

Making Changes Together XXX Conference report.

The 30th friendly and informative parent carer conference organised by *Parents*.

To help inform and support you with the latest changes in Education, Health, and Social Care. YOUR opinion matters!

Wednesday 22nd November 2023 At Ramside Hall Hotel, Durham. This report is distributed to parent/carers and professionals who were unable to attend the conferences, alongside those delegates who did attend. It therefore contains all of the presentations and information given at the conference on Wednesday 22^{nd} November 2023.

If you are unable to read any of the slides, they are also available to download via the "conference info" tab on the MCT website under "November conference 2023" - https://www.mctdurham.co.uk/conference-info/

Contents	Page
Welcome and introductions	3
Improving information & advice for parents of	pre-school
children with SEND in Co Durham	4
Team Training	6
Local Authority SEND update	10
MCT - Have your say	15
Integrating Children	19
SENDEIC - Short breaks	20
SENDIASS	28
Family Hubs Update	33
SEND Participation Strategy	37
Valuing Neurodiversity	39
Needs Led Neurodevelopmental pathway	44
DurhamEnable	49
Feel Good CIC	55
Raffle and Close	57
Conference evaluations	58



Welcome by Amy Stewart from MCT.

Amy was the spokesperson for our 30th Parent carer conference. Amy welcomed everyone to the conference and highlighted the usual housekeeping information.

Improving information & advice for parents of pre-school children with SEND in Co Durham.

Speaker - Fiona Callaghan - Early Years Equalities and Inclusion.

At the end of Fiona's slot, she asked everyone to read the 3 questions below and write answers on a post it note -

- Where are your go to places when looking for information regarding your child's development?
- What information would you have found useful regarding your child's developmental/special educational needs in their early years.
- How good was the information/advice that you found/were given?

All post it notes will be forwarded to Fiona and will be used for the improvement within the Early Years Service.

Fiona's conference slides -

Improving information and advice for parents of pre-school children with SEND living in County Durham

Fiona Callaghan

earlyyearssend@durham.gov.uk



Aim

- To provide a range of information materials that we can signpost parents to that describe what support is available for young children and parents starting to think about nursery/school in County Durham.
- This information will be co-produced and verified and available to parent groups/forums and teams and services working with children and families in their early years.

Outcome

- Trusted information consistently used across services working with children and families in County Durham
- · County Durham specific
 - EY SEND support funding available without an EHCP plan different to neighbouring authorities
- Materials that parents can download and take with them to meetings with early years settings and schools
- An agreed method where parents can seek information or advice from relevant professionals

3 initial questions

- Where are your go to places when looking for information regarding your child's development?
- What information would you have found useful regarding your child's developmental/special educational needs in their early years
- How good was the information/ advice that you found/were given?



Education

Education

Next steps

- · Feedback to co-production steering group
 - MCT representatives
 - · Portage service
 - HDFT
 - Family Hubs and Early Help
- Work with marketing and communications colleagues to draft and develop materials and web locations
- Any thoughts/ideas and suggestions forward to

earlyyearssend@durham.gov.uk



Team Training Update.

Speaker - Victoria Robinson from MCT

Victoria explained to everyone what Team training is and who is involved - MCT, NHS, Durham County Carers Support, Darlington parent carer forum & SENDIASS.

Victoria explained Team Training was started to enable as much parent / carer training was offered as possible and to avoid organisations putting on duplicate training sessions.

Victoria also explained there were leaflets for the "Child to Parent violence and aggression" training ran by CAMHS on the 6th of December on MCT's conference stand.

Victoria advised there was a sheet of paper in the conference packs and asked attendees to think of any training they would like to see. She will share all suggestions received at the next Team Training meeting in January.

You can view all the team training available at https://www.mctdurham.co.uk/parent-carer-training-workshops/. Training is added regularly so keep checking.

At the end of the team training slot - We had Louise Brown explain that the much-loved Rollercoaster parent support group that ended in June was back with the help of Tees Esk & wear Valley NHS trust. Nikki Cooper who is a CAMHS nurse and helping with the support group was also at the conference. The venues for the support group are now North End House, Durham and Acley Centre, Newton Aycliffe. The next support group is in Durham on 6th of December. More information on venues and dates here.

Team training slides below...







NHS









Sessions offered since June 2023:

- **Understanding Sleep**
- Understanding Behaviour Development in Children & Young People
- Understanding Why Children Might Be Anxious About School
- Anxiety
- **Emotional Wellbeing**



Coming up from Team Training:

- Wednesday 6th December Child to Parent Violence & Aggression - CAMHS
- CAMHS plan to have more workshops on offer in the new year.





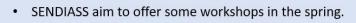


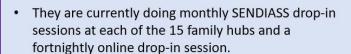














· MCT & Sensory Worx are working on a leaflet for parents and carers about how a child is impacted from a sensory perspective.







So, look out for Team Training Publicity on our social media platforms. It will look like this....



You can contact any of the following organisations through our social media platforms or website.



Durham County
carers support

www.mctdurham.co.uk

www.dccarers.org Tel: 0300 0051213



Tel: 0191 5873542 or 03000 267 007

https://durhamsendiass.info/

Local Authority SEND update.

Speaker - Paul Shadforth - Strategic Manager SEND and Inclusion Strategy Assessment and Provision.

Paul explained he enjoys the MCT conference and is now a pro. He apologised for not attending in person in June.

