

COVID Email Update 1 February 2021 (dyslexia-friendly version)

Good morning to you all, I hope you and your families are doing okay.

Well, I imagine we are all quite glad January is over. That was a long, tough month. Spring is at least a little closer now, with longer daylight hours and a sense of renewal and growth re-starting. It's still hard each day isn't it. But there's at least a sense that there is something on the other side of winter.

As well as working with our Family Changemaker Expert Parent Group to think about our services for the next 3 years, I've been thinking a lot about the *'recovery of our people then the recovery of our services'*. We will all emerge from this exhausted, and whilst our experience of COVID as family workers is different to our friends working in hospitals, the NHS or adult social care, we may well have a similar feeling of being 'hollowed out' by the pandemic.

When the pandemic itself starts to subside, it will be so important we give ourselves space to acknowledge, reflect and talk about what we have all been through, and to think about our individual and collective recovery. People first, service second. There is no service without its people.

Recovery after this pandemic will look different for each of us. I hope we can all take some time in our supervisions in the coming months to begin to explore what a post-pandemic recovery might look and feel like for you, and what you might need from me, from your team, from the Council, and from yourself.

Updates for you this week:

### **Interactive Whiteboards Info Now on the Guidebook**

Following last weeks webinar with Mar and Foz from the Digital Team, you can now find more info about Google Jamboards, Miro and MS Teams Whiteboard on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid->

[guidebook/direct-work-kit-bag/maintaining-virtual-relationships/#main](https://www.camden.gov.uk/guidebook/direct-work-kit-bag/maintaining-virtual-relationships/#main) . I hope these help give you options for interactive work with children and parents during virtual visits. Please make sure you follow the instructions at the beginning to ensure confidentiality and data protection are preserved.

### **Free Printing for Children's Home School Learning at Winkworths and Chestertons Estate Agents**

Estate agent chains Winkworths and Chestertons are offering free printing facilities for children who need to print out home-school work but don't have a printer. Winkworths have a branch in Kentish Town, Highgate, St Johns Wood and Islington, and Chestertons have branches in Camden Town and Primrose Hill, Kentish Town, Covent Garden and Islington. One to mention to parents.

### **Online Q and A Event for the Bangladeshi Community on COVID and the Vaccine**

Camden is hosting an online event for the Bangladeshi community with a number of health professionals and political leaders including Professor Kevin Fenton London's Public Health Regional Director and Muna Tasneem Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK, on Tuesday 2 February at 8pm. Zoom link is here <https://t.co/ODF8etEnmV>

### **Brandon Centre Love and Limits Parenting Programme is Back**

Pleased to confirm that Camden and Islington are funding the Brandon Centre's Love and Limits Parenting Programme in 2021. Brandon Centre will be running 6 online programmes over the year. Love and Limits is a parenting programme for parents of 12-16 year olds who are experiencing distressed behaviours (sometimes called behaviour that challenges).

SYRDC are also running the Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities programme during the pandemic, which is for parents of 4-17 year olds who are looking to improve the parent/child relationship.

More info and referral information on both programmes on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/conflict-or-violence-in-the-home/parenting-programmes/#main>

## Webinar – Working with Migrant Families Who are Seeking Asylum and NRPF

This webinar will introduce different immigration statuses, what NRPF is and what barriers it creates to accessing services and support, and what support is available for families who are NRPF including section 95, section 4 and section 17. 15 February at 2pm. Calendar invite has been sent, but give me a shout if you need it again.

