

In this issue:

Family Voice news and events

Contact Family Voice Norfolk	1
Family Voice events for parent carers	2
Let's talk... about support in mainstream schools	2
How to find out about Family Voice events and news	3
Let's talk... about looking after your child's teeth	3
Family Voice Norfolk AGM 1 September 2021	4
Ambassadors at large!	4
Neurodevelopmental Diagnostic Service – report	5
Newsletter deadlines	24

Workshops, training and employment

Free workshops for parent carers	13
Tackle Learning courses for parents	15
Free 'safe moving and handling' course	19

Surveys, consultations and participation

Speech, language and communication needs parent/carer survey	28
Free family summer 2022 event – are you interested?	29
Health and disability green paper – consultation	29
Challenging decisions about adult social care	30

Information and events for parent carers

Keeping safe reminders.....	7
Norfolk and Waveney children's speech and language therapy service	8
Big Norfolk Holiday Fun	9

50 things to do before you're five	10
National Disability Strategy	10
PELICAN – promoting emotional literacy	11
National Autism Strategy	12
Helping autistic children stay safe online	12
SEND tribunal powers extended	12
COVID-19 vaccines for some 12–15 year olds	15
Listening Ear service for parent carers	17
Tech for children with a vision impairment	18
Carer breaks	18
Ofsted/CQC area SEND inspections	20
SEND family roadshows – relaunch	21
Making sense of SEND	22
Time Together events	23
Carers' locality meetings	24
Advice from Ofcom about connectivity	24
COVID-19 vaccination support and the Worry Bus	26
Safeguarding and SEND	27
All Age Carers Strategy	28

For children and young people (CYP)

Youth Parliament and Young Minds research	6
Learning disability – get better healthcare	16
Counselling service for young people 25 and under	19
Learning Disability Partnership Board	24
Advice for when it is hot	25
Adult Learning – Independent Living Skills	30

- 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](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyVoiceNorfolk)



[familyvoicenfkc](https://twitter.com/familyvoicenfkc)

- 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/>

together we are stronger



Family Voice events for parent carers

Our online **Let's talk...** events give you a chance to hear directly from professionals on subjects that are important to families with children and young people (CYP) with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). There is always an opportunity to ask questions, or to find out where to go next if there are subjects that you are not comfortable with raising during the session.

Many parent carers also find that hearing the experiences of other families can be helpful. Your experiences help others in a wider sense, too. We use your views and stories (always anonymously – we would never mention details that might identify you or your family unless you specifically asked us to) to represent parent carers in the meetings we attend with Norfolk County Council, health services and voluntary partners. Our aim is always to improve services for families like yours and ours. The more we hear from you, the stronger our voices can be.



about support for
children and young people
in mainstream schools

Dawn and Alison
will talk about:

- what we mean by SEN Support
- provision expected at SEN Support (PEaSS)
- how schools should involve you

They will also be happy
to answer questions.

with

Dawn Jones
and
Alison Toombs

Advisors, Virtual School for SEND

Wednesday 15 September
10:00am to 12:00pm

If you are the parent carer of a child or young person with additional needs, email events@familyvoice.org.uk for full joining instructions.



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.

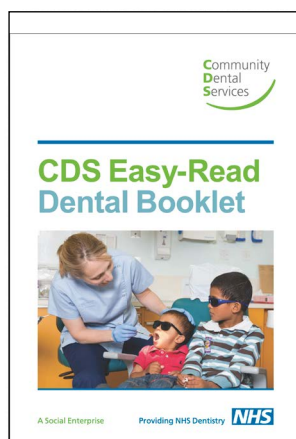
Our [website](#) tells you more about how we work and our own events. You can find reports, news and our past newsletters there.

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.

Let's talk... about looking after your child's teeth

On 26 July, specialists from the Norfolk & Waveney Community Dental Services (CDS) were back with us after their popular event last year. This was a practical session on Zoom for parent carers of children and/or young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The variety and range of practical advice from the professionals and parent carers alike was enlightening. Practical sessions like this underline how diverse the SEND community is and how helpful it is to be able to ask questions directly.



The presentation and further information can be found on our website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/articles-reports/parent-carer-participation-events/>. For more details about the Community Dental Services' clinics go to <https://communitydentalservices.co.uk/clinics/norfolk-and-waveney/>. There is information on referrals, a 360° video of their Norwich clinic, and a range of Easy Read leaflets on different aspects of dental care.





family voice
norfolk

Let's talk... about looking after your child's teeth

with
Angela Simms
Clinical Lead
and
Gemma Sargent
Dental Therapist
from Norfolk & Waveney
Special Care Dental Service

**Monday 26 July 2021
10:00am to 12:00pm**

Email Sally at events@familyvoice.org.uk to receive full joining details.

- Find out how to help your child develop good dental habits
- Learn techniques and tips to tackle challenging issues
- Ask questions in a relaxed setting



You are warmly invited to the

Family Voice Norfolk AGM

Wednesday, 1 September 2021

**at Ayton House, Ayton Road, Wymondham NR18 0QQ
and via Zoom**

There will be a light buffet supper from 6.00pm to 6.30pm,
when the meeting will begin.

If you would like to attend, please let Sally know at office@familyvoice.org.uk
if this will be in person or online, so that she has catering numbers and/or can send
you the Zoom link.

Ambassadors at large!

Family Voice Norfolk ambassadors had their first real-life outing in a long time as part of the Healthwatch AGM at Norwich's Forum in July. Anita and Claire were able to meet and talk with parent carers face to face. As you can see from the smiles, they were very glad to be out and about with you all again. The concerns and stories they heard will be fed back anonymously to the services and professionals that can make change happen. It was great to meet new faces and prospective members for Family Voice Norfolk at the event.