He said he had 2 main points to discuss with parents / carers:

Things I will cover today

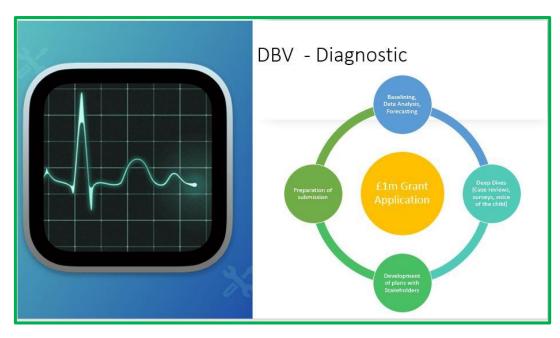
- SEND Transformation through Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND
- North East SEND and Alternative Provision Pilot

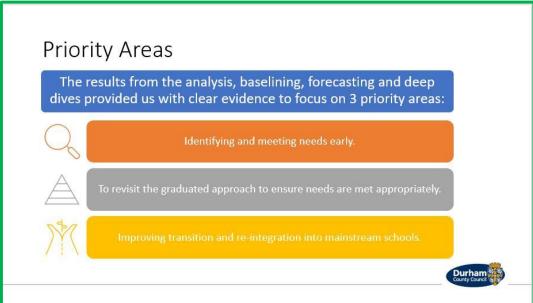


Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND

- The Department for Education (DfE) identified Durham County Council amongst 55 local authorities to receive support towards improving their HNB financial position and sustainability, via a new programme called Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND.
- The DBV in SEND programme aims to identify the highest impact changes that each local authority involved can make to better support their local children with SEND more sustainably.
- The Authority had an opportunity to join an earlier tranche, which we accepted.
- Between January and June 2023, the Authority worked with consultancy firm Newton Europe, partnered with CIPFA and completed a 6-month diagnostic phase.







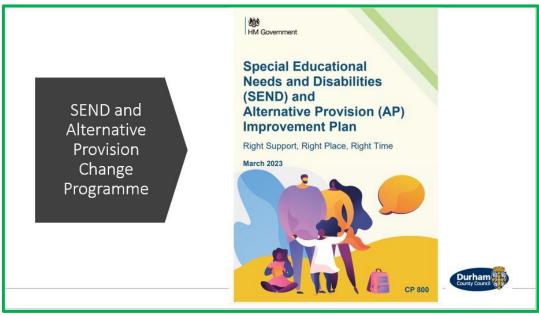
Paul explained things are happening within priority area 1 (identifying and meeting needs early) but still needs improvement.

In recent years, the local authority and schools have moved away from and not doing enough of the graduated approach. A good practise example-

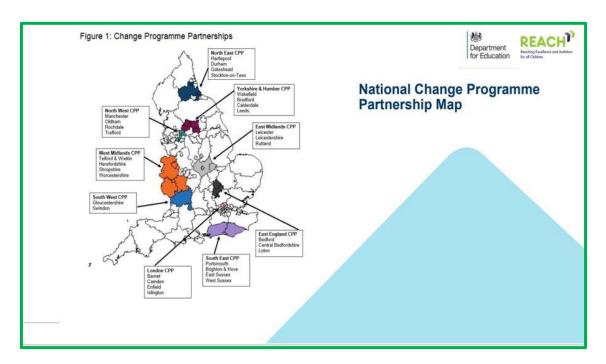
 A child has special educational needs; schools recognise this and write an SEN support plan. If a child needs extra support the school, then asks the local authority for extra funding before applying for an EHCP. This means the child gets help quicker than applying in the first instance for an EHCP. Paul explained the vast number of EHCP requests start in school year 5 / year 6 and there are now more requests at nursery age. He also explained he recognised that parents should not need to jump through hoops at transition stages to be heard.

Some children and young people are too ill for school due to illness or being anxious. He wants these young people to be better supported to get back into school and achieve better outcomes.





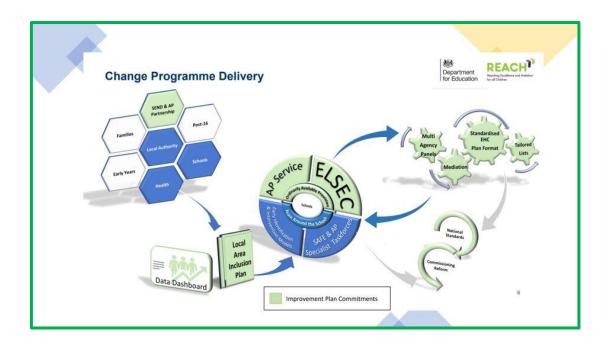
Four years ago, the Department for Education (DfE) began a review into the SEND system. It included a national consultation with parents / carers / young people / local authorities. In March 2023, the DfE announced what government's SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan would look like. Link to the above SEND and AP improvement plan here.



Durham have been asked to take part in a test "National Change Programme Partnership Plan." Durham is part of a North East Change Programme Partnership (CPP) with Hartlepool (lead), Gateshead and Stockton-on-Tees.

According to the March 2023 Improvement Plan, this programme will "test and refine" key reform proposals and support local SEND and AP systems across the country to manage local improvement. They will look at things such as -

- Better medication
- Look at an EHCP format plan.
- Changes to Alternative Provision funding and commissioning
- Multi agency panels.



At the end of Paul's slot, he stated he wants everyone attending the conference to leave with the understanding that there has been lots of change over the years and many things **are** different (lots of improvement) The local authority wants the opportunity to improve things as no one wants to keep things as they are now. There also needs to be more transformation work.



paul.shadforth@durham.gov.uk



Tel: 03000 261684. Mobile: 07766 785279

MCT - Have your say!

Speaker - Victoria Robinson - MCT

Victoria shared feedback from the "MCT have your say" slot at Junes parent carer conference and explained MCT had passed feedback on to the relevant departments in the Local Authority, NHS etc and would follow up with them soon. Victoria then asked parents and carers to grab a post it note and write: -

 Something in education, health, social care or in general that IS going well.

And /

 Something in education, health, social care or in general that is NOT going well.

This allowed parents and carers to share their praise and air their grievances. We got dozens of post it notes with both praise and issues written on them.

The feedback will be collated asap. We will again try to raise issues with the relevant department, and we will feedback to everyone soon.

