



# Activities

**SNAP annually produces a Summer Survival Guide packed full of tips and ideas to help support families through the long summer holidays. Although this summer may look a little bit different, SNAP is still on hand with helpful resources. Here's the first of a series of Information Sheets - one full of both home and away day activity ideas.**

We have tried to include a range of general ideas as a starting point that could be adapted to fit the age and ability of your children and young people.

Although some may not be able to complete these activities independently or with support yet, most can be adapted so they are involved by making choices.

Learning to make and communicate choices is an important skill for everyone - this can be done verbally or with the use of visuals, pointing, symbols, signs or any type of communication aid.

## Get creative

**Design a den** Use materials from around the house to create your own clever cave. The easiest way is to use blankets or a bedsheet to go over a table, or maybe four chairs arranged in a square with the material over the back rests. Make your den more cosy with cushions or pillows. You may even have some fairy lights that you can add. Great place to snuggle into and read a story.

**Chalk walk** Chalk on a pavement washes off easily and your child can scribble away to their heart's content. Draw pictures, shapes, practise writing their name or spelling words. Great way for supporting a dyslexic child. You can also play a Colour Run game. Colour four areas (draw circles or squares) with different colours of chalk. Call out a colour and have your child run to that coloured area. Continue to call out different colours in a varying order.



**Seed sowing** Learning how to plant seeds and grow and look after plants. This could be both indoor plants and outdoors. Planting fruit or vegetables can be extra rewarding and may encourage them to try new food. If you have space outside (and patience) then sunflowers are an impressive option - but for something quick and easy cress can be grown on a damp sheet of kitchen roll!

**Smelly socks** Use old socks for this game. Scent cotton wool balls using things like tea, coffee, lemon or tomato ketchup and once they are dry put them into the old socks. Tie the ends of the sock and then ask your child to play 'guess the smell'.



**Clever copy** Stick A4 paper together, lay it on the floor and then get your child to lie down while you draw around their outline. Then your child can colour in their life-size copy of themselves. Maybe you have some old material they can use to glue on clothes.

**Making music** Music is something that brings people together regardless of age or ability. There are countless activities you can find online - but it could be something as simple as each family member picking a song to listen and dance to, or creating playlists (or an old school mix tape or CD!!). Feel the beat and vibrations or find ways to turn everyday items into instruments. Creating your own music or songs can be an enjoyable way to pass the time.

**Powerful presentation** For some of our children speaking about their interests is one of their favourite things to do. By giving them an outlet it can allow them to get creative about something they are passionate about. It could involve drawing posters, creating a presentation on the computer,

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turning it into a radio show, podcast or video. This can help with a variety of skills including public speaking, learning social cues (such as keeping your audience engaged), and boosts self-esteem to be an “expert” on something.

## Sky shapes

Lie on the grass looking up at the sky and try to identify pictures in the cloud shapes.

**Family forever** Sharing stories, photos or old memorabilia from your past can bring history to life for some children. Finding out what their parents, grandparents and great grandparents were like as children and how they lived can be fun. Digging out any of your old toys or sharing favourite TV shows or music from when you were their age can build shared interests or help compare past and present.

**Cosy cinema** Set up a cinema in living room, close the curtains, rearrange furniture, make tickets and prepare the snacks.

There's more inspiration on these websites:

Amazon Alexa - Commands, Games and Activities

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/browse.html?node=10068517031&ref=nav\\_em\\_T1\\_0\\_4\\_NaN\\_5\\_k\\_a2s\\_all](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/browse.html?node=10068517031&ref=nav_em_T1_0_4_NaN_5_k_a2s_all)

CBBC - Games, Quizzes and Puzzles

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc>

## Summer scrapbook

Take a picture of some of the activities that you do over the summer, print them out and record your summer fun in a scrapbook to look at together at the end of the day or save up looking back through it all to the end of the summer holidays.

## Animal magic

**Animal actions** Inside or out, encourage your child to slither like a snake, hop like a frog, gallop like a horse, or walk like a bear on all fours.

### Give a bear a birthday

Throw a pretend party for your child's favourite cuddly animal. Put on the music, blow up some balloons. Older children could set a budget and plan everything such as venue, entertainment, decoration and food. This can help with research skills, planning and organisation.

If your child would find it difficult to plan a pretend event, you could scale it down to planning something like a living room picnic or a Friday family disco! They could pick a theme and make decorations and choose food/music, and even make invites for the rest of the family. Extended family could be invited over the phone and join the fun through a video messaging app.

