



Issue 3 // Summer 2018

matters

Sharing news of SNAP's (Special Needs And Parents) important work

INSIDE:
Find out how
SNAP stays
strong for
Essex families

A sense of adventure

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

3 WONDERWALL
New tactile mural at The
SNAP Centre is proving
a big hit with families

4 TOP TRAINING
Our varied programme
aims to support parents,
carers and professionals

7 FIRST CLASS!
School pupils can
help ensure a bright
future for SNAP

A spring in our step!

Welcome to the third issue of SNAP Matters. We're delighted that the first two editions of our magazine have been so well received and hope you enjoy our latest issue.

It's been a long winter - the snow in February and March did affect some of our centre activity and fundraising events - but the SNAP team has a spring in its step and is looking forward to delivering a packed programme of services and events planned for the next few months.

We continue to add new elements to SNAP; we're delighted, for example, to see the new sensory wall come to life at The SNAP Centre and pleased it has already become a firm favourite with our visitors - read all about it on page 3.

A core element of SNAP's work that we are proud of is our varied training programme: on our centre pages we talk to a local education professional on how SNAP's training benefits her work.

Meanwhile, we're looking forward to our first SNAP 5K run with Nuclear Races on 23rd June and our social events calendar has a rescheduled Curry Night in May and Afternoon Tea in June.

Finally, we're working on a new SNAP website which will be packed full of information and resources, as well as being easy to use. This is due to go live this summer so keep an eye out for updates.

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



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Making a difference

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 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

If this is your first introduction to SNAP then please join our mailing list at <http://handsupforsnap.pagedemo.co/>

highlights

Making progress with Dyslexia Talk in March

SNAP was thrilled to welcome Emmie Trower - who runs Dyslexia and Dyscalculia Support in Brentwood - to The SNAP Centre to deliver a training session on supporting children and young people with dyslexia.

Attendees heard Emmie discuss processing difficulties, learning styles and strategies to help with concentration, memory and organisation. She introduced techniques to help with spelling, handwriting and to improve study skills.

There were opportunities for parents to ask questions and find out more about the resources available to support their children. Emmie also talked about support for dyslexic pupils in the school environment.



It was all glow at SNAP's Spring Disco

Our young people danced and sang the night away at SNAP's Glow Disco in March, led by our resident D.J. Skittleman.

A delicious buffet in relaxing surroundings upstairs at The SNAP Centre meant that parents and carers enjoyed a catch-up with each other at the same time. The SNAP team received some fantastic comments that reinforce the positivity of such a social occasion for our young people:

"My daughter had such a lovely time - the happiest I've seen her in over a year. That is due to the wonderful people at SNAP."

A huge thank you to Shawbrook Bank for sponsoring this Glow Disco and for their on-going support.

Having a ball with our new Wonderwall!

A new tactile mural at The SNAP Centre is already proving a big hit with our families.

The mural, which frames the entrance to the existing Sensory Room, was installed in February by the team from Mike Ayres Design. It allows users to engage, touch and explore through the use of contrasting textures, light and colour, as Nick Osborne from the installation team explained.

"It was important the mural would be appropriate for everyone and not just for



the younger visitors who use the building. We decided that a landscape with a large tree would appeal to all," he said.

"We also added a giant reflective rainbow to arc over the sensory room door and included interactive elements to provide focal points. When we create tactile murals we try to include as many different contrasting textures as possible," explained Nick.

"When it came to the mural at SNAP, they had a vision, thought big and we were delighted to bring that vision to reality"

Karen Boath, Manager (Families) at SNAP, said the mural was already proving to be a popular addition to the SNAP environment.

"We are delighted with the finished mural and our families have told us how great it is; we are looking forward to getting the most from our mural in the months and years to come."

One parent, Danielle, said she thought the



mural was magnificent and her seven year-old son Dylan was instantly attracted to it.

"Dylan went straight over the new sensory wall and started to play with the balls in the tube. He enjoyed the lights and colours and posing for photos by the wall," said Danielle.

"The mural lights up the room (literally!) with its wonderful coloured lights and different textures. It will make the all children's time at The SNAP Centre even more enjoyable; it is honestly the best sensory wall we've ever seen."

SNAP's supporters are quiz whizzes

Almost 170 SNAP supporters got quizzical in January raising thousands for our charity.

