

Barnet Virtual School Foster Carer Newsletter

Summer 2022

Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of the Barnet Virtual School Foster Carer Newsletter. We hope you had a good Spring break and you and your young people are recharged for the Summer Term.

FOSTER CARER TRAINING

We are delighted that so many of you have attended our workshops on Supporting Positive Relationships at Home and Ways to Reduce Exam Anxiety. We have one more training session this term on Managing Transitions. **If you would like to attend, please email barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk** with your name. We will then send you a link before the course and a certificate of attendance afterwards.

Supporting Transitions—Wednesday 25th May 2022 10.00-11.15am

In this workshop we will explore a range of tried and tested strategies that will support children and young people as they start nursery or school, or when they move on to secondary school or college.

Other training options

We also have a range of training units you can access online through AC Education. You can do these at any time. Options include:

- ADHD
- Autism
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Caring for a Child who has been Sexually Abused
- Children and Young People Who Run Away or Go Missing
- County Lines
- Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia
- Emotion Coaching
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Fostering Asylum Seeking and Refugee
- Harmful Sexual Behaviours
- Introduction to Positive Behaviour Support
- Online Safety
- Promoting the Achievement of Looked after Children in Education
- Self-harming Behaviours Social Media
- Supporting the Mental Health Needs of Looked After Children
- The Impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse on Children
- The Impact of Trauma on Sensory Processing
- Trauma and the impact on Brain Development

If you would like to do any of these, please email barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk stating which course you would like to do and we will set up access for you.

Supporting with exam anxiety

For many of our young people, it is a long time since they have had formal exams so many are likely to be feeling very anxious. It is often worse for children in care who may have moved home several times and have gaps in their education. For some, just getting through the exams will be an achievement in itself. For others they will really want to achieve certain grades to go onto their next stage of education.



We have already sent out ideas for revision and revision packs to our Year 11s who are taking GCSEs. Please encourage them to use them.

Other ways you can help include:

- Talk to your young person and help them to understand that feeling anxious or pressured is quite 'normal' and can even help them to really focus. Support them to see that exams are important but they are much more important! Reassure them that you will be proud of them no matter what happens
- Ensure your young person is sleeping well during revision and before exams
- Boost your young person's confidence and remind them of all their the things they have achieved
- Make sure you stay in contact with the school. Request key documents from their school: revision timetables, exam timetables, reading lists, practice papers and any revision websites the school is using
- Be a bit more relaxed about household chores, tidying etc., to reduce the pressure on your child
- Support them by testing them, listening to them, watching a film of a text with them etc.
- Encourage them to practice with past papers
- Help them with writing a revision timetable to keep them on track
- Practice breathing techniques to help your young person keep calm
- Encourage your young person to eat well and exercise
- Plan a treat to mark the end of exams!

Remember if your young person is really struggling, speak to the school about how they can support. Young people can also contact Kooth which is an online counselling and emotional wellbeing service for children and young people, available free at the point of access. [Kooth](#) Childline where they can speak to a counsellor' is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [1-2-1 counsellor chat](#) | [Childline](#) BBC bitesize also has some useful tips on exam stress and revision tips for young people [Exams: how to deal with exam stress - BBC Bitesize](#) and Young Minds is also has help [Exam Stress | How To Deal with Exam Stress | YoungMinds](#)

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Useful Resources

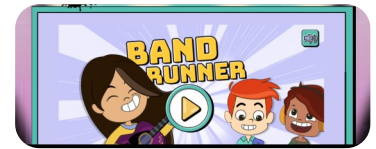


Key Stage 1 Maths

Have you got Key Stage 1 child? Or a child who are operating around 5-6 years in maths? If you have not already looked at the White Rose Maths 1 minute maths app, it is well worth it! It is completely free and is downloadable from App stores. It has individual one-minute tasks focus on adding and subtracting with more coming. The child can choose any topic they want to try. They then answer a unique series of questions (so it's a different set of questions every time). If they're struggling with a question, a 'Hint' button will give a helpful clue by showing the question in a different but familiar way. When the one minute's up, they'll see a feedback screen telling them how they've done.

Band Runner

Band Runner is a fun interactive game that helps 8-10 year olds learn how to stay safe from risks they might encounter online. It puts children's knowledge about online safety to the test by asking them to help characters make safe choices. Players can choose to play the game as characters Ellie or Sam who use their guitars to eliminate all obstacles in their path as they run through school in order to make it to their next gig. If players miss a jump or take a tumble they then need to help Alfie solve an online safety dilemma to be able to continue play. As players pass to the next level, the running gets faster! Band runner is available on the Thinkuknow website [8-10s | CEOP Education \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)



Trauma and unmet needs

This is a BBC news article about a fostered child and the resilience and understanding of attachment awareness of his carer showed in order to meet his needs. It is a reminder that the behaviours we see from looked after children are a product of their trauma and unmet needs that are being communicated and that the child or young person needs our help and support <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-54071599>



Talking about Higher Education

You are a key influencer in young people's lives and play a major role in the decision-making process, along with teachers, advisers, and their peers. Some young people may find it hard to think of their future and make plans due to an underlying problem of believing there is little point in planning for the future. The first step should be to make them believe they can change their future and with your help, it can happen! The Fostering Network has a useful factsheet with information and advice about how you can provide emotional and practical support in the transition from foster care to university life. [Talking about Higher Education and the future | The Fostering Network](https://www.fosteringnetwork.org.uk/resources/factsheets/talking-about-higher-education-and-the-future)



Follow us twitter to keep up with news and opportunities to support our young people.

You can read more about the Virtual School and find useful resources by going to [Virtual School | Barnet Education & Learning Service | London \(bels.org.uk\)](https://www.barnet.gov.uk/virtual-school/)



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