family voice norfolk newsletter

together improving services

April/May 2022

In this issue:

Family Voice news and events

Surveys, consultations and participation

Information and services for children and young people (CYP)

Workshops, training and employment

Early Years entitlements ● support for children with anxiety ● toilet training ● encouraging positive behaviour ● Early Years education for children with SEND ● speech and language support ● sleep ●

Information and events for parent carers

Giving your views Involvement Participation

Let's all speak up!

Co-production Engagement Consultation

All our newsletters focus on making sure that parent carers' views and experiences are taken into account by decision-makers and service-planners. But this one has a special focus on that subject. In meetings attended by Family Voice Norfolk representatives, a lot of long words are used to describe what is really very simple – making sure the people most concerned have a say in the services they receive.

We all have busy lives and we can't respond to every opportunity, but if you can, choose one from this newsletter – they are all marked with a star – and let someone know what you think and feel. Now, more than ever, it can really make a difference.

What's on your mind? Come and talk to us…

Our **Check in and chat** sessions are relaxed, informal online meetings that you can drop into without having to book.

We are all parent carers like you and are always keen to hear about what has worked well for you and your children or young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and what is not working for you.

We will take your views to meetings with decision-makers and planners with the aim of improving services for families like ours. Sometimes we can prompt a quick change. Sometimes this takes a long time. But we will never stop speaking about what needs to be better.

You don't need to give us your name and we will always anonymise anything we take forward.

Many apologies to anyone who tried to access the April session but was rejected by Zoom. We've given the link, meeting ID and passcode below so that you have everything you need to join us.

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check in and chat

is anyone doing anything about this?

am I the only parent worried about this?

why can't this work better?

how can I get people to listen?

If you have more questions than answers about services for your child with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), come and talk to us.

We are all parents like you. We understand.

Find out how we can make sure your voice is heard and what we are working on right now.

Monday 13 June 2022, 10–11am
Monday 11 July 2022, 10–11am

No need to book – just drop in on:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83006703755?pwd=dklnWDQ2bm5ySWlMTFNycnZSbXlFZz09

Meeting ID: 830 0670 3755
Passcode: 8wFFs5

Newsletter deadlines

Our next newsletter will be worked on at the end of May 2022. Tell us about issues you'd like to see covered – or send us an article or your comments on any topic to do with SEND – by emailing comms@familyvoice.org.uk by **30 May 2022.**

Quick updates

- Our **Family Voice Norfolk Question Time** report is now available on our website at https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/articles-reports/parent-carer-participation-events/
- In April, despite the Easter break and the fact that most of our representatives had children and young people with SEND at home for the holidays, we attended **over 70 meetings** with the local authority, health services, voluntary bodies and internally with the aim of improving services for all our families.
- We've mentioned before that we have been helping to plan what for now we are calling **SEND*fest***, a fun event for families with children and young people with SEND in 2023. You can keep up to date with developments on the SEND Local Offer website here. There will be lots more publicity about this over the coming months. The event will take place at Easton College on Saturday **17 June 2023**. Save the date!

How to find out about Family Voice events and news

Our Facebook page not only has our own events and information but lots of other news about what is happening in Norfolk for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their parent carers. Also on Facebook, our **Family Voice Members Chat Room** is a closed group where you can give your views on whatever is concerning you and discuss issues with us and other parent carers.

Our **website** tells you more about how we work and our own events. You can find reports, news and our past newsletters there.

Our **Membership Secretary Kate** may email you about special events and surveys.

If you have been handed this newsletter by a friend or know someone else who is not yet a member, it is easy to join on our website at www.familyvoice.org.uk. Membership is **free**. **Full membership** is open to parents, carers and close family members of children and young people (0–25) with SEND. **Associate membership** is for others wishing to support our work, such as practitioners and extended family. **Affiliate membership** is for groups and organisations.

There are so many ways you can get in touch with Family Voice Norfolk…

- You can contact our **Membership Secretary Kate** on 07950 302937 or at membership@familyvoice.org.uk
- Or message us via:
  - www.familyvoice.org.uk
  - FamilyVoiceNorfolk
  - familyvoicenfk
- Or write to us at Family Voice Norfolk, c/o Ayton House, 11 Ayton Rd, Wymondham NR18 0QQ
- Or join our **Family Voice Members Chat Room** on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/groups/674209366743395/about/

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Family Voice ambassadors … out and about again!

More and more events are taking place in real life rather than online. The following dates are for events where you will be able to speak face-to-face with Family Voice ambassadors. We would love to see you there and to hear how things are for you. If you're not able to be there, do remember it is easy to tell us what is working well for you and your family and what is not. Page 3 has details of all the ways you can get in touch with us.

- **Carers Information Day** at The Forum, Norwich on **13 June and 10 October 2022**. More details in our next edition or keep an eye on the Forum website at https://theforumnorwich.co.uk
- **VISIBLE Festival** at The Forum on **21 and 22 October 2022**. Further details to follow.

If you know of SEND coffee mornings or other events for families with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and it would be helpful to have a Family Voice ambassador come along to explain what we do and how we work to improve services, please contact Gemma at office@familyvoice.org.uk or ring 07749 604595.

We will also be there in person at the **Making Sense of SEND** event below. These events are organised by the Norfolk SEND Local Offer team in partnership with Family Voice Norfolk and give you the chance to:

- listen to a presentation on a specialist subject
- give your views about something the Local Offer team wants to improve or develop
- ask a panel of experts questions.

These **free** events are exclusively for parents and carers who have a child with SEND. They are supported by: • Family Voice Norfolk • Norfolk SENDIASS • Norfolk SEN Network • SENsational Families.

Making Sense of SEND

A free info sharing event for parents and carers of children aged 0-25 with SEND

King's Centre, Great Yarmouth

Tuesday 28 June 2022

10am-12pm

Book on Eventbrite here. The topic will be **Preparing for adult life**.
Kingsgate Community Church, 30 Queen Anne's Rd, Great Yarmouth NR31 0LE

We have been working on…

Family Voice Norfolk representatives attend meetings and give feedback to the local authority, health services and voluntary groups about what families with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are telling us. Our aim is always to **improve services** for our families. Here are just a few of the pieces of work we have been involved in during April and May.

Sharing what matters to you about health services

On Wednesday 4 May, two of our Family Voice Norfolk parent carer representatives met **Tracey Bleakley, Chief Executive Officer Designate of the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board**. The 'round table' session was organised by Andy McGowan of Caring Together and gave us, and other carers and representatives of organisations, the opportunity to voice the concerns that our members had shared with us.

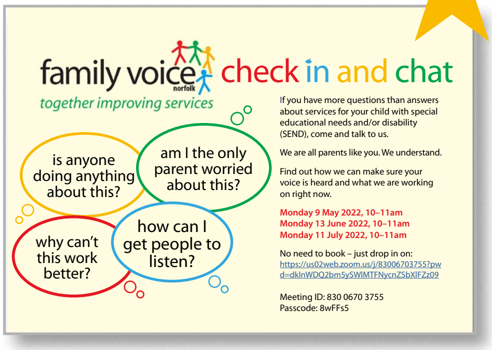
Thank you to all of you who took the time to email and message us with the issues and concerns around health that are affecting your families. We were very careful to voice all of the subjects you raised so that Tracey is aware of **what matters to you and to us about health services**. These include services you are receiving and those that are difficult to access or simply not available – gaps that need to be filled.

Tracey Bleakley left the meeting with a very clear picture of parent carers' experiences and concerns, including :

- Mental health concerns for parent carers and the impact of the exhausting fight for services.
- Mental health failings, gaps, waiting lists and issues around autism and learning disabilities within children's and adult mental health services.
- Transitions within health from children's health services to adult health services and also the difficulties around some specific medications that 'cease' once a child turns 18.
- Inconsistencies and the questionable quality of Carers' Health Checks and the post-14 Autism and Learning Disability Health Checks that should be offered to our young people by GP surgeries.
- Dentistry.
- Lack of awareness of parent carers as carers – those who don't walk in our shoes may not understand the extra work, stresses and isolation of our role, including professionals who really should know.
- Waiting lists – those for neurodevelopmental disorder diagnosis, for speech and language therapy, the current lack of sensory occupational therapy in Norfolk and Waveney.
- Communication – the importance of listening to parent carers, hearing what they say, valuing their knowledge as the experts on their child or young person.
- Lack of 'join-up' within services and the impact of having to tell your child's story over and over again.

Check in and chat

At our Family Voice Norfolk **Check in and chat** session on Monday 9 May we welcomed some 'new' parent carers to the informal online Zoom session. It was lovely to hear at the end that they were glad they had come along.



family voice norfolk **check in and chat**

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Meeting ID: 830 0670 3755
Passcode: 8wFFs5

Our **Check in and chats** are really welcoming and give us all a chance to talk as parents and carers about the things that are happening in our families, worries we might have and the successes we might have seen. They really are a great opportunity just to share what we have learned along the way.

It always amazes us as parent carers ourselves how much help and 'top tips' we get from talking to other parent carers – and we're able to pass on our own ideas. Our hour was full of chat around **school transport**, **sleep and medications**, **autism**, **anxieties** and the things our children do, all led by the parents carers who joined the session. We managed some laughs along the way and enjoyed the informality and safe space to chat.

Turn to page 2 for details of how to join our next sessions – there's no need to book. Just come along and join us!

