

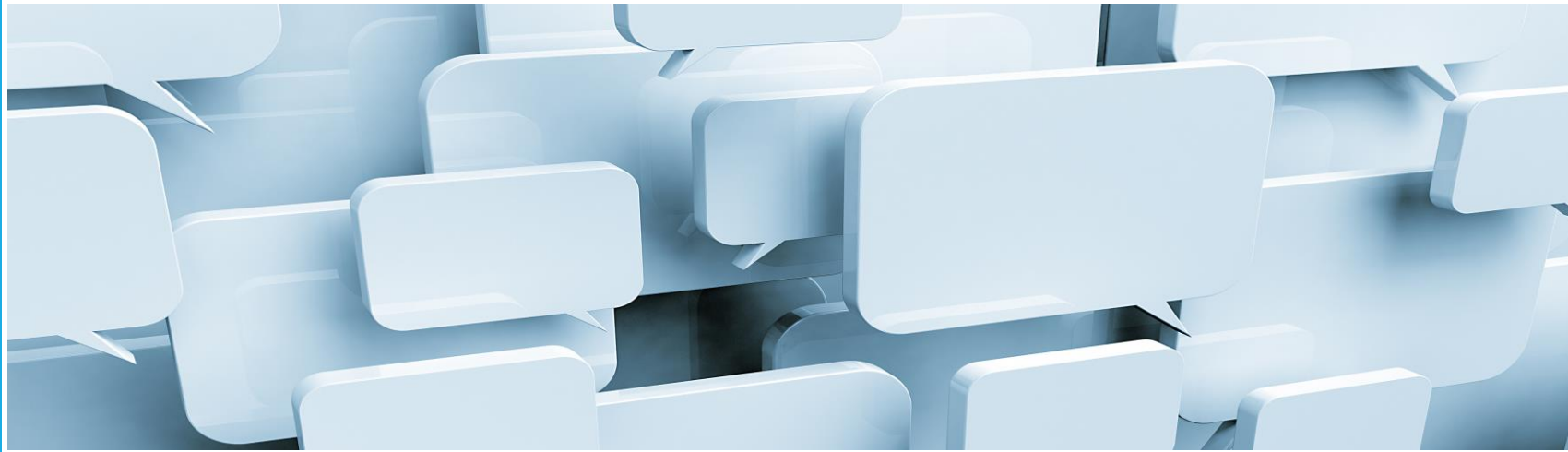
Families First News sharing

Keeping in Touch

CHRIS OCONNOR
SERVICE MANAGER

SUPPORTING FAMILIES | CHILDRENS SERVICES

MAY 2025



**Families
First**

Early help, brighter futures

Parenting Courses

Targeted parenting courses are commissioned by Family and Health Services Commissioning through the Targeted Parenting Framework (TPF). They will meet the most common parenting needs in Hertfordshire and will be a key contributor to the overall package of support that a parent receives.

Parenting courses to be delivered as part of a wider package of intervention and not in isolation.

Six providers have been commissioned through Family and Health Services Commissioning team:-

ADD-vance
Families in Focus
Family Lives
Families feeling safe
SPACE
Supporting links.

There is **NO cost** for families to attend.

Further information about workshops can be found on [The SEND Local Offer](#) and [Parenting directory](#).

Parenting courses



Supporting Links Parenting Courses



Supporting Links are holding the following Parenting Courses

- **Talking ASD/ADHD: Coping with Change - 21st May 2025**
- **Talking ASD/ADHD: Responding to Anger - 9th June 2025**
- **Talking ASD/ADHD: The Teenage Years - 25th June 2025**
- **Talking ASD/ADHD: Tech Use - 2nd July 2025**
- They also offer online courses
- **Talking Additional Needs - (1 online course and 1 Dacorum in-person course)**
- **Talking Families**
- **Talking Teens**
- **Talking Dads**

For further parenting courses in Hertfordshire, please visit:

[Parenting courses | Hertfordshire Directory](#)



For dates visit [Supporting Links Events - 12 Upcoming Activities and Tickets | Eventbrite](#)

Relationship Support

We have developed a [webpage](#) full of resources to support parents in conflict and a range of digital and group based courses:

