

Supported Internship Success!

We are really pleased to report that Dejean Hay, a student on the supported internship programme at Bromley College, secured paid employment at the Co-op in Selhurst last month. Dejean has worked really hard to achieve this and his tenacious attitude towards work has paid off. This really is exciting for him and even better in this current climate as he is now recognised as an essential worker.





Hi everyone,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well during lockdown.

The Bulletin is here to bring you the latest information on our services and let you know what's running online during these unprecedented times for us all.

We also have some of our usual updates and some nice catch ups from before lockdown.

Hopefully we can bring a bit of cheer with our great photos from those who have already taken part in the '2.6 challenge' on page 15. Check them out and see if you're inspired to take on a challenge yourself.

Take care and stay safe all.



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Events and Activities

Please check our website or phone our helpline on 020 8466 0790 to find out about our latest online events.

<https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-update/bromley-mencap-services-update/>

Bromley Well has various support sessions running virtually during May and June, please check the website for the details.

<https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/>

Bromley Well online services include Employment Support workshops, workshops for people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, Autism support sessions as well as our fortnightly Facebook quiz night.



COVID-19 UPDATE

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a big impact on all our lives. At Bromley Mencap we have reorganised all our services with most staff working and providing support remotely from home. Unfortunately, we have had to stop our community activities including our Day Opportunities Programmes and our training courses at the Lodge. We hope to reopen them as soon as it is safe to do so.

We have continued to provide Short Breaks for families and run our PA Agency having successfully sourced PPE for our staff. New models of support have been provided and we are now all familiar with Zoom meetings, online workshops and virtual activities!

We know that many disabled and vulnerable people are struggling to cope with the lockdown and the new world we are living in. People with learning disabilities find it difficult to understand the impact of COVID-19 and the need to stay inside to be safe. This adds great pressure on families and is having an impact on the wellbeing of many disabled people. A survey by the Office for National Statistics showed two thirds of disabled people feel COVID-19 is having a negative impact on their mental health. Many feel worried about the future, are stressed, bored and anxious. Many cannot use technology without support. They have lost their networks and friends. They are worried about scams and being exposed to abuse. Our Helpline is here to support you.

Please call us if you need our support on 020 8466 0790.

During this time our funders have been very supportive, and all our funders have agreed to how we have redesigned our services and support. We are also pleased to have secured new funding during this period including a grant from the London Community Emergency Fund to provide essential shopping and medication support for families in need, disabled people unable to leave their home and people on low incomes.

Despite this we have seen a drop in our community fundraising income as most of our fundraising events had to be cancelled. This income is important to us as it helps to fund the core costs of the organisation. In line with most charities in the UK we have set up a COVID-19 Fundraising Appeal. Thank you to everyone who has donated to the appeal so far. Please support us here: https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/BromleyMencap_COVID-19_Appeal



Government Social Care Action Plan

The Government has published an action plan that sets out how it will support the adult social care sector in England throughout the coronavirus outbreak, so that everyone who relies on care will get the care they need throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan looks at support in people's homes, residential care and nursing homes and community settings, and applies to people receiving direct payments, those with personal budgets, as well as those who fund their own care. Read the action plan here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-adult-social-care-action-plan>



EHRC warns that remote video hearings could disadvantage disabled people

As courts and tribunals switch to online hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is examining whether people with mental health conditions, cognitive impairments and neuro-diverse conditions including Autism and ADHD are experiencing discrimination and being put at risk of miscarriages of justice due to a lack of support.



<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/april/ehrc-warns-remote-video-hearings-could-disadvantage-disabled-people>



What are supermarkets doing to support disabled people?

Kamran Mallick, the CEO from Disability Rights UK, wrote to the eight largest supermarket chains to find out what they are doing to support disabled people to access food and other household items. He asked them to answer the following questions:

1. How can customers let you know they are disabled or have a health condition which means they need to shop in a particular way?
2. How can disabled customers get priority for online shopping slots?
3. For disabled customers who can't use new technology, can they put in their order by telephone?
4. What special arrangements do you make for people with mobility impairments, who want to shop in-store, but who find the length of the shop and standing in long queues difficult?
5. What new measures are you bringing in that might help disabled people, to shop more easily and safely?

Unfortunately, some supermarkets are yet to reply and not all questions were answered. You can read the responses here: <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/april/supermarket-responses-druk-letter>

We support people with physical disabilities. Due to current Government guidelines, we have suspended face-to-face contact and outreach services. However, we are still offering support and services via the phone and emails.

