



**Family Action's Norfolk & Waveney
Autism/ADHD Support Service**

JUNE 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to our June 2025 newsletter.

This month we are thinking about about an issue which we are sure many of you will have faced - balancing your child's love and enthusiasm for online activities with your desire to make sure they are safe.

In today's digital world, technology can offer incredible opportunities for learning, creativity, and connection. However, it also presents challenges for parents and risks for children and young people. And those with neurodivergence may be more vulnerable to online risks due to differences in communication, attention, and social understanding.

For many of our children and young people, this is how they love to regulate themselves and relax after a hard day, or what gives them a dopamine hit which can be quite addictive, or where they are able to interact with friends in a way which feels more manageable to them than face to face social situations. As a parent or carer, you also have to give some thought to what could go wrong.

You will find our top tips for parents and carers regarding online safety later in this newsletter.

Family Action's Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service is commissioned by the Norfolk and Waveney NHS Integrated Care Board to provide support and advice, learning, resources and signposting to parents/carers of children or young people either awaiting a neurodevelopmental assessment or newly diagnosed.

Read on for information about how we can be there for you with our help-line, newsletters, free courses, online workshops and drop-in support groups.



Norfolk and Waveney
Integrated Care Board

This month's newsletter includes:

- **Welcome**
- **Zoom Information Session for June - MASKING**
- **Our Drop-In Groups in June**
- **Staying Safe On-Line**

- **A Social Story**
- **More Reading**
- **Our Upcoming Courses**
- **What's going on elsewhere?**
- **Link to FA's West Suffolk Service Newsletter**
- **Family Action Website and FamilyLine**
- **About our Service - contact details**

Just as every child is unique, every family's situation is different. We in the Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service are not health professionals but we do speak to many families with children of differing needs. Some of the information contained in this newsletter is anecdotal and some from respected websites. We hope you find the following interesting and helpful.

ONLINE WORKSHOP IN JUNE - Click to enlarge

<p>MASKING – Why some children mask and the impact it can have</p>	
<p>ONLINE WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS/CARERS</p>	
<p>Tuesday 17th June 2025 10-11am No need to book for this friendly and informal session. Information for parents/carers about the difficulties of masking with time for your questions.</p>	
<p>JOINING DETAILS Meeting ID: 966 4447 9930 Passcode: 400275</p>	
<p>COME ALONG AND MEET US ON ZOOM</p>	

Our Drop-In Groups in JUNE



Our Drop-In Groups are friendly and informal. No need to book. They are a chance to meet our knowledgeable team as well as other parents and carers who are facing similar challenges.

See below ALL our drop-ins in JUNE. Click on any of the group below to enlarge and click the arrow to move through.

Please note our change of venue in LOWESTOFT



This change is temporary.....the warm welcome remains the same.
Until further notice join us at:
The Kirkley Family Hub, Kirkley Street, Lowestoft, NR33 0LU.
10am-11.30am



Come along and join us on
Thursday 5th June 2025 from 10:00am to 11:30am
NO NEED TO BOOK
RING 01493 650220 or EMAIL gorleston@family-action.org.uk for more information.

Meet our team and other parents in...
GORLESTON

We meet at.....
GORLESTON LIBRARY, FAMILY ACTION OFFICE, GORLESTON-ON-SEA, NR31 6SG

Wednesday 4th JUNE 2025 from 10:00am to 11:30am

No need to book, friendly and informal,
but if you do want more information then please
RING 01493 650220 or EMAIL gorleston@family-action.org.uk for more information.

Join us in
KING'S LYNN

Note our change of venue.
We would love to meet you in JUNE in...
DeeDee's Cafe, Upstairs in The Range,
Hardwick Retail Park, KING'S LYNN, PE30 4NA

No need to book just come along on.....
TUESDAY 10th June 2025 anytime between 9.30 - 11.00am
We will have a Family Action flyer on the table.
RING 01603 972589 or
EMAIL NorfolkAndWaveney@family-action.org.uk for more information.

We would like to meet you in..... SWAFFHAM

We meet each month,
In the quiet UPSTAIRS room in
Costa Coffee, Market Place,
Swaffham, PE37 7AB

Come and join us between 9:30-11am
on Wednesday 11th June 2025

Friendly, informal, no need to book.
Ring 01603 972589 or
Email NorfolkAndWaveney@family-action.org.uk for more info



NEW - Swan Youth Project Downham Market

On the last Tuesday of each month, one of our team will now be joining parents at the regular weekly parent group run at The Swan Youth Project, Paradise Rd, Downham Market, PE38 9JE, from 9 to 11am.

