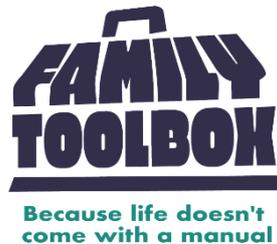


Introducing The Family Toolbox



Koala NW are really excited to be working alongside colleagues at The Foundation Years Trust, Caritas, WEB Merseyside, Shaftsbury Youth club, Ferries Family Groups and Involve North West as founding members of the Family Toolbox.

This is a brand new, innovative website launching 1st April for parents to access for advice and guidance around all aspects of family life and being a parent.

Family Toolbox is a collection of local people, places, and experiences that families can get involved in. It links up everything that is available for families on the Wirral enabling parents to build their confidence, look into local services and make their own choices as to when, where or if they would like to access some support. By using the site parents can:

- Find ideas and information to help them, through a searchable bank of tools
- Find out about local support services through a searchable directory of organisations and available support
- Introduce themselves to an organisation they'd like support from
- Identify their own goals and what they want to learn about, monitoring their progress along the way
- Find out what's happening in their area through a dedicated 'what's on' section.

The website is something families can pick up and put down as they want, they can create a log in to save favourite searches. The site is mobile friendly and won't hold or have access to any data regarding families.

As the logo says, 'because life doesn't come with a manual' and parenting is one of the hardest jobs in the world.

Please head over to www.familytoolbox.co.uk have a look for yourselves and share with your friends and family, and all the families you support in your volunteer role with Koala NW.

A NEW OFFICE

After a couple of years with many staff working from home because of the pandemic everyone now is back in their offices. As you know, as well as the Koala Hub on Woodchurch Lane, Wirral, we moved in to Stanlaw Abbey in Ellesmere Port so staff working with families in Cheshire West didn't have quite so far to travel. This has worked really well so when we knew we wouldn't have enough room for all our staff that had been based at the Hub to return after the Covid restrictions were lifted because our staff team had grown we started looking for another Wirral base.

Now Bev, our CEO, the Family Toolbox Team and the Breastfeeding Peer Support Team, have moved in to offices just 5 minutes drive from the Hub. Commerce House, Campletown Road, Birkenhead, CH41 9HP. There is lots of free parking, so ideal for any of our fantastic Breastfeeding Peer Support Volunteers that want to come in and make the most of the office space to do telephone support, etc



Do you, and your family and friends, shop at Tesco's in Wirral? If you do please VOTE FOR US!



We are delighted to let you know that our application to the Tesco Community Grants Scheme has been successful and our Empower Us project to buy equipment to benefit the children with complex needs that we support.

We will be put forward to a customer vote in Tesco stores. Voting through the Blue Tokens will commence in store from the first week of April 2022 and continue until 30th June 2022.

The project with the highest number of votes across your region will receive £1,500 the second placed project £1,000 and the third placed project £500.

So if you, or your family and friends visit these stores please remember to vote for us by putting lots of blue tokens under our name!

Tesco Metro Superstore - Birkenhead, Bebington Rd CH42 4QF

Tesco Express - Tranmere Express, Borough Road, CH42 9JG

STAFF NEWS

Our Family Toolbox Team

Although the Family Toolbox Team is new the staff team working behind the scenes of the website and with our partner organisations to ensure families can get the help they want when they want it is not. Since January 2019 we have had a Community Matters contract from Wirral Council and when this contract ends 31st March 2022 the staff working on that contract will form our new Family Toolbox Team.

Lynn Loughran - Lynn has been with us since April 2019 as our VCF Co-ordinator with our Community Matters Team leading, amongst other things, a range of networks for voluntary organisations working with children, young people and families. From 1st April will be our Family Toolbox VCF Partnership Officer managing the Family Toolbox Team. Lynn's role will be to promote and support growth and sustainability in the Family Toolbox Alliance services, and the wider VCF sector working with children, young people and families.

Katie Stewart - Katie has been with us as an administrator since January 2019. From 1st April her role will be quite different as our Assistant VCF Partnership Officer working very closely with Lynn.

Lynn and Katie will be joined by our 2 Community & Engagement Officers who will ensure professionals working with children and families are aware of services that can provide the correct interventions at the right time to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people, with the aim of preventing escalation of needs and inappropriate referrals to the statutory sector. Our 2 Community & Engagement Officers are existing members of staff too.

Sallie Taylor - Sallie has joined our Community Matters Team in January 2019 originally as an administrator, becoming an Early Help Co-ordinator in October 2019

Nikki Barker - Nikki has been an Early Help Co-ordinator with us since January 2019 But prior to that she joined us in September 2013 as a Complex Needs Co-ordinator.

New Staff

With Katie moving over from the admin team to the Family Toolbox Team, and Kathy who worked on reception leaving this month to move on to a new job in Wallasey, we have recruited 3 new administrators who will join us on 19th April. One full time to work in our Ellesmere Port office, and two part time to work at the Hub.

We also have a new Family Support Outreach Worker joining our team on 4th April. Alisha Kendrick will be providing short term targeted support for Wirral families.

