



NPT Parent

The Official Magazine of The Parent Network of Neath Port Talbot

Fancy a **FREE CUPPA?**

coffee chats

Every week, we're visiting neighbourhoods across the county, offering a free cuppa, a friendly chat and the chance to meet us and voice your opinion on the issues that matter most to you as a parent.

Come visit us the next time we're in YOUR neighbourhood!

For the complete schedule of where we'll be and dates, go to our website or contact us.



Wink, Wink, Nudge, Nudge...How do YOU keep the romance alive?

"Our favourite thing to do is shower together. It's something we have to do anyway, so we do it together."

Kara, mother of 1



"My husband and I have five children...To keep romance in our lives we send each other e-mail talking about our desires."

Judy, mother of 5

"Our secret is simple, and we only recently rediscovered it: Going to bed at the same time... (It) facilitates 'pillow talk' and all that goes with it."

Wendy, mother of 2

"Every evening we have a few minutes of 'Mummy and Daddy talk' when we get home. The kids have to amuse themselves for a little while, but they're better served by parents who've had a chance to reconnect."

Randy, father of 2

"I asked a friend to take some sexy pictures of me as a gift for my partner. Nothing showed in the pictures — just almost. Let me tell you, it spiced things up for quite a while!"

Tracie, mother of 2

"I tell my wife that I love her as often as I can and I make sure that I cuddle with her at

bedtime; sometimes I just cuddle 'instead' — it always pays off right then, and later on (wink, wink)."

Steven, father of 3

"We send short, sweet text messages to each other's mobile phones."

Pamela, mother of 2

"We make it a point to go out every week without the kids (we have five). We have a limited budget, so sometimes it's just a McDonald's, but it is time spent together away from the stresses of home and office."

Diana, mother of 5

"Sometimes my husband and I take a vacation day during the week and have a date while our daughter's at crèche. We have a leisurely lunch, then catch a movie."



Victoria, mother of 1

"If my husband is on the computer, I go over and rub his back to let him know that I'm thinking of him. And if I'm doing the dishes, he'll come over and pat my bum. With a 2-year-old in the house, sex isn't as plentiful as it used to be. But with all that playing around, it doesn't take long to get in the mood."

Nicola, mother of 1

Taken from www.babycenter.com

new website

Our new, interactive website is now online!



WWW.

TheParentNetworkNPT
.org.uk

Have a look!

Don't have a computer?
No problem!

FREE internet access
is available at your local library!

For information, ring
01639 899 829

Have you hugged your child today?



Love your mobile?

R U
txt mad?

Join our

text circle

What is it? The text circle is a kind of 'chat room' for your mobile. You will be part of a group of parents who hold conversations by text.

You can pose a question or respond to one by sending a text message to the moderator*, who will then send it out to everyone in the text circle.

For more information, contact Nicole.

Or, to join the text circle now, text "join the circle", your name and your mobile number to: 07913 941 211. You will then be added to the text circle right away.

**You will only have to pay for the single text message you send to the moderator.*

real parents real advice



"My teenage son and I used to get along great, but now he barely says hello. I'm feeling hurt and worried...any advice?"

Mark, father of 3

"Sit down with your son and tell him you're concerned because your relationship with him has changed somewhat. Ask him if there is anything that's bothering him, and reassure him that no matter what you care for him and love him. And don't 'push' for info."

Rob, step-father of 2 teen boys

"I recently discovered that my 10 year old daughter had shoplifted. When I confronted her about it, she said that she knew I wouldn't let her get the item (which is true), so she took it. We did punish her, but a couple weeks ago I caught her doing it again (this time chocolates)! How do we stop this?"

Kate, mother of 1

"When my son did that, I made him take the item straight back to the shop, explain what he'd done and apologise. He was very embarrassed. He hasn't done it again."

John, father of 2

"My 14 month old has suddenly started hitting us in the face and throwing full-on temper tantrums both at home and at crèche. How do we 'nip this in the bud'?"

Lara, mother of 1

"Don't 'feed the behaviour'. Walk away or place the child down in a safe place and 'effectively ignore' the behaviour. I've learned that tantrums don't work without an audience!"

Joan, mother and grandmother

"After Uni, my 22 year old step-son moved back home while he looked for a job, which was fine. But now he's gotten a job, he still wants to live at home so he can 'save a bit'. I want to ask him to start paying some room and board, but his father is happy to let things stay as they are. What should we do?"

Claire, step-mother

"I think you should all agree that he contributes a percentage of his wages toward the household, which would let him save and prepare him for the real world. Or agree a date for him to move out."

Nicola, mother of 2

"Let's face it, we'd all take a free ride if we could get it. Have you talked about this with him directly? Maybe he's just waiting for you to ask."

