



Parents *Connected*



January 2025



INSIDE:

- Emotional Regulation
- The Need for Respite
- Who are SPCF?
- Support Group information
- and much more...

INTRODUCING...



Michelle Jones is a Project Manager, she is also a parent of three adult children one of which received an ASD diagnosis at the age of 19. Michelle has previously worked as a nurse, health visitor and special needs teacher and enjoys being able to utilise her diverse range of lived and learned experience to support families.



Katie is a Family Adviser, and she is the parent of three children. Her son has a diagnosis of Autism and ADHD and they are now navigating their way through high school together. Her two other children are dyslexic. Alongside experience as a parent carer Katie has lots of knowledge from previous roles in family support and education.



Angela is a Family Advisor she has two adult sons, She has previously worked in secondary schools with SEND children, She has also been a foster carer which led to her being a Mockingbird Hub carer where she supported families who had children in care. She has lots of experience working with children with SEND.



Michelle is a Family Worker, she is Mum to two teenage boys. Michelle's eldest son received an autism diagnosis when he was 6. Now in his late teens they are currently navigating together the transition to college. Alongside her lived experience, she has worked in a primary school and various agencies in Suffolk supporting children, young people, and families.

Are you getting the right amount of Universal Credit as a parent carer?



Carer element

Paid if you're eligible for Carer's Allowance (or if you meet the criteria for it but your earnings are too high). You don't actually have to have claimed Carer's Allowance.

Child element

Paid for each dependent child in your family. You won't normally get this for a third or subsequent child born on or after 6 April 2017.

Disabled child addition

Paid (at one of 2 rates) for each dependent child who gets DLA or PIP. If you're eligible but don't receive this addition, add a note to your journal. It should be backdated in full.

Childcare element

Covers up to 85% of your registered childcare costs if you work (any number of hours), up to a certain amount.

contact.org.uk/uc

PARENT CARER EVENTS CALENDAR

We have upgraded our events calendar to make it easier for you to find events and book on to them.

You'll find training, activity sessions and peer support drop-ins.

Why not check it out and book yourself on to some!

VISIT NOW!

Please note that most of our events are for families registered under the ND Pathway.



TIME OUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PARENTS

4-week Support Programmes for those caring for an autistic child or child with ADHD

Both courses provide an opportunity for you to support and encourage

others, helping you share feelings and experiences, and come up with solutions to problems on the basis of what works – not what's meant to work!

Time Out courses are very informal and provide plenty of time for you to talk to other parent carers. Choose from the ASD or ADHD course.

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST



A SPACE FOR PARENTS

A Space for Parents is a section on the Suffolk Family Carer website which is set aside for parent carers. We regularly add articles to the site to provide information, advice, support and resources for parent carers.

We are aiming to add a new article each month so do take a look to see if there is anything that might be supportive to you.

VISIT NOW





LOW SENSORY FAMILY FUN SWIM SESSION

Join other SEND families at Fore Street Swimming Pool, Ipswich
for a low sensory swim session.

The pool will only be open to families registered on these sessions and is limited to 30 attendees.

Booking is only available a week in advance.

BOOK NOW

Please note: these sessions are only available for families registered with Suffolk Family Carers who have an under 18 with SEND

FOLLOW US

As well as the main Suffolk Family Carers social profiles, there are also specific pages for Parent Carers where we share relevant resources and information. To keep up to date with our events, resources and more, make sure you follow A Space for Parents on Instagram and Facebook.



EMOTIONAL REGULATION; OUR CHILD'S BRAIN AND THE 3 R's

This article is written by Michelle Jones, Project Manager for the ND Project.

How many times have you said something to your child and experienced what you consider to be an overreaction to your question? Maybe you asked them if they have any homework and swore at you. Perhaps you asked them why they were so unkind to their sister and they burst into tears and punched a door.

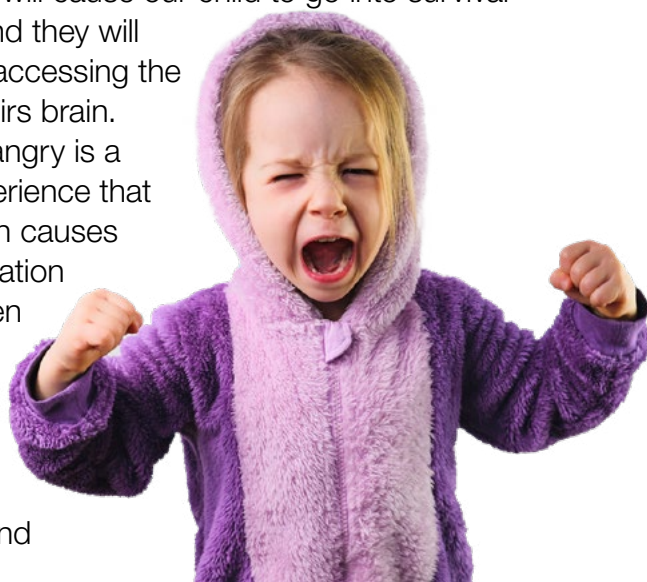
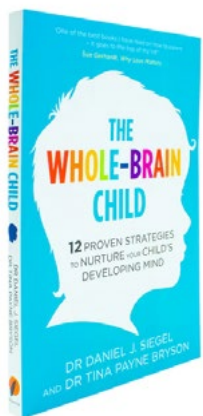
As parents and carers we often want to ask further questions. Common ones are Why did you swear at me? Do you realise how much money it is going to cost me to fix that door? Why are you being like this?! We rarely get answers to our questions instead we get more frustrated and our child becomes more dysregulated. So what is happening and how can we stop this vicious cycle?

