

# Barnet Parent Champions

Caring for people, our places and the planet

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**BARNET**  
LONDON BOROUGH

Parent Champions are dedicated parent volunteers who generously contribute a few hours per week to engage with fellow parent/carers, offering guidance on accessing organisations that can provide them with support, such as local Children's Centres, Youth Service, Early Help and Family Information Services

# Parent Champion Programme in Barnet

The Parent Champions Programme in Barnet has been actively supporting parents/carers, children, young people, and families, fostering a community-centred approach. The current network is made up of 3 strands Coram, EPEC and VRU

The 3 strands have been pulled together to support parent/carers with infants through to secondary school. This proactive approach ensures that parent/carers are well-informed about the services available to them and their children within their borough. This also supports with informing them of issues such as grooming, CSE, youth violence, and gangs, enabling them to recognise potential warning signs with the goal of making a significant impact on the next generation. Our Parent Champions are able to use their own experiences to support other parent/carers

# EPEC, Coram & VRU

## **Empowering Parent Empowering Communities (EPEC) (ages 4 to 11)**

- This 8-week parenting course is led by parents who have completed an accredited EPEC training and receive ongoing training, supervision and support from parenting specialists. Courses run throughout the year in easily accessible locations across Barnet, such as schools and Children Centres.
- EPEC groups are highly interactive, involving an engaging and creative blend of small and large group discussion, role play, demonstrations, information sharing and reflection. Parents practice and use new skills in everyday life to achieve specific goals.
- Our parent group leaders receive ongoing supervision and support from parenting specialists and have fulfilled DBS and other mandatory requirements.

## **Coram (ages 0-5)**

- Coram Family and Childcare is the leading national charity in the field of policy, research and advocacy on childcare and family issues, working closely with government, local authorities, businesses and charities to achieve positive and long lasting change for families across the UK. Their vision is a society where all families are well-supported and have genuine choices about their lives. Coram Family and Childcare was formed when the Family and Childcare Trust joined the Coram group of charities in August 2018.

## **VRU (ages 9-18)**

- The London Violence Reduction Unit has provided funding to sustain Barnet's thriving Parent Champion Programme. This programme empowers parent/carers to support one another by sharing information about available resources within the borough and using their own personal experiences to offer support, guidance and the ability to signpost, all with the aim of reducing youth violence.

# Parent Champion Programme in Barnet

## **Parent/carers encounter various challenges, including:**

- Accessing information for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Managing school transitions
- Managing behaviours
- Uncertainty about meeting their children's needs
- Increased anxiety related to youth violence in the community
- Growing concerns about children's mental health and support
- Worries about exclusion and rising NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)

**The Barnet Parent Champions take an active role in aiding parent/carers by assisting with applications for DLA and EHCP. Additionally, they provide guidance by signposting to SEN services within the borough, sharing information and schedules related to activities for children aged 0-19, and directing families to available support services. Moreover, they offer valuable peer-to-peer mentoring support.**

# Parent Champion feedback

*'I became a parent champion in 2023 and have mainly been supporting CC's staff in running the Stay & Play sessions at their various locations, as well as doing some outreach work in local parks and venues, like handing out leaflets and talking to parents, carers and families about the services available to them in our area.'*

Alessandra, Parent Champion BEYA Nursery & CC

*'I have recently become a parent champion. I have 4 children ages 15, 11, 8 and 4 years. My 15 and 8 year old have additional needs. I became interested in being a parent champion after hearing that my personal experiences, knowledge of information and support out there within Barnet could help other parents access services that could be useful to them'*

Lauren