



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

Welcome to our February newsletter.

One of the questions we get asked when we meet parents and carers is how they can meet the needs of their neurodivergent child while also supporting additional needs of siblings

while trying to remain regulated themselves. It is quite the balancing act and there is no easy answer because every parent, every child and every family is of course unique. Sometimes, parents have their own diagnosis and lots of self-awareness. Sometimes it is the journey they have been on in order to learn more about ways to support and understand their child which has led to some self-reflection and recognition they are also neurodivergent. More and more adults are seeking assessment of autism and/or ADHD.

This month we are thinking about navigating neurodivergent family life.

This month's newsletter includes:

- **Welcome**
- **Online Workshop for February**
- **Drop-In Groups in February**
- **Meet the NWAASS Team**
- **Navigating Neurodivergent Family Life**
- **Plan Bee Courses**
- **Puffins Courses**
- **Norfolk & Waveney NHS Integrated Care**
- **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 February - Supporting Your Neurodivergent Teens. No need to book - note the joining details and we will see you there.



Online Workshop Supporting Your Neurodivergent Teens

Do you have a teenager who is suspected of being neurodivergent, or with an ND diagnosis?

Join us for a friendly, informative workshop for parents and carers of neurodivergent teens.

Learn about teen brains and gain practical tools to support your young person at home and beyond.

Come along, ask questions, and share experiences with others.

No need to book - Just join us online via Zoom on the day.

For more information you can contact us Monday to Friday 9-5pm on:

01493 650220 or 01603 972589
 NorfolkandWaveney@family-action.org.uk
 Family Action Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service.

Wednesday 25th
February 2026

10:00Am - 11:00Am

[Free Online Workshop](#)



Meeting ID: 921 5224 2796
Passcode: 372987

www.family-action.org.uk

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Our Drop In Support Groups

Our drop-in groups are friendly and informal. No need to book. Come along, have a tea or coffee, meet other parents in your area. And members of our team will be there to offer advice, support and signposting. Click to enlarge flyers.



Lowestoft Drop-In Support Group February 2026

Family Action's Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service would like to invite you to come and join our informal drop in session.

This month we will be joined by a representative from Suffolk SENDIASS, who will be speaking to the group about the service that they offer.

Our sessions are designed for you to pop in at anytime, with no need to book. We will be there to welcome you, help answer any questions and support in the way you need – whether that's giving advice, sharing resources or signposting to other services.

Meet other parents and carers living with their child or young person's autism or ADHD who really 'get it' and will likely be happy to share their experiences.

No diagnosis or booking required.

- 01493 650220
- Gorleston@family-action.org.uk
- Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

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The Kirkley Family Hub

Kirkley Street
Lowestoft
NR33 0LU

Thursday

5th February 2026

10:00Am – 11:30Am



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Gorleston Drop-In Support Group February 2026

Family Action's Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service would like to invite you to come and join our informal drop in session!

Our sessions are designed for you to pop in at anytime, with no need to book. We will be there to welcome you, help answer any questions and support in the way you need – whether that's giving advice, sharing resources or signposting to other services.

There will be other parents and carers who are living with their child or young person's autism or ADHD who really 'get it' and will likely be happy to share their experiences.

No diagnosis or booking required

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Gorleston Library
Family Action Office
Gorleston-on-Sea
NR31 6SG

Wednesday

4th February 2026

10:00Am – 11:30Am



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Swaffham Drop-In Group FEBRUARY 2026

Come and join us at our friendly support group.

Family Action Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service. We support families of children with neurodevelopmental differences.

If you care for a child who is neurodivergent or on the pathway for a diagnosis, come along to our 'Drop-In' session to meet other parents/carers with similar experiences. At least one of our team is always on hand to offer support and answer your questions.

No diagnosis or booking required.

01603 972589
 norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk
 Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

Costa Coffee (Upstairs)
Market Place
Swaffham, PE37 7AB

Wednesday
11th February 2026

9:30am – 11:00am



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Swan Youth Project Drop-In Group February 2026

Come and join Family Action at Swan Youth Project's Drop-In Group.

