



FAMILIES INFOCUS (ESSEX)

E-BULLETIN

SUMMER
2019 ISSUE

Welcome

To the **summer issue** of the Families InFocus E-bulletin.

It's been a busy few weeks for our Families InFocus Team; the Kidzspace group went to Maldon to play Crazy Golf and had a lovely walk down to the prom! The weather was great and the children had lots of fun. If you would like to find out more about our popular Kidzspace group, please go to the children and family groups section.

We had our brilliant summer party on Saturday 29 June. The children (and parents!) had a great time and a big thank you to everyone who made the party so special!

Included in this issue are details of children's clubs and activities running throughout the summer holidays; tips and information when travelling with children with disabilities and SEN via UK based airports; summer programmes run by independent Essex based charities along with information about support and upcoming talks.

If you would like to share any information we can pass onto our families, please get in touch.

In the meantime we'd like to wish you all a lovely summer.



All the best from The Families InFocus Team

Want to influence the way we're run?



The Board of Trustees, which is made up of volunteers, is responsible for the overall management and running of Families InFocus (Essex) working closely with Rachel Ellis, CEO.

We always welcome new Trustees, especially parents whose families use the services of the charity. If you are interested, and would like to know more, please contact Rachel on

01245 353575 or Email:
rachel@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



Staff, Trustees, and Supporters would like to wish

**Rachel Ellis, CEO, a very
Happy 60th Birthday!**

**Rachel has been pivotal to the continued success
of Families InFocus and deserves a
wonderful birthday, have a lovely time!**





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Families InFocus

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
- SENIASS 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 2019*





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FAMILIES INFOCUS - Children & Family Clubs

We had our **Saturday Activity Club** summer party at the end of June. It was a fantastic afternoon and nice to see so many families and children enjoying themselves. We had lots of fun on the day; an amazing entertainer, balloon modelling, arts and crafts, adopt a bear stall and a bouncy castle. Thank you to all the volunteers and Martin Baker who did some brilliant balloon modelling, you all helped to make the day really special!

Some of the feedback we received from children and parents on our party.....

"Thank you for a great party", **"The staff were fantastic, working hard to make it fun for all"**, **"Brilliant! Really enjoyed myself"**, **"Just fabulous!"**



A big thank you to Gavin from the Gluten Free Cookie Co. who kindly provided two huge trays of gluten and nut free cookies for our Party. The Cookie Co. can make cookies to order. For more information call 07554428071.

Please note that our Saturday Activity Club is now closed for the summer holidays, but we will be back on 7 September 2019 - 3.30pm to 5.30pm for our regular fun and activities. Cost per child £2.00.



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Kidzspace *A sibling support group for ages 8+ run by Families InFocus*

Here's a message from our Kidzspace Co-ordinator, Jo Sapsted

"Hope you are enjoying the summer holidays. As usual Kidzspace have been having lots of fun. In May we went horse riding at Chelmsford Equestrian Centre. The morning included a pony ride and pony care. The weather was on our side and everyone had a great time.

We've also recently visited Maldon where we played a round of mini golf and had a short walk on the prom. We all had lots of fun at both of these events!

We get together once a month so if you would like to join Kidzspace or come along to the next event, please let me know". **Jo can be contacted via the helpline**



Kidzspace Events

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

DATE: Thursday 29th August

EVENT: Bowling

WHERE: Chelmsford City Bowl

TIME: 10.45am- 12.45pm

COST: £6.00

TO BOOK: Contact Jo Sapstead

helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



Kidzspace Events

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

DATE: Saturday 14 September

EVENT: First Aid Fun

WHERE: Lancaster House, Chelmsford.

TIME: 10.00am – 12 noon

COST: £3.00

TO BOOK: Contact Jo Sapstead

helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk



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VOLUNTEERING

Our volunteers are amazing; a big thank you to:

Abi, Gemma, Ilana, Jen, Joanna, Josh, Matt, Mel, Michael, Peter and Wendy for all the time you donate to Families InFocus. You make a huge difference to our charity and the families and children we help to support.
Also a big welcome to our two newest volunteers Jack and Toby - It's great to have you on board!



