



Issue 1 // Autumn 2017

matters

The Magazine for SNAP (Special Needs And Parents)

Welcome

To the first issue of our new look magazine packed with news, information, fundraising challenges and more!

SNAP's full of smiles!

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are a lifeline for families**

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welcome

Welcome to our first issue

Welcome to the first issue of SNAP Matters!
Our new magazine is for everyone who has an interest in SNAP.

As a charity, we are committed to communicating with you and keeping you up-to-date with our progress, together with outlining our journey into the future. This magazine is designed to do just that; celebrate our successes and share our vision for the years ahead.

2017 has already been another packed year for us with many stand-out highlights including celebrating The SNAP Centre's 10th Birthday in May and welcoming Professor Tony Attwood to Essex to share his insight into Autism Spectrum Disorders.

We have another busy time ahead and hope that many of you will be joining us for the wide range of events for families and supporters. We particularly look forward to welcoming friends (old and new) to our annual Coffee, Cake and Catch-up on 8th November where you can meet up with the team and other SNAP supporters.

Finally, do make sure you join us on social media to keep up with all the latest news. Look out, also, for the next issue of the magazine in early 2018.

Best wishes,

Karen and Christina

SNAP Managers

If you have any stories you would like to see featured in the magazine, or views on this issue please contact the SNAP Matters editor, Michelle Andrews - m.andrews@snapcharity.org



SNAP happy to help

Special Needs and Parents - is an Essex charity that helps families with children and young people who have any special need or disability



From its Brentwood base, SNAP offers a helping hand to thousands of families who need support in a variety of ways.

No formal diagnosis or professional referral is necessary to access SNAP services, available to families of children and young people aged 0 to 25. Facilities at the centre include a training room, a multi-purpose activity hall, multi-sensory room and specialist IT suite.

"When parents first come to The SNAP Centre they often feel isolated and don't know where to turn, but with SNAP's support they grow in strength and knowledge and become better equipped to give the best possible help to their children," says Karen Boath, Manager (Families).

"Parents and their children use our facilities and services in a number of ways, and they all value the support they receive from SNAP."



The SNAP Centre offers a wide range of services

Parent Advice and Support

- Helpline (email and telephone)
- Face to Face Parent Support
- Specialist Talks and Training Courses
- Library of Specialist Books and DVDs
- Website with SNAP Directory of useful contacts
- Online Information Network
- Counselling
- Education Advice Sessions

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
- Multi-Sensory Room
- Specialist IT Suite



SNAP contact information:

Call - 01277 211300

Email - info@snapcharity.org

Website - www.snapcharity.org

highlights

IT'S BEEN AN HISTORIC SIX MONTHS FOR SNAP... FROM PROFESSOR TONY ATTWOOD'S INSPIRATIONAL TALK TO THE SNAP CENTRE CELEBRATING A DECADE

A world renowned expert on Autism flew into Essex for the first time in May to deliver two presentations organised by SNAP. Professor Tony Attwood, a clinical psychologist born in England and now living in Australia, was invited to talk to families and practitioners and his appearance proved very popular. One attendee said: "Here is someone who is changing the world for people with Asperger's. His extensive insights are extremely relevant to every aspect of home and school life for my children." A week later The SNAP Centre celebrated its 10th Birthday with an Open Day. More than 300 visitors chatted to the team, were given guided tours and watched the new SNAP awareness film made by volunteers. SNAP children who turned 10 in the same month were invited to help SNAP eat the yummy cakes donated by Torte Cake Art.



The Barleylands Fun Walk

was greatly enjoyed by the SNAP families who took part in the family friendly duo of small walks in May. Organised by Jon Baron MP and his committee since 2002, entrants get their fundraising matched by the Trust. With more than 2,000 walkers taking part, including some SNAP families, a medal and BBQ awaited everyone on their return.



Moving to Secondary School course

Tutor Linda shared her experience and knowledge to help parents find ways to ease their child's transition to secondary school over this three week course. **For future training visit:** www.snapcharity.org/index.php/services/training-and-events

The Blackmore Village Fayre held in the village over the last May Bank Holiday attracted people from far and wide and also helped to raise a considerable amount of money for SNAP, the main beneficiary of the event. The Big Top was the theme with a carnival parade, an entertainment stage, bike ride, chariot race, stalls and traditional games to name just some of the activities. The committee also organised activities leading up to the fayre that included an afternoon tea, children's sports day, barn dance and a music concert and laser show. A huge thank you to everyone involved!