COME AND JOIN US ON TUESDAY 24TH JUNE

No need to book, friendly and informal, just come along for coffee/tea and a chat. We are there for any questions you have about autism or ADHD and to offer some support/advice or signposting.

For more information you can ring us on 01603 972589 or

EMAIL NorfolkAndWaveney@family-action.org.uk



Join us On-line for a Drop-In chat in June

If you have a child with a diagnosed or suspected neurodivergence...	...we would love you to join us online on ZOOM. No need to book, just come along if you can.	NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY 25 th June 10 TO 11AM
JOINING DETAILS Meeting ID: 966 4447 9930 Passcode: 400275	A chance to meet other parents who 'get it', to meet our team and ask for advice or resources.	For more information ring Family Action on 01603 972589

Staying Safe On-Line

Here is some guidance for parents and carers around keeping children and young people safe online. It is by no means comprehensive. Your children have individual differences and difficulties and every situation is individual also. And the technology, the software, the scams and fortunately, the parental controls are also changing quickly. Love it or hate it, we have to accept that online learning and communicating and gaming are here to stay. They love it and we have to try to help them to avoid some of the potential pitfalls.



Some key strategies to help your child navigate the digital world safely:

1. Understand Your Child's Online World

Children with autism and ADHD may be drawn to specific games, apps, or social media platforms. These can offer comfort, structure, and social connection—but they can also expose children to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, or online predators.

- Talk regularly about what they like to do online. Stay curious and non-judgmental to build trust.
- Join in occasionally. Playing a game together or exploring a site can give you insight into their interests and possible risks.

2. Set Clear, Consistent Boundaries

Structure and routine are essential for many children with autism and ADHD.

- Create a family agreement around screen time, types of games, and when and where devices can be used.
- Use parental controls on devices, games, and platforms to filter content and manage screen time.
- Build in breaks. Children with ADHD may find it hard to self-regulate, so regular tech-free time can be helpful.

3. Teach Online Safety Skills

Learning how to stay safe online is just as important as learning to cross the road.

- Teach your child never to share personal information (like their full name, school, or address).
- Help them recognise and report suspicious behavior, bullying, or scams.
- Use role-playing to practice what to do if someone online makes them uncomfortable.

4. Be Mindful of Gaming Risks

Online gaming can offer a sense of achievement and social interaction, but it also brings potential pitfalls.

- Monitor chat functions in multiplayer games—some can expose children to inappropriate language or contact.
- Use games with strong safety settings and age-appropriate content.
- Be aware of in-game purchases. Children with impulsivity or difficulties with understanding money may need extra support.



5. Create a Safe Space for Conversations

- Your child needs to be confident about coming to you if something doesn't feel right. Avoid punishment if they make a mistake online—focus on learning and safety and doing better in future.
- Reassure them that you are there to help. Avoid taking devices away unnecessarily.
- Keep the conversation open and ongoing, not just a one-time “online safety talk.”
- Help them to understand the kinds of things a 'friend' would not ask you to do.

 **New York Primary School**
Come as you are. Leave at your best.



Online Safety

Follow the SMART rules to stay safe online

- S** Stay *safe* online by not sharing personal information 
- M** Do not *meet* anyone who you have only made friends with online 
- A** Do not *accept* messages or friend requests from strangers 
- R** Not everything online is *reliable*. Some people online are strangers and may try and trick us 
- T** *Tell* an adult you trust if anything happens online that you dont like 

6. Use Tools Designed for Neurodivergent Children

- Some apps and tools are specifically created with the needs of neurodivergent children in mind.
- Visual schedules, timers, and simplified browsers can support independence and safety.
- Social stories or video modeling can help children understand online situations and responses.

Final Thoughts

Navigating the digital world can be tricky—but with guidance, structure, and open communication, your child can enjoy the benefits of technology while staying safe. Every child is different, and what works for one might not work for another, so keep adapting your approach as needed.

You are not alone in this journey. Reach out to support networks, schools, or professionals if you need more advice or resources. See the section below with ideas for further reading.

