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# NEWSLETTER

## November 2024



🚩 PINS Project Now Underway in Cheshire West and Chester! 🌟

The Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project is now rolling out across England! The Cheshire West and Chester Parent Carer Forum (PCF) is proud to be part of the Steering Group and is working closely with 4 local schools: Little Sutton C of E Primary, St. Winefride's Catholic Primary, Neston Primary, and Farndon Primary.

As a partnership approach, our goal is to strengthen relationships between schools and parent carers, helping create inclusive environments that support neurodiverse children. Each school has completed a self-evaluation on Inclusion and Neurodiversity, and parent surveys have provided valuable insights.

Together, we're building a collaborative approach to enhance neurodiversity inclusion in schools. Watch some of the training our schools have participated in here:

- Re-Introduction to PINS
- Embracing Difference
- Understanding Needs

If you would like more information about the project, or if your child attends one of

🔗 Learn more about the PINS project and how it supports our community!



Thank You for Attending the Mental Health Forum! 🙏💙

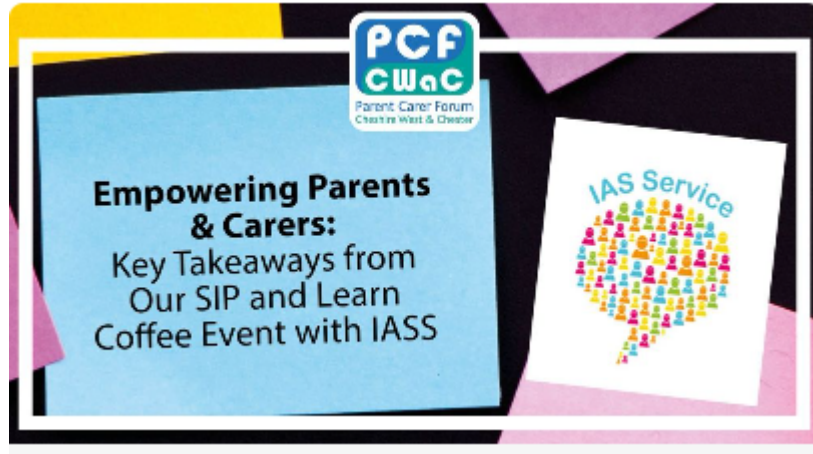
We're so grateful to the 70+ Parents/Carers and Professionals who joined us. It was a full day packed with valuable information and important conversations on mental health and communication. 🗣️💬

Hope you found it useful and enjoyed the food! 🍽️😊

Don't worry if you were unable to attend the event or would like to take a another look at the information from the professionals.

All the presentations from the event are now available on our website...

the day.



☕ Here's a recap of our Sip & Learn with IASS! ☕

Thank you to everyone who joined us for coffee and a great conversation with IASS (Information, Advice and Support Service)! 💬 🤝 This event was a fantastic opportunity for parents and carers to learn more about how IASS supports families and collaborates with the Parent Carer Forum Cheshire West to advocate for the needs of our community. 🌟

Together, we're making sure every voice is heard and every question answered. ❤️  
Missed the event?

[Read all about it here](#) 🖱️

## **NEW PCF School's Representatives Lead.**



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As a proud parent of a neurodivergent son, and being neurodivergent myself, our family has a deep love for life and nature. We also understand the unique challenges and complexities that come with being neurodivergent.

In July 2024, I joined the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) as the school representative for Whitby Heath Primary School in Ellesmere Port. Driven by a desire to help and support other parents, I strive to connect families with the services and community they need.

