



matters

Sharing news of SNAP's important work



Supporting
over 3,800
families across
Essex

Informing the whole family

Increasing resilience and knowledge within Essex families

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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, and live under Essex County Council, Thurrock or Southend local authorities.

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:

Helpline - 01277 211300 Fundraising - 01277 245345

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

We are kicking off the summer with exciting news! We are launching a new session on Monday evenings aimed at those in Years 7 and above. We will be offering activities such as table tennis, DJ decks, games, bingo, karaoke and much more! We are also excited to announce the new Tuck Shop, which we hope the young people will help us to run! We are working with recruitment firm, Sheridan Maine, to provide opportunities for some of our young people to build employment skills such as CV writing and interview skills.

We have also been working with BOSP to deliver monthly parent SEND advice and support sessions. Basildon families can come and meet us at BOSP's premises in Wat Tyler Country Park, Basildon and speak to SNAP Family Support Advisers about their questions or concerns. Please keep an eye on our social channels for the next dates.

We have a fantastic line up of specialist parent talks over the summer term. Kathryn Miller will be returning to talk about emotional and sensory regulation, and for the first time, we welcome Hester Grainger from Perfectly Autistic, and Continence Consultant, Charmaine Champ. See page 6 for more information and how to book. It's our hope that sessions like these will ensure that your family have the right support when you need it.

In this edition of SNAP Matters, we hear from Bella, a young SNAP volunteer, about working alongside families and the difference SNAP has made to her family. We could not help so many local families without our volunteers and it is so wonderful to have siblings and other young people supporting our activity sessions. If you know of anyone who would like to volunteer at SNAP, please contact volunteers@snapcharity.org. You can read more about Bella and her story on page 4.

In the meantime, I hope you all are keeping well and (hopefully) enjoying some beautiful warm weather!

Best wishes,

Karen

Karen Boath, CEO

SNAP in numbers

(January-April 2023)

3,957

Families
supported

238

New families
registered

969

Helpline calls

1,496

Helpline emails

1,859

Hours of children
services

337

Participants in
specialist talks &
workshops

Highlights

Fat Turk

SNAP returned to one of Brentwood's top restaurants and neighbourhood friend, The Fat Turk, on Thursday 30th March. Families and supporters brought along loved ones and enjoyed outstanding and freshly prepared Turkish cuisine in stylish and vibrant surroundings while raising money for SNAP. An incredible £1,005 was raised on the evening! Thank you to all those who came along!

Egg-cellent Easter at SNAP

Thank you to the cracking teams at HS Estates, The Treehouse Club, Royal Mail and all the local businesses and SNAP families who generously contributed chocolate Easter eggs to SNAP for yet another year!

All the children and young people who attended our Easter holiday sessions were so excited to receive their chocolate treat to take away with them.



The SNAP calendar is always packed with services, activities and events. For the latest updates, follow SNAP on social media.

SNAP's quiz whizzes

SNAP's first event of the year was a sell-out! 18 teams competed for the quiz champion crown.... and also a luxurious wine hamper.

Quiz master extraordinaire Tony Clark, who supports SNAP on behalf of Brentwood à Becket Rotary Club, generously compared the teams through 10 rounds of head-scratching questions with two guest quiz rounds presented by SNAP volunteer, Jamie. Jamie is an old hand at quizzes, having prepared a new set of questions for each SNAP+ session he volunteers at during the school holidays.

Music therapist Emily said, "I loved the rounds from Jamie! Made it all hit home why everyone was actually there!"

"The quiz went down such a treat and the room was full of laughter and smiles all round. Special thanks to Tony and Jamie for putting it all together for us." says CEO, Karen Boath.



Something egg-citing hatched in Shenfield

The Easter Bunny delivered special eggs to local businesses up and down Shenfield high street this year. More than 40 shops participated in an Easter egg trail coordinated in partnership with Sincerely Yours. Over three weeks, families tried to find all the eggs in the shop windows to decode a special message and have a chance at winning a Jelly Cat Easter bunny.

"We were so excited to work with Sincerely Yours and the rest of the high street shops to put on a special event for families over the Easter holidays. It was wonderful to see families taking part, visiting local businesses, all whilst supporting SNAP," said Sara Clifton, Fundraising Manager. "We are so grateful to Kaye & Emma from Sincerely Yours and Nish from Shenfield Wine Co for their guidance and support as well as all the high street shops for helping to make the Easter break even more fun for local families."



