



SUMMER SURVIVAL GUIDE 2019

Packed full of tips, ideas, activities
and information to help make
your summer less stressful



SNAP (Special Needs And Parents) is an Essex charity for families with children and young people who have special needs and disabilities. SNAP's aims are to inform, encourage and support parents, allowing them to grow in strength and knowledge so they are better equipped to give the best possible help to their children.

SNAP Services

- Helpline and Face to Face Parent Support
- Specialist Talks and Training Courses
- Online Directory and Information Network
- Library of Specialist Books and DVDs
- Parent and Pre-School Children Sessions
- After-school and Holiday Sessions for Children and Young People
- Sibling Support



Special Needs And Parents

01277 211300 • www.snapcharity.org • info@snapcharity.org



- 2 SNAP Services**
- 3 Introduction to the guide**
- 4 Holidays with children with physical disabilities**
- 4 Holidays with children with autistic spectrum disorders**
- 5 Airport Information**
- 5 Travelchair from MERU**
- 6 Try B4U Fly**
- 6 Firefly GoTo seat**
- 6 Passport Interviews**
- 6 Eurostar Virtual Tour**
- 6 Travel Insurance**
- 7 Visiting Theme Parks**
- 8 SNAP Holiday Sessions**
- 9 A-Z Activities & Events**

Introduction

The long summer holiday can be a difficult time for families with children with additional needs, as the change in routine and increased social demands can be a struggle for all to manage. You may find juggling your child with special needs, your other children and work and life commitments quite a challenge.

A break away, either in this country or abroad, can be an opportunity for some relaxed family time but also a possible source of stress for the whole family. The key to success is to prepare thoroughly in advance and pre-empt all the likely difficulties to see if there are ways to avoid the pitfalls.

Days out can also be fun if you organise things well. Check out the facilities where you are going in advance and see if there are any special arrangements available to make the day go more smoothly. Perhaps take a friend for your siblings, or an extra carer to help with your special child. See our article on Visiting Theme Parks for news on changes to their disabled policies.

If you are struggling to find inclusive social opportunities for your young person, The SNAP 'Summer Survival A-Z' section lists organisations that are running summer events and activities throughout the school holiday. Planning ahead and booking as early as you can will ensure you have a few organised activities. If your child is a particularly anxious person, having them well prepared for the activities and events that are going to be happening is critical. Consider which resources you currently use to support them with managing their daily routine, and see if you can apply these methods to make the summer holiday as comfortable as possible.

Do remember to refer to the SNAP Directory to find other contacts that may be of help, particularly the Leisure Time and Fitness, Respite and Breaks Away, and Local Advice, Support and Information sections. Our Information Network is updated on a fortnightly basis, so be sure to keep an eye out for details of events and activities in your local area.



Holidays with children with physical disabilities

With any trip or holiday, in Britain or abroad, it's a good idea to do some careful planning for the journey. It is important to remember that countries and areas differ and not all services and facilities will be available or accessible to you. If you have particular requirements, check that they are available before booking your trip.

Sometimes an impairment is not always obvious to others, so make sure you explain your child's requirements clearly. Don't assume that staff at travel agents, travel companies or airports will automatically know or understand the needs of your family. The more information you can provide them with, the better.

If flying, check with the airline in good time before the trip about the Special Assistance services they offer. Verify any specific seating and assistance needs and ask about facilities and procedures at the often smaller, less developed resort airports. In compliance with regulations of the European Parliament since July 2008, all European airports will offer assistance services for passengers with reduced mobility.

When taking medication with you, make sure you have enough for the duration of your trip together with an extra supply in case of delays or emergencies. Get a letter from your doctor detailing the medication your child needs

and keep the medication in its original packaging. Where possible always pack medication in your hand luggage in case the hold luggage is lost. You may need to check with the individual airline for restrictions on taking the medication into the country.

When choosing accommodation, check with your travel agent or organisation that the buildings and resort are fully accessible for your child's particular needs.

When buying travel insurance you will need to check thoroughly that the policy you choose covers all your needs, including medical costs that may arise from your child's impairment. Many policies do not cover claims arising from pre-existing medical conditions. Medical equipment and mobility aids are unlikely to be covered by standard travel insurance so you may have to pay an extra premium, however your household insurance may provide cover for these items. See section on travel insurance on page 6.

Holidays with children with autistic spectrum disorders

Going away on holiday may bring a few challenges for families who have a child with ASD. Once you have decided on your destination it may be best to tell your child well in advance.

Preparation will help to reduce their anxiety. It may help to compile a booklet about the holiday, including pictures from the holiday brochure or information leaflets or websites. Visual supports will help your child to understand where they are going and what it will be like. It is important to include when they will be coming home again as this may not be obvious to your child! Use a calendar to show when the holiday starts and finishes. Show a plan of the journey and include landmarks, different forms of transport and any planned breaks. Keep any mention of times loose in case of traffic or delays. Take a travel kit including special toys, foods or comforters.

