



SUMMER SURVIVAL GUIDE 2018

Packed full of tips, ideas, activities and organisations 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

Parent Advice and Support

- Advice and Information
- Helpline
- SNAP Directory
- Face to Face Parent Support
- Library of Specialist Books and DVDs
- Education Surgeries
- Counselling
- Specialist Talks and Training Courses
- Website
- Advice and Information Network

Activities

- Parent and Pre-school Children's Sessions
- Music, Yoga, Drama and Activity Groups
- Holiday Sessions
- SNAP+ (for older children and young people)
- Sibling Support
- Social Events for Parents and Children
- Multi-Sensory Room
- Specialist IT Suite



Special Needs And Parents Ltd

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

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Registered Office: The SNAP Centre • Pastoral Way • Warley • Brentwood • Essex, CM14 5WF

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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 the needs of 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 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 & Fitness, Respite & Breaks Away, and Local Advice, Support & 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.

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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 travel part of your trip. 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.

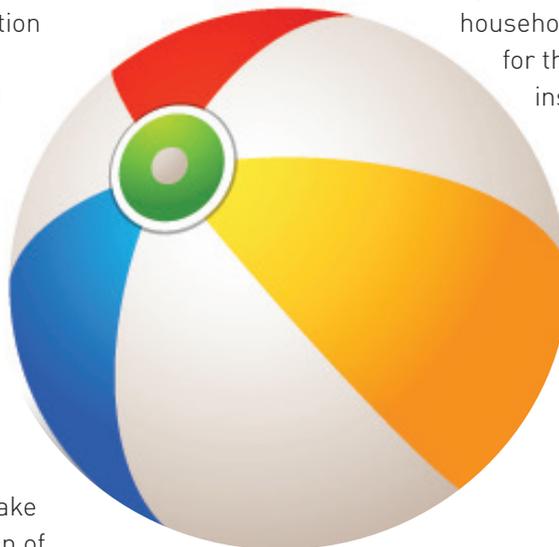
If flying, check with the airline in good time before the trip about the use and storage of major buggies and wheelchairs. Airlines will not store wheelchairs inside the aeroplane but will allow you to keep the wheelchair until you board and then store it in the hold.

Check what happens at your destination for retrieving your child's wheelchair again. 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. Always pack medication in your hand luggage where possible in case the hold luggage is lost. You may need to check with the individual airline 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 below.





Holidays with children with autistic spectrum disorders

Going away on holiday, whether in this country or abroad, may bring a few challenges for families with a child with ASD. Once you have decided on your destination it is 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 local 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. See the Airport Awareness article later on in the guide for more information.

Most people like spontaneity and a relaxed attitude on holiday, but for a child with ASD this can cause anxiety and may lead to challenging behaviour. 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 and changes.

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 12 months) 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**.



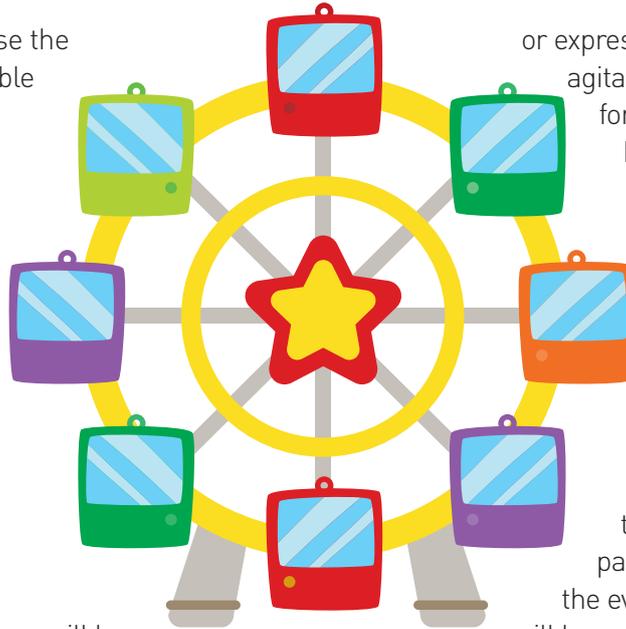


Visiting theme parks

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 2018. 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 your Blue Badge. They also require photographic ID for the individual who requires the Ride Access Pass, which must correspond with the name and details on the GP letter or Blue Badge provided. 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 DLA, DWP or PIP letter stating they are entitled to higher rate/enhanced mobility allowance only. 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 for their ride access passes. 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. They do not accept Blue Badges, as these do not state the nature of the disability. Similar to Chessington, a letter from a doctor or documents specific to the disability are required. They now accept DLA, DWP or PIP letters which must be accompanied by a letter from a GP. Legoland offers a Ride Access Pass, to allow guests up to 10 rides via the ride exit in the day, to provide a reduced waiting time. Photo ID is required when applying for a Ride Access Pass 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.

