



## How are Children & Young People doing in NI?



Northern Ireland Outcome Monitoring Report with Trends 2017 – 24/25

### Improving Outcomes



Multi-agency Information to Support Integrated Planning for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland – April 2025

## New Report Highlights Changing Picture for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland.

The **Northern Ireland Outcome Monitoring Report 2017–2025**, released today by the Children's Services Planning Team on behalf of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), presents the most comprehensive picture to date of how children and young people are faring across eight key outcomes, drawing together multi-agency data from health, education, justice and social care.

- **Fewer children, but growing need**
- **Health gains offset by emerging concerns**
- **Rising disability and mental health pressures**
- **Education: strong attainment, but attendance challenges**
- **Safeguarding, care and stability – the highest number of looked after children since records began under current legislation**
- **Poverty and inequality persist**

The report will directly inform the development of the NI Children's Services Plan 2025-2028.

If you have any information you would like to share across our Locality Planning Group members in Belfast please email:

[LocalityPlanning@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:LocalityPlanning@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

# AUTISM, MENSTRUATION & MENTAL HEALTH

Autistic women's health has been overlooked for too long. Experiences of menstruation, hormones, pregnancy and menopause have been misunderstood, dismissed or never fully recognised, leaving autistic women to navigate complex changes without the language, support or space to be heard.



**THURSDAY  
28<sup>TH</sup> MAY  
09:30-13:00**  
LOUGH NEAGH DISCOVERY CENTRE  
Craigavon, BT66 6NJ



This event brings together lived experiences and research to create something different: a space where autistic women's voices are centred, not questioned. Save the date, scan the QR code and join the conversation!



This event will explore the impact hormones can have across the lifespan for autistic girls and women—from puberty and menstruation to pregnancy, menopause and mental health.

Bringing together research, medical insight and lived experience, this promises to be an informative, supportive and thought-provoking morning.

## Guest Speakers

### •Dr Alison Mackenzie

A leading academic in Philosophy of Education at Queen's University Belfast, specialising in inclusion, epistemic injustice and inequality, with a particular focus on how marginalised voices are often unheard.

### •Christine Doyle

Author of *HormoneFull not Hormonal*, psychotherapist, community facilitator and late-identified autistic woman, bringing both professional and lived experience.

### •Claire Collins

Sharing her personal journey and an honest, relatable account of navigating hormonal changes as an autistic woman.

### •Dr Lisa Neligan

Clinical Lead GP at Kingsbridge Women's Clinic, offering expert medical insight into women's health and hormones.

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>28th</b>	<b>May</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1:00pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon</b>		

Please register by scanning the QR code on the attached poster or by emailing [sharon@bolstercommunity.org](mailto:sharon@bolstercommunity.org).

# Understanding Endometriosis



Awareness supports informed conversation

Sinn Féin MLAs Deirdre Hargey and Órlaithí Flynn are hosting an event to highlight the shocking wait times for an endometriosis diagnosis here in the North. Endometriosis is a chronic, incurable condition affecting 1 in 10 women. Many are forced to wait almost 10 years for a diagnosis, living in severe pain with little or no support.

This event will provide insight into this devastating condition and offer information on the support available to those affected. We are calling on the Health Minister to take urgent action and support the launch of the petition, End the Endo Wait, which is calling for a maximum diagnosis time of 6 months.

 **SHAFTESBURY COMMUNITY & RECREATION CENTRE**

 **SATURDAY 23 MAY**

 **11AM - 1PM**

**PETITION**

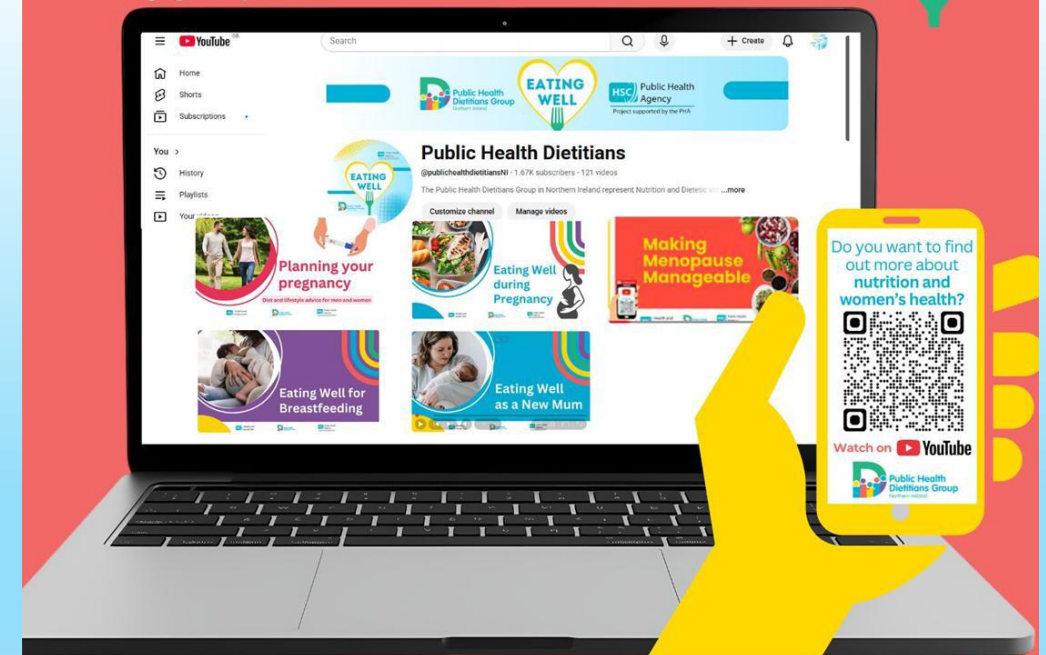


[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLVutsY\\_gd5AZJ1I\\_tjHH843RiTnQw\\_kabg](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLVutsY_gd5AZJ1I_tjHH843RiTnQw_kabg)

## May is Women's Health Month

Eating well is essential for women at every stage of life.

Our free videos on YouTube may be useful for you or your service users - whether it's forming healthier habits for life, planning for pregnancy, breastfeeding or managing menopause.





Pilgrim Trust

# A youth-led event through the lens of young women's mental health and wellbeing

Thursday 11th June, 12-4pm, at W5 at the SSE Arena

Lunch provided and parking costs covered

## What's happening?



Short Film Launch



Interactive Activities



Open Discussions



Networking & Connections

## SIGN UP NOW

[Young Women's Champions Group Event](#)

THE VOICES OF

**YOUNG WOMEN**

A showcase of 4 years of Pilgrim Trust Funding



# WE NEED YOU!

## SHARE YOUR VOICE. SHAPE THE FUTURE.

Help us make the **Peer Champion Harberton** programme even better by filling in our quick survey. Your opinion matters!

leading through **inclusion**



every voice **matters**



leading change **together**



Be a **Peer Champions**

## TAKE 5 MINUTES MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE!

## THANK YOU

FOR SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH COMMUNITY!



The Public Health Agency, together with HSCTs, will be running a Mental Health Awareness Campaign ***Feeling Anxious?*** The campaign will run from 10<sup>th</sup> September – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2026.

**We need your support to amplify this important campaign in your organisation, workplace and community!**

This campaign is aimed at our adult population.

Key messaging for this year's campaign will be:

- It's normal to feel worried or anxious
- There are things that you can do might help when you're feeling worried or anxious
- Calming skills can help when you experience these feelings
- There are Apps that can support you to manage anxiety
- If you've tried to manage your anxiety and you aren't feeling better, talk to your GP and tell them what you've tried.
- Help and support is available. [www.mindingyourhead.info](http://www.mindingyourhead.info)

You can support and raise awareness of the campaign in different ways including:

- Share the campaign messages using the campaign resources and tools with your audience
- Promote the campaign messages in your buildings and online via social media/websites
- Host an event using 'calming skills' – further information will be provided in the campaign pack
- Encourage people to practice the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing

A small selection of physical campaign materials will also be available. Materials will include:

- A3 Posters x 4 (2 of each type)
- A5 Leaflets x 50
- Minding Your Head Wallet Cards

We are also hoping to provide a small selection of Minding Your Head promotional items within each pack.

**Please complete the following form to register your interest in receiving digital and physical resources to support this important campaign:**

[Registration of Interest to receive an Autumn Mental Health Campaign Resource Pack – Fill in form](#)

Please note that the **deadline for registering your interest is 5pm on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June**

# PEACE of Mind

empowering young minds, building resilience

A FREE, cross-community wellbeing and personal development programme for young people aged 11–25 in Northern Ireland and the border counties.

For more than six decades, Inspire has supported people across our communities with person-centred mental health services.

That experience sits at the core of PEACE of Mind, shaping a programme designed to meet young people where they are and respond to the challenges they face today.

Our commitment to supporting people and their wellbeing guides every element of the programme. We understand that young people need spaces that feel safe, welcoming and genuinely supportive.