If you are travelling by aeroplane you may want to visit the airport before your holiday to familiarise your child with the surroundings and watch a few planes take-off and land. If they have sensory issues with sounds, it may help to acquire some ear defenders to cope with aircraft noise, particularly during take-off and landing. Ask your travel agent or the airline about any special arrangements for check-in. They may be able to arrange a time for you to check-in so that your family is able

to approach the desk straight away and your child does not become anxious due to the wait in the queue. There may be a quieter area where you can wait prior to the flight and they may let you board first or last, depending which would be the most beneficial for your child. Give the airline advance notice if your child has any special dietary requirements. Tell the cabin crew if you feel there is anything they can do to help, and explain any unusual behaviours your child may exhibit so they are prepared.

Most people like spontaneity and a relaxed attitude on holiday, but for a child with ASD this can cause anxiety and may lead to difficult behaviours. You could build a routine into your days while away with flexibility between trips to a shop, mealtimes, swimming or beach time. Creating a visual timetable to this effect may be necessary for children who are used to using one at home. It may also help for dealing with transitions.

The National Autistic Society has more useful advice: www.autism.org.uk/about/family-life/holidays-trips/preparation.aspx

Airport Information

Under European legislation, your airline is responsible for providing assistance when you are on board the aircraft and the airport services and staff will help you while you are at the airport. All airport websites give clear information about the Special Assistance they offer and how to access it.

Gatwick, Heathrow, Stansted and London City Airports are offering Sunflower lanyards to individuals with hidden disabilities. These will identify individuals to staff members as someone who may need additional support or understanding. Staff have been specially trained to recognise these lanyards.

London Gatwick Airport has created an autism friendly visual guide to travelling through the airport which may be a useful visual aid. The booklet can be found on London Gatwick Airport's website - www.gatwickairport.com The airport also has a Sensory Room available in the North Terminal for passengers who may need a calming retreat. It is free of charge, accessible to wheelchairs and available on a first come first served basis.

London Stansted Airport has a Special Flyer Autism Awareness Scheme, which allows access to FastTrack

lanes free of charge and also offers a Special Flyer Wristband for discreet identification to staff that additional assistance may be required. www.stanstedairport.com

London Southend Airport has a Blue Wristband scheme. The wristbands are free of charge and can be collected on arrival at the ticket desk in the terminal building. Staff are trained to recognise that people wearing the bands may need additional assistance. www.southendairport.com

Unfortunately, not all UK airports have produced their own visual guides, but you may be able to produce your own version, for the airport you are flying from, if you gather information from the airport website including photos of the airport areas.

Travelchair from Meru

www.meru.org.uk

The MERU TravelChair is a unique chair that fits into a standard airline seat giving firm, postural support for disabled children whilst they fly. It is suitable for children from 3 – 11 years (depending on their size) and can be booked through certain airlines at no extra cost.

The adjustable headrest, footrest and body harness provide various levels of postural support which can allow even severely disabled children the option to fly.

It can be placed in a standard airline seat so you can sit with your child during the flight. It is quick to install and has familiar supportive features.

The TravelChair is now available for parents to buy but not all airlines will accept the TravelChair onboard the plane. It is worth checking with your airline prior to booking. Some airlines have their own fleet of TravelChairs available for passengers. Check availability with the airline prior to booking and the airline will make sure it is available for your flight.



Try B4U Fly www.tryb4ufly.co.uk or www.qef.org.uk

The Queen Elizabeth's Foundation, in association with MERU, has introduced 'try b4u fly' - a support service specially created to reduce the anxieties and stress for children and young people with disabilities and their parents before and during air travel. It provides an opportunity to try specially designed aeroplane seating support for children and young people with disabilities before the actual travel day, at their Centres in Surrey, Birmingham or Leeds. A hiring service is now available for some of their support seating systems if the airline you are flying with do not have the seating you need. This scheme can currently only be used with certain airlines.

Firefly GoTo Seat www.fireflyfriends.com

The Firefly GoTo Vinyl seat is a postural support seat helping children aged 1-8 years (depending on their size) participate in everyday family activities. The flexibility of design allows GoTo to be fitted to any standard seating, including dining chairs, swings, trolleys and much more. The new design also has the option of advanced headrests and a floor sitter attachment to allow the seat to be used without a chair. This could help while away on holiday in order to provide supported seating for your child where it isn't already provided.

Passport Interviews www.gov.uk

If your child aged 16 or over is travelling abroad for the first time and they have never had their own British passport, they are required to attend an interview as part of the application process. The interview confirms that the passport application matches the applicant's identity. There are services and facilities available to people who have disabilities to help with filling in the form. If there are certain aspects of the application that you are unable to complete due to a disability you can provide evidence to skip the sections.

Eurostar Virtual Tour

www.eurostar.com/uk-en/travel-info/travel-planning/travellers-with-autism

Travellers can now take a 360 degree video tour of every stage of the boarding process for a journey on a Eurostar train. This can be helpful for travellers with autism or other special needs who may need to prepare for the sights and sounds of the process.

Travel Insurance

When purchasing travel insurance it is important to make sure the policy will cover all your needs as well as any medical costs that may arise. Be aware that standard travel insurance is not likely to cover medical equipment and mobility aids. There are providers that can offer specialist insurance for children with disabilities and their families. There are a few companies listed below but be sure to look around for others that may provide the right cover for your family.