**Pebble pets** You need smooth pebbles, paint and a paint brush. The best paints to use are a waterproof craft paint or acrylic. Ideally you should use two layers to make sure the colour is thick enough.

**Teddy treasure hunt** Hide your child's cuddly animals around the house, or alternatively print and cut out pictures of famous bears such as Winnie the Pooh. Go on a bear hunt to find them. You could even draw a map to help find the secret locations. For older children you could use word clues instead of a map such as 'look for me where we keep the milk.' Once found, you could turn the tables and let your child hide the cuddly toys for you to find.

There's more inspiration on these websites:

Natural History Museum - resources and activities

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/try-this-at-home.html>

The Wilderness Foundation - Wild Time Nature Activities, Mindfulness and Reflection Activities

<https://wildernessfoundation.org.uk/wildtime/>

The National Trust

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/things-to-do>

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## Sensory session

If your child has been assessed by a sensory occupational therapist make sure you have a copy of the most recent report or support plans that include any recommendations for sensory strategies or a copy of their “sensory diet” for personalised sensory support.

**Rice feels nice** Fill a tray or washing up bowl with uncooked rice. Let your child use a cup, bowl, spoon or ball and let them play. Alternatively use shaving foam, dried beans, or even toothpaste. Sensory trays allow children to enjoy a variety of sensory experiences such as tactile, vestibular, visual and proprioceptive which can help to support your child’s development.

**Texture time** Make a texture book using different materials that you may have at home already - bubble wrap, washing up pads, wallpaper samples, sand paper.

**Foil feeling** Use a foil emergency blanket as a play mat. Great for sensory stimulation.

**Flour fun** Mix together cornflour and water to make a great sensory play tool. Add some food colouring to flour in a sealable plastic bag. As your child squishes it around it changes colour.

**Music magic** Music is a great way for children with additional needs to help them express themselves. You can use simple actions to songs, such as ‘the wheels on the bus’ or use instruments such as homemade shakers (using a bottle and some rice) to shake to the beat.

**Magic moonsand** Made by Spin Master Ltd™ it looks like sand but moulds like dough. Hours of fun! Comes in a variety of colours.

**Blowing bubbles** Bubbles are a great sensory experience. From tubs of bubbles, to wands to bubble machines, bubbles are great fun to watch float in the air or try to pop. Best in an outdoor space whether you are standing, sitting or lying down.

There’s more inspiration on these websites:

- Sensory Spectacle - Information on sensory processing difficulties and tutorials on how to make some DIY sensory items <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIQ6vrkC0eZhK1J8sR0JbeA/playlists>
- NHS Scotland - Messy Play Activities <https://www.nhs.uk/scotland/kids/resources/ot-activityinformation->



## [sheets/messy-play-activities/](#)

- Mother and Baby - DIY Messy Play Recipes <https://www.motherandbaby.co.uk/baby-and-toddler/more/toys-and-education/home-made-recipes-for-messy-play>
- Childhood 101 - 31 Days of Sensory Play Ideas <https://www.motherandbaby.co.uk/baby-and-toddler/more/toys-and-education/home-made-recipes-for-messy-play>
- Multi-Sensory Stories <https://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/sites/default/files/Sensational%20Stories%20MASTER.pdf>
- The SEN Resources Blog - Learning Through Play Activities <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpkztoFHIgP4jpJDKWNWaHA/videos>

## Get Active

Following a dance, yoga or exercise routine. There are countless videos online that not only help to keep us active but help our children’s gross motor skills, coordination and ability to copy movements. For children who process information slower, we may need to use pictures or stop the video after each movement. If you take photos or video of them completing each step you can create your own routine to follow - or better yet let them invent their own. You could share this digitally with friends or family for them to follow too!

**Talent time** Put on a dance or talent show where the family takes it in turns to see who can make everyone laugh or impress with a talent. This can help boost self-esteem and encourage speaking in front of others (favourite toys and teddies could bulk out the audience!).

**Ribbon running** Tie a length of ribbon to the end of a stick or baton and watch your child dance around swirling their ribbons in the air.



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**Hot or not** Hide an object around the house or garden and ask your child to find it. If seekers get near the hider shouts "hotter", if they get further away the hider shouts "colder". The child who finds the object is the hider next time. This game is so simple it can be understood by small children and works well with any number of players.