MCT also played a video over lunch showing what they have done since June 2023 conference., View the video on YouTube HERE



info@mctdurham.co.uk

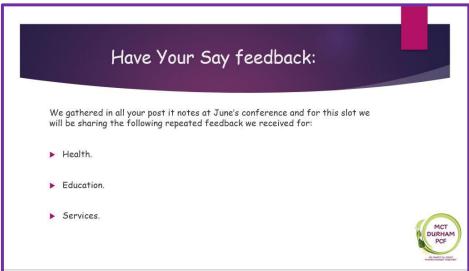


www.facebook.com/MakingChangesTogetherDURHAM



Have your say slot slides -







Education Going Well: Dedicated and knowledgeable staff in Special Schools SENDCOs Teachers & Support Staff Not going well: Transitions for education to adult Communication - School/home/services Lack of understanding about masking





We want you to Have Your Say.

- ▶ What is going well in education/health/social care?
- ▶ What is not going well in education/health/social care?
- Write your praise or grievance on a sticky note & place in the decorated bin provided at the front.









Integrating Children

Speakers

Kathryn Gaudie-Jones - Business Manager

Freya - Young person and service user.



Kathryn explained Integrating children are a short breaks provider based in Chester Le Street but accessible from all over County Durham. They provide activities for young people which allows them to get together with friends without parents / carers. They have social Saturdays and Sunday activities are coming soon. It allows young people to do activities within the community and they also have a holiday scheme.

Integrating Children played a video which featured young people explaining what Integrating Children means to them. Find the video that was played on YouTube HERE.

Freya explained that young people went to a recording studio and have a CD for sale. She found lockdown hard as she does not like to be indoors and even though Integrating children are now back to normal, they still have bingo online and have other activities face to face.



info@integrating.org.uk



https://www.facebook.com/IntegratingChildrenPage



https://integrating.org.uk/



07914376228

SENDEIC - SEND Empowering Inclusive Communities / Short Breaks

Speakers-

Lyndsey Dunn - Commissioning, Planning and Policy Officer (Project lead)

Ruth Pope - Enabling Inclusive Communities Co-ordinator.



https://www.facebook.com/SENDEIC



sendeic@durham.gov.uk



Tel: 03000 260 270

- Link to short breaks information here www.durham.gov.uk/shortbreaks
- Link to register your young person with Childrens and Young people's network and to get a max card - Ring 03000 265 792, email cypn@durham.gov.uk or do it online https://www.durham.gov.uk/cypn.



SHORT BREAKS

A 'short break' is an opportunity for a parent carer of a disabled child to have some 'breathing space', to be able to think, rest, reduce their stress levels, do something they enjoy, socialise or anything that will improve their mental health and wellbeing to help them fulfil the challenges of their caring role. It allows children to develop their independence, take part in social opportunities and improve their physical and mental health.

These short windows of time help parent carers to cope and deal with the challenges they face in supporting a child with additional needs.

A 'lifeline' for carers.



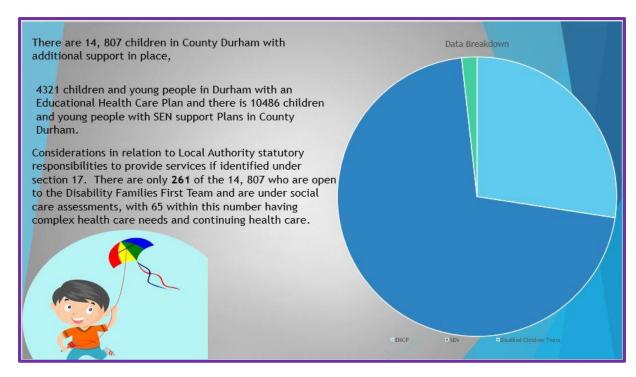
This could include (but not limited to)

Support for the disabled child to access a couple of hours at an activity without their parent carer, support into the home, an activity for all of the family with support, support worker taking the child out of the home for a longer <u>period</u>, or could even include an overnight stay away from their home depending on needs.



Although it is **NOT** a legal duty that the Local Authority **provide** <u>all</u> short breaks, however we MUST:

Ensure there is sufficient accessible provision for children with disabilities that allows parent carers short breaks when needed.





Lyndsey explained SENDEIC are trying to be clear about what they do and what they cannot do.

- She explained the only criteria to get "additional support" was they had already spoken to Ruth to remove barriers / commission extra support.
- To get "specialist support" they must have already worked with Ruth, and it has been determined that barriers cannot be removed to take part in community activities. Social workers or practitioners will then be asked for advice on what is needed / level of need.



Advice, signposting and enabling access

*Provide funding to Durham County Carers Support, to work with parent carers to consider their needs including a carers assessment completed as part of this service.

*work with families to help them develop a <u>personalised</u> response to meeting their needs for a positive activity and short break.



Additional support

*work with families and organisations to develop local community activities with additional support for children/young people who require this to enable them to take part in an activity to allow parent carers to have a short break from their caring role. A focus on removing barriers and growing capacity and ensuring all children can be supported to access.

*Youth groups, activities and projects for children who cannot take part in community activities



Specialist support

For families who feel they require more specialist support for children/young people with a range of complex needs that are unable to be met within the existing offer, they can access a statutory assessment to help identify unmet needs and work on potential solutions to meet these needs.

There is a menu of specialist services to meet these needs as part of the offer.



Advice, signposting and enabling access

We are continuing to see an increase in the number of enquiries a total of 1500 to date, this has over doubled in volume in the last 10 months. From families and within the last 10 months there have been more contacts to the service than that of the previous 23 months



Additional support

155 families have been referred for additional support within the commissioned offer during this time.



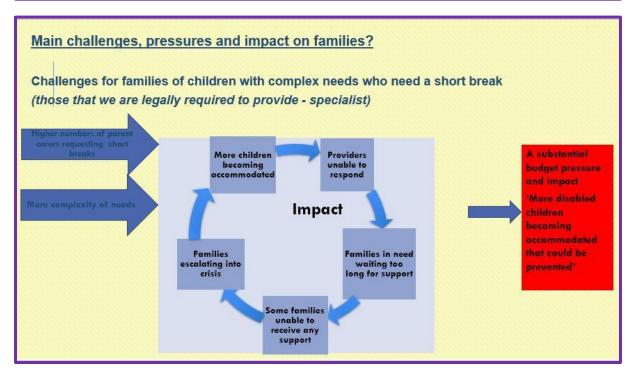
Specialist support

There are currently 372 Specialist packages

Lyndsey explained she plans to do pilots to find gaps in certain areas of County Durham to see what activities there is and see what uptake is.