Volunteer Spotlight

"I feel like SNAP has given me a lot and I wanted to give something back"

From sibling, to SIBS4FUN week-volunteer, to session volunteer; Bella has covered most of the bases as a young person at SNAP. In this issue's Volunteer Spotlight, she shares the impact SNAP has had on her and her family.

As the younger sibling of a neurodivergent young person, Bella's family have attended SNAP for nearly 14 years, and she can't remember a time without SNAP...

"I've been coming to SNAP since I was six months old, so because of that, I feel like SNAP has given me a lot and I wanted to give something back. My brother's got ASD and Severe Learning Difficulties so he started attending SNAP from an early age.

"SNAP has supported my family throughout the years in so many ways. Currently the Family Team are helping my brother figure out what he can do after school, which we as a family are really struggling with. The team are taking a lot of stress off of my parents' shoulders.

"I've been volunteering at SNAP for about a year now - I volunteer every Wednesday at drama and in the school holiday sessions. I started as soon as I could at 14. I take part in the drama games and activities, making sure I'm really enthusiastic to keep the children entertained and involved. It's always very busy in the holiday sessions and keeps me on my toes

which is a lot of fun! The children get a lot of use out of the table football and the soft play - that was one of my favourites when I was younger."

"What I value most about SNAP is the togetherness and being able to support people. Having had the support for my family and now being able to help others is really nice. By volunteering in sessions I help to alleviate stress from the parents. The Family Team can then chat to parents and offer support while I play and interact with their child."

As a sibling, Bella has been part of SNAP's annual fun-packed SIBS4FUN week. SIBS4FUN is dedicated to providing siblings of children with additional needs, with a well-deserved break from their caregiving responsibilities. Siblings enjoy a week of exciting activities they would not otherwise get to try and meet other sibling carers, which helps them to feel less alone.

"Not everyone understands the pressures, responsibilities and things we can miss out on [as siblings]."

"I've been going to SIBS4FUN since I was 6 and now I'm 15. It's a lot of fun and it gives me something to look forward to every year. It really helped in the summer holidays to have something for 'me' when I was younger, and have attention on me specifically and not on what



my brother wanted to do. It was really nice to have a "me day" or a "me week" once every year.

"Last year was my first year as a SIBS helper. I put my name forward and got in! It wasn't the same as attending as a SIB but I still had so much fun supporting and enabling the kids to have fun. It was so good being together and seeing familiar faces as well as being with all the big SIBS, who I grew up with and are such great friends. We can all come together and support the younger SIBS as we've been there. We all get it, we all understand and relate to one another because we all have siblings with an additional need or disability. Not everyone understands the pressures, responsibilities and things we can miss out on. There's such a togetherness at SIBS. It's like one big family. There's always tears at the end of the week because we've all had such an amazing time. I can't thank SNAP enough!"

"SNAP is incredibly important to me and my family. It gave my parents a place they could take me and put a lot of attention on my brother. Having a neurotypical and a neurodiverse child is quite hard to balance your attention between both of us but SNAP gave them that opportunity. It's given me the opportunity to give back too."

If you would like to volunteer at SNAP, please email volunteers@snapcharity.org.



Communicating behaviours

Autism Consultant and Specialist Teacher Kathryn Miller shares how parents and carers can respond to a child's unexpected or challenging behaviour...

All behaviour is communication, often the most challenging behaviours occur when we lose control of ourselves and become overwhelmed. We know that this is likely to happen more frequently for children who have additional needs.

Working out what your child is trying (or not trying) to communicate is key to changing unexpected or challenging behaviours. By stepping away from

a situation, observing what is actually happening and trying not to involve our own emotions, we can start to get a clearer view of the function of the behaviour. Functions may include:

Social attention - to get noticed or acknowledged by others - positive or negative doesn't matter,

Escape/avoidance - to get away from a situation or task the person finds difficult,

Tangible - to get something they want (e.g. food, activities, etc.),

Sensory - because it feels good,

Communication - to express their emotions to others,

what we do, as the adults, in order to distract, change or discourage the unexpected behaviours.

When talking about behaviour remember:

- We all have to be **calm**.
- Revisiting has to have a clear **purpose** (I use 'I don't want you to feel like you need to do that again - it must have felt horrible').
- There should not be any **blame**.
- Give a chance for one **opt out** (allow one 'can we talk about this later? Or allow your child to walk away).
- **Draw or write** about what happened so children can reflect on it in their own time without pressure.

