



matters

Sharing news of SNAP's important work



Sunshine and smiles at SNAP

Step into Spring and Summer with The SNAP Team as we share news, information on upcoming events and sessions, and our top tips to get our families through

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About Us



Partnering with Parents

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.

At SNAP, we have a wide range of services - at the Centre, remotely and hybrid - to meet the needs of our 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
- 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
or familyteam@snapcharity.org

Website - www.snapcharity.org

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

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Welcome

Welcome to our latest edition!

As the days grow longer and the sun shines brighter, there's plenty to look forward to at SNAP! This issue is packed with exciting updates, including the return of our Moving to Secondary School Course in May and Natalie Fernando's Emotional Resilience Course in June. We also have a brand-new session from Louise Simpson Coaching to help you get organised. You'll find all the details about these and other upcoming talks and coffee mornings on [page 6](#).

We also have practical advice on working with your child's school and a fun idea for a summer sensory tray on [page 5](#). Plus, on [page 4](#), our amazing SNAP Parent Choir takes centre stage! It's inspiring to hear how much this group means to parents, offering not just music but a vital sense of community—and remember, no singing experience is needed to join!

Following the fantastic success of our Beat the Wine Bluffers Event (see [page 7](#)), we have even more exciting events coming up—check out the back cover for details. And we're thrilled to announce that, for the first time in years, SNAP has four charity places in the London Marathon 2026! Applications are now open, so if you're interested, visit the 'Get Involved' section on our website for more information.

We hope you and your family enjoy the spring sunshine, and as always, please remember, we're here for you whenever you need us.

Warm regards

Karen

Karen Boath, CEO



SNAP in numbers

(2025 so far)

4,932

Families supported

87

New families
registered

667

Helpline calls

821

Helpline emails

1,031

Hours of children
services

217

Participants in
specialist talks &
workshops

Highlights

The start of 2025 has been a very busy one!
Here is a 'SNAP'shot of last few months...

Emotional Resilience

Delivered by Natalie Fernando, a counselling skilled coach and qualified family mediator, this course provides a safe and supportive environment for parents to explore their feelings, build resilience, and find strength in their unique parenting experience.

Natalie shared, "As a parent of two neurodiverse children, I understand firsthand how challenging it can be to navigate this journey, especially when support feels scarce. Being able to use my experience and skills to help other parents feel less alone during difficult times is deeply rewarding. I love delivering this course, empowering parents and carers to build their self-esteem, and equipping them with strategies, practical tools and techniques to carry forward in their lives".



Natalie delivering the course to 20 SNAP parents

See [page 6](#) for dates for the next Emotional Resilience Course and a host of other upcoming talks, webinars and coffee mornings.

On the road

Members of SNAP's Family Team have been out and about visiting local events, schools and roadshows across the county, to offer support, advice, and a listening ear to parents. They have recently attended Thurrock Family Hub Just for You sessions, Essex Local Offer SEN Roadshows and host monthly drop-in sessions at Brentwood Library alongside the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service.



Family Support Advisers Natalie and Katie at the Mid-Essex Local Offer Roadshow

Find out more about future dates on the ['SNAP Charity Information Network' Facebook page](#) or visit www.snapcharity.org/directory



Services Manager Rachel and Family Support Adviser Alli at the Essex Local Offer SEN Roadshow in Billericay

For the latest from SNAP,
follow us on social media:



@snapcharity @snap_charity

New Facilities

As SNAP's 30th year came to a close, The SNAP Centre had a little makeover. We had a new lift installed, as well as a fresh coat of paint in more calming colours and a new floor in the Activity Hall. Thank you to the amazing funders, Essex Wooden Spoon and the Billericay Round Table, for keeping our Centre both accessible and welcoming!



Above: Members of Essex Wooden Spoon testing out the new lift

Below: The SNAP Centre's downstairs Activity Hall with the new flooring and fresh paint



What a knockout!

Huge thank you to SNAP supporter and former volunteer, Dexter "The Kid" Tyler, who took part in a charity boxing match to raise money and awareness for SNAP. He raised an incredible £1,676!

Dexter (right) throwing a punch at his opponent mid-fight



Family services

Come and do something for YOU!

SNAP's Parent Choir started off the back of the success of the children and young people's choir during the pandemic. Since then it has been a safe haven for many parents.

Led by our music therapist, Emily Grimes, sessions are held fortnightly and begin with a vocal warmup followed by the singing of various songs at the request of the group. Halfway through the session, parents have the opportunity to pause for a tea break, chat with each other and to speak to a SNAP Family Support Adviser for advice and information.

