



CIO CHARITY No 1202217
'MAKING CHANGES TOGETHER'

MCT Durham PCF's

Summer

NEWSLETTER

★

2026





Who are MCT?

We are here to support, inform and empower
parent carers across County Durham.



MCT Durham are the official DfE (Department for Education) designated Parent Carer Forum for the Durham Local Authority area.



We work with the Local Authority, Health, Social Care & other organisations (not only locally but nationally) in order to make changes for families of young people with special educational needs & or disabilities.



If you ever have ANYTHING you want us to forward / raise at a higher level or you have any questions about services we are always available via email:



INFO@MCTDURHAM.CO.UK



PARENT CARER LED

Run by parents and carers
for parents and carers.



INCLUSIVE

We represent all families
across County Durham.



INFLUENTIAL

We speak up and work
together to drive change.



INFORMED

We share information and
signpost to support.



As we approach the summer holidays, here at MCT we look forward to unwinding a little and spending time with our families making memories.

What have we been up to so far this year?

- Attending meetings with the local authority, health and social care.
- Attending National Network of Parent Carer Forum's regional meetings.
- Attended the National Parent Carer Conference in Sheffield.
- Working alongside different charities and services.
- Co-produced a fabulous ADHD leaflet based upon parent carer feedback.

- Since February, did lots of work and meetings regarding the SEND reform white paper 🤔
- Hosted 4 face to face Parent Carer workshops
- Planned, organised and hosted our annual conference.
- Planned, organised and hosted another fabulous Carer's Week event.





What we have coming up...

We have been planning ahead ready to hit the ground running in September. Our plans for 26/27 are to:

- Host a SEND family event in October or November**
 - Host a range of workshops in February or March**
 - Attend / host coffee mornings**
 - Host some Christmas sessions**
 - Host a soft play info event**
 - Attend our usual meetings**
- Possibly host more Have Your Say sessions regarding SEND reform and topics ad-hoc**
 - Continue to design / share our new info booklets**
 - Continue to share information, surveys etc on our website & social media**



CARER'S WEEK 2026



This year we decided to do things a little different and hosted a garden party to allow parent carers to let their hair down and have a much deserved break!

Our guests got to enjoy; garden themed games, a photobooth, sensational summer mocktails, food and hot drinks.

We finished the celebration off with a few games of bingo.



GARDEN THEMED
GAMES



PHOTOBOOTH



SENSATIONAL
SUMMER MOCKTAILS



FOOD &
HOT DRINKS



GAMES OF
BINGO



MCT
DURHAM
PCF

MCT MAY CONFERENCE

6TH MAY 2026



6th May saw the 34th MCT conference take place at the Ramside Hall Hotel and Spa. We welcomed a large number of parent carers to our day and evenings conferences.



We had guest speakers from Education and health as well as local services that were keen to share what they have been up to and what they offer. We also had a huge range of stalls from short break activities to information stalls.



It was a great mix of old and new faces in which we shared a positive and interactive day.



This year, due to the release of the SEND White Paper, the focus was primarily on SEND Reform as we believed it was essential that parent carers and families have the opportunity to share their perspectives to make changes, not only for our own children / young people but for future generations too.



Thank you to everyone who attended, contributed and helped make the day such a success.

MCT TED



MCT Ted is our mascot teddy bear. At our 2025 conference one of our members came up with the lovely idea of sharing our mascot with you all and let him tour as far as possible.



Our Trustees and Volunteers have a bear each. We continue to take Ted out and about to share where we go for self care, short breaks, family holidays as well as taking a more proactive role in sharing what MCT is up to as well as showing you all services that are available for our children.



Keep your eyes peeled on our social media platforms & website to see where Ted is going to be next.



#mctdurhamtedontour

**MCT Durham
Ted on tour**



#mctdurhamtedontour

MCT
DURHAM
PCF

Ted's Adventures

Ted loves to explore new places and support parent carer events and services across the region!