Clouds and Rainbows provides support, training and advice for families and education settings across Essex and surrounding areas. If you would like further information, please email Kathryn kathryn@cloudsandrainbows.org.uk

Kathryn is leading a Specialist Talk for SNAP on 'Emotional and Sensory Regulation' online and in-person on Wednesday 28th June. More information can be found on page 6.



Pain/feeling unwell - to let others know about it or to manage their discomfort,

Reliable response - inflexible children may be looking for sameness/predictability.

When we start to understand what **m o t i v a t e s** behaviour we can make changes in

Services corner

At SNAP, we know how difficult going to school can be for our young people. There are alternative provisions that can provide education in a non-school environment.

We run a home education group at SNAP where parents and young children get together to share resources, ideas and give advice on how their own home school journey is going. Our next Home Education group is on Wednesday 5th July from 10am until 11:30am. If you would like to come along or find out more, please call us on 01277 211300.

Below are some alternative provisions available in Essex. Please also check out the website **Not Fine In School** for more information.

Circles Farm - circlesfarm.co.uk
Raw Learning - www.rawlearning.co.uk
REACH - reachessex.com
Red Balloon - www.redballoonlearner.org/students-parents/admissions
Woodland Warriors Facebook Page - www.facebook.com/woodlandwarriors2013/



Family services

Specialist Talks - May to July 2023

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.

Dates are subject to change with potential school strikes. For the latest information, visit the SNAP website - snapcharity.org/training or SNAP's social media channels.

Being a Neurodivergent Parent of Autistic/ADHD children with Hester Grainger

Wednesday 17th May
Online webinar only - 10am to 11:15am



Hester Grainger, from Perfectly Autistic, will be sharing her family's journey; from her children being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) first, then her husband, and then how all four of them were diagnosed with ADHD. She will give some practical advice on parenting neurodivergent (ND) children as a ND parent and discuss self care and why it's crucial to refill your own cup. (This session is online only and will not be recorded).

Relevant for parents or professionals who would like to understand more about regulating children's emotional states (and their own!) and how this can be achieved for all children through changing responses and developing a range of effective strategies. This talk will explore the journey of learning to regulate effectively, thinking about supporting all children to develop their regulation skills through sensory, organising and thinking strategies.

Preparing for Primary School Workshop

Wednesday 14th June
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12pm

This small group workshop is a chance to discuss ideas and strategies to support the transition into primary school for parents of preschool aged children with additional needs. A crèche will be available and places must be booked in advance.

Grandparent Coffee Morning

Wednesday 12th July
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon

SNAP's annual coffee morning specifically for grandparents of registered SNAP families. It is a chance to share experiences, ask questions and look at specialist resources and information. This is a grandparent only event, to allow for an open and relaxed conversation.

Toileting Q&A Session with Continence Consultant, Charmaine Champ

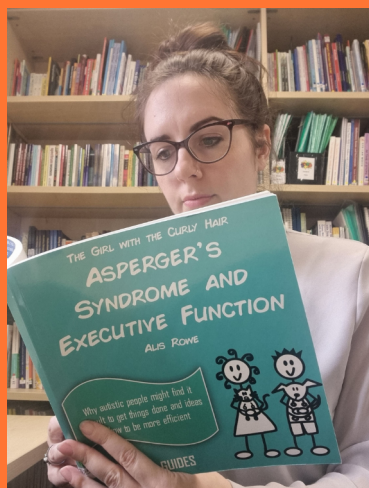
Wednesday 19th July
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 11:30am

Charmaine joins the SNAP team for a relaxed Q&A session where parents can ask questions about toileting, day-time or night-time wetting, soiling, diet, communication, sleep or behavioural needs.

Emotional and Sensory Regulation with Kathryn Miller

Wednesday 28th June
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon and
Online webinar - 7:30pm to 9:30pm

Kate's SNAP Library book recommendation



SNAP's specialist library, based at The SNAP Centre, contains a variety of books, easy reference information sheets and DVDs, that are free to borrow over a four week loan period. The extensive range of resources are available to anyone concerned with additional needs and disability. Kate shares one of her favourite reads, *Asperger's Syndrome and Executive Function* by Alis Rowe [The Girl with the Curly Hair] (2018).

"Alis' books are quick to read and easy to digest, with lots of clear visuals to explain information or give examples. This title helps introduce the 'Executive Functions' which are the set of cognitive processes our brains use to carry out tasks. It covers working memory, flexible thinking, organisation, planning and prioritising, controlling impulses and starting tasks. Although written with autistic individuals in mind, executive functioning differences are often seen in many conditions such as ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia. This is a great book for adults and young people to help understand how the executive functions are used in day to day life and to explore strategies to support them."