We also recently set up a Facebook page and are currently hosting our workshops and quizzes on there as well as uploading lots of useful information.

You can follow our Facebook page by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/BWPhysicalDisabilities/>

You can join our private Facebook group by clicking here:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/BWPhysicalDisabilities/?source_id=100447464959432

Monthly Workshops

We managed to hold one workshop in March just before the lockdown. This was delivered by Ciji, who is the Community Learning and Outreach Worker for Bromley Libraries. Ciji discussed the number of libraries within the borough and how libraries have transformed over the years and are now offering lots of e-books, music etc. via the internet.

Libraries also offer so much more than just books, such as computers, printing, exhibitions, play station games, and more. During lockdown, Bromley Libraries are now hosting story-telling sessions via Facebook. More information here:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/BromleyLibraries/videos/?ref=page_internal



PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR FUTURE WORKSHOPS WILL BE ON FACEBOOK UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Contact Us:

If you are interested in attending one of our online workshops or would like to find out more about our service, please contact the office on 020 8466 0790 or one of our Support and Information Officer

Sue Fuller on 07484673090 or email Sue.Fuller@bromleywell.org.uk
Chetan Raval on 07421106922 or email Chetan.Raval@bromleywell.org.uk

NEWS - Physical Disabilities

The football coach with cerebral palsy helping others learn the game



Jamie helps coach disability football as part of the EFL Trust and the Wembley National Stadium Trust's Every Player Counts initiative, which has seen more than 11,000 people get involved with football over the past three years. Article written prior to lockdown restrictions. More here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/51756384>

Disabled train access: 'I feel less human' due to lack of lift

When Joshua Reeves tried to catch a train to Cheltenham from his local station in February he was faced with a steep flight of stairs. All trains in the UK were meant to be fully accessible by January 2020, under new standards brought in under the Equality Act. But some carriages still do not conform with the law, and a number of stations have steep steps and no lifts or ramps for people to access platforms. Article written prior to lockdown restrictions. More here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-51628453>



Former para gets 'life changing' bionic arm

A former para from Colchester who lost his arm while serving in Afghanistan has become the first veteran to get a 3D printed limb on the NHS.



Sports broadcaster Dave Clark talks openly about his Parkinson's diagnosis



Dave and his clinical psychologist wife Carolyn, decided to tell their young sons early on that their dad had the neurological condition to make it a normal part of family life. Carolyn has since helped to write a guide on talking to children about Parkinson's.

Read the full news story here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/disability-51133674>

Why hasn't AI changed the world yet?

When Kursat Ceylan, who is blind, was trying to find his way to a hotel, he used an app on his phone for directions, but also had to hold his cane and pull his luggage. He ended up walking into a pole, cutting his forehead.

This inspired him to co-develop Wewalk - a cane equipped with artificial intelligence (AI). It detects objects above chest level and pairs with apps including Google Maps and Amazon's Alexa, so the user can ask questions.



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-51632840>

The Cabin Fever Podcast

Screenwriter Charlie Swinbourne is a guest speaker. He reveals that he is keeping busy during lockdown as he develops storylines for the deaf characters in EastEnders and Casualty. He also explains what it's like to be deaf at a time when everyone is social distancing and where mouths are covered by masks, making lip-reading impossible. Listen here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/disability-52399692/i-hope-they-ll-make-masks-with-cut-outs-for-lips>



Supporting People with Learning Disabilities

We support people who have a learning disability or learning difficulty through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings or contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support.



The Learning Disability Pathway has recently supported in such matters as housing and child protection meetings by phone, benefit letters by post and Freedom Pass renewals by email.

Outreach

Our face-to-face outreach sessions in Cotmandene and Mottingham are currently on hold. Instead, we have created an online space on Facebook to support some clients and for people to check-in. This is a private group where only members of the group can see what you have written or posted. We are available every working day and are currently in regular contact with many clients on this platform.

If you would like to learn more, please join the group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BWLearningDifficulties> or contact Rob for help with setting this up.



Bromley Well LD Workshop Group

Private group · 41 members

Monthly Workshops and Drop-ins

We have held two online workshops over the past two months. These have, of course, been very different as we are not able to get together at the moment.

In March, we held an Exercise and Wellbeing workshop through our private group on Facebook. We discussed ways that we can stay healthy and continue to exercise during lockdown.



