

Children's Centre
membership cards

New opening
times

Breastfeeding
friendly places

FREE activities
Please take a copy

children's
centre
chatter



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for families in Sunderland.
Issue 5: September to December 2011

**Sure Start
Children's Centres**


Sunderland
Children's Centres

Hello...

Welcome to Edition 5 of Children's Centre Chatter, which is packed to the rafters with useful information for you and your family.

Inside you can find out about the new Sunderland Children's Centre card, which will be launched in your centre over the coming months, making registration at activities much quicker and easier.

We also take a look at some of the reasons why you love your Children's Centre and how you can keep your children safe on the roads as the winter nights draw in.

Don't forget, if you'd like to find out all the latest Children's Centre news and information first, you can sign up to our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SunderlandChildrensCentres.

See you soon,
Sunderland Children's Centres

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Sunderland
City Council

Keeping children and young people safe is everybody's business...

Sunderland Children's Centres are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Staff and volunteers share this commitment and consider the safety of all children to be paramount and central to their work.

If you have concerns about a child's safety or well-being please speak to a member of staff as soon as possible.

This information can be made available in large print, Braille, audio and other languages. Please contact Communications on 0191 520 5505 or email communications@sunderland.gov.uk for help.

All information correct at time of going to press.
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coming soon... children's centre membership cards



Sunderland Children's Centres are excited to announce the launch of the Children's Centre membership card scheme.

Every family with children under the age of 5 will receive a special membership card, so you'll no longer need to give us your details each time you attend an activity – something you've told us you find frustrating and time consuming.

Soon, with just one swipe and a couple of clicks you'll be registered at an activity and able to spend more time learning and having fun in groups such as 'Time for Rhyme', or finding out useful information in sessions like 'Baby Days'.

With your new membership card, you'll also be able to borrow toys from the Toy Library at the click of a button.

Between September and December, families at Highfield Children's Centre will be testing out the new membership cards and activity registration system. Look out for information if you attend this centre.

We'll then fine-tune the system, based on feedback from families at Highfield, before launching the scheme to the rest of the city in spring 2012.

In the meantime if you have any questions about the Children's Centre membership card scheme, you can email: childrenscentres@qsunderland.gov.uk

Bite size news

What's going on in your Children's Centres



Children don't come with a set of instructions

Families across the city are benefiting from a Triple P parenting programme that helps parents cope with problems such as tantrums, sleeping and bullying.

Mum of two, Kelly Cruickshanks who suffers with Crohn's disease, took part in a local Triple P programme after daughter, Ellie, started having temper tantrums. The programme taught Kelly how to deal with Ellie's behaviour, and as a result the whole family is healthier and happier.

Kelly said: "I feel much more confident in dealing with Ellie's tantrums now. I'd definitely recommend 'Triple P' to other parents.

Fit and fun group goes from strength to strength

A session that brings together parents and children through keeping fit and having fun is going from strength to strength, as more families come along to see what it's all about.

The Fit and Fun session, which takes place in Coalfields aims to educate both parents and children on topics such as healthy eating and dental care, whilst also giving children the opportunity to have fun on the bouncy castle and use the gym equipment.

Jill Nimmo, 30 from Hetton said: "The session is on all year round and the children love it. It's a great chance to socialise and it's free."

Check the timetable pages to see when Fit and Fun takes place this Autumn.





A little help from our friends

Volunteers from Children's Centres in the East and Washington areas have been helping families by training to be Community Parents.

Six parents signed up for a 15 week accredited training course, which will enable them to help families in their local area by sign-posting them to services and support they need.

Christine Bray, from Grangetown said: "I joined as a volunteer to gain work experience and to help families in my area access Children's Centres as some families don't know about the great services they provide."

What's cooking in the North?

Families in the North of Sunderland have been given the opportunity to learn practical cooking techniques to help them to lead healthier lives.

The 'What's Cooking' course gets parents and children working together, trying new recipes, learning which foods are low in fat and what foods work well together.

Darren, a parent who took part in the course said: "It taught me how much fat, salt and sugar are in certain foods and helped me chose the right meal size portions for children compared to adults. I would recommend the course to other parents."

The next 'What's Cooking' course will take place at St Peter's Children's Centre this term. To book a place please telephone 0191 553 7618.



Centre gets a transformation

Wessington Children's Centre has undergone a transformation, making it easier for families to access the centre.

The Children's Centre entrance has been moved, so families can now gain entry to the hall and community room without having to wait at the daycare entrance to be buzzed into the building. Laura Gillard, mum of two from Biddick said: "The new entrance has made it much easier to get

inside the Children's Centre. It saves time by not having to go through several sets of double doors through the school.



Let's talk communication



Talking, singing and sharing experiences are great ways to develop your child's communication skills.

It's exciting for both you and your child as their speech develops. They'll ask lots of questions to find out about the world around them.

To help them along, you can...