Fish Insurance	www.fishinsurance.co.uk
Free Spirit	www.freespirittravelinsurance.com
Good To Go Insurance	www.goodtogoinsurance.com
Insurancewith	www.insurancewith.com

Visiting theme parks

Many families with a child with special needs have been able to enjoy a day out at a theme park by taking advantage of the special arrangements that are put in place for guests with disabilities. There are various concessions and also restrictions in place to ensure comfort and safety.

Children who are unable to use the normal queue lines may be able to receive preferential ride access via the ride exits. The rules regarding this are regularly changing in UK parks so it would be a good idea to check the disabled guide on the theme park's website for new arrangements before you visit. Most theme parks allow you to pre-register for a ride access pass by uploading documentation.

Chessington World of Adventures will be continuing their disabled access registration ID card for 2019. All guests visiting the resort and registering for a ride access pass will be required to have their photo taken and will be issued with an individual ID card for future visits to the resort.

To apply for a ride access pass you can complete the online registration form to save time on the day. Chessington also requires a certified NHS letter from a consultant or GP clearly stating why you are eligible for the use of the Ride Access Pass, or alternatively your Blue Badge.

They also state that they must have one companion with them who is happy to use the rides and attractions with the holder of the Ride Access Pass. They will now accept just a recent DLA, DWP or PIP letter for those who are entitled to higher rate/enhanced mobility allowance.

Ride Access Passes are reserved for adventurers who do not understand the concept of queuing; have difficulties with everyday social interaction; have a limited capacity to follow instruction or to understand others' emotional feelings or expressions, and may become agitated or distressed having to wait for extended periods of time; have a physical disability that prevents them standing for extended periods of time and permanently non-ambulant guests. Having a registered disability does not mean you automatically receive a Ride Access Pass.

Legoland uses smartphone technology

Each theme park has a disabled guide for more information.

www.chessington.com

www.legoland.co.uk

www.thorpepark.com

www.altontowers.com

www.adventureisland.co.uk

www.disneylandparis.com

for their ride access pass, which is a virtual queuing system accessible to the user by a Wi-Fi enabled device. You must apply online at least 5 days in advance. Once you have provided the evidence detailed below you will be provided with a login for the day where you can book a ride. This will then notify you of the time to arrive at the ride after a virtual queue. Similar to Chessington, a letter from a doctor or documents specific to the disability are required.

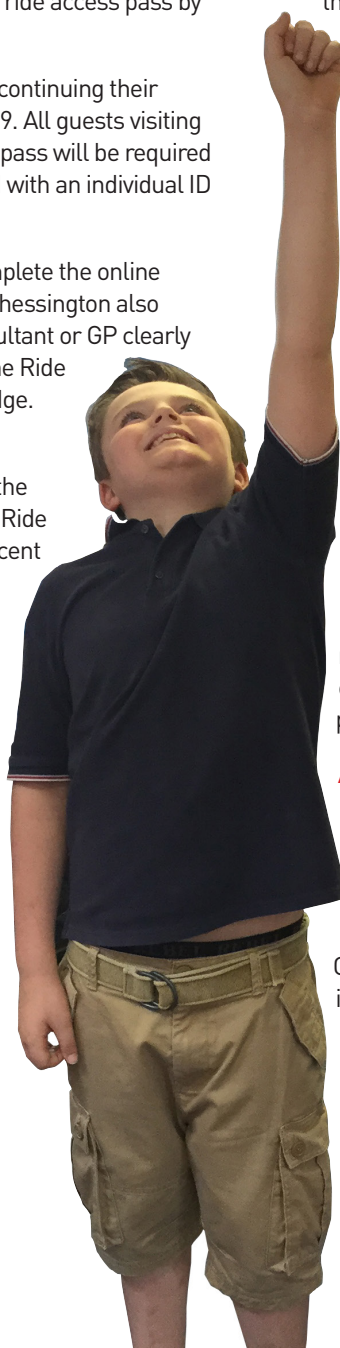
They now accept recent DLA, DWP or PIP letters which must be accompanied by a letter from a doctor unless you have high/enhanced rate. Photo ID is required when applying for a Ride Access Pass login at Guest Services. Please note that for each Ride Access Pass Legoland issues, there is a maximum of 4 people able to book on to one ride at any time. This includes the guest with additional needs, with up to 3 accompanying individuals.

Alton Towers also requires evidence in the form of a letter from a GP or consultant clearly stating that you are unable to queue and why, as well as photographic identification for a Ride Access Pass. They also accept a DLA or PIP award letter (dated within the last 2 years) showing that you receive high rate/ enhanced mobility component. The Ride Access Pass will be stamped after each use with the time at which you can go on your next ride. Guests with the following documentation are entitled to one free carer ticket and a second carer half price.

Adventure Island in Southend-on-Sea allows exit access for wristband holders who are unable to queue due to their disability. The ride operator has the discretion to allow the guest and carer to wait at the exit to then be allowed on at an appropriate time. Carers can purchase wristbands for half the price of in-park rate. Guests may have two carers per person. For further information on accessibility please call **01702 443400**.