What is happening?

Our behaviour is as a result of what is going on in our brain. Our brain is a very complex organ with many different functions however, for the purposes of understanding behaviour, we can look at a simplified model as described by Dr Dan Siegel in his book [The Whole Brain Child](#). In very simple terms we can think about us having a downstairs and an upstairs brain. The downstairs brain's job is to keep us alive, it controls bodily functions such as breathing and heart rate but it also helps us to avoid danger. It is responsible for emotions such as fear, anger and the fight, flight, fawn and freeze response. The upstairs brain is more advanced and is responsible for imagination, planning, decision making and empathy among other things. What is really important to remember is that our downstairs brain is fully functioning when we are born whereas our upstairs brain isn't fully developed until we are in our mid twenties! It explains why children and even young adults sometimes aren't able to make sensible decision, seem to take unnecessary risks or have no sense of danger. So some of what we are experiencing is related to our child or young person's developmental stage.

Something else that is happening is that we are communicating with our child and we are expecting a rational or reasoned response. When we ask "Why did you..." we are needing our child to be able to access their upstairs brain, the thinking part and the part that has the ability to empathise. In reality though what we are doing is talking to our child at a time when the thinking part of their brain is off line, sometimes known as flipping the lid, and instead we are talking to the downstairs brain which has no ability to be reasonable or empathetic. The downstairs brain is fighting for its life, sometimes literally when your child hits out at you. Certain events or feelings, for example being hungry, tired or worried, will cause our child to go into survival mode and they will only be accessing the downstairs brain. Being hangry is a real experience that can often causes dysregulation in children and adults.

Too often as parent and



carers we are inadvertently fuelling dysregulation, meltdowns and shutdowns by trying to find out the reasons for the behaviour too quickly and whilst they are often still in a dysregulated state. The thinking and reasoning part of their brain, upstairs, is overwhelmed and they are unable to give reasons or explanations. The downstairs brain has taken control, resulting in our child actually losing control of their behaviour sometimes described as a meltdown, shut down or red zone. It is worth remembering that due to high levels of adrenalin they may well have done something they didn't intend to and they will regret later on. They may also not remember what they did as the brain acts to protect itself by forgetting. Immediately after the incident is not the time to be asking why, or trying to unpick what the triggers were.

Dr Bruce Perry, an American neuroscientist, has provided a simple approach to help us support our children to be able to regulate their emotions these are known as the **Three Rs**. This approach can, and should, be used alongside other strategies we have talked about before including:

- [The Iceberg Model](#)
- [The Zones of Regulation](#)

Following the 3 R's in the correct order will enable us to build better relationships with our children and reduce the chances of us escalating meltdowns and shutdowns.

The 3R's

1. REGULATE - Our first step should always be to help our child regulate their emotions. This is where we are helping to sooth the downstairs brain, calming the fight, flight, fawn freeze response so that the brain feels safe enough to start accessing the upstairs brain. We can only help them regulate if we ourselves are regulated. You may have to use the following activities for yourself before you can move onto supporting your child.

Things you can do at this stage to support your child:

- Regulating breathing by blowing bubbles, or

using a mindfulness app (modelling this to your child will help).

- Provide sensory or fidget toys.
- Calming scents such as lavender or something your child finds comforting.
- Safe items to chew or suck e.g. ice lollies or gum.
- Rhythmic activities such as jumping, tapping.
- Creative deconstruction e.g. breaking raw spaghetti, tearing up paper.
- Putting on a familiar playlist for them to listen to or sing along to.
- Running or walking.
- Offering a weighted blanket.

2.

RELATE - Once our child is regulated we can look at reconnecting positively, continuing to avoid digging into the reasons why the behaviour happened. If you do start asking too many probing questions at this stage you could move your child back into a dysregulated state.

Things you can do at this stage to support your child:

- Offer a drink and a snack.
- [Theraplay](#) or [intensive interaction](#).
- Quality Time doing something your child loves – this isn't a reward it is about rebuilding a positive relationship.
- Explore feel good boxes (these can be made up in advance, perhaps with your child when they are in a reasoned state).
- Using noticing - "I can see that you are upset" or "I wonder if you are feeling worried".



3.

REASON - Only do this when your child is calm. For some children this may be several hours or days after the event.

Remember your child may feel shame, guilt or embarrassment about their behaviour and we need to avoid magnifying these feelings further.