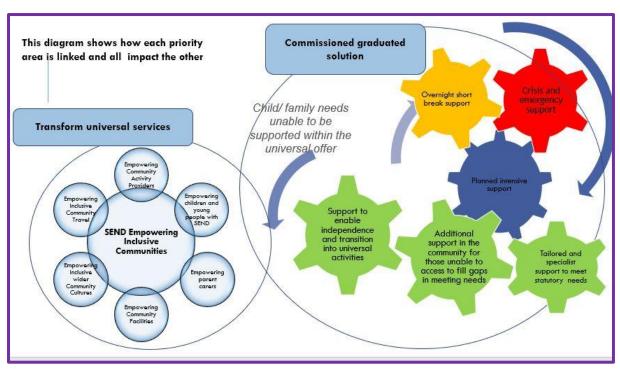
Needs have increased since the pandemic. Cases are more complex, in higher demand and not enough providers to fulfil contracts. She explained individuals and help needed should be given as soon as possible before it escalates to a higher level of care needs.

Service Type		
Specialist Outreach - Positive Activity	30	
ipecialist Outreach - Short Break	82	
Specialist Outreach - Intensive	9	
Overnight	69	
Care in the home & Community (Dom Care Providers)	22	
Specialist Health Care into the Home	9	
Direct Payments	99	
Overall Total	320	













Lyndsey asked if there was anyone who wanted to volunteer with short breaks. For example, mystery shopping and focus groups etc with regards to short breaks.

She also asked if anyone wanted to give a video recording with feedback on short breaks e.g. Opinions on a short break they have done, any barriers they have found or what a short break means to them. As a thank you anyone agreeing to do a video will be put into a draw to win a £25 Amazon gift card.

Short Breaks YouTube video -

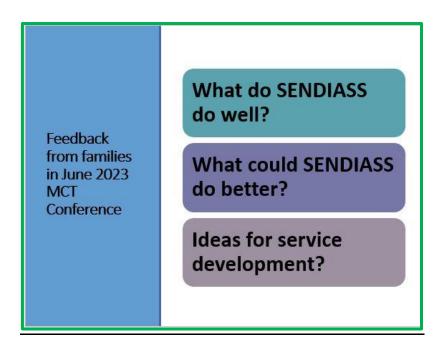
https://youtu.be/oH52uc15Ow8?si=q_RyVkqtqjVSAQQ4

SENDIASS - Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information Advice & Support Service.

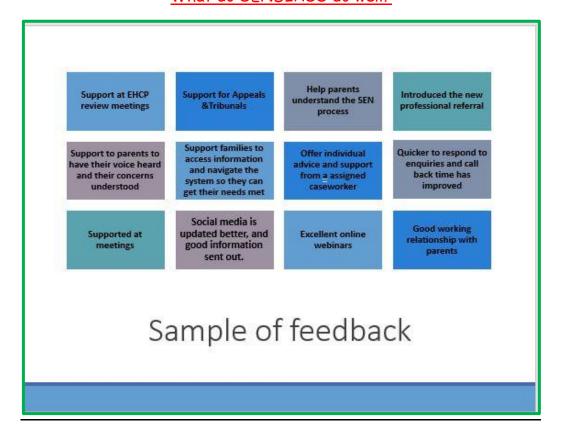
Speaker - Lisa Kirton - County Durham SENDIASS Co-ordinator & North East Regional IASS Representative.

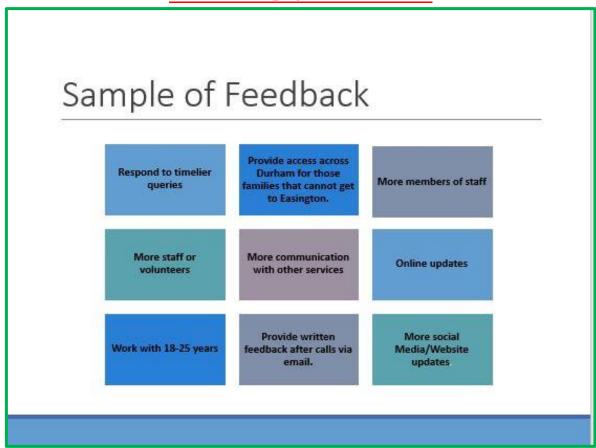




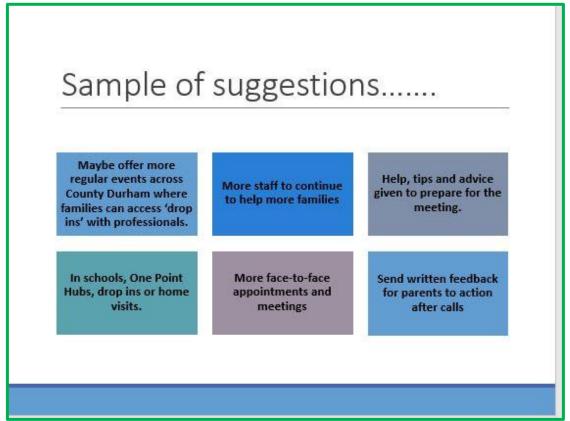


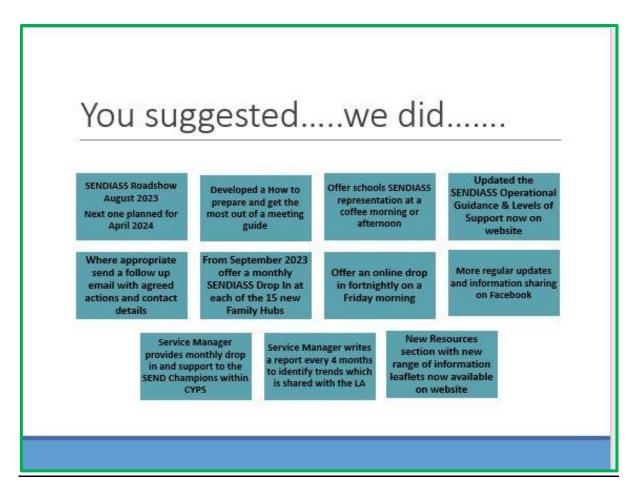
What do SENDIASS do well?





