



FAMILIES INFOCUS (ESSEX) E-BULLETIN

AUTUMN
2019 ISSUE

Welcome to the **Autumn Issue** of

the Families InFocus Newsletter. For many of our children and young people September and October can be a challenging and stressful time. The change in routines and transitions with new timetables and new school environments, along with the darker nights can all have an effect on our emotional wellbeing and put strain on the entire family. There are several organisations that can help provide support and advice at both a national and local level;

ESSEX FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE

The Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service brings together a range of children's community services. It's provided by Virgin Care in partnership with Barnardo's on behalf of Essex County Council and the NHS.

Website: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk>

Phone Number: 01245 329240

HEALTH WATCH ESSEX

A guide to health and wellbeing for young people, aimed directly at young people. It tells you where you can get help and information and gives you clear and sensible ideas on what to do if you feel you need that extra bit of help

Website: <http://www.essexyeah.org.uk/index.html>

Email: info@healthwatchessex.org.uk

Phone Number: 0300 500 1895

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE (EWMHS)

This service provides emotional wellbeing and mental health advice and support for young people and their families across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. The Service is available to young people from the age of 0-18 or up to the age of 25 if they have special educational needs.

For Self-referral - call 0300 300 1600 to access the EWMHS during working hours: 9am-5pm, Mon - Fri

Email: NELFT-EWMHS.referrals@nhs.net

Website: <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs>

For out of hours and weekend Crisis Support Service, please call the general NELFT switchboard on 0300 555 1201 (ask for crisis team)

Also, in this issue, we will be focussing the spotlight on our amazing volunteers; highlighting the fantastic work they do and outlining some of our current volunteering opportunities.

In a climate where services and funding for children and young people with disabilities and SEND are being severely stretched, the support of the community and our volunteers has never been more important to us.



*We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter.
All the best from The Families InFocus Team*

To unsubscribe from our newsletter at any time, please contact helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



At the end of September we celebrated another milestone birthday as our friend and colleague, Julie Neilson, Senior Family Support Adviser, turned 60 years old young! Julie has been invaluable to both the charity and the local community for over 18 years and deserved a wonderful birthday and a fantastic 60th year! Happy Birthday.





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Information....

Families InFocus (Essex)

Supporting Essex Families for over 22 Years

Who are we?

We provide a free INDEPENDENT SEND Information, Advice and Support Service to any Essex family of a child/young person (0 to 25) with any special educational need or disability.

Our Family support Advisers provide support via telephone/email helpline, face to face, drop-ins, advice surgeries, and outreach through home visits/meetings (*Subject to availability*).

Help with Educational Issues includes:

- Information, advice and support with Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment and EHC plan and One Planning
- Information, advice and support with all other SEN support
- Talking through the issues, helping complete forms/letters
- Offering advice on the processes involved
- Being available to accompany you to meetings, reviews etc. (*subject to us receiving enough notice*)

Help with disability related benefits for the child/young person and family support including:

- Disability Living Allowance (child/young person)
- Personal Independence Payment (young person 16+)
- Family Fund and Carer's Allowance
- Other financial support including tax credits and Employment Support Allowance

Preparing for and attending appeals and tribunals (both education and benefits related).

Other sources of help and support available:

- National Helpline from Contact (formally Contact a Family): Tel: 0808 808 3555 contact.org.uk
- SENDIASS Essex: Tel: 0333 013 8913 or visit send.iass@essex.gov.uk
- Essex Local Offer: essexlocaloffer.org.uk/content/send-information-advice-and-support-service

Our services are seen as essential, invaluable and our holistic approach means we can tailor our support to the individual families we help – Families InFocus 2018



Services and support for special educational needs and disability

The Essex Local Offer

Details provision and services available in Essex for children and young people with SEND.

The Essex Local offer is for:

- Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) from birth to 25 years,
- Their parents and carer
- Practitioners and professionals

Go to

<http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/essex-local-offer/>

to find out more about services in your area.



ESSEX.GOV.UK

ADMISSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

If your child is due to start primary or secondary school from September 2020, here are some important dates for you.

SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

From 12 September 2019 you can apply online for your child's secondary school (year 7) place. You must submit an application by the national closing date of 31 October 2019. Applications received after this date will be considered late and you may reduce your chance of being offered a place at your preferred school.

PRIMARY AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLACES FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

From 11 November 2019 you can apply online for your child's primary (Reception) or junior (year 3) school place.