Things you can do at this stage to support your child

- Reassure them that they are loved and accepted.
- Talk through what happened and explore alternative ways of dealing with the feeling or trigger.
- Some children would benefit from comic strip conversations or social stories to support them to explore alternative responses. Where using [social stories](#) these should be repeated frequently when calm to help your child remember.
- Accept that your child may genuinely not know why they behaved the way they did. Instead focus on looking at supportive strategies to help them remain in their zone of regulation.

Final important tips

- Do not be tempted to skip stages or rush through stages, it is important to go at your child's pace. This may go against everything you would normally do and for some parents and siblings it can feel like you are allowing the child to get away with behaviour that has had an impact on others. This takes a shift in mind set as a family to see that you are supporting your child to be able to self-regulate, which in turn will reduce meltdowns and improve family life for everyone.
- Learn to regulate yourself. If you are dysregulated too, for example shouting and being unreasonable or unrealistic, then you will not be able to help your child regulate. If you are regularly becoming dysregulated yourself then you will raise your child's anxiety level, the downstairs brain takes over, and we enter the cycle of feeding each other's dysregulation. You can look at this [Co-regulation Demonstration video](#) for ideas on how you can support regulation. Reach out for help from us at Suffolk Family Carers or [Mental Health, Wellbeing and Emotional Support](#)
- Consider finding out a bit more about how your child's brain works. It will enable you to understand the causes of their distressed behaviour and to develop strategies to support them. The following videos are a good place to start:
 - [Flipping Your Lid](#)
 - [Flipping Your Lid 2 - The Window of Tolerance](#)
 - [Flipping Your Lid 3 - The 3 R's](#)



SUFFOLK LIBRARIES

Your local libraries stock a range of books about Autism and ADHD. You can search the online catalogue or look at the recommendations list. If the book isn't in your nearest library, or is out on loan, you can request it. It is also worth talking to the library service assistants about any future titles you would like to see added to the library catalogue.

AUTISM

ADHD



CHILDHOOD NEURODIVERSITY PARENT/CARER WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Neurodiversity means that across the population there is variation in people's brains. Having people in society who see the world differently and have unique skills is an important part of life to be celebrated. The term "neurodivergent" refers to people whose brains work differently to the typical cultural standards. Neurodivergence includes conditions that people are born with including autism, ADHD, learning disability and learning disorders.

This programme of free virtual workshops for parents and carers will explore nurturing the unique strengths of neurodivergent children and young people and provide advice on how to support them with the challenges they face. Any parent or carer is welcome to join regardless of whether their child has a diagnosis. The workshops are live on Zoom and are 75 minutes long. Recordings of the workshops and resource packs will be sent after the live event to everyone who has registered.

TO BOOK A WORKSHOP

THE NEED FOR RESPITE



Many of us will have experienced burnout, quite often we don't realise we are in burnout until someone comments to us. Burnout is the physical, mental and emotional exhaustion due to extended periods of caring. When you burnout you may find yourself feeling more tired, might end up doing less of the things you enjoy because you just don't have the ability to do them or want to do them due to the exhaustion. You end up feeling overwhelmed, stressed maybe more anxious or low mood meaning you have a shorter fuse when it comes to dealing with different situations. This is your mind and body telling you that you need a break and that can come in the form of respite.

Respite can be many different things from a quick cuppa, to a day without the kids or even an evening out. For me it was the drive to work after dropping the kids off at school where I would blast my choice of music as loud as I wanted and scream along to the lyrics after dealing with meltdowns and school refusal since getting out of bed that morning. In the moment it gave me a short amount of 'me time' before I started work, some people may even see their job as their respite or 'me time'.

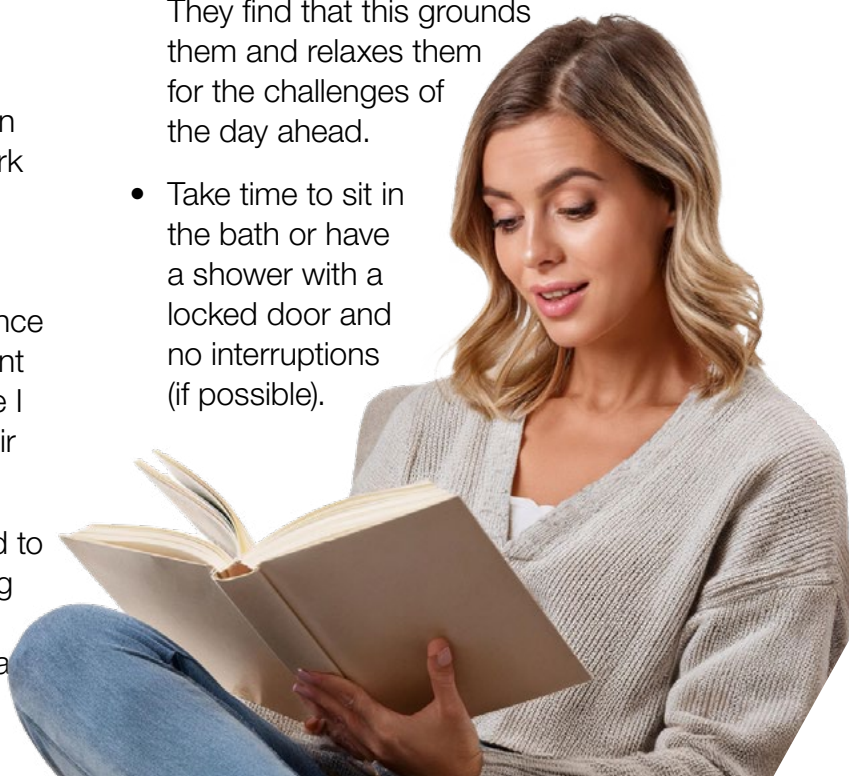
Respite is important to our own self-care and to helping prevent parent carer burnout. Working both in the Neurodevelopmental Differences Project and the Parent Carers Project, I regula