PEACE of Mind gives young people the opportunity to build confidence, strengthen their emotional resilience and develop practical strategies they can use in everyday life. Through group discussions, guided activities and meaningful conversations, participants learn tools that help them navigate pressures, relationships and personal challenges in a healthier, more grounded way.

At its heart, PEACE of Mind is about empowering young people to feel seen, supported and capable and giving them the skills to move through the world with greater confidence and connection.

Click the bullet points below to learn more about the elements that make up PEACE of Mind.

- Programme Overview
- Bespoke Programme Options
- Peer Facilitation
- Building Resilient Young People
- Participant Testimonials

## PEACE of Mind Programme Overview

We support young people aged 11–25 across Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland to build resilience, confidence and emotional wellbeing.

We provide a safe, inclusive, welcoming and accessible space where young people can access professional guidance on a wide range of topics and challenges, including:



### How it works

PEACE of Mind is delivered through six in-person sessions, each 1–2 hours, facilitated by trained mental health and youth-work professionals. Sessions combine guided discussion, practical skill-building and reflective activities that help young people understand themselves, develop coping strategies, build resilience, strengthen relationships and navigate online spaces safely.

Groups are capped at 10 to maintain a supportive environment, and the youth-led approach ensures the content is relevant and engaging while your organisation benefits from a structured, professionally managed wellbeing programme that complements existing support.

# PEACE of Mind

empowering young minds, building resilience

## Tailor the Programme to Your Group

Our PEACE of Mind programme can be tailored to match your group.

We know you and your staff team work in all sorts of settings, so our sessions are intentionally designed to be flexible, adaptable, and easy to weave into your existing structure.

### Whether you're working with:

- A sports team who thrive on teamwork and routine
- A youth club that needs energisers and bite-sized activities
- School-based wellbeing groups
- Faith-based or community settings

We can tailor our PEACE of mind programme to suit the young people in front of you.

### How do we personalise PEACE of Mind?

- Adapting language and examples to match your group
- Swapping activities to suit energy levels or abilities
- Re-framing lessons with themes your group cares about
- Blending activities with your existing programme goals

### How we support you

Our team can help create a version of the programme that feels authentic, achievable, and aligned with the needs of your young people, no matter your setting.

## Growing the Next Generation of Youth Leaders

At the end of the six week programme, young people are invited to take the next step by joining our Peer Facilitation programme, an optional pathway that allows those who are interested to continue developing their leadership skills and play a more active role within future PEACE of Mind groups.

The Peer Facilitation pathway equips young people with the confidence and practical skills to co-lead sessions alongside trained staff, strengthening your organisation's capacity while nurturing future youth leaders.

Across four focused sessions, participants develop core facilitation abilities such as active listening, group management, setting boundaries, and responding calmly to challenges.



## Equipping Your Team to Support Young People's Wellbeing

Our Building Resilient Young People programme provides staff and volunteers with practical, accessible tools that strengthen their confidence when supporting young people.

Designed specifically for youth-work environments, the training builds a clear, youth-friendly understanding of what mental health really means and equips your team to recognise early signs when a young person may need support.

Through creative, strengths-based activities, participants learn how to open up tricky conversations, nurture emotional resilience and create safer, more responsive group environments.

This training is grounded in years of frontline experience, ensuring your team benefits from approaches that have been tried, tested and trusted across youth settings.



## PEACE of Mind Programme Overview

The true value of PEACE of Mind is best demonstrated through the voices of the young people who have completed the programme.

Their feedback highlights the positive changes they experienced and the skills they took forward into their everyday lives.

These testimonials offer a window into that journey.

## Ready to Create Something Meaningful for Your Young People?

Bringing PEACE of Mind to your setting is more than just running a programme, it's investing in a space where young people feel seen, supported and empowered to grow.

Our team is ready to work alongside you to create sessions that genuinely speak to the needs of your group, strengthen your existing provision and offer something meaningful for the young people you care about.

If you're ready to take the next step, we'd love to hear from you!

Let's start a conversation about how we can shape PEACE of Mind together and create a positive impact that lasts long after the sessions end.

Get in touch with our team to register your interest

Freephone - 0808 189 0036

[peaceofmind@inspirewellbeing.org](mailto:peaceofmind@inspirewellbeing.org)



# Free Mental Health Programme for Young People in Northern Ireland



THE  
**CHANGING LIVES  
INITIATIVE**  
FLOURISH & THRIVE

Are you a parent or carer of a child aged 6-12 years who shows ADHD type behaviours?

The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive invite parents to join our **Parents Plus Programme**

Do you live in Southeastern HSC Trust, Belfast HSC Trust or Northern HSC Trust?

- An 8-week evidence-based course designed to support families with behaviour, attention, and emotional challenges.
- This programme will run during May/June with AM & PM online slots available.

A formal diagnosis is not needed

To get started:

1. email [info@changinglives.ie](mailto:info@changinglives.ie) or call 02895 900378
2. We will fill out a short Expression of Interest form on your behalf.
3. A member of our team will contact you by email or phone to guide you through the next steps.

For more information, visit [www.changinglivesinitiative.com](http://www.changinglivesinitiative.com)



**PEACEPLUS**  
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



A project supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).



028 9590 0378



[Info@changinglives.ie](mailto:Info@changinglives.ie)



The Changing Lives Initiative  
Flourish & Thrive



## ADHD Information Workshop

Are you concerned about your child's behaviours?

- Easily distracted...loses interest quickly... Never sits still...acts without thinking...

**ONLINE**  
**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May**  
**7-8:15pm**  
or  
**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June**  
**7-8:15pm**

Or in person  
**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026**  
**10am - 11:30**  
**Carew Centre**  
**15 Tamar St Belfast BT4**  
**1HS**

**For Parents/  
caregivers of  
3-7 year olds**

Come along and find out more about inattentive, hyperactive or impulsive behaviours and how we can help. Free.

**For more information and to register for one workshop contact:**  
**info @changing lives.ie or Tel 028 9590 0378**



THE CHANGING LIVES INITIATIVE  
FLOURISH & THRIVE



## Attention HQ

Helping Kids Tune In and Stay On Track

Free Workshop For Parents and Caregivers

Does your child struggle to concentrate, forget instructions, or drift off easily? This free workshop explores why attention and memory can be such a challenge for some children and shares simple strategies you can use at home and school to help them stay on track.

Whether your child has a diagnosis, is on a waiting list, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use straight away.

In this workshop you can expect:

- ✓ Parent-friendly information on how attention and memory work in children's brains
- ✓ Everyday strategies to help kids focus, stay organised, and follow through

### Event Details:

📅 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026

🕒 7:30PM - 8:30PM



SCAN HERE



THE CHANGING LIVES INITIATIVE  
FLOURISH & THRIVE



## Calm & Connected

Helping Kids Understand & Manage Emotions

Free Workshop For Parents and Caregivers

Big feelings can be overwhelming—for children and parents alike. This free workshop shares ways to support kids in understanding and managing emotions, while creating calmer and more connected family life.

Whether your child has a diagnosis, is on a waiting list, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use straight away.

In this workshop you can expect:

- ✓ Clear information about how children's brains process emotions
- ✓ Strategies to help kids calm down, express feelings, and build resilience
- ✓ A focus on strengthening parent-child connections

### Event Details:

📅 4<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026

🕒 10:30AM - 11:30AM



SCAN HERE



THE CHANGING LIVES INITIATIVE  
FLOURISH & THRIVE



## Sensory SOS!

Practical Strategies for Kids Who Feel Everything

Free Workshop For Parents and Caregivers

Does your child struggle with loud noises, itchy clothes or strong smells? For some children, everyday experiences can feel overwhelming to the senses. This free workshop will help you understand why sensory sensitivities happen, what they can look like, and how they affect daily life.

Whether your child has a diagnosis, is waiting, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use right away.

In this workshop you can expect:

- ✓ Parent-friendly information on what sensory sensitives are and how they can affect children
- ✓ Practical strategies to support your child

### Event Details:

📅 4<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026

🕒 7:30PM - 8:30PM



SCAN HERE



A project supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Delivered as part of The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive



A project supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Delivered as part of The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive



A project supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Delivered by Colin Neighbourhood Partnership as part of The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive



## Social Smarts: Helping Your Child Build Meaningful Connections

Free Workshop For  
Parents and Caregivers

From playground friendships to classroom teamwork — learn how to support children who find social situations challenging.

This free workshop helps parents and caregivers understand what social skills are, how difficulties with these skills affect children's daily lives, and what can be done to help them build confidence and connection.

**Whether your child has a diagnosis, is waiting, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use right away.**

### In this workshop you can expect:

- ✓ Parent-friendly information on what social skills are and how they may look different in neurodivergent children
- ✓ Practical strategies to support your child

### Event Details:

📅 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2026

🕒 10:30AM - 11:30AM

📍 ONLINE



SCAN HERE



## Social Smarts: Helping Your Child Build Meaningful Connections

Free Workshop For  
Parents and Caregivers

From playground friendships to classroom teamwork — learn how to support children who find social situations challenging.

