



Swindon SEND Families Voice



DID YOU KNOW?



We attended 21 Meetings in December,

Participation Champions,

Early Years Engagement Conference

and

BSW Carers Partnership Forum.

SBC SEND Families News Splash

Click to download the December 2023 edition of SEND Families News Splash.

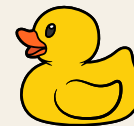
Click here

You can subscribe to get future editions of this newsletter by subscribing to the SBC mailing list.

Join here

A Warm Welcome

Happy New Year!
What a start to 2024, it's certainly nice weather for ducks!
This month sees some of the colder and darker days of the year, so please make sure you reach out to us here at Swindon SEND Families Voice and to other SEND parents and carers when you need to, so that you get the opportunity to share your journey and you never feel alone.
We have several events and groups you can find information about in this bulletin, just check out the SEND events on pages 5,6 and 7.
So why not make your New Year's Resolution to come along, make new friends and connect with other SEND families!



Send Families Voice Team

You said....We did

You told us you wanted us to

Make some changes to how we run our monthly support group, Branches. As 2023 came to a close we asked parents and carers to share their views about how Branches is run via our online Survey.

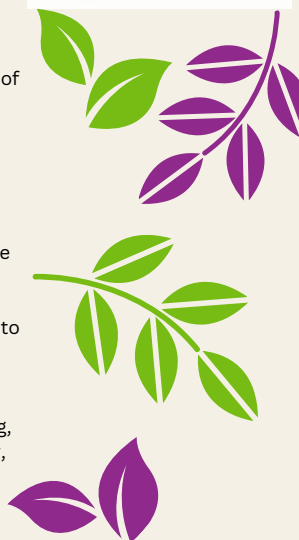
Through that Survey you told us that Thursday's didn't work for you as a regular day to hold these sessions.

You also told us that you would like to see a mixture of Guest Speakers balanced with time to chat to other parents and carers.

You told us that you didn't like too formal of an approach to the sessions and that you wanted to feel supported and included in the SEND community.

You also told us you'd like our venues and day time/ evening sessions to keep alternating. You said the Venue's should be in West and North Swindon as often as possible because these were the most accessible areas in Swindon and for there to be free parking.

You shared that you'd like topics covered such as Sleep, Behaviour, Autism, Toileting, EHCPs, Transition into Adulthood, Anxiety, School Attendance by our guest speakers.



We listened

Our new Branches day is Tuesday!

Our first Branches session of 2024 will take place on Tuesday 16th of January at 10am at the Community room at Shaw Ridge Primary school, West Swindon.

Our guest speaker for January will be Jodie Smitten, who is a Children's Well-being Practitioner and Autism Specialist. Jodie will be talking about Burnout, Masking, Anxiety and the Autistic Experience

We also have access to a BSL interpreter, if you would like to access this service, please email SwindonSENFamiliesVoice@outlook.com, to find out more.

Our February Branches will take place on Tuesday 20th of February at 7pm at The Customer Service Hub, The Orbital in North Swindon.

Our guest speaker for February will be Kirk Anderson who is a mental health practitioner who has 30 years of experience working with Children with learning disabilities and Autism. Kirk will be discussing Behaviour and SEND.

Branches remains a free, monthly support group for any parent, carer or friend/family member who is caring for a SEND child or young adult upto the age of 25 with additional needs, whether those needs are diagnosed or undiagnosed. We want to make sure you feel connected, supported and never alone in your SEND journey. So please do come along and meet the team. We will always do our best to welcome everyone with open arms.



Parent/Carer Questionnaire

The Assistant Educational Psychologists within Swindon Borough Council would be grateful if you could complete the following questionnaire to collect parent/carers views into children and young people's anxious thoughts and worries. They are aiming to use information from the completed questionnaires to create a bespoke webinar aimed at parents/carers, on supporting children and young people experiencing anxious thoughts and worries. Please complete the questionnaire to the best of your ability. If you need support in completing this form please contact: EPsenquiries@swindon.gov.uk
Thank you

Click Here





Useful Contacts

Aiming High

aiminghigh@swindon.gov.uk

(01793) 464 080

Community Paediatricians

gwh.communitypaeds@nhs.net

CAMHS and TAMHS Swindon

tamhs@swindon.gov.uk
CAMHS.Swindon-Admin@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

01865 903 422 CAMHS
(01793) 463 177 TAMHS
0800 023 21 33 Out of Hours

SIAS- The SEND information, advice & support service.