teer to speak to parents who say they would like some respite and I will often ask them what respite looks like for them, the answer is often the same 'I just need a break.' But what really is respite and how can you get respite?

Respite is defined as 'a short period of rest or relief from something that is difficult or unpleasant.' Parent Carers often see respite as someone taking the children away from them for a day, an evening, a weekend, but there are ways that you can find respite in the comfort of your own home during your day to day life. It can be difficult to allow yourself to take a break but it is important to remember that taking time for ourselves is NOT selfish it's necessary. It allows us to recharge and feel better able to manage our caring responsibilities.

RESPITE AT HOME.

- Take five minutes to have a sit down and a favourite drink at home, staying hydrated is really important.
- I've met people that start their day by standing on the grass with bare feet in the morning and taking in their surroundings. They find that this grounds them and relaxes them for the challenges of the day ahead.
- Take time to sit in the bath or have a shower with a locked door and no interruptions (if possible).



- If your children are at school, and you do not need to be at work, take the chance to have some time for yourself whether that is meeting a friend, sitting down for a coffee at home, attending a drop in to meet others that experience a similar situation to yourself or going for a walk and taking in the sights and sounds around you.
 - Take 5 minutes to lay down with your eyes closed, you could even listen to a bit of music.
 - Go for a walk by yourself.
 - Look for support from friends and family. Is there anyone that could take the kids to the park for an hour? Do you have a friend or family member that could take them for a day, an evening or possibly longer?
 - If your children spend time with their other parent at the weekend, or during the week, you could take this time for yourself whilst they are there.
- OTHER TYPES OF RESPITE THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE:**
- You are entitled to request from the local authority a [parent carer needs assessment](#).
 - If your child is entitled to Pupil Premium (free school meals), they may be able to access the [HAF activities](#) in the school holidays
 - If your child has a diagnosis and receives DLA you may be able to get a [Short Breaks Budget from Activities Unlimited](#)
 - You may be eligible for [take a break](#), who offer 1-2 night breaks for carers, however it does require you to pay a small admin fee
 - Access Suffolk Family Carers support programmes and workshops. Meeting other family carers and taking some time out to think about self-care is really important. Information is available on our [website](#)
 - Attending a [parent carer drop in](#), where you can get a free cuppa and an opportunity to chat to other parents and a family advisor in a comfortable, quiet environment can give you a short break. These are run at various locations across the county and virtually. We have provided a comprehensive list in this bulletin.
 - [Respite and Replacement Care](#) provides information on respite opportunities including day tickets, for family carers, to events and attractions.
 - If you are finding things tough, you should reach out to Customer First on 0808 800 4005 or ring Suffolk Family Carers Information Hub on 01473 835477 for further support.



This article has been written by Katie Lorandean, a Family Advisor in the ND and Parent Carer Projects.

WHO ARE SUFFOLK PARENT CARER FORUM?



Suffolk Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) is a charitable organisation formed by parents, carers and family members of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 0-25 in Suffolk, with a view to shape and improve provisions and services.

We became the official Parent Carer Forum for Suffolk in 2021 recognised by Contact, the charity for families with disabled children and the contracted delivery partner for the Department for Education, who support parent carer participation in England. We were subsequently enrolled in the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) and the Eastern Region Parent Carer Forum (ERPCF).

What We Do

We work to consult families and gather their views and experiences of SEND services in Suffolk. Through co-production meetings with the Local Authority, education and health services and voluntary sector, we use the feedback we collect to co-produce with service providers and aim to improve the quality of services for children and young people in Suffolk.

We work alongside, but independently from the Local Authority, Education and Health services.

Benefits Of Being A Member?

Being a member of Suffolk Parent Carer Forum is free, and demonstrates to service providers we collect feedback from all backgrounds across the county. We signpost families to appropriate services and groups in Suffolk and share useful information related to SEND through our member newsletters, website and social media. We host SEND services events across Suffolk with attendees from organisations in Education, Health and Voluntary sectors. We also engage service providers and leaders of education and health in a variety of workshops and focus groups online throughout the year.

