

TeamWork



News and information for people with learning & work in mind

Reaching Out

From the beginning of January, in partnership with PLUSS, WorkWAYS has been offering a service to people living in East Devon.

The response to this long-awaited development has been phenomenal and we have already received many applications from people in the area wishing to use our service.

This new aspect of the service provided by WorkWAYS has been possible by working in partnership with a European Social Fund project run by PLUSS, who provide a range of services for people with disabilities across Devon. PLUSS are also delivering information, advice and guidance for people with mental health issues in other parts of the county.

Carey Lloyd, Vocational Advisor and Vicky Stratton, Vocational Coach from WorkWAYS are leading the East Devon service and have been out and about meeting people and organisations in the area.

We are also very grateful to MIND Exeter & East Devon, Rethink in Exmouth and the Community Mental Health Centres in the locality for their assistance in developing the new service. Through a separate development we are also now able to offer a one-off appointment to people living in Mid Devon.

Useful numbers

Bell Industries	208850
Connexions	203603
Citizens Advice Bureau	201210
Council Tax & Housing Benefits	265440
Exeter College	205222
Exeter Volunteer Centre	202055
Exeter Mental Health Service Users Group	201218
First Step Project	202055
Hillcrest Growers	823720
Jobcentre Plus	474700
Meadow House	208900
MIND Exeter & East Devon	204499
Nextstep	0845 8 50 50 70
PLUSS	0800 91 777 92
Rethink	01395 224166
St Loye's Foundation	255428
Skills for Life & Learning at Broadclyst	466643
Springboard	204496
Victory Centre	383788
WorkWAYS	208833

All prefixed by 01392 unless shown

Stress? What Stress?

The link between stress and mental ill health is a new one for some. We all need it to an extent but many still view suffering from it's ill-effects as a 'weakness'. All the same, stress, depression and anxiety cause more days off sick than any other health condition.

So what is stress? And more to the point, what can be done about it when it becomes harmful?

We're grateful to Amanda Larcombe for her piece on this important topic and also feature a new and innovative approach to preventing stress from damaging your health.

**Read TeamWork online at
www.workways.org.uk**

From A to Z

Continuing our series about WorkWAYS' Affiliated Organisations.

St Loye's Foundation

Kate Came, Training Recruitment Advisor writes, 'St Loye's Foundation trains people with disabilities or health issues to work at their highest possible level by utilising their residual ability. We aim to enable students to compete on equal economic terms in today's labour market and to facilitate them to fully access short term Vocational Training geared to today's employment needs through co-ordinated support, therapeutic intervention and condition management.

'The Foundation also develops and maintains cost effective training for a wide range of employable skills and occupations that satisfy the varying needs of people with disabilities or health issues that is both in tune with their learning style and meets the labour market demands.'

Visit www.stloyesfoundation.org.uk or call Kate on 01392 286211.

St Sidwell's Centre

St Sidwell's Centre works with mainly inner-city Exeter individuals and groups to improve health, well-being and quality of life.

They provide access to a wide range of community activities, learning opportunities, support services developed with local people and other organisations.

St Sidwell's Centre is a partnership project of Exeter Community Initiatives and is supported by the Big Lottery Fund (National Lottery).

For more information phone 01392 666222 or visit www.stsidwells.org.uk

Spring Personnel

Spring Personnel is a multi-location recruitment services business, operating through a national network of strategically selected centres.

Their website states that their expertise 'lies in the provision of flexible staffing programmes, delivering the right solution at the right time.'

They have developed a comprehensive workforce management offering, including

Temporary Recruitment & Contracting Services
Permanent Staffing
Managed Recruitment Service
On-site Resource Management
Outsourcing

Visit www.spring.com or phone 01392 201450 for more information

Tact Personnel

Tact Personnel aim to find people 'a role that you'll love from your very first day.'

With over 36 years' experience of the local employment market, they work with some of the finest companies in and around Exeter, from large blue-chip organisations to small business enterprises.

Whether looking for a permanent placement or work of a more temporary nature, Tact state they strive to ensure 'the job we find for you far exceeds your expectations.'

Recruitment and Employment Confederation qualified consultants are always on hand to offer support.