Areas of development....





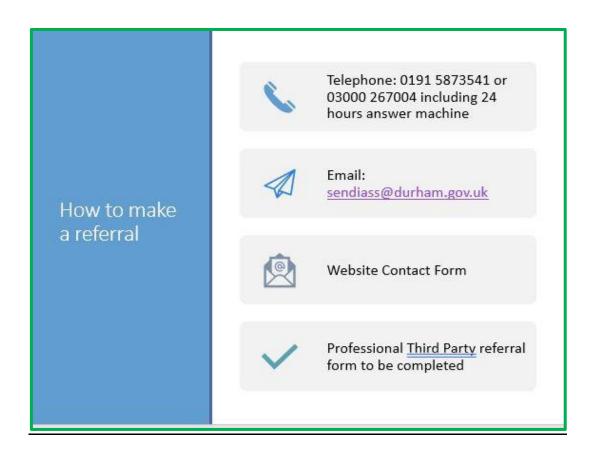
Lisa explained SENDIASS now offer monthly drop ins at all 15 family hubs. Find dates , time and venues <u>HERE</u>.



At the end of her slot Lisa asked delegates to fill in a form which asked 3 questions -

- 1. What does SENDIASS do well?
- 2. What could SENDIASS do better?
- 3. How could SENDIASS develop the offer to families?

Lisa asked parents / carers to include their contact details if they would like her to respond to their form feedback / suggestions.

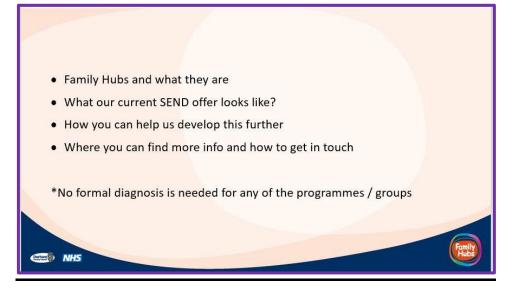




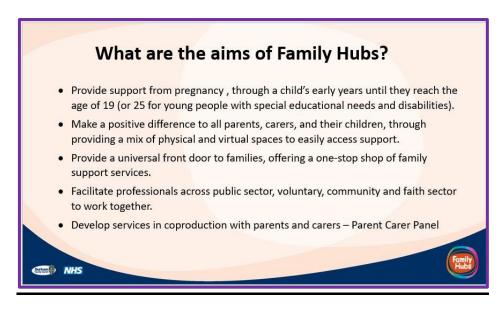
Family Hubs Update

Speaker - Alison Ghent - Family Hub Development Manager





Alison explained County Durham family hubs service 24 areas within 15 building all over the County.





- Stepping Stones is for parents of children with a disability or additional need up to the age of 12. It is great if you are struggling with your child's behaviour or if you would like to learn parenting skills to help promote their development and potential. New courses start in January 2024.
 More information <u>HERE</u>
- EPEC (Empowering parents, empowering communities). Parents with lived experience are trained to deliver the program. The only requirement is you are a parent / carer of an autistic child / young person. There will be new training in the new year. More information <u>HERE</u>.
- 6 family hubs have a sensory room which are free and can be booked for one hour. To book contact the Family Hub directly to book a slot.
 - Bishop Auckland Family Hub 03000 266 390
 - · Chester le Street Family Hub 03000 268 643

- Horden Family Hub 03000 264 973
- Seaham Family Hub 03000 267 470
- Stanley Family Hub 03000 266 150
- · Willington Family Hub 03000 268 445
- Solihull programme information <u>HERE</u>
- DurhamLearn. Follow them on Facebook for up-to-date courses HERE



 Daily Chain Peer support coffee morning will be at Peterlee hub, Chester le street hub, Bishop Auckland hub and Durham hub. More information HERE. Also "Autism Central" learning workshops. Info HERE

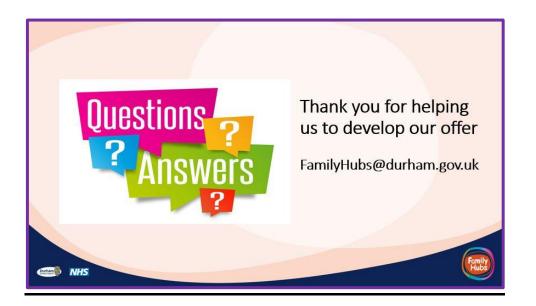


Alison asked for everyone to write on the provided feedback sheet what they think of the current family hubs offer, what is missing and what could they do better.



Website - <u>Help for families - your virtual Family Hub - Durham County Council</u>

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/CountyDurhamFamilyHubs



SEND Participation Strategy Review

Speaker - Victoria Robinson - MCT

Find the current SEND Participation Strategy here.

Send Participation strategy review slides -



What is Participation? Participation is the involvement of parents and carers in services to give them the opportunity to air their views and influence the design and delivery of services There are different degrees of participation but the main one every service should aim for is co-production, this is seen as the 'golden standard' of participation which everyone should strive to do, it gives a more person centred approach.

What is Co-Production?

- Co-production is an equal relationship between people who use services and the people who are responsible for the delivery of services. They work together from design to delivery, sharing decision making. Co-production requires dedication and commitment to achieve and sustain, but the rewards are worth the effort.
- Co-production should always be meaningful and not carried out as a tick box exercise. It's proven to have a positive impact on achievement and progress and overall reduces conflict.



2018

- Back in 2018, MCT got together with Elaine Chandler (former SENDIASS Manager) and Durham County Council to co-produce this Strategy.
- ▶ The Strategy was placed on the Local Offer and advertised on our website and Facebook page.



