

# CHILDCARE

## BENEFIT CHANGES

From April 2013, thousands of households in Croydon will be affected by changes to the benefits they will receive. People will be looking for work to make up the reduction in the benefits they will receive, and many people with children will need to find childcare support.

### FREE CHILDCARE

If you have a three or four-year-old child you are already entitled to 15 hours of free childcare per week for a year through a nursery childminder, pre-school or nursery class. Each childcare setting has its own scheme. The Croydon Information and Support Service can give you information about the settings and schools near you where your child could benefit from the entitlement.

☎ **020 8726 6400**, option 5.

### ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE THROUGH FAMILY SPACE

You can search the user-friendly database of more than 300 childcare providers and 200 organisations that support families in Croydon at [www.familyspacecroydon.co.uk](http://www.familyspacecroydon.co.uk)

Here you will find links to discover your childcare options in Croydon such as finding pre-schools, registered childminders, day nurseries, registered nannies, play schemes, and out-of-school clubs.

You can also search the database for other services, including places you can take your children for fun; where you can get money advice; where you can go for help if your child is living with a disability; help for you and your child with school learning; keeping safe and staying healthy.

In February we will launch an updated version of the Family Space Croydon website. Alongside the database, you will find information to cater for every family's needs, including useful documents for parents and carers, our recommended top 10 useful contacts, the latest information and news of events in the borough.

### CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Our children's centres offer services, activities and support for families with children under five. They are open to all and you do not need an appointment to come along. Most activities, apart from childcare, are either offered free or at a small cost.

Every centre is unique and provides a wide range of services and activities you might need as a parent or carer with a baby or young child, including:

- health services like breastfeeding support, baby clinics, nutrition and post-natal groups;
- drop-ins and 'stay and plays' for parents and carers to bring their babies and children to play;
- information from Croydon Information Support Service;
- jobs, careers and training information for parents and carers who are thinking about looking for work; and
- childcare or early education.

# HELP AND ADVICE

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## Care to Learn

If you are studying and aged under 20 at the start of your course, Care to Learn can help you pay for your childcare costs while you are learning.

☎ **0800 121 8989**, option 1  
🌐 [www.gov.uk/care-to-learn](http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn)

If you're aged 20 or over and you are on a further education course you may be able to get discretionary learner support to pay for childcare. Each college has its own scheme. Contact your local college to find out more.

## Childcare grant

If you are in full-time higher education, you can apply for a childcare grant to pay for childcare costs for children aged under 15, or under 17 if they have special needs.

🌐 [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

## Child maintenance options

Impartial information and support to help separated parents make decisions about their child maintenance arrangements.

☎ **0800 988 0988**  
Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm, and Saturday, 9am to 4pm  
🌐 [www.cmoptions.org](http://www.cmoptions.org)

## Discretionary learner support

If you're aged 20 or over and you are on a further education course you may be able to get discretionary learner support to pay for childcare. Each college has its own scheme. Contact your local college to find out more.