"The whole point of this group is for parents to have a safe space to join in and have fun! For many of the parents attending, due to the complexity of needs their child may have, it can be difficult to have opportunities to socialise or to have friends that understand exactly what they are going through. Here, they can find community and it also gives parents a rare opportunity to put themselves first," shares Emily.

For SNAP mum, Nikki, Parent Choir has been really important.

"The choir is important to me because it is something I do for **ME**. It has a great feeling of togetherness and what we have achieved is amazing and uplifting. I've always quite liked singing but not had a lot of confidence. There's no judgement of how good you are, it's friendly and kind and Emily is fantastic. We have done a couple of performances too which gave us a fabulous sense of achievement and have been great bonding experiences for us all."



From left to right - music therapist Emily plus Mandy, Michaela, Sue, Gemma, Jermayne, Liz, Nikki, Rebecca, Jill, Maria, Marie and Jo

Jermayne has been part of Parent Choir since it began back in September 2021, "I love being part of it because it's something for me to do on my own. I'm a person here not just someone's mum. It makes me feel really happy when I sing and when I'm driving home after I'm on cloud nine. I've got a whole new group of friends who understand what my day might have been like. Emily, our talented singing teacher, is so welcoming and welcomes all of our ideas. Emily has given me the confidence to perform many times in front of our families and wider audiences which I get a real buzz from."



If you are feeling hesitant about joining, these parents have some encouragement for you:

"Come and do something for **YOU**! Take your mind off everyday stuff. You will be amazed at what a great sound we make. Come along and help us make an even greater sound." - Nikki

"We would all love to welcome more people to our group. We are a friendly bunch, you will enjoy yourself, it will build your confidence and if you're anything like me, your voice is better than you think!" - Jermayne

All registered SNAP parents are welcome!
Interested in joining the Parent Choir?

Call SNAP's helpline on 01277 211300 or email info@snapcharity.org.

Part funded by [Essex Association of Local Councils](#)



Parent Choir sessions build towards SNAP's annual Christmas Showcase, where they join SNAP's Junior Choir and Drama Club, performing to a room full of family, friends, and SNAP staff. It is always a very special evening and marks a significant milestone in the confidence of our parents and carers. At last year's showcase, the Parent Choir made the audience tear up with beautiful covers of *Time After Time* by Cyndi Lauper and *Cover Me in Sunshine* by Pink.

"Once you have been a part of SNAP it is very hard to leave!"

In this edition's Volunteer Spotlight, we hear from Mary, who has been part of the SNAP family for 12 years.



"My time at SNAP began in 2013 when I began as a volunteer at the Friday morning Music Sessions, which were running at that time. I had recently 'retired' from First Step in Havering (Pre-school setting for children with Special Needs & Disabilities), where I had worked for 25 years, but I missed the contact with children and families too much, so came to SNAP, which is local to me. My interest in disability and special needs began as a child, as my brother had Muscular Dystrophy and was a wheelchair user from the age of 7, just before I was born."

"After 3 months Karen & Hilary asked me to join the staff and so began 7 years working as a Family Support Adviser, working in the pre-school family sessions and also helping parents to complete their Disability Living Allowance

(DLA) forms. To see the progress that children make when attending SNAP and the support that is given to parents is incredible. After I retired in 2021 I reverted to being a volunteer and still come in a few times a month to help parents with their

DLA forms and help with the catering for SIBS4FUN week in the summer. Once you have been a part of SNAP it is very hard to leave!

"I feel so lucky that I have always looked forward to coming into work and have had jobs that I love and have worked with incredible teams of staff. Most importantly, I feel privileged to have worked with so many amazing children and families over the years. Thank you SNAP!"

Interested in volunteering at SNAP?

Email to find out more about how you could get involved with the charity:
volunteers@snapcharity.org.

Services corner

Featured in the highlights of our previous SNAP Matters magazine, our pre-school sensory tuff trays have been going down a treat in sessions and online!

Services Support Assistant Olivia and Services Support Intern Hannah have been creating these trays for our pre-school children during activity sessions, but it is also a fantastic activity for families to try at home. Objects do not need to be bought especially; parents can be creative with what they already have.

The purpose of a tuff tray is for a child to use one or all their senses while interacting with various textures and materials. This can help to stimulate and strengthen their senses whilst exploring. Many children get a lot of sensory feedback too and can find it calming.