Family Voice Norfolk ambassadors – out and about again at last

Making Sense of SEND

A free info sharing event for parents and carers of children aged 0-25 with SEND

Knights Hill Hotel, King's Lynn
Thursday 12 May 2022
10am-12pm

Our ambassador Rachel went to NCC's first live event in a long time for parent carers last week. **Making Sense of SEND** was at Knight's Hill, King's Lynn and was a session focusing on health, with presentations from Mark Gower and Clare Angell from the Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (N&WCCG). There was also a panel of experts who could field questions on a number of topics.

Parent carers listened to the presentations, asked questions, shared experiences and made use of the time to get information and answers to some of their concerns. It was lovely to be chatting face to face with people again and to be explaining Family Voice Norfolk's role to families who came to our stand.

Making Sense of SEND sessions are organised by the Norfolk SEND Local Offer team in partnership with Family Voice Norfolk. **Find out about the next session on page 4.**

SEND green paper consultation extension

We will shortly be organising some events to gain your views on the proposals in the SEND green paper (see our March newsletter for details here). **Easy Read** and **sign-language** versions are now available here and, as these were late arriving, the deadline for consultation has been extended to 11.45pm on **22 July 2022**.

Speaking up about services for your young person or child with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) – **why it really, really matters** – a parent carer's view

NB This piece was submitted by a parent carer who is also a Family Voice Norfolk representative. This newsletter would be equally happy to publish ***your*** *views, whether they agree or disagree with this piece: Ed.*

It was a conversation with my son in early May that prompted me to write this. I hope it doesn't sound preachy. I'm writing as a parent of more than one young person with SEND.

My son is a young adult, changing jobs fairly often – sometimes through his choice, sometimes not – and gradually finding his way in the world. I asked him if he was going to vote in the local elections.

He said, 'Am I going to vote? Of course not. What's the point? It won't make any difference.'

I didn't manage to get him to see that one vote might not make a difference, but lots and lots of single votes really could. His view is shared by lots of people. And his experience as a young person with SEND has often been that he isn't always listened to.

But it made me think about the world of SEND and how as parents we so often believe that nothing we do can make a difference to the services our children and young people do or don't receive.

It's not surprising. Those who make the plans and decisions that shape our children's lives are often faceless and unknown, working within systems that are unfamiliar, and within constraints of time, money and legislation that we don't fully understand. It's easy to think of them as **them**. You know what I mean – the way that some people think of our children as **them**, not a whole range of individuals, with different challenges and successes and needs.

We shouldn't have to understand how everything works. All we want is for the right services to be there for our children, at the right time, designed to help **them**, not the system.

Having worked as a representative for Family Voice Norfolk, I've been in lots of meetings with planners and decision-makers. The majority genuinely want to improve services, but most of them don't know – as we do – what it is like to fear for the future of a child whose needs are defined as 'special' – not the ordinary needs of most children. They can't completely understand why we are often afraid, confused and angry, feeling powerless in the face of systems that are designed to make our children less 'special'.

But they have a legal obligation to listen to us. Part 3 of the **Children and Families Act 2014** (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/3/enacted), which is about 'Children and young people in England with special educational needs or disabilities' *begins* – the very first clause – with these words:

> ***Local authority functions: supporting and involving children and young people***
>
> *In exercising a function under this Part in the case of a child or young person, a local authority in England must have regard to the following matters in particular—*
>
> *(a) the views, wishes and feelings of the child and his or her parent, or the young person;*
>
> *(b) the importance of the child and his or her parent, or the young person, participating as fully as possible in decisions relating to the exercise of the function concerned;*

(c) the importance of the child and his or her parent, or the young person, being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions;

(d) the need to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.

That's very clear. Of course, it's not possible for every parent, child or young person to speak to every person who makes every decision or plan that affects them. That's where a parent carer forum like Family Voice has a role to play. **Armed with your views about what has and hasn't worked for you and your family, we can make sure that parent carers' voices are heard as widely as possible. The more feedback we receive, the more powerfully we can represent what is important for families.**

This year there will be a revisit from Ofsted/CQC SEND inspectors (see page 9 for more information about this and how both you and Family Voice Norfolk can be involved). It will be necessary for the local authority to show that it has listened to the views of parent carers, children and young people and responded to them.

Of course, there are other things you can do to make sure planners and decision-makers take notice:

- You can campaign. As a parent carer forum, Family Voice Norfolk isn't allowed to do that, but there are plenty of parent groups that can and we value their energy and courage in speaking out publicly about issues that affect our families.
- You can give feedback on the SEND Local Offer website here.
- You can make a complaint (or give a compliment about good service) to Norfolk County Council here.
- You can give your views about health and social care services in Norfolk to Healthwatch here.
- Some families have the resources and stamina to undertake legal challenges. Most of us can't face that or afford it, but we know how effective it can be.

All these actions have a part to play.

As for Family Voice Norfolk, over the coming months, we are going to give you as many opportunities as we can to feed back to us – what works well and what is not working well for your family. There is information in this newsletter about some of them, but we will also use our general Facebook page, our Members Chat Room Facebook page, our website, our events and any other means we can to make sure it is as easy as possible to let us know how things are for you and your child.

We don't expect you to respond to every opportunity. We know you are always busy and often stressed. You don't have to write pages (as I seem to have done). Just a few words to tell your truth is what we need.

None of us at Family Voice Norfolk would be doing this work if we didn't think we could make a difference. We all have children with SEND and we all want the best for them – and for your children too. **Anything you can tell us will help us to make that a reality.**

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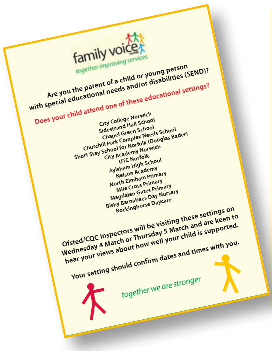
Ofsted/CQC local area SEND inspection – re-visit

In March 2020, just before the first lockdown, Ofsted/CQC inspectors visited Norfolk as part of their national inspection programme to to see how effectively local authorities and health services fulfil their responsibilities for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The voices of parent carers and children and young people with SEND themselves are very important in the inspection process. We kept you informed about what was happening at every step of the inspection.



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Are you the parent of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)?

Does your child attend one of these educational settings?

City College Norwich
Sidestrand Hall School
Chapel Green School
Churchill Park Complex Needs School
Short Stay School for Norfolk (Douglas Bader)
City Academy Norwich
UTC Norfolk
Aylsham High School
Nelson Academy
North Elmham Primary
Mile Cross Primary
Magdalen Gates Primary
Bishy Barnabees Day Nursery
Rockinghorse Daycare

Ofsted/CQC inspectors will be visiting these settings on Wednesday 4 March or Thursday 5 March and are keen to hear your views about how well your child is supported.

Your setting should confirm dates and times with you.

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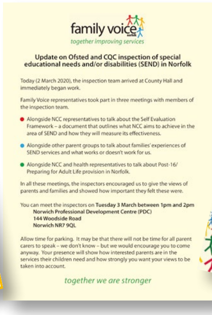

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Update on Ofsted and CQC inspection of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Norfolk

Today (2 March 2020), the inspection team arrived at County Hall and immediately began work.

Family Voice representatives took part in three meetings with members of the inspection team.

- Alongside NCC representatives to talk about the Self Evaluation Framework – a document that outlines what NCC aims to achieve in the area of SEND and how they will measure its effectiveness.
- Alongside other parent groups to talk about families' experiences of SEND services and what works or doesn't work for us.
- Alongside NCC and health representatives to talk about Post-16/ Preparing for Adult Life provision in Norfolk.

In all these meetings, the inspectors encouraged us to give the views of parents and families and showed how important they felt these were.

You can meet the inspectors on **Tuesday 3 March between 1pm and 2pm**
Norwich Professional Development Centre (PDC)
144 Woodside Road
Norwich NR7 9QL

Allow time for parking. It may be that there will not be time for all parent carers to speak – we don't know – but we would encourage you to come anyway. Your presence will show how interested parents are in the services their children need and how strongly you want your views to be taken into account.

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Update on Ofsted and CQC inspection of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Norfolk

Today (3 March 2020), the inspection team heard from parent carers at the Professional Development Centre. Parents' views and experiences were powerful and often hard to hear.

Not everyone had a chance to speak in the time available. Please, if you were not able to come or did not get a chance to mention ways in which your child with SEND has been assessed and supported by education, health and social services since 2014 – whether your experience has been positive or negative – email the inspectors before Friday on

lasend.support@ofsted.gov.uk

They are very interested in what you can tell them. Although they cannot solve individual problems or even reflect everything we tell them in their final report, everything you say helps to build a picture of SEND in Norfolk and will influence what they write.

For more information, see our website at www.familyvoice.org.uk or our Facebook page. If you cannot access the above feedback route, contact us at membership@familyvoice.org.uk or phone 07950 302937 and we will try to help.

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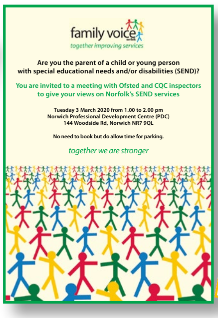

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Are you the parent of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)?

You are invited to a meeting with Ofsted and CQC inspectors to give your views on Norfolk's SEND services

Tuesday 3 March 2020 from 1.00 to 2.00 pm
Norwich Professional Development Centre (PDC)
144 Woodside Rd, Norwich NR7 9QL

No need to book but do allow time for parking.

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Thank you to everyone who fed back to the Ofsted/CQC inspectors.

