

HELPING REFUGEES, MIGRANTS, AND OTHER ETHNIC MINORITIES IN HARLOW, EPPING AND SURROUNDING AREAS TO INTEGRATE SUCCESSFULLY INTO OUR COMMUNITY



'Saturday Club'



A welcoming place for all

It is over three years since Saturday Club opened at Sure Start Centre, Staple Tye; to provide a wide range of services and activities for families with children from migrant, refugee and other Ethnic Minority communities.

The aim for this project is to create more facilities and activities for this community which will encourage participation of both parents and children to have an active fulfilling life and promote a positive attitude towards the future.

Many parents with young children meet here every Saturday and have a warm chat with other parents while children are playing and learning new skills. For many this is the only opportunity to meet with their own language speakers and build links with their own communities.

It is a multicultural environment where we learn and appreciate each others cultures as well as share experiences and better ways of integrating.

One of the mums' expressed herself: "Saturday is the best day of the week for me and my family and I am so happy to come here and speak my own language and get information from those who understand English better about events, activities or job opportunities that I would never know if I was staying home."

If you want to know more about the Saturday Club or you want to get involved as volunteer you can come to visit us any time between 10.30 am-1.30 pm; or give us a call on 01279 639442.

Mimoza Matoshi

Inside this month:

- Black History Month event
- Shocking consequences of living on vouchers, how can we help?
- 'Your Health Matters' event we are hosting at Sure Start, and more...

November Programme

Activity	Time	Venue
Saturday activities for families with children	10.30 am – 1.30 pm (every Saturday)	Sure Start Centre, Parnall Road, Harlow
Special Event Saturday 15 November	11.30 – 1.30 pm 'Your Health Matters' (see notice our newsletter)	Sure Start Centre, Parnall Road, Harlow
Drop-in	11 am – 2 pm Thursdays	2 Wych Elm, Harlow (Rainbow building)
Consultation and advice	By appointment only	2 Wych Elm, Harlow (Rainbow building)

DONATIONS

If you sympathise with our cause and want to make a donation you can help in these ways.

Tick box

'One off' donation

Monthly payment

Clothes and/or other items

For more details on how to make a donation please call our office:

01279 639442

Report reveals "shocking" consequences of living on vouchers

The Refugee Council has published a new report into the consequences of a government policy that forces some asylum seekers to live on vouchers while they are in the UK. The report shows that individuals, couples and families with children whose claims have been refused but who are still in the country, either because they are waiting to return home voluntarily or because it is not safe for them to return home, are being given £35 in vouchers per week to support themselves.

In 2000, the government introduced vouchers for people seeking asylum, but was forced to end this policy eighteen months later following widespread condemnation that it was inhumane. Since then, it has in fact continued this policy by stealth, giving vouchers to people who are at the end of the process and only entitled to limited support. The Refugee Council's report reveals the devastating impact this policy has had. People living on vouchers are hungry and in poor health. They are forced to walk miles to the nearest supermarket that will accept the vouchers, as they have no cash for public transport.

Families are struggling to buy nappies and other provisions for their babies, and some are so desperate they are exchanging £35 in vouchers for £25 in cash. Donna Covey, Chief Executive of the Refugee Council said: "The evidence contained in this report is truly shocking. Vulnerable people, often with babies and very young children, are being forced into severely impoverished circumstances as a result of a policy which this very government recognized as unacceptable seven years ago and abolished. "These are people who are fully co-operating with the authorities, who are in many cases just waiting to return home as soon as they can, or who are from places like Zimbabwe where it is not safe to return. They have no choice but to remain here for the time being, and are not allowed to work. Forcing them to live like this is disgraceful. "This situation is both appalling and unsustainable. The government must end this policy immediately, and offer people cash support. But the real solution lies in letting people work while they are here, allowing them to contribute to the communities in which they live and not forcing them to rely on inadequate state handouts."

Source: Refugee Council, publications and reports, for more information see: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

There are many families with children who live in Harlow, Epping and surrounding areas whose claims for Asylum have been refused and are waiting deportation from the home office. Some of them have very little children and are struggling to buy food, nappies and other essentials in order to live. They don't have the right to work or to claim any benefits.

If you feel you can support any of these families with anything (food, nappies, clothes etc) we will be delighted to hear from you:

The number to call is: 01279 639442/07756 769660

How can you help?

We are always grateful to our sponsors for their continuing help and partnership with various projects, activities, our outreach work and support in all we do. But from time to time we are asked from individuals who perhaps themselves come from another country and have found work or established businesses and feel they would like others achieve what they have done. They too have donated from their own pockets and through this have helped clients of ISS who are struggling, for that, we would like to extend a huge thank you on the behalf of the people they have helped.

If you too would like to help in this way either regularly or as a 'one off' we would very much welcome your call.

Please telephone: 01279 639442

Christmas Party

Saturday 13th December at

The Tree House Children Centre,

Sure Start, Staple Tye.

11.00 am to 1.00 pm

Booking fee: £2.50 per child (over one year old only)

To reserve your place please call our office on 01279 639442

Alternatively speak to one of our staff on Saturdays 10.30 am – 1.30 pm

'Your Health Matters!'

An event to be organised on Saturday 15th November 2008

At the Tree House Children Centre Staple Tye, Harlow.

From 11.30 am - 1.30 pm

Aimed at encouraging an active and healthy life style among our community members and also a full participation in the community.

Yoga, Belly Dancing, a display of useful information, a taste of food from different cultures and much more...

Every one welcome

Organized by:

Integration Support Services

Sponsor: VSRN-EE

West Essex PCT

'The Art' Awards

Has your child got a talent for drawing, painting or any art and craft work? Is he/she age between 4 and 12? Do you want your child to participate in our competition?

Please bring his piece of work at our office/Sure Start centre before 30th of November with your name and address and the age of your child. Three awards will be given to three different categories for age group 4-6; 6-9 and 9-12; The winners will be selected by an independent board and will be announce on the second week of December.

ISS Trustees/Volunteers Needed

Do you have a passion to work with the community? Do you want to represent your own community at our board meetings, by bringing their voice to us and making a difference?

We need your experience, time and dedication to run our organization to the best possible standards. Please do give us a call for more information and we would be very happy to explain in more details the benefits and challenges of becoming a trustee or a volunteer.

Black History Month



Many activities were arranged across Harlow to celebrate Black History Month.

'PATAC' a voluntary organization based in Harlow organized a series of events and activities to raise awareness and inform the public on African culture, history and other elements of African Life. At the civic centre on Wednesday 29th October and Friday 31st October there was a display of information from local groups, and many traditional



costumes and decorative items to promote African and other cultures traditions and history.

It is very positive the fact that PATAC had involved and encouraged other groups from different cultures to be part of the event as a good way of promoting culture understanding and community cohesion.

Integration Support Services displayed a wide range of information for those who are new in our community and need support with integration.