The 19 teams packed out the hall and the atmosphere was buzzing throughout the evening. A variety of rounds meant everyone had a chance to contribute and kept the competition tight right until the end. Eventually, Ho Ho 7, were crowned masterminds of the night and were delighted to receive a wine hamper. And the team propping up the results table were just as delighted with their packets of smarties!

Attendee Owen Thompson certainly had a good night: "It's the best quiz I've ever been to!"

But the biggest winner of the night was SNAP with an amazing £2,906 raised, which meant everyone went home with the knowledge that they had made a real difference to local families.



A SNAP FIRST: Boys on the autistic spectrum coffee morning

"I found this session fantastic. It was good to hear so many other parents' daily struggles as it makes you realise you really are not alone."

Don't forget on the 25th May, 2018 the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into being. You will continue to receive the usual information about our services after this date, but we will no longer be able to contact you with the latest supporter news, events, inspiring stories and updates on our work without consent. Stay in touch <http://handsupforsnap.pagedemo.co/>

SNAP's training programme

Professionals and parents gaining from SNAP's varied training

SNAP organises a unique and diverse calendar of parent and professional training opportunities and events. They range from large specialist talks, workshops aimed at parents of children with particular difficulties or to help with a specific issue, and parent courses of more than one session, focusing on a particular diagnosis or issue. Here SNAP Matters takes a closer look...

Good planning is key

Becki Boath, SNAP's Information Adviser, explains how SNAP organises the training activities each year.

"At the start of each term our Family Team get together to discuss and share ideas about potential training sessions. We try to focus on topics that are frequently mentioned by families as being areas they want to learn more about, or require some extra support with. Throughout the calendar year, we aim to cover a variety of different topics and are always on the lookout for new ideas."

"We always welcome recommendations from parents, as well as professionals too!"

The training day buzz

"There's always such a great atmosphere in The SNAP Centre on the day of a training event, especially if we are hosting more than one talk throughout the day. The SNAP Team is always excited to hear the speaker share ideas, as it's a chance for us to learn too. One of our primary aims is to provide support to parents, and training events are such a crucial



part of making this happen.

"SNAP Parent Training sessions are a great way to inform and empower parents, providing them with useful tips and ideas that can be tried at home.

"They are also a safe place for parents to share their experiences and ideas, while providing support to one another, knowing they are not alone. Our team of parent advisers are also on hand to answer any questions parents may have following the training event."

A resource for education specialists

Gaynor Wilson is SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) Co-ordinator at St. Martins Senior School in Hutton, Brentwood, and has been an admirer of SNAP since it began almost 25 years ago.

Pictured above: World renowned Clinical Psychologist, Professor Tony Attwood gave two seminars on autism last year for SNAP. Pictured right: SNAP's three week workshop course on Moving to Secondary School.

"Over the years I have been to many of SNAP's training sessions and found each one invaluable to me in my working role as a SEAL Co-ordinator. Throughout each year they cover a diverse range of topics and the content of each session is always pitched exactly right for the audience.

"When the talk has finished the SNAP team are always available and I like to ensure I am able to catch up with the team and discuss the information provided. I am able to return to the school and cascade all this invaluable information to my colleagues."

Gaynor is pleased to see first hand at the talks the positive impact the training is having on families and colleagues, many of which she has engaged with in her own day job.

"SNAP never forgets that the parents are the experts of their own children. But SNAP are experts in their field, and the comprehensive information delivered through their sessions offers a supportive and encouraging role and that is priceless."



Karen, SNAP Manager (Families), with specialist occupational therapist, Corinna Laurie, who gave three talks to families on the sensory impact on behaviour and learning.



Emmie Trower gave a talk to families about supporting children with dyslexia. SNAP's specialist library offers a variety of books and information sheets on all of the training topics.



Girls on the autistic spectrum coffee morning. Below: SNAP's training team, Pam, Kate, Alison, Paula and Karen.

Missed it? You haven't missed out!

If families are unable to attend a training event, we are able to email them a copy of any presentation slides provided by the speaker.

If appropriate, we can also share details of relevant information from our SNAP specialist library, and provide a list of helpful information sheets.

Turn to Page 6 where you can see SNAP's upcoming training opportunities. This information is also updated regularly on our website - www.snapcharity.org



"Every section of this presentation was really useful to help me in my work in a secondary school mentoring vulnerable students."