Enjoying the bear-nefits!

The SNAP Centre was taken over by a cuddle of bears in July at SNAP's annual Teddy Bears' Picnic. More than 30 pre-school children were treated to a range of activities including face painting, arts and crafts, and songs.



SNAP's Summer Disco in July saw SNAP's young people aged 12+ head straight for the dance floor to bust some fantastic moves with the girls v boys dance-offs. The SNAP Centre was given a beach themed makeover and the ice-lollies went down a treat on the warm evening.

Our holiday sessions bring miles of smiles!

The SNAP Centre is busy with families coming and going every day, but it becomes a hive of activity, laughter and fun during the school holiday sessions, most notably during the summer break. SNAP creates a packed programme of activities and provides a wealth of information to help families with children and young people with special needs get through a potentially difficult period.

SNAP parent Angela Andrade and her family have accessed a wide range of summer services at SNAP and found them all invaluable.

"SNAP builds such a safe and nurturing environment that my youngest son instantly feels comfortable and runs straight off to get involved. SNAP is the only place where this happens," says Angela.

"Every activity is so well thought through by the SNAP team, and the staff and

volunteers encourage him to interact with other children in such a caring manner that he does so with ease. This is a social skill that he normally really struggles with, and during the school day, one that he finds exhausting. At SNAP, he is free of the expectations of school and able to focus on having fun, and it's fabulous to watch him happy and relaxed. He loves being in the outside play area, but he also likes a game on the snooker table!"

And while Angela's son is playing in the main activity hall she is able to talk to other parents and carers sharing experiences.

"The whole time that he is playing I am being supported too. I get a chance to talk to others in similar situations about my concerns and there are always members of the SNAP Family Team on hand to talk to."

Angela is extremely appreciative of SNAP's unique ethos of supporting the whole family and two of her son's older brothers have both attended SIBS4FUN – a week of activities entirely dedicated to the siblings of children with a special need or



disability (see story on page 5).

"My family wouldn't miss SIBS4FUN for all the world. With much of our activity in the holidays undertaken with my son as a priority it is amazing to be able to give his brothers a week dedicated entirely to them. They really look up to the young volunteers and are inspired by them and that includes their older sister who has been helping for the last six years."

Fellow parent Suzannah Burrell and her family also cherish their visits to SNAP.

"The SNAP sessions in the holidays make life so much easier because you can have a stress free few hours with people that understand and know your children, plus time to relax and recharge your batteries. My children look forward to coming to a safe and welcoming place they love."

And for Pam Kinsella, Family Support Adviser at SNAP the holiday sessions are an opportunity to catch up with past families too.

"The team and volunteers are so happy to see everyone. It's brilliant to see parents, children and young people who can't attend sessions during term time, and see how much they have grown and developed, and to see how happy they are to be back at the centre."

Visit www.snapcharity.org for details of our next holiday sessions.

Just some of SNAP's happy summer visitors!





Superstar week for SNAP siblings

The SIBS4FUN programme is an annual fun-packed week which aims to give those siblings, who might miss out on opportunities because of their family circumstances, a week to remember.

"Siblings of children with a special need or disability aren't always guaranteed the same opportunities as other children of their age and part of our mission at SNAP is to ensure they are cared for too," says Karen Boath, Manager (Families).

"We include siblings in our regular activities but SIBS4FUN is a special week which gives them the chance to meet people of their own age in similar situations and enjoy new experiences.

"It's a complete joy for the team at SNAP to watch their months of planning pay dividends as they see the children grow in confidence throughout the dedicated week. It's also great to offer guidance and support to the team of young people who themselves have attended SIBS4FUN in previous years, and have returned for the coveted positions of team leaders and helpers."

"SIBS4FUN was one of the first play schemes to be created by SNAP more than 23 years ago and each year it exceeds all our expectations. The children excitedly tell us how wonderful it is to make new friends, and getting to do new things they haven't done before," she says.

SIBS4FUN in stats!

45 children led by a team of six support workers and six young volunteers, all guided by the SNAP team enjoyed a cumulative 1,080 hours of awesome entertainment.

