



## Autism

### [New measures to support people with autism announced](#)

A number of measures to improve support for people with autism and improve public understanding have been announced by the Scottish Government to mark World Autism Awareness Week 2019. In partnership with Queen Margaret University, a National Autism Implementation Team will work across children and adults services to improve the diagnosis process and care pathway for autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions, such as ADHD. To improve public perception, an awareness campaign with the charity Inspiring Scotland will encourage people to see autism as a different way of thinking, rather than a disorder that can be cured. In addition, work with Scottish Autism will be undertaken to improve the support given to newly diagnosed autistic people, while steps are being taken with Education Scotland to refresh the autism resource available to all schools.

### [Children's Hearings sensory toolkit launched](#)

A pilot sensory toolkit to support children and young people with autism who are attending Children's Hearings has been launched. Marking World Autism Awareness Week, the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) worked with the Reach for Autism charity to purchase sensory toys and gadgets to provide some comfort to children and young people with autism or other sensory needs. These are available in the Glasgow Hearings centre and will be available across the country later in the Spring.

[Autism](#)

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[Early Years and  
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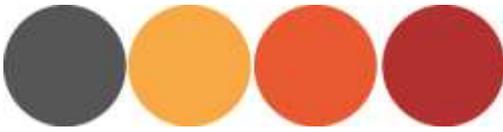
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### [Understanding Autism app launched by SSSC](#)

A new app to support understanding of autism has been launched by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Developed in partnership with Scottish Autism, Autism Network Scotland and the Richmond Fellowship Scotland, the Understanding Autism app is available on both Android and Apple devices and provides introductory information about six key aspects of supporting autistic people.

### **Child Protection**

#### [Joint inspection of services for children and young people in need of care and protection in Argyll and Bute](#)

A new type of inspection has identified key strengths in the way children and young people in need of care and protection in Argyll and Bute are supported and cared for. The Care Inspectorate is leading joint inspections which focus on how well services are working together to improve the lives of children and young people who have experienced or are at risk of abuse and neglect, and those who are, or have been, looked after by the local authority. Inspectors look at how staff across a range of services collaborate, including social work, health and education staff, police officers, and children's reporters.

In the first inspection of this kind, in Argyll and Bute, inspectors noted that overall, processes for recognising and responding to children and young people in need of protection were well established though risk assessments were not always carried out when necessary. The wellbeing of children in need of care and protection was improving, with most children and young people enjoying positive and caring relationships with staff and carers. However, inspectors also noted some areas for improvement, such as access to some specialist services and an inconsistent approach to data measurement and outcome-based reporting.

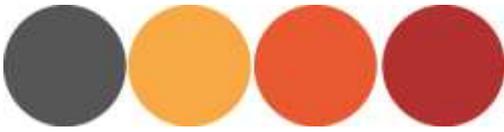
#### [Joint inspection of services for children in need of care and protection in Fife](#)

Inspectors have also identified key strengths in the way children and young people in need of care and protection in Fife are supported and cared for. Inspectors noted the benefits of robust and effective pre-birth planning; a wide range of flexible and responsive therapeutic services; effective, trusting relationships and nurturing care by staff and carers; and strong partnership working and a culture of learning. Inspectors said partners should further improve their recognition and response when children and young people experience neglect or repeated instances of harm, for example because of parental substance misuse, mental ill-health or domestic abuse.

### **Early Years and Childcare**

#### [SCMA seeking to work with councils to include childminding in funded ELC plans](#)

The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) is seeking to work more closely with local authorities across Scotland to explore how childminding can be included as an



option for funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) hours. The statement comes following the recent Childminding Summit, held jointly by the SCMA and the Scottish Government, which explored how childminding services are reflected within local authority expansion plans, what further barriers exist and what further action can be collectively taken to promote childminding as a positive choice for parents when accessing their ELC entitlement.

#### [Busy Bees installs defibrillators at its nurseries](#)

Busy Bees has installed automated external defibrillators (AEDs) at its 354 settings across the UK, Nursery World reports. The AEDs were supplied by Cardiac Science UK at a cost of £328,000. First aid trainers will complete a nationwide roadshow around 43 Busy Bees settings as part of Family Safety Week (1-5 April).

#### [BBC highlights calls for equal access to delayed school start nursery funding](#)

The BBC has published a feature on calls for parents who choose to delay the date their child starts school to have equal access to funding for an extra year at nursery. The article notes perceived inconsistencies across Scotland in relation to the funding of the additional year at nursery and a call from the Give Them Time campaign for extra funding for deferred places to be automatic.

#### [Article suggests outdoor learning helps attract male applicants to childcare course](#)

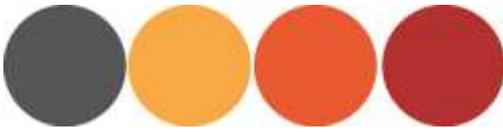
A new 12-week evening course on Men and Childhood Practice at Inverness College is the subject of a feature published in The Scotland on Sunday highlighting the attractiveness of outdoor learning among applicants. The article notes that those successfully completing the course are guaranteed an interview for the university's HNC Childhood Practice course in August. It is suggested that a new emphasis on outdoor learning is helping to attract men who would ordinarily be reluctant to apply.

#### [Providers facing pressures as Living and Minimum Wages are increased \(England\)](#)

Early years providers in England are facing additional pressures associated with the introduction of increases to the National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage. A survey conducted by the Early Years Alliance suggests that 42% of early years providers say they are likely or very likely to reduce staff numbers in the next 12 months, with 90% saying this is partly or entirely due to the rising minimum wages. More than two-thirds (67%) have already increased their fees for non-funded hours in the past year and 63% say they are likely to increase these fees again in future. The new wage increases were introduced on 1 April across the UK.

