



# THE CHILDCARE CHATTER

SCA Childcare's monthly newsletter



## DATES TO HELP WITH YOUR PLANNING....

St. Patrick's Day - 17th March  
Mother's Day - 22nd March  
Easter Day - 12th April  
The Queen's birthday - 20th April  
St. George's Day - 23rd April  
Start of Ramadan - 24th April

## UPCOMING COURSES...

Well-being Support Group for ALL Early Years practitioners at Wickham Market Resource Centre, Suffolk, IP13 0SB - 12th March 7pm-9pm

Support Group for SCA registered childminders in Suffolk - 26th March

Paediatric First Aid L3 - 28th March 9.30am - 4:30pm, Ipswich

Well-being Support Group for ALL Early Years practitioners at Wickham Market Resource Centre, Suffolk, IP13 0SB - 2nd April 7pm-9pm

Support Group for SCA registered childminders in Kent - 23rd April

ESSEX WELL-BEING SUPPORT GROUP COMING SOON!!

To book a course, contact the SCA office on 01728 746970 or email [training@suffolkcca.co.uk](mailto:training@suffolkcca.co.uk)

## CORONAVIRUS FOCUS

It has dominated the news and we're all taking steps to prepare our families and settings for the inevitable spread of Covid-19. The government has clearly stated that panic buying pasta is not necessary so let's look at some practical ways to address the situation.

Firstly, taking the time to teach children how to effectively wash their hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds seems a sensible place to start. Reassure children that despite the media attention, for the vast majority of people, symptoms of Covid-19 will be a cough and perhaps a few days off school with CBeebies.

We must, however, take steps to protect those more vulnerable from this virus. Crucially, identify your vulnerable people and put together a risk assessment. Perhaps consider greeting parents at the gates to limit the footfall through your setting. Ask anyone who does need to enter the setting to disinfect their hands. Importantly, it's vital there's an open channel of communication between settings and parents - prepare parents in case you do need to shut your setting, they may need to find alternative childcare. Have an action plan ready in case assistants need time off. Having a plan for all scenarios will enable you to create a calm front in the face of the Coronavirus and put you in a good position to give clear, practical advice to your parents and staff.

For a Coronavirus Toolkit containing guidance, advice sheets, questions and answers, a 'My Workplace' check list, a coronavirus policy, editable letter and notices then visit <https://www.scachildcare.co.uk/2018/04/our-blog/2020/03/coronavirus-focus>



## NEW BLOG FOR WORLD BOOK DAY

[HTTPS://WWW.SCACHILD CARE.CO.UK/2018/04/OUR-BLOG](https://www.scachildcare.co.uk/2018/04/our-blog)

SCA Director Claire Chapman celebrated World Book Day at her setting High House in Wickham Market. Check out the new blog on the website, 'The Love of Reading', looking at the importance of sharing books in Early Years by following the link above.



**Ofsted Regulated Childcare Agency supporting Early Years practitioners in providing the best possible care for children**

### WHO WE ARE?

SCA aims to offer parents high quality childcare provision by registering and supporting excellent childcare providers. Our dynamic network of experienced early years practitioners and links with Ofsted and local authorities gives us the expertise we need to support childminders.

### WHAT WE DO?

We register quality childminders and childminder assistants on domestic and non-domestic premises. We provide regular support, training and networking opportunities to SCA registered childminders and other professionals working across the childcare sector.

### REGISTER AND SUPPORT

Regular support to help childminders run a successful childcare business including funding and financial help

### TRAINING

Face to face training, networking opportunities across the childcare sector and over 300 online courses available

### BANK STAFF

Providing emergency cover for childminders, nursery settings or pre schools

### PARENT MATCHING

Helping parents find the perfect childcare for their children



## RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

### Mother's Day Breakfast Bagel

Ingredients:

- cream cheese
- bagel, lightly toasted
- smoked salmon, slices
- avocado, sliced
- olive oil
- lemon, cut into wedges
- egg



Method:

1. Spread the cream cheese over both halves of the toasted bagels. Add the salmon to the bottom halves, then top with the avocado. Squeeze over a little lemon juice and season well.
2. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan. When hot, crack in the eggs, season and cook for 2-3 mins until the white is set and starting to crisp up around the edges. Sit the eggs on top of each bagel base and sprinkle cayenne on each yolk. Top with the other half of the bagel and serve with lemon wedges on the side, for squeezing over.

Recipe from: BBC goodfood

## TOP TIPS FOR RUNNING A BUSINESS...

**BEING INFORMED ABOUT TAX FREE CHILDCARE** can make a big difference to some families. For every £8 parents pay into an online account, the government will add an extra £2, this amounts to up to £2,000 per child per year. This scheme is open to eligible working families, including the self-employed, and for children aged between 0-11 (or 0-16 if disabled). To find out more about Tax Free Childcare visit Childcare Choices via the link below.

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

*Training on Choosing Childcare with Confidence coming soon with SCA. Look out for April's newsletter for more details.*

# A SPOT LIGHT ON

## The benefits of co-childminding



One of the most frequent comments we hear from childminders is that it can be a lonely job and, at times, overwhelming. Let's face it, running a successful childminding business is no easy task. Behind the looking after of children and caring for their day to day needs; the planning and implementation of activities to further learning; the learning journeys (we know, it's not statutory, but of course we want to record our children's achievements); the washing up of paint pots and scraping of playdoh off your shoes, there is also the running of the business – invoices, funding forms, tax returns, almost as many policies to write and review as a large primary school! It's not surprising really that there is a shortage of good childminders in this country.

Our experience at SCA Childcare Agency is that no one childminder feels confident doing it all and while one person may be an exceptional Early Years Practitioner, sometimes it can be elements of the paperwork that cause the stress. Or perhaps, it is the ever-changing goal posts of what it means to be an 'outstanding' or 'good' practitioner; the new inspection framework has certainly put excellent teaching skills to the top of the list but without a teaching qualification how can standards meet the expectations?

Co-childminding, where two or more registered childminders work together from the same domestic premises, can be the answer for some practitioners. The ability to care for more children (and therefore more income) and share the workload and responsibilities. But the benefits of co-childminder doesn't stop there. 'A problem shared is a problem halved' and this is certainly true when tackling challenging behaviour or supporting exhausted parents. Co-childminding can also help to build a reflective culture at a setting where practitioners observe each other's teaching skills and share best practice. Training needs can be more easily met without causing disruption to parents by shutting the setting. If training is shared with your co-worker then attending different training sessions allows more experience and more knowledge to filter into your setting. Co-childminding also increases the variety of activities you can have on offer for children at any one time, thus enhancing the children's experiences. So, if you love your job of working with children but find it overwhelming at times, working in a partnership can be both supportive and rewarding.

If you're interested in co-childminding and want to know more or visit a co-childminding setting then contact SCA via [hello@suffolkcca.co.uk](mailto:hello@suffolkcca.co.uk).

Are you aware that childminders are able to work 50% on non-domestic premises? If you are a childminder working from home and would like to also run a group in a village hall or any non-domestic premises then get in touch with SCA for more details.