SIAS@swindon.gov.uk

(01793) 466 515

The SEND Team- SBC

SENDSERVICE@swindon.gov.uk

(01793) 464 641



Swindon SEND
Families Voice

Spotlight on The Local Offer

Local Area Decision Making

The Local Area Decision Making page explains how Swindon residents can get involved in shaping services and the ways in which the local authority will involve children, young people and parents/carers in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. The page also explains what the SEND and AP Partnership board is, and how it helps make sure that the voices of those affected by decision making processes are heard and how they can contribute to the running of services, you can find out more by clicking the link below.

[Click Here](#)



Parent Voices



What makes you smile most about your children with SEND?

Their contagious joy for every small detail, and their gentle hearts that love SO deeply and manage to express that without being verbal.



How have Swindon Families Voice supported you and your family?

The preschool stay and play has provided me opportunities to meet other families with SEN children the same age as mine, and we have made genuine friendships, not just the children but me too. I now have a strong SEN parent network of my own that we spend time with through the week and I can message for support or advice any time of day and they just "get it".

What advice would you give to other parents on their SEND journey?

It's really hard, and it's different, and it's not what you expected parenting to be, but that doesn't mean it can't be lovely. Different isn't wrong or bad, and once you get through the period of grief for the parenting pathway you thought you'd have, and enter the period of radical acceptance and loving everything about your child exactly as they are, that's when your life really begins. It's magical, it's fun, it's absolutely chaotic, but their love for you knows no bounds and that will give you the strength to keep going.



MY FUTURE



The My Future 2024 event, previously known as the Preparing for Adulthood Transitions Roadshow, will take place on Thursday 1st February from 10:00am to 16:00pm at New College, North Star Campus (This is a Teacher Training Date at the College and is specifically open for the event and so will not be a typical College Day)

The event is for young people aged 14+ with additional needs as they prepare for adult life, and the parents, carers and professionals who support them.

The My Future Planning Group includes representatives from Swindon SEND Families Voice, Swindon Carers Centre, STEP, Swindon Borough Council Adults and Children's Services including SEND.

Moving away from services for children and young people and to Adult Social Care and Adult Health Services, and from school into college or work, can often be daunting for all those involved.

However, there are many services in Swindon which support young people and those who care for them throughout this transition, and many of these will be on-hand at the event to offer information and advice.

The My Future event will bring together 40+ 'stallholders' from a broad range of organisations from across Swindon that support young people, including from education, employment and training, good health, independent living, social life and community.

The 'My Future' event is an opportunity for young people, parents, carers and professionals to have informal, face to face conversations with different organisations. Also, it is a chance for attendees to hear more about the services and opportunities that they provide for young people with additional needs as they reach adulthood.

If you have any questions, contact the My Future inbox on myfutureevent@swindon.gov.uk

We look forward to seeing you there!

MY Future

An event for young people aged 14 plus with additional needs, and their parent / carers.

"Becoming an adult can be confusing!!!"

Come along and find out what's available to help young people get ready for adult life.

Thursday 1st February 2024
10am to 4pm
@ New College Swindon, North Star Campus

For more information email: myfutureevent@swindon.gov.uk
or text / call 07989 387810

SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Save The Date:
Thursday
1st of February
2024**

PROJECT SEARCH



Swindon DFN Project SEARCH

- 1 Internship training experiences
- 2 Competitive, transferable, and marketable job skills
- 3 Increased independence, confidence and self-esteem
- 4 Individualised coaching on the job and feedback daily
- 5 Building personal and professional relationships
- 6 Participation in a curriculum focused on soft skills required to maintain employment in addition to financial literacy, health, and more

A unique, school-to-work transition programme for students with disabilities.

DFN Project | SEARCH

For more information, contact: supportedemployment@swindon.gov.uk

Please use this QR code to apply online for Project Search, when entering course details please select 'I do not know' and enter the title 'Project Search'.

What is DFN Project SEARCH?

Project SEARCH is a one-year internship program for students with special educational needs, autism and/or disability. It is targeted for students whose goal is competitive employment in the community.

Opportunities are very diverse and include health care, universities, manufacturing facilities and more.

Students participate in three internships to explore a variety of career paths. Each student works with a team that includes his or her family, an instructor, job coaches and host business mentors to create an employment goal and to support the student during the transition from school to work.