2019

- ▶ In 2019 training workshops were delivered to Frontline staff and Managers at various venues across County Durham delivered by SENDIASS & MCT together. The 90 minute sessions covered:
 - ▶ Participation why it works and why it's necessary,
 - ▶ What engagement, participation and co-production look like,
 - How to engage with service users to ensure the offer you develop and provide is meeting the needs of your client group.



2023

- MCT & Lisa Skelton (Quality Improvement Manager, Children & Young People's Service) started to relook at this document to check that it was still relevant and propose any changes that needed to be made.
- ▶ We then got together with Paul <u>Shadforth</u> (Strategic Manager SEND), Diane Watson (Designated Clinical Officer for SEND) & Judith Bowman (Designated Social Care Officer) to look at it together and to discuss training that could go alongside updating the Strategy.



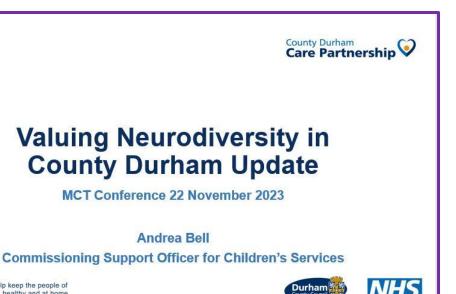
2024 plan

- ▶ We plan to share the newly updated Strategy at MCT's May 2024 conference and share updates about the training that will run alongside this strategy.
- Any further announcements will be made on our website and Facebook page.



Valuing Neurodiversity in County Durham Update

Speaker- Andrea Bell - Commissioning and Development Support Officer - County Durham Integrated Strategic Commissioning Team.



Last time

Working together to help keep the people of County Durham happy, healthy and at home



- Told you of our plans to look at the support offer and to move from a diagnosis focussed system to a needs-led system
- We held a survey and did some work to identify how things were and how you'd like things to be in the future.
- County Durham Care Partnership Executive approved our proposal to take this work forward as a project.

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Andrea explained the project is to help move systems along.

What are we doing now?

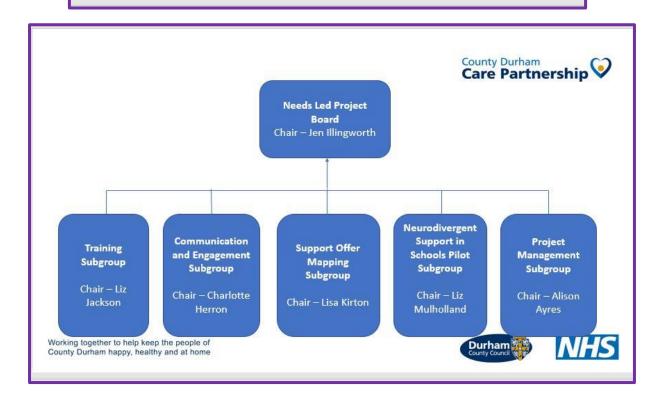


- Agreed a title Valuing Neurodiversity in County Durham (Improving advice, help, and support for neurodivergent children, young people and families)
- Set up a multi-agency project board which meets every 2 months.
- · Set up subgroups to take the work forward:
 - Training
 - · Support Offer Mapping
 - · In Schools Support Project
 - · Communications and Engagement
 - · Project Management
- · Subgroups report into the board on a quarterly basis.

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What we are focussing on



- Terms of reference for the project board and subgroups
- Forward plan items for discussion at future meetings
- Update from Support Offer Mapping Group:
 - · First meeting in October.
 - Membership includes MCT, Early Help, One Point, VCS and SENDIASS.
 - · Mapping support offered to families.
 - · Visual map shared.
 - · Need to work with families around gaps.
 - Will work with communications and engagement group to communicate this when ready to share.

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What are we focussing on cont'd.



- Update from Neurodivergent Support in Schools Pilot:
 - Detailed delivery plan drafted in July 2023. Key areas include:
 - Direct work into schools (CPD, whole school practice audit, school action plans, bespoke CPD and workshops, sharing good practice, direct work with families, voice of the parent and child).
 - Development of continuous professional development across services.
 - · Improving communications with parents.
- 10 schools in Consett area have been linked into this work.
- We are working with the "Consett Pilot" which is focussing specifically on mental health.

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Forward plan



- · Regular updates on subgroup progress
- · Gender dysphoria
- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder
- · Tics and Tourette's
- Sleep
- Sensory Processing Needs
- Anxiety
- Self-harm

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Links to other work in the system



- ICB work to standardise the neurodevelopmental diagnostic pathway.
 Colleagues across Durham and Tees Valley are focussing on improving the pathway for 0-5s.
- Sleep project workshop held 21st November will inform the work we take forward to improve support for sleep issues.
- Update of health information on the Local Offer MCT support with key words.
- Consett Pilot progressing at pace. Focussing initially on training and information for professionals and families.
- Transitions Jen Illingworth leads a group working with children and young people with neurodivergent needs.
- DCO work with GPs about SEND.

Working together to help keep the people of County Durham happy, healthy and at home





The Consett pilot is for Mental health needs and encourages conversations with schools and parents. Hopes to make parents confident, well informed and teach parents how to know all of their options. They currently make monthly plans.

Diane Watson (DCO - designated clinical officer) is working on SEND champions in GP areas. She also wants GPs to add a flag on GP records for show up additional support needs.



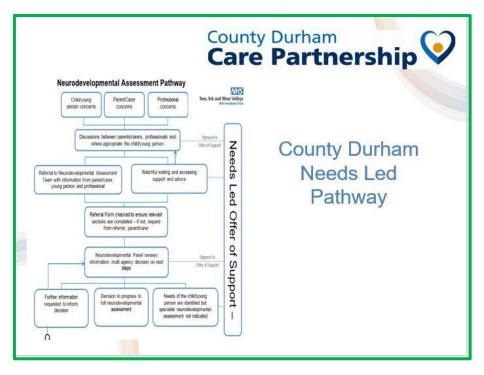
County Durham and Darlington Needs Led Neurodevelopmental Pathway

Speaker - Sara Chadwick - Speech & Language Therapist.

