



matters

Sharing news of SNAP's important work



Supporting
over 3,700
Families across
Essex

Encouraging the whole family

SNAP families share the impact and difference the charity has on parents and young people

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Coffee, Cake and Catch-up success along with some very special guests

About Us



Making a difference

SNAP is an Essex charity that helps families with children and young people who have any additional need or disability.

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, which are available to families of children and young people aged 0 to 25.

SNAP is currently offering a wide range of services - at the centre, remotely or hybrid- to meet the needs of its families

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

Scan me to find out more
information about SNAP!



SNAP contact information:

Call - 01277 211300

Email - info@snapcharity.org

Website - www.snapcharity.org

The SNAP Centre, Pastoral Way, Warley,
Brentwood CM14 5WF

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For views/future articles, contact editor,
Charlotte - cneale@snapcharity.org

Welcome

Another year and a fresh start in 2023 - Welcome to another edition of SNAP Matters!

Despite the challenges of 2022 we had lots of positives, such as returning to full attendance at our activity sessions, receiving various awards including Best Local Charity at the Brentwood Business Awards, welcoming new team members and the launch of our new database. We held our first Coffee, Cake and Catch-up event since 2019, which you can read all about on page 7. We also plan to have our first in-person quiz since the pandemic on Friday 27th January.

Last year we registered an astonishing number of new families - 674 - the highest we've ever recorded. We know that so many of you continue to rely on SNAP for advice and support so we have lots of new and insightful Specialist Talks lined up for the Spring term. This includes 'Supporting Siblings' to help parents of children with additional needs find ways of giving attention, information, and support to the other children in their families and more - see page 6 for all the details.

Additionally, SNAP mum, Natalie, shares her story and talks about the impact that SNAP's support has had on her family - see page 4.

Whilst the year ahead looks to be another challenging one for SNAP, with the help of all our supporters and community we can continue to be here and make a real difference to so many local families.

As always, thank you all for your continued generosity and support. We hope to see you at SNAP soon!

Best wishes,
Karen Boath
CEO

Scan me to donate to SNAP!



SNAP in numbers (2022)

3,727

Families
supported

674

New families
registered

3,508

Helpline calls

3,785

Helpline emails

7,572

Hours of children
services

1,701

Participants in
specialist talks &
workshops

Highlights

What a result

2022 held some exciting things for SNAP including winning **THREE** awards!

SNAP's Drama Club was nominated for **Best Group/Class for Children with a Disability** category at the Essex Mums Awards back in July and we found out in September that we had won! Congratulations to Alli and the team as well as all the children that attend.

In October, SNAP attended the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce's Brentwood Business Awards at The Brentwood Centre. We are delighted to have won **Best Local Charity**, a recognition of our voluntary work that helps to support so many local families across our community.

Karen Boath, CEO, said, "We are so proud of our charity and the amazing work it does. The team work so hard supporting so many families in Essex and thoroughly deserve this recognition. Thank you to Brentwood Chamber of Commerce for arranging this event and Rainer Hughes for sponsoring this award."

We ended the year with a BANG with SNAP winning **Active Essex's Find Your Active Funded Project Of The Year** after their support with SIBS4FUN Week in the summer, funding the sporting activities including slip 'n' slide, inflatable assault courses, Silly Sports and baseball.

We are also shortlisted for the **Resilience in the Face of Adversity Award** at Helpline Partnerships Awards 2022 which we will hear the result of shortly...fingers crossed!



Christmas Cheer



The festive season was choc-a-block with exciting activities including a top notch drama show, two yule tide discos, two fantastic chocolate tombolas, mulled wine, and a Stormtrooper invasion of Shenfield High Street led by Batman and Deadpool! One particular bright spark was announcing the winners of our Prize Draws for the 65" TV

and the DFS Grizzly Snuggly Chair. Winner Claire said, "It's my son's favourite Christmas surprise. He totally loves it!"

Thank you for Sky Labs and DFS for generously donating these prizes and thank you to all those who helped to make the holidays at SNAP festive and bright! We could not have got through 2022 without you.



A tee-riffic day!



The winning team - Come On You Wires

The prestigious Thorndon Park Golf Club hosted SNAP's ninth annual Golf Day on Friday 30th September, where 81 golfers playing in teams of three, hoping to be crowned champions whilst raising money for SNAP.

Beginning at high noon - with golfers fuelled by bacon sandwiches and the promise of a convivial round of golf full of potential, the competition teed-off. The rain held off thankfully much to the delight of the attendees.