We welcome your lived experiences and feedback on SEND services in Suffolk. You can visit our website www.suffolkpcf.co.uk to fill out our feedback form, or you can email us at info@suffolkpcf.co.uk. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#) for updates.





Happy to meet you!



Friendship Club for Autistic Children in Years 5-8.
An opportunity to learn social skills and practice making friends!
REGISTER YOUR INTEREST HERE

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS FOR ND TEENS YEARS 8 TO 13

Building on the success of Art Club we are looking at developing more special interest groups for teens.

Please contact us to let us know what your child's special interest is so we can develop groups to meet need. We are also looking for volunteers who wish to help lead these groups.



Email michelle.jones@suffolkfamilycarers.org with your suggestions

UPDATE ON PARENT CARER DROP INS

All carers of children and young people with SEND or who are Neurodivergent are welcome at our drop ins (except for Ipswich central which is ND only). Drop ins are predominately for peer support and an opportunity to build relationships with other parents. We believe that those with lived experience have much to offer in terms of advice. There will be a Family Advisor available during the session and sometimes also a volunteer.

If you would like specific advice from the Advisor then this will be possible within the session, however in busy sessions we may need to restrict the time you have to speak with them to 10 minutes to ensure all those who need advice receive it. If we don't run a drop-in in your area, please refer to the comprehensive list of drop in's run across the county by other organisations where you can also seek peer support and advice.

PARENT CARER DROP-INS

Parent Carer Drop ins for those caring for a child with additional needs. An opportunity for peer support and advice from a Family Worker from Suffolk Family Carers.

All Drop ins' are Term Time Only!

- **CLAYDON**, The 2nd Tuesday of the month from 10am to 12noon
- **STANTON**, The 2nd Wednesday of the month from 10am to 12noon.
- **FELIXSTOWE**, The 3rd Monday of the month from 9.30am to 11.30am.
- **IPSWICH**, The last Thursday of the month from 10am to 12noon
- **SUDBURY**, The 4th Monday of the month from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

CHECK OUT THE FULL DETAILS HERE

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

We hold regular workshops and activities for parent carers as well as the whole family. To be notified about new events that may interest you please register your interest using the button below.

The events include:

- Time Out Support Programmes • Teen Life • Friendship Groups •
- Parent Carer Respite Activities • Whole Family Activities •
- Special Interest Groups • and many more •

**REGISTER YOUR
INTEREST HERE**



BOOK REVIEW

Declarative Language Handbook: Using a Thoughtful Language Style to Help Kids with Social Learning Challenges Feel Competent, Connected, and Understood.

By Linda K. Murphy MS. CCC-SLP

Linda Murphy is a speech and language pathologist, she claims her book was intended to help therapists, teachers, parents, grandparents and carers learn how to use everyday moments to teach and guide a child's social development. She mentions that whatever your child's learning style, neurodevelopmental diagnosis or not, the book has been written to help you feel equipped to make a difference by being mindful of your own communication and speaking style.

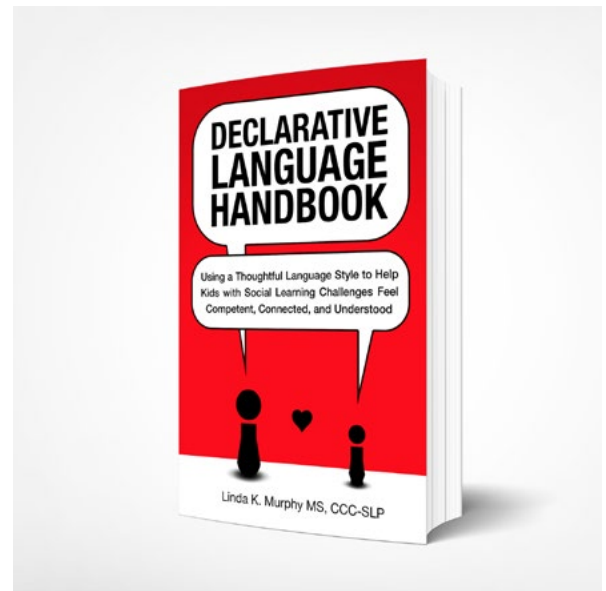
In the past I have been reluctant to read professionally written 'help' books on language use. There are often too many words and strategies that have left me in the same position as when I started reading them, overwhelmed! Linda Murphy's book is far from that, it's not a long heavy book, her writing style is simplistic and to the point. It is well presented, straight forward to follow and easy to dip back in to refresh your memory!

Declarative language is a comment or a statement that we share, it can be what we know, what we see or what we are thinking.

This language style has no wrong or right answers and often doesn't need a verbal response. It paves the way for thought and gives someone the opportunity to hear your thoughts, understand your thinking and to see your perspective. In turn it gives them a chance to problem solve on their own.

A response is usually expected when imperative language is used. The control then lies with the person asking the question or giving the command. For example: 'Put your shoes on'. Imperative language can feel demanding for many people and can trigger flight, fight or freeze responses that can be seen in a negative way.