This free workshop helps parents and caregivers understand what social skills are, how difficulties with these skills affect children's daily lives, and what can be done to help them build confidence and connection.

**Whether your child has a diagnosis, is waiting, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use right away.**

### In this workshop you can expect:

- ✓ Parent-friendly information on what social skills are and how they may look different in neurodivergent children
- ✓ Practical strategies to support your child

### Event Details:

📅 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026

🕒 10:30AM - 11:30AM

📍 Duncairn Centre for Culture and Arts  
Duncairn Avenue  
Belfast  
BT14 6BP




SCAN HERE

## Online Workshops



June 2026

2 <sup>nd</sup> JUNE	10:30AM - 11.30AM Social Smarts Helping Your Child Build Meaningful Connections	SCAN ME 
4 <sup>th</sup> JUNE	10:30AM - 11.30AM Calm & Connected: Helping Kids Understand and Manage Emotions	SCAN ME 
4 <sup>th</sup> JUNE	7:30PM - 8.30PM Sensory SOS: Practical Strategies for Kids Who Feel Everything	SCAN ME 
10 <sup>th</sup> JUNE	7:30PM - 8.30PM Attention HQ: Helping Kids Tune In and Stay on Track	SCAN ME 
11 <sup>th</sup> JUNE	7:30PM - 8.30PM Stop! Think! Act! Helping Kids with Self-Control	SCAN ME 



THE  
**CHANGING LIVES  
INITIATIVE**  
FLOURISH & THRIVE



## Stop! Think! Act!

Helping Kids with Self-Control

Free Workshop For  
Parents and Caregivers

Does your child act before thinking, interrupt, or find it hard to wait? This free workshop explains what drives impulsive behaviour and shares strategies to build self-control and confidence.

**Whether your child has a diagnosis, is on a waiting list, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use straight away.**

**In this workshop you can expect:**

- ✓ Parent-friendly insights into impulsive behaviour
- ✓ Strategies to help kids pause, problem-solve, and make positive choices
- ✓ A supportive space to learn and share

### Event Details:

 **11th JUNE 2026**

 **7:30PM - 8:30PM**

 **ONLINE**



SCAN HERE



A project supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).  
Delivered as part of The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive

TOGETHERNESS



## Emotional health in teenagers explained

**Private online pathways for teens on wellbeing: wherever and whenever you need it**

- Includes ideas from other teens about looking after mental health in adolescence
- Find out about how the brain 'rewires' itself and how it affects your sleep, relationships and behaviour
- Gain ideas about managing stress, anxiety and other big feelings

[togetherness.co.uk/northern-ireland](https://togetherness.co.uk/northern-ireland)

Residents of **NORTHERN IRELAND**

In paid partnership with: 



For free access, use access code:

**NIFAMILIES**

TOGETHERNESS



## Understanding your child with additional needs

An online learning pathway to support emotional health and help you and your child thrive

- Understand more about childhood brain development
- Reflect on differences related to neurodivergence, disability or other additional considerations
- Find ideas for helping your child with emotional regulation
- Build confidence in reading behaviour
- Reflect on ways to look after your own wellbeing

[togetherness.co.uk/northern-ireland](https://togetherness.co.uk/northern-ireland)

Residents of **NORTHERN IRELAND**

In paid partnership with: HSC Public Health Agency



For free access, use access code:

**NIFAMILIES**

TOGETHERNESS



## Moving up to secondary school for children with additional needs

Pathway for parents or carers of children from preteen to teenager

A journey of supporting children who may be neurodivergent, have a disability or face other additional challenges as they transition into secondary school.

[togetherness.co.uk/learn](https://togetherness.co.uk/learn)



This pathway...

- Recognises the range of big emotions that parenting a child with additional needs can bring
- Offers practical tools to strengthen communication and better understand your child's needs
- Helps you understand and process these feelings to support you to care for your child

Developed by our team of psychologists, psychotherapists, and health practitioners

Residents of **NORTHERN IRELAND**

For free access, use access code:

**NIFAMILIES**

In paid partnership with: HSC Public Health Agency

Psychological services



The Neurodiversity Café offers a warm and welcoming space for parents/carers of children on the autism assessment waiting list, as well as parents/carers who have used our service before.

It gives space to pause, breathe, and focus on your wellbeing, alongside others with similar experiences.

There is also time to share information about access to other local services.

This Month's Focus: Mind and Body Wellbeing

We are pleased to welcome Maggie McKeever, who will lead a gentle yoga and mindfulness session for parents. Maggie's approach is rooted in community and trauma-informed practice, offering space to pause, reconnect, and restore in a supportive setting.

The session will take place in a calm, inclusive, and sensory-considerate environment, with refreshments provided

Date: Thursday 28th May | 2026

Time: 10:00am – 11:30am

Venue:  
Greenway Women's Centre  
19 Greenway, Belfast BT6 0DT

To book your place, please email:

[EHWBT@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:EHWBT@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



# DI&CE WORKSHOP

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June

7pm – 9.15pm

McDonald Centre

Seaview Stadium, St Vincent  
Street, Belfast, BT15 3QG

Equipping groups  
in how to be more  
inclusive of those  
with learning  
disabilities, autism  
& neurodivergent  
conditions

Ideal for  
staff & volunteers  
in community,  
youth or  
church-based  
groups

Book  
Your  
FREE  
Place



For more details, contact ROC Team  
northernireland@roc.uk.com / 02890 351020



## Free Workshop

What you can do **RIGHT NOW** to support your child  
diagnosed (or suspected) with autism and/or PDA

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 8pm - 9pm

Join us

No one needs to walk alone in their autism parenting journey

Send an email to [team@youarenotalone.community](mailto:team@youarenotalone.community) to request the  
Zoom link to attend the FREE workshop





**ADHD**  
SUPPORT • EDUCATION • ACCEPTANCE  
IRELAND

**NEURO-AFFIRMING  
STORYTIME**

Ages 6-12

**WHEN**  
Monday 29th June  
7-7:30pm | Free registration

**WITH**  
Marika Rea  
English Language Teacher & Author

The poster features a circular inset photo of Marika Rea, a woman with long blonde hair wearing a black jacket over a purple top, standing next to a stack of books. The background is white with large orange and teal abstract shapes. A trail of blue paw prints leads from the bottom left towards the circular photo.

Join author Marika Rea for a neuro-affirming storytime with Taka the Wolf 🐺

What to Expect: A cozy, inclusive 30-minute session for ages 6-12. Expect a heartwarming reading, a focus on quiet strength, and a space where being yourself is a superpower.

Written by neurodivergent author Marika Rea, Taka the Wolf is a tale of courage and belonging where neurodivergent children are the heroes of their own journey

[Neuro-affirming Storytime with Marika Rea Tickets, Monday 29 June • 6 PM - 6:30 PM UTC | Eventbrite](#)

New parent workshop



Together with  
Settled Petals



## Toilet Training for Children of Nursery/School Age

**Monday 1st June, 10.30am-12noon, online via  
Zoom**

Is your little one about to start Nursery or School in September? Perhaps they are already at school but still experiencing issues around toileting.

At this workshop we will explore some reasons which may be impacting them and respectful strategies to support them.



**Call NOW to book your place  
0808 8020 400**



## Mindset: Funded Mental Health Awareness Programme



Funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA), offered to groups of both young people (age 14+) and adults.

The programme is delivered in all Trust Areas across Northern Ireland in youth and community settings.

**Email [wellbeing@amh.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@amh.org.uk) to book today!**



**HSC** Public Health  
Agency

**action  
mental  
health**

Publication of The Prevalence of Autism (including Aspergers Syndrome) in School Age Children in Northern Ireland. Annual report 2026

Date published: 14 May 2026

The Department of Health has today published The Prevalence of Autism (including Aspergers Syndrome) in School age Children in Northern Ireland. Annual report 2026. These figures have been extracted from the Northern Ireland School Census provided by the Department of Education.

#### Key Facts and Figures:

- The estimated prevalence of autism within the school aged population in Northern Ireland was 6.2% in 2025/26.
- There was a marked difference in the prevalence rates of autism between the sexes, with males 2.3 times more likely to be identified with autism than females.
- The Northern Ireland urban population has a statistically significant higher prevalence rate of autism than the rural population.
- Using the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (MDM) ranking, in 2025/26 the rate of autism in the most deprived MDM decile was over 38% higher than the Northern Ireland average.
- In 2025/26, 19% of children diagnosed with autism did not have any special educational needs, and 65% were classified at Stage 3 of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Assessment, indicating they had a Statement of SEN.

# End Holiday Hunger

1. Email your local MLA in support of the Ending Holiday Hunger bill
2. Sign & share the petition
3. Share this graphic with #EndHolidayHunger
4. Highlight this important issue within your networks and local community



School holidays are one of the hardest times of year for the families we work with. When term ends, the free school meal ends with it, and for a lot of families, that meal was the one thing they could count on. The holidays, especially the eight weeks of the summer holidays, are a long time to have to provide healthy, nutritious meals on an impossibly tight budget.