You must submit an application by the national closing date of 15 January 2020. Applications received after this date are considered late and will reduce your chance of being offered a place at your preferred schools.

For more information go to

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/admissions>

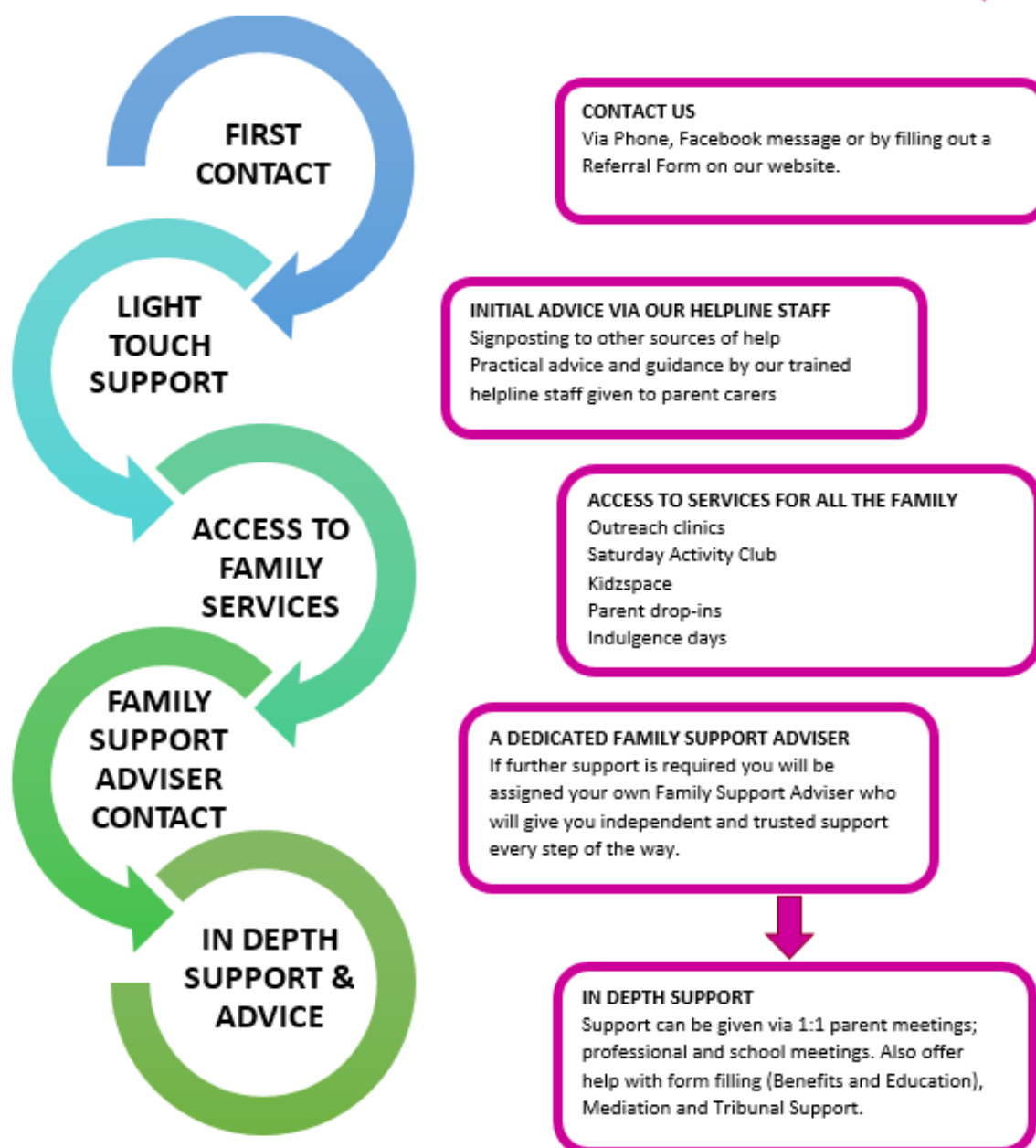


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FAMILIES INFOCUS (Essex) offer a one stop information and advice service which can be accessed free and without a GP referral.



Website: familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



facebook.com/FamiliesInFocusEssex



Helpline: 01245 353 575



helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



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What's On.....

Families InFocus activities

Along with providing support for parent/carers with Education issues and claiming disability benefits, did you know that Families InFocus also run several community based activities and clubs;

FAMILY ACTIVITY CLUB – a weekly fun group for the whole family. Activities include trampolining, gymnastics, dress-up, bikes & trikes, arts & crafts, free play.

