

Families First News sharing

Keeping in Touch

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Service Manager

SUPPORTING FAMILIES | CHILDRENS SERVICES

March 2026



**Families
First**

Early help, brighter futures

Working Together in Early Help Events

Join us this Spring for our Working Together in Early Help learning event.

We will have the following presentations :-

- Prevent (A UK government initiative that helps to protect people from radicalisation)
- Hertfordshire's Carers Strategy: new Young Carers offer
- An update on how the national Families First Partnership Programme is being implemented in Hertfordshire.
- Other services including: Community Alliances (CVS), MIND and Virtual School



DATES:-

Thursday 30 April, 9.30am-12.00pm, Broxbourne Borough Council, Cheshunt

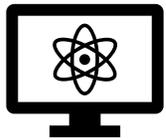
Thursday 14 May, 9.30am – 12.00pm, Three Rivers District Council, Rickmansworth

Monday 18 May, 9.30am - 12.00pm, Sadie Centre, Letchworth

Thursday 21 May, 9.30am – 12.00pm, South Hill Centre, Hemel Hempstead

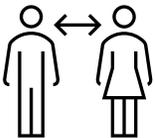
[Book your place here](#)

Other Workforce Development Opportunities



Join a Families First Induction day - ideal for new starters

We host Families First online Induction days 4 times per year, where various early help services give a 20 minute whistle-stop tour of their service and are attended by new internal CS staff and external partners. Our next date is **Wednesday 8th July 2026** via Teams. If you have any new staff or would like to hear more about early help services, please email: familiesfirst.support@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Consider a Workforce Shadowing Opportunity

Workforce shadowing provides a great opportunity to find out more about other services, what they do and how they might be able to support you in your work. It also enhances communication across agencies and helps strengthen and develop professional relationships, building local networks. Visit [Workforce development](#) to make a request

New Step by Step Videos to Support Contact Submissions to Children's Services

As part of our work this year in the Gateway, we have developed a new set of short instructional videos to support partner agencies when submitting contacts to Children's Services.

These videos are now live on our council website. They provide simple, step-by-step guidance and are designed to make the submission process clearer, quicker, and easier.

Find out More here: [Professionals – report a concern about a child or young person | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

How to make a referral guidance

Integrated Services for Learning (ISL) ▼

Turnaround program ▼

How to make a Safeguarding Referral ▼

How to use the Safeguarding Information Sharing system ▼

HAPpy Easter camps are back



HAPpy camps are for children and young people (Reception to Year 11) who attend a Hertfordshire school and are in receipt of benefits-related free school meals.

Camps are running on selected dates between 30 March and 10 April with SEND options available.

The programme is funded by Hertfordshire County Council and the Department for Education (DfE) via the government's Holiday Activity and Food programme and is coordinated by Herts Sport and Activity Partnership and the Hertfordshire Community Foundation

If a child is eligible, they should receive a booking code via their school office.

Should you have any questions about HAPpy please contact haf@herts.ac.uk or call 01707 284229.

Herts Sports and Physical Activity Partnership's website: <https://bit.ly/BookHAPpy26IC>



Young Carers update

From 1st April 2026, the contract with Carers in Hertfordshire / Young Carers will come to an end.

Hertfordshire County Council will bring this area of support for young carers in-house, integrating it fully within the council's services.

All existing one-to-one support for young carers will continue. This includes assessments, help with managing caring responsibilities, regular reviews, and support in preparing for adulthood.

A new Young Carers webpage has been developed in collaboration with young carers and their families. It includes team contact details and an online registration form.

[More information can be found here.](#)

The webpage will go 'live' on 23rd March 2026.

The new service will officially start at HCC from 1st April 2026.

Young Carers Action Day

Young Carers Action Day 11 March

Do you provide a service that can help support young carers?

- Check that your service is listed and up to date on the Herts Directory
- Link your service to the Young Carers category

Add categories...
Search for categories to add to the list.

Families > Parents, children and young people > Young carers

[Add selected categories](#) [Cancel](#)



Check here:- [Search results | Hertfordshire Directory](#)

Supporting Families Partnership Team

Complete the Survey

Our Supporting Families Partnership Team are aiming to gain an understanding of partner knowledge, understanding of and engagement with the Team, in order to ensure that they continue to deliver to you an effective service that allows you to feel confident and supported to deliver Early Help Support to the families that need your help the most.

Please help by completing this short survey, which should take no longer than 5 minutes of your time and your feedback will go a long way to helping us develop and improve our Team Offer.

Thank you

[Supporting Families Partnership Team Survey](#)

HSCP : Impact of domestic abuse on babies and children (for baby's sake)

There are space available on this workshops which aim to raise awareness about the impact of domestic abuse on unborn babies and children. Participants will learn how exposure to abuse affects a child's emotional, psychological, and physical health. The session will help professionals recognise trauma signs, implement safeguarding measures, and provide support. This training will empower attendees to create safer environments for affected babies, children, and young people.