Declarative language is a warmer way of interacting and connecting, it can feel less threatening, less



forceful, making it a less anxiety-provoking way of communicating. So instead of 'put your shoes on' we could say 'I notice the others have put their shoes on.' Stating observations and sharing them can give someone the chance to process the information and then respond if need be.

The book is divided into seven parts: an Introduction, Getting to know the Good Stuff, Mechanics, Pacing and Troubleshooting, Practice, Tracking Progress and Research, and Final Words.

As a parent of an autistic young man with a demand avoidant profile, the use of language has been key to positive engagement and communication. It has been a complex learning journey of noticing when, what and how I speak with my son, sometimes it's worked and sometimes it hasn't. Like many children and young people, he is smart and sometimes my style has back fired, for example, 'Oh James, it would be nice if you could put your shoes on.' which worked for a while, and then in moment of high anxiety before school he said 'yes, it would be nice!' However this time, he did not put the shoes on! It was time for me to rethink.

This book can help you develop your own use of declarative language, it gives you the opportunity to explore your language style, and what could be possible to work for you and who you communicate with. I found by using declarative language more frequently in the home with everyone stopped my son noticing that I was using some form of special language to communicate with him.

I found Chapter 4 very thought provoking and useful.

Using Episodic Memory for Problem Solving. Linda writes 'Episodic Memory is what we use to recall memories or past experiences that are relevant in the here and now. These are vital to social competence. We need it to feel equipped when faced with a problem. We need it to manage a new situation and we need it to be independent in life.'

Most people with competent social skills will have a strong episodic memory, and their brain will often unconsciously recall past memories to help them to know what they are doing in that moment. Or you may just think, 'When have I done this before?' Some with a weaker episodic memory may struggle to recall similar or past experiences. Resulting in feeling stuck when faced with a new situation, experience or communication.

There are some very useful examples in this chapter to help children and young people strengthen their episodic memory using declarative language to help guide them to recall similar situations that in turn can help them develop problem solving skills. This chapter really made me think about stepping back and not rushing in to solve everything for my children.

Instead, I try to support and encourage them to think about what they may have done in the past and how that can help with a solution now or in the future.

Throughout the book there are many practical examples and tips to develop your own use of language to help build more positive relationships with those who you work with or parent. There is also a very useful website that offers resources that are referred to in various chapters of the book, along with pod casts and the author's blog: www.declarativelanguage.com

I highly recommend this book for anyone who is living or working with children and young people and who struggle to feel competent, connected and understood socially. The changes in the way we use language can have such a big impact on the people we support in so many ways.

'So, Why haven't read this book?' or perhaps I should say 'I was thinking this book may be of interest to you.'

This article is written by Michelle Barnett, Family Worker for the ND Project.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

Whether your child receives a diagnosis of autism and/or ADHD, you will be given a plan of care. This plan will include a clear explanation of the assessment results and recommendations for supporting your child's needs effectively.

Suffolk Local Offer are pleased to inform us that Essex Family Forum has created an exceptional resource pack in collaboration with families. This resource pack focuses on supporting neurodivergent children and has been localised to provide Suffolk-specific resources. It offers practical interventions, resources, hints, and tips based on the lived experiences of local families.

We believe that this will be a valuable tool in helping you navigate the support systems in Suffolk and provide you with practical strategies to support your child effectively.

Click the image to view the pack.



SUFFOLK SENDIASS

Suffolk SENDIASS are trained by IPSEA through the National IASS network. Each of our team members complete an initial 90 hours of accredited legal training, so that we can give you information based on legislation rather than local policy. We regularly receive training updates to ensure that the information we share is correct and current.

We work to a set of national Minimum Standards for services providing impartial information, advice and support relating to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). The Minimum Standards are developed by the Information, Advice and Support Services Network. Providing unbiased information and advice about the local authority's policies and procedures, about health services and provision in relation to SEND, and about the policy and practice in local schools and other settings.

You may find the answer to some of your questions by looking through the information on our website [HERE](#) or through our social media channels. We have some downloadable leaflets and factsheets. If you can't find the answers to your questions, you can get in touch directly. enquiries@suffolksendiass.co.uk

Text ADVICE4ME to 87007 and we will get in touch with you as soon as we can.

The SENDIASS helpline 01473 265210 is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 4pm on Friday.

We are a small team and the helpline usually has only one operator working at any given **time**.

If you can't get through to someone on your first attempt please do leave your details in a message. Please remember to give your name and your telephone number slowly and clearly on any message you leave.

SENDIASS Online Events

AUTISM CENTRAL

Autism Central is a peer education programme, commissioned by NHS England. It aims to build knowledge and understanding of autism and empower families and carers to advocate for autistic people they support. Local support helps families to get the right understanding and adjustments in place across the services they use.

Everything the programme does is informed by, or co-produced with autistic people, families and carers.

