

Your Teenager, Their Future

Spring 2010

YEAR 11



**FIND OUT
MORE ONLINE**
www.cxstaffs.co.uk



**Hints and tips for parents and
carers of Year 11 students**

connexions

Staffordshire

Helping your teenager succeed

Hello and welcome to our parents' newsletter, brought to you by Connexions Staffordshire.

We offer a free and friendly information, advice, guidance and support service for all 13-19 year olds (and up to 25 years for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities). We also provide a range of advice and guidance services to help adults get into learning or work.

Our Personal Advisers (PAs) can give information, advice and guidance to young people on a wide range of areas including:

- careers (all our PAs are qualified careers guidance practitioners who will provide impartial guidance)
- courses, training, Apprenticeships, Higher Education and information on finance (e.g. EMA, student loans)
- personal development opportunities (such as volunteering, sports or arts, mentoring or community involvement)
- staying healthy and staying safe
- developing positive relationships.

PAs work in schools, colleges, Connexions Centres and other local community venues across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. They are available at Parents' Evenings in schools.

PAs will also keep in touch with your teenager as they move into adult life, to ensure they are making the most of the opportunities available to them.



Why Year 11 is so important

We work with young people in school from Year 9, helping them to plan and develop the skills and knowledge they need to make important decisions about their future when they get to the end of compulsory education.

We help young people to:

- Find out what sort of career they are interested in and what other possibilities they might consider.
- Consider and research careers that will suit their abilities and interests and advise them about the different routes they can take to progress into the career area that they are interested in.
- Find out about different qualifications, how they fit together, and the many different ways they can be studied. For example, in schools, sixth form centres, FE colleges, or via apprenticeships. Also, how studying can be enhanced by voluntary and community work to build a wide range of skills and experience.
- Complete application forms, write a CV and get ready for interviews.
- Plan for making the most of exam results (there will be extra PAs on hand in schools around results day and extended opening hours in Connexions Centres to offer help and advice).
- Consider the financial aspects of learning, for example, Education Maintenance Allowance, and if HE is part of their plan, student loans and grants.

“It’s vital that your teenager gets professional careers guidance. Come and talk to us at your local Connexions Centre, call 0808 1000 434 or visit www.cxstaffs.co.uk”

Further learning after Year 11

Full-time courses at school, a sixth form centre or a local further education (FE) college

Schools and colleges offer a variety of courses, designed to help young people get a university place, get a job or both. Young people should look to take courses or subjects that they are good at and enjoy. For example, young people can take:

- A Levels
- Diplomas
- Vocational courses like BTEC or City & Guilds

For details about these courses across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent go to

www.way2go.me.uk

Diplomas

The Diploma is a new qualification, available at different levels that offers a blend of practical experience and classroom learning for 14 to 19 year olds. Diploma subjects include Creative and Media, Engineering and IT. To find out more visit www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas and choose the Parents option or talk to the Connexions PA who is working with your teenager. They will know what subjects are available in your area.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships give young people the chance to learn a job by doing it, at the same time as working towards qualifications. The majority of apprentices are employed by a company and receive a wage of at least £95 a week.

There are many types of Apprenticeships available in a wide range of occupations, and this can also be a route to university. You can find out more by talking to the Connexions PA who is working with your teenager or by logging on to www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

Going to university

Most university degrees will require three A Levels (or equivalent) and five GCSEs grades A* – C (including English, maths and occasionally science). Although this is still at least two years away for Year 11 students, it is important that they read university prospectuses and check with their Connexions PA/teacher before making their choices for the end of Year 11. This is because some courses such as engineering, medicine, science, computing and art may require specific subjects.

For advice on going to university, talk to the Connexions PA who is working with your teenager. A further source of information can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/uni or www.ucas.com

More useful websites

Here are some useful websites you may want to visit:

www.cxstaffs.co.uk/parents - Contains lots of practical information on how you can help your teenager.

www.fasttomato.com – A useful way to explore what jobs and careers may suit you.

www.direct.gov.uk/parents - Information on learning and career choices, different types of qualifications, financial support for students and much more.

www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u - Information on different types of jobs and careers.

www.youfind.me.uk – A searchable database of activities for young people in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

“It’s a good idea for your teenager to keep their options open, particularly when they are still finding out what they enjoy and what they are good at. It is important to get applications in early and have a back-up plan.”

Stay in learning and get up to £30 a week

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is worth up to £30 a week and is given to some 16, 17 and 18 year olds, depending on their household income, to help them carry on learning.

EMA is paid directly into the young person's bank account. The allowance will not affect any benefits that you may be receiving including Income Support, Child Benefit and Working Tax Credit.

Currently, for your teenager to qualify for EMA, your household income has to be below £30,810. To find out more call the EMA helpline on **0800 121 8989** (calls are free from a landline) or log on to **www.direct.gov.uk/ema**



Support for teenage parents

If your teenager is a parent and they need support there is help available.