Thursday 6 June 2019

#VOLFEST2019

chelmsfordcvs.org.uk

We were delighted to be part of Chelmsford's Centre Supporting Voluntary Action back in June.

Over 50 local charities took part in the event, showcasing the important work they do with Essex residents and supporting our City. This festival highlighted all the good that can come of our community working together #everyminutematters. For more information on volunteering for Families InFocus, please contact Melanie, melanie@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

VOLUNTEER



We have several different volunteering Opportunities

with Families InFocus (Essex)

Email: melanie@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Or call 01245 353575 for details

Some of our volunteering roles:

Office Admin Volunteer

Kidzspace Volunteer

Social Media Volunteer

Trustee

Saturday Activity Club Volunteer

Helpline Volunteer

Fundraising Volunteer



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Thank you.....

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

Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust for their recent grant of £2,750 for our Family Saturday Activity Club.

Essex Short breaks who awarded us £11,000 for our Family Saturday Activity Club

FSJ Charities for their grant of £5,000 for our Family Support Project

Peter Callaghan from PPC Tiling who generously donated £1,000 for much needed equipment at our Family Saturday Activity Club.

The Rotary Club of Chelmsford who have nominated us to be their charity of the year and to Francis Whitbread, President. We are looking forward to working with Francis and the Rotary Club of Chelmsford on a series of joint fundraising events starting in the autumn.

Woodroffe Benton Foundation for their recent grant of £500





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Supporting a good cause

Search for us at Easy Fundraising

or via <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/familiesinfocus/>



feel good shopping | £27M Raised

Raise FREE donations on everything you need for the summer

Booking.com Groupon



SCREWFIX

HomeAway Dunelm

very Debenhams

DECATHLON wilko

secretEscapes LAKELAND

The Essex Lottery

Make the most of
Summer
Help the Community Shine!

Supporting our cause means the sun won't be the only warmth we feel this year

- Help us to make a difference to our community – Support our good cause
- Tickets are just £1!
- We can do so much more with your support
- It's a WIN WIN for us both – you also get the chance to win up to £25,000 every week!

To start supporting visit:

www.essexlottery.co.uk

And search for Families InFocus



JustGiving

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 Just Giving. You can find our details via the link:

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

[Fundraise for us](#)

[Donate](#)



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Clubs & Activities

Families

contact For families with disabled children

Holidays, play and leisure

A guide for families in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales



Contact have produced a guide providing information about what play, leisure, and short breaks options may be available, and where to find more information. It also has information about arranging holidays for disabled children and details of organisations which provide grants for these types of activities. To access the guide directly via: [Holiday, Play and Leisure](https://contact.org.uk/media/1160137/holiday_play_and_leisure.pdf) or visit: https://contact.org.uk/media/1160137/holiday_play_and_leisure.pdf

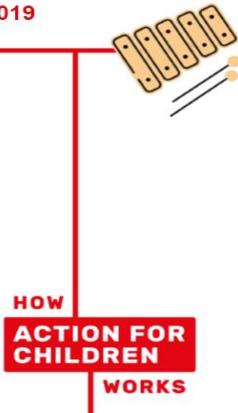
Essex Short Breaks



BY KEEPING YOU IN THE NEWS

Essex Short Breaks
Clubs and Activities

Summer 2019



HOW
ACTION FOR CHILDREN
WORKS

Essex Short Breaks 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.

