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Young parents to be offered childcare and lifeskills courses

Teenage mums and dads are being offered help in coping with pregnancy and the early months of a child's life on courses to run across Hertfordshire (**Broxbourne, Hemel Hempstead, Stevenage, Waltham Cross, Waltham Abbey and Welwyn Garden City**) starting later this month.

The ten-week courses are aimed at young people aged between 16 and 18 years and cover a range of life skills including healthy eating, first aid, careers advice, vehicle maintenance and yoga*. Some of the courses also offer Breakfast Clubs to provide an opportunity for young parents and parents to be to meet others with similar interests and issues.

Tutors hope the courses will provide a solid grounding for young people who are soon to become or have recently become parents, lead to a qualification and encourage young people back into education or work in the future.

Rachael Norman from the Learning and Skills Council Hertfordshire which funds the courses said: "Some young people have their education interrupted when they became pregnant or parents and so these courses are designed to get them re-interested in education by focusing on things that are relevant to them right now. It's all about giving young parents practical skills and getting them back in touch with learning".

The courses are aimed at both males and females and are designed to be informative and fun, as well as leading to a qualification. An important aim of the courses is to help break down any barriers young people may have about getting back in to education and so help to cover the cost of travel and childcare while parents learn is available with the Education Maintenance Allowance and through the Care to Learn scheme.

The course in **Waltham Abbey** are run by Essex Training and start on 27 January. The sessions run on three days each week between 10.30am and 2.30pm. For more information please contact Paul Garrett on 01992760244 or email essextrainingcentre@hotmail.com.

The courses in **Broxbourne and Waltham Cross** are run by Hertford Regional College and start on 18 February. The sessions run on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 9.45 am and 3.15pm. approx. For more information please contact Wenderlynn Bagnall on 01992 411387 or email wbagnall@hrc.ac.uk

The course in **Hemel Hempstead** is run by West Herts College at the Grovehill Community Centre and starts on 8 April with an introduction day on 18 March. Sessions take place on Tuesdays, Thursday and Fridays between 9.00am and 2.45pm each day. For more information please contact Maureen Daly or Rachel Holden on 01923812000 or email Maureen.Daly@westherts.ac.uk

The courses in **Stevenage** are run by:

EYS at 38 Park Place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 2.30pm. Courses start on 4th February. Contact Kim Speer on 01438 726111 or email k.speer@eys.org.uk.

Ridgmond Training at Caxton Way on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between 12.30pm and 4.30pm. Courses start on 4 February. Contact Tracey Edwards on 01438 842200 or email tedwards@ridgmondtraining.org.uk.

North Hertfordshire College at Monkswood Way on Monday, Thursday and Friday from 11 February. Contact Sarah Robins at on 01462 424242 or email srobins@nhc.ac.uk.

The courses in **Welwyn** are run by the YMCA and Oaklands College on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and 4pm starting on 5 February. For more information please contact Clare Tyler on 01707 35415 or email c.tyler@ymcatraining.org.uk

Anyone wishing to find out more about available funding to help with learning should ring the EMA helpline on 080 810 16 2 19 and the Care to Learn helpline on 0845 600 2809.

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* Course content varies depending on training provider, for instance vehicle maintenance is offered by Essex Training and yoga by Hertford Regional College.

In November 2007 there were 452 young people under the age of 18 years old who are pregnant or caring for a child in Hertfordshire. (Figures supplied by Connexions

The Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world-class standards. Our vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

For more information please contact Donna Barker at Tribe on 01603 417722 or email donna@tribepr.com