It has been a very busy week for Family Voice Norfolk, attending meetings, sharing evidence and making sure that we kept as many parent carers as possible informed about how to make their voices heard.

As the parent carer forum for Norfolk, we intend to continue to work with the local authority, health and voluntary services to do our best to ensure that services for our children and young people with SEND – and their families – improve.

The inspectors' report should be published in April. We will let you know as soon as it is available.

We hope that you will carry on informing us about your views and experiences. For us this is neither the end nor the beginning of our work, which we will continue with increased determination.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our Conference on 14 March. Book now if you haven't yet!

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Following the inspection, as is usual, the inspectors sent a letter to the Executive Director of Children's Services, Norfolk County Council, and the Accountable Officer of the Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group. The letter outlined the inspectors' findings. You can read it in full by downloading it from the SEND Local Offer website here.

The letter details lots of areas needing improvement that many of you will find all too familiar. It also mentions some areas of activity that are working well. We were pleased to see the comment: 'Organisations such as Family Voice and the SEND information advice and support service (SENDIASS) have not shied away from confronting area leaders about the needs of families and the problems they face.'

The letter ends by stating **three areas of significant weakness** that the local area must address:

- *Too many EHC plans and annual reviews are not completed in a timely manner and are of poor quality. This limits the scope and impact of joint commissioning, including the timeliness of services to meet speech, language and communication needs; for children and young people with social, emotional, mental health needs; and for those with ASD.*
- *Plans and provision for young people as they move into adulthood are not sufficient to meet their needs. There is a lack of support for the young people to become active, independent citizens in the community, in a way that matches their needs and aspirations. Joint commissioning of services for 18- to 25-year olds is not sufficiently well informed because leaders do not know enough about what the young people want and need.*
- *Too often, communication with parents and carers is poor. Co-production with children, young people and their families is too limited. These weaknesses particularly affect, but are not exclusive to, children and young people with SEND who do not have an EHC plan. Families are not sufficiently informed about what help is available to them and what the area is doing to address the weaknesses in provision and services for children and young people. Many families*

are understandably frustrated and anxious and believe that no one is listening to them. The confrontation between some parents and area leaders is diverting essential time, resources and focus from the urgent work needed. This is not best serving the needs of children and young people with SEND across Norfolk.

What has happened since March 2020?

Following the inspectors' report letter, the local area was required to create **a written statement of action (WSoA)**, detailing how it would address the significant weaknesses. Family Voice Norfolk took part in many of the lengthy meetings that eventually resulted in a programme of over a hundred actions that needed to be taken.

Since then, as readers of this newsletter will know, we have been involved in literally thousands of meetings aimed at addressing many of the issues raised.

The global pandemic has, of course, had an enormous effect on all of us. It has created new difficulties for families with children or young people with SEND and for some of us has put into focus the real nature of how well education and health services work or do not work for our children.

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newsletter
December 2021

Thank you!

for helping us speak up for families with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). In **2021** we attended:

1,074 meetings

to represent the views of parent carers. These covered the areas in the chart below.

'Other' includes regional and national meetings, and meetings with voluntary sector partners.

We couldn't have done it without **you**…

- sharing your stories with us, so that we can tell planners and decision-makers what families like ours need and deserve.
- replying to our surveys, joining us on Facebook, coming to our online **Let's talk…** sessions, visiting our website and reading this newsletter – we know how busy you are.
- tirelessly supporting and championing your children and helping them to look forward with confidence even when the future is uncertain.

As this second year of the pandemic comes to an end, it seems right to acknowledge that we have all faced struggles and anxieties that we could never have foreseen, but let's also celebrate the courage and resilience that has brought us to this point.

All of us at Family Voice Norfolk wish you and your families a safe, fun-filled and (occasionally) peaceful festive season and a happy and healthy New Year.

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It didn't, however, stop work on the written statement of action. If anything, the fact that the meetings went online meant that more work could be done and more conversations had now that there was no more booking rooms and travelling to meetings. With our own young people at home for much of the time, and the anxiety about health affecting every family, Family Voice Norfolk representatives made extraordinary efforts to make sure that parent carers' views were heard.

Almost all the actions on the written statement of action have been completed, but as parents we know that this in no way means that the work has finished. And the key question that we need to ask is: **has all this work made a positive difference for families?**

So what happens now?

At some point this year – perhaps before the summer holidays or perhaps at the beginning of the autumn term – **the inspectors will return to determine whether the local area has made sufficient progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness detailed in the WSoA.**

We are very clear that 'sufficient progress' can only really be judged on whether the situation has improved for families.

The arrival of the inspectors is called a re-visit, not a re-inspection. They will only be interested in the areas of significant weakness that led to a WSOA being required. This isn't an opportunity to talk about other areas that need improvement. The inspectors will gather evidence about the effectiveness and impact of leaders' actions to address these.

You can find more information about re-visits here.

Family Voice Norfolk is very keen that parents and carers should have as much opportunity as possible to tell the inspectors about how the three areas of significant weakness have improved, changed, remained the same or even deteriorated for them.

Below is a timetable of how we believe the re-visit will work. The timings are likely but may be adapted in consultation with the local area and parent carer forum (Family Voice Norfolk). We will have the opportunity to agree the plan for the visit beforehand and, as the chart below shows, will aim to **keep you informed** at every stage.

When?	What will happen?	Family Voice Norfolk…
From now on…	The LA and Health services will be collecting evidence to show how their actions have impacted families	We will be doing the same. We will ask for your views on each of the three areas of serious weakness – if you have noticed improvements in services and how you have been involved in decisions and planning around your child with SEND
10 working days before the re-visit (on a Monday)	The inspectors will notify the Director of Children's Services, Health partners and Family Voice Norfolk of the re-visit	We will notify **you** and other parent carer groups who have not yet been informed.
7 working days before the re-visit	The LA and Health services can upload evidence for the inspectors to view	So can Family Voice Norfolk. We will present what we have learnt from parent carers about the three areas of serious weakness and whether their experience now is different from that in March 2020.
5 working days before the re-visit (at midday on a Monday)	Inspectors will launch their own online survey for parent carers.	We will have already had the chance to discuss this survey with the inspectors to ensure that the wording is clear and the questions being asked give you the best chance to respond. We will work with other parent carer groups to make sure that as many parent carers as possible have access to the survey and can give their views.
1 working day before the re-visit (at midday on a Friday)	The online survey for parent carers closes.	We will have reminded you of the deadline and urged you to complete the survey.
Day 1 of the re-visit (a Monday)	Inspectors will meet with senior leaders from the local area in the morning and Family Voice Norfolk in the afternoon. There will also be an open meeting with parents to discuss those issues that are the focus of the re-visit.	We will inform you about what we have done and said and make sure you have information about the open meeting for parents. We can also take your comments to that meeting if you are unable to attend.
Final day of the re-visit (which may be 2 or 4 days)	Provisional judgement meeting. Confirm judgements. Feedback (afternoon).	Although the Family Voice Chair may be aware of the content of the judgement, she will not be able to say anything about it until the stage below has been completed.
Normally within 33 working days of the end of the inspection	The inspectors will publish a letter of the re-visit's findings on the local authority SEND section of Ofsted's reports website.	We will publicise the findings detailed in the letter and make sure that you know how your participation was heard and used.

Inspectors will also seek to gather the views of children and young people through discussion during the re-visit. **It is important that we all focus on the areas of significant weakness – not the many other topics we might like to tell the inspectors about!**

What happens after the re-visit?

The published letter from the inspectors will include:

- the decision about whether the local area has made sufficient progress in relation to each of the serious weaknesses identified at the initial inspection
- a clear and brief summary of the effectiveness of leaders' actions against each serious weakness identified in the WSOA
- where relevant, information about how the pandemic has impacted on children and young people with SEND in the area, their families and the local SEND system, and how local area leaders have adapted their plans
- reference to any other serious concerns, along with evidence, identified during the re-visit, and clarification that these will be communicated to the DfE and NHS England and will be used to determine the timing of the next inspection (under any future area SEND framework)

If a local area has made sufficient progress in addressing all of the areas of significant weakness, the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England will stop making their formal quarterly support and challenge visits.

If a local area is making insufficient progress in addressing any of the areas of significant weakness, it is for the DfE and NHS England to determine the next steps. This may include the Secretary of State using their powers of intervention. Ofsted and the CQC will not carry out any further re-visits unless directed to do so by the Secretary of State.

When will our local area have its next SEND inspection?

This is not yet clear. Ofsted/CQC are currently working on developing a new inspection framework that will be less focused on the 2014 SEND reforms and more on how local area SEND arrangements affect children and young people, in Ofsted's words: 'whether they make sustained and significant improvement for children, young people and their families.'

Whatever the new plans, they will go out for consultation before being adopted. We will certainly let you know when this happens.

Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums (ERPCF)

In early May a Family Voice Norfolk representative travelled to Cambridge for her first in-the-room meeting in many months to meet up with reps from other parent carer forums in the eastern region. It's a really energising experience to talk with others who are working in their own areas to improve services, just as we are. It's also a way in which we can feed views from our region to the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF), reps of which have regular meetings with government ministers and sit on important national committees. That way your voices from Norfolk can be heard at the heart of government.

Also at the meeting, two Department for Education representatives came along to give a presentation on the SEND Review green paper (see our last newsletter) and ask for the views of those present. We jointly raised a huge number of issues and will soon be organising events at which we can all talk together in Norfolk about what we want to say in the consultation.