BRAINTREE DROP-IN – a monthly parent/carer meetup with access to an FSA and trained therapist offering a free treatment.

SIBLING SUPPORT GROUP “KIDZSPACE” – a monthly group for children aged 8+ who live with a sibling who has a disability or special educational need. Fun activities include; horse riding, crazy golf, bowling and pottery painting!

These groups are a brilliant way for parent/carers and children to connect with others in a similar situation. See individual flyers below, for further details.



Kidzspace Events

Activities for siblings aged 8+ living with a child who has a disability or a special need

DATE: Saturday 16th November 2019

EVENT: Ice Skating

WHERE: Riverside, Chelmsford

TIME: 10.15am – 12.30

COST: £8.00

DATE: Saturday 7th December 2019

EVENT: Bowling

WHERE: Citybowl Chelmsford

TIME: 11.00 – 1.00pm

COST: £5.00

To Book:

helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



Kidzspace Activity – Crazy Golf, Maldon.



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What's On Cont.....

SATURDAY ACTIVITY CLUB

Play activities for children with a disability or special needs and siblings, accompanied by their parent/carers



Every Saturday 3.30pm – 5.30pm*

(* unless otherwise stated. Up to date closures announced on Facebook)

Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre,
Salerno Way, Chelmsford, CM1 2EH

Suggested donation: £2.00 per child

CLOSURES:

Saturday 26 October

Saturday 28 December / Saturday 4 January

Saturday 21 December - Christmas Party**

****Please note this will not be a drop-in session. Booking essential.**

Closed to non-registered members

CALL 01245 353 575 or email the helpline

helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Our club has recently been awarded funding from Action for Children Essex Short Breaks. If you have a passport number, please say at time or registration/signing in.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

ADVANCED NOTICE OF THE SATURDAY ACTIVITY CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY 2019

DATE: 21 DECEMBER 2019 **TIME:** 3pm – 5.30pm

VENUE: Chelmsford Sports and Athletics Club
Please provide a small present for your child as Father Christmas will be coming!

FAMILY INFOCUS

BRAINTREE DROP-IN SESSIONS

Come and join us and meet other parents, for a coffee, cake and chat.

DATES: Wednesday 13th November
Wednesday 11th December

TIME: 10 am – 12pm

VENUE: Alec Hunter Academy, Learning Village, Stubbs Lane, Braintree. CM7 3NR

Meet our new Family Support Adviser covering the Braintree area. Who will be able to discuss any queries you may have.

A trained therapist will also be available offering a free treatment!

Pre-school children welcome



Families InFocus have been lucky enough to be offered access to discounted pantomime tickets for this year's production of Peter Pan. These tickets will be offered on a first come first served basis, and available to immediate family members only.

TIME: 6.00PM

DATE: Saturday 28 December 2019

VENUE: Chelmsford City Theatre

COST: £12.00 per person

TO BOOK EMAIL:

helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk





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Spotlight on



Volunteers & Volunteering



We are incredibly lucky to have a group of fantastic volunteers who help support our vital work with Essex parent/carers and families.

A big thank you to the following volunteers who give up their time to help support Families InFocus, we think you're brilliant!

Abi, Andy, David, Gemma, Hazel, Jen, Joanna, John, Josh, Karen, Leah, Maralee, Martin, Matt, Mel, Michael, Peter, Pippa, Sarah, Toby and Wendy.

Meet our Volunteers

Michael Smith - Kidzspace Volunteer

Many of you will recognise Michael as he not only volunteers for Kidzspace but for the Saturday Activity Club too.

Michael is great fun and can often be seen running around playing football with the kids at the Club.



Michael with Sophie, our newest member of the Activity Club!

Hi Michael! What do you enjoy most about your role?

Meeting new people and watching the children having fun and having a good time.

When you are not volunteering with Families InFocus (Essex) what do you do?

I work Monday to Friday at Essex County Council in finance and love going to car shows at the weekends. Tell us something about yourself that other people may not know. Not sure there is anything as I don't keep many secrets!

Gemma Inci - Saturday Activity Club Volunteer

Hello! What is your name and what do you do for Families InFocus (Essex)?