The DFN Project SEARCH Philosophy

"People with disabilities have the right to choose a path toward education and employment. However, while the freedom of choice is given, the right to work is earned. Earning the right to work is dependent upon the student's preparation."

Stephen Simon, ADA Quarterly Fall 1998

Core Components of DFN Project SEARCH

- 1 Outcome goal is full time, paid employment.
- 2 True co-production across partners is essential
- 3 Business-led program requiring total immersion in the workplace
- 4 Focus on serving young adults with significant disabilities who will receive follow-along services to retain employment
- 5 Partners must provide a consistent on-site staff
- 6 Each site has a licensing agreement with Project SEARCH

Eligibility Criteria

- Have a current Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Be aged between 16-24 years old
- Be a Local Authority resident.
- Have an ability and desire to progress and the motivation to get in to paid employment
- Be an appropriate match for Great Western Hospital or Swindon Borough Council.
- Be willing/able to access public transport

SSFV are involved in this fantastic opportunity for Young People with a Learning Disability or Autism to start a Supported Internship Programme at GWH from September 2024.

The Programme will provide work-based training opportunities at the Trust, with a view to helping the interns develop their employability skills as well as providing hands-on experience in the workplace.

Come along to the Interest Event on Wednesday 24th January at GWH for more information:

Place: Great Western Hospital
Address: Marlborough Rd, Swindon SN3 6BB
Date: 24th January 2024
Time (2 sessions): 4.30 – 6pm or 6pm – 7.30pm
Attendees required: Parents / Carers / Young people / Training providers

If possible please park in the Brunel Treatment Centre car park and follow the signs to the Academy Entrance. A member of staff will meet you there.

If you would kindly fill out the form via the link, to confirm you are attending on the 24th January.

[Click Here](#)

If you have any further queries please contact: supportedemployment@swindon.gov.uk.

Save The Date!
24th January
2024





SEND COFFEE MORNINGS



Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

Location: Lawn Manor Academy
Date: 15th January 2024
Time: 9.15am - 10.15am



Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

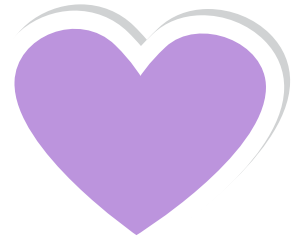
Location: Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
Date: 18th January 2024
Time: 2pm - 3pm



Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

Location: Nythe Primary School
Date: 25th January 2024
Time: 2pm - 3pm



Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

Location: King William CE Primary School
Date: 26th January 2024
Time: 9am - 10am



Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

Location: Kingfisher CE Academy
Date: 5th February 2024
Time: 9.15am - 10.15am



Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

Location: Rodbourne Cheney Primary School
Date: 8th February 2024
Time: 9.15am - 10.15am



SEND EVENTS



BRANCHES SUPPORT GROUP EVERYONE WELCOME



Tel: 07486 873405
Email: swindonsendfamiliesvoice@outlook.com

BRANCHES is a support group open to all parents and carers of children and young people with any Special Educational Need or Disability, aged 0-25 years

When?
Tuesday 16th
January

Where?
Shaw Ridge Primary School,
Ridge Green, Swindon,
SN5 5PU

Time?
10AM-11.30AM

Working Together
Strengthening Support
Reaching Out

Guest Speaker:
Jodie Smitten - Children's Well-being
Practitioner.
She will be doing a talk about;
Burnout, Masking, Anxiety and the
Autistic Experience.



BRANCHES is a free support group, however voluntary donations for refreshments are welcomed



Breakfast Catch-Up

Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Please come along to meet the Swindon SEND Families Voice team to find out what we do!

Location: Toby Carvery, Abbey Meads, SN25 4YX

Date: 7th February 2024
Time: 9.30am onwards



With Amina
and
Hannah!

SEND STAY & PLAY SUPPORT GROUP

For children aged 0-5 years with SEND

FREE to attend!

