

Welcome to SmallTalk

July 2018

FosterTalk's e-newsletter.

Sun, sea and savings!

Make sure you check our discounts page on our website before you book your holiday here or abroad. You can save on your holiday but also on airport parking, car hire and travel insurance. With the savings you make, you can treat the family to some discounted summer clothes too!



Just log into the members' area of our website, click discounts and communications, search under 'holiday' and **start shopping!**

Working tax credit deadline



Please ensure you have submitted your working tax credit renewal figures (the figures on the renewal should be the figures that you will put on your 2018 tax return) by **31 July 2018**.

Failure to do so will result in your working tax credits being stopped and you will be asked to repay all of the money you have received since April 2018. For help and advice, call our tax & benefits team on **01527 836910**.

Showing physical affection to foster children

Are you ever concerned about how or if you should show physical affection to your looked after children and young people?



Fostering Advisor Kamarun Kalam shares her advice in our summer magazine **here**.

If you need advice around this matter or have been subject to a complaint or allegation, call us on **01527 836910**.

Free childcare to be extended to foster carers for the first time

The Department for Education has announced that free childcare will be extended to foster carers that also work outside the role of foster parent for the first time from September 2018.

FosterTalk members provided feedback on this during discussions organised by us and the DfE. If you'd like to be involved in any future focus groups on important issues relating to fostering, contact marketing@fostertalk.org.

If the foster parent and their partner (if any) hold additional employment outside the role of fostering, they'll be able to apply for the additional 15 hours free childcare, providing the provision of these hours is consistent with the child's care plan and would have to be authorised by the local authority. The local authority will determine whether 30 hours childcare is appropriate for the child and confirm that foster parents meet the eligibility criteria. You can read more **here**.

Mental health check pilots

The Department for Education has announced £1m funding to trial mental health assessments for children entering care which will last for two years.

The DfE said the programme will identify a child's mental health and broader wellbeing needs, including whether a referral to a more specialist service is needed. They will also consider which professionals should be involved in the assessment, and develop best practice that ensures each child's unique needs are at the centre of the process. Read more **here**.

24-hour medical helpline

As the summer holidays begin and families go away



away from home, remember if anyone feels unwell you can call FosterTalk's 24-hour medical helpline. Medically qualified practitioners are on hand to answer any queries you may have on first-aid, health and wellbeing. With this peace of mind you can completely relax especially if you are in a non-English speaking country.