Designed for professionals in health, social care, policing, education, and related sectors who work directly or indirectly with families affected by domestic abuse.

Spaces available

Online Event - Microsoft Teams - 31-03-2026 - (10:00 to 12:00)

Online Event - Microsoft Teams - 20-04-2026 - (14:00 to 16:00)

Please visit our [website](#).

Rucksack parenting programme

Rucksack Early Years Autism Programme for Families

About:

This course is designed specifically for parents/carers of autistic children or children (aged 0-5) on the autism pathway. It aims to provide you with the essential knowledge, practical strategies and valuable resources to support both you and your child in navigating everyday life.

Week 1: Understanding Autism
Week 2: Sensory
Week 3 : Communication

Week 4: Play and Social Interaction
Week 5: Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour
Week 6: Using My Rucksack

To self register an interest in our upcoming course running in the summer 2026 term, scan the QR code or click the link and fill in the registration form:

Early
Years
Service
Hertfordshire County Council



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<https://forms.office.com/e/YHcCTbkg60?origin=lprLink>

Red vs Blue - Safeguarding Alert

'You may be aware of a trend that has been referred to as 'Red vs Blue', although other colour-based names are also being used. This is when groups of pupils from different secondary schools are organising to confront each other, often framing it as one "team" against another. In some cases, multiple schools appear to have been grouping together on each "side," increasing both the scale of gatherings and the associated risks to young people and the wider community.

Hertfordshire police are aware of the trend and have been meeting with partners across the County. To date police have not seen any resulting violence in Hertfordshire and there is evidence that the trend appears to be losing momentum.

Hertfordshire Police are aware of the situation and have responded by increasing visibility at school start and end times to offer reassurance. The police are also actively monitoring online content so they can quickly adapt their approach if the situation changes.

Local News

Men's Mental Health Community Evening

About the Event

A relaxed, stigma-free space for men to talk, connect and feel supported — **the start of a long-term movement**, not a one-off session.

Purpose

- Encourage open, honest conversations
- Challenge stigma around men's mental health
- Offer simple, practical guidance
- Build community connection

Who's Welcome

Men of all ages and backgrounds.
Women are also welcome as allies.

Speakers

Kev Orkian • Joe Rowntree • Matt Stirling • Steve Wortley • Claire Mitchell

Partners

NHS • Men's Sheds • Broxbourne Council • Mental health professionals • Community groups

Tue 14 April 2026

- **6–9pm**
- **Hertfordshire Studios, Hoddesdon**

More info:-

[Men's Mental Health Community Evening](#)

Supporting Boys & Men

Professionals Networking event

Our St Albans and Dacorum Intensive Family Support Team are hosting an event which is designed to help professionals assist young boys & men with building healthy relationships, discussing domestic abuse, masculinity and much more. All professionals are welcome to come along, please register your place here:- [Men's Networking Event | Hertfordshire County Council](#).

The event will look at services that support boys and men in Hertfordshire (focusing on St Albans and Dacorum) but not limited to this space. This is the first of hopefully many in the future the team will be organising.

DATE: Thursday, 26 March, 10:00am

VENUE: Grovehill Adventure Playground, Hemel Hempstead

Redbourn Road
Hemel Hempstead
HP2 7BA



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Scan the QR code or [book here](#)

The event will look at services that support boys and men in Hertfordshire (focusing on St Albans and Dacorum) but not limited to this space. This is the first of hopefully many in the future the team will be organising.

Further information or any questions please contact either:
ifst.dacorum&stalbens@hertfordshire.gov.uk or
call 01442 453842

 Families First
 Saved to S: Drive
 Hertfordshire

The Men's Group 'Drop in'

The Men's Group 'Drop in' – Has started in Hemel Hempstead

We are pleased to confirm the Men's drop in' monthly sessions have returned at our St Albans & Dacorum Intensive Family Support Teams (IFST) office.

The men's group is a space for men who are 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. There will be a topic to discuss every month including support with challenging behaviour, Internet safety, parenting challenges and mental health.

It will run on the first Monday of each month from 6:00pm-7:00pm at the IFST office:

- 2nd March 2026, 6pm to 7pm
- Intensive Family Support Team (IFST) – Dacorum and St. Albans, Greenhill Site Tenzing Road, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 4HS.

For further info contact: Kingsley.davis@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Help Shape Herts Summer Parks 2026

Youth Input Request

Herts Sports & Physical Activity Partnership in Waltham Cross are excited to share that [Herts Summer Parks](#) is returning for 2026. Funded by Hertfordshire County Council, the programme provides young people aged 12–16 with access to free activities and food throughout August.

