

welcare

strengthening families since 1894

Dear Friends

It is always a great pleasure to share news from Welcare and thank you for your continuing support and prayers. Your enthusiasm and support make a huge difference to us all as we continue our work to offer effective practical and emotional support to children and their families.

I am thrilled to report that the work of the East Surrey team, under the leadership of Catharine Adjei, has been recognised for achieving Exceptional Performance in the three categories measured as part of the annual Family Centre performance conversation with Surrey County Council (our commissioners). This is for our work with families with more complex needs and reflects the hard work of the whole team exceeding the contract specification and reflects the wider value and contribution of Welcare to the community. Part of the monitoring process required us to bring to life the voice of the child in our work and you can view a short film we made on our website at www.welcare.org/story/erin-tom

Whenever I speak at churches or community groups there is a lot of interest in the Caring Dads programme, an accredited 17-week course to increase men's awareness of abusive or neglectful behaviour and enable them to take responsibility for their actions. One of the men who completed the course in March gave a candid interview to encourage other men who need help to consider attending the course which you can read below.

The impact of trauma on our ability to learn, regulate emotions, and respond flexibly and in a planned way were all themes explored on the second day of our Trauma Informed Practice training session which focussed on skills for practitioners to work in a trauma informed way and the importance of resilience. You can read more below.

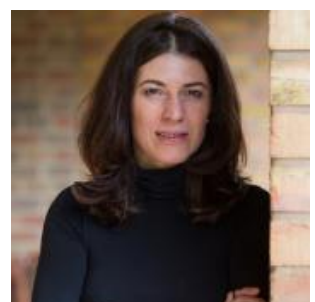
Following on from the success of our Lent lunches, supporters have been enjoying even more fantastic fundraising events including afternoon teas, a quiz night with fish and chip supper and, as the weather has improved and fundraising moved outdoors, our Bromley Parish Reps are organising #Walk4Welcare and Greenwich supporters are busy planning the 2023 Charlton Walk on 9th September. Sue Floyd will be representing us in the London 10K on 9th July. If you would like to join Sue running for Welcare or support any of our existing events please visit our website at www.welcare.org/fundraise or call 020 7820 7910.

I hope you have a fantastic summer and I look forward to hearing and sharing your news in the September edition.

Very best wishes,



Anna Khan,
Welcare CEO



OUR LATEST NEWS

Trauma Informed Practice Training



We were pleased to host the second day of training and to welcome staff from other charities supported by The Mercers' Company. Led by Developing Together, the Social Work Teaching Partnership covering South West London and Surrey (we are a proud primary partner agency), the training recognised that trauma can affect individuals, groups and communities. **Trauma-informed practice** is an approach to health and care interventions grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological and social development.

We explored how we hold more power due to the nature of our role as practitioners and social workers assessing the parents and children we work with or **person of lived experience** (PLE). These power dynamics affect our interaction with other people and services e.g. in multi-disciplinary TAF or TAC meetings.

We were encouraged to:

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- Suspend judgmental thinking
- Value and accept everyone as individuals
- Think positively without imposing conditions
- Show positive belief in capacity to adapt and change
- Work alongside giving value to differences

The training also explored the need to develop **resilience** especially as resilience and trauma are not fixed traits but are dynamic and influenced by the context or system that the person operates in.

Resilience can come from the individual or the community or family in which they thrive or a combination of both. The approach of an agency or charity supporting an individual, whether it is trauma-informed or not, impacts on the resilience of the individual or the community.

Our concluding exercises focused on how we could **reframe our language** and view common statements with a more trauma-informed lens.



Families we've helped: Mark



Mark is the father of 4 children, Lily (10yrs), James (9yrs), and twins George & Oliver (7yrs). Following a recommendation from the Family Courts, Mark referred himself to the Welcare Caring Dads programme because he wanted to learn more about abuse, abusive relationships and how to address issues in relationships, as well as get support to improve his relationship with his children and enable him to become a better father.

There was a history of domestic abuse within the family and Mark's relationship with his children's mother had broken down. After the break down of the relationship the family initially had a private agreement in place for Mark to see the children, but unfortunately due to continued conflict between the parents they were unable to manage Mark's contact with the children in this way. Therefore, Mark had to apply through the courts for contact and was granted supervised contact every other week with the children. Mark was also advised to attend a Caring Dads course so that he could gain a better understanding of the impact of the historical domestic abuse and create a more positive relationship with his children.

