



## EFF Snapshot

### **Week ending- 2/5/2025**

Essex Family Forum receives many comments through our online Graffiti Wall, at events and through our Family Champions. Although we are not able to address all of these through this snapshot, please be assured that all feedback is raised with services and issues that are shared repeatedly are being highlighted.

**Recent ongoing issues that have been raised, include; EHC needs assessment wait times, Autism assessment wait times, ADHD medication changes and mental health support.**

You said:	We did:
<p><b>Autism Support Hub</b> There is an Autism support hub available for young people (12–25-year-olds) who have recently been diagnosed with autism. Parents/carers can also access this. (see attached poster) You are now able to self-refer: <a href="http://www.autismhub.kids.org.uk/self-refer">www.autismhub.kids.org.uk/self-refer</a></p> <p>We received feedback stating that there is a section you need to add a name of a professional from education or health that is working with your young person. However, some individuals may not have that especially if they are not in an education setting.</p>	<p>We had a meeting with KIDS Autism project this week where I raised this with them. They said the professional can just be a GP, or someone they may have worked with in the past. They have agreed to make this clear on the referral, so not to put barriers in people accessing this service.</p>
<p><b>ASD/ADHD Support – Pre-diagnosis</b> Parents and carers have been sharing feedback on a lack of knowledge/awareness/communication regarding support available for those without a diagnosis or awaiting a diagnosis for ASD/ADHD.</p>	<p>We continue to share the issues regarding communication of support available for SEND families with and without a diagnosis across Essex. We regularly raise this feedback within the SEND workstreams across all four quadrants.</p> <p>Whilst some commissioned services are only available with a diagnosis, some services and support are not diagnosis based and support for children and young people in schools should be needs based and not diagnosis led.</p>



	<p>You can access the Essex Local Offer for information relating to information and support available across all four quadrants of Essex:</p> <p><a href="#">Essex County Council: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)   Essex Local Offer</a></p>
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## In other news.....

- EFF team members met in person this week to discuss our internal processes, how we could structure ourselves and the work we do, to represent families in the best way possible. Lots of discussion was had and we will update on any significant changes in the future.
- Stacey attended the Learning disability health day in Harlow. It was great to see so many organisations there, NHS representatives, cancer awareness for checking your body, PACT for Autism and Sport for confidence to name a few. We also had the honour of a live performance from the Purple All Stars, who are a group of young adults with a learning disability. They put on a fantastic show which delivered several important messages.
- Stacey attended a Therapies meeting where she received an updated about the new Link therapists that will be going into schools for Speech and language therapy. This has launched last week. See website for further details.  
<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/services/west-essex-specialist-services/speech-and-language-therapy/>
- Claire & Kate attended the Mid & South Essex Learning Disability Annual Health Check Forum, and presented the results of a poll recently shared on our Facebook page – this showed many families were not aware that their child/young person was entitled to an Annual Health Check and did not know how to go about arranging one. The poll results are being shared with West and North East quadrants Forums too. We are working with the Forums to try to bring more awareness of the Annual Health Checks to families and to provide more information to families.
- Claire has been working with the Shortbreaks Commissioning Team to help score applications for the Community Capital Inclusion Fund this year. Essex Organisations can apply for up to £40,000 capital funding to improve access to clubs and activities in mainstream settings for children and young people with SEND. Essex organisations can



also use this grant towards install a Changing Place in a publicly accessible space. Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in due course.

- Last week Sarah attended the North East Essex Neurodevelopment Oversight Group meeting and fed back comments/experiences of families accessing support and diagnostic services in this area.
- This week Sarah attended the Colchester MAZE coffee morning at its new location In Greensted Community Centre this week and also met with Colleagues from Dream the Change (DTC) to get feedback from their families about what is working/isn't working for them. DTC support families from diverse backgrounds who have children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and service providers. You can find out more about DTC via their website, [Home - DREAM THE CHANGE, CIC](#)
- Ange and Katrina attended the Essex SEND Accountability Board which included discussion around the review and approach of the Self-Evaluation Framework, update on changes to NHSE and ICBs, EFF updates and a presentation by Newton Consultants.
- Ange, Katie and Katrina attended workshops by Newton Consultants last week on:
  - Universal Support, early identification & intervention
  - The EHCP process
  - Placements and settings
  - Annual reviews and moving on

This was attended by professionals across the sector to review the output of a series of workshops, child outcome reviews, listening forums, process mapping and surveys (including EFF surveys)

***Please note: The Graffiti Wall and Snapshot is designed to give anonymised feedback and cannot be used to answer individual queries.***

***All EFF staff are part time and work on a flexible basis. If there are weeks when a quadrant does not appear represented in this snapshot, we are still working hard. Please bear this in mind.***



**Kids**

Disabled children  
say we can



# Kids Autism HUB

Essex | Southend | Thurrock

For young autistic people aged  
12-25 and their families.

"It's good that you're not just focusing on the  
struggles, but also the positives."

"It has been lovely to be able to communicate  
with people who really understand"

"Wow! It looks great. So easy and  
straightforward to navigate."

