

Suffolk Parent Carer Forum

Newsletter February 2026



Welcome

Welcome to the February 2026 edition of our newsletter, where you will find Suffolk Parent Carer Forum news, updates and family events.

You can view all our resources [here](#)



Membership

Why should you become a member of Suffolk Parent Carer Forum?

It's completely **FREE**

Stay up to date with our projects, news and SEND developments in Suffolk

Receive our newsletters straight to your inbox

Hear about SPCF events and other SEND-related events happening locally

Take part in opportunities to share your experiences and have your say

Get involved in meaningful co-production with services

Be entered into members-only prize draws

Your voice matters. Together, we can make a real difference for children and young people with SEND.

If you are a parent, carer, grandparent, family member or professional you can join us for free today [here](#)

Affiliate Membership

Affiliate membership is designed for practitioners, within both the Voluntary and Statutory sectors. Members will be kept up to date by receiving regular information and news. You can sign up [here](#)

Feedback

Your feedback on SEND education, and health services in Suffolk is valuable to us. Please share your thoughts anytime [here](#)

**Suffolk Parent Carer Forum
will close for half term on
Monday 16th February and
reopen on Monday
23rd February**



Anonymous Feedback

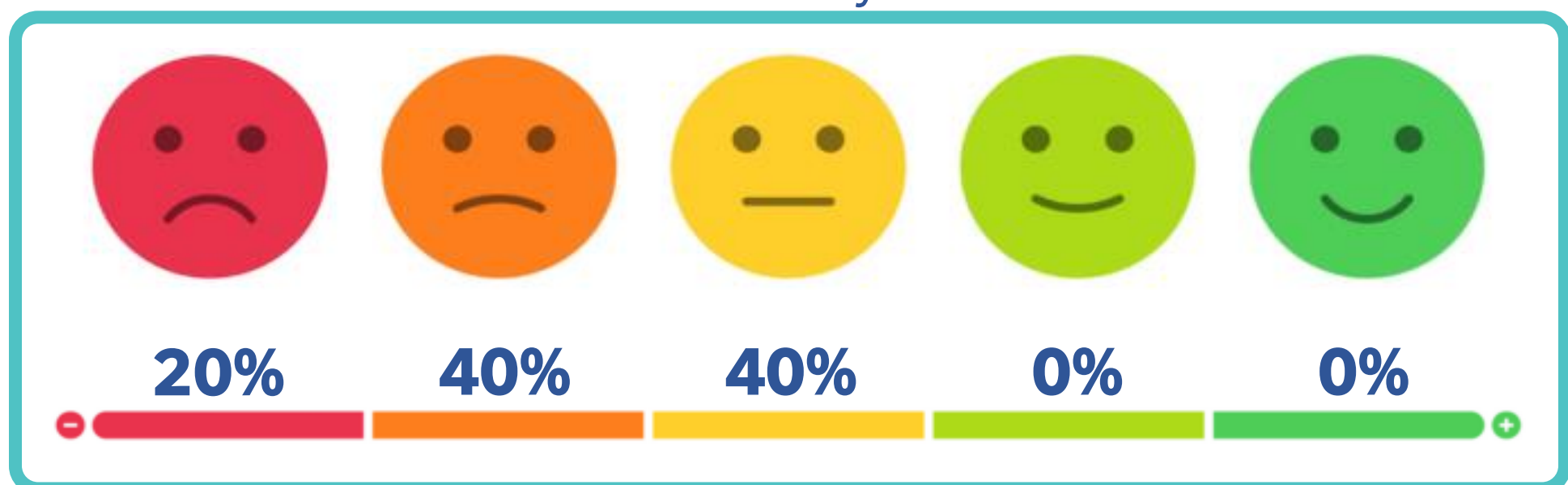
Every Tuesday during term time, we reach out to the parent and carer community on our social media to see how you're getting on.



We understand how vital SEND services are, which is why we offer this anonymous space for you to tell us what's working and what needs to improve.

It only takes a moment to answer our two quick questions, but the impact is huge. We take your feedback directly into our meetings with health and education partners to ensure your voice is heard.

Below is a scale of how parents and carers have told us they are feeling since January.



