

Chair's Report for Oxfordshire Sands AGM
21.09.16 at Bicester Children's Centre

Support

- 2 new befrienders have been trained and are due to attend Part 2 advanced training. 2 existing, experienced befrienders attended Part 2 advanced training. Sadly, one of our befrienders has stepped down- but is happy to stay as a contact if anyone has similar experience. We will have a new befriender later this year after she completes the initial training.
- Whilst there has been variable contact to the befriender phone, mainly clinical staff enquiring how to access support for families, the main method of contact is through the befriender email.
- We have continued to run 10 group support meeting throughout the year, the attendance was variable at the beginning of the year- but has been more constant during the last few months.
- We have expanded our book library for parents to access at meetings and we have added newly published Sands books. We are always on the look out for new books to add to the collection.
- We have now added a 'Poems' section and an Online Remembrance Book onto our new website.
- Sarah has very kindly been putting our newsletter together for us and it looks great!
- We have remembrance tags with charms for people to decorate and personalise with their baby's name at our October, November and December group support meetings - and also have them at our Service in December.
- We have contributed to the Joint Network account, to ensure all newly bereaved parents in surrounding counties are supported in the best possible way following tragedy.

Next year:

- *Aim: To be able to continue with 10 meetings a year, by developing a befriender rota of our current befrienders.*
- *For all our befrienders to undertake Part 2 training.*
- *To produce a poems booklet to go in our memory boxes/ support packs given out at the hospital*
- *Christmas tags for personalisation for next year if it goes down well this year.*

Fundraising and Events

- We held our Awareness month event in Castle Quay shopping centre in Banbury. The tombola was popular and the free children's activities along with colouring competition worked well. The colouring competition was a successful way of raising awareness in a 'gentle' way.
- Individuals have chosen to support us through their fundraising, which is fantastic eg marathons.
- The past few years, Edd Frost and Daughters family funeral directors, Banbury, have kindly dedicated their window display to Oxfordshire Sands during the month of June. The memorial section of the display has received a lot of positive feedback.
- Our Annual Remembrance Service last year (leading up to Christmas) was a success, bringing many parents comfort. Plans are in place for this year's Service at the same venue.
- We now have our own Oxfordshire Sands pack-away bags, pens, stickers and tshirts. We also have remembrance candles to sell. These were launched in June at the start of Awareness Month.

Next year:

- *Caalm Camp yurt site have donated a 2 night stay as a prize- organise a 365 raffle- launch on Babyloss day 15.10.16?*
- *Christmas cards? Need to find ways to sell items during the year, as well as at our Remembrance Service.*
- *June event for Awareness Month*

Healthcare

- Good links with our 2 local hospitals
- Changes will happen now that the Horton is to be midwife- led from October- which may impact upon the amount of support we give to the 2 hospitals.
- Support books have been added to Kim Paul's library at the JR hospital in her counselling office. Children's support picture books have been added to the Horton collection.
- The Ashfield Suite refurbishment at the JR hospital is now complete.
- Talk given about Oxfordshire Sands at JR National Sands Study Day, along with a parent speaker.

- We have spoken about the importance of creating memories at a photography training day.
- We were invited to talk at the Oxford Brookes University student midwife conference, to share our experience and promote Sands
- We continue to donate our custom-made wooden memory boxes, support packs and usb sticks to both hospitals, for them to offer to parents. We continue to receive welcome feedback that our memory boxes are so very special and make a real difference.
- We have funded 14 midwives from both the JR and Horton hospitals, to attend specific bereavement midwife training at a major conference.

Next year:

- *Keep in touch with the 2 bereavement midwives regarding the changes at the Horton hospital.*
- *Establish further links with the Chaplains at the JR, as our main contact has now left.*
- *Celebrate the refurbishment of bereavement suite at the JR hospital. Photos.*
- *Continue to raise awareness of our Sands Remembrance Books, so people are aware that they can have an entry with no charge.*
- *Give a talk to Sonographers in October- we have been invited as part of their in-service training programme.*

Communication

- Our new website is completed and is regularly updated, including with newsletters.
- We take part in Network calls and days, to share good practice.
- We now have an Oxfordshire Sands Facebook Page.
- We continue to send out regular newsletters and email updates, including reminders of our events.
- Individuals who have completed fundraising for us have also raised awareness for Sands through their publicity.

Next year:

- *Maintain established links with media in North Oxfordshire and aim to build new links across the whole of the county?*
- *Seek support of Funeral Directors in other towns, to make them aware of what we offer, and provide them with the booklets and information in order to support parents.*

Other priorities for next year:

- To continue with all the support we currently offer and increase committee numbers.