

ESSEX FAMILY FORUM

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to our termly newsletter, bringing you SEND news from across Essex



SEND PARENT & CARER EVENTS ACROSS ESSEX

Following on from our extremely successful events last year, EFF are holding another series of parent/carer engagement events across Essex which hopefully you will have seen advertised on our social media pages. Please see below for details of these events and how to book.

In addition to the above, the SEND Roadshows coordinated by Essex County Council are also taking place across Essex this term. EFF will be attending these alongside representatives from SENDIASS, Team Around the Family Support Officers Early Help, Health, Education and SEND Navigation Leads. See below for details of all the events.

EFF Parent/Carer Engagement Events:

13/06, Harlow Study Centre (WEST) - **PAST**
 27/06, Watt Tyler (SOUTH)
 28/06, Rivenhall Oaks (MID)
 29/06, Jaywick Community Resource Centre (NEE)

Booking required, please [click here](#) for the EFF eventbrite page and select the relevant event for your area.

SEND Roadshows:

28/06 Epping Civic Offices, Epping
 30/06 Firstsite Muesum, Colchester
 06/07 Central Baptist Church Chelmsford
 07/07 The Megacentre, Raleigh

No booking required, simply turn up. All roadshows run from 9am - 12pm. For further details [click here](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON SUPPORT GROUPS - MyOTAS



Myotas, stands for "My Own Time And Space" (formally known as Takiwatanga) are a registered charity offering support to parents/carers of neurodiverse children and young people, throughout Essex. They offer both virtual and face to face support for parents and carers in a number of ways and also organise activities for children and young people including Woodland Warriors, Yoga and Mindful Crafts. Parent support groups and children's activities can be booked via www.ticketsource.co.uk/myotas

FAMILY IMPACT SURVEY 2022 - REPORT NOW PUBLISHED!

The report of our Family Impact Survey findings has now been finalised and published. You can read what parent and carers shared with us about their experiences of SEND services in Essex by [clicking here](#) or by visiting our website. The results from this report formed part of the evidence we submitted to the

OFSTED/CQC inspection portal and has been circulated to the members of the SEND Partnership Board.

What difference will it make?

Our 2020 Family Impact Survey gave us the baseline information of parent/carer experience in Essex. The results from this survey will be used to measure how and where there has been improvements and also to identify where there still improvements needed in support and information for families. There are many things that are currently being developed specifically as a result of parental feedback. In March 2022, Essex County Council provided an update on some of the ongoing work that is being undertaken [click here](#) to learn more.

Below are examples of some of the support and information that families told us they wanted that are now in place:

- Supporting your Neurodiverse Child resource pack – [Click here](#) to view
- Equipment Guidance Document – [Click here](#) to view (scroll down)
- ECC SEND Navigators
- SEND Roadshows (giving parent/carers opportunities to meet with representatives from Education, Social Care and Health.) [Click here](#) for further information.

"I have information/feedback that I want to share NOW – how do I do that?"

You can share any current feedback on our Virtual Graffiti Wall. It is available all year round and is reviewed each quarter. Please [click here](#) to provide your feedback.



SHARING SEND LIFE EXPERIENCES WITH NURSING STUDENTS

Alongside the direct work and meetings Essex Family Forum attends to share the feedback of SEND families, the Forum also looks at other opportunities to share the SEND parent/carer voice for future generations of SEND professionals.



For over a year now, Tori has been working with Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) to promote the work of Essex Family Forum and share the experiences of SEND families, to year one and year two nursing students.

By sharing a very personal and candid insight in to her life as a SEND parent to two children with very differing SEND needs, Tori's presentation takes attendees on a journey. Starting with a snap-shot of a 'normal', 'perfect' family and contrasting this with the reality of SEND family life. Whilst the subject matter is emotionally heavy, Tori also keeps the presentation light-hearted, sharing the triumphs and quirky family moments that enrich the complex picture of SEND family life.

Using her professional background in Human Resources, Tori summarises the presentation by sharing techniques and development skills that can be used to help round the soft skills ('bedside manner') of professionals so that they can better support SEND families in their care. Most importantly, finally Tori then pulls on her philosophical qualifications to explain the importance of the subjectivity of experience; i.e., this is one SEND family experience - an insight, other families will bring different experiences. The focus is upon ensuring that the professional is always actively listening and is aware of the natural human trap of 'making assumptions', so they retain an open-mind with each patient they come across.

At the end students and tutors are encouraged to ask any questions of her as a SEND parent. The focus is upon a 'safe' and open discussion, where unable to answer a question or it is possibly something that some SEND families may find insensitive, Tori then uses this to give the cohort an insight in to how that may be perceived by someone within the SEND community and makes suggestions of how these things can be framed more inclusively and empathetically. ***If you would like to find out more please email tori@essexfamilyforum.org***



LATEST NEWS FROM A NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

The NNPCF have recently launched their parent carer survey on the SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper consultation. The responses of the survey will help to inform the NNPCF's own response to the SEND Green Paper consultation. Co-chairs Tina Emery and Mrunal Sisodia stated that, "The Green Paper is an opportunity

to reset the SEND system after the 2014 reforms failed to deliver the improvements that families of children with SEND so desperately need. It is vital that every parent carer's voice is heard and so we have launched a short, simple survey to gather parental views that we will use to inform our response to the Green Paper. We will, of course, also publish the survey results." You can complete the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/J63QX22> and remains open until the 30 June.

Information taken from the NNPCF website, For the full article from NNPCF [click here](#).

NOW ON YOU TUBE! SEND REVIEW GREEN PAPER WEBINAR



The recording of Essex Family Forum's webinar on the SEND Review Green Paper is now on our YouTube channel. We discuss what the the Green Paper means for children and young people with SEND and their families, what the proposed changes are and how you can give your views on these changes.

You can view the recording by [clicking here](#).

NEWS FROM YOUR PARENT CARER FORUM

As you may be aware Essex Family Forum (EFF) has a new Chairperson. Andrea Pereira, our previous Chair has moved on to new and exciting adventures and handed the baton over to our new Chairperson, Kevin Gay (pictured right).

Kevin brings a wealth of knowledge to EFF: he has significant experience working within the community, both as a (now retired) police officer and as the manager of the West Essex charity; Pact for Autism. Kevin is also a SEND parent to his adult son, Callum, so brings a wealth of lived-in experience and knowledge from this aspect of his day-to-day life also. We are confident EFF will continue to thrive under his experience, guidance and leadership.



SUPPORTING YOUR NEURODIVERSE CHILD - PACK

This hugely popular resource is available as a download or hard copy.

The pack provides information about the following:

**neurodiverse conditions, *diagnosis, education, *health and wellbeing – including: speech and communication; sensory processing disorder and therapy; *tips on exercise and diet; *toileting, growing up, *financial help – e.g. disability living allowance and includes lots of personal experiences, quotes and tips from families and young people.*



If you would like to download or register for a hard copy [click here](#).

Follow us on facebook, @essexfamilyforum for the latest news and events!