By registering with Short Breaks you can tap into a range of different activities and days out; they offer;

- [Clubs and activities](#)
- [Light Touch \(hours of care\)](#)
- [Adapted and un-adapted caravans](#)
- [Beach huts](#)
- [Activity days out](#)
- [Max Card discount scheme](#)

Find out more <https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/>



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Clubs & Activities

SEN SUMMER DANCE WORKSHOPS
FOR CHILDREN OF ALL ABILITIES

CELEBRATE DIFFERENCES

Tuesday 13th August 2019

Hutton Community Centre, 5 Harrison Close, CM13 1LP

10.45-11.30- 3-5 year olds

11.45-12.30- 6-10 year olds

£9 per child (adult to stay in class please)

Run by Louise, an inclusive dance teacher with SEN training and experience working with preschoolers, in mainstream schools, and in the Endeavour Co-operative Academy.

For more information contact Louise at
louise.howitt@hotmail.com or 07921394708

Booking and payment online is essential:
https://celebrate_differences.eventbrite.co.uk

Rainbow Rural

Rainbow Rural Centre is based on Sallet's Farm, which is a family run organic farm. It is a registered Care Farm, and provides a unique view of animal care, conservation, horticulture, equine therapy, wild life monitoring, where your food comes from, rural skills, to name a few!

During the school holiday period Rainbow Rural often puts on extra farm club days and activities open to children.

To register and find out more please go to their website [Rainbow Rural](http://RainbowRural.co.uk) or visit <https://www.rainbowrural.co.uk/>

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:



[@radarsfc](#)

#Soccability

Rainbow Rural Junior farm club



Thursday 28th July,
4th August, 11th August, 18th August, 25th August

Rainbow Rural now runs junior Farm Club, during school holidays you can now book a place for your child with special needs (a accompanied by a parent or carer) to join us and help look after the farm.

Junior Farm Club is for 5 years and upwards and is lots of FUN and learning!!!

Here are some of the activities we do for junior Farm Club:

- Looking after the farm animals including any lambs
- Collecting the eggs from the hens
- Exploring the farm and our wood
- Bug hunting
- Gardening in Rainbow garden
- Pony Care
- Finishing with games, drinks and cake!!!



If you are new to Rainbow Rural we are Community Interest Company (C.I.C.) which was set up to allow access to the farm for our community. We work with many different charities, schools and organisations so we can teach rural and traditional farming knowledge to everyone in our community.

BOOKING:- Please email info@rainbowrural.co.uk or ring 01371 874803 (answerphone) and we will send you booking details.



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Travelling



London Transport have a range of Accessibility guides in alternative formats to help people with disabilities and SEN to plan and make journeys. All of the guides can be obtained free of charge by completing the order form on the following website:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/forms/12387.aspx?cid=accessguides>

Special Assistance at UK Airports



Airport journeys can be very stressful for many people, especially if you are unsure of what to expect on the day. Some airports and airlines are now recognising that parents and carers who are travelling with children and vulnerable adults need extra help and support. Assistance is also being offered for people with Hidden disabilities (Autism, ADHD, Dementia, GDD, Asperger's) as well as well as those with physical impairments. Below is a list of Some of UK airport websites which offer further advice. More can be found on Civil Aviation Authority website (CAA)

<http://www.caa.co.uk/Passengers/PRM/Special-assistance-guidance-from-airports-and-airlines/>

**GATWICK HEATHROW LUTON STANSTED
SOUTHEND**



Essex

Bus Accessibility

First Safe Journey Card

The First Safe Journey Cards has been designed specifically for customers who may need some extra help to make their journey.

The card gives you the chance to tell the driver what extra help you may need to make your bus journey. From needing more time to reach your seat to needing the driver to speak up because you have trouble hearing, the card is there to help. Whatever your need, you can use these cards to let the driver know in a private and discreet way. There are even blank spaces for you to fill in yourself for details of your destination or special instructions

Better Journey Card for Disabled customers

After speaking to many disability groups around the UK, First Essex have designed a card to help give people with disabilities a way of letting the driver know that they may need additional help. The card includes messages such as 'please be patient, I have a hidden disability', 'please face me and speak clearly, I lip read', and 'please help me find a seat'. There are also some blank spaces for you to use if you want to include your own personal message.