All of the above theme parks have Changing Places facilities, which are accessible with a Radar key.

Further information can be found in the Disabled Guide for each theme park.



SNAP Holiday Sessions

During the school holidays SNAP runs a variety of sessions for children and their parents who have regular contact with The SNAP Centre. Sessions run at different times and all centre facilities are available to use. Contact The SNAP Centre - **01277 211300** - if you are interested in attending future SNAP holiday sessions.

SNAP's after school clubs and holiday sessions are part funded by Essex County Council Short Breaks.

All organisations now have a contractual requirement to request an 'Essex Short Breaks passport number' for each child and young person accessing the funded sessions, clubs and activities. To receive an Essex Short Breaks passport number, families must live in Essex and are required to register online at [ECC Short Breaks \(https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/\)](https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/)



Diddlies

For families with pre-school children with special needs and their siblings.



Stay 'n' Play

Group play for families with children of primary school age with special needs and their siblings.



SNAP+

For families with young people aged 12+ years with special needs and their siblings.



Sensorise

For families with children and young people with more profound and complex special needs.



Mini Sensorise

For families with pre-school children with more profound and complex special needs and their siblings.



SIBS4Fun

Four days each summer for a group of primary aged siblings whose brothers and sisters.

Thank you to Essex County Council - Short Breaks - for their continued support of SNAP's holiday sessions.

Contact the organisations overleaf directly for up-to-date information.



A-Z EVENTS & ACTIVITIES IN ESSEX

In addition the SNAP Directory lists further contacts and is updated regularly on the SNAP website. You can browse in the Respite and Breaks Away; Leisure Time and Fitness; Local Advice, Support and Information sections.

www.snapcharity.org/directory/

A-Z Events and Activities

Accuro

Provides a range of services to children and young people with disabilities, primarily in West Essex. Accuro offers the School Holiday Support Project for children aged 8 to 19 years, who are matched to a one to one family support worker for fun leisure and social activities. Outings may include bowling, cinema, horse riding, swimming and more. Accuro also provides group activity days such as art day, drama day, sports day and many more.

01279 870297

www.accuro.org.uk

enquiries@accuro.org.uk

ADD+UP

Based in Hornchurch is running a four week School Holiday Project during the summer where children can take part in various craft activities, as well as drama, movement and team building games.

01708 454040

www.addup.co.uk

www.addup.co.uk/contact-us/

Aladdin's Cave

Is a resource centre based at Beacon Hill School. Resources include sensory equipment, musical instruments, portable ball pools and story sacks which may be enjoyable to use over the summer. Resources may be selected from a catalogue or by visiting the library on specified dates. Aladdin's Cave has hundreds of sensory resources for you to borrow, free of charge, all matched to individual special needs. Equipment can be viewed online.

01708 852006

www.beaconhill.thurrock.sch.uk

aladdinscave@beaconhill.thurrock.sch.uk

Aquaccess

Is a swimming club for disabled children and adults which takes place every Sunday from 3.00pm to 4.30pm at the Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road. Adults and children, swimmers and non-swimmers are welcome. Hoists are available to enable easy access to both pools.

01277 354161

enquiries@brentwoodleisure.co.uk

Autism and Nature

Has published guides to help families and carers of children with autism to access nature and the countryside in counties in the South East and East Anglia. They also produce illustrated story books to accompany the guides. To download the guides visit their website. A copy of the illustrated story can be requested by emailing Short Breaks.

www.autismandnature.org.uk

shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk

Autism Friendly Cinema Screenings

Cineworld, Odeon, Vue and Showcase cinemas are participating in autism friendly screenings which have low lighting, reduced volume levels and the ability to move around in the cinema. Film titles will be announced soon on the Dimensions website where you can also book tickets.

0300 303 9062

www.dimensions-uk.org

autismfilms@dimensions-uk.org

Big Xperience

Is an activity centre based in Basildon that offers a wide range of activities and bespoke courses for young adults with learning disabilities. The activities include archery, animal care, life skills cooking, dancing and much more. They also offer summer holiday camps and experiences at their sister site Green Trees Farm where young people can camp out and build shelters.

01268 901516

www.thebigxperience.co.uk

info@thebigxperience.co.uk

Bishop's Stortford Splash Park

Based in Castle Park is hosting exclusive family SEN/ Disabilities sessions every Wednesday from 5pm to 7pm throughout the summer until September when the summer season ends.

BOSP (Brighter Opportunities through Supported Play)

Run a variety of sessions during the school holidays providing fun and exciting activities with social opportunities, for children and young people with disabilities aged 4 years and over. Activities will take place from July to September and include a Holiday Club at The Pioneer School in Basildon, with Whizzy Woodland Away Days at Thriftwood Scout Camp in Brentwood as well as trips out. They also run a 'come & swim session', 'Trampolining club' and 'BOSP swim club' all offered during the summer holidays. BOSP has a high staff ratio to ensure all medical and behavioural needs can be met. There are a number of funded and unfunded places available. The children and young people must be in receipt of DLA (Disability Living Allowance) or PIP (Personal Independence Payment) to be able to apply. For more information contact BOSP.