<https://actnow.movement-action.org/p/email-mlas-support-the-holiday-hunger-payments-bill>

# Viral Trend Risks Causing Severe Burns to Children



Microwaving NEEDED Toys and Squishies  
Parents and Carers Guide

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

A viral trend is encouraging children to microwave squishy silicone toys, known as NEEDED toys or squishies, among other names (Jelly Cubes, Nice Cubes) in order to make them softer and more pliable. Often, the packaging warns against this, but children are ignoring it because online videos and trends on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube encourage them to do the opposite. The toy feels cool to the touch after microwaving, but bursts when squeezed, spraying boiling material on hands, neck and face. A child in Bristol was seriously hurt on 4th May 2026 and children in America have experienced significant burns and injuries. This has happened to children as young as seven.

*Please note - Your child does not need to have searched for this. The algorithm shows it to children based on other content they have watched.*



## IF YOUR CHILD HAS ONE OF THESE TOYS

It is natural to feel concerned, but the most important thing is to remain calm. Children are far more likely to talk to you, now and in the future, if they know they will be met with a steady response rather than alarm.

This is also a valuable opportunity. What your child sees online, from friends or from trends, does not always show the full picture or the consequences. Safety conversations are not about restricting their fun, they are about making sure they understand how to protect themselves and others.



## STARTING THE CONVERSATION

You do not need to be an expert. A relaxed, open and honest conversation is enough. A few things that can help:

- Use the toy as a natural conversation point rather than sitting them down for a formal talk.
- Tell them simply that children their age have been seriously hurt following this trend. Reality carries more weight than a rule.
- Avoid taking the toy away without explaining why as providing a reason builds trust. Removing it without understanding may lead a child to hide things from you.
- If the toy feels too firm, the manufacturer's recommendation to soften it is to knead it with your hands for a few minutes. Encourage them, or help them, to do this instead.
- If they have already seen the videos, remain calm. The algorithm does its job quietly. What matters is the conversation that follows.



## KEY POINTS TO DISCUSS...

You do not need to be an expert. A relaxed, open and honest conversation is enough. A few things that can help:

- The toy looks and feels completely normal after microwaving, the outside stays cool to the touch. But inside, it has reached temperatures as hot as boiling water so when squeezed, it bursts and dangerous hot liquid can explode.
- The injuries include severe burns, potential scarring and in some cases, a risk to eyesight. Some children have been hospitalised because of the trend.
- Remind them it could hurt anyone nearby - a friend, a sibling, whoever is in the room when it bursts.
- Online videos are designed to look like helpful tips, sometimes to get more followers. They do not always show what happens afterwards.
- If a friend suggests trying it, knowing and explaining the real danger makes it much easier for them to say no.
- If they have already tried it, or something has worried them, they are not in trouble. What matters is that they are safe.



**If your child is worried or needs help, make sure they know they can always come to you first or an adult they trust. They can also:**

- Talk to a trusted adult at school – their teacher, a youth worker or the school Safeguarding Lead or Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- Contact Childline, free, confidential and available any time
- If they have been hurt, seek medical attention straight away - call 999 immediately. Burns from this can continue to cause damage after the initial contact.

Please do not search for this on TikTok or Instagram yourself. Every search feeds the algorithm and makes this content more visible to others. For news coverage, use the links below and share this and our alert with friends and family to raise awareness.

For verified news coverage: [BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news) | [The Independent](https://www.the-independent.com)

If your child has seen these videos or even tried this trend, do not react with panic or anger. That is the response most likely to close the conversation down. Staying calm keeps the door open, and an open door to conversations with adults they can trust is what makes children safer.

## SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

Childline – free, confidential support for children and young people: 0800 1111 | [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

NSPCC Helpline – support and advice for adults with concerns about a child: 0808 800 5000 | [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)





# We See You

#CaringForChildrenWithDisabilities

Theatre at The Mill  
Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey

Wednesday 27 May 2026  
10am-2pm (Lunch Provided)

Welcome Refreshments available from 9.30am

You are warmly invited to join us for a special event dedicated to recognising parents and carers who care for children with disabilities.

Join us as we honour the love, dedication and quiet strength of these primary caregivers, many of whom support children with complex needs without recognition. Hosted by Paul Clark, this meaningful event will also provide opportunities to access practical support and connect with others who truly understand the journey.

Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey, Councillor Leah Kirkpatrick will lead a day of meaningful and empowering conversation, including a keynote speech reflecting on her experience as a parent-carer of children with profound needs and how her family navigates everyday life. Other event speakers include Sasha Gillespie, Law Lecturer at Ulster University and Alma White, Caleb's Cause. Hillcroft School Makaton Choir will also provide a special performance.

Carers are warmly encouraged to attend and are very welcome to bring the person they care for. The event is designed to be relaxed, inclusive and accessible for everyone. Accessoloo, BSL interpreters and a Sensory room will be available at the event.

Further details of the venue are available [here](#).

## Do you care for a child with a disability?

If so, you are invited to a special event at the Theatre at the Mill on Wednesday 27 May 2026 from 10am-2pm with lunch provided.

 Hosted by Paul Clark (UTV)


 The Mayor of Antrim & Newtownabbey, Councillor Leah Kirkpatrick, will share her personal journey as a parent-carer

 Guest speakers: Sasha Gillespie (Ulster University), Alma White (Caleb's Cause), Susan Walls (Contact Northern Ireland), Adenike Yisa (Parent of children with special needs)

 Special performance by Hill Croft School Makaton Choir

 Theatre at The Mill, Newtownabbey

 Wednesday 27 May 2026

 10:00am – 2:00pm (Doors open at 9.30am)

[We See you Registration - Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council](#)

Children's Law Centre

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL

## AN INTRODUCTION TO CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

VIEW OUR FULL TRAINING CALENDAR

DATE: TUES 9<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026  
TIME: 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM  
CPD HOURS: 2 HOURS (GROUP STUDY)  
FORMAT: HYBRID



Come and find out what children's rights are, their impact, and how small changes can make a real difference right now.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Delivered by:

- **Emma Murray**, Policy Officer at Children's Law Centre.
- **Julie Graham**, Youth Participation Worker at Children's Law Centre.
- **Paul Hamilton**, Training and Engagement Co-Ordinator and Children's Law Centre.

[BUY TICKETS](#)



If you are unable to book online and wish to raise an invoice or pay by another method, please contact [paulhamilton@childrenslawcentre.org](mailto:paulhamilton@childrenslawcentre.org)

Children's Law Centre

HYBRID TRAINING

## CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCES: TRAINING FROM THE EXPERTS IN CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

VIEW OUR FULL TRAINING CALENDAR

DATE: THURSDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026  
TIME: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
CPD HOURS: 2 HOURS (GROUP STUDY)  
FORMAT: HYBRID



Aimed at parents, carers, advocates and professionals who may be asked to participate—whether as part of the panel or in a supporting role—the session will provide essential knowledge and practical guidance.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Delivered by:

- **Eamonn McNally**, Senior Solicitor at Children's Law Centre.
- **Hannah Newburn**, Solicitor at Children's Law Centre.

[BUY TICKETS](#)



If you are unable to book online and wish to raise an invoice or pay by another method, please contact [paulhamilton@childrenslawcentre.org](mailto:paulhamilton@childrenslawcentre.org)

Children's Law Centre

HYBRID TRAINING

## ACHIEVING CHANGE THROUGH STORMONT: A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

VIEW OUR FULL TRAINING CALENDAR

DATE: THURS 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026  
TIME: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
CPD HOURS: 2 HOURS (GROUP STUDY)  
FORMAT: HYBRID



Navigating the political landscape at Stormont can feel daunting, but it remains one of the most effective ways to drive real-world change. This two hour introductory session delivered by CLC policy experts and an invited politician is designed to cut through the jargon and provide you with a clear, realistic roadmap for engagement.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Delivered by:

- **Fergal McFerran**, Policy and Public Affairs Manager at CLC
- **John O'Doherty**, CEO at CLC
- **Emma Murray**, Policy and Public Affairs Officer at CLC

[BUY TICKETS](#)



If you are unable to book online and wish to raise an invoice or pay by another method, please contact [paulhamilton@childrenslawcentre.org](mailto:paulhamilton@childrenslawcentre.org)

# Mental Health First Aid Training

Free 2-Day Course | Delivered in your organisation or alternative venue with lunch provided

## For Individuals

- Awareness – Recognise mental health issues & early signs
- Skills – Provide initial support & guide to professional help
- Confidence – Talk about mental health effectively
- Stigma – Help reduce stigma
- Growth – Build empathy & self-care


## For Organisations


- Work Environment – Build a supportive culture & reduce absenteeism
- Employee Support – Equip staff to support each other
- Compliance – Meet health & safety responsibilities
- Crisis Management – Respond appropriately to mental health crises
- Community Impact – Promote awareness beyond the workplace

Interested in bringing MHFA training to your organisation?