Lemonade summer sensory tray idea:

You could use: Yellow shredded paper • Yellow tissue paper • Lemons - real or fake • Scoops/spoons • Cups • Straws



Think of the senses when creating a tray:

- Sight
- Sound
- Smell
- Taste
- Touch

Working in partnership with your child's school

Whether it is you that first raises concerns with the school, or the teacher that wants to talk to you about their observations of your child, it is most beneficial to communicate positively with them to get the best outcome.

Working together with the teaching staff and SENCO will be most effective.

This information sheet details how to get started, preparation before meeting with the school and advice for after the meeting. There is also a list of education advice organisations you can contact to see if they can advise you on next steps.



When meeting with the school:

- Do ask for any jargon or acronyms to be explained if you do not understand them.
- Do ask for a set plan going forward so that you and the school are on the same page.
- Do not be afraid to refer to a list you prepared earlier, to make sure you don't forget anything you wanted to say.



For the full SNAP Information Sheet, please scan the QR code or visit our website:

www.snapcharity.org/resources

and click the SNAP Information Sheets tab.



April to July 2025

SNAP organises a unique and diverse calendar of Specialist Talks, Courses, Webinars and Coffee Mornings for parents and professionals.

For more information, visit the SNAP website - www.snapcharity.org/training.

Please email info@snapcharity.org to book/register your interest for the Summer Term talks.

Brighter Futures Course - ONLINE

Starts Wednesday 23rd April
Every Wednesday for 6 weeks
Online webinars - 7.00pm to 9.00pm
£60 per SNAP registered parent

Led by Kathryn Miller of Clouds and Rainbows, this course is for parents of primary-aged neurodivergent (ADHD/Autistic) children.

She will cover topics such as understanding neurodiversity, sensory processing, emotional regulation and behaviour as communication.

Emotional Resilience Course

Starts Wednesday 18th June
Every Wednesday for 4 weeks
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon
£40 per SNAP registered parent

Led by Natalie Fernando, this course is for parents of children with SEND.

She will cover topics such as understanding your emotions, building resilience, effective communication and self-care.



Essex County Council

We are extremely grateful to the Essex County Council Carers Community Fund for funding the courses above.

Moving To Secondary School

Two week course - Wednesday 7th May and Wednesday 14th May
Hosted by Kathryn Miller
The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon
£20 per SNAP registered parent

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

Sensory Friendly Support for Children with Anna Hamlet

Tuesday 29th April
Online webinar - 7.00pm to 9.00pm
£10 per SNAP registered parent

This session will give you some ideas on how to support your child's sensory needs. It will include a quick recap on sensory processing differences and will then provide lots of sensory strategies that you can start to use with your child straight away.

How organising your life will improve your wellbeing with Louise Simpson

Wednesday 21st May - The SNAP Centre - 10am to 12noon
Wednesday 2nd July - Online webinar - 7.00pm to 9.00pm
£10 per SNAP registered parent (per session)

Professional organiser and life coach, Louise, will be joining us to share her top tips to help you get your life more organised as well as helping you tackle both the mindset and practical changes required. Q&A will be held at the end of the session.

In Partnership With



Louise Simpson Coaching
Bringing balance to heart and home

Coffee Morning with Occupational Therapists

Wednesday 4th June
The SNAP Centre - 10.30am to 12noon
Free of charge

Join Occupational Therapists Aaron and Jenne of The Great Little OT Practice, Maldon, who will be on hand to answer any questions, give some informal advice and help wherever they can with anything OT-related.

In Partnership With



Grandparent Coffee Morning

Wednesday 16th July
The SNAP Centre - 10.00am to 12pm
£5 per SNAP registered parent

SNAP's annual coffee morning specifically for grandparents of registered SNAP families is back! 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.

Activity Sessions at SNAP

SNAP offers a range of sessions for pre-school children through to teenagers, both during the school term and the holidays.

Scan here with your phone camera to go straight to our website



Find out more:
www.snapcharity.org/activities

Fundraising

Labelnet raises funds and spirits at Wine Bluff

The corks popped, the glasses clinked, and the generosity flowed at SNAP's Beat the Wine Bluffers at Shenfield Parish Hall, sponsored by [Labelnet](#). The event attracted wine lovers, philanthropists, and members of the SNAP community for an evening of exceptional wine tasting and entertainment.

Nish Patel of [Shenfield Wine Company](#) and Penny Hollington of [Lady Penelope Wines](#) compered the Call My Bluff style event as three bluffers tried to convince the audience of their expertise.