The Staffordshire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership and the Stoke-on-Trent Teenage Pregnancy Service provide information and advice on a range of issues including, housing, benefit entitlements, education and local support groups. To find out more, talk to a Connexions PA at your local Connexions Centre.

Care to Learn

There is also a scheme called 'Care to Learn', which offers under 19s who are in education or training financial support to help with the costs of registered childcare. To find out more talk to the Connexions PA who is working with your teenager, call **0845 600 2809** or visit www.direct.gov.uk/moneytolearn.

Getting about

If your teenager enters further education they might get help with the cost of travel to and from their place of study.

If you live in Stoke-on-Trent visit www.stoke.gov.uk/education (click on college and universities) to read details of help with transport for 16 – 19 year olds.

If you live in Staffordshire visit www.staffordshire.gov/post16transport



The Diploma

Bringing learning to life

The Diploma is a new qualification for 14 to 19 year olds that can lead to more study at school, college and university or a job with training.

Find out more at www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas

What Rachel and Hannah, from Torc Campus Vocational Centre, in Tamworth said about the Diploma...



Rachel

“The Society, Health and Development Diploma is a great qualification. I really enjoy the mixture of classroom learning and practical exercises. It teaches us a lot about how to treat people and how different sectors work together to support them.”

“I enjoy the practicals that we do in the HealthTec Centre, with the bathroom, living room and kitchen settings. I also enjoy learning about all the different aspects of health and social care. The course is very rewarding and I would recommend it to others.”



Hannah

The Diploma is available in a wide range of subjects across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. To find out what subjects are available in your area talk to a Connexions PA or visit www.way2go.me.uk

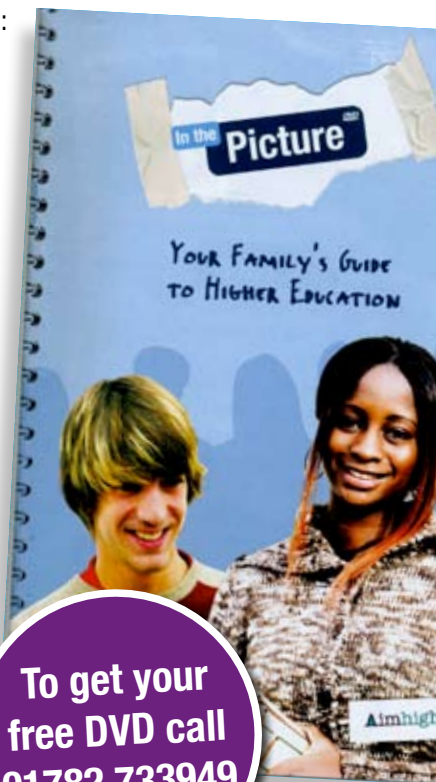
Aim Higher

It's never too soon to start thinking about Higher Education.

Higher Education (HE) is a chance for your teenager to continue their studies, and could open the doors to all kinds of jobs and opportunities.

There is much more to HE than ever before:

- People with a degree will earn, on average, over the course of their working life, over £100,000 more than someone with two or more A levels.
- An average starting salary for graduates in full-time employment is around £19,000.
- There are many routes into HE – from A levels and Diplomas to on-the-job training like Advanced Apprenticeships.
- Graduates have a wider range of careers open to them and are much less likely to be unemployed.
- Many jobs already require a degree, and many more jobs in the future will require higher level skills.
- There are over 50,000 courses available at more than 500 colleges and universities.



To get your
free DVD call
01782 733949

Talking through the various options with your teenager or to a Connexions PA, will help them find the right path to doing something they really enjoy. You can find out more about HE by logging on to www.direct.gov.uk/uni

Teenagers who need that extra bit of support

If your teenager has a lack of confidence and skills, there are a range of personal and social development opportunities available which may include:

- work experience
- job tasters
- confidence building
- literacy skills
- one-to-one intensive support
- numeracy skills.

These are tailored to meet individual needs, giving young people the skills and confidence they need to move into employment, education or training.

There may also be financial support available (such as EMA) while teenagers are on these programmes. Talk to your Connexions PA for more information on local opportunities.

Teenagers with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

If you have a teenager who has a learning difficulty and/or disability their Connexions PA will help to identify what options are available.

The PA will also know about additional support that may be available to them.

If they are planning to go to college or go onto a work-based learning programme, their PA will complete an assessment with them, which will identify the young person's support needs. This will then be sent to the college or training provider who will use it to put in place the required support.

Parents/carers might also be interested in the publication "Future Choices – A guide for Parents/Carers of Young People with learning difficulties and/or disabilities". Phone us on **01785 355722** for a free copy.