- **Parenting when Separated**
- **Co Parenting with Care for parents of children with SEN**
- **Stronger Relationships**

One Plus One Digital Interventions:-

- **Arguing Better**
- **Me, You and Baby Too**
- **Getting It Right For Children**



We have developed an **i-learn** that we can share for free if you have a learning platform you can host the course on. It covers:

- Understanding what parental conflict is and the impact this has on Children and Young People
- Understanding the difference between parental conflict and domestic and the appropriate support pathways
- Identifying signs that could indicate relationship distress and conflictual behaviours that lead to relationships breakdown
- Understanding a framework for working with parents in conflict

We have practitioners trained across the Family Centre Service and Local School Partnerships that can support parents and carers through the digital resources or parents can be signposted to complete the resources independently by creating a [free account](#).

If you would like to know more about the training, resources and courses available to support parental relationships please contact CSStrategic.PartnershipsCommissioning@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

HSCP 7 Minute Briefing

In recent years, the HSCP have worked with partners to produce 7 Minute Briefings to be shared with colleagues and in Team Meetings. These briefings can be found on their [website](#) (scroll to the end) and can be printed or shared electronically. Many of these Briefings have been developed to support and strengthen the HSCP Procedures, to ensure all professionals in Hertfordshire working with children, young people and families are aware of the protocols and practices in Hertfordshire.



7 Minute Briefing
Professional Curiosity



EHCP

HSCP/HSAB Training - Purchase Order Nos/Cost Centres

- HSCP have recently updated their [training platform](#) and there is now a requirement for either a Purchase Order Number to be included (external partners), a Cost Centre (HCC employees), or a School Number, as they have experienced issues with obtaining this information from some agencies and therefore, are not able to invoice for the training attended or for non-attendance.
- For partners who are entitled to attend training free of charge (Health, Police, HCC, HCC Schools, Voluntary Sector and Charities) this information is required if delegates fail to attend training they have booked and have not cancelled in advance.
- Please note, Academies and Private Schools are not exempt from payment.

Families First Share & Learn: Prevent Programme



- Still time to book!
- Learn more about how to spot and report radicalisation in Hertfordshire through Prevent.
- We work with some of the most vulnerable people in society. Some of these vulnerable people can be exploited by extremists looking to radicalise individuals into terrorist ideologies.
- The HCC Prevent Programme Delivery Manager is holding a share and learn session for all staff about the Prevent programme. Prevent is the government initiative in place to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism, intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation and enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

Please join us:-

Date and time: Monday, 19 May, 1:00pm

Location: Online live streamed - Microsoft Teams

Duration: 45 minutes

[Book your place here](#)

Free Professionals Training



Beezee are offering the Families First / Children's Services teams some free training around the following topics:

- Fussy Eating behaviours in children
- Raising the Issue of Obesity with parents and carers

Training is delivered by their Wellbeing Coordinator and/or Nutritionists and lasts around 90 minutes to allow for discussion and interaction, with groups of professionals in attendance either in person (best) or online.

If you would like to complete this training or have any queries, please contact victoria.dundas@maximusuk.co.uk.

Download the poster here:-



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Drug and Alcohol Training



CGL in conjunction with Public Health have produced a number of Drug & Alcohol bitesize videos covering the following topics:

- Why do people use drugs and alcohol
- Drug awareness
- Cannabis – What's there to know
- How to have a conversation with someone about their drug or alcohol use
- Alcohol awareness
- Ketamine – What's there to know?
- The impact of trauma and drugs and alcohol

You can access these videos via [Drugs and alcohol \(professional\) | Hertfordshire County Council](#) where a wealth of other D&A information is also available.

The following dates are also available from CGL for their online training for drug and alcohol awareness 2025/06, open to all professionals in Hertfordshire.