**Simon says** Always a great game to play. To vary the game the instructions can be described instead of demonstrated. Being able to give clear instructions as well as following them are important skills in life. Some children might enjoy creating a tutorial either by video or with pictures. Children with communication difficulties could point to visuals to give people instructions - such as which silly dance moves to do or to stop and start an activity.

**Pillow path** Set up a line of couch, throw, or bed pillows on your floor, and have your child walk from one end to the other. It may sound easy but their balance will be challenged!

**Balloon bounce** Outdoor fun on a wind free day! Blow up a balloon and see how long your child can keep the balloon off the ground using their hands, a soft bat or even a pool noodle if you have one!

There's more inspiration on these websites:

- Go Noodle - Pre-School to Primary <https://www.gonoodle.com/for-families/> or <https://www.youtube.com/user/GoNoodleGames>
- Cosmic Kids Yoga <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>
- Focuz-Fit Ltd - Ultimate Kids PE Lessons <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL70kjCF9Z00d5Ahn991F4VV0vMymPTTr>

## Food delights

We are sure lots of families have been cooking and baking over the last few months! Not only is it a great life skill to have but it can help with organisation and following instructions, as well as incorporating maths (and a bit of science too!) ending up with a yummy treat at the end is all the better. You could take pictures or video and create your own family cook book.

**Nice ice** This is a really quick and easy recipe for making biscuits [www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/shortbread\\_1290](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/shortbread_1290) that you can make and then decorate with icing and any other sprinkles of your choice. This is always a firm favourite with children and young people that visit The SNAP Centre for our summer holiday sessions.

**Awesome apples** Alternatively to using biscuits to ice how about making apple fruit doughnuts? Slice your apples thickly. Use a corer or a knife to make a hole in the centre. Spread cream cheese, or chocolate spread on top and then add sprinkles.

**Necklace nosh** Tie a knot on the end of some string or cord and let your child thread sweets or cereals - ones with a hole in of course!

**Pack a picnic** Pack up your child's favourite lunch, grab a blanket and eat outdoors in the sunshine! If it's raining, why not have an indoor picnic?

**Frozen fruit yoghurt bites** Lay out cupcake cases in a muffin/baking tray, dollop in some yoghurt of your choosing and pop in a few pieces of fruit such as strawberries, raspberries and blueberries. Press them down into the yoghurt, you could even make a funny face with the fruit! Put them into the freezer for a couple of hours and then take them out of the cases to serve.

**Muffin pizzas** Split each English breakfast muffin into half to make the pizza bases and lay them on a baking tray. Spread tomato puree over the bases. Add on any other of your favourite toppings and cover with mozzarella or cheddar cheese. Bake in the oven for 5-10 minutes at 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4.

**Rainbow fruit kebabs** You can recreate a rainbow like the one at The SNAP Centre or to acknowledge the NHS. Thread red grapes, blueberries, green grapes, kiwi, pineapple, mango, orange, strawberries or raspberries onto skewer sticks and arrange in a semi-circle.





# Summer sessions



**We're staying connected throughout the summer with a range of online activity sessions for those children and young people who have regular contact with The SNAP Centre. Contact the Family Team - 01277 211300 - if you are interested in attending future SNAP holiday sessions.**



**Pam's Bingo Fun** Join Pam online for a game of her much loved Bingo. Eyes down for a full house!

In lieu of our SNAP+ holiday sessions, Pam is taking her bingo game onto Zoom. Attendees will receive bingo card(s) and the zoom log in details via email for each session you register for. Sessions will last around an hour. Please note, the number of places will be limited.

Thursday 6th August - 2.00pm

Thursday 13th August - 2.00pm

**Microsoft Workshops** SNAP are delighted to announce that our partnership with Microsoft is continuing during the summer with online virtual workshops exclusively for SNAP families during August.

There are two workshops to choose from - Minecraft Hour of Code and Code Your Own Video Game.

Sessions start at either 10.00am or 2.00pm.

Contact SNAP to receive the Microsoft booking details.

3rd August 10.00am - 11.00am - Minecraft Hour of Code

3rd August 2.00pm - 3.00pm - Minecraft Hour of Code

6th August 10.00am - 11.00am - Minecraft Hour of Code

10th August 10.00am - 11.00am - Code your own video game

10th August 2.00pm - 3.00pm - Code your own video game

13th August 10.00am - 11.00am - Code your own video game

17th August 10.00am - 11.00am - Minecraft Hour of Code

17th August 2.00pm - 3.00pm - Minecraft Hour of Code

20th August 10.00am - 11.00am - Minecraft Hour of Code

The hour long workshops are limited to 30 children per session.