Autism Central hubs deliver the programme in seven regions of England through group and one-to-one sessions, giving information on local services. Each session is delivered by parents and carers of autistic people who are happy to share their knowledge and experience with others. To find out more visit [Autism Central](#) for Parents and Carers.

A DAY OUT AT THE FOOD MUSEUM

FOOD
MUSEUM

THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST

We have two corporate day passes for the Food Museum in Stowmarket that are available FREE for a day to any registered family carer, with each providing free entry to the museum for up to 6 people, giving an opportunity for a fun day out.

**MORE INFORMATION
CLICK HERE**

A DAY AT THE FARM

As part of our Time Out Together project we now have a family day pass for Easton Farm Park.

To have the chance for FREE entry to the farm please click here.

FIND OUT MORE HERE



THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST

MISSED OUR WORKSHOPS?

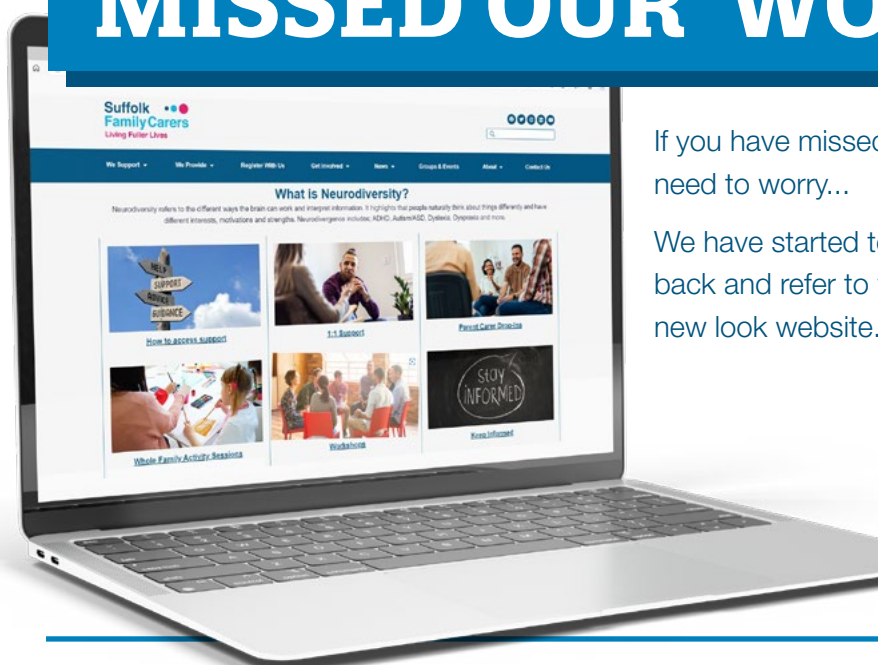
If you have missed one of our Parent Carer Workshops, no need to worry...

We have started to record some of these for you to watch back and refer to when needed. You can find them on our new look website.

PARENT CARERS

ND PROJECT

RECORDED WORKSHOPS



PARENT CARER SUPPORT GROUPS

All information is correct at time of publication, we advise contacting the organiser directly for updates.



VIRTUAL DROP IN SESSIONS FOR PARENT CARERS

PACT Group (parents and carers together)	Every Friday 6pm on Facebook
A Time to Be , Home Start Suffolk. Virtual group for parents of children with additional needs.	1st Wednesday evening every month 19.30-20.30 and 1st Thursday 10.30 – 11.30 tracy@homestartinsuffolk.org
Join Speak ; virtual group sessions for parents carers whose children self harm	Connect & Learn Sessions

IPSWICH

Suffolk Family Carers , Unit 9, Hill view Business Park, Old Ipswich Rd, Claydon, IP6 0AJ. For parent carers of ND children and young people.	2nd Tuesday each month 10:00-12:00
MENCAP Community Carers Drop In , The Meeting Place, Limerick Close, Ipswich IP1 5LR	13th Jan 2025 then every 2 weeks Contact Barbara Thorn 07766 103563
Ipswich Opportunity Group Salvation Army Hall Woodbridge Road Ipswich IP4 4PH	Monday: 10.00 - 11.30 / 13.00-14.30 and Friday: 10.00 - 11.30 (No groups in school holidays) Cost £5.00 per family (negotiable)
Neurodivergent Abilities and Suffolk Family Carers , The Key Café, St Margaret's Plain, Ipswich, IP4 2BB	4th Thursday of the month 10:00 - 12:00 term time only
BEANS Steam House Café 22 Carr Street Ipswich IP4 1EJ. Group for parent carers of ND children and young people to get support and advice	1st Tuesday each month 10:00-12:00