An outdoor walk



Meditation

In April, we held a 'Coping Well with Covid' workshop. We discussed people's concerns around physical health, mental health, following government guidelines, and many other issues that have come up over this time. Our next workshops will be held virtually on 23rd May and 25th June.

If you would like more information about the Learning Disability Service or to book your place on the workshops, please call, text or email Rob Morgan on 020 8466 0790, mobile 07482 558 660 or email robert.morgan@bromleywell.org.uk

NEWS - Learning Disabilities

Coronavirus - Staying Well at Home

Easy Read Online has created a guide to help you stay well. It contains a lot of useful information about Covid-19 as well as maintaining our mental and physical wellbeing: https://www.easy-read-online.co.uk/media/53250/free-document-on-staying-well-at-home-easy-read_v1c.pdf Here is the latest Photosymbols poster following the new rules issued by the Government: <https://www.keepsafe.org.uk/resources>



Freedom Pass (an update)

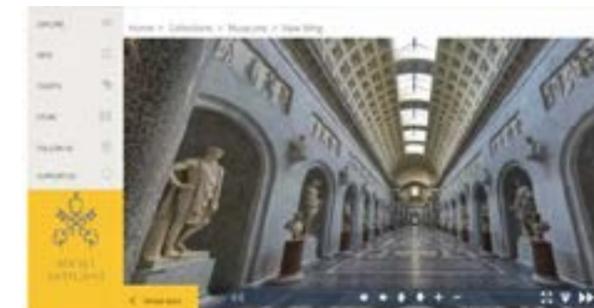
For the people who had a Disabled Persons Freedom Pass which expired on March 31st, there were a lot of issues with the renewal process. Many passes were delayed but you should have received your new pass by now. If you still have not received your new pass or have an expired pass, please contact us or the Bromley Freedom Pass Department. <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200022/help-with-transport/120/freedom-passes-for-people-with-disabilities>

THINGS TO DO DURING LOCKDOWN

Virtual Gallery and Museum Tours

From the Tate Modern to the Vatican Museum, many tours of global cultural heritage are available by clicking the link below:

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/mar/23/10-of-the-worlds-best-virtual-museum-and-art-gallery-tours>



Virtual Theatre and Plays

London's National Theatre has been keeping audiences on the edge of their sofas during lockdown by streaming plays from its archives on YouTube for free. Take a look here:

<https://www.timeout.com/london/news/national-theatre-live-full-schedule-of-plays-streaming-on-youtube-each-thursday-for-free-042320>



Bromley Well Quiz Night

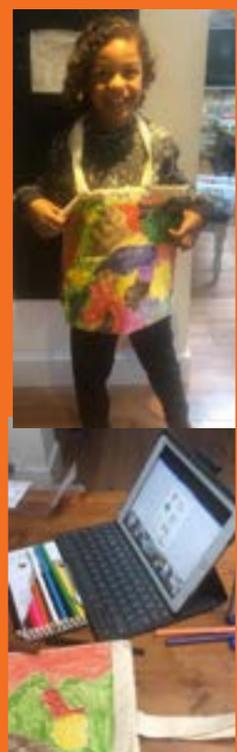
Bromley Well clients are eligible for a fortnightly quiz on alternate Thursdays from 7pm through our Bromley Well Quiz Group. Join us for some tricky questions plus a chat and a laugh:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bromley-wellquizgroup>



Mutual Carers News and Events

We provide specialist support for mutual carers where one of the carers is aged 55 + with a disabled son, daughter or sibling living at home. Due to the current situation with COVID-19, we had to postpone both the older carers' workshop and lunch and cookery class until further notice. However, we have been busy providing telephone support, checking in regularly with all families and providing emergency shopping and medication support. Please contact Tina Penn, Mutual Carers Support Worker, on 07719426680 or phone the helpline on 020 8466 0790 if you need support. We do hope everyone is staying safe and keeping well.



Update from the Children's Service



These past few weeks have been very busy indeed! The wonderful Children's Service Team have been finding lots of lovely things for everyone to join in whilst we're all spending time at home. The Bromley Well Young Carers group and our Bromley Mencap Wellbeing Services sibling groups, funded by BBC Children in Need, have been accessing Zoom classes and events.

Our Short Breaks team have been busy finding ways to continue to support people in our communities. It has been a little tricky, but they are still providing support where available to families who need it and working on different ways to keep people safe and able to work.

For the team at large, we've really missed being together in our office! But we've been staying positive, finding ways to make the days a little brighter by going out for walks and finding different areas in our houses to work. We've enjoyed the newfound flexibility to our days but are hoping we can be back together soon.