I am Gemma and I volunteer at the fabulous Saturday afternoon activity club approximately once a month. Often found at the craft table, I help wherever needed at the club.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I love interacting with the children and chatting and laughing with them and the adults that they bring along. During quieter moments I enjoy looking around and watching the children enjoy all the fun on offer.

When you are not volunteering with Families InFocus (Essex) what do you do?

I live with my 11 year old daughter who normally attends activity club with me and at the moment we are kept pretty busy with her recently starting a new school. Other than that I work as one to one support at a local school and have been in this role for about a year and a half. My guilty pleasure is a binge watch so secretly I don't mind so much that the autumn nights are upon us now. That said I love gardening and whilst still quite a novice I love getting out in my own little garden or strolling around open ones with friends and family.

Tell us something about yourself that other people may not know.

I am a new person since having surgery for trigeminal neuralgia 2 years ago and whilst volunteering with families and focus I often reflect on how this activity that I enjoy so much would have been impossible for me a few years ago.

Gemma's creative and fun approach to the arts & Crafts table makes it a popular pit stop for many children and adults at the group!





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Wendy Windsor - Helpline Volunteer

Hi! What is your name and what do you do for Families InFocus (Essex)?

Hello, my name is Wendy Windsor and I volunteer in the offices at Lancaster House every Tuesday. My main role is to respond to telephone and email enquiries on the helpline.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I enjoy speaking with parents and professionals and being part of the initial support process. Some of the conversations are very challenging but I usually feel a sense of achievement if we have identified some positive first steps. The Families InFocus team are a pleasure to work with; everyone is so friendly and willing to help me provide appropriate information and guidance

When you are not volunteering with Families InFocus (Essex) what do you do?

I am actively involved in several other charities and projects in Chelmsford. I volunteer with a local project that provides support for women and children who are fairly new to the area and need help to develop their language skills and to become more familiar with their community. Once a month I join a working party at Marconi Ponds Reserve where we maintain and improve the beautiful woodland and pond areas. I have also just started some voluntary administration support at Age UK Essex and am looking forward to improving my knowledge and learning some new skills. I am a member of Riverside Leisure Centre and enjoy trying to keep my mind and body fit by attending several classes including Yoga and Pilates.

Tell us something about yourself that other people may not know.

I love music, especially singing and have been a member of a local community choir for five years. We perform several times each year and have started to get involved in fundraising concerts for local charities.



David Carruthers – Trustee

What is your name and what do you do for Families InFocus (Essex)?

Hello! My name is David Carruthers and I work for Families InFocus in a voluntary capacity as a Trustee. I feel privileged to be able to support the excellent work our staff do, support our leadership, and I'm very proud to be part of our committed team of staff and all the volunteers. It's great to be part of the team, who work so hard week in and week out to support our families of children with disabilities and special needs.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I got involved with the charity as I am the parent of a child with additional needs. I therefore empathise with the real life struggles of families who use our services. It is extremely satisfying to be able to help and support with the governance of our charity, and assist with the decisions we make at Families InFocus, so we can be the best we can be with the resources we have. I have a fairly stressful working life, and to be able to give a little back, with my experience working in business is personally what I enjoy.

Professionally I work as Head of Purchasing, in the energy from waste sector. My company runs power plants where we prevent general waste going into a big hole (which you'll know as landfill), by converting the waste into electricity which then powers thousands of homes. I'm passionate about our future and being able to work in the environmental sector is similar to my values which drive me to support Families InFocus charity.

When you are not volunteering with Families InFocus (Essex) what do you do?

I love travelling with my family, and try to see new places and cultures as often as I can. Languages and different cultures have always been a great interest, I'm fortunate to have learnt French and German to a reasonable standard. I also do my best to keep fit, and regularly can be found working out at the gym. I completed my first Mud race earlier this year, which was a lot of fun if not borderline crazy!

Tell us something about yourself that other people may not know

On a Saturday afternoon you'll often find me at Melbourne Sports and Athletics Centre as my daughter loves the Saturday Activity Club. I've been known to have a go on the trampoline, to test our safety procedures, of course. Well that's my story and I'm sticking to it! I have personally witnessed the benefits of our Saturday Club, it literally changes lives, and I have seen children grow in confidence and come out of themselves at the Club.

One thing you may not know about me, in closing, is Melbourne Park was my second home in my youth. Athletics was my sport, I competed for Chelmsford Athletics Club through my teens and early twenties, and was Essex 800m Champion. For those that know me now it may be hard to believe. Okay, it was long time ago, but it's great to return on Saturday – I have many happy memories of the running track.