<https://www.firstgroup.com/essex/plan-journey/bus-accessibility>

You can download either card using the links below

- [Download your Safe Journey Card - PDF - \(67 KB\)](#)
- [Download your Better Journey Card - PDF - \(74 KB\)](#)



National Rail Enquiries

Do you need any extra help traveling by train? National Rail Enquiries have produced a quick guide of what you can expect from all train companies as a customer with a disability.

[Further information](#)



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Accessibility



Changing Places Toilet Map

Over a 1/4 million people need Changing Places toilets to enable them to get out and about and enjoy the day-to-day activities many of us take for granted.

Changing Places offer an interactive map of accessible toilets to help you find a toilet not only in Essex but in the whole of the UK.

If you are planning to travel outside your local area then the Changing Places map will quickly show you all the Changing Places toilet locations along your route

You can access the website directly here [Changing Places](#) or via the following link
<http://changingplaces.uktoiletmap.org/>

SEATRAC, from TOBEA

Accessible beaches in Europe.

Seatrac is a device which enables you to get in and out of the sea unassisted. This clever chair is in operation across several European tourists destinations. Tobeá, the company who invented the chair, have produced a map showing where Seatrac is in operation along with an accessibility key to help you plan your visit.

For more information go to [Seatrac](#)

<https://tobea.gr/en/your-seatracs>



Centre Algarve

HOLIDAY CENTRE FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Set in the beautiful [Ria Formosa Nature Reserve](#) and just 2 minutes from the pretty local village of Moncarapacho, The Centre Algarve is mainland Europe's only specialist holiday Centre which is fully equipped to allow people with special needs young and old to experience a wonderful holiday with their family or carers.

They have created an environment where everybody feels comfortable, safe and secure within wonderful grounds that are fully enclosed and gated. A magical and unique holiday centre where fun and memories are created.

The Centre has 14 bedrooms keeping the experience intimate and not too overwhelming as with most large complexes. Whether you are relaxing by the pool or enjoying yourself within the private secure facilities, you will always be able to keep a watchful eye even whilst you relax and unwind in the evening with a glass of wine.



Find out more:

[Centre Algarve Facebook](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/CentreAlgarve>



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Information & talks

Help to Claim

The new Universal Credit support service from Citizens Advice

Our trained advisers can support anyone who needs help in the early stages of their Universal Credit claim – from the application through to the first full payment.

Support is available online, over the phone and face to face.

[citizensadvice.org.uk/
helpclaim](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/helpclaim)

0800 144 8 444 (England)
08000 241 220 (Wales)

Calls are free and lines are open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.



citizens
advice

Help to Claim is a dedicated service from Citizens Advice. It's free, independent, confidential and impartial.



Talk with Geoff Evans

"Anxiety, challenging behaviour and how sensory can impact"

Date: Tuesday, 24 September 2019

Time: 7.00pm – 9.00pm

Price: £10.00

Venue: The Playhouse Theatre Harlow

To Book: playhouseharlow.ticketsolve.com look for PACT for Autism Talk or visit the Playhouse

In this talk Geoff will explore the areas of sensory processing and anxiety in autistic children and young people and how this can impact on behaviour and daily living.

This presentation will be relevant to parents, professionals and autistic individuals.

Geoff Evans is an Independent Autism Consultant and Trainer.

FORTHCOMING DIARY DATES

We are delighted to announce that on 27 November, we will be inviting Dean Beadle to be our guest speaker at an evening hosted by Families InFocus. As well as public speaking, Dean is a journalist, patron of several autism charities and an advocate of autism rights. Dean regularly shares his experiences of life as an autistic person to sell out venues across the country. Further details and booking information will be posted nearer to the event. In the meantime, to register your interest, please email our helpline.

CONTACT US

Families InFocus (Essex) Helpline: 01245 353 575 Open Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm

Email: helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk Follow us on Facebook

Website: www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk <https://www.facebook.com/FamiliesInFocusEssex>