With the last teams returning to the clubhouse early evening, the results were counted. Come On You Wires with Alex, Callum and David came in 1st place. Well done team!

Also during the evening, an auction was held with fantastic prizes and 4-balls available as well as a raffle prize draw. A fantastic £11,100 was raised which SNAP is so thankful for. Huge thanks to all those who sponsored holes and adverts, donated 4-Ball vouchers and auction prizes.

Ignoring the judgment

SNAP parent, Natalie, blogs about her family's journey after her son was diagnosed at 2.5 years old with autism along with sensory processing disorder, global development delay and a speech and language delay. Here she gives a little insight...

We came to SNAP at around the time Rudy was diagnosed, I was completely lost, suddenly propelled into a world I knew nothing about.

SNAP were amazing and supported Rudy and my family so much, not only giving Rudy a safe place to play free of judgement but also a place of support and learning for me and my family, helping and guiding us through processes that were alien to us: EHCP's, specialist



schooling, transportation, the list is endless.

For us it was the judgment we felt so much from others. Rudy was so young with such a host of difficulties that he was trying to manage on a day-to-day basis. I felt useless as his mother as I just didn't know how best to parent him, what did this little boy want, how could I help him?

The overwhelming nature of the world around him led to my boy being aggressive, stressed and incredibly difficult to manage. We would get stared at in supermarkets, tutted at, we were even told once that children like my son should not be allowed out.

I was lost, so I did what many people may do and retreated into my own world. We stayed in, we rarely went out, we retreated to safety, we avoided the judgement, and I suppose in some way for us it worked, it kept us safe but did it keep us fulfilled?

How dare a society that understand so little force me and my son into our home, afraid to go out because of what other people think.

So, we changed! We owned who we were, I spoke about Rudy to anyone who would listen, and we became the loudest proudest autistic family there was.

We ignored the stares, we ourselves stopped judging others, perhaps they were stares of curiosity, empathy even, we opened our own eyes.

If I could tell one thing to the person I was when my son was first diagnosed it would be to trust your gut. Be the parent you want to be not the parent others expect you to be.

Block out the noise of other people's expectations. Instead, listen to the people who support you, the people who want to learn and understand, but most of all to believe in yourself; you have got this, you know your child better than anyone else.

Take time, ask for support if needed from friends, charities such as SNAP or counsellors, and invest in yourself so you can be the best person for your family.

If you'd like to follow our journey, please check us out on Facebook at Better to be Different.

SNAP Directory

Our Online Directory (www.snapcharity.org/directory) aims to provide a comprehensive guide of useful contacts to point you in the right direction.

The search facility allows you to find entries by using keyword, location, or condition. Alternatively you can browse through the 13 categories that cover social activities, financial support, education advice, therapy services and many more.

Follow us on Facebook for regular updates

 @SNAPCharityInfoNetwork 

SNAP Library

SNAP has an extensive library of over 2,000 books, specialist DVDs and hundreds of easy reference sheets that can be accessed at The SNAP Centre.



SNAP Charity's Information Network

The place to find information which may be of interest to families who live in Essex with a child or young person aged 0-25 with any additional need or disability.

SNAP Helpline

The SNAP phone and email Helpline is often the first point of contact for new families.

Phone: 01277 211300

Email: familyteam@snapcharity.org

SNAP's Helpline is open:

Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm

Friday 9am-4pm

Schedule a call by emailing familyteam@snapcharity.org



"What a gift SNAP is to the community"

In this edition of Volunteer Spotlight, we hear from one of our counsellors, Maggie, on how she got involved with SNAP 27 years ago...

How long have you been involved with SNAP?

I first came to SNAP in, I think 1995/1996, when we were at Keys Hall and there were just a few children and parents. A friend of mine was involved and asked if I'd go along and help look after the children so the mums could have a chat.

Then they got to realise that I actually was a qualified counsellor so if anyone got upset or there was anything I could help with, I'd take them off to have a little chat.

And then as SNAP grew and there were more children, I had a little table in the corner and people would come up and speak to me. Sometimes we'd have a session outside of SNAP on a Monday and by then other things at the charity were starting to take off.

As I started to work with more parents we started offering counselling in the shower room on a wooden bench, with no heating, and it worked!

I think it was roundabout that point I became a trustee and sat on the trustee board for 14 years and now I still see clients voluntarily for SNAP.