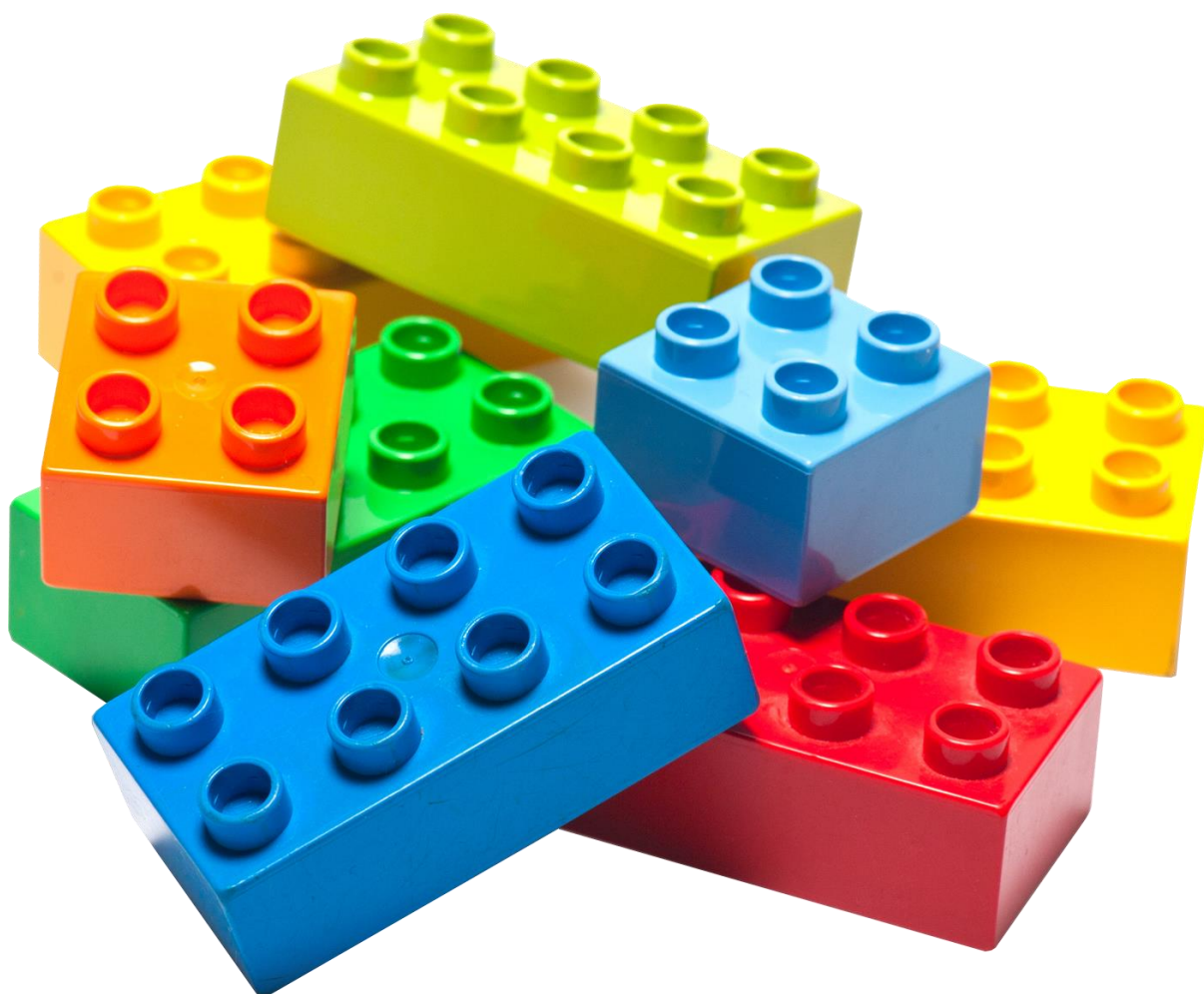
A Social Story

We mentioned above that, for some children, a social story can be helpful to get all sorts of important messages across to them about stranger danger, road safety, using your words and not your hands, managing friendships and a million other things. There are lots of social stories for every eventuality to be found online, or you can write them yourself. They should always be in the first person, written at the level of the child's understanding, written positively focusing on what they should do rather than what they should not do and should offer solutions to some of the barriers in the situation you are writing about. For example, "Although I am on a school trip, I will still have a lunch box with the foods I like to eat." Here is a link to a previous newsletter which focused on social stories and comic strip conversations <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/iXaf8b3b6ZmUDStT?ref=Link>

There are also lots of AI tools now available which can produce a social story for you in seconds. In your initial search you can input your child's name and age and names of siblings, of friends, or pets or favourite games or apps and produce something which is really quite individual to help get their attention. Always check carefully what has been produced to be absolutely confident about the content. There can also sometimes be americanised language which you may want to change. Add visuals like cartoons, online images or actual pictures of your child. This is something just to be used at home and read together often, like a bedtime story, as a way of reinforcing, in this particular scenario, safe practices online.

Here is a very simple example of the kind of social story which can be quickly generated to help a child be aware of internet safety.