**Sensorise Sessions** For families with children with more profound and complex special needs and their siblings. Join Music Therapist Emily and some of the SNAP Team for Sensorise sessions with a difference!

Friday 7th August - 11.15am to 12.15pm

Friday 14th August - 11.15am to 12.15pm

## Music Making with Maggie

Engaging sessions for pre-school age children with Maggie's music that many of our young families usually enjoy on a Thursday or during the holidays.

New music videos recorded weekly that families can access and watch at their leisure.

**Friday Facebook Live Music Session** Karen and Dale from the SNAP Team are joined by SNAP's resident music therapist, Emily, for an hour of live songs every Friday from 9.30 am until 10.30 am on Facebook Live. Requests are welcomed via the comment section.

We are also planning the gradual re-opening of The SNAP Centre over the Summer for those with appointments only at this time.

# A-Z Activities from other organisations

The SNAP Directory lists further contacts and is updated regularly on the SNAP website. You can browse in the Respite and Breaks Away; Leisure Time and Fitness; Local Advice, Support and Information sections [www.snapcharity.org/directory/](http://www.snapcharity.org/directory/)

Many organisations are offering a reduced or different service to normal due to COVID-19 so please contact the organisations directly to find out the most up-to-date information.

**Accuro** is providing a range of online activities for children and young people with disabilities.

**01279 870297**

[www.accuro.org.uk](http://www.accuro.org.uk)

[enquiries@accuro.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@accuro.org.uk)

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

**01277 354161**

[enquiries@brentwoodleisure.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@brentwoodleisure.co.uk)

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

[www.autismandnature.org.uk](http://www.autismandnature.org.uk)

[shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk)

**Brentwood Borough Council's Summer Family Fun Days** have gone virtual for this summer. Each week has a theme and there are fun activities to join in with including songs and an activity sheet from SNAP.

Friday 7th August – Green Fingers

<https://www.facebook.com/events/714697599076109/>

Friday 14th August – Totally Roarsome

<https://www.facebook.com/events/560513997977275/>

Friday 21st August – Show Time!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/751681152268785/>

Friday 28th August – Teddy Bear's Picnic

<https://www.facebook.com/events/931960877322168/>

**BOSP (Brighter Opportunities through Supported Play)**

has re-opened its face-to-face activity services and will also continue with online music therapy sessions through the summer. For more information contact BOSP.

**01268 553117**

[www.bosp.co.uk](http://www.bosp.co.uk)

[enquiries@bosp.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bosp.co.uk)

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

**0207 803 2876**

[www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org)

[changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org](mailto:changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org)

**UK Cinema Association (UKCA) The Cinema**

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

**0344 967 0101**

[www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

[info@ceacard.co.uk](mailto:info@ceacard.co.uk)

**City of Chelmsford Mencap** is offering their lifelong learning service online. Some courses and times are subject to change. New students are welcome to enrol at any time, subject to the availability of places.

**01245 268303**

[www.cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk](http://www.cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk)

[info@cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:info@cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk)



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**Diddi Dance North Essex** are running online dance classes for children and young people with any additional needs. They usually Colchester, Clacton, Hatfield Peverel, and Harwich areas. For more details on class times and costings, please visit the Diddi Dance website.

**07722 605395**

[www.diddidance.com/diddi-dance-north-essex/](http://www.diddidance.com/diddi-dance-north-essex/)

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

**0345 605 0525 0345 601 0132** (For customers with hearing impairments)

[www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk)

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

[www.gov.uk/transport-disabled](http://www.gov.uk/transport-disabled)

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

**01702 304528**

[www.elitegamer.co.uk/](http://www.elitegamer.co.uk/)

**Essex County Council** is encouraging everyone to stay local this year and has information on days out and activities across the county, including attractions and disabled access.

**03330 134105**

[www.visitessex.com](http://www.visitessex.com)

**Essex Country Parks** offer great opportunities to get out and explore.

**0345 603 7624**

[www.visitparks.co.uk](http://www.visitparks.co.uk)

Alternatively, you can 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 Libraries** are online Summer Reading Challenge called 'Silly Squad.' Children receive a certificate and medal for taking part.

