

# LAUNCHING 04.04.2022

## Wirral's Family Toolbox

Over the last few years, we have been listening very closely to our parents, carers and children as they tell us what family life in Wirral is like. We found out more about those times they need a bit more support, and how they want to feel when they're getting that extra help. Their stories told us about the key areas we need to strengthen and helped us shape our priorities - putting a big focus on how support feels for each person, making access to support joined-up and making sure it's 'ready to go' as and when families need it.

This new approach will be known as Family Toolbox, and instead of trying to 'fix' families it'll focus on giving them tools to find their own answers. We want families to hold the power: what do they want to change?

We all have our part to play for Wirral's families, and, while the Council will continue to directly offer vital social care services, families have told us that earliest help needs to feel different from us as a Council for them to engage sooner and more fully. In Wirral, our vibrant and skilled community sector supported families through the Community Matters initiative, and there are many more already doing so much with families. Family Toolbox lets them lead the way.



**Elizabeth Hartley**  
Assistant Director: Early Help  
& Prevention

### Family Toolbox encourages families to ask:

**"Could I...** use my own resources?  
find new information?  
talk to someone who can help?  
try an activity that could help?  
share my learning with others?"



### What is Family Toolbox?

Family Toolbox will launch in April 2022 and be available to all parents and carers. It aims to make resources and support more readily available, and it puts the power right in the hands of families to work out what they want to change for themselves, and what steps they want to take to do that.

Family Toolbox is made up of digital tools and resources, brilliant people and welcoming places. The Family Toolbox way of working prioritises building families' confidence and skills so they can make the most of their own strengths and support networks.

[familytoolbox.co.uk](https://familytoolbox.co.uk)

## Who's behind Family Toolbox?

The Founding Members of Family Toolbox are people families already know and trust: Caritas Shrewsbury, Ferries Family Groups, Foundation Years Trust, Involve North West, Koala North West, Shaftesbury Youth Club and WEB. These organisations have been funded to work together in an Alliance with WMBC over the next 5 years as a minimum, to help Family Toolbox grow and develop.

While the Family Toolbox site will tell families about all the organisations on Wirral that work to support children, young people and families, the Founding Members of the Family Toolbox have committed to making their support free from referrals and thresholds, so families can access support as and when they feel they need.

**In the coming months Family Toolbox will begin to build a network of Wirral organisations that share its values too, so that families can quickly identify the people and organisations who are there to help if they need it.**

## What's going to be available for families?

Family Toolbox is a collection of local people, places and experiences that families can get involved in either online, at [www.familytoolbox.co.uk](http://www.familytoolbox.co.uk) or in person through various Family Toolbox member and partner organisations across the borough.

The online side of the model is a mobile-friendly website that Wirral's parents and carers can use to find resources, people and places to help them with anything specific they want to work on.

They can:

- find ideas and information to help them, through a searchable bank of tools
- find out about local support services through a searchable directory of organisations and available support
- introduce themselves to an organisation they'd like support from
- identify their own goals and what they want to learn about, monitoring their progress along the way
- find out what's happening in their area through a dedicated 'what's on' section.

If families want to go directly to an organisation for support, they can find contact details for local and national organisations on the site to get started in person instead.

There's an accessibility toolbar embedded into the site for families who need it, which can be found through the little person symbol in the right-hand corner of the screen. This does a range of things including translation, read out loud and adaptation of colours or font sizes.

**[familytoolbox.co.uk](http://familytoolbox.co.uk)**

## How do families get the support they want?

Families can go directly to [www.familytoolbox.co.uk](http://www.familytoolbox.co.uk) to find all sorts of tools and organisations that can give the support they need.

Families told us that they want support from people they know and trust, so they can still ask the professionals in their lives to give them a hand to get started with the site.

The site can help families find great organisations to help them with specific things but if they'd prefer to find help in person, they can still go along as usual to local organisations, like children's centres.



Because life doesn't  
come with a manual

## How do I support a family to get help?

The main aim of the Family Toolbox is to give parents and carers what they need for family life so that they can use their own skills and tools before needing to access services.

You can support a family to access a huge variety of resources, people and places from across Wirral by first exploring the website at [www.familytoolbox.co.uk](http://www.familytoolbox.co.uk) yourself and then telling everyone about it!

If you're unsure about how best support a family that you're working with, you can check out the Growing Up Well Early Help guidance for professionals, provided by WMBC.

[familytoolbox.co.uk](http://familytoolbox.co.uk)