ASD Helping Hands focus groups

ASD Helping Hands is keen to hear from people with lived experience of learning disability and/or autism and their parents/carers about what is working well and isn't working well in Norfolk, and what needs to happen to make things better.

Your feedback will form part of ASD Helping Hands bid to become coordinators for the Norfolk Autism Partnership and the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

They are running two groups one specifically for autism and the other for learning disability.

Autism focus group

Date: Tuesday 24 May 2022

Time 10:30–12:30

Venue: Virtual (Zoom)

Register for the Autism Focus Group: https://tinyurl.com/ycktx42v

Please note that the mention of London on the registration form only relates to the time zone – the session is online and about Norfolk.

Learning disability focus group

Date: Wednesday 25 May 2022

Time 10:30–12:30

Venue: Virtual (Zoom)

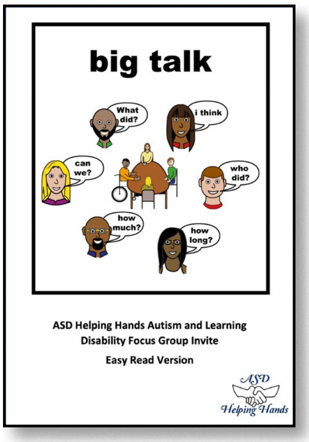
Register for the Learning Disability Focus Group: https://tinyurl.com/mr2peuwb

Please note that the mention of London on the registration form only relates to the time zone – the session is online and about Norfolk.

Click here for the Easy Read invitation: https://tinyurl.com/3xuph28x

For further information, email lee.gibbons@asdhelpinghands.org.uk or call 01362 853018 or 07884141299

If you are unable to make the focus groups, ASD Helping Hands is still keen to hear from you. Email Lee directly to let him know what you think.



ASD Helping Hands Autism and Learning Disability Focus Group Invite

Easy Read Version

Keep in touch with Contact

The name of Contact, the charity for families with disabled children, crops up regularly in this newsletter, as it is part of the consortium that supports parent carer forums but also has a wealth of information, webinars and training opportunities for parents. www.contact.org.uk

Have you had experience of your child or young person being discharged from hospital?

Caring Together and Carers Voice are working with Norfolk County Council and Norfolk & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group to create a short animated video for those working on hospital discharge to promote good practice when supporting people who have unpaid carers.

They would really like the voices of **parent carers** and **young carers** to be included. The video will have short stories of different experiences, with an animation for each to accompany the voice of the real person. Your experience could be good or negative – both can help to make sure the experiences of families is better in the future.

The idea is that the workforce viewing the video will learn new perspectives that will help them to change the way they work and share ideas with others.

There is a tight schedule for this, so if you would like to help, please contact Andy.McGowan@caringtogether.org as soon as possible and tell him your story.

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun feedback

If your child or young person took part in the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Easter programme, please make sure that you reply to the request for feedback. It is important that families with children or young people with SEND let organisers know what worked and what didn't work for them.

If your child's needs, where you live, or your access to transport meant that you were not able to join the holiday programme, please do feed that back as well by emailing bnhf@norfolk.gov.uk. Sometimes what is obvious to us as parents is not clear to those organising activities. **Make sure they understand!** Family Voice Norfolk attends meetings with the commissioners of holiday services and we continually speak up for the needs of children with SEND. Your voice added to ours will be even stronger.

This is particularly important as plans are underway for the summer holiday activity programme, which will take place between **25 July and 5 September 2022**. Information will gradually be added at https://www.activenorfolk.org/public/bignorfolkholidayfun/#contact

Improving support for young carers and young adult carers

Do you want to improve the support available for young carers, young adults carers and their families? You can join a **Young Carers Alliance research, policy and practice forum** on 'Improving support for young carers at key points of transition'.

The Young Carers Alliance is a growing network of organisations and individuals committed to changing the negative impact caring for a family member may have on young carers, young adult carers and their families and improving the support available to them.

The online forum, taking place via Zoom on **Monday 6 June 2022, 1.00pm–3.30pm**, will look at issues affecting young carers at different transition points, for example primary school to secondary school, secondary to higher education and then into employment.

You will have the opportunity to:

- hear about the some of the work being done to improve transitions for young adult carers
- learn about research exploring some of the challenges being faced at transition stages
- view examples of resources for transition from primary to secondary school
- and take part in a discussion around whether transition assessments are working.

The Young Carers Alliance brings together representatives from research, policy and practice. It provides opportunities for collaboration, sharing best practice and a strong, collective voice for young carers.

Caring Together
so that carers have choices

Young Carers Alliance

Young carers research, policy and practice forum

Improving support for young carers at key points of transition

6 June 2022 1.00pm-3.30pm on Zoom

Join us for the next Young Carers Alliance Research, Policy and Practice forum looking at some of the issues affecting young carers at different transition points. This forum gives you the opportunity to:

- Hear about some of the work being done to improve transitions for young adult carers.
- Learn about research exploring some of the challenges being faced at transition stages.
- See examples of resources that have been created to improve the transition from primary to secondary school.
- Network and discuss key issues around transitions such as access to higher education/employment and how well transitions assessments are working.

Booking https://young-carers-research-policy-practice-forum.eventbrite.co.uk

For more information contact
youngcarersalliance@caringtogether.org

@YCAlliance

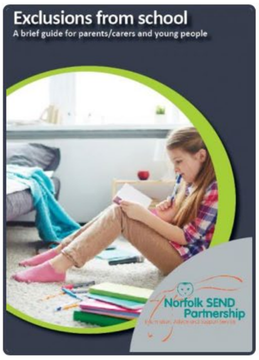
youngcarersalliance.org

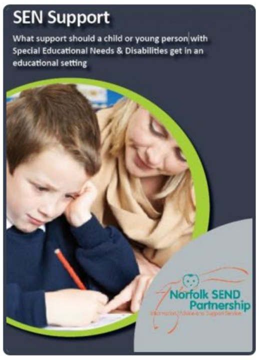
Norfolk SENDIASS
Information, Advice and Support Service

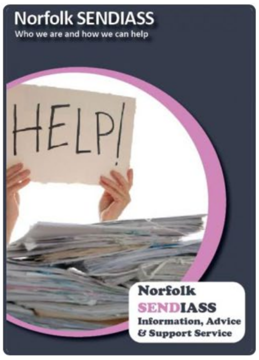
Norfolk SENDIASS provides free and impartial information, advice and support about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for children, young people, parents and carers.

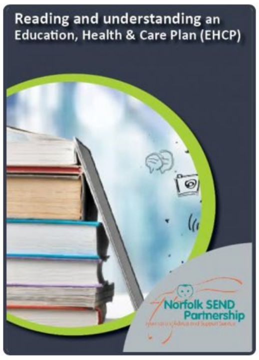
They are currently experiencing a very high increase in referrals through their helpline, which means that there is a wait time to speak with a SENDIASS adviser. If you have a deadline please contact the service as soon as you can so that the team can try to book you in within that deadline timeframe.

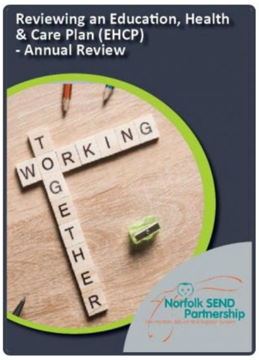
SENDIASS has an extensive range of booklets on many subjects and aims to create further resources. They would like to know what would be most useful to you. Go to their website at https://www.norfolksendiass.org.uk to fill in the short survey.

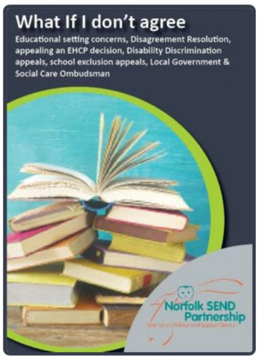

Exclusions from school
A brief guide for parents/carers and young people

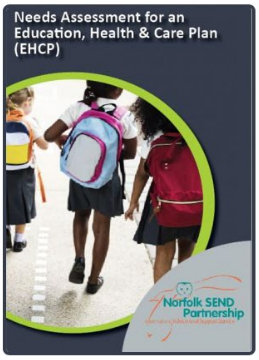

SEN Support
What support should a child or young person with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities get in an educational setting

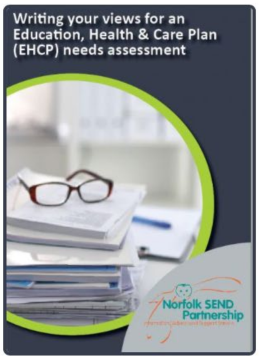

Norfolk SENDIASS
Who we are and how we can help

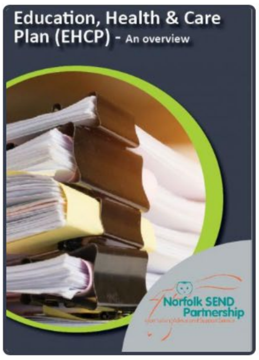

Reading and understanding an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)


Reviewing an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) - Annual Review

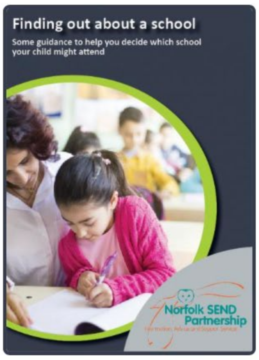

What If I don't agree
Educational setting concerns, Disagreement Resolution, appealing an EHCP decision, Disability Discrimination appeals, school exclusion appeals, Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman


Needs Assessment for an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)


Writing your views for an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) needs assessment


Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) - An overview


Disability Discrimination


Finding out about a school
Some guidance to help you decide which school your child might attend


Personal Budgets

Norfolk County Council Children's Services Practice Week

Each year Norfolk County Council Children's Services hold a Practice Week – a series of talks and presentations designed to enrich the practice of those working with children and families.