- Encourage conversation – bed time can be great for sharing a book or snuggling up in bed and talking about your day
- Share daily jobs – this will give your child the chance to talk about what you're doing together
- Spend time talking, listening and exploring together

Discover your little chatterbox by sharing rhymes:

By singing rhymes together you are helping your child learn patterns of speech and language. Sunderland Children's Centres sing a new rhyme each month. You'll find the words and actions for each rhyme in the 'year of nursery rhymes' booklet.

Pick a copy up at your local Children's Centre or download it at www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk

Autumn nursery rhymes...

September: Three speckled frogs

October: Baa baa black sheep

November: Grand old Duke of York

December: Here we go round the Christmas tree

Working towards a brighter future

Sunderland Children's Centres across the city are working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to launch a new initiative for parents and carers who are unemployed and want to get back to work.

Work clubs have been set up across the city to offer useful advice and guidance in job search techniques, interview skills and personal development opportunities.

One gentleman who has benefited from attending one of the new work clubs is Paul Gardiner, 37 from Millfield. Paul was unemployed for three months and had tried a number of avenues to gain employment. He always found application forms his weakness.

Paul received a leaflet from his child's school advertising the new work clubs, so he decided to give it a go. Since joining the club, Paul has found a job, and he puts it down to the support he received around completing application forms. Paul said: "I would recommend the club to anyone looking for work. Rachel and Clare were absolutely brilliant, they really helped me gain the skills I was lacking."

To find out about work clubs in your area visit: www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk



Baby Buddy guide make

Families across Sunderland can now pick up a handy guide that lists shops, cafes, restaurants and other organisations in Sunderland that are 'Baby Buddies'.

The Baby Buddy guide to Sunderland contains information on organisations that have family toilets, nappy changing facilities and high chairs. Every organisation listed in the directory welcomes breastfeeding, so nursing

mothers can rest assured and feel at ease when feeding their baby at any of the listed places.

The guide was officially launched during National Breastfeeding Week (19 to 25 June) with a family information event at The Bridges Shopping Centre. Breastfeeding mothers and Bosom Buddies from local Sunderland Children's Centres gathered to raise awareness of



...s breastfeeding easier

breastfeeding in Sunderland and promote the benefits to future parents.

One mum who attended the launch was Laura Foster, 36 from Hall Farm. Laura experienced problems breastfeeding both of her daughters, but with the support she received from her Maternity Health Care Assistant she succeeded.

Laura said: "Breastfeeding is the most important thing you can do for your baby

and despite two difficult births I've proved it can be done with the right support.

"Having the Baby Buddy guide is also really useful. Knowing where you can go to breastfeed has given me peace of mind."

To view the Baby Buddy guide online visit: www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk or ask your health visitor for a copy.



Keeping the family safe during the darker nights

As the dark nights close in, roads become increasingly dangerous for children and families.

Brake, the road safety charity recommends families take the following simple steps to ensure you and your children stay as safe as possible:

- 1 Plan your route. Before you set off, think hard about where you are going and how you are going to get there.
- 2 Always stay on the pavement and cross roads at the safest possible places, such as pelican crossings.
- 3 Hold hands with your children for as much of your journey as possible.
- 4 Always stop, look and listen before crossing a road.

To view more helpful road safety tips visit: www.brake.org.uk



Did you know...

The number of casualties in Sunderland under the age of 16 during the last year (May 2010 to April 2011) were:

0 - Fatal Injury Casualties
17 - Serious Injury Casualties
77 - Slight Injury Casualties

That's a 50% reduction in the number of children (under 16 years) killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in Sunderland over the last 10 years.

Let's reduce this number even more!
Stop, look, listen.

We love our children's centres...

We receive lots of comments and feedback from parents about Children's Centre activities and services. Here are just a few...



"Children's Centres have helped me to build my confidence and make new friends."

Victoria Usher



"Children can come and play with other children, by themselves or even with their parents."

Laura Craister

"Dads and Kids group gets us out of the house on a Saturday morning. It's a chance to spend quality time with the children, for free."

Chris Olsen



"Busy bodies is an amazing session. My two year old son really benefits from the activities and it helps with childhood obesity."

Tori Hetherington



"It's a great way for the children to interact with other children, make friends and have fun."

Sarah Greathead

Tell us what you love about your Children's Centre.

Email your comments to childrenscentres@sunderland.gov.uk or write on our Facebook wall www.facebook.com/SunderlandChildrenCentres

A close-up photograph of a young woman with blonde hair tied back, smiling broadly and looking towards the right. She is wearing a dark jacket with 'NHS' visible on the sleeve.

"There's no way I'd
keep up if I still smoked."

We can help you give up.

Call Sunderland NHS
Stop Smoking Service on
0191 283 2240.

www.sotw.nhs.uk



SMOKEFREE

A photograph of two young children in blue hoodies. One child is laughing and looking towards the camera, while the other is leaning over, looking down at something in their hands. The scene is outdoors and brightly lit.

*Working together to make
South of Tyne and Wear healthy for you*