Whether you are a parent, carer or grandparent, all are welcome to come along to this friendly and welcoming group for tea/coffee/biscuits. With the opportunity to chat to other parents and our Family Support Workers, who are on hand to offer advice and support on anything relating to neurodivergence.

Swan Youth Project
Paradise Road
Downham Market
Norfolk
PE38 9JE

Tuesday
24th February 2026

9:30am to 11am

(Group starts at 9am, but we will be there from 9:30am)

01603 972589
 norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk
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Have a look at the flyer below, a change to our new drop-in for King's Lynn from February. A range of professionals available for advice and support.

Please note this drop-in will now be on a Monday



Meet the Family Action NWAASS Team

Meet Susan Wood



Hello everyone, I am Susan and I have now been working for Family Action and providing support and advice to parents and carers about autism and ADHD for over seven years. Prior to that I worked in primary schools, mainly running interventions for children with additional needs. I love what I do. When you are able to offer a parent a bit more understanding of neurodivergence, or a few strategies for them to use at home or when you can give them the confidence to ask for more support in school, you know that you are helping in some way to improve outcomes for a child.

I have a son, now in his twenties, with ADHD. He has always been unpredictable, chaotic, inattentive, energetic, procrastinating, sleep deprived, super-talkative, over-sensitive, happy, clever, loving and utterly lovable. I know what a rollercoaster it is being a parent or carer of someone with neurodivergence.

If you have met me at a course, workshop or drop-in you will remember me. I am the one with the broad Scottish accent, although I have now been away from Scotland for 40 years.

I am very proud of our team, the friends and colleagues who make up our Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service. They work really hard to make a difference every day.

Navigating Neurodivergent Family Life: Supporting Children When Parents or Siblings Are Also Neurodivergent

Raising a neurodivergent child brings unique joys, challenges, and a whole lot of learning. But for many families, neurodivergence doesn't stop with the child; parents, carers, and siblings may also have traits of or a diagnosis of autism, ADHD, or both.

When everyone's brains work a little differently, family life can be wonderfully creative... and sometimes a little chaotic. The good news? Neurodivergent families often come with deep empathy, inventive problem-solving, and a strong sense of understanding. With the right tools and expectations, your home can be a place where everyone's needs are recognised and respected.

Here are some practical, friendly tips to help you navigate life as a neurodivergent family.



1. Start with Self-Understanding

If you or another adult in the family also have autism or ADHD, recognising your own needs is just as important as supporting your child's.

Why it matters:

Children often learn emotional regulation, communication, and self-care from what they observe at home.

Try this:

- Notice situations that drain you - is it noise, or multi-tasking or unexpected changes?
- Become really aware of what calms and resets you.
- Build in small “reset points” during your day (a quiet cup of tea, headphones break, a tidy-up pause, walking the dog or some fresh air.)
- Use tools that support you; planners, visual reminders, timers, or sensory aids aren’t just for kids.

Remember: you’re not being selfish by supporting your own needs—you are teaching and modelling self-regulation.

2. Reduce Guilt and Show Compassion for Yourself

It’s common for neurodivergent parents to feel guilt when their own traits clash with what parenting “should” look like.

Try reframing challenges:

- Instead of “*I’m disorganised*,” try “*I need systems that work with my brain*.”
- Instead of “*I overreact*,” try “*I have strong emotional responses, and I’m learning safe ways to express them*.”

Your child benefits enormously from watching you approach yourself with kindness.

3. Choose Your Battles

Linked to the above, give yourself permission to 'let go', just a little.

Think about the battles which are just not worth the stress. This is not giving up or giving in:

- How important is a very rigid bedtime?
- Could teeth be brushed just once a day?
- Could he have longer hair and fewer trips to the hairdresser?
- If gaming is regulating, why am I challenging it so much?

Try to ignore the opinions of others. Your Family - Your Way.