"Thank you for organising this great workshop - I found it very useful and it was also comforting to be amongst people in similar situations as it can feel quite isolating at times. I could have happily stayed all day."

"So useful. Thank you, every bit of information is power."

"I felt the talk last night for me was life changing. It gave me so much more insight to what my son may be thinking, seeing and feeling. I am so impressed that I am struggling to put my admiration into words."

"Thank you for putting these sessions on, they are rewarding on so many levels."

"I found as a counsellor the autistic perspective of enabling happiness will help me to build on what I already know, and be even more creative in the work I do. Sarah's delivery was very insightful."

"The talk was invaluable to me. I left feeling less like my daughters's difficulties are unique, her behaviour is a little less daunting for me now, and I feel stronger. I thank SNAP for that."



Summer Survival Guide SNAP creates a Summer Survival Guide for parents and carers each year, full of useful tips and ideas for making the summer holidays less stressful for all the family. The guide also brings together a host of useful information about activity programmes provided by local organisations.

Professionals are welcome to share this guide with the families they support through their schools and groups. Please contact info@snapcharity.org if you would like more information, alternatively keep a look out on SNAP's website from the end of June when it will be available to download.

Training opportunities for May-Sept 2018

Moving To Secondary School: £15.00
2nd, 9th & 16th May – 12.15pm to 2.30pm

This three session course will help with the transition and changes associated with the move into secondary school, giving lots of practical and common sense ideas. It is suitable for parents who have children in Years 4 to 6 in mainstream school.

Sarah Hendrickx: Self-Esteem Talk
£10.00 (per parent/YP) £25.00 (per professional)
23rd May - 4pm to 6pm Professional Talk, 7pm to 9pm Parent and Young Person Talk

In these talks for parents and professionals, Sarah will define and discuss the concepts of self-esteem and consider whether these are meaningful to autistic children and young people, and how we can help them to feel 'good enough' by any means possible.

What Next?: £5 12th June – 5pm to 7pm

SNAP will be inviting representatives from a range of organisations that support young people with additional needs with the preparation for adulthood. This will be a great opportunity to speak to them and find out what options are available for your young person.

Grandparents Coffee Morning: £5
20th June – 11.15am to 1.15pm

SNAP welcomes grandparents for an informal opportunity to share experiences and meet others.

Special School Coffee Morning: £5
27th June – 11.15am to 1.15pm

SNAP is inviting families whose children attend special school, to come in for an informal catch-up and a chance to share their experiences.

An Insight into ADHD : £10
12th September – 7pm to 9pm

Steve Challen from ADHD+ Support will be giving his insight into how ADHD/ADD affects individuals. He will be discussing day-to-day symptoms and looking at how we can support those with the condition. He will also explore how we can develop the positive characteristics of ADHD and utilise individual strengths.

Paula's extra special (and very well deserved) award

The work of one of SNAP's founding members, Paula Hills, has been recognised with a Borough of Brentwood Civic Award.

Paula received her award for lifetime achievement at a special ceremony in March and told SNAP Matters she was delighted to have been nominated by her colleagues at the charity.



“Paula is one of life's unsung heroes. She is not one to seek the limelight or acknowledgement of her good deeds. She goes quietly about her business, providing a lifeline to families like ours.”

A SNAP family

“I'd like to say a huge thank you to SNAP for nominating me for this award. At the Civic Dinner I felt proud to be acknowledged by our local community for my work with SNAP and as one of the original mums back in 1994 it has been a privilege for me to watch SNAP establish itself in our community,” said Paula.

“I deeply believe SNAP offers a unique and valuable service to parents of children with special needs and disabilities and gives them and their children the support, information and advice they need.

“I have met so many people over



these years - parents, volunteers and fundraisers who have all contributed to the success of SNAP,” she said.

“I am always in the sensory room at SNAP

on a Monday where I am able to share my years of experience with parents. SNAP and the families it helps are very important to me so I hope to continue to do this for many years to come.”

Honorary Life President Hilary Needham said: “Paula is a very special person who is loved by so many and is passionate about supporting and campaigning for families who have children and young people with disabilities. She works tirelessly for others and has had such a major influence on so many families.”