Thorpe Park provides guests with a wristband and card to enable the disabled person and the helper to bypass the queue system usually through the exit or designated entrance. On popular rides guests will be given a time in which they can return, based on queue time. They require documentary evidence from a GP or hospital consultant detailing reasons that the

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

www.chessington.com

www.legoland.co.uk

www.thorpepark.com

www.altontowers.com

www.adventureisland.co.uk

www.disneylandparis.com

guest is unable to queue. Thorpe Park now accepts a DLA, DWP or PIP letter stating you are entitled to higher rate mobility allowance, or a blue badge with an additional form of photographic identification in order to apply for a Ride Access Pass at Guest Services.

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 12 months) 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**.



Airport information

Manchester Airport is offering 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. There are also Accessibility Journey videos on the Manchester Airport website. These videos allow individuals to familiarise themselves with the airport before a visit. Website: www.manchesterairport.co.uk

London Gatwick Airport has created an autism friendly visual guide to travelling through the airport which may be a useful visual aid. There is also a guide with tips from the ADHD foundation, providing advice for travelling with children and vulnerable passengers. The booklets can be found on London Gatwick Airport's website: www.gatwickairport.com

London Stansted Airport has now created an autism awareness booklet and video. They show the process of going through the airport explaining what to expect in each area. The booklet and video are available on Stansted Airport's Website: www.stanstedairport.com

Unfortunately, not all UK airports have produced their own guides, but the other guides may be worth looking at in the meantime. 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. Many airports may also provide assistance to make travelling through the airport easier, from fast tracking queues to finding a quiet area. Many airports such as Southend, provide a wristband or lanyard to indicate to staff that you may require additional assistance whilst travelling through the airport. In December 2016 The Civil Aviation Authority published new guidelines setting out how UK airports should support people with disabilities, contact your airport to discuss your requirements and to see how they can support you. Civil Aviation Authority website: <http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/modalapplication.aspx?appid=11&mode=detail&id=7396>





Travelchair from meru

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. www.meru.org.uk



Try b4 U fly

The Queen Elizabeth's Foundation, in association with MERU, has introduced 'try b4u fly'. It is 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 Centre's 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. For more details visit www.tryb4ufly.co.uk or www.gef.org.uk



Firefly goto seat

The Firefly GoTo 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 whilst away on holiday in order to provide supported seating for your child where it isn't already provided. For more information visit their website: www.fireflyfriends.com



Passport interviews

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 they have checked belongs to the person and that they are the rightful owner of that

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. To find out more visit the website: www.gov.uk



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



SNAP Holiday sessions

During the school holidays SNAP runs a variety of sessions for parents and their children 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 if you are interested in attending future SNAP holiday sessions:

Diddlies sessions are for families with pre-school children with special needs and their siblings.

Stay 'n' Play sessions are group play for families with children of primary school age with special needs and their siblings.

SNAP+ is for families with young people aged 12 to 25 years with special needs and their siblings.

Sensorise is for families with children and young people with more profound and complex special needs and their siblings.

Mini Sensorise is for families with pre-school children with more profound and complex special needs and their siblings.

Sibs4Fun is four days each summer for a group of primary aged siblings whose brothers and sisters regularly attend SNAP sessions during term time.



A-Z summer activities

The **SNAP Summer Survival Guide** gives details of activities and events taking place in Essex this summer holiday for families who have children with special needs and disabilities.

We suggest you contact the organisations directly for up to date information and use the SNAP Directory for other contacts. Please note, the SNAP Directory is updated regularly on our website: **www.snapcharity.org**

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. Visit www.accuro.org.uk for information or telephone **01279 870297** or email: enquiries@accuro.org.uk

ADD+UP 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. For more information telephone **01708 454040** or visit www.addup.co.uk

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. For more information telephone **01708 852006** or email: aladdinscave@beaconhill.thurrock.sch.uk or view equipment online at www.beaconhill.thurrock.sch.uk

Aquaccess is a swimming club for disabled children and adults which takes place every Sunday from 3.00pm to 4.40pm 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. For more information contact Alan on **01277 354161** or email: enquiries@brentwoodleisure.co.uk

