs.uk)

**Melanie Stapleton**, Assistant childcare co-ordinator for West Hertfordshire

Email: [melanie.stapleton@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:melanie.stapleton@whht.nhs.uk)

**Annette Bailey**, Childcare co-ordinator for East & North Hertfordshire, based at QEII Hospital, Welwyn Garden City. Tel: 01707 365424.

Email: [Annette.Bailey@nhs.net](mailto:Annette.Bailey@nhs.net)

**Caroline Woodhams**, Childcare co-ordinator for East & North Hertfordshire, based at Lister Hospital, Stevenage.

Tel: 01438 781702.

Email: [Caroline.Woodhams@nhs.net](mailto:Caroline.Woodhams@nhs.net)

**Doreen Housden**, Childcare co-ordinator for Luton & Dunstable, based at Luton & Dunstable Hospital. Tel 01582 718150.

Email:

[Doreen.housden@ldh-tr.anglox.nhs.uk](mailto:Doreen.housden@ldh-tr.anglox.nhs.uk)

**Joanne Webster**, Childcare co-ordinator for Bedfordshire, based at Bedford Hospital. Tel: 01234 355122 ext 2035, Email:

[Joanne.Webster@bedhos.anglox.nhs.uk](mailto:Joanne.Webster@bedhos.anglox.nhs.uk)

## NURSERIES

### WEST HERTFORDSHIRE

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust have appointed TLC (Tender Loving Childcare) Ltd as their childcare provider who are able to offer a flexible childcare service to NHS staff who need it.



*The official opening on 27 June 2003*

#### Open Now

**Watford General Hospital** - The new nursery based at Watford, run by TLC, opened in July this year.

They have 46 places and take babies from 6 weeks to 5 years old. For further information, please contact the nursery on 01923-236801

**Opening hours:** 7am - 7pm Mon - Fri, and bank holidays where required  
**Fees:** There are reduced fees available for all NHS staff

**Mount Vernon Hospital** - There is a nursery run by Child & Co on the MVH site which offers a limited number of places to WHHT staff at a reduced rate. For more information please call 01923 826111 ext 4141.

#### Nurseries planned

Building has now started on the **St Albans City Hospital** site. This will create a 48-place nursery, which will replace the existing nursery on that site. The opening is anticipated to be March 2004.

Once the land transfer has taken place (hopefully within the next few months) TLC are planning to build a 96 place nursery on land at the rear of **Hemel Hempstead General Hospital**, to incorporate a 24-place holiday play scheme. It is hoped that completion will be in time for summer 2004.

### EAST AND NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust have appointed Child Base to run their nurseries which will both open from 7am - 7pm, offering flexibility to those NHS employees that need it.



#### Open Now

The new 95 -place nursery based at **QEII Hospital**, Welwyn Garden City opened in May this year and is run by Child Base Nurseries. It is open from 7am - 7pm, Monday-Friday and subsidies are currently available for all NHS staff. For further information call Rachel Melvin, Nursery Manager on 01707-326001 or Annette Bailey, Childcare Co-ordinator on 01707 365424.

#### Nurseries planned

90- place nursery at the **Lister Hospital** in Stevenage expected to open early in 2004. For further information please contact Caroline Woodhams (Childcare Co-ordinator) on 01438-781702.

### LUTON AND BEDFORDSHIRE

#### Open Now

**Luton and Dunstable Hospital** - Seabrook nursery is an 88-place Nursery, run by Childbase and located on the hospital site. Open 7am to 6pm, Mon to Fri - discounts and subsidies are available to NHS staff using the nursery. For more information, please contact the nursery direct on 01582-490555 or Doreen Housden (childcare co-ordinator) on 01582-718150.

**Bedford Hospital** - On-site 58-place nursery managed by Bramley's. It is open from 7am - 6pm Mon-Fri - please contact Joanne Webster on 01234-355122 ext 2035 for more information.

