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BOLSTER COMMUNITY Newsletter

This Newsletter is funded by:
HSC Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Welcome to the 'Ber months!



Welcome to our October 2026 newsletter! This month, we'll be highlighting our various training and project opportunities with Tracy and Justina, the launch of our new **NO FILTERS** (A project supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body - SEUPB) programme for young adults aged 12-18 and a few snaps from our **Bolster Buddies' graduation** for 'Caring for Our World' at Queen's University, Belfast. This was a major moment at Bolster HQ, with our candle-makers donning their own graduation gowns, with the BBC attending to cover the story.

In this issue, you'll also find more information on our **Parents Plus ADHD, Autism Connect and RECONNECT programme.**

Our **Halloween Disco** is a big moment in our annual calendar, with tickets on sale NOW!! Tickets are selling very fast so make sure you get yourself on the guest list. It's sure to be an amazing night. We're also already planning for our Joining the Dots Event in November so stay tuned for more.

Team Bolster xx



Family Fun Day
For families seeking support!

Looking for support services that can help your needs?

Wish you could have options all in one room?

Bolster Community invites families to a **free** event designed to build connections in the community, meet other families, and learn about the wide range of services and support available in the area.

Organisations/professionals will host stands, providing information and guidance for children and families, particularly those who are new to the area.

Light refreshments provided



Entertainment from Community Tribal Drumming



Bouncy castle



Families

Simply scan either QR code to register or call 028 3083 5764 or email comms@bolstercommunity.org

Organisations

Saturday 21st November
from **11am to 2pm**
Main Hall, Brownlow Community Hub

Training & Projects

It's shaping up to be a busy autumn across our Training & Projects, with new groups getting underway, schools welcoming us back and lots of opportunities for people to get involved.

Building Futures

Our current Classroom Assistant Programme began on 30 September, running for 10 weeks. The programme supports women to develop the confidence, skills and practical knowledge needed to explore pathways back to employment. Eligibility criteria apply. For anyone interested in future programmes please contact us on details below.

Our Entrepreneur Workshops will take place October - December, supporting women who are interested in exploring self-employment, developing an idea or taking those first steps towards starting their own business. The date will be confirmed shortly and places are still available.

Layered Lives

Layered Lives returns this term, with programmes planned for St Paul's High School and St Joseph's High School, and further groups to be confirmed.

The programme provides a safe and accessible space for young neurodivergent people to explore healthy relationships, consent, boundaries, online safety, coercive and controlling behaviours, and how to recognise when something doesn't feel right.

We still have availability this term and would love to hear from schools, organisations or groups interested in bringing Layered Lives to their young people.

RAISE FRIENDS Resilience



Our RAISE FRIENDS Resilience delivery is also getting off to a busy start, with 4 programmes started across St Patrick's and St Clare's this week. Through FRIENDS Resilience, children and young people develop practical skills to support their emotional wellbeing, confidence and resilience, helping them manage worries and everyday challenges. Each child who logged onto the Friends eBook last term was entered into a draw for the summer activities hamper. Well done to our 2 winners (pictured adjacent) Michael McKeown - St, Malachys Carnaget - Mrs Murphys class and Orlaith McCann - St, Joesphs Convent - Mrs McAteers class.

RAISE Reconnect

Our RAISE Reconnect project is now underway, with the team beginning to receive referrals. Reconnect provides early, relationship-based support for children, young people and families, working alongside schools and other services to strengthen engagement and connection with education.

The Reconnect Project has been launched by Bolster in conjunction with the Department of Education and is a targeted early intervention programme aimed at addressing emotionally-based school non-attendance (ENSNA).

Bolster has 2 designated Educational Engagement Practitioners who are working with targeted primary and secondary schools in the area to strengthen engagement between children, families, schools and community services.



Contact Tracy or Justina at the number provided for any of the training and projects mentioned here!

Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Northern Ireland Executive
END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS
HSC Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Delivered by BOLSTER COMMUNITY

NO FILTERS PROGRAMME LAUNCH



A project supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body - SEUPB. A huge thank you to both for making this programme possible, and to Three Ways Community Association and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for all of your support 💜



Wonderful photos by Noel Moan as always. Thank you Noel!

NO FILTERS is designed to support young people aged 12-18 to build confidence, develop life skills and make meaningful connections. Through a range of fun, interactive activities focused on wellbeing, communication, leadership and teamwork, participants will have the opportunity to shape the programme around the issues that matter most to them, creating a positive environment to learn, grow and thrive. Watch this space for more!!





PEACEPLUS
Northern Ireland - Ireland
Co-funded by the
European Union
UK Government
Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland
Northern Ireland Executive



No Filters is a youth empowerment programme built around interactive missions; real, hands-on challenges designed to spark personal growth in a fun and meaningful way. Each mission is crafted to develop key life skills:

✦ Teamwork ✦ Communication
✦ Problem-solving ✦ Confidence
✦ Resilience ✦ Belonging

Young people discover their strengths, support each other, and grow - no filters required.

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Linktree





‘Caring for Our World’ Graduation

A huge, heartfelt congratulations to our Bolster Buddies who **graduated at Queen’s University Belfast** this September. All of your hard work in your ‘Caring For Our World’ project paid off. The course on climate change was designed specially to meet their needs, encourage discussion and learning.



The opportunity to don their own gowns at the Whitla Hall and celebrate together was a major highlight for all of us at Bolster HQ! We are so very proud of you all. We wanted to take a moment to also say a huge well done to our staff member Lauren. She puts her heart and soul into her work and her passion makes a real difference every day. Well done Lauren!







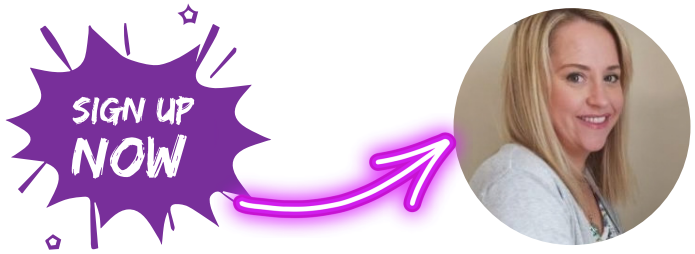


Parents Plus ADHD

Parenting a child with ADHD can bring special challenges but with the right support parents can learn to overcome these challenges and help their children reach their full potential.

This 8 week evidence-based parenting programme addresses the needs of parents raising a child with an ADHD diagnosis, helping them manage behaviour and emotional problems.

Places normally fill up very fast so we would encourage you to contact Gemma and express your interest sooner rather than later.



Call us to register on 028 3083 5764
Limited places available - apply today



PARENTS PLUS ADHD Programme - Limited places available

Parenting a child with ADHD can bring special challenges but with the right support parents can learn to overcome these challenges and help their children reach their full potential.

Open to parents of children with a confirmed ADHD diagnosis. Remaining places are available for parents of children currently undergoing assessment.

This 8-week evidence-based parenting programme addresses the needs of parents raising a child with an ADHD diagnosis.

Location: Altnaveigh House, 51 Downshire Road, Newry, BT34 1EE
Time: 10.30am-12.30pm
Dates: Tues 26th Jan - Tues 23rd March 2027 (break over mid-term Tues 10th Feb)

Criteria: For parents with a child diagnosed with ADHD/awaiting an assessment, aged 6-12 years and who are resident in the Southern Trust area.