## Exploring Financial Insecurity with Families – Tools

If you are working with a family who is experiencing financial insecurity, there are a number of tools on the Guidebook to help you if you need them:

- *Online budget planner*: this will help provide a structure for conversation to explore household income and expenditure with a family, to see where the pressures are, and what practical support you could give to help alleviate the pressures (for example debt advice to get payment plans in place, or exploring additional benefits) <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/finance-bills-and-financial-hardship/>
- *Income maximisation checks* – Welfare Rights in either IEYS or Landlord Services can help with this, to make sure a family is getting all the benefits they are entitled to <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/legal-debt-welfare-and-other-advice/camden-welfare-rights-team/#main>
- *Free School Meal entitlement* – this Guidebook page includes a link to check free school meal eligibility and help with applying for free school meals – you can also contact school to make sure a family who are eligible for FSM are getting either food parcels or vouchers during lockdown <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/schools/free-school-meals/#main>
- *Support for NRPF and Migrant Families* – if the family's income difficulties are attached to their immigration status, have a look at the NRPF pages on the Guidebook, and particularly whether the family have applied for section 95 funding (if they

have an asylum application in process) <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/refugee-and-asylum-seeking-families/no-recourse-to-public-funds/#main>

- *Guidebook Poverty Proofing Our Practice* – for more ideas, here is a link to the Guidebook pages on poverty, including a conversation guide you could use in supervision to explore financial insecurity with families <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/poverty-proofing-our-practice/talking-about-poverty-with-families/#main>

### **LGBT+ History Month**

February is LGBT+ History Month, a month-long focus on promoting equality and diversity and raising awareness and advancing education on matters affecting the LGBT+ community. There are a wealth of resources on the LGBT+ History Month website here, well worth a read <https://lgbtplushistorymonth.co.uk/resources/lgbt-history-month/>

### **Weekly Survey**

Because of this morning problems with Office 365, the link to this weeks survey will follow later today!

### **New information uploaded to the COVID Guidebook this week link here**

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/>

<b>Interactive Whiteboards</b> New information about how to use interactive whiteboards during virtual home visits	<b>KCNBA Employment Support</b> New offer from KCBNA offering help and advice with CVs, job applications and interview techniques	<b>New Parenting Programmes available</b> Brandon Centre’s Love and Limits parenting programme and SYDRC’s Strengthening Families Strengthening
---	--	--

<a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/direct-work-kit-bag/maintaining-virtual-relationships/#main">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/direct-work-kit-bag/maintaining-virtual-relationships/#main</a>	<a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/employment-jobs-and-benefits/finding-a-job/#main">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/employment-jobs-and-benefits/finding-a-job/#main</a>	<p>Communities programme are both back and taking referrals</p> <a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/conflict-or-violence-in-the-home/parenting-programmes/#main">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/conflict-or-violence-in-the-home/parenting-programmes/#main</a>
---	---	---

We are now in week 46 of COVID, and continue to welcome back staff who have been poorly over recent weeks. We are appointing 2 agency family support staff to increase our capacity, who will be able to support work in FSEH, FIF or TT. Staffing capacity is lower than usual across IEYS and YEH as well as FSCF, so we are meeting regularly with IEYS and YEH service managers to work together to coordinate and stabilise capacity in all parts of family support. Social care are experiencing very similar capacity issues, and the backlog in the courts system due to COVID is also presenting a number of difficult problems for social care to manage and hold.

To end this week, I don't know if anyone else feels like they've been lurching around this circle during January, but if you have are then you're definitely not alone. I know I've felt the strain with work and homeschool, and I've felt like a bit of a failure at times in the last 5 weeks



But let's keep trying to be kind to ourselves and manage our expectations of ourselves. This lockdown is hard, and its different to the first one when our adrenaline was plentiful and running high. So if this image resonates with you, explore it with your manager in supervision to make sure we've done everything we can to make the working week as manageable as possible.

Finally, a short biography of the great Inabel Burns Lindsay, another Black pioneer of social work who trailblazed better understanding of the socio-cultural perspective in social work practice from the 1930s onwards

<https://socialwork.howard.edu/about-us/history/80th-anniversary/inabel-burns-lindsay-bio>

Stay safe and well, and as always shout if there is anything you need.

Becca

Becca Dove

Head of Family Support and Complex Families

Telephone: 020 7974 3603