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Volunteering is a great way of gaining essential experience, meeting new people, passing on your knowhow and experience, and giving back to your local community. We have several volunteering opportunities, please continue to read to find out more.....

Family Support Adviser - Benefits Team

This role will provide 1:1 support with parent/carers to fill out benefit forms to help families receive the benefits and help they are entitled to.

The Role

You will make home visits or meet parent/carers at Head Office, Chelmsford. Some administrative tasks will be undertaken such as writing up case notes on charity database.

Skills and experience you'll need

- Good listening skills and an understanding of common family problems
- The ability to deal with private information and sensitive issues
- A calm and confident approach
- The ability to work well with parents,
- An understanding of disability benefits (desirable)

Hours required – Minimum 5+ per week

Website Design

Are you a whizz with the Web?

We are looking to re-launch our website and require some short term help with setting it all up. We have some knowledge of how it can be improved, but would like someone who is very experienced at it to guide the process! It would be short term help but may result in further work in the future. Please get in touch if you think you could help us.

Hours required – Flexible work from home

Graphic Designer

We require a creative person who can produce original graphics that reflect the vital work of the charity and our core values and aims. Visuals will be used across all channels (web, social, traditional press). All graphics produced must be royalty-free. Ideally you would have your own software and be able to work from home. You will help us by designing any of the following;
Roller Banner (for our events and activities)
Website Banners for our Social Media
Flyers and other promotional literature (as required)
Logos for our various clubs and activities

Hours required – Flexible work from home

Ambassador & Local Representative

We are looking for people who are as passionate about Families InFocus as we are! Use your communication skills to inspire your local community to support us. You'll be helping to raise awareness of our services and raise more funds to make sure that we can continue our vital work.

The Role

You will be required to speak at parent/carer groups, attend networking meetings and research potential networking opportunities.

Skills and experience you'll need

- An ability to use your own initiative
- Good verbal communication skills,
- Friendly attitude
- Confidence about speaking in public
- Good networking skills
- Knowledge of the local groups within your area
- An interest in SEND/disability and the services that Families InFocus provides

Hours required – Flexible, dependent on Event

Community Fundraiser

We are looking for a team of community fundraisers to help us raise funds and awareness of our services. Bring your creativity, energy and enthusiasm for fundraising to this newly set up team to help support Essex Families of children and young people with SEND.

The Role

Get creative coming up with ideas for our fundraising events – we've had everything from supermarket collections, Balls, Sponsored running events and quiz nights

- Organise and help out with fundraising events
- Raise awareness of Families InFocus Services in your community

Skills and experience you'll need

- Enthusiasm and passion about our work
- Knowledge of the challenges facing children and families with SEND/disabilities
- Strong organisational skills

Hours required - Flexible, dependent on Event

Contact melanie@familiesinfocussessex.org.uk for further details on any of our volunteer roles.



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Out and about.....

WOODHAM RADARS SOCCABILITY FC



Woodham Radars Soccability FC are delivering a free taster session for young people, regardless of disability or ability!

Woodham Radars FC is an inclusive football club providing various opportunities for their community. They are now focussing all their efforts to ensure that every individual has an opportunity to become part of their club.

To register your interest, please contact **Kenny Bentham** on **07923 134493** or E-Mail **kenny@wrfc.football**

William de Ferrers
3G Pitch,
Trinity Square,
South Woodham,
Ferrers,
CM3 5JU

8-16-year-olds
(male and female)

Every Wednesday
(from 7th August)

6:00-7:00pm

In partnership with:



#Soccability

@radarsfc

THE MAX CARD

The Max Card is designed to make days out more financially accessible for foster families and families of children and young people with special educational needs and disability aged up to the age of 25. Max Cards allow families to visit over 1,100 attractions at a free or discounted rate.

Max Cards can be used for up to two children and two adults. The card is the property of the registered child or young person. To use the discount, the child must be present.



To apply visit <http://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/max-cards-and-tickets/>

Essex Fun Days

October Half Term 2019 and February Half Term 2020

We know it's important for young people with additional needs to try new things, be adventurous and have fun! At Lambourne End we are thrilled to invite young people in Essex who have a disability or additional need to join our

Fun Days!

**Thursday 31st
October 2019**

Ropes Course
Bush Craft
Zip Line

"I love this place.... My children can be themselves without any questions, because people understand their needs."