We hope you're all staying safe and well. If you would like more information about our services, please feel free to send any enquiries to:

youngcarers@bromleywell.org.uk
autism.familysupport@bromleymencap.org
shortbreaks@bromleymencap.org
Wellbeing – Julie.cook@bromleymencap.org

Our Young Carers have done everything from cookery and yoga, to book clubs and 15+ social forums. Our Wellbeing team have delivered lots of creative craft sessions and they're keeping busy coming up with new ideas! We've had great feedback from those who have attended. Autism Family Support continues to run drop-in sessions on Zoom to help families come together and have discussions during these difficult times. There have been workshops in partnership with CASPA which have been successful and informative. The team continues to support families in the pathway with lots of information and links to online activities.

Supporting People with Autism

We support people aged 16 and over who have an Autism diagnosis, or who believe they have Autism and are seeking a diagnosis, through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings or contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support. The Autism Pathway can support in such matters as social care appointments, general correspondence, and Freedom Pass renewals.

Outreach

Due to the Coronavirus we have suspended our outreach sessions in line with the Government guidelines. We are still available via phone, email or virtually using Zoom. Please get in touch for more information.

Monthly Workshops

We are currently running workshops via Zoom in association with CASPA on the last Tuesday of every month and they have been well attended. In our most recent workshop, we discussed the health and wellbeing of participants. At the end of the meeting we were treated to a song by Elvis. Everyone said they felt the session was very positive.



Our next planned meeting is on Tuesday 26th May. This will take place via Zoom. If you would like any more information about the Autism Support service/or to book a place on our next workshop, please call or text Chris Towers on 020 8466 0790, Mobile: 07597 048 674 or email chris.towers@bromleywell.org.uk



Important Information:



The National Autistic Society has put together a downloadable health passport resource in the event of someone being admitted to hospital during the current situation, especially with limited visiting in operation. It is endorsed by the Department of Health and NHS England and is designed to help autistic people to communicate their needs to doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals. More info here: <https://www.autism.org.uk/about/health/hospital-passport.aspx>

Facebook

We have created a new Facebook page and group for you to use to get information and speak to others with Autism: <https://www.facebook.com/BWAutismSupport/>



World Autism Awareness Week

Due to Coronavirus, we had to suspend all planned events, as did many of the local partners. We held a check in and chat event on World Autism Day via Zoom which was well attended and appreciated by those who got involved.

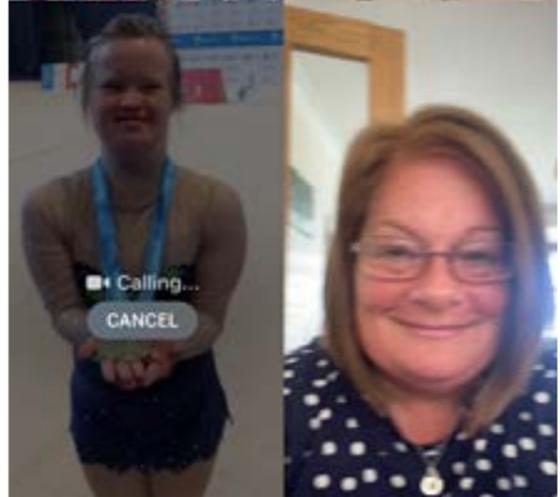
Staying Safe Online

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has released new advice to help people to stay safe while online during the coronavirus outbreak. More information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-staying-safe-online>

Employment Services Update



Ian (in Lockdown Shock)!



Step Forward is still open for business!

We have set up WhatsApp groups for virtual workshops, had video calls with the candidates, sent out weekly workshop packs, formed a Facebook page and having one-to-one calls with everyone. And we are still in contact with employers.

In these days of lockdown, it is reassuring to know that everyone is coping fantastically well. It is lovely to speak to everyone each week and hear of all the different coping mechanisms people are undertaking. Heart-warming stuff!

We are pleased to say that the Step Forward candidates who have secured paid employment have kept their jobs and are still being paid.

Well done to everyone, you are all inspirational!

Let's hope we all see each other very soon. Stay Safe!

Ian and Sharon

Virtual Disco!

Our regular DJ, Steve Catchpole, has put together a series of podcasts for you all to enjoy while in lockdown as we can't hold our adult discos right now.