01268 553117

www.bosp.co.uk

enquiries@bosp.co.uk

A-Z Events and Activities

Bounce Village

Is a UK trampoline park based in Rayleigh, Essex. During the school holidays, Bounce Village hosts a SEN session on Saturday mornings at 9.00am. The cost is £5 per child, with carers going free.

01702 549010

www.bouncevillage.co.uk

bookings@bouncevillage.co.uk

Brentwood Leisure Trust

Host a variety of inclusive sports activities throughout the year including during the summer holidays.

01277 215151

www.brentwood-centre.co.uk

enquiries@brentwoodleisure.co.uk

Bury Active

Offer a wide range of holidays and short breaks in the UK, Europe and the USA for small groups and individuals with learning disabilities, aged 17 years and over. They offer special interest mini-breaks in the spring and autumn and a full range of holidays throughout the year. Bury Active holidays are ideal for young people aged between 17 and 35 years who are looking for lively, activity based holidays. All holidays come with an appropriate level of support from the small team of experienced couriers.

01268 542365

www.buryactive.co.uk

info@buryactive.co.uk

Canalability

Is a registered charity that provides boating holidays, day trips and themed activity days on purpose built, fully accessible boats on the waterways in Essex, Hertfordshire and London.

01279 424444

www.canalboat.org.uk

hello@canalability.org.uk

Centre Algarve

Is a specialist holiday centre which is fully equipped to support families who have children and young people with special needs. The centre has private secure facilities which includes a discovery centre with a multisensory room, an animal experience, a swimming pool accessible via a seated hoist and much more.

01279 661661

www.centrealgarve.org

www.centrealgarve.org/contact-us/

Changing Places

Campaign to improve facilities for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets and are involved in setting up new facilities. Changing Places toilets have extra features and more space to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities, including a height adjustable adult-sized changing bench and hoist. To find local Changing Places toilets see their website.

0207 803 2876

www.changing-places.org

changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org

Chris Cross

Is a holiday club for young people with disabilities and their siblings, aged between 6 and 14 years, held at Christopher's Cottage Sports Hall (The St. Christopher School), Leigh-on-Sea. The club takes place between 10.00am and 3.00pm 4 days a week during the summer holidays (please contact school for dates). Various sports, games and indoor activities are on offer.

01702 524193

office@tscs.southend.sch.uk

UK Cinema Association (UKCA)

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association (CEA) Card is a national card that can be used to verify that the holder is entitled to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. To apply for the card you must be 8 years or older, in receipt of DLA, PIP or Attendance Allowance or be a registered blind person. The card is valid for one year from the date of issue and application forms are available online or from cinemas across the UK supporting this card. Download a form or apply online.

0344 967 0101

www.ceacard.co.uk

info@ceacard.co.uk

City of Chelmsford Mencap

Is offering a range of fun summer activities throughout the holidays for young people aged over 16 years offering workshops and trips out.

01245 268303

www.cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk

info@cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk

Columbus Discovery Club

Provide high quality short breaks, child care and play opportunities for children and young people aged 3 to 19 years with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Columbus Discovery Club offers activities in the Columbus school and college including swimming, sensory play as well as days/nights out to attractions such as the zoo, water parks, activity centres, cinema and more.

01245 291492

www.sites.google.com/aetinet.org/columbus-school-and-college/discovery-club

slambert@columbusschoolandcollege.org

A-Z Events and Activities

Dancing Giraffe

Is a community website that delivers in-depth news and information for the Essex disabled community. It offers a wide range of lifestyle and support information including culture, travel, leisure activities and news.

01206 212469

www.dancinggiraffe.com

susanp@dancinggiraffe.com

Diddi Dance North Essex

Runs dance classes for children and young people with any additional needs. These classes are run during school holidays, and are based in Colchester, Clacton, Hatfield Peverel, and Harwich. For more details on class times and costings, please visit the Diddi Dance website.

07722 605395

www.diddidance.com/diddi-dance-north-essex/

Disabled Person's Railcard

Entitles people with disabilities and one adult companion to 1/3 off travel fares throughout Great Britain. Applicants must provide proof of eligibility - you may qualify if you are visually impaired, have a hearing impairment or epilepsy, or are in receipt of a disability-related benefit. The cost is £20 for one year or £54 for a three-year railcard.

0345 605 0525

0345 601 0132 (For customers with hearing impairments)

www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

Disabled Persons Transport

Provides advice on access for disabled people on public transport including the ability to check if a station has accessible facilities.

www.gov.uk/transport-disabled

ELHAP

Is an adventure playground in Woodford Bridge designed and built for children and young people aged 5-19 with disabilities. ELHAP offers summer holiday playschemes to children and young people, which run throughout the summer holiday.

020 8550 2636

www.elhap.org.uk

info@elhap.org.uk

Elite Gamer

Is a gaming centre located in Southend-on-Sea. Throughout the week, they provide four special needs club nights for young people with additional needs.

01702 304528

www.elitegamer.co.uk/

Essex County Council

Has information on days out and activities across the county, including attractions and disabled access.

03330 134105

www.visitessex.com

Essex Country Parks

Offer a great range of events and opportunities to get out and explore.