We will continue to run our anonymous feedback opportunities every Tuesday. Thank you for helping us work on improving services for our SEND children and young people; on the next page we have a **Tell Us Tuesday** update

Suffolk County Council Meeting Minutes

Suffolk County Council make some documents and minutes from their SEND meetings available on the Governance and Oversight section of their website. You can view the documents along with information about the committees, boards and panels [here](#)



Tell Us Tuesday.

We are grateful for all who have participated in ***Tell Us Tuesday.*** Your feedback supports us in knowing what's working well and what isn't.

Overall, families have reported some positive experiences, particularly with individual caseworkers who are supportive, understanding, and able to give clear, practical advice. There have also been examples of effective multi-agency working, with timely input from services such as school nursing and occupational therapy making a real difference to young people at critical points.

However, families continue to raise concerns about inconsistent practice and communication. These include confusion over the 15-day EHCP draft review period, statutory timescales not being met, limited communication during delays, lack of updates for those on the ND pathway, and ongoing uncertainty for over-18s around right to choose and shared care arrangements.

Tell Us Tuesday happens every Tuesday on our Facebook page. All responses are anonymous.

PINS Update . . .

In line with the PINS (partnership for inclusion of neurodiversity in schools) project's core aim of strengthening partnerships between schools and families, a second round of parents and carers engagement has begun through coffee mornings.

This phase focuses on reinforcing shared values and behaviours, updating families on PINS activity, supporting the development of connected parents and carers communities to reduce isolation, reviewing communication between families and schools, and agreeing a small number of priority actions based on issues raised previously.

We are grateful to all at the schools on the project for their engagement.

SPCF News . . .

Team expansion.

We are pleased to be increasing our capacity with nine new team members who joined us last week. This includes three additional Experts by Experience, five Parent and Carer Representatives and a new Administrator.

Our new team members are currently undertaking training before they begin shadowing meetings. Together, they bring an even wider range of experiences, cultures, languages and skills. As a team, we now collectively speak seven different languages.

We are excited to further expand our reach, skills and strengthen the voices of families we represent.

Finding support safely...

Peer-to-peer support can be incredibly powerful.

Speaking with other parents and carers who have lived experience often brings reassurance, practical tips and a sense that you are not alone. These shared experiences are invaluable, but it's important to remember that what works for one family may not always be right for another. When receiving advice, always take a moment to check that the information shared is accurate, up to date and relevant to your own situation, particularly when it relates to legal rights, education processes, or health needs.

We also want to gently remind families to be cautious when seeking paid support or advice. There are individuals and organisations who charge parents and carers for guidance, but there is also a wealth of high-quality, free support available locally and nationally. Before paying for any service, check credentials carefully: are they suitably qualified, experienced, recommended by trusted organisations, and appropriately insured?

Taking these simple steps can help ensure you receive safe, reliable support and avoid unnecessary costs at what can already be a stressful time.

Room on the Broom

Forestry England trail



Forestry England has introduced a new walking trail at High Lodge.

The interactive trail brings the much-loved Room on the Broom story to life in the heart of the forest.

Search for Witch's missing hat, bow and wand and add the final ingredients into her cauldron to complete the spell.

You can read all about it on their website here

**See what's going on at your
local library as there are some
incredible events happening,
just click here**

A warm welcome at your library

Come in from the cold to a friendly face at the library. Cosy up with a good book and enjoy our free WiFi. Everyone is welcome!



February Half Term Activities

in Stowmarket Library

All for FREE!