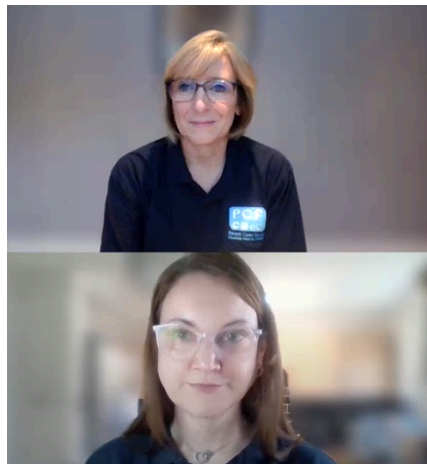
Recently, I've taken on the role of Lead School Representative, where I'll be supporting all other PCF school reps, where we aim to foster a supportive environment for every family, ensuring that each child's needs are met with understanding and care.

**contact** *For families with disabled children*



**Lucy Kennerley and Julie Duff, Vice Chair and Chair of Cheshire West & Chester Parent Carer Forum joined Laura Burling Contact associate to talk about how their bi-annual parent carer survey has become a powerful tool in amplifying the parent carer voice to improve Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services in Cheshire West.**

**In the video, you'll hear from Lucy and Julie about the day-to-day work of the parent carer forum, its engagement activity and how the parent carer survey has supported Cheshire West & Chester to become a SEND inclusive borough. They also offer some tips to other forums on where to start with their own parent carer survey!**



🌟 **Success Story: Cheshire West & Chester Parent Carer Forum Using Survey Data to Drive Change!** 🌟

building an inclusive SEND community in Cheshire West! 🗨️ ✨

In a chat with Contact Associate Laura Burling, they discuss how the survey data has strengthened partnerships and influenced meaningful changes in the area. They're passionate about inspiring other forums and proving that together, we can make a real difference! 🙌 ❤️

📺 Watch the recording for tips on starting surveys, collecting data, and how to use it to create positive change:

[Read more success stories here](#)

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## Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy 2021 - 2025



Cheshire West and Chester Council are developing a new Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy that will set out a vision to provide short breaks for parents/carers with children/young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The vision is to create a supportive and inclusive environment where disabled children and young people can thrive while providing their families with an essential short break. They aim to commission high-quality short breaks that cater to the diverse needs of children and young people with disabilities, ensuring they have access to enriching experiences that promote their development, socialisation and wellbeing.

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through a series of workshops for parents, carers and young people. They would welcome the opportunity to meet as many of you as possible to hear your experiences of short breaks, what works well, what needs improvement and your ideas for the future.

They are also engaging with children and young people, various providers, as well as colleagues from across the Council to ensure that we are discussing this as widely as possible.

Once this information has been gathered, they would welcome the opportunity to come back to parents/carers and young people to co-produce the Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy to ensure that it is fit for the future and reflective of your needs.

#### Find out more

To find out more about the current Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy, it can be found on the Live Well Website by clicking on the following link below: [Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy 2021 - 2025 | Live Well Cheshire West](#)

#### Get involved

If you would like to book on one of the face to face workshops, please click on the following link to book your place: [Short Breaks booking form](#) or call 0151 356 6558.

If you are unable to make one of the face to face workshops but would like to be involved in this, please contact [aiminghighfordisabledchildren@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:aiminghighfordisabledchildren@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) to look at booking an alternative date and time.

**livewell - Short-Breaks-Commissioning-Strategy-2021-2025**

### Short Breaks Booking Form

Email

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**Who can have travel training?**

Travel training is available to young people who are eligible for travel assistance and require support to enable them to travel on their own.


**How can I apply for travel training?**

If you would like to receive training and support to enable you to travel on your own, you should discuss this with your key worker or allocated social worker.

**Further information**

If you want to know more about independent travel training, please contact: **Independent Travel Training Team**, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

**Email:** [traveltraining@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:traveltraining@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)  
**Tel:** 0300 123 7039



**Your questions answered**

**Q** How much will the training cost?

**A** There is no cost to the individual for the travel training sessions.

**Q** What if the trainee has a problem and needs help?

**A** The trainee will be taught what to do if there is a problem or an emergency.

**Q** Will doing this affect any benefits?

**A** It is unlikely that benefits will be affected from completing this programme.

For more information around our services, advice and support for children and young people aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), please visit our Local Offer webpage: [www.livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/Categories/3948](http://www.livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/Categories/3948)

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services


Council information is also available in audio, Braille, large print or other formats. If you would like information in another format or language, including British Sign Language, please email us at: [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Tel: 0300 123 8 123 Textphone: 18001 01466 275757  
 email: [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)  
 web: [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)


Cheshire Council

For young people

## Independent Travel Training



Giving independence, creating confidence



**What is independent travel training?**

Travel training supports children and young people to get more out of life through learning new skills and building their confidence. The programme teaches individuals how to travel a specific route on their own in a safe and responsible way.