County Durham Care partnership hosted webpage for the Neuro pathway here - https://nenc-countydurham.icb.nhs.uk/our-work/needs-led-neurodevelopmental-pathway/







Link to clearer image of the slide above can be found HERE





What's happening

- Consett pilot improved liaison with parents and schools at the earliest point, before and after referral.
- · Ongoing review of 0-5 pathway.
- Improving single neurodevelopmental assessment for all young people based on national guidelines and family feedback
 - Neurodevelopmental key worker to guide families through their assessment journey
 - Individualised assessment planning aiming to improve outcomes
- Recruiting staff to support capacity. Although there are still capacity challenges.
- Reviewing the information that is sent out with suggestions of support available. Increased Daisy Chain offer.

Sara explained there is lots of signposting and the pathway is a joint diagnostic process with ASD and ADHD. Her team only does the bottom section of the pathway chart. She explained there is staffing issues and high capacity which is the reason for long waiting lists.



What we are working on

- Partnership working to improve access to advice and information on what support is available, regardless of diagnosis.
- Better liaison with adult services to ensure transition between teams as appropriate.
- Improving the 0-5s and early school age pathway with partner agencies.
- Updating the Referral Form



Assessment Process

- · Initial appointment with family and young person
 - · Background information
 - · Clinical impression
- · School information
- · Assessment planning meeting
- · Assessment appointments
 - · Developmental history (1, 2 or more appointments)
 - · Additional observations
 - · Standardised assessments
 - Information gathering from other agencies (social care, mental health, health)



Key Worker Model

Aims

- · To keep the child and family at the centre of the assessment
- To be confident that the information we are using in our decision making is current and accurate
- · To reduce families having to retell their story
- · To use standardised paperwork
- To reduce the number of appointments needed to make a decision
- · Ensure we are following a NICE compliant process
- To streamline the process, and cut out unnecessary steps and assessment for the young person

Sara explained there is a key worker model which will hopefully mean the same key worker will continue with the child / young person on their journey on pathway.



Sara explained they will be looking at "keeping in touch" letters as they need improving, trying to make better connections with adult services and are trying to improve referral forms to make them easier to fill in.



An introduction to DurhamEnable

Speakers -

Stuart Cannon - Service Development & Quality Manager DurhamEnable.

Dean White - DurhamEnable service user.

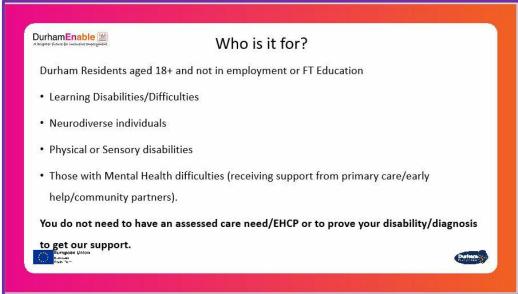
Sean Ridley - DurhamEnable service user.

Stuart explained he was from the engagement team and meets employers, parents, and groups. He did an MCT slot 4 years ago at the MCT conference on supported internships and asked for opinions on the scheme on that occasion.



He explained that the DurhamEnable supports jobseekers in County Durham with autism, a disability, or other long term health needs. He explained DurhamEnable is person centred and intensive but IT WORKS! and they find real jobs with real employers. He said young people like to bring down barriers themselves so work together with job coaches to collaborate with employers. He explained that he believed everyone can work with the right support and enter work valued, thriving, and fulfilled.









They have now supported 185 people to get back into paid employment. Below are some examples of employers that Durhamenable have worked with.









Stuart introduced Dean who has been helped by DurhamEnable.

Dean explained he had done some work with the Prince's Trust and gained some work experience. He was suffering with depression and had trust issues, but the job centre was pushing him to find a job, but they offered no help to do so. Dean was close to giving up until he went to a DurhamEnable workshop in 2021. DurhamEnable boosted his confidence and made him trust people again. They helped with CVs and his job coach helped him with so many things. He managed to get a job interview and with the help of Durhamenable received the interview questions before the interview so he could prepare. Dean had a trial shift and a day later got the job. Dean now works as a Digital Support Officer at Bridge Creative.

Stuart explained that DurhamEnable help employers to make reasonable adjustments and suggested to attendees to look at the Eric Knows website <u>HERE</u>. Eric knows is a North East website that is "Inclusive, invaluable and innovative searching: making more things more accessible."





Stuart then introduced Sean who has also been helped by DurhamEnable.

Sean explained that prior to contacting DurhamEnable he did nothing. He attended a bridge creative workshop and met DurhamEnable, and he has gone from strength to strength. He received job interview help and now has several different jobs. He works for Bridge Creative, Inclusion North as a citizen leader and is also a NQC Quality Care Checker. Sean stated DurhamEnable has helped him to become confident and aware of what he is doing. They have changed his life completely!



Question for Sean from the audience -

Q - "What would you be doing now if it was not for DurhamEnable?"

A- "Sat at home bored and doing nothing. If somebody says you cannot do it prove them wrong!"



DurhamEnable@durham.gov.uk



www.durhamenable.info/



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"Staying calm in the moment"

Speaker - Gillian Fortune from Feel Good CIC





https://www.facebook.com/feelgoodcic



gillian@feelgoodcic.com





The fabulous Gillian Fortune from Feel Good CIC joined us to give us tips on how to "Stay calm in the moment."

She explained that our internal nervous systems need to stay balanced. When we get stressed, our internal systems start to become out of balance, so you need to do things to help them become normal again.

Gillians tips-

Not all moments are the same, so Gillian gave attendees 4 different techniques to help them to get their nervous system into balance and to find calm. Key to your emotional and mental health and wellbeing is the ability to regulate your nervous system, and the first technique my 'Reset Button' is the best way to do this.