Craft Club – Saturday 14th 10:30–12:30

**A fun craft session suitable for all ages.
No need to book**



**Suffolk Archives Craft Session
Tuesday 17th 10:30–12:30**

**A spring themed craft for children aged 4–11.
Book at suffolkarchives.co.uk**



**Rhyme Time – Wednesday 18th
& Thursday 19th 2:15–3:00**

**Interactive singing session for children
under 4. No need to book**



**Friendship Bracelet Making
Friday 20th 10–12**

**Make a customised bracelet for yourself or a
friend. For children aged 6+.
No need to book**





PLACES WHERE KIDS EAT FREE (OR FOR £1) FEBRUARY HALF TERM 2026

moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free



ANGUS STEAKHOUSE

Kids under 8 eat FREE daily, 12pm to 5pm

ASDA

Kids eat for £1 daily, with no adult spend

ASK ITALIAN

Kids under 10 eat for £1 during school holidays

BELLA ITALIA

Children eat free Sunday - Thursday

BEEFEATER & BREWERS FAYRE

2 Kids Eat Free Breakfast with one paying adult

BILLS

Kids eat free Monday 17th - Friday 28th Feb

BREWDOG

Kids eat free this Feb Half Term

BEEFEATER & BREWERS FAYRE

2 under 16s get free breakfast daily with 1 adult!

COCONUT TREE

Kids eat FREE from 10th to the 16th of Feb 2026.

CAFE ROUGE

Kids Eat FREE 12-4pm every day of the week

DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRES

Kids eat for £1 with an adult breakfast or lunch

FRANKIE & BENNY'S

Kids eat FREE during all school holidays

FUTURE INNS

Under 5s eat for free with any adult meal

GORDON RAMSEY RESTAURANTS

Kids under 10 eat FREE all day, every day

IKEA

Kids get a meal from 95p daily from 11am

LAS IGUANAS

Kids under 12 eat FREE with 'My Las Iguanas' App

MARCO PIERRE WHITE

Kids under 12 Eat FREE daily with an adult spend

MORRISONS

Kids Eat FREE all day, every day with a £5 spend

PAUSA CAFE @ DUNELM

Kids eat FREE with every £4 spend all day

PREMIER INN

2 kids eat for free with 1 adult breakfast

PRETO

Kids up to age 10 eat free with 1 paying adult

PREZZO

Kids eat for £1 from 6th Jan to 11th February 2026.

PUREZZA

Kids under 10 get free pizza with every adult meal

PIZZA HUT

Kids Eat Free Every Day after 3pm

SA BRAINS PUBS

Kids eat for £1 on Wednesdays

SIZZLING PUBS

Kids eat for £1, Every Monday to Friday, 3 - 7pm

TABLE TABLE

2 Kids Eat free breakfast daily with 1 paying adult

TGI FRIDAYS

Kids Eat Free with any adult meal (Via App)

THE REAL GREEK

Kids under 12 eat FREE Sundays with £10 spend

TRAVELODGE

2 kids eat for free with 1 adult breakfast

TURTLE BAY

Kids eat free with every £15 adult spend

WHITBREAD INNS

2 kids eat for FREE with 1 adult breakfast

YO! SUSHI

Kids eat free all day (weekdays) in school holidays

ZIZZI

Kids eat free all day Feb 16th - 20th 2026



Suffolk SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service) is a confidential and impartial information, advice and support service on issues related to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). It is free, easy to access and confidential. They can help children, parents and young people take part in decisions that affect their lives.

They offer information, advice and support to:

- Children and young people (up to 25 years) with SEND
- Parents and carers of children with SEND
- Practitioners (who might support children, young people or parents and carers to access their service)

You can find a list of the SENDIASS online sessions [here](#)

All the SENDIASS workshops can be viewed after the event on their YouTube channel [here](#)

Come join us for . . .

SEND Oral Health Webinars

Community
Dental
Services

This ***FREE*** training is open to all people with SEND and/or their parents and carers in Suffolk!



When:

Where:
Online/Teams



Tuesday 3rd February - 10:00-11:00

Wednesday 11th March - 12:00-13:00

Thursday 2nd April - 17:00-18:00

Monday 18th May - 13:00-14:00

Friday 5th June - 14:00-15:00

**FREE
TRAINING!**

Discover how to care for oral health, understand the impact of sugar in everyday diets, and learn of the practical ways to help in reducing tooth decay.

Simply scan the QR code or click the link in the description to register for your chosen date!

Keep Suffolk

Smiling



Support Providers 2026



Below are a list of mental health support providers available to you. Click the images below to visit their websites, where you will find their contact options and operating hours.