Guests swirled, sniffed, and savoured delicious wines over six rounds, debating which bluffer was telling the truth. Fundraising Manager, Sara Clifton said, "It was an incredibly entertaining night. Our bluffers were hilarious and really got into their characters. Everyone really enjoyed themselves, though I suspect there were a few sore heads in the morning."

"I really enjoyed watching the audience each round - there were a lot of tables having heated debates about who to trust, and others who were very democratic, with raised hands to cast their vote for a consensus. Despite how relaxed the event was a lot of our guests took it very seriously!"



Above: The winning team - scoring 5 out of 6!

As well they should with a case of delicious wines provided by Shenfield Wine Company up for grabs for the winning team! The night wasn't complete without the charity auction which featured some stunning prizes including a Damien Hirst, Rare Spin CD from [Brandler Galleries](#), a gift set of wines from [New Hall Wine Estate](#), and bottle of Blackeye Gin signed by Mike Tindall, James Haskell and Alex Payne.

By the end of the intoxicating evening, a fantastic £4,508 was raised for SNAP. These funds will help to ensure that SNAP can continue to support thousands of local families.

Karen Boath, CEO said, "This would not have been possible without Labelnet, who in addition to sponsoring the event also provided a welcome drink and specially printed covers for each of the bottles being sampled throughout the night."

"On behalf of The SNAP Team, I would like to raise a glass to Labelnet for their continued support. And huge thanks to Nish, Penny, our bluffers and everyone who came along, helping to make this event such a success. We are truly grateful for the overwhelming support we receive from our community. SNAP really would not be able to be here for so many families without you."



From left to right: Our bluffers Jamie & Alli Fudge-Smith and Jos Hollington alongside Penny Hollington, Nish Patel and SNAP CEO Karen Boath

Mark your diaries - SNAP's Beat the Wine Bluffers will be back on Friday 24 April 2026!

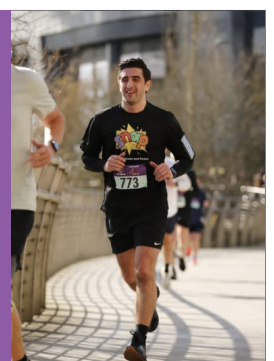


Labelnet Team goes above and beyond!

The day after Beat The Wine Bluffers, seven members of the Labelnet team took on the Chelmsford Half Marathon in aid of SNAP.

A massive well done to Rob, Vir, Jack, Matt, Austin, Adam and Rich. They raised nearly £3,000 between them! Thank you so much Team Labelnet - you are incredible!

Rob (left) and Vir (right) running over the River Chelmer



Upcoming events

WARLEY PARK GOLF CLUB
 **CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**
 In aid of SNAP
 Friday 9 May • 4 balls encouraged
 Email fundraising@snapcharity.org

IN AID OF SNAP
CURRY & CASINO NIGHT
 Saturday 10 May From 7pm
 Marco's New York Italian at Holiday Inn Brentwood
 Email sr@phoenixfm.com to book and for more information.

 **TRY A TRI**
 BRENTWOOD
 Sunday 29th June from 8.00am
 Brentwood Centre, CM15 9NN
 Headline sponsor:  Raising funds for: 
 Book your place at www.trisportessex.org/tryatri

COCKTAILS & TAPAS at **HARRY'S BAR**
 BILLERICAY
 THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER - £30 PP
 TABLES OF 4,6,8 AVAILABLE
 SAVE THE DATE

Drop-in for a catch-up over coffee & cake
 It's also an opportunity to look around and see The SNAP Centre's fantastic facilities
 Friday 7 November 11:00am-2:00pm at The SNAP Centre
 plus Christmas shopping stalls
 Coffee and cake catch-up
 SAVE THE DATE



Tap the images for booking and more information. Alternatively, visit snapcharity.org/events.

Scan the QR code to the left to go straight to the Events webpage.

Get all the latest updates by subscribing to supporter emails snapcharity.org/subscribe.

or scan this QR code with your phone camera.



LONDON MARATHON

SNAP has 4 charity places for 2026 London Marathon!

Join Team SNAP for this once in a lifetime race through the capital and tick off the ultimate bucket list item!

Applications now open!

Visit our website to apply: www.snapcharity.org/london-marathon

Scan for more information



£25
per year by standing order

200+
Club Lottery

Could you be our next winner?

Make a difference to the families we support and your good deed could reward you too...

Find out more by visiting www.snapcharity.org/200-club

or scan the QR code with your phone camera

