



Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending - 14th March 2025

| You said: | We did: |
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| <p>Mid Update – Support groups</p> <p>At a Home Start SEND session in Halstead for families of children under 5, families reported not being able to find support in their area, other than the Home Start groups</p> | <p>The Essex Children & Family Wellbeing Service (Family Hubs) have a SEND Stay & Play at the Carousel Centre in Braintree – every Wednesday 1-2.30pm.</p> <p>They don't have a SEND specific toddler group in the Acorn Centre in Halstead, but from 1st April Sunny Days will be running at the Acorn Centre, and all children under 5 are welcome. Details will be released shortly on the Carousel Family Hub Facebook page Facebook</p> <p>POP Essex run Stay & Play Inclusive toddler groups in Braintree: Every Wednesday 9.30-11.30 and every Friday 12.30-2.30 Further details on the POP Essex Facebook page Facebook</p> <p>Happy Hill Essex will be starting a Stay & Play toddler session in Braintree soon – Every Thursday 10-12 Further details are on their website Happy Hill Essex CIO</p> |
| <p>South Update – Short Breaks</p> <p>Feedback indicated that parents weren't aware of mainstream providers they can access via Short Breaks.</p> | <p>Since our last meeting, the Short Breaks team have added this information to their website and included whether they have had inclusion funding or capital grants under the Short Breaks Strategy and what they were for. There have been some website limitations on how this information can be presented, but you can find the providers listed here, grouped by area: Capital Grants and Inclusion Funding</p> <p>Hopefully this list is a starting point for ensuring families to find those Mainstream providers they can access.</p> |



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| | <p>Please continue to provide feedback via our Graffiti Wall Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum</p> |
| <p>Mid/South Update – MyCareBridge</p> | <p>Claire and Kate met with the MyCareBridge Team for an update on the changes made to the portal, and to give feedback that we’ve received either at events, coffee mornings or on the Graffiti Wall.</p> <p>We have requested an update on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the Parent User Guide for MyCareBridge will be available for sharing. • What additional support might be available to charities/groups that are supporting parents in completing and using the portal. • Whether the ND pack is currently available within the resources section, as feedback from the Roadshow indicated that parents weren’t aware of it. • App glitches – feedback suggests the Android App hasn’t had an update and there is glitching on both the Apps and the portal. The Team will be contacting the developers about this. <i>If anyone can share their experience of the ‘glitching’ they’ve experienced, please get in touch with us, as this will help the developers.</i> <p>SENCO raised issue around where they can find information on why a referral was declined in the portal. To be able to support parents and carers, they have asked for clarity around whether referrers and parents are receiving the same information at the point of decline.</p> <p>Please continue to provide feedback on MyCareBridge via our Graffiti Wall Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum</p> |



In other news...

- Stacey attended the WEST Essex SEND roadshow on Thursday. Was great to see so many organisations and services offering support. There were quite a few families new on their SEND journey who appreciated all the information on offer.
- Stacey is having the final PINS meetings in schools. Feedback has been positive regarding the training staff have received and parent/carers have enjoyed connecting with each other.
- Kate attended the South Essex SEND Roadshow this week, connecting with parents and carers to hear about their SEND journeys and sharing our ND packs. It was wonderful to see so many support services and charities there, helping parents, especially those just starting out, find advice and support.
- Ange, Katrina and Julia met with several Councillors this week to discuss the work EFF do, our feedback mechanisms, how we feed to National level and current issues with SEND in Essex. Topics included lack of trust within the system, EHCP process, training of front-line staff and Academy Trusts.
- Sarah represented EFF at the “Championing Neurodiversity in Schools: A Day of Reflection, Learning, and Legacy” PINS conference on Monday at Colchester Community Football Stadium. It was great to see so many of the schools who were part of the PINS project in attendance and listen to the different speakers. The ‘Experts by Experience’ Clara and Erin from the Multi Schools Council deserved the multiple rounds of applause they received after sharing their stories.
- Sarah attended the Maze Coffee Morning in Clacton on Thursday which is held at the Ambition Cafe, Tendring Education Centre, Jaywick Lane, Clacton-on-Sea, CO16 8BE. The next Maze Coffee Morning in Clacton will be at 9:30am and 11:30am on the 3rd April.