

Hello and welcome to the parent carer participation newsletter

As we head towards the holidays, we are all aware the challenges children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and their families are facing are unprecedented, and the environment we are working in is harder than ever. On behalf of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) and Contact we all want to say thank you for your continued work and determination this year. We can't wait to get together with as many of you as possible next year whether face to face or virtually to celebrate parent carer forums and take time to connect and support each other.

This newsletter includes the NNPCF annual report, news from the NNPCF, a reminder of the virtual and face to face conference, offers on workshops for practitioners, fledglings and more.

NNPCF news

It's been a super busy time for the NNPCF over the last few months.

Our website has been updated with over 20 news items since the last newsletter.

We have published our [annual report](#) as well as updates on our steering group and the consultations we are involved in.

You can read the [latest news](#) items on our website.

A reminder: Contact and NNPCF national conference for parent carer forums

You can find the full information about our virtual and face to face event, including the booking and consent form for the face to face event on our [dedicated conference page](#).

Virtual conference - 31st January and the 1st & 2nd February (timings TBC)

The virtual conference will include a series of virtual workshops and the NNPCF AGM between 31st January and 2nd February – further details of the sessions and

timings will be released in early January, but please make time in your diaries. Many thanks to all those who contributed to the survey about the topics to be covered, we are now finalising the workshop content and speakers/presenters.

Face to face conference - 28th February

This year's theme is the three Rs: 'reconnection, resilience and renewal'. We want the conference to be a celebration of forums, of togetherness through adversity and the events of the last few years which have been incredibly tough for everyone.

Time: 10.30 (for an 11am start) until 5pm, followed by a social event starting at 7.30pm

Place: Double Tree by Hilton, Bristol City Centre or you will be able to join the event virtually via a live stream for the 1st time!

Physical attendance at the conference is limited to 2 people per forum on a first come first served basis.

For all the information you should need about the conference please look at our dedicated [conference page](#) and the [conference FAQ document](#).

Newsletter for practitioners

Are you working with families with children with SEND? Would you like to receive updates from our Business Development Team about support and learning available for practitioners working with families with children with SEND? If so please [sign up for the practitioners newsletter](#). The most recent issue gives a [10% discount on virtual workshops](#) which must be invoiced by 3rd February. Take a look at the [practitioner workshops](#), or our [popular and valued workshops for parents](#) to make use of this offer.

Online learning sessions for parent carer forums

You can find the latest online learning sessions for forums on the [learning and events page](#) of our website, and watch previous once back on our [parent participation you tube channel](#). We have "support from Contact and the NNPCF" coming up on the 23rd January 12:00 - 13:00. This session is designed to give a warm welcome from the NNPCF and Contact to anyone new starting out with their forum, or new forums just starting up. It'll give an overview of the NNPCF and Contacts role and what support we can offer. If you can join us please [register to attend](#) and let us know any accessibility requirements.

Leading your forum course

Thank you to all those that have booked on to the leading your forum course. The course is now full. We'll get in touch in the new year to find out what training we should prioritise for forums next year.

Fledglings

Fledglings has enhanced their [out and about collection](#) to include a wide range of wheelchair covers and accessories. At this time of year wrapping up warm is essential when out in the cold weather and some of these are really cosy! A wide variety of colours and patterns and for small children and adults alike. Don't forget their [Warm and Cosy](#) range of products too. They have a wide variety of adaptive clothes to be worn underneath general clothes and in bed, plus a new range of weighted blankets in both 3kg and 5kg weights in a selection of colours.

CIC forum assistance programme

Every forum has a free subscription to the CIC Forum Assistance Programme as part of Contact's core offer to parent carer forums. You can log in and access wellness advice and tips, there are a number of advice lines including a legal advice line, and forum steering group members can also access counselling through this service. If you don't have the details to hand please just get in touch with your [participation adviser](#) and they can resend the details to you.

Dingley's Promise

Dingley's Promise, a partner in the Early Years SEND Partnership and fantastic provider, is seeking expressions of interest for their Comic Relief funded Early Years inclusion programme for practitioners to apply for, the link for [local areas to register their interest](#) is on their website. You can read more about this initiative in the [press release](#).

Contact helpline opening times

Contact's helpline for families will be closed at 5pm on 23rd December and will re-open on Tuesday 3 January 2023 at the usual time of 9.30am – 5pm.

Wishing you all a peaceful break and a happy new year. Merry Christmas to all those celebrating.

[Sign up for the parent carer participation joint newsletter.](#)