0345 603 7624

www.visitparks.co.uk

Alternatively, you can contact the park directly:

Belhus, Aveley	01708 865628
Cudmore Grove, East Mersea	01206 383868
Crossing Temple Barns and Gardens	03330 132738
Danbury	01245 222350
Great Notley County Park	03330 132900
Hadleigh Park, Benfleet	01702 551072
Marsh Farm, South Woodham Ferrers	01245 222350
South Weald, Brentwood	01277 261343
Thorndon, Brentwood	01277 211250

Essex County Football Association

Offer football coaching for players with special needs and disabilities at various locations across Essex. Sessions run throughout the summer. See their website to find a club or session.

www.essexfa.com/players/disability

Essex Fire Service

Will be arranging open days at fire stations across Essex. It is a free and fun day out for all the family to meet their local crew, have a close up look at the fire engines and find out what it is to be a firefighter. For more information on dates for your local fire station open day visit their website.

01376 576000

www.essex-fire.gov.uk

Essex Libraries

Will be running activities and events throughout the summer, including the Summer Reading Challenge called 'Space Chase' which returns from 20th July to 2nd September. Visit local libraries to sign up and choose six stories for the challenge. Children receive a certificate and medal for taking part.

www.essex.gov.uk/libraries

Essex Outdoors

Is offering activity days through the Short Breaks for Disabled Children programme. These activity days are available at various centres across the county and dates are available throughout July, August and September.

0345 200 4220

www.essexoutdoors.org

hello@essexoutdoors.com

A-Z Events and Activities

Essex Wildlife Trust

Offer a great range of activities and opportunities to see Essex wildlife up close from visitor centres and nature reserves across the county. There are trails to follow to find favourite book characters and accessible pathways.

www.essexwt.org.uk

Euan's Guide

Is a listings and review website that helps disabled people and their families know which venues are truly accessible. To find out more about the reviews or leave a review of a venue yourself visit their website.

www.euansguide.com

Families InFocus

Continue to offer a range of services during the summer holidays.

01245 353575

www.familiesinfocussessex.org.uk

helpline@familiesinfocussessex.org.uk

Friends & Places - in Southend

Is offering young people the opportunity to meet with friends and new people. They offer a variety of activities and day trips. To find out more about the events and services offered visit their website.

Over 18's: 07796 678 939

Under 18's: 07904 271027

www.friendsandplacetogether.org.uk

info@friendsandplacetogether.org.uk

Grapevine Essex

Is a registered charity and provides recreational and educational activities for adults with learning disabilities living in Essex. Grapevine is offering a summer programme of activities listed in the What's on section of the website.

01277 625530

www.grapevinessex.org.uk

Jackie@grapevinessex.org.uk

Havering Youth Clubs

Are running holiday activities aimed at young people aged between 5 and 18 years including arts and craft and sports.

www.havering.gov.uk/holidayactivities

Hft

Has created a holiday information guide which provides information about how to make holidays and travel both in the UK and abroad easier for people with additional needs.

www.hft.org.uk/our-services/family-carer-support-service/fcss-updates/holiday-information-guide/?_sf_s=Holiday

Hylands Adventure Castle

Is a wheelchair accessible play area in Hylands Park Chelmsford, with specialist play equipment designed to be inclusive for all abilities. Additional play battlements include all-inclusive ladders, double width, climbing ramp, suspended bridge, scramble net, bat sculptures and much more. There is an adjacent café and Changing Places facility.

01245 606606 - Ask for "Parks"

<http://hylandsestate.co.uk/explore/adventure-castle/>

InterAct

Will be running some exciting, fun activities during the summer for young people aged 12-25 years with learning disabilities/additional needs in the Essex County Council area. There will be group activities that are friendly and welcoming and designed to help young people join in, get to know each other and experience new and challenges.

As well as regular youth club and evening leisure activities, there will be day trips out. For full details on the programmes running or to book your place telephone

01245 608201

www.interact.org.uk

mail@interact.org.uk

I Need A Holiday Too

Offers accessible and supported holidays for disabled people in France. They offer accommodation, equipment hire, adapted transport and support workers.

UK Freephone: 0800 949 6801

www.ineedaholidaytoo.com

info@ineedaholidaytoo.com

JollyDays Supported Holidays

Provides supported holidays for adults over the age of 18 years with mild to moderate learning disabilities.

JollyDays Holidays can tailor a supported holiday to suit your individual needs and are extremely flexible. Activities include horse riding, wall climbing, abseiling, sailing, canoeing, caving and archery. Activities are fully accessible and special dietary requirements will be catered for.

01277 355565

www.jollydaysholidays.co.uk

enquiries@jollydaysholidays.co.uk

Just Ride Southend

Runs regular drop-in inclusive cycling sessions for people of all ages and abilities based at Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre at Garon Park.

07971 774479

www.justridesouthend.com

A-Z Events and Activities

Kids Week

Is running throughout August. A child aged 16 years or under can experience the magic of London theatre from a selection of shows for free, plus two additional children can go at half price if they are accompanied by a full paying adult. Children can also take part in a fantastic range of free activities and events.

www.kidsweek.co.uk

Lambourne End Centre

Is running an Adventure Academy 2019 of multi-activity days during the summer holiday for 8 to 13 year olds to get outdoors and try a new activity.