If you, or someone you know, is at immediate risk of physical harm because of a mental health concern, or you are worried about your or their safety call 999 or visit your local A&E



0300 111 6000



0800 068 41 41

YOUNGMINDS

0808 802 5544



Option 2



SANE

0300 304 7000



0800 58 58 58

SAMARITANS

116 123

**Rethink
Mental
Illness**

0808 801 0525

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. OTHER SUPPORT PROVIDERS ARE AVAILABLE.



Go Jauntly is a free walking app that helps you discover local routes, with a specific focus on wellbeing, green paths and nature connection.

It includes a variety of step-free and accessible walks, making it easier to plan a route that works for your family. Whether you are looking for a five-minute wander or a longer weekend trail, it is a tool to help you find a walk that suits you.

Suffolk County Council provided a collection of walks to mark World Mental Health Day in 2024.

You can access the Go Jauntly website [here](#) where you can find more information.

Please note, you can explore the website for routes and maps, but the app requires internet access to give you step by step instructions with pictures on your journey.

Suffolk Local Offer

Suffolk Local Offer provide a range of information and advice for families of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Suffolk.

They cover topics including:

- Education
- Health and Wellbeing
- Social Care
- Preparing For Adulthood
- Short Breaks & Leisure

You can find them [here](#)

Suffolk Inclusion Support Line

Advice, guidance and information for education settings to help meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).



Call us today on 01473 265502
Email - localoffer@suffolk.gov.uk
www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk

Autism and Nature

Autism and Nature are a non-profit organisation who aim to improve life for children with autism by engaging them with nature.

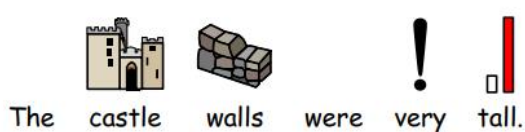
They believe that contact with the natural world can benefit a child's learning, health and wellbeing, and act to raise awareness of these benefits by developing educational resources in partnership with schools, local authorities, conservation organisations and autism charities.

Their books are designed to help parents, carers and teachers to engage children with autism and related disabilities with the countryside, natural world and rural heritage. Illustrations are accompanied by simple text supported by Widget symbols.

Framlingham Castle

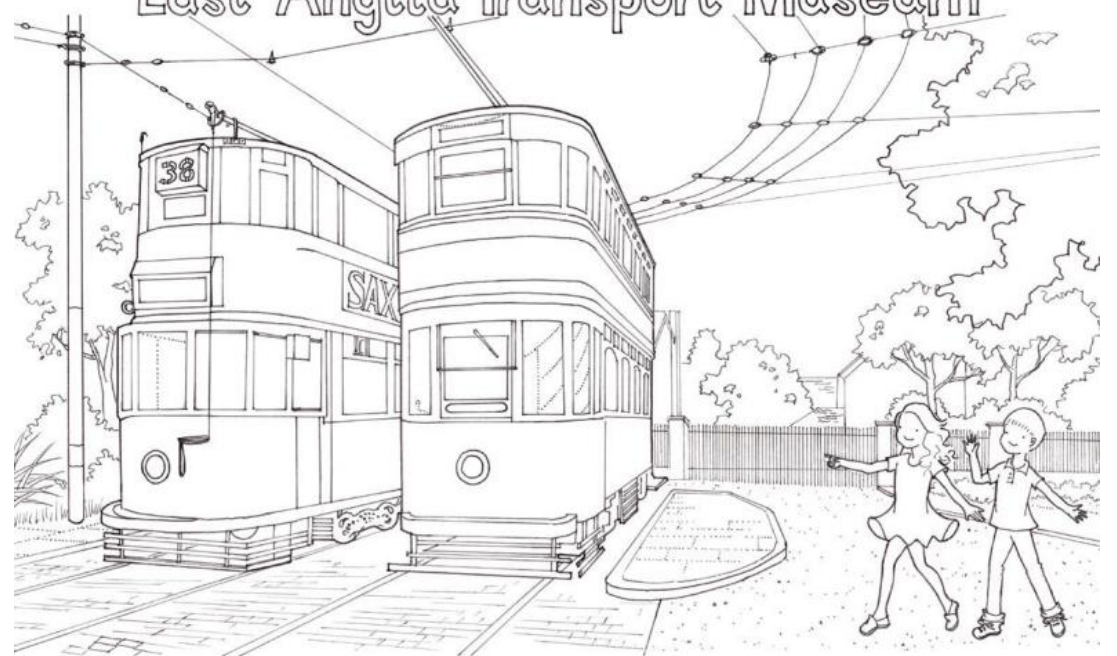


Alex and Rosie were excited to visit Framlingham Castle.