Simon, father of 1

Submit YOUR questions to:
"Real Parents, Real Advice" at The Parent Network

Coffee Chat with Nicole James



We recently sat down for a Coffee Chat with **Nicole James**, The Parent Network's **Development Officer**. It's her job to ensure The Parent Network meets parents' needs and is a success.

Nicole and husband Mark are parents to Rhys, age 1.

What are your favourite TV shows?

"My tele is usually on Cbeebies or Cartoon Network these days. My favourite shows to watch with Rhys are Fimbles and Blue Cow. I find myself singing the theme songs in the car! For myself, I have been watching 'Fairly OddParents' a lot lately (does that make ME a fairly odd parent??). And if I can stay up for it, I like the CSI series."

Why did you take this job?

"Because as a parent, I've found that it's really hard to know where to go for information on things, or to even just talk with someone who really understands what I'm going through. I work full-time, so that makes it even harder.

"I also found that decisions and policies seem to be made FOR me, instead of WITH me...I mean, we're the parents—we're the experts on our kids—so shouldn't we have a real say in things?

"I wanted to do something about all of that, and this was the perfect opportunity!"



What are your personal goals for 2005?

"Hmmm...finishing a cup of tea while it's still hot would be nice, and having a proper lie-in. Oh—and just once to actually catch-up on all the laundry!"

What is your main goal for The Network?

"To get as many parents involved as possible! I think the biggest task for 2005 will be to get the word out about the Network and get people involved so as many parents as possible can benefit from it and we can really make a difference. There really is power in numbers!"

Personally, what are you looking forward to most in 2005?

"Seeing my family. I'm originally from the States, and it's really hard living far away from family and not being able

to see them very often, especially now that we have Rhys."

What are you looking forward to most with The Parent Network?

"Definitely 'The Ultimate Parent Event' - it's going to be so much fun! And also doing the Coffee Chats because I can meet fellow parents (and eat lots of biscuits!)."

Any final thoughts?

"Yes—if you see me walking around with little handprints of smeared Wheatabix on my clothes, please tell me!"

The Jamie Owen Show

Word about The Parent Network is certainly getting around!

Nicole James, Development Officer for The Parent Network (centre), has been a guest on the Jamie Owen show (Radio Wales) twice—in September 2004 and February 2005—speaking about The Parent Network of Neath Port Talbot and The Ultimate Parent Event.

Also featured on the show was Ann Fritter from The Parent Network of Caerphilly County Borough (left).





What Is The Parent Network?

We are a **network of parents** who live across Neath Port Talbot County.

We define 'parent' as anyone who has primary responsibility for the care and upbringing of a child or young person age 0–25 years.

In other words, we are:

mums, dads, foster parents,
adoptive parents, and step-parents;
single, partnered and married parents;
full-time and part-time parents;
'younger' and 'older' parents;
professional and stay-at-home parents;

ALL parents are welcome!

Through The Parent Network, you can:

- Connect with other parents
- Share your concerns and interests with people who understand
- Find support and friendship
- Get helpful information on lots of different parenting topics
- Enjoy special parent activities & events
- Voice your opinions on parenting issues in a way that really makes a difference.

IT'S COMPLETELY FREE!!!

Interested? Great!
Get in touch with us
and we'll tell you more!
(see below)

HOW TO CONTACT US:

The Parent Network of Neath Port Talbot

Phone: 01639 620 771 or 07913 941 211

Text: 07913 941 211

Fax: 01639 620 785

Email: info@TheParentNetworkNPT.org.uk

Web: www.TheParentNetworkNPT.org.uk

Post: 1st Floor - 4A Queen Street
Neath
SA11 1DL

Nicole James, Development officer

we need your help!

The Parent Network is run by **parents** like yourself who **volunteer** to help make the Network a success — **can you help us, too?**

You could help with activities and events, or with this newsletter, or with the website, or in our office, or with coffee chats, or be on our 'key committee'!
There's lots of different things to do!



Whether you have a lot of time or very little, there's sure to be **something fun and interesting for you to get involved with!**

Plus, we may be able to help with your **travel** expenses, **childcare** costs, and **meals!**

**To learn more,
contact Nicole.**

*(see back page for
contact details)*

This newsletter is produced by The Parent Network of Neath Port Talbot. A **free copy** is sent to all members of The Parent Network. **Membership is free** and open to **all parents/carers** in Neath Port Talbot County. To join The Parent Network, or for more information, please contact us.

Pe bai'n well gennyh dderbyn fersiwn Gymraeg o'r daflen newyddion yma, cysylltwch â ni os gwelwch yn dda.

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