The Ark Centre is a therapy centre designed to serve families in Chelmsford and Essex areas with children aged 2-8 who have an autism spectrum disorder and/or social communication disorders. The team work together through a multidisciplinary approach to develop a specialised and highly tailored programme for each individual. For more information contact Danielle Monk on **01245 467355** or email: admin@thearkcentre.org or visit www.thearkcentre.org

Autism and Nature have 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 www.autismandnature.org.uk or to request a copy of the illustrated story contact Short Breaks on 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





A-Z summer activities

ability to move around in the cinema. Film titles will be announced soon on the Dimensions website at www.dimensions-uk.org where you can also book tickets. For more information about autism friendly films telephone **0300 303 9062** or email: autismfilms@dimensions-uk.org

The 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. For more information visit www.thebigxperience.co.uk or telephone **01268 901516** or email: info@thebigxperience.co.uk

BOSP (Brighter Opportunities through Supported Play) runs 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. Sessions 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. The deadline for booking sessions has now passed, so it may be worth

bearing in mind for next year. For more information contact BOSP on **01277 624300** or email: enquiries@bosp.co.uk or visit www.bosp.co.uk

Braintree Mencap offers a Play and Activity respite scheme, providing respite for parents and a stimulating and enjoyable experience for young people with special needs. There are a number of group sessions available, for children and young people aged between 5 and 19 years. For more information telephone **01376 326302** or email: playscheme@braintreemencap.org.uk

Breakaway Active offers 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. Breakaway 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. For more information telephone **01245 260330**, email: info@buryactive.co.uk or visit www.breakawayactive.co.uk

Brentwood Leisure Trust hosts a variety of inclusive sports activities throughout the year including during the summer holidays. For more information or to book telephone **01277 215151** or email: enquiries@brentwoodleisure.co.uk

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. For more information visit www.bouncevillage.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. For further information telephone **01279 424444** or email: hello@canalability.org.uk or visit www.canalboat.org.uk



A-Z summer activities

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. For more information or to book visit www.centrealgarve.org

Changing Places campaigns 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 visit www.changing-places.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. For more information telephone **01702 524193** or email: office@tscs.southend.sch.uk

UK Cinema Association (UKCA) The Cinema Exhibitors' Association 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. Contact **0344 967 0101** or visit www.ceacard.co.uk to download a form or apply online.

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. For more information, call **01245 268303** or email: info@cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk or visit www.cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk

Columbus Discovery Club provides 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. Visit www.columbusschoolandcollege.org and search for the Discovery Club for more information or contact on **01245 291492** or email: slambert@columbusschoolandcollege.org

Carers Trust / Crossroads Care offers individual day time support for children and young people with disabilities and their families in Essex. Crossroads offers one to one regular visits with a support worker, who will stay at the home and play with the child, learning games or cookery etc. Alternatively, the support worker can take the child to a park, activity centre or for a shopping trip. For further information visit www.carers.org

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. Visit www.dancinggiraffe.com for information on events.

Diddi Dance 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 and search for your local area. <https://www.diddidance.com/>

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. For details visit www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk





A-Z summer activities

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

Website 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. For more information telephone **020 8550 2636**, email:

info@elhap.org.uk or visit www.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. For more information on dates and times visit <https://www.elitegamer.co.uk/>

Essex County Council has information on days out and activities across the county, including attractions and disabled access. Telephone **03330 130177** or visit www.visitessex.com

Essex Country Parks offer a great range of events and opportunities to get out and explore. There is also the opportunity to purchase season parking ticket for £65 for the year. For information telephone **0345 603 7624**, visit www.visitparks.co.uk or contact the park directly:

Belhus, Aveley	01708 865628
Cudmore Grove, East Mersea	01206 383868
Cressing 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 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 www.essex-fire.gov.uk or telephone **01376 576000**.



Essex Libraries will be running activities and events throughout the summer, including the Summer Reading Challenge called 'Mischief Makers' which returns from 14th July to 1st 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. For more information visit Essex Outdoors at www.essexoutdoors.org

Essex Wildlife Trust offers 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. To find out more visit 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 www.euansguide.com

Families InFocus offers a range of services during the summer holidays. Contact Families InFocus on **01245 353575** or visit their website www.familiesinfocusessex.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 www.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 details of which will be released nearer the time with dates and further



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activities on the 'activities' section of the website at www.grapevinessex.org.uk
Alternatively telephone **01277 625530** or email: Jackie@grapevinessex.org.uk
for more information.