Reset Button: Taking an action 'on purpose' puts your brain into thinking mode rather than auto mode. To get back to balance after a moment of stress you need to take 3 long, slow, deep breaths. This 'resets' your nervous system. Then to become calmer, take 3-6 more long, slow deep breaths, this time making each out-breath longer than the in-breath.

Running Commentary: You cannot think of nothing. To cut out the 'jibber jabber' you have to focus as your mind/brain cannot focus on 2 things at the same time. So, when you need to stop the mind chatter - start a 'running commentary' on whatever you are doing. Either in your head or out loud, literally comment on everything you do. I mean everything!! This crowds out the negative thoughts.

Be In THIS Moment: This is a good mindful exercise to help you to be calm, relax and be fully aware of being in the moment, whereas thoughts are often focusing on the past or the future. You focus on taking a breath in and saying in your mind 'I AM' and as you breathe out you say, 'IN THIS MOMENT'. As you say the word 'THIS' become fully aware that you are, in fact, in THIS moment. If possible, do this 6 times, the more the better.

THE THIGH-SLAP RELAXER: In a sitting position, start to slap your thighs with your open palms and get into a good rhythm. Not too fast but one that you can slow down. Then start to breath 'In-2-3-4' then 'OUT-2-3-4'. Do this a few times then slow the pace and repeat a few times. Then slow down again until you are breathing to a slower rhythm."

Gillian announced she is doing a rare 10 week relax course at Bullion Hall Hub, Chester-Le-Street for anyone who lives in Chester le street, Pelton, Sacriston or Great Lumley. See poster on next page...

<u>'Feel Good Families'</u> A Free 10-Week Course delivered by Gillian Fortune

<u>For Parents, Parent-Carers, Grandparents</u> <u>Living in Chester-le-Street, Pelton, Sacriston or Great Lumley</u>

Starting Tuesday 9th January 2024 9.30am - 12 Noon At Bullion Lane Family Hub

A great course for parents, parent-carers, grandparents who would like to tackle stress and anxiety; feel more in control; sleep better and to feel more confident to deal with the daily challenges of family life!

All of that plus some laughs, good banter and great tips to make every day a bit easier!

You will learn some great stress-busting actions and techniques that are simple to use, work quickly and really do help you with the stuff that life throws at you!



To Book Your Place:
Contact Gillian Fortune:
By Text to: 07825031818
Or Email: gillian@feelgoodcic.com



This project has been supported by a grant from the Chester le Street Primary Care Network Community Investment Fund, delivered by County Durham Community Foundation.

Raffle and Close.

The raffle took place at the end of the conference with a range of lovely prizes which were won by 7 delegates. Amy thanked everyone for coming and asked delegates to complete the evaluation forms.

Conference Evaluations



Head - Something I've learnt from today.

- Support extends beyond 18 years (DurhamEnable)
- More info welcomed to support older children (mine is 20) for things to do & moving on from college.
- I can access many services before a formal diagnosis has been made for my son.
- About integrating children.
- Speaking to Short Breaks about gaps and needs.
- We are not alone; the support is there 😊
- Kooth!
- More about hubs and other services.
- The job employment from 18. Shame it has wasn't from age 16.
- Making Changes Together MCT. Who they are and what they do, who they link with.
- How much help that is out there.
- Calming techniques really helpful.
- DurhamEnable Keen to know more.
- Services that are available.
- Calming ©
- A lot more about DurhamEnable.
- Information about other services.
- Lots about other organisations via networking and presentations.
- Really interested in the two projects that Paul Shadforth highlighted on hearing about the priorities of DCC to deliver better value.
- Inclusion. Coproduction
- Being calm in the moment.
- Valuing neurodiversity

Heart - Something I've felt / experience today.

- Reassurance, Others in the same position.
- Gillian Fortunes presentation relatable
- That other people are in similar positions as myself.
- Connected with others.

- Supported.
- I got quite emotional listening to the positive stories from DurhamEnable.
- DurhamEnable warm, happy, motivated, grateful.
- Things are in process for future hopefully it helps.
- Warmth and humour from Gillian at the end Feel Good CIC.
- Lovely food ©
- Impressed with information and passion of many of the services involved.
- DurhamEnable workers/service users ♥
- Good positive conference.
- Calmness and a laugh.
- Lots of useful information.
- Very moved with the two men supported by DurhamEnable.
- Inspired by the Integrating and DurhamEnable stories / videos.
- As a professional.... We make a difference. As a parent I felt part of a community. Supported and heartwarming.
- DurhamEnable inspirational! Their support is unique and valuable. Dean White is amazing to stand up in such a big crowd.
- Absolute respect for the team that support "integrating children." The video of those young people enjoying themselves made me shed a tear.
- Learning other people's experiences.
- Care



Carrier Bag - Something I'll take away from today.

- Contacts- lots of research options.
- New info for pre-college students.
- Info about activities / trips we can access as a family.
- Family hubs services.
- Goodies.
- Raffle prize 😊
- Breathing techniques from Gillian (feel good CIC) thank you!
- Contacts.
- Contact details.
- Calming techniques to teach my husband.
- A whole host of signposting leaflets and information.
- Contact details of workers to co-work with.
- Lots of information I could get more help with my kids.
- Support out there.

- More information.
- A lot.
- Positivity! Thank you all!
- Information.
- Resources, networking. Staying calm in the moment techniques.
- They are a lot of professionals who really care about the outcomes/lives of children and young people in the community \odot
- How many different groups are here to help.
- Remembering stay calm in the moment.
- Greater awareness of available services



Dustbin - Something that was not good about today.

- Still not sure how to navigate where to go from here.
- Food not great sorry. Only 1 gluten free option. No puddings or snacks offered.
- Nothing. It was all great thank you very much.
- Not much for 18+ and adulthood transition.
- Short breaks- same old stuff.
- Nothing
- n/a
- Nothing-great event.
- The event room is always so cold as are the toilets.
- No homemade biscuits for gluten free.
- Missed Claire Stirland from Sensoryworx.
- Some repetition from services in the presentations / updates



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