Family Voice Consultation on the Neurodevelopmental Diagnostic Service in Norfolk

On 15 July 2021, Norfolk County Council Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) elected to look at the service in Norfolk for diagnosing neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism (ASD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and attention deficit disorder (ADD).

Family Voice Norfolk felt that this was an important opportunity to make sure that the experiences and views of our members were heard. Between 23 and 28 June 2021, we gave the opportunity for parent carers to complete a survey about their experiences of accessing the pathways and services supporting diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders.

Despite the short duration of the survey, responses came from 178 families living in all seven district council areas. In addition, the West Norfolk Branch of the National Autistic Society (NAS) shared the experiences of some of its members. This was a very valuable contribution to Family Voice's report and presentation. All responses – to the Family Voice survey and from NAS – were carefully anonymised before they were included in our report.

You can view the full report (all 48 pages of it!) on the Family Voice website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/articles-reports/survey-results/>.

The key findings of the survey unfortunately did not come as a surprise:

1. Many families are waiting far too long for diagnosis, even after they are 'on the pathway'. Over 75% of families who replied to the survey had been waiting in the service for more than 18 months. Over 57% of respondents first requested help over three years ago.
2. Communication with families is often poor or lacking. Over 62% of respondents reported that they had received no help in understanding the pathways and services. 75% of all respondents said they had not been informed at all about their child's position on waiting lists or updated on progress. 73% had considered paying for a private diagnosis because of wait times and a sense of urgency for their child to receive appropriate help and support.
3. The impact of these two points on families is very significant, causing increased negative effects on both parent carers and children and young people. You can read many families' reports of distressing experiences in the appendices to the report (see above), which include school exclusions and phobias, difficulties accessing other services without a diagnosis, and worsening mental health among children and young people and their parent carers.

During the HOSC meeting, the Chair placed on record the Committee's thanks to Family Voice for the paper that they had produced for this item. You can view the minutes of the meeting at <https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1814/Committee/22/Default>. In short, the Committee agreed to return to the subject at a future meeting and to request a short report that:

- Clarified demand and capacity in the service and the consequent funding gap.
- Set out the top priorities for action in the short to medium term.
- Identified opportunities to improve processes within the pathways.

Family Voice Norfolk would like to thank all families who helped us to report so powerfully and assure them that we will continue to highlight this issue at all levels. Remember that we are *always* keen to hear about your experiences. See page 1 of this newsletter for how to do this.



UK Youth Parliament + Young Minds

Mental Health: Movement for Change

Creating a blueprint for children and young people's mental health, and setting up local mental health support hubs



May 21

Approach your local MP, encouraging them to write to the Prime Minister calling for national funding for mental health hubs in the Autumn's Comprehensive Spending Review

Summer 21

Run YoungMinds consultations in schools, colleges and youth groups to design a new vision for what mental health support for children and young people should look like.

Sept/Oct 21

Campaign for our vision to be included in the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in November 21.

Nov/Dec 21

Young Minds will launch their "Movement for Change", enabling young people to campaign on the issues that matter to them

www.byc.org.uk

Youth Parliament and Young Minds research

Norfolk County Council (NCC) is looking for young people to take part in the second stage (see above) of a national research project that aims to find out what needs to change to help improve young people's mental health.

The purpose of the research is to find out what will make the biggest difference to young people and what changes they want to see in society. The information will then be used to create a new vision for what support for children and young people should look like, while the UK Youth Parliament will be supporting the Young Minds campaign for young people's vision to be incorporated in the government spending review.

The research will seek to find out:

- thoughts, feelings and experiences about how different aspects of identity impact on lives and mental health.
- what changes could be made to improve their experiences and the experiences of other young people.

There are a number of ways young people can take part in the research.

- 1:1 interview – face to face or virtual depending on what the young person would prefer.

continued on page 7



- visit by NCC to a group session with a maximum of six young people. As conversations may involve sharing very personal feelings and ideas, it is recommended that all young people in the group know each other and are happy to discuss these topics together.
- If a young person would like to lead a session with a group of young people they know, NCC can support the young person to do this.

During the session young people will be asked:

- What makes you, you?
- How do different aspects of your identity impact on your life? For example, has where you live given you better or worse opportunities? Have any aspects of your identity led to any challenges or struggles?
- What caused the struggle? Events? People?
- What support was there to help you?
- What could be there to make sure other young people don't go through a similar struggle/ challenge?

The research will be running **until the beginning of September** and any young person that wants to take part will be asked to sign a consent form confirming they are happy with how the research is conducted and how the information will be used.

If you would like further information, please get in touch with Jade Cubitt from Norfolk County Council at jade.cubitt@norfolk.gov.uk.

Keeping safe reminders

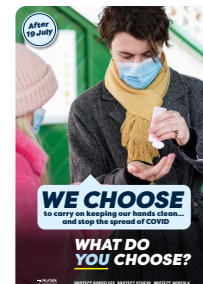
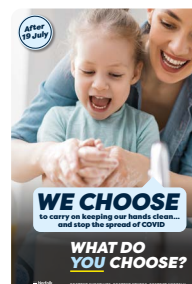
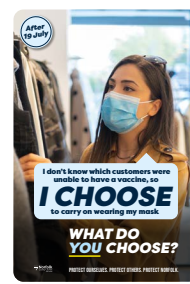
A parent carer told us:

'During the last lockdown, my son, who is in his late teens and has a learning disability, found it hard to remember what the rules were when he went out by himself. It's even harder now to advise him when everything is opening up.