Get in touch with:

Nicola Conlon

 [nicola.conlon@boysandgirlsclubs.net](mailto:nicola.conlon@boysandgirlsclubs.net)

 07935 944761

**boys & girls clubs**  
reach : involve : enjoy : achieve

## 'OUR GENERATION' STRONGER TOGETHER

'P6 & P7 Pupils are invited to take part in a seven week OUR Generation programme in your school including a Shared Learning Event'

### WORKSHOPS INCLUDE:

- IDENTITY
- HEALTH & WELLBEING
- EMPATHY & PROBLEM SOLVING
- GROUP GAMES & ACTIVITIES
- GOOD RELATIONS & SOCIAL INCLUSION

*Fully Funded & Facilitated*



Scan the QR code  
to register an interest for  
the programmes



**boys & girls clubs**  
reach : involve : enjoy : achieve

**OUR generation**

**PEACEPLUS**  
Northern Ireland - Ireland  
Co-funded by the  
European Union | UK Government

of supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)



## IMH Lunchtime Learning

**Barnardo's: Supporting Infants and Young Children Bereaved by Suicide**  
hosted by Phil Lindsay and Michelle Scullion

**Wednesday 26th August, 2026**  
**12:00PM - 1:00PM, online**



[Lunchtime Learning August 2026 Tickets, Wednesday, August 26 • 12 PM - 1 PM GMT+1 | Eventbrite](#)



# PEACEPLUS Employability: Language Up Project

This is a free English language and community programme for people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

### Who is it for?

If English is not your first language – and you want to improve your English language skills for work and everyday life in Belfast – this programme is for you!

- ✓ Improve your English
- ✓ Find a job or training
- ✓ Meet new people and feel more confident living in Northern Ireland

**Contact  
Cathy Norris  
to find out more:**

E: [c.norris@people-1st.co.uk](mailto:c.norris@people-1st.co.uk)  
T: 07786272022



Belfast City Council



The Belfast Local Community Action Plan is supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

# Bryson PATHWAYS



## FAMILY PATHWAYS

Family life isn't always easy – but you don't have to face it alone. Family Pathways offers free, friendly support for parents and carers, tailored to your family's needs.

### We can support you with:

- Understanding your child's development ✓
- Creating healthy routines and boundaries ✓
- Helping with learning at home ✓
- Managing behaviour or big emotions ✓
- Finding the right services and support for your child ✓

**SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN YOUR HOME OR COMMUNITY**  
**FLEXIBLE TIMES THAT WORK FOR YOU**

[communities@brysonpathways.org](mailto:communities@brysonpathways.org) 07887 341873

BRYSON PATHWAYS IS MANAGED AND OPERATED BY BRYSON ENERGY

Celebrating  
25 Years of  
Odyssey



BELFAST  
GIANTS



We are beyond thrilled to invite you to an exclusive, action-packed **FREE** Dream Space camp day at W5 LIFE! 🌟

This year's summer camp runs over **multiple dates in July** as follows and is open to community groups with children **aged 8-12**:

- 📅 6th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 7th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 8th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 9th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 10th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 15th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 16th July 10:00am-2:00pm
- 📅 17th July 10:00am-2:00pm

#### Get involved this summer:

- Unleash the Fun: Get ready to dive into a world of digital adventures with Sphero Robots, Minecraft Education, and Micro:bits! Plus, let your creativity soar with awesome arts and crafts. 🚀
- Expert Guidance: Our fantastic Dream Space team will lead the way, ensuring an unforgettable and inspiring experience. 🎧
- Perfect for Ages 8-12: Tailored activities for young explorers. 📖 *(Please note, the camp is not suitable for those under 8, the team reserve the right to question ages on arrival. Exceptions can be made for the upper age limit please add a note to the registration form if you wish to bring children 12+)*

#### Important Details:

- Timing: The camp runs from **10:00 AM to 2:00 PM** on the selected dates above.
- Group Size: We need **a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 participants per group**.
- Supervision: **Community group leaders must attend to supervise**, with a minimum of 1 adult per 8 children.
- Date Selection: You must select the date(s) you wish to attend. Participants may be selected to attend multiple dates or individual dates, subject to popularity. You do not need to be able to attend all dates to be considered for the camp.
- Lunch: Please bring a **nut-free packed lunch**.
- Location: Dream Space at W5 LIFE, Odyssey Place (2 Queens Quay, Belfast, BT3 9QQ).
- Parking: We can validate your parking at W5. Just let us know your registration on arrival.
- Admission to W5: Not included, but you can add it at an additional cost per attendee.
- You must provide your own transport to and from W5 LIFE

#### Ready to Join the Adventure?

Fill out our expression of interest form to secure your spot > [Dream Space Summer Camp - Registration of Interest](https://forms.office.com/e/e67RcVit6z) <https://forms.office.com/e/e67RcVit6z> 🌟

Hurry, the form closes on **25<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 5pm**. Please note, places are limited and successful applicants will be notified shortly after the closing date.

Springboard has 5 programmes kicking off over the next few weeks and months, each tailored to young people's specific needs and interests, open to those aged **16 - 24** years from across the Greater Belfast area. Below is more information on each programme. There are four key themes underpinning the programmes: Personal development, Good Relations, Citizenship and Employability. We work in a person-centred way with young people coming from a range of backgrounds and experiences. We tailor one to one and group work support to help young people identify their needs and set goals to work through any challenges they may be experiencing.

#### **April – October 2026**

**Gamechanger** - Help young people facing barriers in life to choose their own path. Young people will receive **one to one support**, meet new people, and have opportunity to make changes in themselves and society.

**Gener8** - This programme is **youth led** and will help young people **develop skills** and figure out their own path growth. Young people will take over the running of the programme using leadership / teamwork / organisation to **develop and plan** the schedule.

**Xceler8** – Using sports as a medium young people will **identify their own leadership skills** and explore how to create positive change within their own lives and communities.

#### **June – December 2026**

**Rise - Adventure learning** programme focusing on self-growth and building resilience. The programme will help young people **gain confidence and connect** with likeminded peers using a holistic approach in new environments.

**Fuse - Creative** arts-based programme for young people who think outside the box and explore different ways of learning and collectively overcoming challenges.

Participants on all the **Journeys** programmes can benefit from:

- £8 daily incentives (eligibility criteria)
- Free Travel Card
- NOCN Qualifications
- One to One Mentoring
- Residentials and trips
- Meeting new people
- Social Action Projects

**Springboard Opportunities Limited**

**112-114 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2GX**

# 10 is Too Young Coalition launches renewed calls for increase in Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility

Tuesday 3 February 2026

At 10 years of age, Northern Ireland (NI) has one of the lowest ages of criminal responsibility in the world. Despite repeated, longstanding calls, internationally and nationally, no legislative progress has been made.

Today, the 10 is too Young coalition, published their latest joint briefing, providing the evidence for raising the age in NI to 16, with no exceptions, holding a briefing event for stakeholders and organisations on why this must be raised as a matter of urgency, and encouraging organisations to support this key change.

The group, made up of Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI), the Children's Law Centre, Include Youth, Niacro, the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) and the Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) have said that the Justice Bill presents *the* opportunity to finally deliver reform that has been promised, consulted on and supported for well over a decade. Failing to act now would mean knowingly continuing a system that does not wholly work in the best interests of our children and young people.

10 is too Young are encouraging Members of the NI Assembly to support an amendment to the Justice Bill to raise the age, with no exceptions, as a necessary, proportionate and principled reform to our justice system.



[2601 Joint Briefing - Ten is too Young - Jan 2026 \(2\).pdf](#)

- Please take a moment to watch this video to find ten reasons why ten is too young. [Ten Reasons Why 10 is Too Young - YouTube](#)
- Our new dedicated 10 is Too Young website has lots of resources you can find it here <https://tenistooyoung.com/> .
- If you weren't able to join the recent webinar hosted by Children's Law Centre on behalf of the Coalition [Ten is Too Young - The Developing Brain, Vulnerability and Criminal Responsibility](#) is available to familiarise yourself with – It is very interesting for everyone working in Niacro



We wanted to share our upcoming **ADD-NI events and training schedule**, and we would be very grateful if you could circulate this with your staff, service users, and networks.

We have a range of sessions coming up designed to support individuals, families, and professionals within the ADHD community:

**Chat & Craft Session**

Monday 11th May 2026 | 11:00am

<https://addni.org/ols/products/chat--craft-session>

**ADHD Foundations at Home: Parent Workshop**

Monday 18th May 2026 | 10:30am

<https://addni.org/ols/products/adhd-foundations-at-home>

**ADHD Training for Professionals**

Friday 29th May 2026 | 10:30am

<https://addni.org/ols/products/adhd-training-for-professionals-working-with-children-young-people--families>

**Coffee Morning**

Monday 1st June 2026 | 11:00am

<https://addni.org/ols/products/coffee-morning>

**Men's Mental Health & ADHD: Men Don't Talk Enough — Let's Start the Conversation**

Wednesday 17th June 2026

<https://addni.org/ols/products/adhd-men>

These sessions aim to provide **practical support, education, and a sense of community** for those impacted by ADHD.