Social Story: Staying Safe Online



My name is Charlie and I am nearly 10. I like to use the internet. Sometimes I play games online, watch funny videos, or talk to good friends like Tom and Ben on the computer or tablet. I like LEGO Life and Minecraft the most.

I Use the Internet with Rules When I go online, I follow special rules. These rules help keep me safe. My parents and teachers will help me learn the rules, and I can always ask them if I feel unsure. 🖥️ The first rule is that I only go on websites, apps or games which my parents or teachers tell me are okay.

Not everyone online is a real friend. Some people online are kind, like my friends and family. But some people might pretend to be nice when they are not. That's why I should only talk to people I know in real life. If someone I don't know tries to talk to me, I can tell a trusted adult like mum or dad, my teacher or my big sister Alice. 🧑🏻 🏠 🧑🏻 🧑🏻 🧑🏻

Private Information is Private When I am online I use my nickname or just my first name. There are some things I should never tell someone I am speaking to online, things like, my full name, my address, my school, my passwords or my phone number. And I will not share

pictures of myself. If anyone asks for these things I will not answer, I will stop talking to them, I will get help.

Kind Words Only I try to be kind when I talk online and people should be kind to me. If someone is mean or makes me feel upset, I don't need to reply. Instead, I can take a break and tell an adult. I am allowed to block or report people who are unkind so that I do not have to speak to them again.

Taking Breaks I take breaks so my eyes and brain don't get too tired. 🛑 Taking time away helps me feel calm and happy. When it's time to log off, I can do something else I enjoy, like drawing, riding my bike, or reading about dinosaurs. If I stop when I am asked to, I know I can play again soon.

Scared or Confused Sometimes things on the internet might make me feel confused, scared, or worried. If that happens, I don't have to deal with it alone. I will tell my parent or teacher if I have seen something which makes me feel this way or which I don't understand. They want me to be happy and safe online.

😊 I can have fun and stay safe online by remembering to: Only talk to people I know
Never share private information Tell an adult if something feels wrong Be kind and expect friends to be kind Take breaks

Further Reading

This is the website for anyone to report harmful content: <https://youtu.be/ht9ryeKGOUU>
www.reportharmfulcontent.com

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) If you are worried about online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating online you can make a report to one of CEOP's Child Protection Advisors. [CEOP Safety Centre](#)

And some other links:

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

[Neurodivergent children safety online | Internet Matters](#)

[How to stay safe when setting up gaming profiles - BBC Teach](#)

[Support for parents and carers to keep children safe online - GOV.UK](#)

[Parents and Carers - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

[Keeping children safe online | Barnardo's](#)

PLAN BEE COURSES



PLAN BEE – Understanding and Supporting your Child or Young Person with Additional Needs.

‘Plan Bee’ is a FREE 3 week course (2hrs per week) and is aimed at parents or carers of children or young people with additional needs including those with traits of autism or ADHD.

If your child or young person already has a formal diagnosis of autism, please see the information later in the newsletter about the PUFFINS AUTISM PROGRAMME.

You can still access the online videos of our Positive Behaviour Strategies course (now Plan Bee) on the NHS for Norfolk website, Just One Norfolk. Just click here:

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/child-development-additional-needs/behaviour-sleep/norfolk-positive-behaviour-strategies-pbs/>

OUR PLAN BEE COURSES ARE IN HIGH DEMAND AND OUR TWO JUNE COURSES IN DEREHAM AND GORLESTON ARE NOW FULLY BOOKED. KEEP AN EYE ON THE NEWSLETTER FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PLAN BEE COURSES AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.

Puffins Autism Programme - for parents or carers of children or young people with a *diagnosis* of Autism



Family Action has been commissioned by Norfolk Community Health and Care to continue to run the comprehensive, free, four-week Puffins Autism Programme for Parents/Carers until end of March 2026.

This is a strictly post-diagnosis autism course and includes sessions delivered by Family Action, by Speech & Language and Occupational Therapists from NCH&C clinical teams and by Autism Specialists from within NCC's Educational Psychology & Specialist Services. Do not miss your chance, if you have a child or young person with a formal diagnosis of autism, to attend this well regarded programme.

To book your place contact Sue.killick@family-action.org.uk



The Puffins Programme is a FREE, four week programme designed by Norfolk Community Health and Care's

Neurodevelopmental Service for parents and carers of children and young people with a diagnosis of Autism.

Family Action are working in partnership with NCHC and EPSS to deliver the programme.