020 8500 3047

www.lambourne-end.org.uk

info@lambourne-end.org.uk

Local Offer

Is published by every local authority as part of the SEND reforms under the Children and Families Act. It gives information about all services and support available locally for special educational needs and disability. Visit your council's local offer for summer events and activities.

Essex County Council www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk

Thurrock Council www.askthurrock.org.uk/localoffer

Southend Council www.southendinfopoint.org

Havering Council www.havering.gov.uk

Merlin's Magic Wand

Is a worldwide charity for children under the age of 18 years, aiming to provide magical experiences for those who are seriously ill, disabled or disadvantaged. These would primarily be at attractions within the Merlin Group. Applications can be made through the website (Only one successful application per family).

01202 440060

www.merlinsmagicwand.org

Mersea Island Festival

Offers an inclusive camping break that is suitable for young people with or without a physical or learning disability. Week Camp runs from 18th to 23rd August and Weekend Camp runs from 23rd to 26th August. The festival includes activities such as archery, zip wire and climbing, as well as discos and talent shows. Meals and accommodation are inclusive as well as evening entertainment.

01206 383226

www.merseafestival.org.uk

info@merseafestival.org.uk

Mini Play Big Listen

A group for pre-school children with autism at Epping Forest District Museum, will be running on 2nd July and 16th July, 11.15am to 12.30pm.

www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/leisure/museums/

Mobility Equipment Hire Direct

Provides wheelchairs, hoists, walkers, standing aids and much more for hire across the UK and some selected locations abroad. The equipment is delivered direct to the hotel, apartment or villa on the selected date.

www.mobilityequiphiredirect.com

Monkey Madness

Is a party venue and soft play centre for children of all ages in Basildon. They host a special needs evening from 6-8pm every second Wednesday of the month. The session costs £4.25 per child. They have a wheelchair accessible sensory zone with bubble tubes and fibre optic light tunnel.

01268 288211

www.monkeymadnessplay.com/basildon/

info@monkeymadnessplay.com

Mushroom Theatre Company

Run their Performing Arts Life Skills (PALS) workshops for children and young people with a disability throughout the summer holidays. Contact to book.

01268 906470

info@mushroomtheatre.co.uk

www.mushroomtheatre.co.uk

Orchyd Holidays

Offers a 10 day holiday from the 1st to 10th August for children aged 8 to 12 years with any degree of physical disability. The holiday is free of charge and is offered for 20 children from any part of the UK. The children are accommodated at St Martains Church Hall, Ruislip with a full programme of daily activities and outings. Qualified nursing staff and first aiders accompany the children and each child is assigned a personal helper to attend to their special needs. Although applications for this year needed to be returned by the end of May, Orchyd Holidays may be worth bearing in mind for next year.

07502 382469

www.orchyd.org.uk

info@orchyd.org.uk

PARC (Play and Resource Centre)

In Great Notley Country Park offers an outdoor playground and a sensory garden as well as an indoor resource centre, where children and young adults with disabilities can enjoy themselves. PARC holiday clubs run from Monday to Friday each week at different times in the day. To find out more about the holiday clubs

01376 528999

www.parc-essex.co.uk

info@parc-essex.co.uk

A-Z Events and Activities

Rainbow Rural Farm Club

In Great Dunmow provides a wide range of countryside experiences and a rural environment to learn about conservation, wild life, farming skills, animal care and much more. They are running a variety of sessions for children and young people with additional needs throughout the summer holidays.

07873 232055

www.rainbowrural.co.uk
farm@rainbowrural.co.uk

Redbridge Cycling Centre

Offers the use of road and off-road cycling tracks to individuals or groups. Families can hire a range of adapted bikes and trikes for disabled users. The centre is located in Hainault, Ilford. The centre also offers coaching in their Cycle Vision Programme, which encourages learning and development.

020 8500 9359

www.redbridgecyclingcentre.co.uk
rcc@vision-rcl.org.uk

Relaxed Performances

Are specifically designed to welcome people with ASD, learning disabilities or sensory and communication disorders into theatres to give them the experience of live theatre. They have a less formal, more supportive atmosphere to reduce anxiety levels. For lists of performances that are audio described, captioned, BSL interpreted or relaxed visit their website.

020 7557 6700

www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk
enquiries@soltukt.co.uk

Revitalise

Provides short breaks and holidays (respite care) for disabled people and carers. Their Summer Youth Weeks are held at their centres across the country on a variety of dates over the summer. These weeks are aimed at 18-40 year olds and include activities, day trips and entertainment.

0303 303 0145

www.revitalise.org.uk

Romford Autistic Group Support (RAGS)

Is the support group for families in Havering who have a child/children with an autism spectrum disorder. Summer activities include an exclusive members only session at Timbuk2.

01708 564871

www.rags-havering.org.uk
info@rags-havering.org.uk

Royal Association for Deaf People

Has events throughout the year for families to enjoy. Visit their website for the events timetable.