These sessions aim to provide **practical support, education, and a sense of community** for those impacted by ADHD.

# Gaming or Gambling Concerns?



**Free, Confidential  
Counselling for Ages 11-17.**

Available in the Belfast & Southern Trust areas

- Talk openly about gaming or gambling habits
- Understand why they happen and how they affect you
- Build confidence, resilience, and make positive choices



Trauma-informed • Age-appropriate • Here to support you.

Group awareness sessions also available on request.

Reach out today – help is free and confidential.

 **DUNLEWEY**  
ADDICTION SERVICES

admin@dunlewey.org

 **LOTTERY  
FUND**

02890 392547

# GET CONNECTED

Come and enjoy this family friendly event!

**WEDNESDAY 1ST JULY**

**10:00 AM**

**CONWAY MILL COURTYARD**

**REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED**

## WHAT TO EXPECT:

-  INFORMATION ABOUT SPORTS TEAMS
-  DISCOVER SERVICES IN YOUR AREA
-  EXPLORE CLUBS & ACTIVITIES TO JOIN
-  INFORMATION SHARING AND NETWORKING

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME - BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!**

Come and enjoy, meet new people, and get connected.

# MEN'S GROUP

*Good food.  
Better conversation.*

A welcoming space for men to come together, talk, listen and support one another.



LAST THURSDAY  
OF EVERY MONTH



6PM



FOOD AND  
CONVERSATION

## WHY JOIN THE MEN'S GROUP?



### TALK & BE HEARD

Share, listen and connect in a safe space



### SUPPORT & FRIENDSHIP

Build friendships and support each other



### IMPROVE WELLBEING

Reduce stress, boost mental health and wellbeing



### PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Get advice and information when you need it



### GOOD FOOD, GOOD COMPANY

Enjoy great food and even better conversation



**ALL MEN WELCOME – COME AS YOU ARE.**

*Join us for good food, great chats and real support.*



028 9031 3945



play@forthspring.com



373 Springfield Road,  
Belfast, BT12 7DG



www.forthspring.com



# MAN UP

ACTIVE  
COMMUNITIES  
NETWORK

**MEN  
AGAINST  
NEGATIVE** & **UNACCEPTABLE  
POSITIONS**

**WHAT IS MAN UP?**

**MAN UP IS ABOUT SUPPORTING OUR MOTHERS,  
DAUGHTERS, SISTERS, WIVES, PARTNERS.**

**OVER THE PAST 6 YEARS 30 WOMEN HAVE DIED AS A DIRECT  
RESULT OF MENS ACTIONS**

**JOIN US FOR A CONVERSATION WHICH WILL EXPLORE THE  
ROLE MEN AND BOYS MUST PLAY IN BRINGING ABOUT AN  
END TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS.**



**28TH OF MAY 2026**



**155 NORTHUMBERLAND STREET, BT13 2JF**



**10AM-12PM**

BBQ - Playbus -  
Facepainting -  
Sensory Bus - Art -  
Ice cream and more

# Sense family fun day

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June | 11am-2pm

Belfast Hub  
34 Annandale Avenue

RSVP [grainne.gibson@sense.org.uk](mailto:grainne.gibson@sense.org.uk)

**Forthspring**  
Inter Community Group

## AUTISM SUPPORT GROUP



Support when you need it most

A welcoming, understanding space for  
parents and carers of autistic people  
to connect, share experiences,  
and access support.



LAST TUESDAY  
OF THE MONTH  
6.30PM - 8PM



OFFERING SUPPORT TO  
PARENTS AND CARERS  
OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE

### WE CAN SUPPORT YOU WITH:



Sharing  
experiences  
and advice



Emotional  
support



Information on  
services and  
resources



A safe &  
understanding  
environment



Refreshments  
& a friendly  
welcome



Everyone is welcome. Come as you are.  
Listen • Connect • Support • Belong



028 9031 3945



[play@forthspring.com](mailto:play@forthspring.com)



373 Springfield Road,  
Belfast, BT12 7DG



[www.forthspring.com](http://www.forthspring.com)





**BELFAST CITY OF SANCTUARY**

# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026**

*Join us at the Belfast City of Sanctuary AGM 2026 to reflect, connect, and shape a more welcoming Belfast!*



**The Great Hall,  
Queen's University Belfast**



**Wednesday, 03 June 2026  
10:00am - 01:00pm**

**SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO REGISTER**



[BelfastCityofSanctuary.com](http://BelfastCityofSanctuary.com)



[belfastcityofsanctuary@gmail.com](mailto:belfastcityofsanctuary@gmail.com)

ファンダム乗っ取り

# **Fandom Con**

Gaming & socialising event celebrating  
Autism & Neurodiversity



**May 23rd 2026**

12-4pm at ICC Belfast. All tickets £5

Get your ticket on our website  
[www.nowgroup.org/fandom](http://www.nowgroup.org/fandom)



Or buy at Loaf Cafe, Ewart Building, Bedford Street.

**NOW**

Fandom Con is brought to you by NOW Group

We're a **JAM Card™**  
Friendly Event

# BOXING PROGRAMME

WITH GARY ARTHURS

**YOUTH 10 - 14 YEARS**

*Train your mind.  
Build your future.*

A fun and supportive boxing programme that builds confidence, teaches skills and helps young people become the best version of themselves.



**FOCUS. DISCIPLINE. RESPECT. ACHIEVE.**  
*You've got this!*

**EVERY OTHER MONDAY NIGHT**

**7.15PM - 8.15PM**

**FORTHSPRING**  
373 Springfield Road,  
Belfast, BT12 7DG

### BOXING BUILDS MORE THAN STRENGTH

**DISCIPLINE**  
Learn focus, self-control and commitment

**CONFIDENCE**  
Build self-belief and a positive mindset

**RESPECT**  
For yourself, others and the sport

**FITNESS**  
Improve strength, stamina and overall health

**TEAM SPIRIT**  
Make friends and support one another



**BELIEVE IN YOURSELF. WORK HARD. STAY FOCUSED.**  
*The ring is just the beginning.*

028 9031 3945

play@forthspring.com

373 Springfield Road,  
Belfast, BT12 7DG

www.forthspring.com



# GARDENING GROUP

*Grow, connect,  
Thrive together.*

Join us for a relaxing and rewarding time in the garden.  
Make new friends, learn skills and enjoy the outdoors.



**PLANT CONNECT GROW**  
*All welcome*



**TUESDAYS**



**1PM - 2PM**



**ALL WELCOME**  
No experience needed!

### BENEFITS OF GARDENING TOGETHER



**IMPROVES WELLBEING**

Boosts mood, reduces stress and supports mental health



**BUILD FRIENDSHIPS & COMMUNITY**

Meet new people and enjoy spending time together



**LEARN & SHARE SKILLS**

Pick up new tips and share your knowledge



**GET ACTIVE NATURALLY**

Light exercise that's good for body and mind



**BE OUTDOORS & CONNECT**

Enjoy nature and the fresh air together



**GOOD FOR YOU. GOOD FOR OTHERS. GOOD FOR OUR COMMUNITY.**  
*Let's grow something great together!*



028 9031 3945



play@forthspring.com



373 Springfield Road,  
Belfast, BT12 7DG



www.forthspring.com



## FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

You deserve to feel safe and respected everywhere.

Look for the Safe to Be sticker.

If harassed:

- Tell a staff member
- Ask for support
- Remember: discrimination is never acceptable



## YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Share your experiences. Tell spaces what helps you feel welcome.

By speaking up, you help change the culture – from silence to action.



## KEY MESSAGES:

- Visible support
- Action against harassment
- Equal treatment for all identities
- Education on healthy relationships
- Safer public spaces



## NEED HELP?

- ▶ **Childline:**  
0800 1111
- ▶ **NSPCC Helpline:**  
0808 800 5000
- ▶ **Cara-Friend:**  
(028) 9089 0202

**JOIN US IN MAKING EVERY SPACE SAFE TO BE.**



**CREATING SAFER, MORE RESPECTFUL COMMUNITIES FOR EVERYONE**

Look for the **Safe to Be sticker** it means this space welcomes and protects LGBTQIA+ young people.

**NSPCC**  
NORTHERN IRELAND



## WHY THIS MATTERS

Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia grow from the same harmful systems as sexism and misogyny.

They feed a culture that excuses harassment and tolerates violence.

**WE ALL DESERVE TO FEEL SEEN, SAFE, AND SUPPORTED.**



## WHAT WE BELIEVE

- Every young person has the right to feel safe and respected.
- Challenging one form of harm helps prevent others.
- By promoting inclusion, kindness, and respect, we help create the kind of culture where violence against women and girls – and against anyone targeted for who they are – cannot take root.

## WHY WE NEED THIS CAMPAIGN

LGBTQIA+ young people often feel unsafe in public spaces. Uncertainty about acceptance can lead to isolation and vulnerability.