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk>

**Essex Wildlife Trust Offer** an opportunity to see Essex wildlife up close from visitor centres and nature reserves across the county. There are trails to follow to find favourite book characters and accessible pathways.

[www.essexwt.org.uk](http://www.essexwt.org.uk)

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

[www.euansguide.com](http://www.euansguide.com)

**Families InFocus** are an independent parent led registered charity providing holistic support to families of children with disabilities and special needs (aged 0 to 25) across Essex, who require advice, information and support, particularly at times of change, challenge and crisis. See their website and social media for summer activities awareness.

[www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk](http://www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk)

[helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk](mailto:helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk)

**Flute Theatre** offers online interactive performances. Specialised productions of Shakespeare for people on the autism spectrum. "Play at Home" activities and online personalised interactive performances.

<https://flutetheatre.co.uk>

**Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre** in Thurrock is offering a range of summer outdoor activities for families.

[www.thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters-outdoor-education-centre/grangewaters](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters-outdoor-education-centre/grangewaters)

**Grapevine Essex** is a registered charity and provides recreational and educational activities for adults with learning disabilities living in Essex. They are offering online activities on Tuesdays and Fridays at 4pm. Please see their private Facebook Group for information.

**01277 625530**

[www.facebook.com/groups/grapevineessex/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/grapevineessex/)



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**Havering Youth Clubs** have published a brochure on what's happening in Havering during the summer holidays.

<https://familyserviceshub.havering.gov.uk/kb5/havering/directory/advice.page?id=CEjK-KtV6Qs>

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

**01245 606606 - Ask for "Parks"**

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

**Lambourne End Centre** is running a new Summer Family Camp! An activity-filled overnight stay that includes a bell tent, an activity, an orienteering pack, animal feeding and a camp fire! All COVID-19 compliant.

**0208 5003047**

[www.lambourne-end.org.uk](http://www.lambourne-end.org.uk)

[info@lambourne-end.org.uk](mailto:info@lambourne-end.org.uk)

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

Essex County Council [www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk)

Thurrock Council [www.askthurrock.org.uk/localoffer](http://www.askthurrock.org.uk/localoffer)

Southend Council [www.southendinfopoint.org](http://www.southendinfopoint.org)

Havering Council [www.havering.gov.uk](http://www.havering.gov.uk)

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

**01202 440060**

[www.merlinsmagicwand.org](http://www.merlinsmagicwand.org)

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

[www.mobilityequipmenthiredirect.com](http://www.mobilityequipmenthiredirect.com)

**Multi-Sports Live Online Sessions** Para Athletics is hosting weekly online sports sessions for children and young people with disabilities aged 5 to 25.

[www.haveringactive.co.uk/index.php/eventscalendar/para-sport/para-multi-sport-event-10](http://www.haveringactive.co.uk/index.php/eventscalendar/para-sport/para-multi-sport-event-10)

**Mushroom Theatre Company** are running online workshops for children and young people with a disability throughout the summer holidays. Contact to book.

**01268 906470**

[info@mushroomtheatre.co.uk](mailto:info@mushroomtheatre.co.uk)

[www.mushroomtheatre.co.uk](http://www.mushroomtheatre.co.uk)

**Natural History Museum** is offering 'Dawnosaurs Online' – a range of free online activities aimed at children with neurodiverse conditions.

[www.nhm.ac.uk/events/dawnosaurs.html](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/events/dawnosaurs.html)

**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's Summer Holiday Sessions are offering one 4 to 5 hour session per day, with lots of outside play. To find out more contact PARC.

**01376 528999**

[www.parc-essex.co.uk](http://www.parc-essex.co.uk)

[info@parc-essex.co.uk](mailto:info@parc-essex.co.uk)

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

**07873 232055**

[www.rainbowrural.co.uk](http://www.rainbowrural.co.uk)

[farm@rainbowrural.co.uk](mailto:farm@rainbowrural.co.uk)

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

**020 8500 9359**

[www.redbridgecyclingcentre.co.uk](http://www.redbridgecyclingcentre.co.uk)

[rcc@vision-rcl.org.uk](mailto:rcc@vision-rcl.org.uk)





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**Royal Association for Deaf People** Has events throughout the year for families to enjoy. Visit their website for the events timetable.