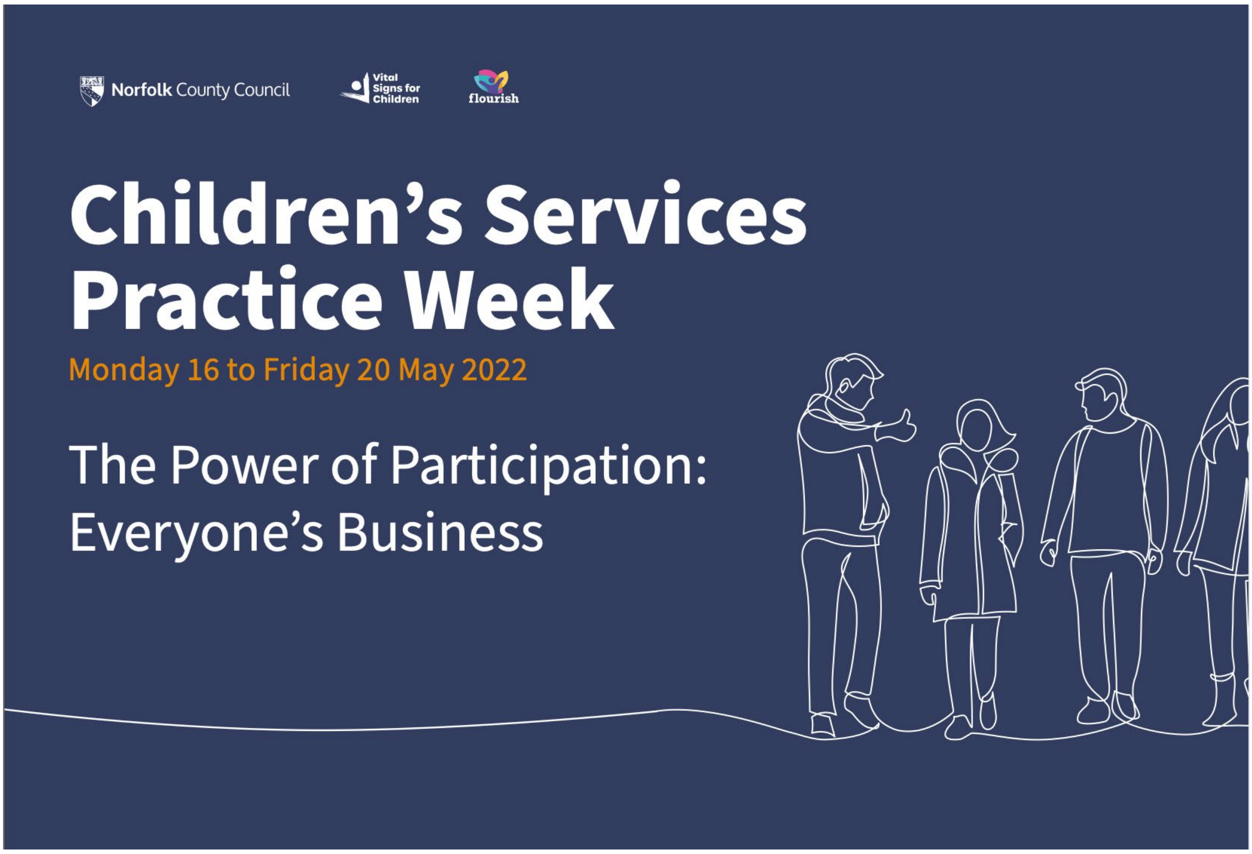
This year's event is online and focuses on **Participation**. It is appropriate that the sessions are opened up to allow children, families, carers and partner agencies to attend. After all, we are the experts with experience of NCC's services.

On page 18 you can see the invitation with link to the Conference part of the Practice Week, which takes place on the evening of **Wednesday, 18 May, 16.00–19.00**. It's not, I'm afraid, at a particularly good time for those with young families.

For the rest of the talks and presentations, which are shorter and perhaps easier to dip into, you can find the Practice Week brochure on our website at https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Practice-week-brochure-May-202224.pdf. Links to the events are in the brochure itself.

One of the presentations, **from 11.00 to 12.00 on Thursday, 19 May**, includes Tracey Sismey, Family Voice Norfolk's Chair, and Nicola Baxter, our Communications Lead, taking part alongside professionals from Norfolk County Council to talk about **Improving co-production of SEND in Norfolk**.

At Family Voice Norfolk, we believe in co-production as the best way to work together to improve services, making the best use of resources by including the people who are most affected by what is planned. You can read what we believe about co-production on our website at https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/co-production/.



Norfolk County Council
Vital Signs for Children
flourish

Children's Services Practice Week

Monday 16 to Friday 20 May 2022

The Power of Participation:
Everyone's Business

Norfolk County Council

Vital Signs for Children

flourish

The Power of Participation:

Everyone's Business

4pm to 7pm Wednesday 18 May 2022

A free online conference event run by Norfolk Children's Services about how we can best listen, act, and respond to the views of children and young people in care.

Open to young people, families and professionals, it will feature speakers from Norfolk County Council introducing the authority's new participation strategy and these two inspirational speakers:

Lemn Sissay
Lemn is an award-winning poet, playwright, performer and broadcaster who spent his childhood in foster and residential care.

Luke Rogers
Luke is an award-winning social entrepreneur who has helped design projects to improve the experience of children in care and moving beyond care.

Book your place here

Down Syndrome Act 2022

The Down Syndrome Act became law in April. Its aim is to ensure that health, education, and local authorities take account of the specific needs of people with Down syndrome when exercising their relevant functions. The Act is just the first stage. The Secretary of State, after taking advice, first has to develop and issue guidance to health, education and local authorities (in respect of social care and housing) on how to meet those specific needs of people with Down syndrome, and then the relevant authorities have to have due regard to the guidance in providing services.

The Act, even from those of us who love and care for a person with Down syndrome, has received criticism. Some widely stated issues are:

- current government policy focuses on recognising and addressing the inequalities and premature mortality faced by all people with learning disabilities including those with Down syndrome. Government policy does not typically differentiate between different parts of the population except where there is clinical justification (for example adults with Down syndrome were identified as being at far greater risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 and identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable). Shouldn't we be concentrating on ensuring that **all** people with a learning disability have the services they need?
- Local authorities are legally obliged to use assessment under the Care Act 2014 to assess people based on need, not diagnostic categories. It can't be right that people with Down syndrome have preferential treatment, so how will the new bill improve things?

However, evidence indicates that people with Down syndrome face specific challenges. The Bill seeks to address these by ensuring that relevant authorities will have clear guidance on appropriate steps for them to take to meet the needs of people with Down syndrome.

The guidance will also help individuals with Down syndrome and their families to have a clearer understanding of what they can expect and what they are entitled to receive.

This is all the more important when we consider that this is the first generation in which people with Down syndrome are likely to outlive their parents.

Speaking as both the editor of this newsletter and the mother of a much-loved young woman with Down syndrome, I see the arguments on both sides. I would wish all people with a learning disability to be treated fairly, but I would also welcome more knowledge among professionals about the specific needs of people with Down syndrome. I still have to explain to people that giving my daughter a string of verbal instructions is setting her up to fail, as she has a very short short-term memory, while giving her the same list in writing would enable her to deal with everything easily.

At Family Voice, we consider any kind of special educational need or disability as of equal importance – there shouldn't be any kind of hierarchy for our children. And we are particularly mindful of those who do not have a clear diagnosis and therefore often lack access to condition-specific advice and the support of other families with similar challenges.

A note about terminology: The DS bill uses 'Down syndrome', which is why we have used it above, but in the UK 'Down's syndrome' is commonly used as well.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION WEBINAR FOR PARENTS

A discussion – led by industry experts and parent advocates – on the effective inclusion of all children within mainstream settings.

MONDAY 23RD MAY 2022

10AM (UK TIME)

REGISTER TO ATTEND FOR FREE

#InclusiveEducation

DOWN'S SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

Down's Syndrome Scotland

DSi Down Syndrome International

Inclusive education webinar for parents

- Join the webinar to learn about the benefits of inclusive education for your child, to understand what inclusive education means and how it could be achieved in classrooms.
- Learn what you can advocate for and discover advocacy tools to help you achieve this.
- Ask questions about inclusive education, empowering you on your journey.
- The webinar is scheduled to last for an hour and a half.
- Register for the webinar at https://www.ds-int.org/Event/inclusive-education-webinar-for-parents

Lewis starts work

Congratulations to Lewis Sismey, who has started paid work with GXO, a logistics company in Stowmarket, and is seen here with his colleague Cliff, the gate man.

Lewis found his employment with the help of WorkFit, a programme run by the Down's Syndrome Association (DSA). WorkFit matches jobseekers who have Down's syndrome with employers who have jobs to offer. A dedicated WorkFit Officer supports jobseekers and employers at all stages of the process. WorkFit listens to the business needs of employers and matches them to the hopes and ambitions of jobseekers, supporting them to be more independent, learn new skills, meet new people, earn money and increase their self-esteem.