Havering Youth Clubs are running holiday activities aimed at young people aged between 5 and 18 years including arts and craft and sports. For more information visit 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. Visit www.hft.org.uk

Hylands Castle Sensory and Adventure Wall is a wheelchair accessible adventure/sensory wall which has been developed by young people and families. This complements the existing adventure castle play area in Hylands Park Chelmsford, with specialist play equipment designed to be inclusive for all abilities. Additional play battlements all-inclusive ladders, double width, climbing ramp, suspended bridge, scramble net, bat sculptures, musical wall and a spiral disk. The park is open everyday from 7.30am to 10.00pm in the months of June and July and closes at 9.00pm in August and 8.00pm in September, visit <http://hylandsestate.co.uk/explore/adventure-playground/> for visitor information.

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. 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 challenging things. 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** or visit www.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. For more information visit www.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. Telephone **01277 355565** or visit www.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. For more information visit www.justridesouthend.com

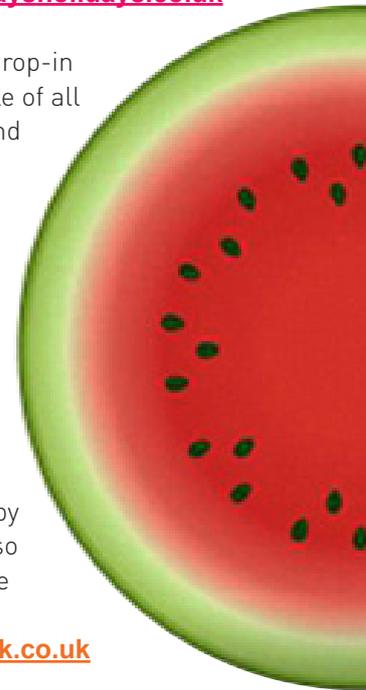
Kids Week is running throughout August. A child aged 16 years or under can experience the magic of London theatre from a selection of shows for free, plus two additional children can go at half price if they are accompanied by a full paying adult. Children can also take part in a fantastic range of free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

Lambourne End Centre is running an adventure academy of summer activity days crammed with fun for 8 to 13 year olds to get outdoors and try a new activity. The activity days are run between 23rd July to 17th August. For more information telephone **020 8500 3047**, email: info@lambourne-end.org.uk or visit www.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





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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). For full details visit www.merlinsmagicwand.org or telephone **01202 440060**.

Mersea Island Festival offers an inclusive camping break that is suitable for young people with or without a physical or learning disability. The cost for a week camp from 19th to 24th August is £262 for adults and £235 for under 18s. The cost for a weekend camp from 24th to 27th August is £158 for adults and £141 for under 18s. 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. For further information or to book a place telephone **01206 383226** or visit www.merseafestival.org.uk

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. For more information visit www.mobilityequiphiredirect.com

Monkey Madness is a party venue and soft play centre for children of all ages. 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. For more information telephone **01268 288211**.

Mushroom Theatre Company run their Performing Arts Life Skills (PALS) workshops for children and young people with a disability throughout the summer holidays. Contact on **01268 906470** or email: info@mushroomtheatre.co.uk or visit www.mushroomtheatre.co.uk for more information or to book your place.

Orchyd Holidays offers a 10 day holiday from the 2nd to 11th 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. For more information visit www.orchyd.org.uk or telephone **07502 382469** alternatively email: 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 telephone **01376 528999** or email: info@parc-essex.co.uk or visit www.parc-essex.co.uk

Rainbow Rural Farm Club 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 throughout the summer holidays. For more information email farm@rainbowrural.co.uk or telephone **01371 874803**.



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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. For more information telephone **020 8500 9359**, email: rcc@vision-rcl.org.uk or alternatively visit www.redbridgecyclingcentre.co.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 www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk Listed below are some of the relaxed performances coming soon.

'Gangsta Granny' at the Theatre Royal and Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham on Thursday 12th July. For more information or to buy tickets visit <https://trch.co.uk/your-visit/access/relaxed-performances/>

'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' at the Lyric Theatre, Shaftsbury Avenue, London on 13th July and 8th August. For more information or to book tickets email access@nimaxtheatres.com or telephone **0330 333 4815**.

'Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, Parts 1 and 2' at the Palace Theatre, Shaftsbury Avenue, London on Thursday 23rd August and Friday 24th August. For more information or to book tickets telephone **0330 333 4410**.

'Disney's Aladdin' at the Prince Edward Theatre, London on 28th August. For more information or to book tickets email access@delfontmackintosh.co.uk or telephone **0344 482 5137**.