Programme Overview:

- **Dates:** Every Tuesday between 4th – 18th August
- **Age Group:** 12–16 years
- **Time:** 3:00pm – 6:00pm
- **Cost:** Free of charge / Fully funded
- **Location:** Waltham Cross Playing Fields, EN8 7LU

They're really keen for this programme to be designed by young people, for young people, so they'd love to gather ideas and feedback from the young people you work with and are asking partners to share a short survey with the young people you work with - [Help us shape your summer!](#)
[Herts Summer Parks 2026 coming soon... – Fill in form](#)

Contact Project Lead, Faye Latiffe, at f.lahiffe2@herts.ac.uk. if you have any questions about further involvement

IFST Sports and Wellbeing Festival

Stall offer

The Intensive Families Support Team for North Herts and Stevenage are running a sports and wellbeing festival for young people (age 10-16) during Easter break

When: **Tuesday 7th April, 10am – 4pm**

Where: **Shephall Community Centre**

If any service would like a stall, please contact

sally.lee@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Cyber and Fraud Awareness Day



Cyber and Fraud Aware?

Stay safe & secure online

All day drop-in with cyber & fraud crime prevention experts to answer your questions.

• Password & 2-step verification
• Phishing and social engineering
• Phone, email, text scams and other top tips

FREE event
No tickets or booking required

Talks at Hatfield Library Fri 20th Mar

11:00-12:00 - Cyber crime & Fraud Prevention - Herts Police
12:00-13:00 - Scams & Victim Support - Beacon/Victim Care
13:00-14:00 - Rogue Traders & Scams - Trading Standards
14:00-14:15 - Fraud against the Council - HCC SAFS

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/libraries Further details 0300 123 4049

- **Hatfield Library**
- All day drop-in
- Cyber & Fraud Crime experts
- Talks from Herts Police, Beacon/Victim Care, Trading Standards and HCC
- **Friday March 20th**

Cherished is 14 Consultation Event

To celebrate Cherished's 14th anniversary and give ladies a chance to share their experiences of DV support, they are hosting a buffet lunch on **26 March at 12:00** at **The South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1JF**.

They will have small tables of 6–8 so attendees can talk about what worked well for them and what could be improved. A professional will sit at each table to listen and gather feedback.

Front-line agencies are welcome to invite service users who may benefit, helping us gain a fuller picture of services across Dacorum and the surrounding areas. Please feel free to share this invitation with any colleagues or partner agencies who may wish to attend.

This event is funded by the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

Cherished

Confidential, welcoming
and safe support for
women.

[Web: Cherished](#)

Contact jude@iamcherished.co.uk
for more info

From **Overwhelm** to **Inner Calm** **Discover Reiki**

Join us for a free talk introducing the practice of Reiki.

Reiki offers a gentle and nurturing way to reconnect with calm. It's a simple yet powerful system that supports your body and mind to find balance helping with:

- 🌙 better sleep
- 🌿 reduced anxiety and stress
- 🌀 pain relief and emotional release
- 💖 a deeper sense of peace within.

The King Room,
The Turner Building,
The Sadie Centre
Sunday 29th March
10:30am - 11:30am



Scan to book

01462 678 804
sadiecentre@hertsmindnetwork.org

Herts Mind Network

- Free talk introducing the practice of Reiki
- The Sadie Centre, Letchworth
- Sunday 29th March 10.30am- 11.30am
- Use QR code to book on

Relationship Support

When working with families do you think about the quality of parental relationships?
Do you feel confident to ask questions about relationship quality?
Do you know where to signpost for relationship support?

We understand that healthy relationships support good outcomes for children, so it is essential that we support parents to have the skills to manage stress and communicate well. Arguing is **NORMAL** it is our behaviours and how we resolve conflict that determine relationship quality and stability.

The Strategic Partnerships Commissioning Team 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 offer free **training** in the use of the OnePlusOne Digital Interventions and are looking for relationship support champions across the VCFSE sector.

We have developed a **webpage** full of resources and courses to support parents in conflict [Relationship support for parents | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

We have commissioned 3 **online courses** for parents through the charity OnePlusOne [Me, You and Baby Too](#)
[Arguing Better](#)
[Getting It Right for Children](#)

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](#)

We have trained practitioners and commissioned providers delivering **group interventions** for parents
[Parenting When Separated](#)
[Co-Parenting with Care for parents of children with SEND](#)
[Stronger Relationships](#)

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

Parenting Courses

Targeted parenting courses are commissioned by Strategic Partnerships Commissioning team, within the Joint Children's and Young People Commissioning Service and 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 the Strategic Partnerships Commissioning team :-

ADD-vance

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

Families in Focus

Family Lives

Families feeling safe

SPACE

Supporting links.

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

[Parenting directory](#).

Links to special edition newsletters:

[Families First News – Parenting & Relationship Support](#)

[Families First News - Welcome to the Workforce](#)

[Development Special Edition](#)

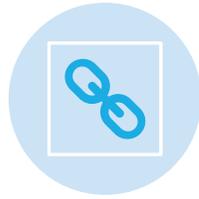
Parenting courses



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@hertfor
dshire.gov.uk](mailto:familiesfirst.support@hertfordshire.gov.uk)



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