I've found that it has helped to put a poster up on the inside of the front door, so it's the last thing he sees as he leaves.

There are lots that you can download from <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/campaigns/coronavirus-toolkit-for-professionals>.

It just helps to keep safety messages in his mind without scaring him.'



Information about Norfolk and Waveney children's speech and language therapy service

From **2 August 2021** the Norfolk and Waveney speech and language therapy service will have a new provider. Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust will deliver the service as part of their Norfolk and Waveney children and young people's health services.

Appointments and support will continue to be provided with no pauses in the service.

Will families notice any differences?

There will be very few changes from 2 August, mainly just a change in contact details.

Existing staff will be transferring across along with your child's patient record so any interventions and support can continue. For more information about the transfer of information please visit: www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/salt.

Why is this happening?

The contracts for speech and language therapy services were being renewed and after a formal procurement process the new contract was awarded to Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust

How to contact the service after 2 August

From 2 August any families needing to contact the service for appointment booking, advice and support should call Just One Number on 0300 300 0123.

If you are concerned about a child's eating and drinking, please ring Just One Number on 0300 300 0123. A therapist will then ring you back to discuss your concerns.

All referrals and pre-referral assessments need to be received by email or post.

Email: ccs.norfolk-waveney-salt-jon@nhs.net

Postal address: Norfolk and Waveney Children and Young People's Health Services
Children's Speech & Language Therapy,
Unit 3, Cringleford Business Centre
Intwood Road
Norwich, Norfolk NR4 6AU

Do families need to do anything?

No, all families need to do is remember to use the updated contact details after 2 August 2021.

What changes should families expect in the future?

In the first few months, the service will focus on current referrals, maintaining essential clinical work, developing a single point of access for the service, and settling teams into a new organisation.

Looking forwards, the new model for the speech and language therapy service for Norfolk and Waveney will be co-produced with families, professional partners and staff to ensure that it best meets the needs of children, young people and families. There will be lots of opportunity to engage in the design of the new service and further communication about this will be shared after the transfer.



Big Norfolk Holiday Fun

FREE Big Norfolk Holiday Fun scheme for 5-16 year olds

Do your children receive means tested
free school meals? **This is for you!**

Keep your children busy and active over the summer
holidays with our fun packed programme of activities
happening near you. They'll also receive a healthy lunch too.

Don't delay. Book up today!

There's something to keep
everyone busy. Choose from:

- sports and fitness
- arts and crafts
- theatre and drama
- music and dance
- outdoor games



Book your kids on the activity scheme in 3 simple steps

1. Sign up for your code online by
scanning the QR code with your
mobile phone
2. Choose your favourite activities
www.norfolk.gov.uk/holidayactivities
3. Use your booking code to book
your child into an activity.
16 days of activities per child.



50 things to do before you're five

Discover 50 activities that parents and carers can support their children to try out and repeat.

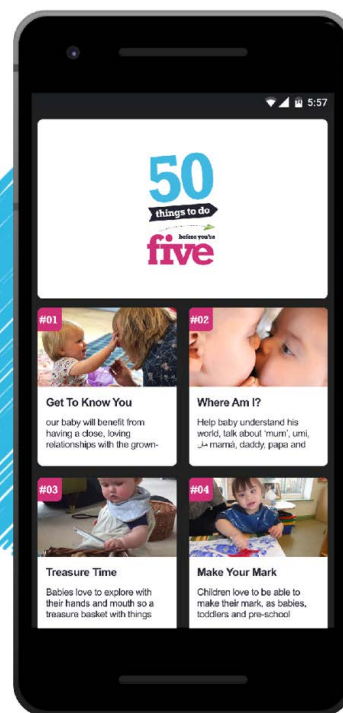
Each of the 50 things has been carefully developed by education experts and early years practitioners following consultation with parents.

Children with special educational needs are included and each of the 50 things has meaning across culturally diverse communities.

Go to <https://norfolk.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!/welcome> to find out more and download the app.

All the suggestions are low-cost or no cost experiences that include indoor, outdoor, seasonal, home-based and out-and-about activities that are not only fun but will get your little one off to a flying start with his/her learning and language development.

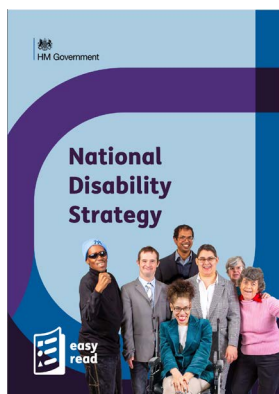
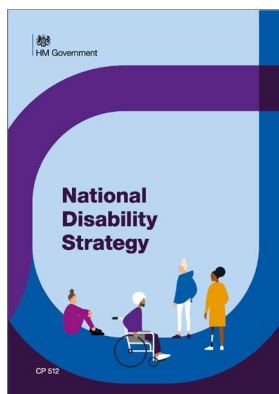
The app allows you to build a memory bank of those special moments to revisit, reflect on, and look back on later in life.



National Disability Strategy

On 28 July, the government published its **National Disability Strategy**, setting out the actions it will take to improve the everyday lives of all disabled people. This was a commitment in its 2019 manifesto – a national disability strategy to cover areas such as housing, transport, jobs and education. There was wide consultation before the publication of the Strategy, and those consulted included the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, of which Family Voice Norfolk is a member.

There is a lot to digest in the document – we will revisit different aspects of it in future newsletters. The Strategy is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-disability-strategy> in full, Easy Read, Braille, British Sign Language, large print and other versions.