Crete



Jet2 plane to Majorca



Choice Wellbeing



Beamish Museum



MCT Workshops



Hole in Wand



Turkey



MP



Blackpool Zoo



Reighton Sands



Sendsational Gala



Ted is always on an adventure, raising awareness and showing support for parent carers, children and families across our community.



Summer Jokes



How do we know that the ocean is friendly?

It waves!



Where do sheep go on holiday?

The Baa-hamas



Why did the fish blush?

Because it saw the ocean's bottom



What did the beach say to the tide when it came in?

Long time, no sea!



Why did the elephants get kicked out of the pool?

They kept dropping their trunks.



Why was the vegetable banned from the cruise ship?

It was a leek.



Did you hear about the sunflower that was excited for summer?

It wet its plants.



Why do bananas wear sunscreen?

Because they peel.



How do celebrities stay cool in the summer?

They have many fans.



Summer fun

SUMMER WORD SEARCH



Find the hidden summer words!

S	U	N	S	H	I	N	E	B	A	Y
B	E	A	C	H	W	A	V	E	S	U
S	U	N	G	L	A	S	S	E	S	M
I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M	P	O	O
P	A	L	M	T	R	E	E	S	L	C
S	A	N	D	C	A	S	T	L	E	E
O	C	E	A	N	F	U	N	T	I	D
F	L	I	P	F	L	O	P	S	B	A
B	A	L	L	S	U	M	M	E	R	Y
S	H	E	L	L	S	P	L	A	Y	X

WORD LIST

SUNSHINE 
 BEACH 
 WAVES 
 SUNGLASSES 
 ICE CREAM 

PALM TREES 
 SANDCASTLE 
 OCEAN 
 FLIP FLOPS 
 BALL 

SHELLS 
 PLAY 
 SUMMER 

REFRESHING SUMMER MOCKTAIL

A fruity, fizzy drink
that's perfect for sunny days!



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup watermelon juice
- 1/2 cup pineapple juice
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tbsp honey or agave syrup
- Sparkling water
- Ice cubes
- Fresh mint leaves
- Lime slices (for garnish)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 In a glass, combine watermelon juice, pineapple juice, lime juice, and honey. Stir well.
- 2 Fill the glass with ice cubes.
- 3 Top with sparkling water and give it a gentle stir.
- 4 Garnish with mint leaves and a slice of lime.



Sip, relax, and enjoy your summer!

EASY ICE CREAM SUNDAE



Simple, sweet, and oh-so-delicious!



INGREDIENTS

- 2–3 scoops of your favorite ice cream
- Chocolate syrup or caramel sauce
- Whipped cream
- Sprinkles
- Chopped nuts (optional)
- Cherry on top
- Waffle cone or cookie (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Add 2–3 scoops of ice cream to a bowl or sundae glass.
- 2 Drizzle with chocolate syrup or caramel sauce.
- 3 Top with whipped cream.
- 4 Add sprinkles, nuts, and a cherry on top.
- 5 Add a waffle cone or cookie for extra crunch.



Dig in and enjoy your sweet treat!

TOP SUMMER TIPS



Here at MCT Durham PCF we understand that the Summer holidays can be a challenging time. So we have put together a few tips which may just help.



Prioritise your own health and well being.

1



Create a sensory box of your favourite things together. You never know when you may need it too!

2



Take advantage of groups, charities etc who host activities in summer. They are often bookable in advance which means you can prepare your child.

3



Embrace flexibility

.....
Prepare daily snack boxes full of safe foods.

4



One bad day, is exactly that, one bad day. There are more days of happiness to come.

5



Who cares what others are doing. Do what you know is best for your family. You know best.

6

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

There are several local charities and organisations with activities for young people and families over the summer.

We have a list of providers on our website but a few examples below, please check them out:



Activities and places- Subject to availability.



SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FOR PARENT CARERS



WAVES – PARENT CARER PEER SUPPORT GROUPS



Waves

NHS
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust

Parent and carer support group in County Durham and Darlington

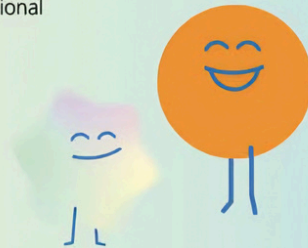
Do you care for a child or young person with emotional or mental health difficulties?

Join Waves, our parent and carer support group.

Led by a friendly parent peer practitioner and supported by a CAMHS staff member, the group will listen, support and give advice and guidance based on their own lived experiences.

There's no need to book.

If you have any questions, email the team at TEWV.waves@nhs.net



2026 Locations and dates:

Durham

Lanchester Road Hospital,
DH1 5RD
10am to 12noon

1 July
5 August
2 September
7 October
4 November
2 December

Darlington

Mulberry Centre,
DL3 6HX
10am to 12noon

7 July
4 August
1 September
6 October
3 November
1 December

Newton Aycliffe

Acley Centre,
DL5 4PE
6pm to 8pm

15 July
19 August
16 September
21 October
18 November
16 December



CHOICE WELLBEING CIC

Rainbow Guide, Therapeutic Services, Counselling



Receiving your child's diagnosis can be an emotional rollercoaster for the whole family. At Choice Wellbeing Service CIC, we're here to help you navigate that journey. As parent carers ourselves, we understand first hand the challenges you face. We offer a holistic support system, providing practical advice, signposting to relevant services, and a safe space to simply be heard. When life feels overwhelming, our in-house counselling service offers. We've been there, we understand, and we're here to walk alongside you. We believe in building trust and empowering you, because you are the expert of your own experience.



We also offer resources such as The Rainbow Guide, After a Diagnosis Guide, and our Navigating SEND directory.



All created with parent carers in mind, to help you be fully informed, empower you and build up your SEND knowledge.

Your Child, Your Choice.

Because one size doesn't fit all

- ✓ The right information
- ✓ At the right time for you
- ✓ Tailored by you
- ✓ For you & your family

Visit our website
www.choicewellbeingcic.co.uk or use the QR code to access our resources

SEND is understood as focused on learning and mainstreamed and supporting families by providing support, with parents, where we know freely things can get tough.

An impartial parent reading the evidence, clear and easy to navigate.

Pick up your resources today!



SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FOR PARENT CARERS

Support for adults


Mental Health & Emotional Support
 for Adults in County Durham

This is a great starting point to help you access support

Local services:

Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance | 0300 304 5527
 The Alliance brings together organisations from across the county to offer mental health, wellbeing and recovery services.
durhammentalwellbeingalliance.org

Wellbeing for life | www.wellbeingforlife.net | 0800 876 6887
 Helping you find what's around you and how to make the most of it. Call free for expert advice.

Durham and Darlington Talking Therapies | 0191 333 3300
www.talkingchanges.org.uk
 A self-help, counselling and talking therapies service designed to help anyone with common mental health problems.

Manhealth | 01388 320023 | info@manhealth.org.uk
www.manhealth.org.uk
 Providing weekly ongoing peer support services to men across the northeast of England.

CRUSE | 01642 210 284 | www.cruse.org.uk
 Advice, information and support to anyone who has been bereaved.

The Recovery College Online | www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk
 Providing a range of online courses and resources.

Durham Locate | www.durhamlocate.org.uk
Durham County Council | www.durham.gov.uk
 A directory where you can search for all kinds of local support.

Specialist local services:

TEWV Crisis Resolution and Intensive Home Treatment Team 111, option 2
www.tewv.nhs.uk/services/crisis-resolution-intensive-home-treatment
 This service is for people of all ages including children and young people who are experiencing a mental health crisis.

If U Care Share | 0191 3875661 | www.ifucareshare.co.uk
 Offer a range of services aimed at prevention of suicides, intervention and supporting those bereaved by suicide. Text IUCS to 85258 for a free and confidential chat, (in partnership with SHOUT).

