



TRAFFORD PARENTS FORUM

AUTUMN/WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

WELCOME TO TRAFFORD PARENTS FORUM LATEST NEWS ROUND UP

Directors Update

Wow, what a start to the new academic year we've had! Back in the Spring TPF made the monumental decision to find our forever home, somewhere that could support our ever-growing offer for parent carers in Trafford. Finally, our vision of creating a SEND Hub in Trafford moved ever closer when we packed up Oakland House and our friends from Brookies Removal transported us to our new office in Ambassador Place, Stockport Road, Altrincham in September.

And before we had time to unpack the boxes, Trafford got the call from OFSTED/CQC SEND Inspection Team at the beginning of October. TPF wants to express our sincere thanks to all our children, young people, and their families for completing the surveys, you guys blew the Inspection Team away with your responses, Trafford had over 900 responses! Keep an eye out in December for the publication of OFSTED/CQC SEND Inspection report for Trafford.

We can't believe whilst all this was happening, we managed to sneak in a 10th Anniversary celebration. Huge thank you to everyone who donated and joined us to celebrate 10 years of TPF supporting parent carers in Trafford, and a huge THANK YOU to all Trafford parent carers who entrust your collective voices to us so we can ensure your voices and your children and young peoples voices are heard at every level of service development, review and delivery across Trafford.

We have included in our newsletter some of the things that has been happening at the forum and sharing some of the exciting things coming up. We cannot wait for the New Year with some great collaborations, and activities scheduled in for our parent carers and families. Dad's keep an eye out for our new Dad's group and to keep your self-care a priority for the forum, we are excited for our new wellbeing programme coming in 2024. We continue to work with our key partners at the local authority and health organisations to organise opportunities for our parent carers to share their lived experience, benefit from shared knowledge about local SEND processes and systems, and provide our parent carers the peer support, knowledge, and information to support their children and young people through their SEND journey. If you've not done already, get signed up for more information by popping onto our website and complete our forum membership form.

We look forward to welcoming you all to the forum.

NEW WEBSITE IS NOW LIVE!!



We are so pleased to let you know that this term saw our new website being launched.

We have upgraded our membership database so that you can manage your own personal information – you will have received a personal link to your account. Please register, create your own secure password where you can check yours and your children's details are up to date and correct, you can also add your partner to your joint membership. If you need any assistance, please email engagement@traffordparentsforum.com.

The new site has everything you need as a parent carer in Trafford; you can find information on the events we are running, the services we provide as a forum and the bits in between. We'd love to hear your feedback.

Newsletter Content

In the latest TPF Newsletter, you'll find: -

- Information on our weekly and evening drop in's
- An update from STEP
- A big mention on our 10th Anniversary Celebrations
- The latest on our Wellbeing Activities
- Essential Support Information for our families
- EBSNA - Emotionally Based School Non Attendance Session with Trafford EP's

Our Weekly Drop In's

During the school year, we've been running a drop in every Tuesday at St Matthew's Community Church Hall. Most weeks have a speaker come to talk to us about their service.

Sarah Bradley, Family Information Adviser, came to talk to us about Trafford's Local Offer and what you can expect from it, there were lots of parents who were able to sign up with Sarah on the day. The ARFID workshop with SENAS had a massive turnout from our parents. This session was particularly emotive and lots were able to sympathise with each other with just how eating is a challenge for our children and young people.

SENDIASS came along to provide some welcome 1:1 sessions – this is a very welcome appointment for those in need of advice.

As part of the SEND Week of Action, we had a bigger drop in with STEP, Family Information Service, SENAS, Trafford Carer's Centre, Trafford Children's Therapy Service and many more.



STEP

Stronger Together Empowering Parents

STEP is run by a small team, Clair Domville (left), Emily Heywood (right) and our new team member Gill Thompson (centre) who joined us in September.

STEP was created by Trafford Parents Forum in May 2020 in the height of Lockdown, as a gap had been identified in the low-level support available for SEND families in Trafford. The service has evolved and grown over the 3 and a half years we have been active and we have now supported over 250 families.

We offer peer to peer support for parent carers who have children/young people with SEND in Trafford (whether diagnosed or not).

SUPPORT OFFERED BY STEP:

- Emotional
- Practical day-to-day/organisational
- Support navigating the Local Offer
- Support communicating with services/schools
- Support maintaining positive relationships with school
- Help to prepare for/support in low level meetings
- Support completing DLA/PIP application forms
- Face to Face Peer Support Sessions

Please note we are unable to support with issues/concerns around EHCPs.



FEEDBACK FROM OUR PARENT CARERS:

“Before making contact with STEP I felt extremely isolated and helpless. I’ve very much benefitted from their services. I now feel part of a community of understanding and supportive people and more positive about the future and my capability to support my daughter in the challenges she may face.”

“STEP have helped me enormously for over a year through a very difficult time. They are always willing to support as soon as they possibly can and keep in touch by text to arrange phone calls and ask how things are going. They really care about how my child is! Calmly, kindly and without any judgement whatsoever they have given me relevant knowledge and steadfast support when I’ve been struggling. They have given me hope and strength. They ‘get it’ when so many others sadly don’t.”

“I don’t know where I’d be without STEP. I couldn’t put into words what the support both on an individual basis and from a group perspective has given me. It’s priceless, being part of a community where people truly understand and listen, support and signpost.”

“The staff are hugely supportive and exude a confidence and good humour which is vital when some of the situations you find yourself in as a parent of a child with ND traits can leave you tearing your hair out. STEP are a fantastic organisation and I feel lucky to have been introduced to them by a friend who also benefitted from their expertise.”

