



Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending- 09/11/25

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.

You said:	We did:
SEND parent/carers support - Many parents/carers have told us that they feel overwhelmed and isolated as a SEND parent/carers.	We have highlighted the importance of connecting with other SEND families and the strength found in shared experiences. Organisations such as SNAP and MYOTaS were recommended for their excellent parent/carers support networks. You can find details of other organisations across Essex in our service directory Services Directory Essex Family Forum or via the Essex Local Offer Essex County Council: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Essex Local Offer
** Update** MyCareBridge – SENCo training - We received feedback from a Primary School SENCo last week that she had received no training to use MyCareBridge and that she had taught herself to use it.	The MyCareBridge team informed us that they held three webinars from November 2024 through to January 2025 at varying times, to help schools understand the portal and how to use it. However, they are arranging more webinars and have sent an email to all schools in Mid and South Essex asking them initially what they would like to see in the webinars – areas for support.
Changes to EFF Family Impact Survey - We received feedback on our Family Impact survey, that it was quite time consuming.	We are launching our Family Impact Survey for 2025 on Friday 7 th November. We have taken on board the feedback we received from previous surveys and have reduced the number of questions to make our annual survey more efficient and timely. Click the link to complete the survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YRMGD8Q Your feedback can make a big impact on shaping and improving services for the future.



In other news.....

- Ruth & Claire attended the Mid Essex SEND Roadshow at the Baptist Church in Burnham on Crouch on 22nd October. There was a good turn out and they heard from parents struggling to view special schools, parents trying to support their children at home and at school, and grandparents who have the main caring responsibility for a grandchild while parents work. We were able to signpost them to lots of amazing services that day to support them further.
- Carly, Ange and Julia attended the South Essex SEND Roadshow at SNAP Charity. There was a steady flow of attendees. As always, we were honoured to engage with families at various stages of their SEND journey. A recurring theme was the sense of feeling overwhelmed - families expressed confusion and uncertainty about where to turn for support. We were able to show empathy and offer signposting, informing families about the support available and share copies of the 'Supporting your Neurodivergent child' resource pack. Most families were unaware of 'Ordinarily Available' and 'The Sensory toolkit' so we were able to share this information to help parents learn about how their child's educational and sensory needs can be better met. We also had an individual who expressed an interest in volunteering as a Family Champion which is fantastic! We received lots of additional feedback from parents about their experiences which we will raise with the relevant organisations in meetings, with a vision to inspire and create positive change.
- Ruth and Claire attended the final two Startwell Roadshows during the half-term break. These have been lovely events for parents and carers with children under 5 years old. It was a great opportunity to chat to parents and get feedback about services for the under-five bracket and some of the struggles that are there with regards to advice, so we were able to signpost these families. It was also lovely to engage with other service sand discuss the provisions that are available within our area. Overall, the autumn cluster was a positive and enriching experience. We look forward to building on this momentum and preparing for the next series of roadshows in the spring.
- Ruth and Claire joined Send Sensation Parent voice group yesterday online. It was nice to listen to parent's views on services and how sometimes what is delivered needs amending to be more user friendly. Such as swimming where one carer can attend free but second needs to pay, some children require two carers so this can put a barrier for attendance. Also, timings of events were discussed. Send sensation were discussing better ways to advertise their parent voice group so we all agreed that social media is the way forward to reach a bigger audience. A lovely group to be part of.



- Ruth and Claire visited the Home Start session at Halstead Acorn Family Hub. It is a specialist group for families who have children with a SEND diagnosis, are on the pathway or have general development delay. The demand is so great that they have split their group into week A & B alternating. The group is run by an experienced Team along with volunteers. The environment was so welcoming and the opportunities for children were endless, finishing with a small song group session. Getting the feedback today from a parent was so positive about their journey and just how much this group has changed things for her and her child, creating a strong support network of professionals and other parents/carers. I look forward to returning.
- Stacey attended the West Essex Quadrant meeting this week. There was an update from the Designated clinical officer, who is working on a SEN Quality & Improvement Tool. There is Ongoing work with SEND Operations teams to improve the Health sections of EHCPs, ensuring consistent, multi-disciplinary input. Following provider audits, work is being done to ensure EHCP advice and training are consistent and informed across services. Focus on using audit findings to shape training priorities over the next six months, particularly around transition planning.
- Sarah attended the SNEE LD&A Health Inequalities Steering Group this week.
- Sarah and Leanne (NEE Family Champion) attended the North East Essex SEND Roadshow at The Waterfront in Harwich. It was a very busy morning with a large number of families attending. We spoke with a number of families looking for support and information and were able to signpost them as well as gaining feedback from them about what is working/isn't working for their families and what can be done to improve things. We will use this feedback to share with the relevant teams across health, education, social care and the local authority.

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.