

# CHSWG Update Report

Term and Year: Summer 2020

## Local Engagement Team Update

**First of all we would like to say a big thank you to all key workers who have been working with us over the last few weeks and also working in their local community, making a huge difference to the lives of deaf children, young people and their families during this time.**

This summer update has a different emphasis given the current COVID 19 pandemic and its impact on deaf children. We have tried to include all relevant information that will help both professionals and parents during this time.

All of face to face activities, including our training, have been put on hold due to COVID-19. However, we are running a number of online events for families and we offer a range of [information](#) and blogs for [families](#) and [professionals](#), setting out our understanding of how coronavirus is impacting on the support that deaf children receive, and our position on a number of key issues. Topics covered in these blogs include:

- Impact of school closures and supporting home learning
- Cancellation of school and college exams
- Changes to audiology provision and newborn hearing screening
- Wearing of face masks
- Disability benefits
- Safeguarding considerations

These blogs are updated regularly as new information becomes available. Please do share the blogs with the families you're working with and your colleagues and please do send us any feedback or suggestions you might have.

Our [Helpline](#) is running as normal, and families and professionals can contact them in all the usual ways.

All face to face fundraising has been paused until further notice.

### Holding your CHSWG remotely

We recognise that CHSWGs are unable to meet face to face currently and we are aware of a number of CHSWGs being cancelled for the summer term. However, we are encouraging all CHSWGs to meet remotely using technology such as Zoom, Skype or Microsoft Teams. This is to ensure that services can support each other, hear from parents, work together across all disciplines and quickly respond to the changing needs of deaf children and their families during this time. This will also enable you to identify the gaps in services and consider strategic planning for post COVID 19. The Local Engagement Team will be able to support you in helping to make this happen and we would encourage you to contact us on [localengagement@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:localengagement@ndcs.org.uk).

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## Other news for Services

<b>Education</b>	<p>Many of us will be focused at the moment on supporting children's learning at home.</p> <p>We've published a <a href="#">blog</a> setting out some top tips for families, as well as links to key resources. We are also signposting families to our existing <a href="#">resources for supporting home learning</a>.</p> <p>On 6 May 2020, we'll be running an online information session <a href="#">for families</a> on home learning. Please do let families in your area know about this opportunity. We are exploring if and how we can make these available afterwards for professionals to share with families. We'll be adding more dates for sessions in coming weeks.</p> <p>With our support, the online classroom <a href="#">Oak National Academy</a>, has been working to ensure their video content is as accessible as possible, with subtitles and BSL interpreted versions being rolled out.</p>
<b>Audiology</b>	<p>On 13 May and 24 June, we'll be running an online information session <a href="#">for families</a> on making the most of your child's hearing at home. Again, please do let families in your area know about this opportunity.</p> <p>We will not be running our annual Listen Up! survey of audiology services this year. We hope to publish the results from the 2019 survey soon.</p> <p>At the end of last year, a safety alert was issued on hearing aids. As far as we know, this still requires action to be taken before September 2020. Our <a href="#">blog for families</a> set out the implications for this – CHSWGs may wish to discuss how they will ensure that this safety alert does not lead to radio aids being withdrawn or no longer available to deaf children.</p>
<b>Social Care</b>	<p>SignHealth has <a href="#">introduced an app/service</a> to ensure that a remote interpreter is available for any health related appointments with immediate notice. It is a 24 hour service.</p> <p>Visits by social workers are significantly reduced and are trying to be undertaken remotely. Coronavirus Act has given powers for LA to relax its duties towards vulnerable children, those in care, fostered or being adopted. Concerns have been raised by the <a href="#">sector</a>.</p> <p>The Government <a href="#">recently announced</a> that some "disadvantaged children" (e.g. those who receive support from a social worker and care leavers) across England may be eligible for IT equipment and access to the internet while at home during lockdown.</p>