**Safe to Be aims to change that:**

- Shows allyship
- Signals safety and inclusion
- Challenges prejudice

## HOW YOU CAN HELP (BUSINESSES & SPACES)

- Show kindness
- Be open to feedback
- Don't tolerate hate
- Respect pronouns
- Check in if someone is harassed
- Display the Safe to Be sticker



**NSPCC**  
NORTHERN IRELAND



## CREATING SAFER, MORE RESPECTFUL SPACES FOR EVERYONE



*Find out more*

**NSPCC**  
NORTHERN IRELAND





**NSPCC**  
**Learning**

## Managing Allegations of Abuse

In order to ensure that children are adequately protected from abuse and harm this training aims to improve the way you respond, manage, and record allegations and concerns that have been made against staff or a volunteer within your organisation.

### Objectives:

- Understand what an allegation is and how allegations may arise
- Identify national and local guidance in relation to managing allegations of abuse
- Understand your role and responsibilities in effectively managing allegations
- Recognise your personal values and how these can have an impact
- Provide appropriate support to all those involved
- Demonstrate an awareness of the emotional dimension of safeguarding work and identify ways in which you can support staff

To apply for a place on this training, please click on the link below:

<https://ccptraining.hscni.net/Courses/Details/259>



### Course Dates

#### Course 1

20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026  
6.30pm - 9.30pm  
Online

#### Course 2

27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
6.30pm - 9.30pm  
Online



## Level 1 Adversity, Trauma & Resilience Awareness

This training course aims to raise awareness of the potential impact of adversity and trauma upon individuals, families and communities and how relationships matter in promoting resilience and recovery.

### Course Date:

28/05/26

**Time:** 10am - 1pm

**Venue:** NICVA, Belfast

To book a place, please click on the link below:  
<https://ccptraining.hscni.net/Courses/Details/258>



## ***Snack-tember is back!***

Last year, nearly **1 million children and young people** took part in our first ever *Snack-tember!*

Registration for 2026 is now open, so if you work with children and young people aged 5-16 years, in any setting, come and get involved!

**REGISTER NOW** and be the first to receive the latest updates about *Snack-tember*, and access to ALL the resources as they become available (from early May 2026 onwards).

[Snack-tember 2026 | British Nutrition Foundation](#)

## **What is *Snack-tember* all about?**

We want to improve children and young people's knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation, so that they can make and choose healthier, more sustainable snacks.

Throughout September 2026, we will be helping children and young people to:

- **Explore** better snacking
- **Try** new snacks
- **Make** their own healthy snacks

We'll have a range of resources for those teaching, or working with, children and young people aged 5-16 years. These will include activity ideas, recipes, posters and lots more!

Our aim is to help children and young people choose and make snacks that have:

- **MORE** vegetables and fruit
- **MORE** wholegrains, beans and pulses
- **LESS** saturated fat, salt and sugars

These are key contributors to healthier, more sustainable snacking!

# Funding Opportunities



**Belfast**  
City Council

The North Belfast DPCSP has a small amount of funding available again this year for groups to apply for under our 'Reactive' Project. The purpose of the project is to support groups to deliver small interventions regarding Anti-Social Behaviour or another Community Safety related issue in your community.

Projects need to benefit the local community of North Belfast and be delivered within North Belfast.

The funding is for individual projects up to a maximum of £250. Groups can apply up to 3 times this financial year.

If you have any queries or would like a copy of application and guidance email [ClearyP@BelfastCity.gov.uk](mailto:ClearyP@BelfastCity.gov.uk) or phone 07825 140523.

There are 3 things we require for each project.

- Completed application
- Social media post to promote your work and that of the DPCSP – tagging @BelfastPCSP
- Monitoring form completed at the end of project (within 10 days)

This is for projects that will deliver between now and March 2027.

# Funding Opportunities



## [Holiday Hunger Grants Eligibility Criteria | Holiday Hunger | Cash for Kids](#)

**Holiday Hunger Grants are available to organisations and service providers who support children and young people (up to and including 18 years old) that have a genuine need for support, are disadvantaged due to poverty, increase in the cost of living and face food insecurity.**

We do not accept applications from individuals for this type of grant.

This funding is specifically to provide disadvantaged children and young people who have a lack of access to **food AND activities** in the school holidays.

Projects must focus on outcomes that encourage children to eat more healthily and be more active during the school holidays.

Making an application does not in any way guarantee success and nothing should be committed to on the basis that grant may be successful.

**PCSP Grants**

**Open: 18 May 2026**

**PCSP** Policing & Community Safety Partnership  
making Belfast safer

Belfast (D)PCSPs will offer grants of between £1,000 and £3,500 for Belfast-based voluntary groups to deliver projects to improve local community safety.

Receive an application pack and register to attend an information session by emailing [PCSP@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:PCSP@belfastcity.gov.uk)

📅 Online information sessions on

- 📅 Thursday 21 May 12:30pm
- 📅 Tuesday 26 May 7:00pm

**Close: noon 5 June 2026**

# Funding Opportunities



**PEACEPLUS**  
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the  
 European Union |  UK Government

 Northern Ireland Executive |  Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland |  pobal  
government supporting communities

The PEACEPLUS Change Maker Funding Programme,  
managed by the Special EU Programmes Body

**PEACEPLUS  
CHANGE MAKER  
FUNDING  
PROGRAMME**

GRANTS OF  
**€10,000–€100,000**  
(£8,700 TO £87,000)



**TOTAL FUND: €40M / £35M**

## Who Can Apply

- ✓ Community groups
- ✓ Voluntary organisations
- ✓ Local bodies or partnerships
- ✓ Groups seeking to build cross-community or cross-border engagement

## What the Funding Supports

- ✓ People-to-people projects
- ✓ Community events, programmes or activities
- ✓ Cross-community or cross-border collaboration
- ✓ Locally designed initiatives (flexible, tailored to community needs)

Simple application process, direct support available

Guidance and one-to-one advice available

Apply now or find out more at [seupb.eu](https://seupb.eu)



**APPLY  
TODAY!**

# Funding Opportunities



CRC's Community Relations/Cultural Diversity Grant Scheme.

The CRCD grant scheme is now open and the deadline for applications is 15 January 2027 at 4pm (subject to available budget). The CRC website holds a lot of information and a pathway to the portal to be able to apply.

## Useful Links:

- Application Portal: <https://community-relations.flexigrant.com/>
- About Community Relations / Cultural Diversity Grant Scheme: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/funding-scheme/community-relations-cultural-diversity>
- Eligibility and Guidance of costs/capped rates: [CR/CD Scheme Criteria and Eligibility | Community Relations Council](#)
- CR/CD Most Frequently Asked Questions: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/crcd-most-frequently-asked-questions>

Please forward any enquiries about the scheme to Helen DiDuca [HDiDuca@nicrc.org.uk](mailto:HDiDuca@nicrc.org.uk) and Judith Hamilton [jhamilton@nicrc.org.uk](mailto:jhamilton@nicrc.org.uk)

Also, Good Relations Week takes place during 12<sup>th</sup> October– 18<sup>th</sup> October 2026.

# Funding Opportunities

## £1.5 million Local Community Ownership Fund now open

Belfast City Council's Local Community Ownership Fund is now open for Stage One Expression of Interest applications.

The Fund has been established to support groups with the acquisition of community assets or existing derelict sites for viable and sustainable community use, allowing them to invest in their areas and improve local economic outcomes.

The Stage One Expression of Interest stage will close at 12noon on **Wednesday 17 June 2026**.

Please visit [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/lcof](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/lcof) for further information on how to apply.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, projects must be able to demonstrate:

- Alignment with the purpose of the Local Community Ownership Fund.
- Delivery against any of the Local Community Ownership Fund outcomes.
- Costs of acquisition and revenue funding, used to fund the initial running costs of the project, of no more than £25,000 or 20% of the total capital funding applied for (whichever is smaller).
- Financial sustainability, with no ongoing revenue implications for the Council.
- That the asset is located within the Belfast City Council area but not located within the city centre retail core.
- The funding will not be used to purchase sites for or develop housing.
- The applicant is not an individual, sole trader or profit-making organisation.
- The applicant is a formally constituted voluntary or community group, community interest company, not-for-profit company limited by guarantee or social enterprise.
- That the applicant has good governance and is in good financial health.
- That no retrospective costs are required.
- If the asset is being released as part of the Government D1 process, then the Council will act as the Sponsoring Body

## Assistance for applicants

Information on the Fund can be found on our web page [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/lcof](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/lcof). Interested groups can complete the Stage One Expression of Interest online form on the webpage. Throughout the process, they can email [lcof@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:lcof@belfastcity.gov.uk) and staff will be available to answer any queries.

# Job and Training Opportunities

Friends of Africa are recruiting: Programme Coordinator – Refugee & Asylum Seeker Youth Support commencing September 2026. The application deadline is Friday 29th May (end of business). Please find the job description and application form via our website: <https://www.friendsof africa.org.uk/join-our-team>



**WE'RE HIRING**

**Floating Support Officer  
(Full-Time, Permanent)**

Visit  
[www.arkhousing.co.uk/vacancies](http://www.arkhousing.co.uk/vacancies)  
to apply!