The submission also highlighted:

* **Experience** – setting up a music therapy charity for pre-school children with special needs meant that Paula was a great asset from day one of SNAP.

* **Services** - Paula still volunteers at the pre-school sessions (60 per annum). She is a stalwart of Sensorise, sessions that SNAP runs for families who have children and young people with complex and profound needs.

* **Governance** - she has served for 19 years as a SNAP Trustee since the charity registered in 1999.

* **Supporting staff** - she acts as mentor to the staff in sessions.

* **Fundraising support** – Paula is often to be found helping to raise money at events or with other support.

Paula finds time for all this alongside being a full-time Carer (and Mum!) to her son.

Who's talking about SNAP on social media?

f Richard SNAP have helped our family so much with support and information regarding our son who has Autism. The facilities at the centre are top spec and the staff go above and beyond to help. Fundraising opportunities galore if you want to support.

f Victoria Pinney Talfourd LLP has supported SNAP as our charity of the year for 2017/2018 and during that time we have seen them make a massive impact on so many young people and their families. The commitment from the team is amazing and they work tirelessly to raise funds for their excellent facilities and programmes. Keep up the good work.

🐦 Do Good In Brentwood Why not support @snapcharity and other local charities by taking part in @TheEssexLottery?

First class young people!

Schools across Essex can help ensure a bright future for SNAP and the families it supports. Whether it's a school-backed initiative or individual pupils getting involved, the younger generation can make a real difference to their local community.

When it comes to raising money for SNAP and volunteering for the charity, Essex youngsters are already proving they are in a class of their own.

Various schools across the county, and individual pupils, have shown their commitment to charity by organising events and spending time at our centre in Brentwood.

Now SNAP is hoping to strengthen its ties with local schools and make the most of the bright ideas and young talent in our educational establishments.

SNAP's Fundraising Co-ordinator, Robert Dennis says SNAP is keen to get even more involved with local schools.

"SNAP is always on the lookout for enthusiastic schools and students who want to support a good cause," said Robert.

"We couldn't be here for more than 2,300 families across Essex without the support of the local community."



One school which has helped SNAP is Shenfield High School. Students from Years 7, 8 and 9 at Shenfield took part in a sponsored fancy dress fun run, organised by two Year 12 pupils Karen and Naimah.

"SNAP is a charity close to me and my family; they have helped us and I wanted to give something back," explained caring Karen.

"We gained support from teachers at our school and even put a powerpoint presentation together. Once we had permission to go ahead we then set

about making posters to place around the school. We also went into classrooms and assemblies to explain what we were doing."

"The run went really well on the day, we had wonderful weather! Everyone was really supportive and got into the spirit with the range of different costumes - we had just over 300 students taking part," she said.

"The event raised £1,182 to be split equally between SNAP and the school's PE department extra curricular budget."

Headteacher Carole Herman said: "It's very important for the school to play an active part in supporting the local community and SNAP is a cause we all believe in."

SNAP's Robert Dennis added: "We are extremely grateful to everyone involved at Shenfield High School for helping us. The money raised by schools is absolutely vital in helping SNAP deliver the best possible support to families."

Watch out for a new SNAP fundraising pack for schools full of tips and ideas!

If you are interested in finding out more information about supporting SNAP on behalf of your school, either for a one-off event or perhaps to make us your school's Charity Of The Year, please contact the Fundraising Team on 01277 245345, or email fundraising@snapcharity.org

Inspiring young volunteers

Volunteering offers students a chance to gain valuable work experience, giving them confidence and skills to go out and grab opportunities. SNAP Matters talks to one of our many young volunteers, Evie, who relishes being part of one big family...

How did you first hear about SNAP?

I was talking to a friend of our family who has a son with autism who said she had struggled to get him to settle, or to enjoy any extra curricular activities, until she had discovered SNAP.

What inspired you to volunteer?

I don't like anybody to feel left out. I wanted to join SNAP to make a difference to someone else and the way they feel about themselves, I want to make sure that everyone is included and has a good time.

In what way do you volunteer for SNAP and what does it involve?

I volunteer for SNAP regularly on a Wednesday with the younger and older

drama sessions. I also occasionally help out in the holidays with the day sessions. It's all about getting involved and encouraging everyone to take part, to talk and organise games or come up with some ideas they can develop. It's all really fun.

Which previous skills have you been able to bring to volunteering, and have you learnt any new ones?