Say hello to Peli and Tou!



The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities is delighted to launch **PELICAN - Promoting Emotional Literacy In Children with Additional Needs.**

PELICAN is a set of free, web-based materials for children and young people with complex learning needs and/or learning disabilities and people who support them.

PELICAN helps staff, parents and carers to develop emotional literacy, wellbeing and resilience in children with learning disabilities and autism. It helps with emotional and behavioural difficulties they have. It can be used alongside other support.

PELICAN can be used in schools, other settings, communities and at home. It is based on over 10 years of action research including collaboration with children, young people and the adults that support them.

Peli and **Tou** introduce you to the **PELICAN** Framework through a simple visual story. **Peli** is scared to fly but **Tou** is on hand to help! So, **Peli** changes from **Peli can't ...** to **Peli can!**

Through the story and linked activities, you are guided through the Framework as you introduce:

- I CAN **Feel**
- I CAN **Relax**
- I CAN **Think**
- I CAN **Do**



If Peli can and Tou can, then you can!



Wow, this looks amazing.

Behaviour Intervention Lead/
SENCO Support

*What a brilliant name
and concept.*

Clinical Psychologist

*The resources are very
young person friendly*

Child and Families Therapies
Service Staff

To find out more about PELICAN and to access all of the PELICAN resources, go to:

<https://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/pelican>

For more information contact the Foundation at: info@fpld.org.uk

National Autism Strategy

On 21 July, the government published its **National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026**.

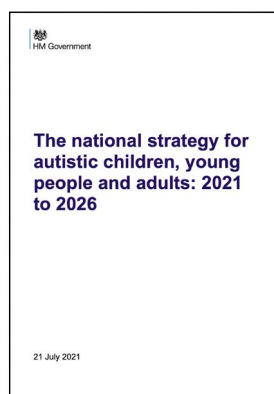
The strategy builds on and replaces the preceding adult autism strategy, [Think Autism](#), which was published in April 2014. It extends the scope of the strategy to children and young people for the first time.

The focus of this new strategy and implementation plan has been informed by the government's call for evidence on the review of [Think Autism](#), which received over 2,700 responses from autistic people, their families and carers and organisations.

In addition, the strategy has been informed by independent research commissioned from the Policy Innovation Research Unit into [the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on autistic people and their families](#).

The government also commissioned Skills for Care, the National Development Team for Inclusion and the National Autistic Society to produce [a guide to help commissioners to identify local demand and develop the right services and support for autistic people](#), which is published alongside this strategy.

The strategy in full and in Easy Read formats can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-strategy-for-autistic-children-young-people-and-adults-2021-to-2026>.



Helping autistic children stay safe online

The Ann Craft Trust (ACT) and the Marie Collins Foundation have collaborated to produce a resource to help parents and children understand various online risks.

You can download the leaflet at <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Digital-SAO-Helping-my-autistic-child.pdf>



DfE extends SEND tribunal powers on health and social care

The government has confirmed that the extended powers given to SEND tribunals in England that allow parents and young people a single route of appeal about the education, health and social care elements of an EHC plan will continue. A national trial allowing SEND tribunals to hear appeals and make non-binding recommendations on these aspects as well as education began in March 2018. You can find out more at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/extended-powers-send-tribunal-national-trial>.



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.

How to handle meetings – for parents/carers of young children with additional needs

It is very natural to feel overwhelmed about attending a meeting to discuss your child's specialist needs and get the right support for them. You may be finding this even more challenging during the disruption of COVID-19.



This workshop will help you to :

- develop your skills for online and face-to-face meetings to help you make the right decisions for your child
- feel more confident and better able to express yourself in meetings with professionals
- understand how to prepare for and how to get the best from a virtual meeting
- recognise your strengths when communicating and remember that you are the expert!

Wednesday, 25 August 2021, 19:30–21:30

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginningshandling-meetingsa-contact-workshop-for-parentscarers-tickets-163162231627>

Encouraging positive behaviour in children with SEND

During the disruption of COVID-19, it can be extra challenging to manage the behaviour of your child. This online workshop gives the opportunity to hear other parents' experiences, learn new strategies and share as much or as little of your story as you wish.



It is common for some young children to have challenging behaviour. This webinar 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 and help.

Thursday, 19 August 2021, 10:00am–12:00pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-encouraging-positive-behaviour-in-children-with-send-tickets-163159667959>



Money matters for parents of young children (0–5)

During the disruption of COVID-19, many families may have changes in their financial circumstances.

This online workshop will help you to maximise your finances, hear other parents' experiences and share as much or as little of your story as you wish.

This workshop gives an overview of benefits, DLA, Carers Allowance, grants available, discounts on utilities, leisure and discounts for carers.

We will also cover accessing services for support with applications, local information and helplines and dispelling myths around benefits.

Tuesday, 24 August 2021, 19:00–21:00

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-money-matters-for-parentscarers-of-young-children-tickets-163161148387>



Helping your young child sleep (suitable for parents of young children aged 0–5)

During the disruption of Covid-19, it can be extra challenging to manage young children's sleep patterns. This online workshop gives the opportunity to hear other parents' experiences, learn new strategies and share as much or as little of your story as you wish.

It is common for all young children to have sleep issues, but more common for children with additional needs. This webinar 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. Participants will gain a better understanding of sleep processes, why sleep problems may occur and examine possible causes. Group discussions will explore what might help and where to get support.

Wednesday, 18 August 2021, 10:00am–12:00pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-helping-your-young-child-sleep-a-contact-workshop-tickets-163158269777?aff=erelexpmlt>



Does your child have regular hospital appointments or stays in hospital?