COASTAL & WEST SUFFOLK

Suffolk Family Carers & Pushchair Pit Stop SEN Sessions St Edmunds Church, Langer Rd, Felixstowe	3rd Monday each month 9.30-11:00 term time only to talk to a Suffolk Family Carers Advisor. Group runs Mon and Weds mornings 9.00-12.00
MENCAP Felixstowe Felixstowe Ferry Centre, Ferry Road, Felixstowe, IP11 9RS All social clubs cater for a range of individuals with a variety of needs and provide a fun and supportive environment. Activities change throughout the year.	Drop-In - Age 2+ Saturdays 9.30am-11.45am Contact: Amy Peachey 07738902914 The Gateway Club - Age 16+ Alternate Wednesdays - 7-9pm Contact: Simon Jennings 07971 930226 Magic - Age 16+ 2nd & 4th Friday - 7-9pm Contact: Nikki Taylor 07899 971585
BEANS , The Pavilion, Jetty Lane, Kingston Fields, Woodbridge, IP12 4BA. <i>Group for parent carers of ND children and young people</i>	2nd Tuesday each month 10:00-12:00noon
PACT Walk and Talk at Needham Lake Meet at the Duck and Teapot café for a drink and walk around the lake.	3rd Thursday each month 10:00 - 12:00 Email: Clare@pactsuffolk.co.uk .

Parent Support Group Framlingham. FAYAP Youth and Arts Centre, Saxted Road Framlingham IP13 9HE	Thursday 9th January, Friday 24th January, Thursday 6th February and Friday 28th February. 8:30am – 10:30am (arrive at any time) Tea and coffee provided Email: framparentgroup@gmail.com
Family Action - West Suffolk , Oakes Barn St Andrews St Bury St Edmunds IP33 3PH. Group for parent carers of ND children and young people	1st Thursday each month 10.30-12:00 wsuffolk@family-action.org.uk
Family Action - West Suffolk , Clements Community Centre, Leiston Rd, Haverhill, Group for parent carers of ND children and young people to get support and advice.	1st Weds of each month 10:30-12:00
BEANS , Linden House, Kings Rd Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3DJ. <i>Group for parent carers of ND children and young people</i>	3rd Tuesday each month 10:00-12:00
Parent Carers Monthly Meet Up Drop in Blossoms House, Crockett Road Hadleigh IP7 6RJ	1st Tuesday of each month - 13:00 -14:30 familyhubs@suffolk.gov.uk
Parent Carers Monthly Meet Up Drop in Phoenix Family Hub 27 Tudor Road, Sudbury CO10 1NP	1st Tuesday in the month - 10:00 -11.30 familyhubs@suffolk.gov.uk
SEN Superstars: Stay and Play at Blackbourne Community Centre Elmswell IP30 9UH.	Thursdays fortnightly - 10:00 -11.30 £1.00 per child/£1.00 per adult.
Embrace celebrating & supporting neurodiversity. Old Newton Church Institute IP14 4ED	2nd Wednesday each month 9:30 -11:00
The Arc SEN parent support group with Suffolk Family Carers Stanton Village Hall IP31 2BX	Wednesdays 10:00-12:00 ARC Group meets every week, <i>Suffolk Family Carers present on 2nd Wednesday of the month term time only</i>
The Arc SEN parent support group with Suffolk Family Carers The Salvation Army Hall, Station Road, Sudbury, CO10 2SP	Mondays 10:30-12:30 ARC Group meets every week, <i>Suffolk Family Carers present on 4th Monday of the month term time only</i>
The Arc SEN parent support group Bay Tree Café Bury St Edmunds	Thursdays 10:00-12:00
Bridge the Gap Bridge Community Church, 68 Queens Rd, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3EW. <i>A drop-in support space for children and their families who struggle to attend school for whatever reason.</i>	Tuesdays Fortnightly 10.30 – 12.30 Contact emma@bridgecommunitychurch.co.uk or 07501 408608
Stowmarket ASD Club Parent and Carer evening meet up. Open to members and non members.	1st Thursday of the month 19:00 – 21.00 For location details contact leah@stowmarketsaturdayclub.co.uk
Stowmarket ASD Club Parent Café , Stowmarket Community Hub, Crown St, Stowmarket	Bi-monthly Saturdays 10.00 – 13.00 For dates - leah@stowmarketsaturdayclub.co.uk
SEND Families Unite Red Gables, Stowmarket IP14 1BE. <i>Support group for parents and carers of children with a diagnosis or undiagnosed special needs</i>	3rd Tuesday 13:00-14:30. Places need to be booked contact Stephen on 07925 138386 or stephen@families-together-suffolk.org.uk
SEND Families Unite Chalkstone Community Centre Haverhill. <i>Support group for parents and carers of children with a diagnosis or undiagnosed special needs.</i>	1st Monday 10:00 -12:00 noon. Places need to be booked contact Stephen on 07925 138186 stephen@families-together-suffolk.org.uk

Why does my child need Heavy Work?

"Heavy Work" Calms Sensory Seeking Behavior

Carrying Objects:



Heavy backpack, take out the trash, carrying groceries, pick-up books, carry toys.

Pushing or Pulling:



Stretchy bands, push grocery cart, pull wagon, shovel snow, rearrange furniture.

Jumping and Bouncing



Trampoline, leapfrog, pogo stick, jumping into a bean bag, jump rope.

ilsllearningcorner.com

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