Support at work is ongoing and all support, resources and training are free of charge. Work means different things to different people. Some people want a paid job; some people want to volunteer or do work experience in different sectors so that they can decide what might be best for them.

Find out more and contact WorkFit at https://www.dsworkfit.org.uk

Down's Syndrome Association WORKFiT

Protection of liberty consultation

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the government is consulting on the proposed changes to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) Code of Practice, which includes guidance on the new Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) system. This consultation is also seeking views on the LPS regulations, which will underpin the new system.

This is a joint consultation published by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

The LPS will apply to **people over the age of 16**, and the Department for Education (DfE) has been involved in the development of this new system.

The LPS is important guidance about what has to happen if a person is deprived of their liberty without their consent.

You can find more details and Easy Read versions of documents that explain more about what is proposed on the government website here. It's important for parent carers to understand what this could mean for their young person and how it affects their ability to advocate for them.

Is community mental health care working for you or your family?

Healthwatch Norfolk wants to find out if changes to community-based mental health services in Norfolk and Waveney are working for patients, and those who support and care for them.

It wants to evaluate the changes which were made following a partnership between the NHS, councils, charities and community-based organisations to make sure the needs of adults affected by mental health conditions are better met.

If you are:

An adult (aged 18+) living in Norfolk and Waveney affected by a mental health condition in the past 12 months

or support an adult affected by a mental health condition in the past 12 months, they would like to hear from you.

They are keen to hear your experiences of treatment and care, what works, what could be improved and whether you have seen recent improvements to mental health services.

It is particularly important for them to hear the experiences of adults severely affected by mental illness (SMI), particularly those affected by:

- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia/Schizoaffective Disorder
- an Eating Disorder
- Bi-polar disorder
- Personality Disorder
- Severe Depression
- a mental health condition resulting in a need for rehabilitation

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete, and you have until **30 May 2022** to leave your feedback.

Complete the online survey

There are two different surveys – one for **those who have been affected by mental ill health**, and a second for **those who care for and support affected adults.**

Complete the online survey for adults affected by mental ill health here

Or scan the QR code which will link to the questions.

If you are an adult (aged 16+) who cares for or supports an adult affected by mental ill health living in Norfolk or Waveney, you can follow this link

Or scan the QR code below which will link to the questions.

If you would prefer to take part in the survey by phone, you can call Healthwatch Norfolk on 0808 168 9669 or email enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk to arrange a time to be called.

This survey will be discussing mental health issues. If you are struggling with your mental health and are looking for advice on where to get support, click this link.

New partnership to support parent carer forums

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced that the four-way consortium led by Contact and including the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF), the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) and KIDS has been awarded a three-year strategic participation contract, designed to encourage and support participation (involvement) of parent carers in decision-making and planning of SEND services, via their local parent carer forum. In Norfolk that is Family Voice Norfolk.

You can read more about this on the Contact website here.

The DfE funding means that over the next three years Contact will continue to work with 152 parent carer forums in England to make sure their voices are heard at a local, regional and national level. The new contract started in May 2022, and also enables Contact to continue its support offer to families with disabled children through online information and its national helpline. You can find out about upcoming training opportunities for parent carers starting on page 31 of this newsletter.

The Council for Disabled Children will continue to support the Information, Advice and Support Network and will, alongside KIDS be supporting children and young people's participation in local, regional and national policy and practice.

Contact has acted as the delivery partner to the DfE to support parent carer forums since 2008. It will lead the work carried out by the consortium in this new contract which aims to:

- empower children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and their parents and carers to make informed choices about the services available to them and support them to influence SEND policy at local, regional and national level so that services and provision are designed and delivered in a way that works for them.
- develop parent carer forum and children and young people's participation at a local level and improve their strategic participation in regional and national SEND policy and delivery
- support the provision of high-quality information, advice and support for families whose children have SEND, including through a national helpline
- provide training, development and support to Local SENDIASS and
- administer grants to 152 parent carer forums across England.

Children and Families Minister Will Quince said: "Contact and their partners do fantastic work to make sure parent carers and young people are directly involved in how local SEND services work for them.

"This new government contract and grant funding, of over £17 million for three years, will support Contact's work and make sure parents and young people's voices continue to be heard at a local, regional and national level.

"Together we can make sure that all parents and carers, regardless of their child's needs, have access to the advice and support they need to better succeed in life."

the national sleep helpline

Does your child suffer with sleep issues?

Do you struggle with your child's bedtime?

Will your child not sleep in their own bed?

WE CAN HELP

03303 530 541
Available Sunday - Thursday 7pm - 9pm

the national sleep helpline

50% Around 50% of children will have a sleep issue at some point*

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL SLEEP HELPLINE?

In partnership with Furniture Village, The Sleep Charity has launched a brand new National Sleep Helpline to ensure that everyone has access to high quality, evidence-based advice.

HOW CAN THE NATIONAL SLEEP HELPLINE HELP YOU?

- Run by a team of specialist trained sleep advisors
- Offer you some practical strategies and recommend services that could help
- Ensuring you understand how sleep plays an important part in your child's mental health and wellbeing
- Listen without judgement and help you decide what next steps are right for you
- Empower you with sleep knowledge so you can understand why your child might not be sleeping well and how that can change

03303 530 541
Available Sunday - Thursday
7pm - 9pm

POWERED BY the sleep charity | IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Furniture Village

*Survey of 2,000 adults by OnePoll, Aug 2021

the national sleep helpline

Need help with sleep issues?

SUPPORTING THE NATION'S SLEEP

03303 530 541
Available Sunday - Thursday 7pm - 9pm

the national sleep helpline

1/4 say sleep affected their mental health*

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL SLEEP HELPLINE?

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03303 530 541
Available Sunday - Thursday
7pm - 9pm

POWERED BY the sleep charity | IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Furniture Village

*Survey of 2,000 adults by OnePoll, Aug 2021

News from the Navigators

Year one…
In 2021, the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership were successful in securing £345,000 of funding from NHS England & Improvement to support children and young people with a learning disability, autism, or both, who are at risk of admission to a specialist hospital.

The funding secured a team of five Transforming Care Navigators who support and guide children, young people, and their families to navigate the health, education, and social care systems.

in good health
The Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership

Norfolk and Waveney NHS
Clinical Commissioning Group

A RECENT SUCCESS

100% of young people (U18, under Transforming Care) in an inpatient provision were allocated a Navigator in 2021/22.

100% of young people (U18, under Transforming Care) identified as at risk of hospital admission were allocated a Navigator in 2021/22.

"There is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more"

Robert M. Hensel

NAVIGATOR NEWSLETTER

YEAR ONE...

In 2021, the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership were successful in securing £345,000 of funding from NHS England & Improvement to support children and young people with a learning disability, autism, or both, who are at risk of admission to a specialist hospital.

The funding secured a team of five Transforming Care Navigators who support and guide children, young people, and their families to navigate the health, education, and social care systems. By getting the right help and support at the right time, it is hoped this will improve outcomes for these children and young people and reduce the risk of a hospital admission.

To-date, the Transforming Care Navigators have been supporting children and young people up to the age of 18 in a specialist hospital provision and those living in the community but are deemed at imminent risk of admission.

The Navigators have been working across Norfolk and Waveney, providing highly personalised and flexible face-to-face support to identify what works well for the individual, where support is helpful and where support is required. The service is person-centered and takes a whole family approach, with support tailored to the outcomes identified by the young person.

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Year two…
In April 2022, NHS England & Improvement awarded the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership a further £508,000 in response to a bid to expand the Navigator service to support more families across Norfolk and Waveney.

From 1 April 2022, the Navigator Team has extended their referral criteria to offer support not only to those children and young people in inpatient settings and those deemed at imminent risk of admission to a specialist hospital, but to young people:

- Demonstrating early signs of distress
- At risk of placement breakdown
- On the edge of care – at risk of being removed from the family home
- Regularly presenting to A & E due to a mental health difficulty.

To be eligible for Navigator support, the young person must have a diagnosis of a learning disability, autism, or both.

Continued on page 26

You are one of the only people that listens to me.

It makes such a difference having someone in meetings to support me that understands how I am feeling and really cares what mine and my child's views and wishes are.

And there's more…

From 1 June 2022, the Navigator Team will be expanding their service further to support young people up to the age of 25, who meet one of the referral criteria listed above. To support the expansion of the service, five additional Transforming Care Navigators have been recruited.

Our team of 10 Navigators will work across Norfolk & Waveney to create the right structures and interventions to enable early identification, recognition, and accountability to ensure young people experience a more co-ordinated response with support that promotes long-term sustainable change.

The ultimate aim of the service is to prevent problems escalating to the point of crisis and to prevent hospital admission. The Navigators therefore work closely with young people to improve their quality of life and to put in place the confidence, skills and knowledge to sustain a safe and happy home.

The Navigator initiative directly supports the NHS Long Term Plan pledge, that by 2023/24 children and young people with a learning disability, autism, or both with the most complex needs will have a designated keyworker (Navigator).

To find out more, please contact the Navigator Team on nwccg.cypnavigators@nhs.net

Are you a parental carer of a child with a developmental disability?

You may be interested in research about a new group programme which has been co-developed by family carers, aiming to improve family relationships and wellbeing

The programme is called Positive Family Connections and involves six online, group sessions facilitated by trained family carers. Up to two family carers from each family can take part, but one must be the primary parental carer of the child with a developmental disability.