**0330 688 2525**

[www.royaldeaf.org.uk](http://www.royaldeaf.org.uk)

[info@royaldeaf.org.uk](mailto:info@royaldeaf.org.uk)

**The Science Museum** re-opens to the public on Wednesday 19th August. All visitors are now required to pre-book a free ticket in advance.

**020 7942 4000**

[www.sciencemuseum.org.uk](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk)

[info@sciencemuseum.ac.uk](mailto:info@sciencemuseum.ac.uk)

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

[www.skybadger.co.uk](http://www.skybadger.co.uk)

**Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People** allow Essex families to take a break from their caring responsibilities. To find out more information about how to access this support visit their website.

[www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)

[shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk](mailto: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 their website.

**01983 864885**

[www.spectrumbreaks.co.uk](http://www.spectrumbreaks.co.uk)

[support@spectrumbreaks.co.uk](mailto:support@spectrumbreaks.co.uk)

**Steam on!** is a programme of fun filled learning activities for 5-11 year olds made and delivered by Matipo, supporting by Essex 2020. Activities released every week day over the summer holidays and will explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths through the arts. To find out more and sign up on the Matipo website

[www.matipoarts.com](http://www.matipoarts.com)

[matipoprod@gmail.com](mailto:matipoprod@gmail.com)

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

**01708 642970**

[www.thameschase.org.uk](http://www.thameschase.org.uk)

[enquiries@thameschase.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thameschase.org.uk)

**Tourism For All** provides advice and information on accessible tourism in the UK and abroad.

**0845 124 9971**

[www.tourismforall.org.uk](http://www.tourismforall.org.uk)

[info@tourismforall.org.uk](mailto:info@tourismforall.org.uk)

**TrailNet** offers inclusive cycling sessions for children and adults to ride through Thorndon County Park. They have a range of adapted trikes for all ages and sizes, they are available to hire either independently or as part of their regular group rides. Currently booking must be made in advance and there is a maximum of six riders per group.

**01277 811012**

[www.trailnet.org.uk](http://www.trailnet.org.uk)

[info@trailnet.org.uk](mailto:info@trailnet.org.uk)

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

**01255 831302**

[www.willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk](http://www.willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk)

[reception@willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk](mailto:reception@willowparkresourcecentre.co.uk)

The following websites are useful:

[www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk](http://www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk)

[www.essexmums.org](http://www.essexmums.org)

[www.playday.org.uk](http://www.playday.org.uk)

[www.childsafezones.co.uk](http://www.childsafezones.co.uk)

# 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 safety.

Due to COVID-19 there are some extra hygiene and safety measures in place to keep the parks COVID secure, such as temperature checks on entry and mandatory face coverings on all rides, attractions and in gift shops. Children under six-years-old and those with certain health conditions and disabilities do not have to wear a face covering. Please check the website of the park you want to visit for the latest rules and information.

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.

If your child or young person is not eligible for a Ride Access Pass, you may still be able to purchase a free ticket for a carer and reduced rate for a second carer if you can show proof of DLA/PIP, or a blue badge, or a medical letter confirming the need for a full time carer.

For 2020, Merlin theme parks have made some improvements to the Ride Access Pass scheme, making it simpler and speedier than ever to register.

All you must do is register once, with either Alton Towers Resort, THORPE PARK Resort, Chessington World of Adventures Resort or LEGOLAND Windsor Resort and you will be given a Merlin Yellow Ride Access Pass card on your first visit. This card will be your Ride Access Pass ID for all your visits over the following 24 months, which will have your name, photo and carer requirements on it and will be valid at all four parks.

You should apply via the website form or email of the theme park you are intending to visit first. You will need to submit a scan of either a certified NHS letter from a doctor stating why you are eligible for the pass, or proof of DLA or PIP high rate/enhanced mobility award within the last 24 months, or blue badge if you have one. Photo ID of the child or young person applying will also be required.

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.

Once your application has been accepted you will be directed to create an ID card via the chosen attraction's website that will be available for collection on your first visit. When you visit for the first time you will need to bring your case number and confirmation number to collect your pass.

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.

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

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

[www.chessington.com](http://www.chessington.com)

[www.legoland.co.uk](http://www.legoland.co.uk)

[www.thorpepark.com](http://www.thorpepark.com)

[www.altontowers.com](http://www.altontowers.com)

[www.adventureisland.co.uk](http://www.adventureisland.co.uk)

[www.disneylandparis.com](http://www.disneylandparis.com)



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.