Mark was very enthusiastic throughout the 17-week course. After he completed it, Welcare had the opportunity to interview him about his experience. His response was very interesting and insightful; keep reading for the full interview.

What were your expectations before coming to Caring Dads?

Before I came to the Caring Dads programme, I was a little bit sceptical about how it would make a positive impact on me, my situation, and my relationship with my children. I had little expectations but was prepared to give Caring Dads a chance. I wanted to try to understand the inside views of professionals and try to establish whether I was in any way not a 'caring dad'.

How have you found the course?

I found the course to be informative and practical. It was 17 weeks long, which was a commitment for everyone that attended. The facilitators were non-judgemental, gave really sound advice, challenged mindsets where needed and gave examples of alternative solutions to situations.

How has the course impacted your relationship with your children?

I feel that from attending the course I have a better understanding of what my children may have experienced from my previous relationship. It has shown me that they may have been affected more than I had first believed from arguments and domestic situations that occurred in my relationship with their mother. From attending Caring Dads, I have learnt techniques to help me to become a better father and a more caring dad even when challenging situations arise. In all, I would say that Caring Dads has helped me to understand what my children may need more.

Is there anything you've learned about yourself?

I have learned that however strongly I felt that I was already a good dad, there is always much more to learn and understand. I have learnt the importance of being a dad that can adjust and grow, and the skill of listening and being a good teacher to my children. I have learnt that I am the type of parent that has the drive and the ambition to go above and beyond, and I want to be a present, loving father to my children. I want to be the best teacher I possibly can be to ensure my children grow and develop in the best way possible, and I want to enrich their lives and to always be there for them as a caring dad. I knew I had this motivation before going to Caring Dads, but I have learnt new skills which will help me achieve my goals as their dad.

What would you say to a dad thinking about coming to a Caring Dads course?

I would recommend Caring Dads to all dads, not just the ones that are separated, going through family courts, or ordered to attend a course for fathers. Ideally, this course would be offered to all fathers when they are expecting to become fathers, as it would help them to prepare for all eventualities and difficulties that parenting may challenge them with. Caring Dads supports fathers with so many different situations, including domestic issues between partners, communication and listening skills, and what to watch out for with parenting if a relationship becomes strained. The Caring Dads course supports fathers to always put the needs of their children before their own and to remain child focused.

What have you enjoyed most about the course?

I enjoyed meeting people from different walks of life, different religions, and cultures, and listening to their opinions, and sometimes challenging those opinions. The challenges set by the facilitators each week were a way to look deep into my self-belief system and really understand who I am by questioning myself and my own morals. I was challenged to make decisions that were based upon what I was learning and to try to change aspects of my parenting that may have not been completely child focused.

What did you find most difficult?

Taking the steps to attend the Caring Dads course in the first place was probably the most difficult part. I struggled with being open and communicating about the most sensitive areas of my life, which was especially difficult at first amongst strangers. However, it became easier as time went on and the relationship between the participants of the group developed. It was also difficult for me to listen to anyone talk about my faults or for my views to be challenged, but all in all I am pleased that they were. It has enabled me to appreciate the opinion of others more and being able to listen to criticism, which is a very constructive tool to have.

*names have been changed and a stock photograph used

Walk for Welcare



Whatever time of the year a Walk 4 Welcare is a great way to keep fit, spend time with friends and family, and improve your wellbeing by being out in nature, all whilst raising money to support vulnerable families in your local community.

Whether you choose to walk around your local park, along a river, or between landmarks, walks are very simple to organise and can be very rewarding and fun for all ages.

You can raise money for Welcare by arranging a collection, setting up a JustGiving page, or asking people to donate via our donation form.

For more information visit our website at www.welcare.org/campaign/walk-4-welcare/ or contact us at fundraising@welcare.org or 020 7820 7910

To see more of our news from 2023 visit www.welcare.org/news-listing

EVENTS

Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 1-2.30pm
[Working Together With You at Welcare Family Centre, Redhill](#)
24 Warwick Road, Redhill RH1 1BU

Want to find out more about what Welcare does? This is the perfect opportunity to visit the Welcare Family Centre in Redhill and meet the East Surrey team
Ring 01737 780 884 or email redhill@welcare.org for details

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www.welcare.org

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