Contact London is inviting you to a By Your Side Coffee Morning on Zoom: **Tuesday, 14 September 2021, 11:00am**

Meet Hospital Patient Advisers and other parents to share experiences and advice in this friendly online get-together. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/by-your-side-virtual-coffee-morning-september-tickets-155648901053?aff=ebd-soporgprofile>



Tackle Learning courses for parents

Norfolk Adult Learning and Norwich City Community Sports Foundation have worked in partnership to offer **free** workshops providing parents with the knowledge and skills to support their children through school. These are not SEND-specific but may well be useful.



Starting School to support both parents and children in readiness for starting school for the first time in September.

Starting High School aims to support both parents and children in readiness for making the step up to high school in September.

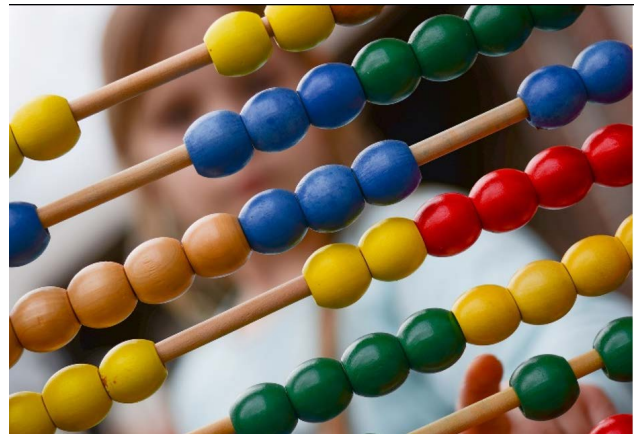
Returning to School aims to support both parents and children in readiness for a return to the classroom after COVID-19 restrictions ease.

Simple Maths – Key Stage 1 aims to help parents to support their children with their school maths work, explaining key terms and how to support learning them, such as number array, place values, partitioning, number bonds, number lines, hundred squares.

Find out more at: <https://www.communitysportsfoundation.org.uk/programmes/tackle-learning/>



**COMMUNITY
SPORTS
FOUNDATION**



COVID-19 vaccines for some 12–15 year olds announced

The government committee on vaccinations and the Vaccines Minister announced on 19 July that children aged 12 and over at increased risk of Covid-19 will be offered the Pfizer vaccine, which the UK regulator said was safe and effective for this age group last month.

Who is eligible?

This includes children aged 12 to 15 with severe neurodisabilities, Down's syndrome, immunosuppression or profound and multiple or severe learning disabilities. The Joint Commission on Vaccines and Immunisation (JCVI) also recommends that children and young people aged 12 to 17 who live with an immunosuppressed person should be offered the vaccine. Eligible children will receive invitations from their GP or clinician over the coming weeks. The NHS have asked families not to contact their GP or clinician yet. Read Contact's response and FAQs at <https://contact.org.uk/about-contact/news-and-views/relief-for-clinically-vulnerable-youngsters-and-their-families-as-some-are-given-access-to-a-covid-vaccine/>.





Do you have a learning disability?

Don't miss out: get better healthcare now.

Tell your doctor you have a learning disability and they can check if you are on their **learning disability register**.

When you are on the register, you will be offered **the support you need** to make things easier, like:

- extra time and support during your appointment
- easy read/accessible information
- help to make an appointment

You can also be offered a full health check every year.

To find out more speak to your doctor, or visit:
www.mencap.org.uk/dontmissout

Be happy. Be healthy. Don't miss out.





Are you a struggling parent carer?

Our Listening Ear service is here for you

We provide emotional support, advice and ideas to help you cope.

Appointments are free, confidential and over the phone with one of our family support advisers. Get in touch!

Visit contact.org.uk/listening-ear to book today

contact
For families with disabled children


**listening
ear service**



Tech for children with a vision impairment

For a limited time, Guide Dogs are offering iPads to children with a vision impairment aged 3–18, while secondary-school-age children may choose an iPhone instead. The devices have excellent accessibility features built-in, and online guides and tutorials will be provided to help them get started and to ensure that they know how to stay safe online.

The devices are completely free of charge, with the only requirement being proof of vision impairment.

The Guide Dogs organisation knows how important technology is for children with a vision impairment and hopes to reach as many potential beneficiaries as possible. Apply for a free iPad or iPhone by filling in the simple online form at www.guidedogs.org.uk/techforall. Stocks are limited so don't miss out!

Unlock possibilities
with Tech for All



Free iPads and iPhones

Carer breaks

If you are caring for an adult over 18 years, a carer break could provide a personalised, flexible break from caring.

A break could make a positive difference to you as a carer by:

- Improving your physical and emotional wellbeing
- Giving opportunities for you to have a life outside of caring
- Enabling you better to sustain your caring role
- Enabling you to take more control of your life.

What to do if you would like a carer break

Find out more on the Carers Matter Norfolk website at <https://carersmatternorfolk.org.uk/our-work/support-for-carers/carers-breaks/>.



Carers Matter Norfolk
0800 083 1148



Counselling service for young people 25 and under



The Mix Counselling service is suitable for young people who are looking for short-term help with their mental health and emotional wellbeing. The telephone and webchat counselling service is available to young people aged 25 years old and under. Counsellors aim to support by listening to your problems and helping you find ways to cope in a confidential, safe space.