You can take part if:

- You are a parental caregiver of a child aged 8-13 years who has a learning disability and/or autism.
- You are aged 18 or older
- You are not currently receiving individual or group therapy or completing a parenting programme
- There are no safeguarding investigations relating to anybody in your family
- You don't feel that your family are in crisis and urgently in need of support

You would also need to be able to attend one of the following groups:

- Thursdays 12pm-2pm from 9th June 2022 for 6 weeks
- Wednesdays 7pm-9pm from 8th June 2022 for 6 weeks

If you want to find out more, the primary parental carer can scan the QR code, email positivefamilies@warwick.ac.uk, or call 07392125603.

Positive Family Connections

WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

CEREBRA
Working wonders for children with brain conditions

in good health
The Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership

NHS

Parents and carers are encouraged to get their children vaccinated

The following update was received from the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System: www.norfolkandwaveneypartnership.org.uk

Children aged between 5 and 11 are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at vaccination sites across Norfolk and Waveney, and health leaders are encouraging all parents and carers to bring their children to a vaccination centre as soon as they can.

Children and young people remain at risk of catching COVID-19, as well as transmitting it to other friends and family members who may be vulnerable to more serious illness. Getting vaccinated can prevent the worst effects of COVID-19 and reduce the risk of infection in children and those around them.

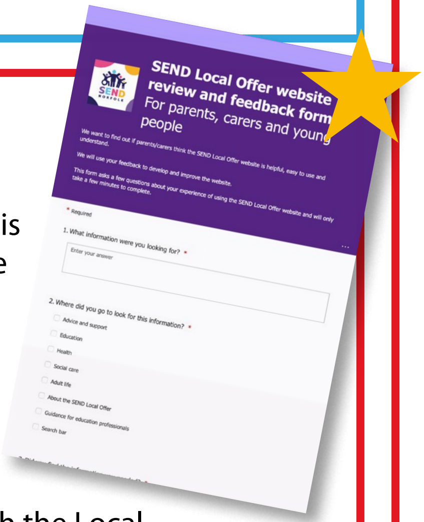
All children aged 5–11 are now able to attend any of the large-scale vaccination centres in Norfolk and Waveney as a walk-in to receive a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine instead of having to pre-book an appointment.

Appointments can also be booked quickly and conveniently on the NHS website and people who can't go online can book by phoning 119. Local NHS teams are also offering walk-in appointments and people are being urged to check availability on the local walk-in finder.

Tell the Local Offer team what you think!

The SEND Local Offer team is asking parents and carers to provide feedback on the **SEND Local Offer website**. They'd like to find out if it is helpful, easy to use and easy to understand. The feedback you provide will help them to develop and improve the website.

Share your experience of using the SEND Local Offer website using this short feedback form – it should only take about 5–10 minutes to complete.



SEND Local Offer website review and feedback form
For parents, carers and young people

We want to find out if parents/carers think the SEND Local Offer website is helpful, easy to use and understand.

We will use your feedback to develop and improve the website.

This form asks a few questions about your experience of using the SEND Local Offer website and will only take a few minutes to complete.

* Required

1. What information were you looking for? *

Enter your answer

2. Where did you go to look for this information? *

☐ Advice and support
☐ Education
☐ Health
☐ Social care
☐ Adult life
☐ About the SEND Local Offer
☐ Guidance for education professionals
☐ Search bar

Family Voice Norfolk has already fed back some thoughts about an earlier version of the form but most of us are already fairly familiar with the Local Offer website, so it's not a fair test for a new user.

If you're not very familiar with the SEND Local Offer website, do take a look on www.norfolk.gov.uk/send.

It's full of information about special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) – a one-stop shop, in fact. With so much information, it's vital that it is organised in a way that is intuitive and easy for parents and young people (there is a section specially for them) to use. **Please do feed back using the form.**

Find out about Short Breaks

Short Breaks support children and young people with disabilities. At Norfolk County Council a dedicated Short Breaks Team offers support and guidance to parents and carers through the process of applying for and using Short Breaks.

What exactly are Short Breaks?

- Short Breaks come in different forms and enable children and young people between the ages of 5 and 18 to explore new opportunities, form friendships, learn and develop skills, become more independent and enjoy themselves.
- Short Breaks activities take place outside school hours during evenings, weekends, school holidays and in some instances, overnight. They range from activities in the community that are available to everyone, to specialist services and trained staff and specialist equipment. They can be delivered in a range of different settings, such as in a family's home, at a 'centre', or out and about in the community.
- Short Breaks give parents/carers time to do the things they can't do while looking after their child, including looking after themselves. Short Breaks can and should be positive experiences for everyone involved.
- They allow a child or young person to have an enjoyable break away from their parent/carer, while giving the parent/carer a break.

Do you have any ideas or feedback?

If you have concerns or ideas about how to use your Short Break plan or anything else, please don't hesitate to get in contact. All feedback is very much appreciated.

How can I get in contact with the team and find more information?

By email: cs.shortbreaks@norfolk.gov.uk

By telephone: Duty line 01603 692455 Monday to Thursday 9am–5pm and Friday 9am–4.30pm

By post: Children's Services Short Breaks Team
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwic
Norfolk
NR1 2DL

If you have a Child with Disabilities Social Worker please contact them in the first instance as they will be able to advise you on next steps.

You can also find out more about Short Breaks on the SEND Local Offer website at https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/health-and-social-care/social-care/send-children-social-care/short-breaks

TEAM DEREHAM

Prince's Trust

An exciting opportunity for young people to complete a 12 week programme, boost self confidence, reduce anxiety, complete a team community challenge, attend work placement and improve employment prospects.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- Programme Dates: 23rd May to 12th August
- Register your interest now!

To find out more & sign up:

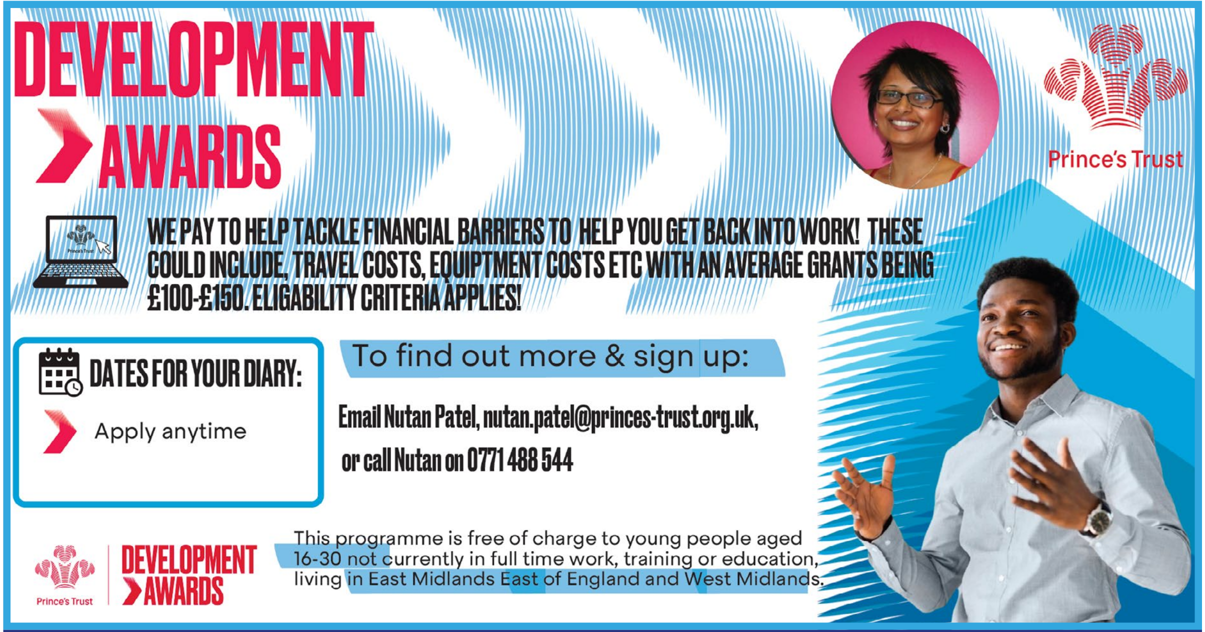
Call Fiona on 07929188285 or email fiona.bradley@princes-trust.org.uk

Available free of charge to young people aged 16-25 not currently in full-time work, training or education living in Dereham

Prince's Trust START SOMETHING

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

Click here to find out more!



DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Prince's Trust

WE PAY TO HELP TACKLE FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO HELP YOU GET BACK INTO WORK! THESE COULD INCLUDE, TRAVEL COSTS, EQUIPTMENT COSTS ETC WITH AN AVERAGE GRANTS BEING £100-£150. ELIGABILITY CRITERIA APPLIES!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- Apply anytime

To find out more & sign up:

Email Nutan Patel, nutan.patel@princes-trust.org.uk,
or call Nutan on 0771 488 544

This programme is free of charge to young people aged 16-30 not currently in full time work, training or education, living in East Midlands East of England and West Midlands.

Prince's Trust DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

MENTORING HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Prince's Trust

Are you based in the East of England? Actively seeking employment in Health and Social Care? We can prepare you to apply for and maintain any employment or progression opportunity you are interested in with our tailored & flexible 1-2-1 support.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- Programme dates: 6 months of 121 support
- Get support up to 3 months after obtaining employement!