I worked through the pandemic, seeing clients via Zoom or FaceTime, though this was not the greatest way to do it but we kept going.



How long have you been a counsellor for?

Oh gosh... About 40 years. Roughly 27 years counselling at SNAP. I'll keep going for as long as I can.

As a counsellor, how do you maintain a work/life balance? Hearing difficult things and situations.

I have a supervisor that I can go to outside of SNAP. I think it just comes over the years, you do learn that you can't take things on, you aren't going to solve anyone's difficulties by doing that. It's about giving them the tools to help them come to their own conclusions.

It takes a huge amount of courage to sit in those chairs and talk to me about things that are very personal to them. I just feel so privileged that people do that.

How often do you volunteer?

One day a week at SNAP - including supervision with the Family Team. We talk about any issues that crop up and affect them, sharing feelings which I think is really important for the staff as they work so hard in this amazing organisation. I still can't believe what it's grown into. It's really quite phenomenal. And how brave they are too.

I feel that having seen SNAP grow to what it is now and what a gift it is to the community; how dedicated everyone is that works here and how hard they work. It fills me with a great deal of pride to be a part of it. I'll go on until they tell me I've passed my sell-by-date!

January to April 2023 opportunities

SNAP is pleased to offer a variety of Specialist Talks via online webinars and in-person thanks to the Mid & South Essex Hospitals Charity, Mid and South Essex Health Care Partnership and NHS Charities Together. This enables us to offer them FREE for families for a limited time. A nominal charge for Professionals to attend still applies.

Communication Workshop

Wednesday 1st February
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon

During this in-person workshop we will be looking at a range of different tools and strategies to promote and enhance communication. We will be joined by Inclusive Communication Essex and Makaton Tutor Debby. This session is aimed at parents whose child is preverbal or in the early stages of speech development.



and people with ADHD, along side an introduction to "the executive functions". There will be lots of opportunities to speak with other parents and find out about helpful resources.

Behaviour as Communication
with Kathryn Miller
Wednesday 22nd March

The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon and
Online Webinar - 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Behaviour is often a primary means of communicating when we are feeling overwhelmed, unable to find the words we need or not able to regulate ourselves effectively. This talk will look at behaviours you may be seeing from your child, helping you to analyse and gain a greater understanding of root causes for behaviours and think about what your child is communicating through their behaviours. We will explore strategies for coping with and addressing behaviours; changing our approaches and thinking in order to help our children feel more understood and have their needs met effectively.

Supporting Siblings with Sibs

Wednesday 8th March
Online webinar - 10am to 11am (not recorded)

This workshop led by national charity Sibs is an introduction for parents of children with additional needs who want to know more about supporting siblings. This workshop will help parents find ways of giving attention, information, and support to the other children in their families. Participants will gain an insight into siblings' needs and experiences, with practical ideas and further sources of information.

ADHD; Parent Coffee Morning

Wednesday 15th March
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon

SNAP will be hosting a relaxed session for parents of children with ADHD (no formal diagnosis required). The session will include short presentations from parents

Moving To Secondary School

Wednesday 19th April
The SNAP Centre - 9.30am to 2.30pm

This extended session will give parents lots of practical ideas to help with the transition and changes associated with the move into secondary school. It is suitable for parents who have children with additional needs in years 4 to 6 in mainstream school.

Talking about a diagnosis

Some families choose to tell their child soon after the diagnosis is received and learn about the condition together, whilst others decide to wait until they feel they have a good enough understanding to answer questions their child may have.

When asked about being told of their diagnosis, many young people and adults express that when it was done in a positive way, it gave them a sense of relief and allowed them to begin to understand more about themselves, their strengths and also why they may have certain differences to their peers.

Often a good place to start can be to talk about differences in general, looking at how everyone is unique, why that is positive and how that makes us good at different tasks and skills. Help your child think about what life would be like if everyone was the same. You could even turn it into a game of identifying things that makes people special, interesting or unique.



This gives you a starting point, when you are ready, to speak to your child about their diagnosis.

Here are SNAP's top tips:

- Ensure you and your child are in a calm, positive headspace before starting a conversation about difference or diagnosis
- Consider where and when you have the conversation, make sure to give yourself time and privacy
- Explain using language or resources your child/young person will understand
- Be positive
- Keep it factual
- Be open to questions

Contact for more information:
familyteam@snapcharity.org

Fundraising

You put the icing on top of the SNAP cake!