- Throwing 250 sponges at the stocks
- Sewing 40 metres of bunting
- Making 4kgs of slime
- Using 1kg of glitter
- Dancing to a 4 piece Ceilidh band
- Sipping 60 mocktails
- Bounding over 2 giant inflatables
- Solving three crimes
- And being served dinner from 1 Nando's chicken mascot.



Holiday sessions sponsorship

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

SNAP would like to thank The Moody Charitable Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust and through the Essex Community Foundation - The Roger and Jean Heath Charitable Fund and the The Diana Tinson Fund for their support in funding SIBS4FUN.

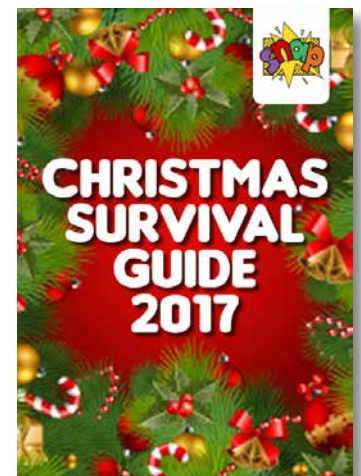
If you would like to sponsor one of SNAP's future holiday sessions please contact SNAP's Fundraising Team on 01277 245345 or email fundraising@snapcharity.org

Survival Guides

SNAP creates two Survival Guides for parents and carers each year - one for the Summer Holidays, the other for the Christmas Holidays.

Each guide contains useful tips and ideas for surviving the holiday period and brings together information sheets from other organisations. They include tips and ideas for making the holiday period less stressful for all the family, along with useful information about activity programmes provided by local organisations.

To download SNAP's latest survival guides please visit: <http://www.snapcharity.org/index.php/information/survival-guides>



family services

18th October EHCP Training Workshop 11.15am to 1.00pm Free of charge

This is an informal session to offer guidance for your child's Education, Health, and Care Plan. You will learn about the process and be given resources and tips alongside other parents.

23rd October Photography Day 10.00am to 6.00pm Free to attend

Professional photographers Tempest are on hand to capture those special images of the family in SNAP's relaxed and comfortable environment. Could be a great Christmas present!

30th October Online Safety Training 7.00pm to 9.00pm £5 per SNAP parent

Talk from two leading police experts who specialise in online safety. They will bring parents completely up-to-date on the apps their children are using, and the dangers they face.

29th November ASD in Girls Coffee Morning 9.30am to 12.30pm £FREE

This is an opportunity to speak to and learn from other parents of girls in a similar age group. SNAP is delighted that Speech and Language Therapist, Rachel Joseph, will be joining the session.

Coffee and Catch-up Cake



Wednesday 8th November

Drop in to The SNAP Centre
between 11.00am and 2.00pm

SNAP invites families, friends and supporters to drop in for coffee, cake and a catch-up with the SNAP team. Plus start your Christmas shopping with stalls selling a variety of gifts.

£3.00 pp
includes
coffee and
cake

SNAP's specialist library

SNAP has an extensive library of more than 2,000 books and hundreds of easy reference information sheets and specialist DVDs.

Library resources include:

Titles by diagnosis, including ADD/ADHD, autistic spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy/ physical difficulties, sensory impairment, Down syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia and sensory processing disorder.

General information, including parenting, communication, therapies & approaches, benefits, education and puberty. Practical information, including behaviour management, toileting, sleep, eating, sibling support, sign language and emotions & anxiety.

The library can be accessed during sessions, or by appointment if you need help from an adviser. Resources can be reserved for collection during open hours, or a postal service is available if necessary. Our range of information sheets and useful links can also be emailed.

Items can be borrowed on a four week loan period. There is a secure post box outside our building for returning books when our centre is closed.



Who's talking about SNAP on social media?

Race4Business We're very proud to support @snapcharity helping #Essex #families who have a #child with a #disability of #special needs #race4business

IDon'tGiveADamn Thank you for all being lifesavers over the past 4 years for our family. Your support is phenomenal and inspirational.

F9 Consulting Congratulations @snapcharity on your ten year anniversary. We hope to continue supporting you over the next ten!