Call Gemma at Bolster Community to register on 028 3083 5764 or email gemma@bolstercommunity.org

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BOLSTER COMMUNITY

https://bolstercommunity.org/

ABILITY FAMILY SENIORS

Empowering individuals and families through practical support at every stage of life

Autism Connect, a peer support programme for autistic adults

Coffee, Cake & Connection
Date: Thursday, 22nd October
Venue: Warrenpoint Hall 4 All
Time: 12.30 - 2.30 pm

Drop-in
Bolster Office
Marcus St, Newry
11-4pm
last Saturday of the month

Creative Collective
Every Friday
Bolster Offices
Marcus St
2 - 4 pm

Silent Reading Session
The Third Wednesday of each month in the Cosy Corner, Newry from September 2026

Walking Warriors
Alternative Friday evenings. We meet at 6 pm at pre-arranged venues (In Newry, but would be open to starting similar in other areas).

Evening social events happening this Autumn: Plant Bingo, Board Game evening, Lego nights
Any other suggestions??

Social Hubs
Newry based in Bolster Offices Whitegates (18-24yrs) Tuesday (25 yrs plus) Thursday
6.30 - 8.30 pm weekly

Social Hubs:
Craigavon - Wednesday - Brownlow Hub
Banbridge - Elim Church - Thursdays
6.30 - 8.30 pm weekly

Autism * Me
This 6-week programme explores autistic self-understanding through creative, body-based reflection.
More details to follow

If you are curious about any of these programmes or events
email: autismconnect@bolstercommunity.org
or call Bolster: 028 30 83 57 84 and ask for Sharon

Federation of Family Practices Newry & District
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What's on at Autism Connect?



Autism Connect is a peer support programme for autistic adults. While we do have weekly **Social Hubs** in Newry, Craigavon and Banbridge, we have so much more to choose from!

There are coffee mornings, our Walking Warriors group, Silent Reading Nights and drop-in 'Body Doubling' sessions that are aimed to give you the space to get your own tasks done in a space with **peers who just get it!**

Our aim at Autism Connect is to give you the space to be yourself and connect with others, without any pressure or expectation. With so much to choose from, we encourage you to reach out and contact us at autismconnect@bolstercommunity.org or call and ask for Sharon or Emma at 028 3083 5764.

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Federation of Family Practices Newry & District



Early Intervention Support: Connecting Home, School and Community through RECONNECT

Reconnect is an early intervention, relationship-based programme delivered by Bolster Community through the RAISE Programme.

The programme supports primary and post-primary pupils who are experiencing, or beginning to show signs of, **Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), persistent absence or disengagement from education.**

Our aim is to intervene early, working alongside the child, family and school to understand what is contributing to difficulties with attendance and to develop **practical, achievable steps** towards positive and sustained engagement with education.

Bolster Community brings extensive experience of supporting children and families across Newry and Mourne. Through our role as lead organisation for the Newry & Mourne Family Support Hub, we can also help families connect with wider community and statutory services where additional needs are identified. Our approach is **child-centred, family-led, strengths-based, trauma-informed and relationship-based.**



If you are concerned about a pupil's attendance or engagement with education and feel that early intervention and family support could help, please speak to your school's designated Reconnect contact or contact: Orla / Michelle, our Education Engagement Practitioners, on 028 3083 5764.









In a season of letting go, hold on to community

Acorn candles are more than just candles Every candle holds a story and person behind it.

When you purchase one, you're not just promised a beautiful scent drifting through your home, **your purchase makes a real difference** in our community. Any profits we make go right back into our programmes, helping us provide practical, early intervention support for families and individuals at every stage of life. From vital family support to our Home 2 Hospital.

From Autism Connect to Building Futures. Our Ability, Family and Senior services are by people, for people and they truly do go further with your help. The next time you light your Acorn candle, take a moment. This autumn, in a season of letting go, hold on to community.

AUTUMN

With Acorn Candles

- Molten Amber
- Black Plum & Rhubarb
- Our 'Moments' Candle to remember loved ones so dear





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Contact us at: acorn@bolstercommunity.org

Follow us on instagram @acorncandle and keep an eye out for our future Christmasmarkets, corporate gifting also possible for all budgets.



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