Counselling sessions could help with issues such as:

- A bereavement (death) or relationship breakdown
- Stress/anxiety
- Exploring issues like sexual identity/gender identity
- Dealing with issues that are stopping you achieving your ambitions
- Dealing with feelings of depression or sadness
- Understanding yourself and your problems better
- Feeling more confident

You will usually be offered up to eight counselling sessions that last around 50 minutes each.

If you're thinking about counselling but you're not quite sure if it's for you, here are some links that you might find useful:

[What to expect from counselling: a guide](#)

[Your first counselling session](#)

To receive counselling, complete the form at <https://www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team/the-mix-counselling-service>.

Free 'safe moving and handling' course



Do you assist somebody you know to move? Are you using the most effective techniques to keep yourself and your family and friends safe? Disabled Living will be delivering a free, virtual and interactive session on moving and handling to help you carry out your moving and handling tasks in a safe and efficient way. They will also be available to signpost you in the direction of additional advice and support.

The free course is taking place on **Monday 20 September 2021**, and places are limited. For further information and to book on the session please get in touch with Disabled Living at: training@disabledliving.co.uk.

To find out more about Disabled Living and sign up to their free newsletter, visit their website at: <https://www.disabledliving.co.uk>.



Ofsted/CQC area special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) inspections

As reported in this newsletter and elsewhere, Norfolk received its area SEND inspection from Ofsted/CQC in March 2020, just before the first lockdown. Family Voice Norfolk and many of you gave evidence to the inspectors. The result for Norfolk was the identification of three significant areas of weakness, concerning: Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs), communication and co-production, and preparing for adult life. The local authority and health services, involving Family Voice Norfolk and other parent carer organisations, prepared a Written Statement of Action.

Working through the actions has been the focus of a large proportion of the meetings Family Voice representatives have attended in the last fifteen months. Ofsted/CQC will revisit Norfolk in 2022 to assess whether these actions are resulting in improvements for children and young people with SEND and their families.

During the pandemic, Ofsted area SEND inspections (and inspections of schools) ceased. School inspections began again in the summer term and will return to full inspections in September.

As far as new area SEND inspections are concerned, on 9 July, Ofsted's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, published a report on the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families and the challenges facing the SEND system, along with Ofsted and CQC's role going forward.

The report is clear about the difficulties of the past sixteen months, but states that 'the SEND system was struggling before the pandemic hit'. The report goes on:

Before lockdown, Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) area SEND inspections identified a number of recurring weaknesses across local areas in England. These included:

- *flaws, inconsistencies and delays in the identification of children and young people's needs*
- *not enough of a system-wide focus on providing high-quality universal education, health and care services*
- *a lack of clarity about who is responsible for what between organisations, resulting in fractures in the way professionals in these services work together*

Area arrangements for identifying, assessing and meeting children and young people's education, health and care needs were frequently slow. They felt like a 'battle' for families as their concerns escalated. Too often, families were left feeling dissatisfied with their experience of area SEND arrangements because the quality of services and support failed to live up to what was envisaged in their children's EHC plans. ...

We know that area SEND inspections are important to children, young people and families because they provide valuable insights into how the SEND system is working for them.

However, we are not doing these inspections at the moment. The current levels of disruption to education, health and care services, as well as changing expectations of local areas during the pandemic, would make it impossible for us and CQC to make fair, valid and consistent inspection judgements.

continued on page 21



We therefore think it is right that we do not return to area SEND inspections in the autumn, but instead focus on other ways we can help and support local areas to strengthen the SEND system in future. ...

So, in the interim period before area SEND inspections restart, Ofsted and CQC will work collaboratively with local areas through a series of visits to:

- *understand children and young people's experience and learn from what has worked well for them in this time*
- *support local areas to prioritise and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in the context of the pandemic*
- *enable learning for all local areas, government and stakeholders on how best to strengthen the SEND system in future through a series of national reports*

The visits will give us an insight into how well the system is working and allow us to see the point at which local areas will be ready for us to re-start full inspections. We will use the expertise of our inspectors to help local areas get to that point in a strategic, supportive and evidence-based way.

These visits are not inspections, nor will they replace the current area SEND inspection cycle. They will start in the autumn term, while the inspection cycle remains suspended. We will not give a formal judgement or publish reports on individual local areas.

We will publish insights from these visits, alongside good practice and case studies, in national reports. This will help to strengthen the whole SEND system in a positive way.

You can read the full statement at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-the-future-of-area-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-inspections>.

Relaunch of the SEND family roadshows

In September, the Local Offer is relaunching the SEND family roadshows with a new name – **MAKING SENSE OF SEND** – at the new time of 10–11.30am and on varying days of the week to give more people the chance to attend. Due to COVID-19 these events will continue to take place on Zoom for the time being.

These events are exclusively for parent carers who have a child with SEND. They are supported by: **Family Voice Norfolk**, Norfolk SEND Partnership, Norfolk SEN Network, and SENSational Families. These groups suggest topics that parent carers will find useful. There is always time on the agenda for parent carers to have group discussions with parent carer reps from these organisations too.

The format will stay roughly the same, with a talk on a topic, an opportunity for parents/carers to give their views, and the new addition of an expert question panel, which attendees will have the chance to submit their questions to prior to the session.

Please see the flyer on page 22 for further details. For the next event, on Tuesday, 21 September 2021, go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/making-sense-of-send-tuesday-21st-september-2021-tickets-139446053901?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>.



MAKING SENSE OF SEND

Free online events exclusively for parents and carers who have a child with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Hear from speakers on a specific topic, share your views, meet the parent/carers organisations and have your questions answered by experts.

Search for 'Making Sense of SEND' on Eventbrite.