# Maternity Drop-in Coffee Mornings

West Hertfordshire Trusts have recently set up maternity mornings where anyone expecting a baby or on maternity leave is welcome to drop in for a cup of coffee and a chat. Representatives from various organisations will be available to give out information on all aspects of childcare, including nurseries, childminders, money advice, and baby massage! Details of the sessions are as follows:

## **Tuesday 28th October**

Watford General Hospital

## **Wednesday 3rd December**

Hemel Hempstead General Hospital

## **Tuesday 13th January**

St Albans City Hospital

## **Wednesday 25th February**

Harperbury Hospital, Radlett

If anyone is interested in coming to one of the sessions, please contact Barbara or Mel on 01923 217356 at least one week before the date of your choice.

These sessions will also be arranged in the near future in other areas in Hertfordshire and also Bedfordshire. Watch this space....

# CHILDREN'S INFORMATION SERVICES

If you are looking for information about childcare, leisure, or Early Years, there is a Children's Information Service in each area that can help you. The numbers are as follows:

For Hertfordshire, contact Young in Herts on 01438 737502

For Luton, call 01582 548888

For Bedfordshire, call 01234 228229

**Childcare Link** - 0800 0960296 The Free phone service will direct you to your local Children's Information service who will provide information on childcare and early education options. The lines are open 6 days a week 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-12pm Saturdays. You can also visit the Childcare Link website at [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk).

# USEFUL INFORMATION

## TAX CREDITS HELPLINE

For information on Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit either call 0845-300 3900 or visit [www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/taxcredits](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/taxcredits)

## KIDS' CLUBS NETWORK

Information about out of school clubs and holiday schemes in your area. Tel 0207-512-2100 or [www.kidsclubs.co.uk](http://www.kidsclubs.co.uk)

## NATIONAL CHILDBIRTH TRUST

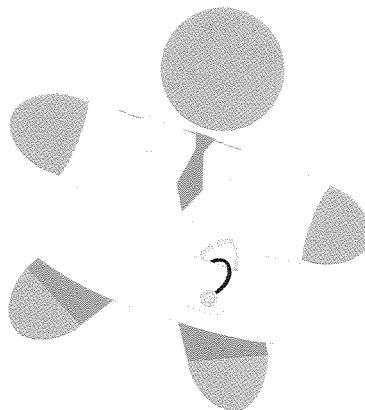
Provides information and support on all aspects of pregnancy, birth and early years parenting.

NCT Helpline - 0870 444 8707 or visit [www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com](http://www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com)

## PARENTS AT WORK WEBSITE

A very useful website with all sorts of information on many aspects of parenting for parent and employer alike.

[www.parentsatwork.org.uk](http://www.parentsatwork.org.uk)



# National Surestart Month

June was the month that childcare was celebrated all across the country and some childcare co-ordinators were able to promote it within their own trusts.

**Doreen Housden** held an art competition for the children of all NHS staff at the Luton & Dunstable Hospital.

First prizes went to the following children:

## 5 and under

*Cedony Chauhan (age 4)*

## 6-9 yrs

*Hannah Hobbs (age 7)*

## 10-14 yrs

*Adele Rankin (age 14)*

An art competition was also held for West Hertfordshire employees and prizes were awarded at the open day for the new nursery at Watford General Hospital, where they also had an entertainer.

## First prizes went to:

## 5 and under

*Sareena Verma (age 4)*

## 6-9 yrs

*Miriam Schechter (age 8)*

## 10-14 yrs

*Thomas Parry (age 9)*

# WHAT'S NEXT?

Trusts in West Hertfordshire are currently exploring the possibility of providing emergency childcare cover for staff when their childcare breaks down for whatever reason. They are hoping to employ 'mobile nannies' who would be based in the hospital nurseries, but would be on call to go to the child's home when called upon. Hopefully more information will be available in the next newsletter.

Your childcare co-ordinators need to find out from you what type of childcare services or facilities you would like the NHS to help you with. Time has lapsed since the last childcare survey was conducted and new provisions have opened since then too. We hope to send out a brief childcare survey sheet in November and on analysing the information given to us, we will do our best to ensure that we look into providing the kind of services that you need.