17/07/2025 (Q2): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1244829451399?aff=oddtcreator>

20/11/2025 (Q3): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1244833834509?aff=oddtcreator>

18/02/2026 (Q4): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1244834937809?aff=oddtcreator>



Step2Skills – Free Training

Step2Skills is offering free training to work in the Early Years sector

- Are you interested in working in with young children? Or do you know someone who might be? Our adult learning service, Step2Skills, is running a Skills Bootcamp for Hertfordshire residents to work in the Early Years sector which is expanding to meet demand. The Skills Bootcamps are free, and they are a fast way to kickstart a new career

For more information:-

[Step2Skills Bootcamps for Hertfordshire residents](#)



STEP 2 SKILLS

Herts Counselling and Creative Therapies



Referrals to new Herts counselling and creative therapies open in April 2025

- Hertfordshire's new county-wide counselling (previously known as community counselling) and creative therapies services opened for referrals on **Tuesday 1 April**.
- Both services will accept self-referrals, as well as referrals via professionals.
- They are offering groups, one-to-one, online, and in-person options at various locations throughout the county, based on the specific need of each child/young person.
- You can find out more and make a referral for counselling from Hertfordshire Mind Network and creative therapies from Signpost.



Healthy Start

- A national scheme to help young families and those who are pregnant, to access healthy food, milk and vitamins
- Nearly £1M unused in Hertfordshire
- It's a simple online registration for those who are eligible, and they can receive:
- £4.25 each week of pregnancy from the 10th week
- £8.50 each week for children from birth to 1 year old
- £4.25 each week for children between 1 and 4 years old

You can apply online if:

- you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have at least one child under 4 years old
- your family's monthly 'take-home pay' (also called 'earned income') is £408 or less from employment



Healthy Start A5
poster



If you're pregnant or have children under the age of 4, you could get help to buy food and milk

Apply online to get your prepaid card.

You could be missing out on free fruit, vegetables, or milk worth at least £220 a year and free vitamins.

If you are more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old, and are in receipt of benefits, you could be entitled to a Healthy Start prepaid card worth £4.25 per child per week to spend on healthy food and milk.

Check your eligibility and apply at www.healthystart.nhs.uk

www.healthystart.nhs.uk
@NHSHealthyStart

The alloy prepaid card is issued by alloy Ltd pursuant to license by Mastercard International Incorporated. alloy Ltd is a company regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FRN 900539) for the issuance of electronic money. Head office and registered address: Fortis at Fides, Whitestone Business Park, Hereford, HR1 2SL (Company No 6293191). Mastercard is a registered trademark of Mastercard International Incorporated.

Little Herts

The Family Support Service have launched “Little Herts” which is aimed at under school-age children, allowing parents to attend parenting activities for free.

Family centre events - what's on in Hertfordshire

Family Support Staff are aware that they should be identifying families to offer the sessions for free.

If a family comes to FCS with a Herts Card, are identified locally in sessions, via Family Support, or in a Family Matters Meeting, then they are given the pre-loaded cards to access groups for free.

Finally, this is a message that staff give directly to families attending the Little Herts sessions. Any family struggling is encouraged to identify themselves to the team for more support.



Little Herts

LITTLE HERTS

Active Rhyme Time (0-5 years) £2.50*

Fun, active rhymes and songs for your baby and toddler. A great way to meet other families and develop your child's communication and physical skills. Siblings welcome. *Drop in, no booking required!*

Baby Group (pre-walkers) £1.50*

Meet other families with young babies in a supportive, stimulating and friendly environment. During the 90 minute session there will be time for babies to play, discover more about their development and support your wellbeing as a new parent. *Drop in, no booking required!*

Physical Fun (18 months +) £2.50*

A fun, active session. Come and meet other local families and enjoy lots of play opportunities to support your child with their physical development. Siblings welcome. *Drop in, no booking required!*

Stay and Play (0-5 years) £2.50*

A fun session with various activities and resources for children. There's a special area for babies with family support staff available to help, plus the chance to socialise with other parents and carers. *Drop in, no booking required!*

**The cost is per family, per session, with contactless payment only. Pick up a Loyalty Card, your 6th session is free! If the cost of the session would prohibit you from attending, please speak to one of our team in confidence either in a centre, one of our sessions or call us - we are here to help!*

IFST Men's Drop-in sessions 2025



Dacorum and St Albans IFST are facilitating a drop-in group for dads and male carers. A space for male role models in children's lives to come together and have a positive outlet for concerns and to share their thoughts with other men.