"My son who is autistic absolutely loved the farm, stroking and feeding the animals."

"The best thing about the Fun Days is the sense of achievement that my son gets from completing the activities. My son really comes away from Lambourne End with a feeling of empowerment."

**Thursday 20th
February 2020**

Caving
Eggs can Fly
Fencing

Each Fun Day is 11am - 4pm. Places must be booked in advance. Young people must be aged 8 or over. Transport to and from the Centre can also be provided from Saffron Walden, Bishops Stortford, Harlow or Epping. There are four adults working with eight young people on each day.

For more information or a Booking Form, please contact Carolan: 020 8500 3047 extension 221 or carolan.casey@lambourne-end.org.uk



Are you a carer based in Essex?

Essex carers helps provide training to develop new skills, gain training and qualifications. See Flyer for details.



Essex Carers The Way to Work

Are you an unpaid Carer, living in Essex?

Would you like to re-train, volunteer, or gain new skills?

We can support you to access new opportunities.

Ages 16+

Access respite to free up time	Undertake a Carer's assessment	Discover new ways to gain skills	Get funding for courses	Improve your confidence
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Get in touch for more information, or drop-in at one of our pop-up events near you! See our website for details.

Referrals@4sx.org.uk | 01268 923 910
www.EssexCarers.co.uk

Caring for someone doesn't have to mean you can't live your life too.



Part of Building Better Opportunities | Funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund



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Thank you.....

To all our supporters and volunteers for their generous donations and time.

INTEL

Intel - The Meetings and Travel Management Company

SUPPORTING FAMILIES INFOCUS, CHARITY OF THE YEAR

We are delighted to share with you the news that **INTEL** raised an impressive £3,100 for Families InFocus during their year of fundraising.

A big thank you to Sian Sayward, who originally nominated us and her fantastic colleagues. The money will go towards ensuring Families InFocus continue to give vital support to Essex Families of children and young people with SEND.



We are delighted to be the Chelmsford Rotary Club's Charity of the Year. Among lots of planned fundraising events, the rotary club will be hosting a quiz to raise funds for us on 16 November. Please see flyer on page 11 for further information. To reserve tickets email melanie@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



A Big Thank you to Luciano Pattavina and Annie Lack who raised £22.00 and £35.00 respectively at the Saturday Activity Club Sponsored family event in July.

We thought you both did amazingly well and the money you raised will go towards more equipment at the club! You're fantastic superstars. Thank you!



NOMINATING FAMILIES INFOCUS AS YOUR CHARITY OF THE YEAR

There are many benefits of us being your chosen Charity of the Year;

- Demonstrate to your employees, customers and potential customers, your company's commitment to an issue that affects lives every day
- Encourage team building
- Boost staff morale
- Positive PR opportunities

Put your company at the heart of the community and adopt Families InFocus (Essex) as your Charity of the Year.

Quiz Night

Saturday 16 November 2019
7.00pm for 7.30pm start to 10.30pm

Writtle Sports & Social Club,
Paradise Road. Writtle. CM1 3HP

Why not form a team with friends, colleagues and family members and join us for a fun evening.

Tickets £6 per person
Teams of 6 to 8
Licensed Cash Bar
Bring your own snacks
Prizes for the Winning Team
Excellent Raffle Prizes

To reserve tickets please email
melanie@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Chelmsford Rotary Club
are hosting a quiz night
in aid of Families
InFocus (Essex)

Rotary Club of Chelmsford

The money raised will go towards
ensuring Families InFocus
continue to give vital support to
Essex Families of children and
young people with SEND.



*Supporting Families of children and young people
with disabilities and special needs.*

Familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



Charity Number 1062311

Families InFocus (Essex) present
“An Evening with Dean Beadle”



27 NOVEMBER 2019, 7pm to 9pm
Doors open at 6.30pm

Hamptons Sports and Leisure, Great Baddow, Chelmsford. CM2 9FH

Dean Beadle is a world renowned speaker who has toured the UK for ten years sharing his experiences of being autistic. In recent years he has also spoken across Europe as well as undertaking four seminar tours of Australia and New Zealand. Through his humorous and insightful speeches Dean outlines his positive outlook on being autistic.

Dean is an experienced journalist and also a singer and performs at charity balls and various events nationwide.