0330 688 2525

www.royaldeaf.org.uk
info@royaldeaf.org.uk

The Science Museum

Is hosting a Summer of Space with a range of events. On Saturday 6th July there is a Night Owls, sensory friendly evening for young people aged 16+ who need a quieter environment to enjoy the museum.

020 7942 4000

www.sciencemuseum.org.uk
info@sciencemuseum.ac.uk

SHARE (Safe Haven and Respite Environment)

Runs a holiday club for young people, aged 3-19 years, with disabilities. The activities run on weekdays from 10am to 3pm during all school holidays in Basildon where there is a soft play area, a large garden and lots of activities. There is also a club for young people aged 16 to 25 held at SEEVIC campus in Benfleet.

01268 521691

www.sharerespice.co.uk
share.enquiries@gmail.com

Sky Badger

Provides links to organisations that support children with disabilities, from sports clubs to sibling groups and 'make a wish' charities to holiday venues.

www.skybadger.co.uk

SNAC (Special Needs Activity Club)

Provides opportunities for young people in Thurrock through the provision of programmes of educational, recreational and social activities. The different programmes are run in term time and school holidays and include siblings.

07756 294943

www.snac.btck.co.uk/
SNAC2007@googlemail.com

Southend Mencap

Has a range of summer term holiday sessions, such as Family Play and Respite Club which provides respite for carers of children with learning disabilities aged 5 to 16 years and their siblings. You can download a booking form under the flyers section on their website.

01702 341250

www.southendmencap.org.uk
marc.mcowens@southendmencap.co.uk

Short Breaks for disabled children & young people

Allow Essex families to take a break from their caring responsibilities. To find out more information about how to access this support visit their website.

www.essex.gov.uk

shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk

A-Z Events and Activities

Spectrum Breaks

Offers The Hartlands holiday centre on the Isle of Wight providing self catering accommodation and facilities to support families with members of any age on the autistic spectrum. The centre has a hydro pool, cinema, IT room, sensory room and much more. For more information or to book visit their website.

01983 864 885

www.spectrumbreaks.co.uk

support@spectrumbreaks.co.uk

Starburst Dance Night

Will be held on 18th July, from 7.00pm to 10.00pm, for young people aged 16 plus (young people under 18 years must be accompanied by an adult). Tickets cost £5. The dance will be held at Ashwells Country Club in Brentwood.

01277 218902

www.frontlinepartnership.org/

starburst@siermail.co.uk

Stay and Splash

Is a water park situated at the Paddocks Lido on Canvey Island. Every second Wednesday from 4.00pm to 6.30pm (including school holidays), Stay and Splash hosts SEN and siblings only sessions, providing a relaxed and comfortable environment for children with additional needs of any age. Their SEN sessions are also a great opportunity for parents to meet and form friendships. There is a cost of £5 per child, with adults going in free.

07726 496069

www.stayandsplash.rocks/sen-session-s

info@stayandsplash.rocks

The Sunshine Centre

Holds a summer play-scheme each year with activities such as various sports, picnics, dance, outings and more. The Sunshine Centre also organises caravan holiday bookings which includes adapted caravans.

01375 652200

www.thurrock.gov.uk/sunshine-centre-for-disabled-children/summer-play-scheme

sunshinecentre@thurrock.gov.uk

Thames Chase Forest Centre

Offers a bike hire scheme during weekends and school holidays between April and October. They have bikes for adults and children, buggies, a tagalong and adapted cycles for children with special needs in association with TrailNet.

01708 642970

www.thameschase.org.uk

enquiries@thameschase.org.uk

The Thomas Centre

Provide specialised holidays for families affected by autism, epilepsy or related conditions. They provide fully accessible bungalows and houses in Lincolnshire alongside a variety of facilities such as a gym, sensory area, swimming pool, go carts and much more.

01507 363463

www.thethomascentre.co.uk

enquiries@thethomascentre.co.uk

Tourism For All

Provides advice and information on accessible tourism in the UK and abroad.

0845 124 9971

www.tourismforall.org.uk

info@tourismforall.org.uk

TrailNet

Offers inclusive cycling sessions for children and adults to ride through Thorndon County Park. They have a range of adapted trikes for all ages and sizes, they are available to hire either independently or as part of their regular group rides.

01277 811012

www.trailnet.org.uk

info@trailnet.org.uk

Willow Park Resource Centre

In Clacton offers activity workshops such as drama, arts & crafts, gardening, nature and animals, cooking and more. The centre is for young people with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and sensory impairments. The centre offers a sensory room and hydrotherapy pool.

01255 831302

www.willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk

reception@willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk

Zinc Arts SEN

Summer events for young people aged 18+ include 4-week workshop courses on Thursdays or Fridays in August, and respite residential weekend breaks at Zinc Arts Centre in Chipping Ongar.

01277 365626

www.zincarts.org.uk

nadia.allen@zincarts.org.uk

The following websites useful:

www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk

www.essexmums.org

www.playday.org.uk

www.childsafezones.co.uk

PLEASE NOTE: This guide has been prepared for general interest and it is important to obtain professional advice on specific issues. We believe the information contained in it to be correct. While all possible care is taken in the preparation of this guide, no responsibility for loss occasioned by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of the material contained herein, can be accepted by SNAP.