

### **Meals on Wheels – New Service**

Hampshire County Council has started a new Meals on Wheels Service, offering hot meals to adults aged 18+ years who have difficulty preparing food, and managing and maintaining nutrition. Delivered by Meals on Wheels provider *Apetito*, the service is now available to young and older adults, including those who have dementia, a learning disability, a mental health issue, a history of substance misuse, or a physical disability.

The County Council's Meals on Wheels service delivers a two course hot lunchtime meal, with the additional option of afternoon tea. Meals on Wheels drivers are trained to carry out a wellbeing check in addition to the delivery of the meal. This ensures that wellbeing and safety concerns are identified and action taken in a timely way. Drivers report concerns to the relevant Hampshire County Council team or call for emergency services where necessary.

The current cost is £4.67 for a daily two course meal and £3.25 for afternoon tea. For more details see - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/olderpeople/mealsonwheels>

### **Waste**

You may not be aware that every month we throw away around one fifth of the food we buy – that's approximately £60 worth of food every month. In Hampshire this adds up to an estimated 98,000 tonnes of food each year, which is 28 times heavier than the HMS *Victory*! Each year, Councils spend over £100 million dealing with waste produced from Hampshire households. As financial pressures grow for Councils, we need to look at all options to reduce volumes of waste in the system to try to bring down this cost. Maybe this is something for all of us to keep in mind during the festive season, or perhaps it could become a new year resolution!

### **Sibling Adoption**

Across Hampshire, there are sibling groups of two or more brothers and sisters who are in need of a new family to give them a forever home. Wherever possible, these siblings are kept together for adoption. The strong bonds between siblings can help them settle into their new family and provide a child with a source of support, friendship and affection. The County Council is looking for adopters who can care for all ages of children, but especially for sibling groups and children with disabilities. Potential adopters have access to Hampshire's excellent in-house adoption support team and additional support packages may also be available. The Hampshire adoption enquiry and advice line number is 0300 555 1384

### **Additional Funding for Child Care**

If you are a working parent or carer with a three or four year old receiving the free universal early years education entitlement, then you might be eligible for the 'extended entitlement' of 30 hours free childcare. This provides a total of 30 hours funded childcare per week if they only attend during term time (22 hours funded care per week, if they attend child care 51 weeks a year). You may be able to access the additional funding if you (and your partner) meet the working and income criteria. For more information or to find out if you are eligible, apply online at <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> or call 0300 1234097

### **Help a Hampshire child**

People from all walks of life are being encouraged by Hampshire County Council to volunteer with children and families across Hampshire. Around 150 volunteers work with Children's Services to provide valuable input into a wide range of activities including mentoring schemes and family support work, but more volunteers are always needed.

Just a few hours each week could make a world of difference to a child or young person in Hampshire. Our volunteers perform an important role, complementing our care professionals. They find it incredibly rewarding to share their life skills and experience to help a young person overcome personal difficulties, succeed at school, or improve their self-esteem – and those they support often thrive with their input.

Volunteers can choose to become a mentor, working one-to-one with a young person needing guidance, and provide support to parents and carers to improve family relationships and prevent breakdown. They can also offer support to families of children who have been permanently excluded from school or volunteer with the youth offending team to reduce harm and help to reintegrate young offenders back into the community.

The County Council is particularly looking for volunteers to conduct interviews with young people who have been reported missing but have returned. All volunteers receive a full training programme where they learn how to appropriately support and guide young people and families. Volunteers themselves are supported and supervised by volunteer coordinators who are on hand to offer help and guidance whenever needed.

### **ChatHealth 0-5**

This is a new text messaging service to support parents, carers and families of under 5's in Hampshire. It has been launched by the Health Visiting Service of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust to improve access to health information and support. As the Executive Member for Public Health at Hampshire County Council, which commissions the service I am really excited to see the launch of the new ChatHealth service for Hampshire parents. This new service provides a quick and easy way to access information and advice which is particularly important for parents and carers of very young children. They can ask about a variety of topics such as sleep, growth and development, parenting, breast or bottle feeding, diet and nutrition, and behaviour – by accessing this service, in some cases visits to the GP may not be required. For more information visit - <https://www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/.../chathealth-0-5-parents.../>

### **Emergency Care**

If you are caring for someone who needs your help due to a health condition, disability or frailty, you may find it useful to know that Hampshire County Council fund emergency planning for carers. Up to 48 hours free care may be available for the person you care for in the event of an emergency. This is a free service and no adult services assessment is needed. Telephone Freephone 0800 1691577.

### **Flu Vaccination**

Hampshire County Council is urging people at increased risk from flu or who care for someone vulnerable to book their free flu vaccine. A winter flu jab is considered essential protection for the over 65s, young children, pregnant women and carers, as well as those with pre-existing long-term health conditions or a weakened immune system. The vaccination is available free of charge from GPs and pharmacies for these eligible groups.

School children from Reception to Year 4 will get the vaccine by means of a free nasal spray at school vaccination clinics and pre-school children can receive it from the family GP. Vaccinating children aged two to nine is particularly important as they spread flu easily, putting families, other adults and the wider community at risk.

Patricia Stallard

Executive Member for Public Health; Supporting Families Programme; Emergency Planning & Resilience  
Hampshire County Councillor  
Winchester Southern Parishes Division  
Mental Health Champion

pgstallard@aol.com or patricia.stallard@hants.gov.uk