THE STEVE MORGAN 20th ANNIVERSARY AWARDS

The Steve Morgan Foundation is a charitable foundation that funds a range of voluntary organisations across Merseyside, Cheshire and North Wales. We have had a number of grants over the years, and they currently fund our Family Support work in Birkenhead, and gave us additional funding during the pandemic when our income from our charity shops had to close.

The Redrow founder, Steve Morgan, launched the Steve Morgan Foundation in 2001 to support vulnerable people across Merseyside, Cheshire and North Wales. Since then it has grown massively and in 2020/21 the Foundation distributed a record £25.8m to charities struggling with the pandemic, helping more than 2.2m people in the process.

This is their 20th year of support charities that change lives and to mark this they held a very special Awards ceremony on Monday 28th March attended by our CEO, Bev Morgan, our Chair of Trustees, Ron Kearney, and our Volunteer Champion/Trustee/Family Support Volunteer, John Jones.

We were delighted to get first prize for Best Volunteer Team with turnover above £250,000, which means we get a donation from them of £12,000 - which we will use to support our recruitment, development and support of our amazing volunteers. This wouldn't have been possible without everyone of our amazing volunteers - Thank You!





Volunteers Week takes place 1-7 June every year. It's a chance to recognise the fantastic contribution volunteers make to our communities and say thank you. This is a time for us to come together and thank all our volunteers for your invaluable contribution.

We want to say thank you to all for all of the fantastic things that you have done to support Koala NW through the year. We appreciate all the help that you give to our families, whether it's in their homes, at our groups, gardening or helping to raise money through our charity shops!

KOALA NORTH WEST PRESENTS

WEDNESDAY 1ST JUNE

TEA PARTY

1 - 3 PM

We would like to invite you to our Volunteer Week celebration. As this is the Jubilee week, it will be a Jubilee themed tea party. If you would like to attend please contact the hub or your coordinator.
0151 608 8288 / admin@koalanw.co.uk

**@ Koala North West Hub,
Woodchurch Lane, CH42
9PH**

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SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN FAMILIES

There are plans for some displaced Ukrainian families fleeing the war in their own country to be accommodated in Wirral until it is safe for them to go home.

Koala NW will be working with The Steve Morgan Foundation, who are funding their relocation, and Wirral Multicultural Organisation who provide translation/interpretation services, to provide family support.

Could you spare a couple more hours a week to support a family new to this country?

Supporting them to get to know the new area they are living in?

Supporting them to ensure they have what they need?

Offering play/fun activities for the children?

If you are interested and have the time please let us know asap so we can put a list of interested volunteers together.

When we know exactly when and where they will be housed we will invite you in to a meeting about the next steps.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS!

We have a range of different volunteering roles available

- ❖ Befriending Family Support Volunteers to support in family homes or in group settings
- ❖ Volunteers to support children with a complex need/disability in family homes or group settings
- ❖ Charity shop volunteers. Including people interested in supporting us with e-marketing and sales, and visual merchandising

If you know anyone who may be interested tell them to get in touch:

admin@koalanw.co.uk or call 0151 608 8288

Our Volunteer Champion



Hello Volunteers

Wow, what a busy time it's been! Everyone has had to cope with the impact of Covid 19, not least our families and everyone who relies on the support of Koala NW and the wonderful work of our volunteers.

Fortunately, we seem to be finally getting back to some form of 'normality' and it is so much better to be able to meet face-to-face again at The Hub, our Ellesmere Port office and at our families homes.

I was delighted to join our wonderful Chief Executive, Bev and our inspirational chair Ron, at the recent Steve Morgan Foundation 20th Anniversary Conference and Awards. Steve has been a major supporter of charities and social enterprises, with particular focus on North West England and North Wales. Koala was delighted to be entered into an award for 'The Charity and Social Enterprise with the best volunteer team'. There were five finalists at the event and we were delighted to be awarded the first prize. It is an independent recognition of the fantastic work of Koala volunteers, so as a volunteer myself, as well as a Trustee (on behalf of our volunteers) I was absolutely delighted and very proud.

Thank you all for your support and I hope to meet up with more of you over the weeks and months.

Don't forget, if any volunteers want to discuss anything with me (in confidence) my contact details are; mobile 07970 652690 or email hillamaccounts@btinternet.com

Best Regards

John Jones



If you are a Family Support volunteer we have a few things going on over the next couple of months for families we are supporting in Wirral, Ellesmere Port & Neston, that the family you support may be interested in.

Easter Egg Hunt - Tuesday 5th April, 10am - 12p.m @ Whitby Park, Ellesmere Port

Easter Egg Hunt - Tuesday 12th April, 10a.m - 12p.m @ Birkenhead Park, Wirral

Queens Jubilee Celebration/Fun Day - Monday 30th May, 11a.m - 12p.m @ The Hub, Koala NW, Wirral

Queens Jubilee Celebration/Fun Day Tuesday 31st May, 11a.m - 12p.m @ Trinity Church, Whitby Rd, Ellesmere Port.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS THAT HAVE JOINED US OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Here are some photos of just a few of them



**A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS
YOU ARE CHANGING LIVES EVERY DAY**