To request support from STEP you can complete the ‘self-referral’ tab on our website:
www.traffordparentsforum.com/pages/step



Bean and Brush Crafty Sessions - back by popular demand

Last month TPF hosted two fun-filled crafty evenings for our parent carers at Bean & Brush Art Cafe in Sale. I hope those who attended have remembered to collect their wonderful creations. Everyone really enjoyed the sessions and after some delicious tea and coffee coupled with enormous fruit scones began their masterpieces. An artist was on hand for advice on techniques, ideas, and encouragement which was much appreciated.

Many enjoyed connecting with other parent carers, whilst others took respite in the mindfulness of the painting but at the end of the evening, we are confident everyone left feeling a little lighter having honoured that time for themselves. This is what our Well Being events are all about, keep checking the TPF website and Facebook group for more activities.



Up and Coming Wellbeing Event

Embrace Tranquility - Yin and Sound Healing Event on December 9th!

As the days grow shorter and the weather turns cooler, we invite you to join us for a deeply rejuvenating and immersive experience at our studio.

Yin and Sound Healing with Lorna

Saturday 9th December 2023 13:30 - 14:30

Imagine a serene afternoon where you indulge in the gentle practice of yin yoga, guided meditation, and are cocooned in the soothing embrace of crystal singing bowls.

This magical combination, led by the talented Lorna, promises to be a true treat for your mind, body, and spirit.

To book, you just need to email info@naraliyoga.co.uk or phone 07956 263589



EVENING DROP IN'S

Last week we hosted our first ever TPF evening drop in at our new office in Altrincham (Suite 2, Ambassador Place, Stockport Road, Altrincham WA14. 8DB)

Similar to our Tuesday day drop in - we offer a safe space, tea/coffee, choccy biscuits, a listening ear and an opportunity to connect with other parent carers who are on a similar journey and just 'get it'. We were pleased to have a reasonably good turn out for our first event and thrilled to welcome two new parent carers who have previously been unable to attend our day drop in sessions.

We plan to continue these sessions monthly. Our next drop is Monday 11th December - we hope to see some of you there.

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TPF's 10th Anniversary Celebrations at Sale Rugby Club

You may know about recent Anniversary of celebrating 10 wonderful years of Trafford Parents Forum... well we wanted to celebrate in a big way with how much we have achieved over this period not just supporting our Trafford parent carers but establishing our working relationship with our key partners in Trafford.

TPF Team would like to say thank you to everyone who contributed, donated, attended, sent warm wishes and partied with us at our 10th Anniversary on the 20th October at Sale Rugby Club. It was an incredible night, with a mesmerising performance from Di Voci Ladies Choir, there really wasn't a dry eye in the house when the choir sang Bridge Over Troubled Water. One of our guests reflected and said this song "is what the forum is all about to me", thank you for that lovely comparison.

We were lucky to have Elizabeth Fricker from Missing the Mark and award-winning author of "Can't Not Won't", join us to present her personal reflections about neurodivergency. We celebrated with one of our Directors, who braved Scafell Pike in a 7-hour hike raising much needed funds for TPF. Huge thank you to Caroline and the hiking team, well done! Lots of happy winners from our mahosive raffle, again thank you everyone the funds raised goes back into the forum to help us put on our activities and self care programme.



Thank You



TO ALL OUR 10TH CELEBRATION SPONSORS
FROM TRAFFORD PARENTS FORUM



PANORAMIC PROPERTIES



NARALI
YOGA STUDIO



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EBSNA – EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE

We have ran a drop in and an event last half term around EBSNA, where the sessions covered the Flow Chart and Toolkit that schools have been given to help and support our young people when they have anxieties around getting into school. The feeling around the room was so emotive and that everyone there was going through something similar in one way or another.

Just last week, we ran a 'You Said, We Did' session with Trafford's EP's Shannon and Holly letting us know how your experiences help to shape the service they provide. They both said "how motivating and powerful it is to hear your stories first hand, reminds us why we push so hard for EBSNA support"

If you'd like to receive the toolkit and card sort activity, please get in touch. You can self-refer for a 30 minute free telephone consultation with an Educational Psychologist can be booked here <https://www.facebook.com/people/Trafford-Educational-Psychology-Service/100067849460396/>

Trafford's Early Years Conference

What a fabulous day TPF and STEP had at Trafford's Early Years Conference that saw us getting back to networking on the ground.

A big thanks to Becky Bennion for taking to the stage to share her EVs lived experience.



Did you know TPF is a Foodbank referrer? Please don't struggle in silence, get in contact with our team at our Tuesday drop in, through our STEP service or email us at hello@traffordparentsforum.com

Autism in Schools Project

We have been running a project commissioned by NHS to enable schools across Trafford to support pupils with Autism and/or Social Communication in educational settings (with or without diagnosis). The programme covers Understanding Autism, Enabling Environments, Learning Styles, Anxiety and Distressing Behaviours.

The First Schools that were part of the project were Moorlands Junior School, Lostock High and Wellington School. The next tranche of schools are Wellacre School, Flixton Girls School and Stretford Grammar School. If your child is on roll at these schools then you will be eligible to attend, for further information including upcoming dates, please see our website.

Trafford Directory and the Local Offer – www.trafforddirectory.co.uk

If you need any general help, Trafford Directory offers free, impartial advice and guidance service connecting Trafford families, young people and caregivers with local support services. Under this service, you will find the SEND Local Offer – if you haven't visited yet, it's a tool to keep always as it's Trafford offer of support for families with children with SEND.

During holiday periods for urgent support, please contact Trafford Children's First Response on 0161 912 5125 during office hours Mon-Fri 8.30-4.30pm or 0161 912 2020 out of hours – Emergency Duty Team.

Contact us on engagement@traffordparentsforum.com

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