Email: sendstayandplay.ssfv@outlook.com to book a place

When: Every Thursday ; 10:00 - 12:00

Where: The Meadow, Leigh Road, Swindon, SN2 5DE

Please note parents and carers are responsible for their children whilst attending

SEND EVENTS



BRANCHES SUPPORT GROUP EVERYONE WELCOME



Tel: 07486 873405
Email: swindonsendfamiliesvoice@outlook.com

BRANCHES is a support group open to all parents and carers of children and young people with any Special Educational Need or Disability, aged 0-25 years

When?
Tuesday 20th
February

Where?
Customer Service Hub,
Orbital Shopping Park
SN25 4AN

Time?
7-8.30pm

**Working Together
Strengthening Support
Reaching Out**

Guest Speaker
Kirk Anderson - He has worked with children and Adults with Learning Disabilities for over 30 years. He will be talking about understanding behaviour in SEND.
Encouraging parent/carers to think about what is behind the behaviour, rather than focusing on the behaviour itself.



Swindon SEND
Families Voice

BRANCHES is a free support group, however voluntary donations for refreshments are welcomed



Parent Carer Coffee Mornings

Need a break and a chat?

Come and meet our Parent Carer Support Practitioners, and other Parent Carers at The Sun Inn, Coate Water, SN3 6AA.



Dates for your diary:
Wednesday 11th October
Wednesday 8th November
Wednesday 13th December
Wednesday 10th January
Wednesday 14th February
Wednesday 13th March

Time: 9.30am - 11.00am

SIAS drop in sessions

The SEND information, advice and support service have drop-in sessions every other week. Pop in to the Central Library if you have any questions about SEND, want to meet the team or just prefer to talk face to face!

10th January
24th January
7th February

Central Library
SN1 1QG
12.30-4.30PM

SIAS
SEND Information
Advice & Support



SEND SUPPORT



**SEND
Sharing
Service**



**A specialist lending library from
Swindon SEND Families Voice**

for families in the Swindon area with children and young people who have any kind of Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, whether they have a diagnosis or not

Browse the catalogue...

swindonsendsharingservice.lend-engine.com

ONLY £3
membership per
year, per family
No borrowing
costs

*Some specialist items may be loaned for shorter periods of time. All policies and full details are on the SEND Sharing Service website (swindonsendsharingservice.lend-engine.com) All information is subject to change

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for families in the Swindon area with children and young people who have any kind of Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, whether they have a diagnosis or not

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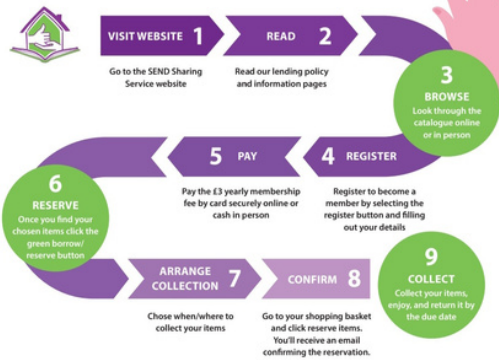
*Some specialist items may be loaned for shorter periods of time. All policies and full details are on the SEND Sharing Service website (swindonsendsharingservice.lend-engine.com) All information is subject to change



Borrow items for up to 28 days*

You can browse the catalogue online or in person, reserve and collect your item...

swindonsendsharingservice.lend-engine.com



Contact us if you have any questions sendsharingservice.ssfv@outlook.com

The Kelly Foundation
LISTEN UNDERSTAND SUPPORT

**EATING DISORDER FAMILY
SUPPORT GROUP**

Last Tuesday of Every Month, 6.30-7.30pm
Starting Tuesday 28th November 2023
Pinetrees Community Centre, Pinehurst, Swindon SN2 1QR

No two families will have the same experiences with eating disorders, but we are here to listen, understand and support families to develop resilience and become strong through the process.

We believe in families. We believe in recovery. We believe talking together is power and good support saves lives.

Welcome to our Family Support Group.

Please contact Jane for more information or to register your interest
Email - jane@4kelly.org
Tel - 01793 200710



Swindon SEND Families Voice

Call us on 07486 873405 or find us on Facebook: SwindonSENDSharingService
www.swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk

Be U SWINDON

www.beuswindon.co.uk
beu.swindon@nhs.net
01793 781 484

**On-Demand
Courses**

- 30 day Access
- Downloadable slides
- Developed by a ND parent with both lived & professional experience knowledge
- Priced to be accessible



Jodie Smitten
BSc Hons Psy, PGCert, MA Autism, MBPsS

Topics covered include; autistic burnout, challenging distress behaviour, school attendance, mental health, understanding emotions.