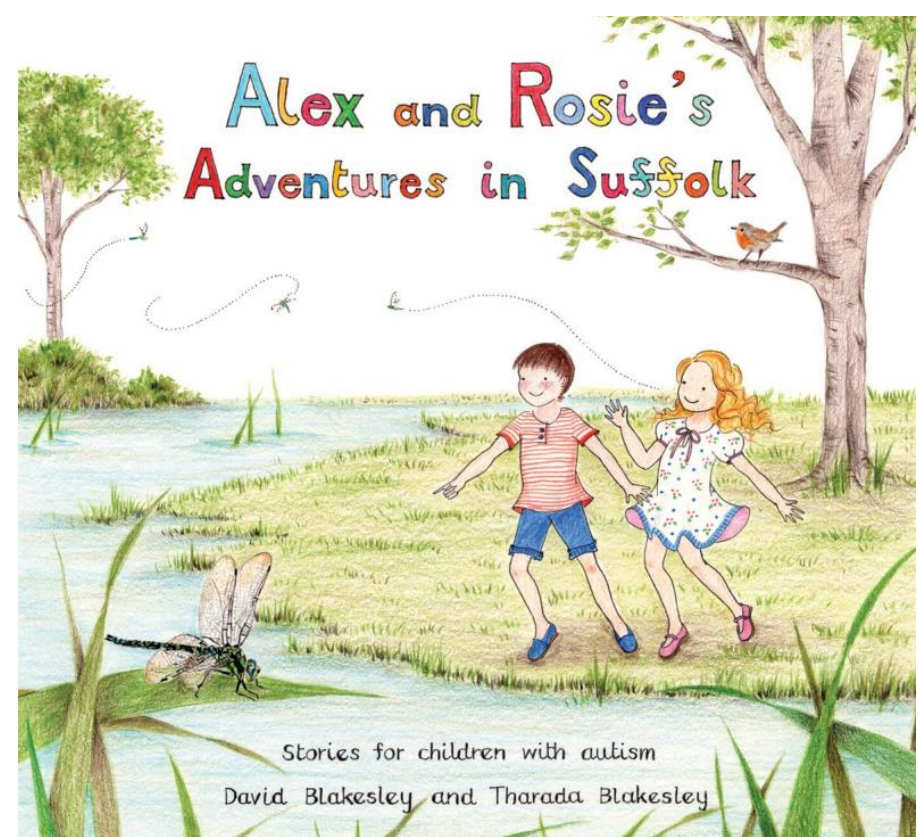
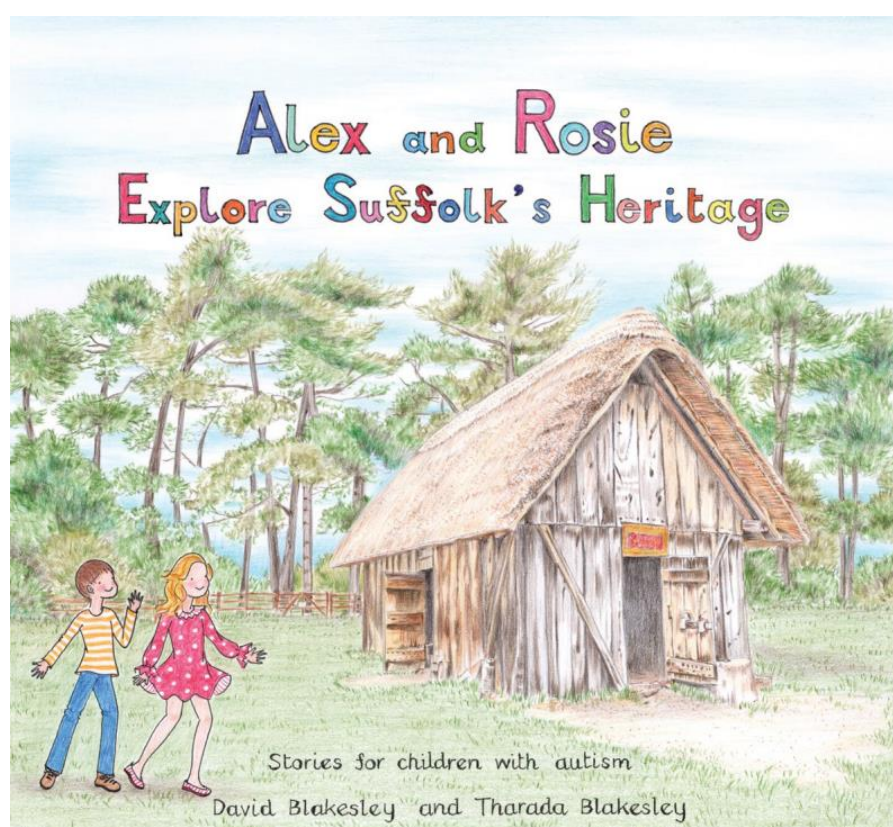
The castle walls were very tall.