Alex Burghart Really brilliant afternoon at @snapcharity - congratulations on all you've done for local families with children who have special needs

George Petty Finally got round to seeing @snapcharity to give them their chq for £1,500. What a fantastic place - so deserving! #racenight #charity

Pinney Talfourd Solicitors Our #CharityReadathon in support of @snapcharity is in full swing today!

Hollington Associates Proud to be sponsoring the 1st Hole for the amazing @snapcharity. Just £50 - it will be 'putt' to good use to help #Essex families.

MasonicCharitableFdn The #MCFawards results are in! Congrats to all the 300 charities, we're incredible proud to support you all!

Thank you to everyone who voted for SNAP in the #MCFawards and to the Masonic Charitable Foundation... SNAP has been awarded an incredible £15,000 for our helpline.

“What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?”

A quote by Victorian writer George Eliot and a blueprint for life for supporter Mike Conyers

Mike Conyers has been fundraising for SNAP since 2001 and has now chalked up the amazing total of £32,000 - an incredible feat for a man without sight. Here, he tells us what inspires him...

A physiotherapist by day - he works at Crushes Manor Clinic in Brentwood - Mike has a natural interest in helping other people and has been inspired to raise money for SNAP because he firmly supports the charity's ethos of looking after the family as a whole and not just the individual with a special need or disability.

Mike explains: “When I was 12 a sporting accident resulted in me losing my sight, and after a long period in hospital I had to leave my parents to attend a facility that looked after people with disabilities as there wasn't one locally. Obviously, it was difficult to be away from my family, and my parents were at a loss with no support. That's why I firmly believe in SNAP's 'whole' approach and wish there had been such a centre for my family. I am continually impressed with SNAP's commitment to its families.”

Over the years Mike has had to overcome many obstacles but his determination and passion for getting the most out of life has spurred him on. And it is this spirit that now regularly sees him dreaming up arduous adventures to raise money for charity, escapades that often involve clients who have become friends!

“Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing at all!” quotes Mike from one of his favourite writers, Helen Keller.

Over the years Mike has completed an impressive series of challenges. He has run the **Brentwood Half Marathon** seven times, the **Brentwood Fun Run** twice, **The Great North Run** twice and the **VirginMoney London Marathon**. He has been on an “invigorating” **skydive** where he was most impressed with the photographer who had to climb out of the plane first and hang on to take his picture, and then land first to take more photos.

In 2014, Mike, together with his son Campbell, three guides, a sherpa, a cook and two porters, successfully scaled the **19,340ft Kilimanjaro**



mountain in Tanzania, reaching the summit after six days just in time for sunrise.

“On the final day we had to hike six hours to base camp, rest in the afternoon and then walk through the night, on the now stable due to freezing surface, to reach the summit, where at 7.10am as the sun was coming up we had a lukewarm sweet tea!” recalls Mike.

He has conquered the **National Three Peaks Challenge** in 30 hours and the **Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge** in 14 hours too.

“I spent a lot of my youth in the Yorkshire Dales. You had to walk four miles and back just to get a haircut so I'm used to walking a lot,” he says.

Because of his loss of sight, Mike has to be accompanied on his adventures; it's often his son but also clients from Crushes and last year he convinced one of them to join him on a tandem and cycle from **Brentwood to Brighton**.

“I bought a tandem and we set about training. My keen cyclist friend referred to it as driving an oil tanker, and we would get very saddle sore,” recalls Mike.

“We left Brentwood early in the morning, stopped at Tower Bridge for a photo, once more for a bacon sandwich and then battled up and over the South Downs into Brighton for a final photo in front of Brighton Pavillion and then onto the beach to feel the shingle



and sea under my feet.”

As well as shingle, Mike has also walked over hot coals in the **Brentwood Fire Walk**.

Mike even manages to find more time to raise funds for SNAP by giving talks to local clubs and organisations about his life and experiences and in return he has requested that a donation be made to SNAP. Mike's talks are particularly entertaining thanks to his quick wit and contagious humour.

And Mike has no intentions of taking things easy: “I'm thinking about a six day trek in the Alps taking in Mont Blanc and a 90 miles hike along Hadrians Wall. And I like the idea of the walk in aid of the homeless that takes you from St.Martins in the Field Church to Canterbury over four days, sleeping in churches at night.”