Support for Children and Young People


Mental Health & Emotional Support
 for children, young people & families in County Durham

This is a great starting point to help you access support

 **Local Support**

KOOTH | www.kooth.com
 Free, safe and anonymous support around mental wellbeing for 11 years +

Family Hubs | 03000 261 111 | www.durham.gov.uk/helpforfamilies
 Advice and practical support across all aspects of family life

Emotional Health & Resilience Team | 03000 263 532
 Emotional health, advice and guidance for 5 – 19 years

Education & SEND Support | www.countydurhamfamilies.info
 Support for children with special educational needs or disabilities

Investing in Children | www.investinginchildren.net
 A children's right organisation, creating spaces to be heard

Waythrough | 01325 731 160 | www.waythrough.org.uk
 Health and wellbeing support for LGBT young people aged 15-24 years

DurhamWorks | 03000 262 930 | www.durhamworks.info
 Supporting 16-24 year olds not in education, employment or training

Recovery College Online | www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk
 Educational courses and resources to support mental health and wellbeing

Children's Social Care First Contact | 03000 267 979
www.durham.gov.uk/FirstContact
 Report a concern about a child's welfare

CAMHS - Single Point of Access | 03001 239 296 | www.tewv.nhs.uk
 Community mental health teams for children (0 – 18 years)

TEWV Crisis Resolution and Intensive Home Treatment Team | 111, option 2
www.tewv.nhs.uk/services/crisis-resolution-intensive-home-treatment
 This service is for people of all ages including children and young people who are experiencing a mental health crisis.



National Support for Parent Carers

National services:

NHS Mental Health Services | 111, option 2
www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health

Find out how to access NHS mental health services and where to get urgent help.

NHS Better Health. Every Mind Matters
www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

Find expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.

Samaritans | 116 123 | www.samaritans.org

The Samaritans are there to listen. 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

Mind | www.mind.org.uk

Resources from Mind can help find what's right for you and your family.

Rethink Mental Illness | www.rethink.org

Offers online support, understanding your rights, information on local Rethink support groups.

PAPYRUS | 0800 068 4141 | www.papyrus-uk.org

A charity dedicated to preventing suicide and promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Calm: Campaign against living miserably | 0800 58 58 58

Access the helpline to talk and find support. 5pm-Midnight 365 days a year
www.thecalmzone.net

SANE | 0300 304 7000 | www.sane.org.uk

Sane and the SANEline offers one-to-one emotional support for those times you feel you need it most. SANEline is open from 4pm - 10pm every day of the year.

Shout | www.giveusashout.org | Text 85258

Anxious? Worried? Stressed? Get 24/7 help from our team of Crisis Volunteers.



North East and
North Cumbria

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust



County Durham
Care Partnership



57002 4/15



National Support

Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families | www.annafreud.org

Self-care to look after our own mental health

Charlie Waller Memorial Trust | www.cwmt.org.uk

Resources for schools and families

Childline | 0800 1111 | www.childline.org.uk

Confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem

Headspace | www.headspace.com

Free tools around mindfulness and meditation

NHS Better Health Every Mind Matters

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

Resources to support children and young people's mental health

MindEd | www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk

Safe and reliable advice about young people's mental health

Young Minds | www.youngminds.org.uk

Support for mental health during the pandemic

The Mix | 0808 808 4994 | www.themix.org.uk

Free, confidential support for under 25 via online, social or mobile

BEAT Youthline | 0808 801 0711 | www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Provides support for children and young people with an eating disorder

NHS 111 | www.nhs.uk

Get medical help near you

Remember your **local school** and **GPs** are available to help.
You are not alone, we can get through this **together**.



North East and
North Cumbria

County Durham
Care Partnership



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust



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MCT Contact Information



Email: Info@MCTDURHAM.CO.UK



Website: WWW.MCTDURHAM.CO.UK

Find us on social media



WWW.facebook.com/makingchangestogetherDURHAM



WWW.instagram.com/makingchangestogetherdurham

