

ACCESSING SUPPORT

EARLY HELP (SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES)

Kent County Council provide services that can be accessed locally at a time and place that suits families to help them to do well, stay safe and resolve problems at the earliest possible opportunity, before they become more serious.

Find out more by reading the Early Help leaflet for families: www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/early-help-support-for-families

Depending on the help that you are looking for, there are a number of ways in which you can ask for Early Help support.

Children's centres

Each centre offers different services, including:

- childcare
- early education
- training or finding a new job
- antenatal classes
- baby clinics
- support with breastfeeding
- support with parenting and speech and language
- drop-in sessions for parents and children
- services for children with special needs and disabilities
- opportunities for families to get involved with volunteering and designing services.

Please check with your local children's centre to find out what they offer. You can find more information here: www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/childcare-and-pre-school/childrens-centres

Youth Hubs

Kent County Council provide services which are aimed at young people and adolescents including:

- supporting the personal development of young people
- helping young people develop stronger relationships
- encouraging young people to respect and value differences
- promoting the voice of young people
- helping to set up, plan and evaluate youth club sessions
- clubs and activities for young people with additional needs.

Please check with your local youth hub to find out what they offer. You can

find more information here:

www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/young-people/youth-hubs

Additional Support

If you would benefit from some one-to-one support or low-level family intervention this would be classed as “Additional Support”. This support is expected on average to last 6-8 weeks. Please speak to a team member at your local children’s centre or youth hub for more information.

Disabled Children and Young People’s Teams

- 03000 41 11 11 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)
- social.services@kent.gov.uk

The team offer help to 0-25 year olds with:

- severe and profound learning disabilities

- physical and sensory disabilities
- a combination of disabilities.

A member of the Disabled Children and Young People's Team will assess your child's and family's needs. This means we will talk to you about your situation and find out what you are worried about or what changes you would like to make in your life.

After the assessment, we'll agree what kind of care and support you need. This could include:

- services that can offer you or your child support
- direct payments
- help at home
- local support groups so you have people to talk to
- short breaks, including specialised social activities, play schemes and overnight residential short breaks.

If your assessment shows you're not eligible for our specialist disability services, we will always tell you about other organisations that could help you.

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Kent wide:

Kent Autistic Trust – Children's Support Groups

- www.kentautistic.com

Runs groups for families, parents and carers of children and young people, to develop a community network to help each other.

If you would like more information regarding these groups, please contact: Wendy Boorman, Family Support Officer at the Kent Autistic Trust by calling **01634 405168** or emailing wendy@kentautistic.com

The Kent Parents and Children Together (PACT) Service

- www.kentpact.org.uk

Support with information and opportunities to meet with other parents/carers of children with SEN.

Headstart Kent

- www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk

Supporting 10-16 year olds to cope better with the pressures of everyday life. HeadStart Kent is part of Kent County Council's Integrated Children's Services and aims to help young people cope better when faced with difficult circumstances in their lives, preventing them from experiencing common mental health problems.

Advocacy for All

- www.advocacyforall.org.uk/self-advocacy-groups/kent-groups/

They have support groups across many areas of Kent. They help people gain confidence, meet others, join in social events and hold peer support groups. They work with over 18s who live in Kent and have a diagnosis of high functioning autism or Asperger's syndrome.

BEMIX

- www.bemix.org

An organisation of people with and without learning difficulties and/or autism who support people with learning difficulties and/or autism to speak up, make choices and become powerful by working and learning together. Most of their work is in Canterbury, Dover, Thanet, Sittingbourne and Medway but they do offer some support in other areas.

Bemix offers specific support for 16-24 year olds to find work with “Supported Internships” – a work coach helps find work in Swale, Medway, Thanet or Canterbury with support to get a paid job at the end of the placement.

So You're Autistic?

■ www.soyoureautistic.com

This site forms part of So, You're Autistic (SYA)? at the University of Kent, a support programme teaching those with a diagnosis, awaiting a diagnosis, or self-diagnosed HOW to be autistic – to understand what being autistic means for YOU. SYA? are also consultants delivering workshops on autistic experience, neurodiversity, & stigma-reduction.

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

In most areas of Kent parents and families have set up

support groups to help other parents. They vary in what they offer and how they operate but most families find their services helpful.

Ashford

ASD Ashford

■ www.asdashford.com

A parent-led group which aims to support families in the Ashford area, with children and young adults on the Autistic Spectrum as well as those with ADHD.

Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay

SNAAP – Special Needs Advisory & Activities Project

■ www.snaap.org.uk

■ info@snaap.org.uk

Provide an extensive range of services to children with every kind of disability, aged from 0-25 years, in partnership with parents. The focus of the services is upon all of the child's needs including educational,

social, developmental and emotional. We focus upon the whole family and not just on the child with disabilities.

Altogether Extraordinary

- <https://www.facebook.com/pg/AltogetherExtraordinary/>

Facebook group for parents and carers of children and young people with ADHD, Autism, and/or Additional Educational Needs.

Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley

Beams

- www.wearebeams.org.uk
- admin@wearebeams.org.uk

Provide comprehensive support services to families of children and young people with any form of physical, learning or sensory impairment living in Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks and the surrounding areas.

Sheppey

ADHD Sheppey

- www.adhdsheppey.com
- info@adhdsheppey.com

Helping to educate, empower and enrich the lives of people affected by ADHD and autism. There is a weekly face to face support group that meets at the Sheppey Healthy Living Centre and a closed Facebook group for parents and children.

South Kent

Includes us 2

- www.facebook.com/pg/IncludesUs2/about/
- info@includesus2.org.uk

A small, parent driven charity that provide support to disabled children, young people and their families. They operate across the districts of Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe, and Dover and support parents/carers of disabled children by providing regular, informal support groups and practical workshops.

Swale

For Us Too

- www.forustoo.org
- info@4us2.org

Based at the Orchards centre for disabled children, Sittingbourne. The charity is run by parents and carers of disabled children and young people and aims to empower families across east Kent.

The Autism Apprentice

- www.autismapprentice.co.uk

Provides information and advice and host regular information days in Sittingbourne, where parents can meet providers of services, listen to talks from experts and meet other parents who are going through similar situations.

Thanet

For Us Too

- www.forustoo.org
- info@4us2.org

Based at the Green Banks centre for disabled children, Margate. The charity is run by parents and carers of disabled children and young people and aims to empower families across east Kent.

West Kent

Space 2 Be Me

- www.space2beme.org.uk
- info@space2beme.org.uk

They work across west Kent (mainly Maidstone, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells) with disabled children and young people with additional needs aged from birth to 25 and their families. They work in partnership with our member families to design all our activities and services so that they support disabled children, support parents, and support the whole family.

NOTES

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