2021/2022

All events are from 10.00–11.30am

Tuesday 21 September 2021

Wednesday 17 November 2021

Wednesday 12 January 2022

Tuesday 8 March 2022

Thursday 12 May 2022

Tuesday 28 June 2022



sendnorfolk



send_offer





Time Together

Join Strangers' Hall for Time Together, a free online social club in September, October and November for people with a passion for history and museums who may find it hard to get out and visit in person. Each session will be a friendly mix of presentation, chat and activity, hosted on Zoom. You're welcome to take part as little or as much as you would like. The sessions are:

- ♦ Wednesday 15 September, 2.30-3.45pm: **Potted Pottage— A Tudor stew cook-along**
- ♦ Wednesday 13 October 2.30-3.45pm: **Happy Ypocras—Create a Medieval banqueting wine**
- ♦ Wednesday 17 November 2.30-3.45pm: **Subtleties— Artifice and cunning in historic cookery**

To book, please email your name plus confirmation that you can attend all three sessions to norwichcastle.bookings@norfolk.gov.uk. Bookings close at 5pm on Friday 10th September .

Once we've confirmed your place, we'll send details of the first month's activity, then a Zoom link closer to the date. The activities will use widely available, inexpensive store cupboard items.

So we can build a community of friends, we've limited places to 10, and we ask that you try to attend all three sessions. Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority going to those who can attend all three sessions. If places fill up, we'll add you to a waiting list.

We look forward to meeting you in our online social space!



Learning Disability Partnership Board

The Learning Disability Partnership is an independent organisation that works with people who have learning disabilities, parent carers, the council, health services and other professionals to improve services and opportunities for people with learning disabilities in Norfolk.

The Partnership is always looking for new members who want to share their stories and contribute to the improvement of services. If you or someone you know would be interested, please visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/care-support-and-health/support-for-living-independently/learning-disabilities/learning-disabilities-partnership-board>.

If you would like to receive an emailed copy of the LDPB newsletter each month, please contact Andrew at LDPart@norfolk.gov.uk or phone 01603 223045.

The July newsletter is now available at the web address above.



Carers' locality meetings

These meetings are for carers and people working with carers to come together and share information about services and support for carers. They are an opportunity to identify what could be improved and co-develop solutions.

West Norfolk Locality Meeting – Wednesday 20 October

South Locality Meeting – Monday 25 October

East Norfolk Locality Meeting – Wednesday 27 October

Norwich Locality Meeting – Wednesday 3 November

North Norfolk Locality Meeting – Wednesday 10 November



These meetings take place between 10.30 and 12.30 and have been being held online via Zoom. To find out more about the autumn dates, please email info@carersvoice.org or call Catherine Kennedy on 07932 095312 or Sophie Little on 07932 095260.

Advice from Ofcom



Almost all of us have experienced some connectivity problems during the pandemic. Ofcom, the TV, radio, video and telecoms regulator, has some useful advice at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/stay-connected>.

Newsletter deadlines

We all need a break this August and we don't usually produce a newsletter then. The next one will appear in September 2021. Tell us about issues you'd like to see covered by emailing comms@familyvoice.org.uk by **5 September 2021**.



When it is hot.....



Don't lie in the sun



Keep your house cool with closed curtains



Use a fan



Wear light clothes like a T-shirt and shorts



Have a cool shower or bath



Eat salads and fruit



Drink lots of cold drinks

“I know I need a vaccine, but I just can’t face it...”

“I want some answers about the vaccine before I decide to have it...”

“I’m nervous about having a vaccine but I need it to travel...”

“Can I have my vaccine in a quiet space away from other people?”

“I have anxiety and need someone to support me in getting a vaccine...”

“The thought of leaving the house overwhelms me...”

“I’m pregnant, is the vaccine safe?”

“I want a vaccine but I’m petrified of needles...”

“I’m worried I’ll have a panic attack in public...”

“I didn’t want a vaccine but my workplace says I have to have it...”

***“We’re listening
and we can help”***

“I just want to talk to someone first...”

“I know it sounds silly, but...”

Visit our Worry BUS on Saturday 7th & Sunday 15th August,
11am to 5pm at the Sportspark, UEA, Norwich NR4 7TJ
Confidential advice plus Pfizer vaccine available, but no pressure!

Email us with your phone number, age and postcode and we will get someone from a local drop in clinic to speak to you over the phone before you decide to go: nwccg.contactus@nhs.net



Scan here to find a drop in clinic near you.

You can just turn up and speak confidentially to the team on site, ask questions and request extra support if required.



Safeguarding and SEND

Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) are, as we all know, vulnerable in many different ways. The term 'safeguarding' is broader than we may first think and can even feel scary to families, but a focus on the wellbeing of children and young people is something we all feel strongly about.

Kelly Waters, Senior Adviser Safeguarding – Education Quality Assurance & Intervention Service (part of Children's Services), has kindly supplied the useful information below.

What is safeguarding?

We all have a responsibility for the safeguarding of children and young people. Safeguarding is about:

- making sure that children are protected from harm, abuse or maltreatment
- making sure that children can grow up in safe environments enjoying their childhood
- the action we take to promote their welfare.

Safeguarding means that:

- children are protected from mistreatment
- a child's health, or development, is protected
- children grow up with safe and effective care
- action is taken to ensure the best outcomes for all children.

What is early help and family support?

Sometimes families need a little extra support and it is important that they get the right help at the earliest opportunity. If families are experiencing difficulties or are worried about a child, there are people who can offer help and support. Difficulties could be:

- mental health problems
- struggling as a lone parent
- domestic abuse at home
- debt problems
- drug or alcohol dependency
- housing problems
- a child not going to school

In these circumstances, a professional may offer to work with a family to address their worries via a Family Support Process.