Week 1 – Introducing Autism and Understanding

Behaviour (Family Action)

Week 2 – Social Communication and Interaction – (NCHC Speech and

Language Therapy Team)

Week 3 – Understanding Sensory Processing

(NCHC Occupational Therapy Team)

Week 4 – Autism in Education (Educational Psychology & Specialist Support)

THE PUFFINS COURSES ARE VERY POPULAR AND OUR KING'S LYNN COURSE IN JUNE AND OUR ONLINE ZOOM COURSE IN JULY ARE NOW FULL.

WE PLAN TO BE IN COSTESSEY, NORWICH IN SEPTEMBER, THETFORD IN OCTOBER, KING'S LYNN IN NOVEMBER AND ON ZOOM IN DECEMBER.

KEEP AN EYE ON THE NEWSLETTER FOR FURTHER ADVERTISING OF COURSES OR CONTACT Sue.killick@family-action.org.uk FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BOOKING A PLACE.



**Educational Psychology
& Specialist Support**


What Else is Happening?

THETFORD - New SEND Group for Ages 5–12 – Starting 3rd June at 4pm

This friendly SEND group is for parents and carers to come along with their children (aged 5–12) and connect with other families in a safe, welcoming space where others understand. It's a great opportunity to relax, share experiences, and enjoy a variety of fun activities together.

 Starting Tuesday 3rd June at 4pm at Traquinas Hub, Charles Burrell Centre, Thetford

 Book your place: bookwhen.com/traquinas

 Questions? Message us on Facebook at **Nina's Foundation** or call **07352 981089**

Please note: Our venue is on the first floor with lift access. A disabled toilet is available, but we do not currently have hoist or changing bed facilities. All children are welcome, and session formats will be reviewed in the future to meet the needs of families.

CLICK ON FLYER TO ENLARGE



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Parent Cafe



SEND

Norfolk libraries are teaming up with services in the community to support children, young people

and their families to access support from services and other families.

Last Wednesday of each month | 1:30 - 2:30pm

Thetford Library, Raymond Street, THETFORD, IP24 2EA

Come along to this friendly and supportive safe space to share ideas, make

friends and gain professional information, advice and guidance on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

No need to book. Just turn up. There will be activities for children and young people and staff available.



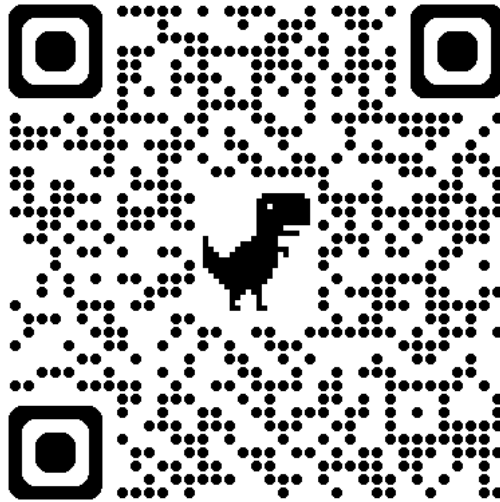
Working in partnership to make a difference for children



Family Action Website



Family Action is a national charity, supporting families up and down the country and has recently updated and relaunched its [website](#).



In addition to being able to search for Family Action services and projects in your locality, you can also now access lots of information and resources on a wide range of topics affecting families today. Have a look for example at a number of [self-help resources](#) around the return to school and preparing your child for the school day, linking nicely in with the topic of our September newsletter.

See also the QR code below which will take you to the home page.

Family Action also serves families in West Suffolk - see their June newsletter below, focusing this month on dealing with transition.



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allow-orientation-lock allow-popups allow-same-origin allow-scripts" scrolling="no"

style="border: none; max-width: 100%; max-height: 100vh" allowfullscreen mozallowfullscreen msallowfullscreen webkitallowfullscreen></iframe>

Family Action FamilyLine - for any parenting concerns or crises. We can listen, support, inform and refer to a relevant service.



Family Line

- 📞 0808 802 6666
- 💬 07537 404 282
- ✉️ familyline@family-action.org.uk
- 💬 Online Chat



Family Line

- 📞 0808 802 6666
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- ✉️ familyline@family-action.org.uk
- 💬 Online Chat

About our Service - Contact Details



For West and Central Norfolk **01603 972589** or email NorfolkAndWaveney@family-action.org.uk

For East Norfolk and Waveney **01493 650220** or email gorleston@family-action.org.uk

Unsure which area to contact? Use any of the above – we are all here to help you.

If you wish to join our closed Facebook group, go to Facebook and to the Family Action page and then search for Norfolk and Waveney Autism and ADHD Support Service.

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