4. Make Routines Visible, Flexible, and Shared

Neurodivergent families often thrive with routines, but rigid ones can add pressure. Aim for structure with breathing room.

Helpful tools:

- Visual schedules for the whole household
- Colour-coded calendars
- “Family check-ins” once a week to review what’s working
- Shared routines with options (e.g., “after dinner you can choose between bath OR quiet play before bedtime”)

This helps everyone predict what’s happening while still giving choice and autonomy.

5. Create a Sensory-Friendly Home (for Everyone)

Sensory needs exist across the whole family, not just the child.

Consider:

- A quiet corner for anyone to retreat to
- Headphones available for both adults and children
- Soft lighting or lamps instead of bright overhead lights
- A family agreement about noise levels at certain times

Small changes can significantly reduce stress for everyone under the same roof.



6. Sibling Support Matters Too

When siblings also have autism or ADHD, their experiences may be just as complex.

Offer siblings:

- A space to express feelings without judgement
- Clear explanations of routines and expectations
- Independence where possible (e.g., their own sensory tools, schedules, or spaces)
- Shared family language around neurodiversity (“brains work in different ways,” “my bucket is full,” etc)

Celebrate their strengths and reassure them that differences are normal; not something to hide.

7. Teamwork Over Perfection

In neurodivergent families, no one person can hold everything together and they shouldn't have to.

Try:

- Delegating tasks based on strengths (e.g., “you’re great at remembering appointments, I’m great at calming bedtime routines”)
- Simplifying housework routines
- Using reminders and technology to your advantage
- Asking for help when you need it (friends, family, online communities, professionals)

Teamwork creates resilience and reduces burnout.

8. Celebrate Neurodivergent Joy

Alongside challenges, neurodivergent families have so many opportunities to display strengths:

- Deep passions and special interests
- Creativity and problem-solving
- Honesty and loyalty
- Unique humour and imagination
- Shared understanding of sensory experiences
- A strong sense of justice, empathy, and fairness

Taking time to recognise these strengths and spelling them out builds confidence in every family member.

Final Thought

Neurodivergent families aren't "doing it wrong"—they're doing it differently. And different can be supportive, effective, creative and build strong and long lasting connections.

By embracing your own neurodivergence, supporting your child with compassion, and building routines that work for your household, you're creating a nurturing environment where everyone can thrive.

PLAN BEE COURSES



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

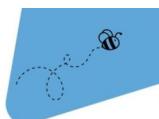
'Plan Bee' is a FREE 3 week course (2hrs per week) and is aimed at parents or carers of children or young people with additional needs including those with traits of autism or ADHD.

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](#):

Our February Plan Bee course is already underway.

See flyers below for Plan Bee courses in March, available to book now. Click to enlarge.


Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

Plan Bee Course

Brundall

March 2026

Understanding and supporting your neurodivergent child or young person's needs.

A FREE course for parents & carers

Plan Bee is a 3 week course (2 hours per week) written by two Clinical Psychologists working in Norfolk Community Health and Care. We have been commissioned by Norfolk & Waveney NHS Integrated Care Board to deliver this course for parents and carers of children who have suspected or diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions.

All behaviour is a form of communication. Our course supports parents and carers to understand their child's individual needs and how to best support them.

The aim of this course is to help parents and carers:

- Understand why their child or young person might become overwhelmed.
- Reflect on what might trigger certain distressed behaviours and how to implement pro-active and re-active strategies.
- Develop a support plan which they can share with other family members and schools to ensure a consistent approach.
- Meet with other parents/carers for peer support.

Tuesday 3rd 10th & 17th March 2026

10am – 12noon

Brundall Memorial Hall
Links Avenue
Brundall
Norwich
NR13 5LL

For more information contact us **Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm**

01493 650220

norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk

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Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

SATURDAY CONDENSED

Plan Bee – Online

March 2026



ZOOM

Understanding and supporting your neurodivergent child or young person's needs.