No matter our age or circumstance, many of us are facing increased stress or maybe things are cropping up that we don't know how to deal with. There are a number of places where you can access further support and information including:

- **Just One Norfolk** has support and advice for families on a range of issues: 0300 300 0123 <https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/>
- **Early childhood and family service (ECFS)** offers support to 0–5 year olds and their families in Norfolk.

continued on page 28



The **NSPCC** provides advice on spotting the signs of child abuse and what to do if you are worried at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>.

What to do if you are concerned about a child

If you think a child is in **immediate danger** contact the police on 999.

If a child is not in immediate danger but you are worried about their welfare, contact the Norfolk Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on 0344 800 8021. A trained social worker will talk through those concerns with you to make sure the child gets the right support, alongside health, police, education and a wide range of other agencies as required.

Speech, language and communication needs parent/carer survey

Does your child struggle with making and keeping friendships? Do they find understanding social rules difficult? Does your child play alone and struggle to play with others? If the answer is yes to any of these, this could be a **social communication need**.

In Norfolk and Waveney a small group of people from the NHS, local authority, SENDIASS and parent carer groups including **Family Voice Norfolk** are working together to produce some easy-to-access information for families and schools about social communication difficulties, with helpful ideas on how to support your child/young person.

We need your feedback to make sure this is going to work for you as families, so please complete the survey on the link below before **29 August 2021**. Thank you!

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=fhcZFOBXD0-v8P1htUnRDqo0MyleTppOIWDms_ZF8JUNkhFQkVIQkYwWU9TNU1URkc3SzhSRkE2Vy4u

All Age Carers Strategy

Carers Voice Norfolk & Waveney is delighted to be leading on co-producing the initial stage of the first All Age Carers Strategy for Norfolk & Waveney 2022–2025.



Carers Voice are currently working with carers to co-produce the questions for a survey to find out what carers see as the priorities to support them and how they should be delivered so that carers receive the services they want and need. **Family Voice Norfolk** is one of the organisations helping to develop the survey, as we believe that many parent carers have not had the focus or services they need in the past.

Family Voice will publicise the survey when it is ready. We urge all parent carers to fill it in, giving as complete a picture as possible of what support would help you as a carer. We know that it can be difficult as a parent to consider yourself as a carer, but it is important that we all acknowledge that our parenting role has aspects that other families do not experience.

If you have any questions please contact info@carersvoice.org.





Share your ideas!

Are you interested in a free family event for all children and young people (0–25) with SEND?

Help Norfolk County Council and partners plan the summer 2022 event by filling in a short survey.

Go to <https://forms.office.com/r/12LhfYNTSF> to fill in the survey – it is quick and easy to do. The deadline is **Sunday 15 August 2021**.

Health and disability green paper – open consultation

The government has published the **Shaping future support: the health and disability green paper**. It asks for your views on how the government can help people to live more independently, including support to start, stay and succeed in work and ways we can improve the experience people have of the benefits system.

The experiences of disabled people and people with health conditions have shaped the ideas, proposals and questions in this green paper, with participants sharing their views on the benefits system and their priorities for change.

There is a lot to read but it is very relevant for young people with disabilities claiming benefits and/or in or seeking employment. Many of the case studies will feel familiar to families.

To find out more, go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/shaping-future-support-the-health-and-disability-green-paper/shaping-future-support-the-health-and-disability-green-paper#summary-of-consultation-questions>.



Adult Learning – Independent Living Skills

This course is for entry-level (or above) learners of 19+ and is free. It will take place on Fridays, beginning in w/c 20 September 2021 and is over three terms:

Term 1 (which is online via Zoom) **Living healthily:** including units from Beat the Bugs and health and wellbeing topics such as eating healthily and taking exercise, with On the Move fitness sessions from Active Norfolk.

Term 2 (which will be in person at venues around Norfolk) **Living creatively:** including units from Beat the Bugs and practical everyday living skills tasks and visits out in the community to develop community participation skills.

Term 3 **Living positively:** including developing learners' skills around money, time and temperature, and ICT, with the aim of helping with independence.

To enquire about this course and enrol or find out about other opportunities within Adult Learning Community and Leisure courses, or to find out about other service providers in Norfolk, please contact Learner Services directly – telephone 0344 800 8020 and choose option 5, or you can email adultlearning@norfolk.gov.uk.

Introductory sessions can be booked at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning/courses/search?searchterm=Independent%20Living%20Skills>

Inquiry into challenging decisions about adult social care

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has launched an inquiry into how older and disabled adults and unpaid carers can challenge local council decisions about social care and support in England and Wales.

A short survey (which takes only ten minutes or so to complete) seeks to find out whether:

- the existing ways of challenging decisions are effective and accessible
- people are given enough information about their rights to care and support, and how they can challenge decisions
- people can access high quality advocacy support to help them challenge decisions
- local councils and other bodies learn from challenges to improve decision-making in future
- there are effective systems in place to check that decisions are made well the first time round.

You can find the survey and more information at https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/inquiry-challenging-decisions-about-adult-social-care?fbclid=I-wAR2YrzhFFis_OOFSLJiQsv4KAhMNRDCtN7sUvRsWfLKLHJaNQqsoKtdWSKl.

This may seem far from your experience, but remember that it was the equality argument that was the crucial factor in a young disabled person from Norfolk winning the Judicial Review against Norfolk County Council regarding the contributions disabled people are required to make towards their care and support.