£5 FOR PARENT/CARERS

£10 FOR PROFESSIONALS

PRE-BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL AS PLACES ARE LIMITED

EMAIL: helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

WITH NUMBER OF PLACES REQUIRED AND PAYMENT METHOD

Payment either by Cheque or BACS :

Please make Cheque payable to: Families InFocus (Essex) – quoting your full name and how many places required and send to:

Families InFocus (Essex), Lancaster House, 140 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0EB.

Or VIA BACS transfer to:

Account Name: Families InFocus (Essex)

Account Number: 50076071 Sort Code: 08-90-04. Please quote your full name as a reference.



Charity Number: 1062311



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Supporting a good cause

Let Us Entertain You
With Our
Entertainment Bundle
National Giveaway!

5 BUNDLES TO GIVEAWAY

Play now for a chance to WIN 1 of 5 bundles
including Amazon Echo, Fire TV Stick, Echo Dot and tablet!

- £25,000 jackpot
- Sign up from £1 per week
- Support our good cause today

To start supporting, visit:
www.essexlottery.co.uk
and search for: **Families InFocus**

*Supporters must be 16 years of age or older, enter by the 2nd of November 2019
See website for Terms and Conditions.

Raise funds for Families InFocus (Essex) every time you shop online


Find us on easyfundraising to start:
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/familiesinfocus/>

Shop with over 3,300 online stores

amazon.co.uk John Lewis ebay M&S
Argos Booking.com Boden next
DEBENHAMS GAP viking Sainsbury's
SCREWFIX JUST EAT moonpig ASOS
discover fashion online

easyfundraising feel good shopping
£20 Million raised 1.2 Million users 100,000 causes

Client Questionnaire



Feedback

We need your help!

Please could you spare a moment of your time to help Families InFocus?

Have we recently provided you with advice and/or support?

If so, please could we ask you to complete a client feedback questionnaire?

Your participation in our survey will be vital in helping us to secure future funding and will also provide important evidence to existing funders in highlighting the important work we do with Essex families.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2T3523X>

As an independent charity, Families InFocus (Essex) is funded almost entirely on donations and funding applications.

Thank you for your support!

If you are taking part in any fundraising events, please do consider supporting Families InFocus (Essex). It is easy to make your own free online fundraising page via

<https://www.justgiving.com/FamiliesInFocusEssex>

Family and friends can donate securely via justgiving.com, Facebook or text message.

JustGiving™



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Our popular Saturday Activity Club is partly funded by Essex Shortbreaks (which is run by Action for Children) and by BBC Children in Need.

The money we receive from our funders help us to sustain the club by providing money to hire the venue, hire trampoline and gymnastic coaches, fund key staff positions, purchase equipment (arts and crafts, bikes and trikes), and purchase new toys and dressing up clothes. The funding also enables us to host two children's parties a year; at summer and Christmas. The money we receive goes a long way and is very important to us and to the children and families who attend the club. Sometimes the club is the only place where children can be themselves and connect with others who experience similar symptoms and disabilities to their own. It's also a great place for parents to get to know each other.

Our Activity Club runs every Saturday 3.30pm – 5.30pm
at Chelmsford Sports and Athletics Club, CM1 2EH.

Please see our flyer for further
information.



Through the month of November we will be running clinics at the Saturday Activity Club to help registered Parent/carers of the Activity Club apply for Essex Shortbreaks. For more information, please email Melanie James at melanie@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Did you know that Action for Children, Essex Shortbreaks gives families the chance to take a break from their normal routines and enjoy doing fun things together! They also give children and young people the chance to do fun and different activities. This can help build their confidence and independence.

Short Breaks clubs help children and young people:

- take part in activities away from their family / make friends / try new things.

It also gives families the chance to do things they may not usually do or just have time for themselves.

Activities include:

- After-school, holiday and weekend clubs Sports
- Arts and crafts
- Outdoor activities
- Drama and music clubs



To take part, your child or young person must:

- live in Essex (excluding Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock local authority areas)
- be under 18 or aged between 19 to 25 years old and in receipt of a personal budget
- have a confirmed diagnoses* of special educational need and/or disability

**Where no formal diagnosis is in place or the young person is not of age to receive an EHCP then eligibility criteria would be in place and would need to be confirmed in writing by a medical professional.*

The definition of disabled children and young people is set out in the 'Equality Act 2010' that is a child and young person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

* Sensory Impairments * Learning disabilities * Communication difficulties * Physical impairment
* Chronic or life limiting condition * Complex health care needs*

TO SIGN UP PLEASE VISIT: <https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/what-are-short-breaks/>