Charity Champions are back!

Big or small, easy or challenging, SNAP supporters of all ages want to get stuck in and raise vital funds for their local charity after seeing its impact on Essex families. We cannot thank people enough for thinking of SNAP and taking on these impressive feats!

Here's just a small selection of exciting challenges that have recently taken place...

Wing Walker, Joyce

SNAP supporter, Joyce, went to new heights to support SNAP by completing a wing walk hundreds of feet in the air.

"I have always wanted to wing walk as it's something quite daring, so thought I would make it worthwhile and do it for charity."

Wing walks date back to the 1920s as a heart hammering stunt that featured in aerial barnstorming shows. Daredevil, Joyce, wasn't worried about the risks involved. "I didn't really think about it. I have been in a light aircraft before, albeit the one in Clacton."

On the day, Joyce climbed up onto the top wing of a vintage biplane and was strapped into a specially

designed five-point harness, standing on top of the plane. She reminisces that it was great once the plane had taken off.

The wind and a bit of rain whipped at Joyce but she wasn't frightened. "The best part was once I was in the air, I could clearly see the Dartford Bridge, the Thames and Canary Wharf."

Thanks to her bravery and determination, Joyce raised an astonishing £1,952 for SNAP.

She also shared some sage advice for anyone wanting to try a wing walk. "I will always remember the tip from a lady who went on the plane before me. She told me to keep my mouth shut. Otherwise your cheeks flap around!"



Swimmer Jaime

Nine-year-old, Jaime, decided to do a swimathon for SNAP after attending Mini-Sensorise in February half term. She saw the impact the charity has on other children and families...

"I wanted to help other kids like my brother and give something back to SNAP".

Congratulations to Jaime for raising £500.

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



Carl with his wife and two daughters

Running legends

This year we had two fabulous runners participate in the London Marathon who raised over an incredible £5,200 between them.

Rich - "Running the London Marathon for SNAP was a real honour. I can't say I'm in any rush to run another marathon anytime soon, but I'm absolutely thrilled with the money raised for a charity that is very close to my heart."

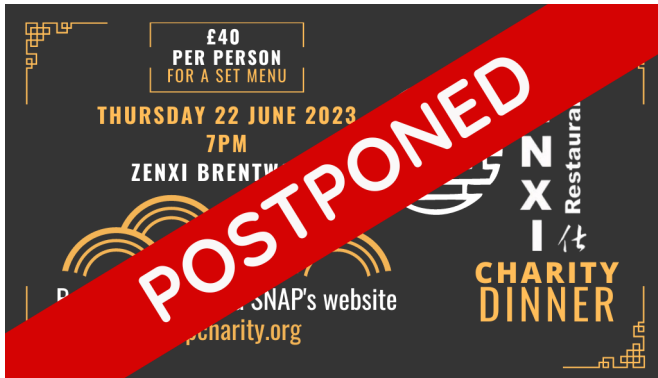
Carl - "I've always wanted to run a Marathon but never really committed to doing one until this year. I said to myself it's now or never. I'm just so pleased I have raised some money to help SNAP with its superb work to help families."



Rich running past Big Ben

Fundraising

Upcoming events



For more information or to book tickets for any of these events, please visit snapcharity.org/events.

More events will be coming in 2023 and 2024 so keep your eyes peeled on SNAP social media platforms and the SNAP website.

Interested in volunteering at events? We need lots of help to ensure our events run smoothly. Please contact fundraising@snapcharity.org for more information.

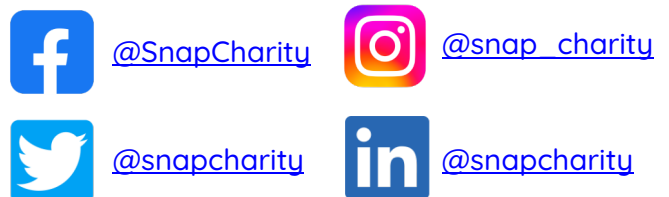


Donate while shopping

Help support SNAP every time you shop! Make your purchases through **Easy Fundraising** or **Give As You Live** they will turn a percentage of your spend into free funds for the charity!



Follow us on social media:



Subscribe to regular supporter emails at snapcharity.org/subscribe



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

Call 01277 245345
Email events@snapcharity.org