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. For more information telephone **0303 303 0145** or visit www.revitalise.org.uk

Role Models SEN summer camps are now under a new company called Movers and Makers. For more information email info@moversandshakers.org.uk

Romford Autistic Group Support (RAGS) hosts a multi-sports activity evening every Friday throughout the year for children and young people with autism. There are two sessions: 5.15pm to 6pm for children aged 6 to 11 years and 6pm to 6.45pm for 12 years and over, both in Harold Hill. The cost is £3 per session payable monthly. For more information about the activities, telephone **01708 564871** email:

info@rags-havering.org.uk

or visit

www.rags-havering.org.uk

Royal Association for Deaf People has events throughout the year for families to enjoy. Visit

www.royaldeaf.org.uk for the

events timetable. For more information telephone **0330 688 2525** or email:

info@royaldeaf.org.uk

The Science Museum is hosting a SENSory Astronight on Saturday 4th August. This exclusive museum sleepover is for campers aged 7-14 with additional needs. All family members are welcome to attend too. The cost is £25 per camper. For more information or to book tickets telephone **020 7942 4749** or email astronight@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 9am to 5pm during all school holidays in Basildon where there is a soft play area, a large garden and lots of activities. Contact Michelle on **01268 521691** or email: michellewesternhofer@googlemail.com or visit www.sharerespite.co.uk





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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. For more information visit www.skybadger.co.uk

SNAC (Special Needs Activity Club) provides opportunities for young people through the provision of programmes of educational, recreational and social activities. The programmes are run mainly in the school holidays and include siblings. Some clubs run throughout the year. The youth clubs are held during term time at Treetops School on Thursday evenings for ages 8 to 13 from 5.30pm to 7.00pm and ages 14 to 25 from 7.15pm to 9.00pm. For more information telephone **01375 389867** or email: SNAC2007@googlemail.com

Soccability offers football coaching for players with special needs and disabilities on Saturday mornings at various locations across Essex. Sessions run throughout the summer. For more information contact Christian on **07901 542023** for Brentwood, John Smith on **07814 227304** for Basildon, Tom Parden on **07713 194031** for Maldon and Mick Watson on **07783 372110** for Southend.

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. For more information telephone **01702 341250** or you can download a booking form flyer under the flyers section on the website at www.southendmencap.org.uk

Short Breaks for disabled children and young people allow families to take a break from their caring responsibilities. To find out more information about how to access this support visit www.essex.gov.uk or email: shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk

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 www.spectrumbreaks.co.uk

Starburst Beach Party will be held on 19th July, from 7.00pm to 10.00pm, for young people aged 16 plus (young people under 18 years must be accompanied by an adult). The theme for this year is beach party. Tickets cost £7. The party will be held at Ashwells Country Club in Brentwood. For more information or to book tickets telephone Frontline on **01277 218902**

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. 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. <https://www.stayandsplash.rocks/sen-session-s>

Swim With Me is a small, family run swim school that offers swimming sessions for children with autism. Class sizes are kept small to help the development of confidence. For details of class times and availability telephone **03455 578803** or visit www.swim-with-me.co.uk





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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. To find out more visit <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sunshine-centre-for-disabled-children/summer-play-scheme> or telephone **01375 652200** or email: sunshine@thurrock.gov.uk

Thames Chase Forest Centre offers a bike hire scheme during weekends and school holidays from 10:30am to 4pm between the 1st April to 29th October. They have available adults and child bikes, buggies, a tagalong and adapted cycles for children with special needs in association with Positive Parents Outreach Project. There is a charge to hire the bikes of £3 for 30 minutes or £5 for 1 hour per bike. To find out more visit www.thameschase.org.uk

The Thomas Centre provide specialised holidays for families affected by autism, Asperger's 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. For more information visit www.thethomascentre.co.uk or contact on **01507 363463**.

Tourism For All provides advice and information on accessible tourism in the UK and abroad. For further information telephone 0845 124 9971 or email: info@tourismforall.org.uk or visit www.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. For more information telephone **01277 811012**, email: info@trailnet.org.uk or visit www.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. For more information telephone **01255 831302**, email: reception@willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk or visit

Zinc Creative Short Breaks offers unique short breaks for children and adults 14 years and over, who require a short break/respite, to take part in creative activities in a variety of art forms. They are running a summer programme of creativity, cinema and dine, and wellbeing workshops from the 6th August to 31st August taking place at Zinc Arts Centre in Chipping Ongar. To find out more telephone **01277 365626**, email: info@zincarts.org.uk or visit www.zincarts.org.uk

For additional contacts please visit the SNAP Directory and browse in the Respite & Breaks Away; Leisure Time & Fitness; Local Advice, Support & Information sections. You may also find 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.