A free online session for parents & carers

To meet demand from parents/carers who work or who are otherwise unable to join us for our usual face to face, three week course. We will be delivering a Saturday Plan Bee on ZOOM in ONE session.

We hope this will be more suitable for working parents or for those with preschool children who find it difficult to attend a full length course during the week.

The aim of this course is to help parents and carers:

- Understand why their child or young person might become overwhelmed.
- Reflect on what might trigger certain distressed behaviours and how to implement pro-active and re-active strategies.
- Develop a support plan which they can share with other family members and schools to ensure a consistent approach.
- All behaviour is a form of communication. Our course supports parents to understand their child's individual needs and how to best support them.

SATURDAY
21st March 2026

9:30am to 12:30pm

Online – ZOOM

Joining details will be provided after booking

For more information and to book your place contact us **Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm**

01603 972589

norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk

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



Family Action has now been re-commissioned by Norfolk Community Health and Care to continue to run the comprehensive, free, four-week Puffins Autism Programme for Parents/Carers in *West and Central Norfolk* until end of March 2027.

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.



THE PUFFINS COURSES ARE VERY POPULAR and FULL in February and March.

We are planning to deliver an online Zoom Puffins in April and a full programme of courses for the rest of the year and will very soon be able to advertise these.

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.

Other News

See below Family Hub drop-in sessions happening in the west of the county in February.

These are for young people, parents and carers.

**Drop In for Young people,
Parents and Carers**

Come and meet a Community Worker at a place near you. They are ready to answer questions/listen to worries and share supportive information, advice and guidance.

You can also call your local Family hub on **01553 669651** and talk to an advisor who will be happy to help. Mon-Fri 9am and 4:30pm

Location	Date	Time	Contact
Gaywood Library	3rd February	9:15am - 11:15am	Georgie
Marshland Hall	12th February	1pm - 2:30pm	Georgie
Hunstanton Library Money Matters	3rd February	10am - 12pm	Lex
Hunstanton Library peer support group with REDI	6th February	9:15am – 10:30am	Lex
Kings Lynn library	7th February	10am – 11:30am	Lex
Dersingham Library	19th February	12:30pm - 2pm	Lex
Cornerstone Church South Lynn	24th February	9:15am – 11:30am	Lex
ECFS South Lynn	27th February	9am - 11am	Lex
Swan Parents' Group	3rd February	9:00am-11:00am	Sarah
Downham Market Library	17th February	3:00pm-4:30pm	Sarah
Downham Market Methodist Church-Under 5 Healthy Child drop-in	26th February	9:30am-11:30am	Sarah

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You can find out more about our family hubs approach online, just scan the QR code



Norfolk and Waveney NHS Integrated Care Board

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.



Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board

"CHILDHOOD IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE IT IS BRIEF; TOO MANY CHILDREN ARE SPENDING TOO MUCH OF IT WAITING FOR CARE."

Barz. 2024

FIND SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON JUST ONE NORFOLK

WWW.JUSTONE.NORFOLK.NHS.UK



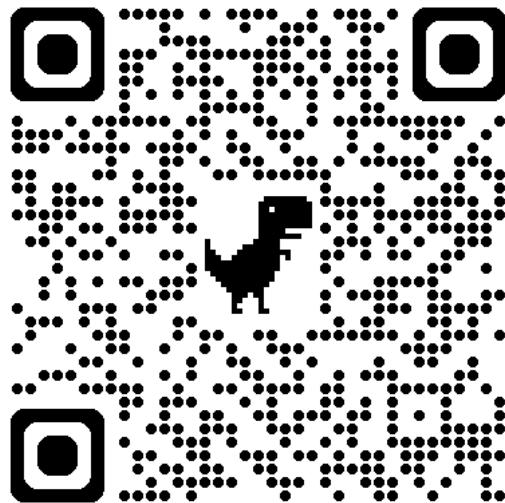
SCAN ME

NHS
Norfolk and Waveney
Integrated Care Board

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.

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

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





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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