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<p><b>Early Years</b></p>	<p>In the next few weeks, parents across the UK will be able to access some NDCS online drop in sessions if their child has recently been identified as deaf. Our Support and Advice service colleagues will be there to introduce parents to information about childhood deafness and services they can access. Keep looking on our website for further information.</p>
<p><b>Post 14</b></p>	<p>Deaf Works Everywhere has been paused with some of the planned activities of the campaign put on hold for the time being. In March our Youth Advisory Board (YAB) published a <a href="#">report</a> on careers support for deaf young people. Later in the year, to address the issues raised in the report, we will be publishing a toolkit for Teachers of the Deaf and other professionals supporting deaf young people with careers guidance. Professionals interested in accessing the new toolkit can register their interest <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p><b>Technology</b></p>	<p>Our technology team has produced a range of information for families and professionals which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A blog providing some <a href="#">top troubleshooting tips</a> for families on using technology at home.</li> <li>• A <a href="#">short online video</a> about using the Clips app to add captions to short videos.</li> <li>• Two online information <a href="#">sessions</a> available for parents on technology they can access at home</li> <li>• <a href="#">Tele-practice advice</a> for parents and professionals from an auditory verbal therapist</li> </ul>

## Information on National Deaf Children's Society national campaigns:

A number of government inquiries have been launched into how coronavirus is affecting deaf children. We are keen to share examples of how services for deaf children are responding to the crisis to continue to meet the needs of deaf children.

**Please share with us any examples from your area via [localengagement@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:localengagement@ndcs.org.uk).**

We also want to hear from parents and will be sharing their feedback with government. Find out more in our [campaigns update](#) how our campaigns work has changed, and what we're doing to make sure that the issues facing deaf children, young people, families and professionals are still heard at this time.

## Research:

### Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE):

The [2019 CRIDE reports](#), including the latest numbers of deaf children and Teachers of the Deaf, were published earlier this year. CRIDE has decided to keep the 2020 survey open until the end of May as not all services had responded before coronavirus had a significant impact and to help ensure we have an accurate a picture of national provision as possible. However, CRIDE's message to services is that they should only respond to the survey and to any requests for clarification if they feel able to. CRIDE will not be issuing FOI requests this year.

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## Attainment data

Our [annual briefing](#) sets out what Government figures say about the attainment of deaf children in England.

## Temporary hearing loss

Earlier this year, we published a literature review on temporary hearing loss and the impact this has on deaf children. We also published the results of surveys of parents and professionals from last year.

- [Literature review](#)
- [Survey results](#)

## Careers advice

We have also recently published a [literature review](#) on careers advice and support for disabled young people.

## Resources – new, updated, out of date:

### New and updated resources

We have published some blogs recently which have touched on the corona virus situation and may be useful to you:

- [Life in lockdown](#)
- [Finding a deaf community](#)
- [Time-management tips for teenagers](#)
- [Maintaining our wellbeing and adjusting to the new 'normal'](#)

We publish new blogs every Thursday so please do continue to check them out [here](#).

Our Families magazine will be available from the first week of June.

We have updated our [webcontent](#) for families on emotional wellbeing.

### Our training courses for professionals

We are not running any face to face training, however [our e-learning modules](#) are open. These are aimed at professionals with different levels of knowledge about deafness and include:

- Deaf-friendly Activities
- Social Care Needs of Deaf Children and Young People
- Supporting Children with a Suspected Hearing Loss in Early Years
- Working with Deaf Children and Young People

### 2020 Conference - Starting Out: Supporting Deaf Babies, Children and their Families in the Early Years

Please be advised that we are monitoring developments around COVID-19 in the UK. Although the conference will not run in July as planned, we hope to run it later in the year. Safety is our first concern and we will follow government guidance as it develops. If you have booked your place already, we will let you know soon whether the conference will go ahead and offer the option to attend later in the year, or a refund.

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## Events and Support for parents, deaf children and young people

Through this briefing, we've talked about the new online sessions being run for families. The latest information on these can be found [here](#).

### Pen Pals

We have an exciting new initiative called Pen Pals which aims to support deaf children and young people (ages 8-18) to keep in touch and make new friends. Those who take part will be matched with another young person of a similar age, interests, and communication preferences. As pen pals, they can write letters (or record videos in BSL) to each other, giving them a chance to ask questions and get to know one another. By taking part, deaf children and young people can: create and maintain new friendships, reduce feelings of isolation and improve mental wellbeing and develop and build their communication skills.

This is a pilot project that will run for 6 weeks from the 15 May - 26 June 2020. The project is open for all deaf children and young people aged 8-18. All they need to take part is a parent or carer email address. Please let families in your area know about this initiative – they can [apply online](#) or for more information, please contact our Youth Development team by emailing [youthdevelopment@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:youthdevelopment@ndcs.org.uk) **Closing date for applications: Thursday 7 May 2020.**

## Contact with NDCS:

Email us at [localengagement@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:localengagement@ndcs.org.uk)