7-9 Alliance Crescent  
Belfast BT14 7PL  
02890 740454  
info@wishing-well.org.uk  
www.wishing-well.org.uk

## WE'RE HIRING!

### Preschool Leader

Lead with passion. Inspire little minds.  
Make a big difference every day.

**Hours:**  
8:50am – 2:30pm  
Monday–Friday  
(Term Time, 28.5 hrs)

**Salary:**  
TBC

Caring today, shaping tomorrow.

Wishing Well Family Centre is seeking an experienced and passionate Preschool Leader to manage the day-to-day running of our preschool and deliver high-quality early years education.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lead, support, and supervise the preschool team</li><li>Plan and deliver engaging activities in line with Pre-school Curricular Guidance</li><li>Monitor children's progress and support individual learning needs</li><li>Ensure a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment</li><li>Build strong relationships with parents and external agencies</li><li>Maintain compliance with Education Authority/Belfast Trust requirements</li><li>All necessary paperwork, observations, plans, reports, files etc.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Level 5 qualification in Children's Care, Learning &amp; Development (or equivalent)</li><li>Experience in a Pre School setting, including leadership/supervision</li><li>Strong knowledge of preschool curriculum and safeguarding</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enhanced Access NI &amp; Belfast Trust clearance</li><li>Two references</li><li>Paediatric First Aid &amp; Child Protection training (or willingness to obtain)</li></ul>

We are looking for someone who is caring, organised, and committed to providing high-quality early years provision.

**TO APPLY:**  
Please submit your CV and covering letter outlining your suitability to [info@wishing-well.org.uk](mailto:info@wishing-well.org.uk)

Wishing Well Family Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All staff are expected to share this commitment.

# Skills for Life and Work

## Your Choice- Your Journey- Your Future

### 2026/2027 COURSES INCLUDE:

- ADMIN
- BRICKLAYING
- CHILDCARE
- HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
- JOINERY
- STORES & WAREHOUSING
- LITERACY
- PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
- WELLBEING/LEARNING SUPPORT
- BEAUTY
- CATERING
- HAIRDRESSING
- IT
- PLAYWORK
- RETAIL
- MATHS
- EMPLOYABILITY
- DIGITAL ICT

Register today\_ 🔍

**PLACES AVAILABLE**

CONTACT REBECCA 07803833373

[rebecca.sweeney@brysonpathways.org](mailto:rebecca.sweeney@brysonpathways.org)

**Stockman House**  
**39-43 Bedford Street**

**Belfast**  
**BT2 7EE**

**Bryson**  
**PATHWAYS**

**Skills Based Training**



Department for the  
**Economy**

An Roinn  
**Geilleagair**

[www.economy-ni.gov.uk](http://www.economy-ni.gov.uk)

**Skills for Life  
and Work**

#### Skills for Life and Work

#### Training Programme for Young People (NI)

##### What is it?

Skills for Life and Work is a vocational training programme funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE) in Northern Ireland and delivered by training providers like Bryson. It is designed to help young people build the skills, confidence and experience they need to progress into employment, further education or higher-level training.

##### Who is it for?

The programme is aimed at:

- Young people aged 16–17 years who have left school,
- Young people with a disability up to age 22, and
- Young people from an in-care background up to age 25.
- There are no formal academic entry requirements to join.

##### What will participants do?

Participants take part in a mix of:

- Classroom-based learning,
- Vocational training in areas such as *Business Administration, Childcare, Catering, Health & Social Care, IT, Retail, Joinery, Hairdressing, Bricklaying, Playwork, Hair, Stores and Warehousing, and Beauty*
- Essential Skills development (literacy, numeracy and digital skills), and
- Work experience placements with local employers.

The programme helps young people gain recognised qualifications in personal development, employability and a chosen vocational area while preparing them for future work or study.

##### How long is it?

Typically delivered over 24–30 hours per week for up to two years (with potential extensions for those with additional support needs).

##### Support and incentives:

Participants may receive a weekly Educational Maintenance Allowance (£40), travel assistance, bonus payments, work experience opportunities, extra-curricular activities, pastoral care and support to help them succeed.

##### Why it matters:

Skills for Life and Work supports young people to:

- Develop practical and professional skills,
- Build confidence and employability, and
- Transition to employment, apprenticeships or further study with better chances of success.

##### What does Bryson offer:

- Dedicated Learning Support Team
- Support with Work Placements
- Workwear Vouchers
- Free Lunch Club
- Mental Health Support
- Free outings, Trip and Activities
- Paid Travel

##### How to join:

Interested young people should contact the Youth Engagement Team at Bryson to get more information and register.

# Job and Training Opportunities



## Upcoming courses

- [Get Ready for Careers in Customer Service](#)
- [Get Started with Music](#)
- [Get Started with Make up](#)
- [Get Started with Content Creation](#)
- [Get Ready for Careers in Digital](#)
- [Get Ready for Careers in Health and Social Care](#)
- [Get Started with Photography](#)
- [Get Started with Nails](#)
- [Get Into TK Maxx](#)
- [Enterprise](#)
- [Drop Ins](#)
- [Monthly Flyer and Quick Guide](#)

## [Upcoming courses from The King's Trust](#)

The poster for the Springvale Cyber Quest programme features a vibrant purple and blue color scheme. At the top left is the Springvale logo with the tagline 'Employment & Learning'. The main title 'CYBER QUEST' is in large, colorful, stylized letters. To the right, a small robot icon is next to a callout box that says '16-25 Year old?' and 'REGISTER NOW' with a downward arrow. Below the title, a graduation cap icon sits on a globe, with the text '20 WEEK CYBER SECURITY PROGRAMME' in a blue rounded rectangle. The poster is divided into two columns: 'QUALIFICATIONS' on the left and 'OTHER' on the right. The 'QUALIFICATIONS' column lists three items, each in a blue box with a corresponding icon: 'INTERNATIONAL COMPUTER DRIVING LICENSE' (with a computer icon), 'ILM LEVEL 2 YOUNG LEADERS' (with a person and star icon), and 'CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS' (with a shield icon). A 'CONTACT US' callout box with the phone number '07485394456' is positioned below the third qualification. The 'OTHER' column lists activities in blue boxes: '2 & ½ DAYS A WEEK' (with a calendar icon), 'ACTIVITY DAY TRIPS', 'DAY RESIDENTIALS', 'AI SESSIONS', and 'VISIT INSTITUTES OF TECH'. At the bottom, there is a search bar for 'SPRINGVALE LEARNING YOUTH DEPARTMENT', the 'PEACEPLUS' logo (with subtext 'Employment Inclusion - Ireland' and 'Supported by the European Union and Government'), and a small 'CYBER QUEST' logo on a computer monitor. The footer text reads 'THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY THE PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME'.

# Job and Training Opportunities

JOB | FLEXIBLE

## Befriender

### Upper Springfield Development Trust



Friday / 29 May 2026 12:00pm

Salary: £12.92 per hour

Hours per week: 0.00

BASED AT: Upper Springfield Development Trust , 200 Springfield Road, Belfast, Hours: Pending – Contracted hours secured as per successful match. REPORTS TO Team Leader - Befriending and Advocacy SALARY £12.92 per hour

Action Ability Belfast

#### Closing Date

---

Friday / 29 May 2026  
12:00pm

#### Contact Details

---

200 Springfield Road  
Belfast  
BT12 7DB

02890236677  
j.fegan@usdt.co.uk

# Job and Training Opportunities

Do you know anybody aged 18+ looking for a job in July and August? Belfast City Council is seeking temporary staff to help us deliver Summer Schemes in our Community Centres again. These are 20-hours per week, and recruitment is via agencies. If interested, please contact any of the recruitment agencies below a.s.a.p.:

- Blue Arrow
- Industrial Temps Limited
- Staffing Professionals
- CPL Solutions International Limited
- Lynn Recruitment
- First Choice Selection Services Ltd
- Staffline Recruitment (NI) Ltd
- Platinum Recruitment (NI) Ltd
- Bluestones Staffing (NI) Ltd
- Hatched Recruitment Group
- Task Recruitment Ltd
- Gen Tech Specialist Recruitment Solutions Ltd
- Prime Recruitment Services Ltd
- Proactive Solutions Group Ltd
- Cogent Staffing



Belfast  
City Council

I would be grateful if you shared this via your networks, too.

Many thanks and kind regards -

**Ulrike Letzner** | Community Development Officer

Community Services | City & Neighbourhood Services Department | Belfast City Council | 4-10 Linenhall Street | Belfast BT2 8BP

Mobile: 077 4746 5446 | Email: [letzneru@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:letzneru@belfastcity.gov.uk)

[www.belfastcity.gov.uk](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk) | [www.facebook.com/belfastcitycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/belfastcitycouncil) | [www.twitter.com/belfastcc](https://www.twitter.com/belfastcc)