Visit www.tactpersonnel.co.uk or phone 01392 279111

The Goldilocks Principle – or ‘How to treat stress’

Statistics are rife regarding the negative impact of ‘stress’ on businesses: increased number of work days lost, reduced productivity and motivation, increased staff turnover. Though these figures are significant and rightly alarming, they unfortunately give a vital resource a bad name. ‘Stress’ is seen as being something that is akin to a disease: something that needs to be ‘treated’ and got rid of. Now, if you happen to be motivated by the ‘stick’ then feel free to be encouraged to act by these figures! For those of you who prefer the ‘carrot’, what these figures actually indicate is the value of unrealised human potential, because ‘stress’ is actually a resource that needs to be ‘understood’ not ‘treated’. To use this effectively the ‘Goldilocks Principle’ applies. Too little and too much won’t do: they result in lack of fulfilment and/or significant pain. For both the individual and organisation to want and achieve success it has to be ‘just right’:

1. Learn to recognise your reaction to pressure. What’s happening for you & around you when you perform at your best: demands, control, support, relationships, role, change?
2. Acknowledge that every individual and organisation has limits. Know what these limits are.
3. Check attitudes/culture: aim for ‘It’s OK to say ‘no’ and ‘It’s a sign of strength to know when to stop’.
4. Learn how to identify the symptoms of exceeding limits: physical, behavioural, psychological and emotional.
5. Know what you can and can’t control. Focus on changing what you can.
6. Acknowledge that limits can be exceeded by the unforeseen and unplanned: bereavement, marital breakdown, new arrivals, traumatic incidents, chronic illness.
7. Understand that the response to exceeding limits is an effective, normal and natural alarm system i.e. something is wrong, action is required.
8. Anticipate the unforeseen, have support in place: counselling services, critical incident support, access to healthcare, legal and financial advice.
9. Empower people to make the most of themselves and their teams: access to personal coaching, encourage exercise, healthy eating, community involvement, social contact.
- 10...Don’t just talk about it. Do it!

Amanda Larcombe, Director, Optima Workplace Ltd
www.optimaworkplace.com © Optima Workplace 2006

Feeling Stressed: Keeping Well

Could harmful levels of stress be prevented? Could sickness absence be reduced?

Prevention is better than cure. *Feeling Stressed: Keeping Well* offers an easy-to-use Personal Workbook to develop an effective and very practical, common sense approach to overcoming distressing symptoms which can sometimes arise from harmful levels of stress.

Feeling Stressed: Keeping Well uses elements of the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) developed by Mary Ellen Copeland and others. It’s been produced as part of the MINDFUL EMPLOYER initiative with advice and support from Dr Glenn Roberts, Consultant Psychiatrist in Rehabilitation and Recovery, Laurie Davidson, Practice Development Manager and Christine Oliver, Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager all of whom work for Devon Partnership NHS Trust; together with Helen Fee, Mental Health Development Worker at University of Exeter.

It can be used by anyone – whether or not they have experienced harmful levels of stress or mental ill health before – after all, it’s about prevention.

Feeling Stressed: Keeping Well can be downloaded free from www.mindfulemployer.net – why not ask your employer to give all staff a copy?

MINDFUL EMPLOYER

MINDFUL EMPLOYER, the business-led initiative facilitated by WorkWAYS which supports employers in recruiting and retaining staff experiencing mental ill health, goes from strength to strength.

In excess of 150 businesses now receive information about the initiative on a regular basis and over 30 employers have signed the Charter for Employers who are Positive About Mental Health from as far afield as Tyneside and Cornwall. The public sector has taken a strong lead in adopting the Charter as part of their good practice and the private and voluntary sectors (who represent just over half of the signatories) are also seeing it as a valuable statement of their commitment to employees.

Charter signatories comprise small, medium and large employers – including Optima Workplace Ltd who feature in this edition of *TeamWork* – and many more are considering adopting it.

What about your employer? Could they sign up? It's free, voluntary and all about *working towards* good practice.

We have also developed a number of partnership agreements with groups in Kent, Cheshire and Yorkshire as well as across the South West. These enable us to support local groups in developing their own local employer networks. Similarly, in conjunction the National Institute for Mental Health England (both in the South West and nationally) and the National Social Inclusion Project we assist in convening a National Employer Engagement Forum.

The MINDFUL EMPLOYER website at www.mindfulemployer.net carries a wide range of valuable resources and information for employers as well as full details of the Charter, an online Discussion Forum and much more. A number of events on employment and mental health are taking place over the next few months – including some run by the Disability Rights Commission and the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health who are both strong supporters of the initiative – more details on the MINDFUL EMPLOYER website.

For more information, phone 01392 208833, visit the website or e-mail info@mindfulemployer.net



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The DRC is pleased to announce its new DVD 'The Appointment'.

The ten minute comedy drama helps employers and others to explore attitudes to disability in life and in the workplace. It should provide you with a good basis for discussion or training.

To obtain up to ten free copies please contact:

DRC Helpline 08457 622633
FREEPOST Textphone: 08457 622644
MID02164
Stratford upon Avon CV37 9BR

Don't forget that lots of useful information can be found on our website www.drc-gb.org.

Something to say?

If you have any contributions or comments or would like to place an advert then do get in touch:

TeamWork, WorkWAYS, King Street Business Centre, 7-9 King Street, Exeter EX1 1BQ

Tel/fax: 01392 208833 E-mail: teamwork@workways.org.uk

TeamWork is a photocopyable resource – please make copies for others.

Devon Partnership NHS Trust