East Anglia Transport Museum



Alex and Rosie enjoyed a ride on the tram.

They have kindly made the resources below available for families in Suffolk to download free of charge on the Suffolk Local Offer Website [here](#)





Activities Unlimited is part of Suffolk County Council. They give grants to activity providers around the county, to enable them to put on high quality, inclusive groups, clubs and activities for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

To view the providers short breaks and leisure activities, click [here](#)

You can follow them here – [Facebook](#)

Short Breaks Personal Budgets

A Short Break Personal Budget is a sum of money paid directly to eligible families as a contribution to help your child access short breaks and to give you a break from your caring responsibilities. You can find out more information and how to apply [here](#)

Family Fund Grants

Family Fund Trust offer various grants to families of disabled children and young people to purchase things like family breaks, computers and tablets, sensory toys, games consoles, outdoor play, days out, games, books and music, specialist trikes / bikes, clubs, hobbies and activities.

Eligibility, criteria and application can be found [here](#)



Family Fund

Helping disabled children

contact

Contact is a charity that offers a range of services to support families with disabled children. They give information and advice, run a variety of workshops, provide 1:1 telephone appointments for parent carers needing emotional support and more.

You can find out more about the services they provide [here](#)

Their workshop calendar can be viewed [here](#)

Contact have also launched a free helpful guide which is an all-in-one book full of the information and help you need to enjoy family life.

You can order a copy [here](#)

Help and advice



Find information on:

- financial support
- practical support
- health and wellbeing
- work and career

PACT offer non-clinical peer-led support and resources for parents and carers. Their vision is to reach parents and carers across Suffolk who are caring for a child or young person with mental health issues. They offer support (face to face meetups, online, and our outreach 1:1 service), training (including Youth Mental Health First Aid and parent guided CBT) and tools/resources to help both with a parent/carers wellbeing and via them, their child/young person too.



You can contact PACT at parentsandcarerstogether@gmail.com



"Supporting you, supporting your child"

Suffolk Support for parents and carers of children and young
people with mental health issues

www.parentsandcarerstogether.uk

Helpline number (07856) 038799 (not 24/7)

**Support group for parents and carers of children and
young people with mental health issues**



@pactenquiries



/parentsandcarerstogether/

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice Suffolk is a group of independent charities that help people to find a way forward. They offer confidential and impartial advice for free. 

They help with a range of topics including: benefits, debt, employment, housing, family and relationships, energy advice, consumer issues and more.

Their main website has resources that you can access online that could support you. They also offer support by phone; by completing a contact form or some locations offer face to face appointments. Contact your local Citizens Advice [here](#)

Home Library Service

If you or someone you know can't make it to the library, Suffolk Community Libraries' Home Library Service can deliver titles to homes and care homes. If health or other issues are preventing you or someone you know from visiting a library branch or mobile library, their Home Library Service volunteers can help. The service is free and available from most libraries.

If you think this might be right for you, you can visit their website [here](#)

Contact your local library [here](#) Email: hls@suffolklibraries.co.uk



Working towards a brighter future for
Suffolk's children and young people

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