To find out more & sign up:

Email Enquiries.H&SC@princes-trust.org.uk

Available free of charge to young people aged 16-30 not currently in full-time work, training or education living in the East of England area.

Prince's Trust START SOMETHING

European Union
European
Social Fund

pathways to health & social care

Register your interest here!

Children’s Summer Event Pleasurewood Hills Lowestoft

Saturday 18 June 2022 10am–2.30pm

Children with a vision impairment plus one parent/guardian are free. Immediate family members (parents/guardians/essential carers/ siblings) are £5. Booking is essential as we can take a maximum of 60 guests. Contact Cat on 0118 983 8499 or email familyevents@guidedogs.org.uk for a booking form.

Guide Dogs’ Family Events Team are delighted to invite children with a vision impairment and their immediate family members to a Summer Event at Pleasurewood Hills Theme Park, Leisure Way, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 4TZ .

We will meet at Pleasurewood Hills at 10am. The children and young people’s services team will be ready to greet you with hot and cold refreshments in Tony’s Restaurant, our private base for the day. With over 35 rides, shows and attractions, there’s something for everyone at Pleasurewood Hills, whether you’re a bit of an adrenaline junkie or not!

As well as plenty of time to explore, Guide Dogs have arranged an exclusive 45-minute animal encounter where participants can get right up close and touch/handle animals such as an owl, parrot and skunk.

Back at Tony’s Resturant, a cooked-to-order pizza lunch will be provided for all!

Families will have a great opportunity to meet with other children and families plus our children and young people’s services team will be standing by to provide advice and guidance in areas such as Education, Family Support and Habilitation.

For more information on Pleasurewood Hills, visit www.pleasurewoodhills.com

Early Years survey

Oops! In our March newsletter we gave you the information below but, although we gave you the links for the two earlier surveys, we failed to give you the link for the new survey. Below you will find links to all three surveys – please do fill them in if you are a parent as described below.

Norfolk County Council Family Information Service (FIS) has joined forces with **Family Voice Norfolk** to produce a new childcare resource for parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which will be launched later in 2022. Working together, we are undertaking a survey of parents and carers of a child with SEND who currently use childcare, have used childcare in the last five years or will be looking to use childcare in the near future. We want to hear about your experiences and perceptions of childcare in Norfolk.

This is the third in a series of childcare surveys. If you missed the first two, there's still time to have your say – you can find the links to surveys 1 and 2 below.

Your comments will be used to help Norfolk County Council support your childcare requirements and inform its plans moving forward. The survey should take around five minutes to complete. You do not have to give your name or contact details.

If you have any queries about the surveys, please email fis@norfolk.gov.uk.

If you want to go back and see the previous surveys, please use the links below:

Survey 1 - Finding and choosing childcare

Survey 2 - Starting at a new childcare setting and settling in

Survey 3 - Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) in the early years

Social isolation and loneliness

better together

Better Together Norfolk is open for referrals (including self-referrals) for social isolation and loneliness support in Broadland, Great Yarmouth and South Norfolk.

The services offer 1-to-1 support to adults (18+) whose loneliness is the primary issue affecting their health and wellbeing, including adults with SEND. Clients are supported to:

- Access social activities, volunteering opportunities, community services and assets
- Identify and overcome barriers that prevent them becoming connected
- Reconnect with family and friends and make new connections in their community

The services can also form part of a wider package of support for individuals where loneliness is a symptom of other more complex challenges, such as caring responsibilities, mental or physical ill health or debt.

Refer someone else (or yourself) via the form at https://www.bettertogethernorfolk.org.uk/eligibility-and-referral-form/ or by calling the helpline on 0300 303 3920.

Free workshops for parent carers

Contact, the charity for families with disabled children, is running further virtual workshops for parent carers. All are accessible online via Zoom. These are stand-alone events – alternative dates are just that, not continuations of a course. Full instructions for using Zoom and accessing the workshops, together with booking forms and further information, is available if you click on the links below.

Early Years entitlements for children (0–5) with SEND

This workshop will give you advice and support on the following topics:

- Childcare – what are your options and how to find suitable childcare
- Help with childcare costs – what is available
- Early Years education – what can you expect from an Early Years provider, how children with special educational needs are supported in Early Years settings and what you can do if you are worried about your child's learning and development.
- What help is available – we will discuss how you can be supported if you are struggling to find suitable childcare or if a setting is not providing suitable support for your child
- Benefits and grants – DLA for under 5s and a brief overview about benefits/grants

Tuesday, 21 June 2022, 19.00–21.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-early-years-entitlements-for-children0-5-with-send-tickets-328050496867

Friday, 1 July 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-early-years-entitlements-for-children0-5-with-send-tickets-328132361727

Support for parents of children with anxiety

- What is anxiety?
- The signs of anxiety and how it can make you feel
- The causes of anxiety
- Different types of anxiety
- Strategies to help recognise and manage anxiety

Join this workshop to meet other parents and get some advice and support.

Thursday, 16 June 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-support-for-parents-of-children-with-anxiety-tickets-328896798177

Toilet training

Advice and strategies for parents/carers/practitioners on how to toilet train a child/children with additional needs (0–5 years)

All children learn to use the potty or toilet at a different stage in their life. Most children start to show an interest in moving on to a potty or toilet at about two years old. Children with additional needs may not be ready to start until they are older.
This workshop will help you to understand when they are ready and how to start.

You will learn:

- What it means to be toilet trained, inside and outside the body
- Know if your child is ready and how you can prepare them
- Know what a plan may look like, when to start it and how
- Know where to get support

Tuesday, 14 June 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-toilet-training-0-to-5-years-tickets-328168379457

Thursday, 7 July 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-toilet-training-0-to-5-years-tickets-328650571707

Encouraging positive behaviour in children with SEND

For parents/carers who have concerns about the behaviours of their children (aged 0–5) with additional needs

It is common for some young children to have challenging behaviour, particularly if they have additional needs. This online workshop will explore some of the issues around behaviour and will look at ways of supporting and encouraging your child. Participants will gain a better understanding of why children behave the way they do and learn ways to handle difficult situations in a calm, stress-free manner. Group discussions will explore what might help and how to get support.

Wednesday, 15 June 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-encouraging-positive-behaviour-in-children-with-send-tickets-328698274387

Tuesday, 12 July 2022, 19.30–21.30 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-encouraging-positive-behaviour-in-children-with-send-tickets-328704603317

Early Years education for children with SEND

Find out what educational support is available in Early Years settings in the UK for your young child (aged 0 to 5) with additional needs

It is very natural to be concerned about getting the right educational support for your young child, particularly if they have additional needs.

This workshop will help you to understand:

- How an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) could benefit your child
- How to apply for one and what is involved in the assessment process and the timescales involved
- When an EHCP is not appropriate and what support is available for children who do not have an EHCP
- How to challenge decisions about your child's educational support

Tuesday, 28 June 2022, 19.30–21.30 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-early-years-education-for-children-with-send-tickets-328907028777

Support for speech and language issues in young children

Suitable for parents of young children (aged 0 to 5) with speech, language and communication issues

If your child has additional needs, it can often be challenging to cope with their communication needs, with or without a diagnosis. Here is your opportunity to hear other parents' experiences, learn new strategies and share as much or as little of your story as you wish.

This workshop will help you to think about how you can best communicate with your child and how you can share this knowledge with those in their Early Years and school settings.

Written and delivered by a very experienced speech and language therapist and advisor to the children's communication charity, I CAN.

Tuesday, 7 June 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-support-for-speech-language-issues-in-young-children-tickets-328758193607

Tuesday, 21 June 2022, 18.00–20.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-support-for-speech-language-issues-in-young-children-tickets-328772396087

Tuesday, 5 July 2022, 18.00–20.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-support-for-speech-language-issues-in-young-children-tickets-328791041857

Helping your young child sleep
For parents/carers of children aged 0 to 5 with additional needs. Hear other parents' experiences and learn new strategies.

Having difficulties getting your child into a sleep routine? Do they keep waking up? Is it a challenge to get them to sleep at all?

If your child can't or won't sleep, it can affect the whole family. Many children have sleep issues, but this is much more common for children of all ages with additional needs. This online workshop will explore some of the issues around sleep and will look at ways of supporting your child, raising awareness of the importance of sleep and the effect on the whole family.

Gain a better understanding of sleep processes and why sleep problems may occur. Examine possible causes. Explore what might help. Find out where to get support.

Wednesday, 6 July 2022, 10.00–12.00 BST

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-helping-your-young-child-sleep-a-contact-workshop-tickets-328920629457

Are you a young carer? Your views are urgently needed!

Norfolk County Council are working on their new Youth Strategy. They would really appreciate if you might be willing to answer the questions below and send your replies to nycf@caringtogether.org. **Every reply will be entered into a prize draw to win a £10 giftcard.** The **deadline for replying is Sunday 22 May 2022**.

1. How does caring work in your house? Who does what? How do you feel about your caring responsibilities?

2. What issues do young carers face during the following stages (it's fine to only comment on the ones relevant to you):

- Moving from primary to secondary
- Moving from secondary to higher education
- Moving from children to adult services

Are there any other stages we may have missed?

If you support a brother or sister:

3. Do you think young carers with other siblings have different experiences from young carers who don't?

4. If you are in secondary school. Young Adult Carers are entitled to a transition assessment to help them prepare for when they turn 18. What types of things should a transition assessment include?At what age should a transition assessment take place? For example, is it useful to speak to 14-15-year-olds? Is there anything else you want to say?