I would definitely say volunteering has given me a lot more confidence with making new friends, and helps me outside of SNAP as well as within.

What is the most rewarding part of being a SNAP volunteer?

I can honestly say that coming to SNAP is



the best part of my week. It doesn't even feel like I'm volunteering it just feels like I'm catching up with my friends. Everyone is so friendly and welcoming, it really makes you feel like you are a part of one big family.

Would you recommend volunteering?

I would definitely recommend it to others. I started a year ago and I regret not starting sooner!

fundraising

Helping hand from local businesses

There are many ways that local businesses can partner with SNAP. Here we talk to two companies who have recently given to SNAP.

Brentwood's Axiom Design Associates kindly donated their skills to give SNAP's administrative office at The SNAP Centre a space optimising makeover while The Cheeky Panda are providing tissues for use by families who attend SNAP sessions.

Axiom's latest help for SNAP further strengthens the relationship between the two organisations, as Axiom's Director, Lisa Bliss explained.

"Having previously supported SNAP we were delighted to have the opportunity to provide the knowledge and skills to improve the comfort and efficiency of their admin office, helping SNAP to most effectively carry out their amazing work and allowing us to make an indirect positive contribution to our local community.

"Aware of the need for improvement but with obvious budget constraints we planned a new layout using existing furniture to create an improved working



environment, with minimal disruption, working with the installation team from Primary Group to complete the transformation."

Lisa added: "The people at SNAP are so dedicated and appreciative of any help received that it is a pleasure and privilege to work with them and be able to give something back to the local community."

Meanwhile, Shenfield's The Cheeky Panda business, which creates a range of sustainable and skin-friendly tissue products made from natural bamboo, is providing tissues for The SNAP Centre.



Chris Forbes, managing director of The Cheeky Panda, said: "We are a community brand and doing the right thing is at the heart of our business philosophy; we're delighted to support SNAP, whose work plays a vital community role.

"Tissue is a simple product but the accompanying message around health and sustainability is great for everyone at SNAP and we are delighted to help."

SNAP's Manager (Business), Christina Stubbs, said: "We're very grateful to Axiom Designs and The Cheeky Panda; their generosity will help us support just under 1,000 children and young people and almost 1,500 parents who visit SNAP every year.

"Their actions demonstrate how the local community – specifically businesses – can support charities like ourselves and the impact they have cannot be understated."

If your business could help SNAP in a similar way please get in contact - fundraising@snapcharity.org

Events not to be missed



**SNAP Afternoon Tea, £25 per person
Monday 4th June 2018**

De Rougemont Manor, Brentwood

Support SNAP and enjoy an afternoon of tea, cakes, scones and sandwiches with friends and family. You can even add more sparkle to your afternoon with a glass of prosecco. Brew know it makes sense!

**Moonlight and Twilight Marathon,
Saturday 7th July 2018 6pm start
Chalkwell Park, Southend-on-Sea**

A sponsored 13.1 mile walk set against Southend nightlights, or a shorter walk - the 'Twilight Colourthon' 10K (6.1 miles). Dress code is bright and creative which gives this event a vibrant and fun atmosphere.

**SNAP Curry Night, £20 per person
Thursday 10th May 2018**

Indian Night Restaurant, Chelmsford

It was snow go for our originally planned Curry Night in March so we have a new date for our fundraising evening which includes a delicious Indian banquet.

NEW DATE

**Strawberry Fayre
Saturday 16th June 2018
Shenfield Common**



This annual summer event for the local community has entertainment for all the family. Make sure you come and say hello to the SNAP stall and play one of our games raising funds and awareness.

**Barleylands Sponsored Fun Walk
Sunday 2nd September 2018
Barleylands, Billericay**

A great family day out with a choice of a 5km walk, or a 1 mile stroll that are both family friendly. There will be stalls and BBQ food served throughout the event. The SNAP team will be taking part too!

**SNAP's Nuclear 5K
Kelvedon Hatch Nuclear Bunker**
This marvellously mad mud run is perfect for anyone looking for a messy, fun challenge for all levels of fitness. An exhilarating 5K course with obstacles such as the Deathslide and Ziplines over water!

For more information on these events, or other ways to get involved contact SNAP's Fundraising Team
01277 245345
fundraising@snapcharity.org