The SNAP Centre opened its doors recently to families, friends and supporters as more than 150 guests attended SNAP's first Coffee, Cake and Catch-up event since the pandemic. A vast selection of delightful homemade cakes were enjoyed along with tours around the Centre providing greater insight into the charity's work and purpose.

The Centre's main activity hall was turned into a pop-up tearoom and was filled with the buzz of visitors sharing their SNAP experiences. Old and new supporters enjoyed a journey round the facilities and were impressed with the wide range of services and resources available at the centre as well as how SNAP adapted support for families throughout the pandemic.

The SNAP Team were joined by The Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst, who generously opened the event, and the High Sheriff of Essex, Nick Alston. He said,

"Charities like SNAP that provide essential services, add so much to our communities. I am pleased to have an opportunity to highlight their

work and to say thanks for all they do."

The High Sheriff awarded SNAP's Chair of Trustees, Mandy Carr, with the High Sheriff's Award for great and valuable services in the community. Mandy has volunteered for the charity since 2009, providing HR advice and supporting fundraising events, eventually joining the board of trustees and then becoming Chair in 2019.

SNAP's CEO, Karen Boath, was delighted at how the event went and the support of the local community,

"It was fantastic to be back for our first Coffee, Cake and Catch-up since the pandemic. It was such a joy to see so many supporters and funders plus lots of wonderful friends and families, old and new, at the Centre. There was so much love for SNAP, which was great to see."

SNAP parent, Lisa Cable, has come to SNAP for a number of years. She said,

"SNAP is a safe haven not just for our son, but also for his siblings and us, his parents. It was so good to be back after lockdown and see lots of familiar faces and catch up. SNAP is like a family to us - in fact it is a lifeline. We really don't know what we'd do without all the help and support we receive from this amazing place."

The SNAP Team would like to say a big thank you to all those who came along, volunteered, hosted a stall, generously donated cakes



and took part in the raffle and SNAP sale.

An additional extra special thanks to the Ursuline Preparatory School in Warley, who held a bake sale of the left over cakes from the event at the end of the school day.

If you would like to fundraise for SNAP, contact the Fundraising Team on 01277 245345 or email fundraising@snapcharity.org.

Alternatively, visit SNAP's website [snapcharity.org/get-involved](https://www.snapcharity.org/get-involved)



Scan me to
donate to SNAP!



Fundraising

Upcoming events



Quiz Night

7pm for a 7:30pm start
Friday 27th January 2023

Book via
SNAP website or Eventbrite

The Nightingale Centre
Pastoral Way, Warley,
Brentwood, CM14 5GB

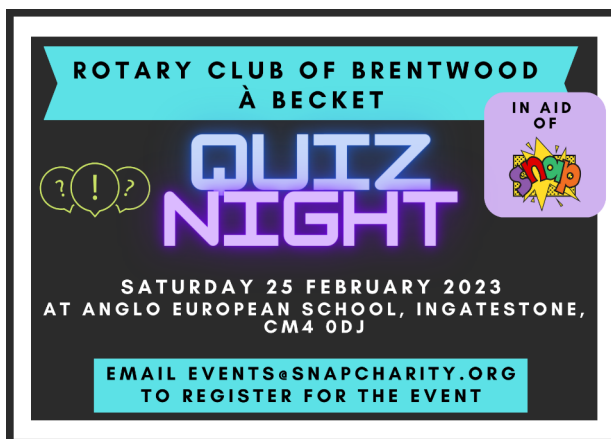


Brentwood Half Marathon & Fun Run
12th March 2023

BOOK YOUR PLACE VIA
WWW.BRENTWOODHALF.ORG

Rotary
Saint Francis Hospice
Caring for you

Brentwood Running Club



**ROTARY CLUB OF BRENTWOOD
À BECKET**

QUIZ NIGHT

SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2023
AT ANGLO EUROPEAN SCHOOL, INGATESTONE,
CM4 0DJ

EMAIL EVENTS@SNAPCHARITY.ORG
TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT

More events will be coming in 2023 so keep your eyes peeled on SNAP social media platforms and the SNAP website



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snapcharity.org/subscribe



SNAP's 200+ Club means that you can make a difference to the families we support; your good deed can also reward you too...

200+ Club

Scan me!

Sign up now!
snapcharity.org/200-club



SWEEPSTAKE

Commencing January 2023

SNAP CHARITY
Dancing On Ice
2023

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For more information on events, visit
snapcharity.org/events