



# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 10

AUTUMN 2008

## A WORD FROM ROSIE - THE CHAIR

If you are new to reading our newsletter, we hope you enjoy it and will think about coming to one of our planned events or courses soon, or even become a member of the Forum. We also need to keep in touch with all of you who already know and value support of families. Please, please help us by continuing to promote what we do by spreading the word amongst your friends and neighbours!

## This Term's Courses

Booking Essential - bookings now being taken for the following courses:

0-6s Thursday mornings Starts Sept 18th 9.30-11.25am Queens Park Church with crèche

0-6s Monday evenings Starts Oct 6th 7.45-9.45pm Christ Church

Both courses 5 weeks with a break for half term.

Teens Wednesday evenings Starts Sept 24th 7.00-9.00pm Billericay School

6 week course with a break for half term.

We are also running a 'Primary Years' course for 6 - 11's this term; venue and dates are yet to be confirmed. This course is in great demand, so if you would like to add your name to the waiting list please call immediately.

If you would like to book on any of the above please call us on 01277 633910, or visit our website [www.billericayparents.com](http://www.billericayparents.com).

## Many Hands Mean...



## Can You Help?

We are looking for interesting and enthusiastic people to join our friendly committee. If you value our work, have a few hours each month to spare and are looking for involvement in a small well-run charity, then we would like to hear from you! We need YOU! Nominations need to be in by October 6th - if you or someone you know may be interested, please ring 01277 633910 and ask for Rosie

## HELP!!

Waitrose Community Matters is a new scheme whereby each month every branch gives £1000 to three local good causes. Customers decide on the winner by placing a token in a box at the store. There are also leaflets for people to fill in to nominate a good cause. Next time you are in the store, please will you nominate Billericay Parents Forum and then **get everyone to vote for us please** - we urgently need extra funding!

## TIME SESSIONS

The TiME sessions are a continuing success story. In response to requests we have increased the frequency of the sessions and they now take place on the second and last Wednesday of each month.

The sessions also ran during the summer holidays and were welcomed by the new mums of Billericay, partly due to the fact that they had somewhere to take their babies out of the rain!

Going forward, we are looking at producing a timetable of speakers, which we will publish in the newsletter. We hope that this will ensure that

everyone has sufficient notice of a session that they would particularly like to attend. Suggestions are always welcome.

Finally to all new parents, if this is the first newsletter that you have received, we would like to say a big welcome to the Billericay Parents Forum and we hope that you will enjoy getting involved in other activities.

**HOME-START** offers support, friendship and practical help to parents with young children, who may be undergoing family stress. The service is returning to Billericay and anyone needing support can ask to be referred or ring 01277 263325. They are also looking for more volunteers.

## OPEN EVENING and AGM 2008

Tuesday October 21st • 7.45pm  
Mayflower High School • Stock Road

A brief AGM will be followed by a presentation by Essex Police & Ann Oakes-Odger\* on

## Knife Crime

**"How Can I Help My Teenager Keep Safe?"**

Everyone welcome! Come and find out what is happening locally and what you can do to prevent it happening to your family.

For further information or to book a place ring 01277 633910

Another BPF initiative that local parents have asked for!

\*founder of knifecrimes.org

# ALL CHANGE!

## How to help your child change schools

Parents of children transferring to secondary school were invited to attend either of two sessions in July to find out about how they could support their youngsters through the changeover.

These innovative sessions, the first run by the Forum, were well attended and we had excellent feedback! Comments ranged from very helpful to reassuring, thought provoking and well-run. The general response was that the session had been very useful and parents could not understand why more

people had not come along! After all, it was all about helping your child and none of us are experts!

Topics covered everything from coping with the journey, finding the way around the new school, different teachers and teaching styles, managing homework, changes in friendships, coping with feelings and emotions, signs to look out for and how to communicate effectively. We hope that we made a difference to those families and hope to run the sessions again next year.

### Results of our Parents Survey

Thank you to all of you who took time to complete our questionnaire this summer. We had an excellent response and the results are being analysed. Some of the things that you felt are most important to you as a parent: children's confidence and self-esteem, their feelings and emotions, success at school and developing good family communication.

### And the winner of our Prize Draw is...

Sally Witham who will be presented with her prize of M&S Vouchers at our AGM on October 21st. We hope that she will enjoy spending them on a treat for herself!

## PARENTING IS A JOURNEY

When we first become parents it is hard to imagine the long journey that lies ahead of us with our children.

Parenting is an ongoing series of stages. Just when we have finally settled into a good routine for milk feeds, it is time to think about weaning and then when we have taken the leap from purees to finger food, we see potty training looming in the distance.

Before we know it we are waving them off to school and in the blink of an eye biting our nails as we wait for the GCSE results to crash onto the mat.

September always hails new beginnings. For some it will mean their little one starting school for the first time and for others the transi-

tion to a new school, be it junior secondary or college. Children are very resilient and eager to get to the next stage, but how about us parents?

Watching our children grow up, we are very proud of all that they have achieved, but we should also give ourselves a pat on the back for all of the hard work and input that we have had.

We look ahead with them and give them our love, support and encouragement, even if we do fight the lumps in our throats and privately look back nostalgically.

Whatever stage your children are at this September, you have our very best wishes and our congratulations on the good job you've done so far.

## Storytelling

Our summer open meeting was a great success! We had Charlie Wilson to talk about 'The Magic of Telling a Story'. He kept us all entertained with stories and practical ideas for making and sharing a good story, and even the most reluctant of those present went away inspired to make up stories with their children. Within days, families and pre-schools in Billericay were telling the story of 'Plop' - one lady emailed to say that she had told it numerous times and her children were still begging for more!

Young children's imagination and language skills can be devel-

oped through creative storytelling, helping them to express themselves, share ideas and communicate with others, so that when they start school, they are ready to listen, ready to learn, eager to read and enjoy books and to share stories. Shared stories also help relationships to grow, bringing teller and listener together in shared experiences that are long remembered and treasured.

So if you really want to help your child, tell a story today! Who knows, you could have another budding JK Rowling on your hands!

## Book Review

### Dad Rules: What I Learned from My Girls

by Andrew Clover, £9.69 from Amazon.co.uk

ISBN-10: 1905490305 ISBN-13: 978-1905490301

*"She takes my hand. 'Andrew', she says, 'let's have children'. I know this is a historic moment. I must respond like a man. So I ignore her..."*

This wise, intimate, and hilarious book is based on Andrew Clover's much-loved "Sunday Times" columns. He tells stories about how he's coped with all the big parenting issues: sibling rivalry, choosing a school, winning an argument about where you're spending Christmas. He also wrestles with all the big questions: Why do I have no friends anymore? Am I turning into my dad? Will we ever have sex again? He describes the journey he made from reluctant father, to being the happiest man in North London, as he learns from his daughters that, if you want to have fun, you better start playing.

### Billericay Children's Centre

## Fun Day

Saturday October 11th  
11 - 3pm

Mayflower High School  
Lots of activities and

information for families with  
children 0 - 5

Noddy and FiFi will be coming so bring  
your cameras for a great photo opportunity



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