“I just want to find a job”

If your teenager just wants to leave school and find a job, here is some advice:

- Encourage them to look for a job which offers training and/or the opportunity to progress. Jobs with training usually offer better prospects than jobs without training.
- Your teenager cannot leave school and get a full-time job until after the official school leaving date, which is always the last Friday in June at the end of Year 11.
- PAs can help your teenager to find and apply for jobs and training. They can provide advice on filling in application forms, writing a CV or attending interviews.
- We offer a specialist vacancy service with full-time and part-time employment and training opportunities. Call into your local Connexions Centre to find out what's available or log on to www.cxstaffs.co.uk/yp
- We can still support your teenager after they have left school and up to their 20th birthday, or the age of 25 if they have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Please keep in touch with us and together we can help them make the most of the opportunities.



“Remember, there are very few jobs available at the minute, so now is a good time to get some qualifications or learn new skills. Your teenager will then be in a much better position to find a job once the economy improves”

Could you be a Parent Ambassador?



Do you have a son or daughter at university?

Are you proud of their achievement?

Aimhigher are looking to recruit Parent Ambassadors to promote the benefits of Higher Education (HE) to parents/carers across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. As a Parent Ambassador you would:

- Talk informally to parents at events such as university/college open days, parents' evenings and careers fairs.
- Share your family's experiences of HE with other families.
- Encourage parents/carers to share their ideas, opinions and views about their teenagers studies after they are 16.
- Distribute information resources on HE.
- Meet with other Parent Ambassadors to share ideas.

Parent Ambassadors need to be reliable, confident and enthusiastic about education and the benefits of HE. You will need to be able to work unsupervised and be able to organise and manage your time effectively.

Work will be offered on a casual basis, at the rate of £8 per hour plus holiday entitlement and travel expenses. To find out more about this exciting opportunity or for an application pack, please contact Catherine Hare on **01782 733949** or email **c.r.hare@acad.keele.ac.uk**

Free advice for adults

Did you know that we can help you as well as your teenager?

Whether you're looking for a job or a career change, want to learn something new or get a qualification, our friendly Advisers can help you do it. You can be employed or unemployed. For more information or to book your free advice session call:

0800 298 0234. You can also find out more at www.cxstaffs.co.uk/adults

“Get free information and advice on any aspect of finding and applying for work or returning to learning. Remember, the more you learn, the more you'll earn.”



Our Centres

“Visit www.cxstaffs.co.uk for opening times and directions, and remember, some of our Centres are open on Saturdays.”

Burton-upon-Trent

126 New Street, DE14 3QW
Tel: 01283 239400

Cannock

Balfour House,
84 High Green, WS11 1BE
Tel: 01543 510270

Hanley

46-58 Pall Mall, ST1 1EE
Tel: 01782 295300

Leek

County Service Building,
Fountain Street, ST13 6JR
Tel: 01538 483169

Lichfield

Venture House,
Davidson Road, WS14 9DZ
Tel: 01543 510683

Longton

10-12 Bennett Precinct,
The Longton Exchange, ST3 2JA
Tel: 01782 591000

Newcastle-under-Lyme

Hassell Street, ST5 1AR
Tel: 01782 297383

Stafford

Foregate House,
70 Foregate Street, ST16 2PX
Tel: 01785 356656

Tamworth

56a Albert Road, B79 7JN
Tel: 01827 475580

Tunstall

49a-51 Clive Street, ST6 6DA
Tel: 01782 825681

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We also provide services from partner venues in other places:

Biddulph

Tel: 01782 297865

Cheadle

Tel: 01583 483870

Rugeley

Tel: 01889 256190

Uttoxeter

Tel: 01889 256426

Connexions Direct

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Young people can also get information on a wide range of topics, as well as confidential advice and practical help. Advisers are available from 8am to 2am, 7 days a week.

Phone: 080 800 13 2 19
(8am-2am)

Text: 07766 4 13 2 19

Visit: www.connexions-direct.com

Have your say...

If you are a parent or carer and you want to have your say about what services are delivered to families in your area, then you can.

Your voice can:

- ✓ **Help make sure that parents' needs are being met**
- ✓ **Make sure parents' views are taken into account and are acted on**
- ✓ **Help shape and improve services for young people and their parents.**

If you want to get involved and you live in Stoke-on-Trent, please contact Lesley Boughey (Engagement Service Manager) on **01782 683 080** or email **lesley@vast.org.uk**

If you live in Staffordshire, please contact Charlotte Bailey (Commissioner for Parents) on **01785 355751** or email **charlotte.bailey@staffordshire.gov.uk**



Staffordshire Children's Trust
Working together to improve the lives of children and young people

School Year Calendar 2009 / 2010

September 2009

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2009

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2009

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2009

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2010

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Local Authority school holidays are marked in purple

Important Dates

To find out more about how we can help you...

visit: www.cxstaffs.co.uk

call: 0808 1000 434