#### [New organisation for childminder agencies launched \(England\)](#)

A new organisation has been set up by eight of the 11 Ofsted-registered childminder agencies in England to enable them to work together more closely, Nursery World reports. All members of the [Organisation for Childminder Agencies](#) (OFCMA) must follow quality standards and a code of practice, and offer a minimum of two visits per year to their registered childminders in their second year of being at the agency.



## **Health**

### [Report predicts societal trends and shifts in relation to children's wellbeing](#)

A report summarising the predicted societal trends and shifts in relation to children's health and wellbeing over the next decade has been published by the Scottish Government. The horizon scanning review covers areas such as demography, the labour market, economic inclusion, education, technology and social patterns, providing the context in which future policy planning will be situated.

## **Justice**

### [CYCJ reflects on key messages and themes from work over past three years](#)

The Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ) has a paper setting out the findings and themes emerging from its work over the past three years. The paper poses a number of questions, such as 'Are children's rights protected and upheld by Scotland's youth justice systems?', and presents associated evidence to inform thinking and generate debate.

## **Looked After and Accommodated Children**

### [Care Review member calls for focus on nurturing adults looking after children in care](#)

Some adults looking after children in care are unable to offer a loving and nurturing environment due to a lack of resources and support, according to Sue Brookes of the Independent Care Review. Speaking at a recent Scotland Policy Conferences seminar on improving provision for children in care, Ms Brookes said it was "impossible for [workers] to nurture children and young people in the way we wish them to do, unless they are adequately nurtured themselves". She said "nurture for the workforce" is likely to be a key focus for the Review, The Herald reports.

## **Mental Health**

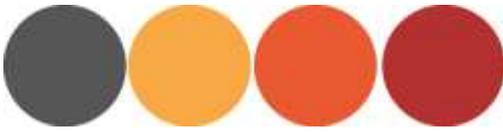
### [Call for social media impact to be considered in child mental health assessments](#)

Psychiatrists should consider the impact of social media when assessing children, according to the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych). RCPsych said questions about technology use should be a routine part of mental health assessments given possible links between harmful content or excessive time spent online and poor mental health. It has also called for social media firms to help fund new research into the links between technology use and mental illness.

## **Other**

### [Evaluation of Realigning Children's Services Programme published](#)

An evaluation of the Realigning Children's Services (RCS) Programme has been published by the Scottish Government. The RCS Programme has two strands: one



gathers data on the experiences of children and young people and maps expenditure on children and family services, while the other provides development and facilitation to Community Planning Partnerships to improve their joint strategic decision making in relation to children's services. The evaluation covers the first and second tranches of RCS to improve the effectiveness of the programme in its third tranche.

#### [Demand for SVQs expected to rise, according to annual SSSC data report](#)

Demand for SVQs for people working in adults and children's services is expected to rise, according to the latest annual SVQs in the Scottish Social Service Sector report by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The report, covering data from 2016-17 and 2017-18, presents a detailed analysis of the entries (registrations) and awards (certifications) in relevant SVQs for the adults and children and young people frameworks. It also includes the proportion of SVQ activity made up by modern apprenticeships in Scotland.

#### [Shortlist for 2019 Scottish Social Services Awards](#)

The shortlist for the 2019 Scottish Social Services Awards has been announced by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). A total of 29 finalists have emerged from 157 entries received nationwide, covering a mix of social services from third sector, independent and health organisations and local authorities.

#### [Iriss launches online 'finding evidence' course](#)

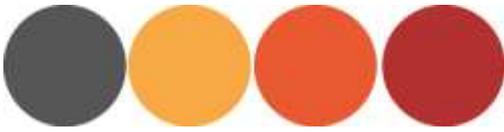
A three-week online course on the process of finding evidence to improve practice has been launched by Iriss. Information Specialist Annelies will take users through techniques for searching for, and evaluating, evidence, as well as highlighting other resources. You can work through the course in your own time and will receive an open badge on completion.

#### [Recommendations to support young human rights defenders published](#)

Eight recommendations on how those in power can support young human rights defenders in Scotland has been published by the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland. Promote, Protect, Defend, developed by the Young Human Rights Defenders Action Group, contains recommendations for the Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament and Scotland's main public bodies, linking to calls from the UN for states to do more to support young human rights defenders.

#### [Organisations to be supported by Healthier Lives Data Fund announced](#)

The six organisations to be supported through the Healthier Lives Data Fund have been announced by NESTA. Funded by the Scottish Government, the fund was launched in November 2018 to support organisations to design and test digital technologies that make data available and useful to citizens to help them lead healthier and more independent lives. A mobile app to support parents or carers of children undergoing assessment for autism is among the successful projects.



## **Disclaimer**

This weekly bulletin is produced as an update on the key issues concerning children and young people.

Each item in the bulletin has a hyperlinked headline that will take the reader to the original source.

We collate items from our parliamentary and Scottish Government monitoring covering health and social care news from throughout the UK, and current research and policy development. We use a variety of sources for the bulletin, including alerts from [Newsdirect](#), [Community Care](#), [Children & Young People Now](#) and [ISD Scotland](#).

We aim to be representative rather than comprehensive, so we try to cover only the main Scottish stories, along with some stories from the rest of the UK. The purpose of the bulletin is to alert readers to items of interest. It should be noted that these items are the works of others and are neither authorised nor endorsed by the Care Inspectorate, with the exception of publications which are identified as Care Inspectorate publications.

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