SEND ACTIVITIES



STFC have 3 Disability sessions on a Wednesday evening:

- 5-6pm - Down Syndrome Active
- 6-7pm - U16 Pan Disability
- 7-8pm - 16+ Learning Disability Team

Venu: The Nigel Eady Training Centre

For more information regarding these sessions, and to register your interest please click the link. If there are any questions about our disability provision please email brad@stfcfoundation.com

[Click here](#)

www.STFCfoundation.com

CHEER FOR FUN

ACCESSIBLE FOR DISABILITIES AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Saturdays 10:15-11:15AM

Wednesdays 11.15AM-12.30PM

TIGER CUBS TODDLER ZONE

AGES 1-4 YEARS OLD (CHILDREN SHOULD BE SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES)

£3 PER WEEK + GROUP T-SHIRT - £10

PRNG | CASH ONLY | INCLUDES DRINK & BISCUITS

BUILD CONFIDENCE • IMPROVE MOTOR SKILLS • SENSOY AWARENESS

G5 Evolution Martial Arts Academy Swindon, SN2 8YY

Free Parking - Baby changing facilities

Next SEN ONLY session at Little Centurions is coming up!

This is a 2-hour session taking place on the FIRST Wednesday of EVERY month from 3.30pm - 5.30pm.

Wednesday 6th December.

Parents and Carers accompanying children are FREE, with a 2-hour session costing £5.95 for Under 4's and £7.95 for ages 4 and above.

You can book online, click anywhere on this poster to go direct to the website

#LittleCenturions #SENsession #Cirencester

SEN Session

1st Wednesday of every month 3:30pm-5:30pm

SENSORY SESSION

Last Thursday of Every Month at 4:15pm

No need to book
Discount applied to the whole family

Rugrats and Half Pints

Cirencester

+125 456 765

Singability

A fun inclusive music/singing class for children aged 5-14 with a severe or profound disability to attend alongside their parent/carer.

TERM 4
STARTING MONDAY 8TH JANUARY

WHERE: Redhouse Community Centre, SN25 2GY

WHEN: Every Monday (Term Time)

TIME: 18.00-18.30

COST: £3 (Pay as you go)

To find out more about the set up of the class please email singabilitygroup@gmail.com
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

SEND ACTIVITIES



ACTIVE & INCLUSIVE SWINDON

Check out Active Inclusive on Facebook for update info

Please Note:
Link Centre Closure will affect Swim, Bounce and Ice Skating so please check with the Link Centre before attending.

Click here for more info

Mondays: Wheels 4 All Cycling, LD Football (16+), SALTO! Dance (16+)

Tuesdays: Disability Ice Skating, Inclusive Bounce Trampolining, Inclusive Swim (16+)

Wednesdays: Yoga, Inclusive Tennis (All ages), Pan Disability Football, Down Syndrome Football

Thursdays: Wheels 4 All Cycling, Inclusive Tennis (16+), Pilates, Inclusive Bounce Trampolining, Table Tennis, Disability Cricket (12-25)

Fridays: Football (Mental Health 16+), Disability Boxing Session, Wheelchair Rugby (9+), Vixens Netball (16+), Wheelchair Basketball (8+)

Saturdays: Indoor Bowls (All ages)

6-7PM EVERY WEDNESDAY

ADDITIONAL NEEDS & NEURODIVERSITY YOUTH GROUP!

AT MEADOWCROFT COMMUNITY CENTRE
SN2 7JX

This group is free to attend for those aged 10-25!

You can enjoy games and exciting activities within a safe space, where you can chat to someone you can trust!

MEADOWCROFT COMMUNITY CENTRE Youth

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
CHERRY RILEY AT:
CHERRY.RILEY@STRATTONSTMARGARET.GOV.UK
01753 833761

SEND Families with families

Connected Supported Togetherness

Welcome to SEND families with Families

We are a small group of parents that meet to plan small events in the half terms where SEND families can meet and connect.

We would love to connect with as many families as possible, so if you feel like you could benefit from SEND news, support, advice and connection with other families then please scan the QR code below to join our Facebook group and find out more about what we're aiming to achieve.



Freedog

SEND SESSIONS

Open Bounce SEND Sessions at Freedog:

SEND individuals and their families
Every Sunday evening from
16:45-18:00

This session has reduced noise and a reduced check in and briefing time of 15 minutes.

One Carer free with each SEND child.

Click here to book

£8
If booked at least 24 hours in advance