Everyone at SNAP is in awe of Mike's achievements, and is enormously grateful to him for all his fundraising endeavours. Also thank you to Crushes Manor Clinic, Practice Manager, Suzanne Gunn, its clients and every supported Mike's fundraising. Suzanne also belongs to the Shenfield Operatic Society whose next show - Betty Blue Eyes - will also be fundraising for SNAP. The show is on at the Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch from 7th - 10th February 2018. To book tickets call the Society Box Office on 07734 817418.

If Mike has inspired you to take on a challenge for SNAP then please contact the Fundraising Team on 01277 245345 or email fundraising@snapcharity.org. Alternatively for ideas please visit: www.snapcharity.org/index.php/fundraising

Helping to keep SNAP running

Earlier this year Birketts LLP chose SNAP as their charity to benefit from their annual Birketts Race4Business, a 3.5 mile race through Chelmsford's parks for the business community.

Hundreds of runners took part on the day and the fundraising total will be announced later in the autumn. SNAP would like to say a huge thank you to Birketts LLP for choosing SNAP and to all the businesses and supporters involved.

"The Birketts Race4Business is a fantastic example of the local community working together to raise funds for charity," said Christina Stubbs, SNAP Manager (Business).



"We had a team of almost 30 runners supporting SNAP, raising an additional £386.60 in sponsorship. The team spirit on the day was brilliant, with many Essex businesses joining forces to raise money for such an outstanding charity. We love supporting local charities and were delighted to fundraise once again for SNAP."

Sophie Lyons, Communications Manager, Ground Control, just one of the many amazing businesses supporting SNAP on the day.

Volunteer Alida

Volunteer Alida Horne recalls the day and tells SNAP why she is proud to be able to give back to the charity that has supported her own family.

How was the experience on the day?

The atmosphere was amazing. I was a marshal at the race, along with my son and partner cheering on the runners. I was also happy to talk to members of the public who asked what was happening and tell them about SNAP's work. I always appreciate the genuine gratitude that members of SNAP show to their volunteers at every event - it's an indication of how fabulous they are too.

Were you involved before the event day?

In my role as Marketing Supervisor at Bennetts Funerals, I helped to publicise the event and also organised the Britannia Pipe Band to play during the race.

Would you recommend volunteering?

There's a real 'feel good factor' to volunteering for an organisation you believe in. If what I do in any small way helps to support the work that SNAP do then I am going some way to thanking them for the myriad ways in which they have supported my son and I. SNAP provides the kind of support that just cannot be accessed elsewhere which makes it a vital resource and being a small part in keeping that resource going gives me a huge feeling of satisfaction."

"I am always very proud to be associated with SNAP in any way I can."



Events not to be missed

Lighting up Brentwood Saturday 25th November, Brentwood High Street 1pm -5.30pm

An illuminating start to the festive season! This popular event boasts a wide variety of entertainment that culminates with the Christmas lights switch on at dusk. Stop and say hi at the SNAP stall!

Shenfield Christmas Fayre Sunday 3rd December, in and around Hutton Road 12pm-5.30pm

The local community turns Shenfield into a festive feast of stalls, entertainment, food and drink and even a ice skating rink! Visit the SNAP stalls to get warm with our mulled wine and mince pies.

Nuclear Fallout Saturday 11th November 9.50am

The 'Winter Beast' that you need to train for! A 7k and 12k race to finish the Nuclear Races season. Expect 70+ obstacles on the 12k and 50+ on the 7k. The minimum age for the 7k is 13 years, and for the 12k it's 17 years.



Santa Fun Run, London Sunday 3rd December at 9.00am

Join in the festive atmosphere, by running, jogging or walking around Victoria Park, London in a Santa costume. Run the 5K or 10K route around one of London's beautiful royal parks. Every entrant is given a Santa suit.

SNAP's Christmas Jumper Day Friday 8th December

Whether with your family, friends, schools pupils, work colleagues or community group chums this is a great chance to dress silly, have a laugh, donate to SNAP and raise money. Let's all make Christmas 2017 a woolly wonderland.

SNAP Quiz Night £10 per person Friday 26th January 2018, Nightingale Centre, Brentwood

How about exercising the little grey cells at the SNAP Quiz? Bring your family, friends and work colleagues along to answer questions on a variety of topics, with fun games and top team prizes.

For more information
on these events, or other
ways to get involved contact
SNAP's Fundraising Team

01277 245345
fundraising@snapcharity.org