

Special Guardian Network

News and information for Special Guardian families in Essex

Dear Special Guardian,

Hope you all have a lovely Easter break and enjoy the brighter spring days.

As always, we would like to keep you up to date with news and developments within the SGO Support Team. Please do contact us at any time, if you need guidance, advice, and support or to just share achievements of the children/young people with us.

Kind Regards
SGO Support Team

It's My Life 2024 – Danbury Outdoors Friday 16th August - Save the Date

We are pleased to announce that we will once again be holding the It's My Life event at Danbury Outdoors.

Time: Arrive 10:00 – start 10:30am - 14:30pm

The activities this year include will be confirmed soon.

- Teas and Coffee will be available throughout the day
- Crisps and snacks will be provided but please bring your packed lunch

Details of how to book will be sent out in due course.

Summer Picnic Dates

Harlow – Wednesday 7th August 11am to 1pm at Harlow Town Park, Park Lane, Harlow CM20 2QQ. Meet at the café. Park in School Lane.

Canvey Island – Thursday 15th August 11am to 1.30pm at Northlands Park, Pitsea, SS13 1SD

Clacton – Friday 9th August 11am at Weeley Village Hall, Clacton Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO16 9DH

Cressing – Friday 23rd August 11am to 1pm at Great Notley Country Park, Great Notley, Braintree, CM77 7FS

Basildon – Thursday 22nd August at 11.30am at Langdon Hills Country Park, in Westley Heights, Langdon Hills, Basildon SS16 5LT

Family Routes Research

Family Routes is a brand-new, ground-breaking study about the **lives of teenagers and young adults and their adoptive and special guardianship families**. The research aims to give a voice to these families through interviews and questionnaires about family life, including things that are going well or things families might be struggling with.

Questions ask about families, important relationships, school/college, wellbeing, and any support needs.



Visit the study website to find out more.

- Scan the QR code, or
- Visit: <https://familyroutes.ipsos.com>, or
- Register by emailing family.routes@ecorys.com (please include a phone number) or ring the study team on **08081759341**.
- Young people aged 12-17 years will need parent/carer consent to take part.

The study is funded by the Department for Education and is being run by Ecorys UK, in partnership with Professor Julie Selwyn at the Rees Centre (University of Oxford) and Ipsos. Previous similar studies have led to the government introducing new support for families like the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund and extra support in schools. So, taking

part really does matter, as families views and experience can make a difference.

Autism Central for Parents and Carers

<https://www.autismcentral.org.uk/hubs/east-england-delivered-essex-county-council>

The East of England Autism Central Hubs offer guidance to families, carers, and personal assistants of autistic people of any age. They do not need a diagnosis to access the service. Support is provided by parents and carers of autistic people who are happy to share their knowledge and experience with others. What they can offer:

- A constantly growing range of information and resources.
- Weekly online groups - drop ins and themed sessions covering a range of topics.
- 1:1 support via a telephone or Teams call.

Upcoming coffee mornings

While caring for a traumatised child, you may have a lot of worries and anxieties, especially around how this may impact *your* wellbeing. The life changes associated with this may also bring on feelings of exhaustion and depletion. You may also want a space to celebrate some of the victories you are achieving at home with your child/ren. You are not alone, and many are feeling the same way. The space of the Special Guardians' support groups may give you an opportunity to connect, share, and hopefully feel more supported by people going through a similar experience while creating a sense of community.

Please be reminded that it is not appropriate for children to attend our coffee mornings, due to the adult content of some of the discussions.

Area	Venue	Date and Time
Basildon	April's morning will be at The Place, Pitsea Leisure Centre, Pitsea, Basildon Essex, SS13 3DU	Thursday 25 April and 23 rd May 2024 9.30am to 11.30am

	From May 2024 until further notice the venue will be - Trenham Community Centre Wilsner, Pitsea, Basildon SS13 1HN	
Clacton	Weeley Village Hall, Clacton Rd, Weeley, Weeley Heath, Clacton-on-Sea, CO16 9DH	Friday 19 April and 10 th May 2024 <i>10am to noon</i>
Canvey Island	Leigh Beck Infant School, Point Road, Canvey Island, SS8 7TD	Thursday 18th April and 16 th May 2024 <i>9.30am to 11.30am</i>
Cressing	St. Barnabas Church Hall, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, CM77 8HG	Friday 26 April and 17 th May 2024 <i>10am to noon</i>
Harlow	Woodlands Family Centre, 9 Peterswood, Harlow, CM18 7RJ	Wednesday 17 April and 1 st May 2024 <i>10am to noon</i>
Virtual	Via Teams – link sent out the day before	Tuesday 16 April and 7 th May 2024 <i>10am to noon</i>

Training opportunities through Kinship Compass

Compass are an independent online information, advice, and support hub just for kinship carers run by Kinship. They offer a number of free workshops on the following topics:

- Understanding trauma and attachment in children workshop
- Better communication and the teenage years workshop
- Managing contact for kinship families – practical tools and tips workshop
- Building resilience and wellbeing in your kinship family workshop
- Preparing for sensitive conversations with kinship children workshop
- How to improve challenging behaviour workshop
- Managing contact for kinship families – the emotional journey workshop

- Overview of the EHCP and SEND process workshop
- Understanding trauma and attachment in children workshop

These are run online and for around 1 ½ hours and repeated often and different times of the day. These are all free. See their website for details of how to book on. <https://compass.kinship.org.uk/>



Contact Details

sgo.support@essex.gov.uk

Tel: 03330139860

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/special-guardianship>

Children & Families Hub: 0345 603 7627

After hours - Emergency Duty Team: 0345 606 1212

Mon - Thurs 5.00pm - 8.45am and Fri 4.30pm - Mon 8.45am inc. Bank holidays

If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please let us know by emailing sgo.support@essex.gov.uk and we will remove you from our mailing list.