Listen here: <https://buff.ly/2yXiiNr>

If you have any requests for tunes or shout-outs, get in touch with Matt Yule either by calling 020 8466 0790 or emailing matthew.yule@bromleymencap.org

For anyone who hasn't met DJ Steve, here he is showing his 'good side' next to his temporary set-up at home.... Steve, you're a star and fast becoming a legend to us all!

You can follow Steve on Facebook here:

<https://www.facebook.com/steveteadbags/>



Congratulations to Vicky!

Earlier this year we were delighted to hear that Victoria Cannon, one of our volunteers, was due to receive an award from the Mayor of Bromley in recognition of her outstanding voluntary service.

Vicky has volunteered for Bromley Mencap in excess of 11 years. She regularly volunteers at many of our events and activities including Monday Afternooners, Outdoor Club, adult discos, workshops and Christmas parties. The support she gives ensures our activities run smoothly and these events would not be possible without her help and that of other volunteers.

Vicky received her award on 11th March from the Mayor of Bromley, Councillor Nicholas Bennett, at a ceremony held at the Civic Centre.

Well done Vicky and a huge thank you for all your support from all the staff and members of Bromley Mencap.



EMERGENCY COVID-19 APPEAL

Due to the cancellation of most fundraising events and funding for some of our activities, we have set up a Bromley Mencap Emergency Coronavirus Appeal to raise vital funds so we can continue our vital work and we thank you so much for all your generosity so far.

You can donate to our Emergency COVID-19 Appeal here: [virginmoneygiving.com/fund/BromleyMencap_COVID-19_Appeal](https://www.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/BromleyMencap_COVID-19_Appeal)

Shop online and raise money for us at the same time



Sign up to easyfundraising and shop online. Retailers include Amazon, eBay, Argos, M&S, Tesco, Debenhams, Next and Boden, among thousands of others. Every time you shop a small donation will be made on any purchase at no extra cost to you: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bromleymencap/>

You can also sell unwanted items on eBay and give all or some of the proceeds to Bromley Mencap. It is simple to opt for our charity under the Advanced Options. If you need any assistance just contact us!

Socially Distancing Fundraising Ideas

If you would like to continue to fundraise for us, here are some more ideas that you can do safely from home.

Tea and cake, anyone?

Do you enjoy baking & catching up with friends?

Help us to continue our vital work by hosting a virtual coffee morning using Zoom, the HouseParty app or WhatsApp and raise essential funds for us at the same time.



Online pub quizzes & bingo are all the rage since lockdown, so why not meet up with friends virtually and have a giggle. There's lots of free resources online to help you come up with questions, such as <http://freepubquiz.weebly.com/>

Or why not set yourself a challenge and get sponsorship? This could be to increase your fitness by completing laps of your garden, planking or hula hooping for a set time. If you prefer a more restful challenge, why not do a sponsored reading contest? The possibilities are endless.



Don't forget you can keep updated on what is going on at Bromley Mencap by following us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

2.6 Challenge

With the postponement of the London Marathon, a number of families and staff took part in the 2.6 Challenge instead. The 2.6 Challenge involved doing anything active which included a 2 and a 6. For example, walking 2.6 miles or 2.6 km, doing 26 press-ups, completing 26 pancake flips or disco dancing for 26 minutes. As you can see, our families ran, jogged, weight lifted and cycled to help raise vital funds. Thank you so much to everyone who took part. We really appreciate your support.



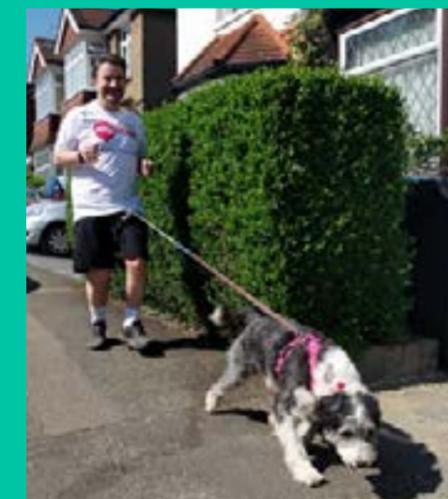
Mike Martineau completed 114 presses of 2.3kg on each arm (262.2kg in total!)



Wendy Muckle and son James ran 2.6k



The Moore family completed a 26k cycle ride from their home to the Thames and back



Matt Yule (Adult Support Services Manager) ran 2.6k with his dog, or rather his dog took Matt on a run!

Copy deadline for June/July 2020 is 1st July

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