It will run on the **first Monday of each month from 6.00 – 7.30pm at the IFST office, Greenhill Site Tenzing Road Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire, HP2 4HS**

A new topic will be discussed every month such as:

- support with challenging behaviour
- Internet safety
- Parenting challenges
- Parenting when Separated Programme
- Domestic abuse from a male
- Understanding the LGBTQ+ community

Dates for 2025 are:-

2nd June
7th July
1st September
6th October
3rd November
1st December

Please promote within your teams and if you have any questions, please contact

Kingsley.Davis@hertfordshire.gov.uk

First Steps ED Boys and Men Body Image Workshop

First Steps ED have introduced a brand-new four-week group workshop for 12–17-year-olds to help address the distinctive challenges that males face with body image.

Developed by staff and volunteers with first hand experience, each week will look at a specific topic: masculinity and expectations; social media, gym culture and diet culture. Find out more: [Workshops & Support Groups for Eating Disorders | First Steps ED:](#)



CYPMHS Early Help Services

Please help publicise the following messages about First Steps ED, The Sandbox iCBT Academy and With Youth one-to-one sessions in your newsletters and via your organisation's social media:

Please E: lisa.Gazeley@hertfordshire.gov.uk if you would like further information and/or to receive file of images.

First Steps ED (ages 5-17)

First Steps to Understanding Eating Disorders (First Steps ED) can help 5–17-year-olds in Hertfordshire with early help eating disorders inc. ARFID and/or wellbeing offering free young people's workshops and one to one sessions via self, parent/carer or professional referrals. They don't need to be physically unwell due to their eating behaviours to ask for support – it's best to ask for help as soon as you notice a problem. Eating disorders can happen to anyone at any time. First Steps ED support is on hand for anyone regardless of ability, background or identity: <https://buff.ly/3p7Wx7T>

The graphic has a background image of a woman and a young girl smiling. In the top left corner is the 'First Steps' logo. The text 'Anyone can be affected by an eating disorder' is centered. Below this, 'First Steps ED' is written in large, bold, blue letters. A dark blue box contains text about the charity's support services. Below that, an orange box lists various support services in two columns. At the bottom left, text states that referrals can be made by the user, a parent, carer, or healthcare professional. At the bottom right is a QR code with the text 'Make a Referral' above it.

Anyone can be affected by an eating disorder

First Steps ED

First Steps ED is a leading UK charity providing support for individuals and families affected by eating disorders and disordered eating. Our support services include:

- Peer Support
- Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Befriending
- Workshops and Support Groups
- Parent and Carer Support
- Nutrition Support
- Self-Guided Resources
- CPD Training for Professionals

Referrals can be made by you, a parent, carer, or healthcare professional.

Make a Referral

CYPMHS Early Help Services



Sandbox Academy FB post

The Sandbox Academy is free for young people in Herts ages 10-25. It offers fun and interactive iCBT modules to help with improving the emotional wellbeing of young people who may be experiencing emotional wellbeing problems to do with anxiety, loneliness, trauma, relationships and so much more. Why not head over to the Service Zone at www.thesandbox.mindler.co.uk and answer a few short questions to sign up, so you can give it a try? Remember to tell your friends about it too!



With Youth one to one sessions FB post

It's exam time, which can feel overwhelming and stressful for some young people and for parents and carers too! With Youth @hertsmind can support young people with free & flexible one-to-one sessions & a safe space to help them explore their feelings and goals, discover coping strategies & more: www.withyouth.org



Free and confidential Gambling Support



Health in Herts are running a campaign to help anyone affected by gambling, either if you are struggling personally or affected by someone else's gambling. They offer confidential support and useful resources available [here:-](#)

There is information on the support services in Hertfordshire, national support services and self help options.

Key Families First Links



Keep up-to-date by reading o
latest **Families First:**
[Families First News](#)



Link to support for families:-
[Families First Website](#)



Professionals area:-[Early Help – information for professionals and partners](#)



For Families First partnership
groups, news sharing and
general info email:-

familiesfirst.support@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Ensure your service is listed on the
Hertfordshire Directory:- [Register to add a listing | Hertfordshire Directory](#)