It aims to increase their independence to enable them to access future learning, training, employment and social opportunities.

Trainees who have successfully completed Independent Travel Training report feeling generally happier, more confident and prepared to access further education, training and job opportunities.



**What are the benefits of independent travel training?**

- ✔ The ability for the trainee to travel on their own
- ✔ The use of sustainable forms of travel (such as walking, cycling and public transport)
- ✔ Increased independence, confidence and self-esteem
- ✔ Access to future learning, training and employment opportunities
- ✔ Increased opportunities to participate in social and leisure activities
- ✔ Improvement in personal health, well-being and quality of life
- ✔ Less reliance on family and friends

**What will you learn?**

- ✔ Journey planning and how to use timetables
- ✔ Personal safety and road safety
- ✔ Public transport skills including how to buy tickets
- ✔ Using technology to support independence
- ✔ Emergency procedures





**Who will teach these skills?**

Cheshire West and Chester Council trainers from the Skills and Employment Team deliver the training across the borough. All trainers have specialist skills which are accredited by the Open College Network (OCN) and have clearance by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) – enhanced check.

**How does this training work?**

- Introductory meeting between the trainee, parent/carer and travel trainer
- Individual risk assessment of the trainee's needs and route. A training plan is co-produced with the trainee and parent/carer.
- Practical training to and from destination.
- A trainer will go with the trainee on their journey, providing encouragement and guidance until they develop the skills and confidence to travel on their own.
- Final assessment and sign off that the trainee is confident and ready to travel independently.

Cheshire West and Chester Council are reintroducing Independent Travel Training this winter. Independent Travel Training is designed to give children and young people with Special Educational Needs/Disability the skills and confidence they need to travel independently.

It is a free service offered to children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) who

information about travel assistance eligibility for SEN: [Special Educational Needs \(SEN\)/Disability | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#) and have access to a suitable public transport route.

Take up of this offer is not mandatory but it is a great opportunity to learn lifelong skills for the future.



# PCF Events





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Parent Carer Forum  
Cheshire West & Chester

# Drop-In Session



**Coffee & Chat**  
Thurs 21st Nov  
All Welcome  
10am - 12pm

**Topic: Short Breaks & Wraparound Care**

**Do you struggle with wraparound care or getting a break from your caring role?**

Guidance from the service providers about support for SEND families. Learn more about accessing support for after-school, weekends and school holidays.  
Your chance to give feedback and ask questions.  
Chance to catch up with other parents and carers in an informal setting.



**Venue:** New Scene Centre, Newton Lane, Chester CH2 2HD

[www.pcfcheshirewest.org/whats-on](http://www.pcfcheshirewest.org/whats-on)

🇬🇧 Join Us for a Coffee & Chat Drop-In Session! ☕💬

💡 Topic: Short Breaks & Wraparound Care 💡

Do you struggle with wraparound care or need a break from your caring role?

This session is for YOU! 🌟

Come along to:

🕒 Learn about Wraparound Care: Support available outside school hours for SEND families, including after-school, weekends, and holidays.

🌸 Explore Short Breaks: Find out how to access services that give you a break while your child receives quality care.

🗣️ Ask Questions & Give Feedback: Your chance to chat with service providers and share your thoughts.

relaxed, informal setting.

We're here to help you navigate support options! 🌈

🗨️ Everyone is welcome! Let's chat, share, and support each other! 😊



**Bright Futures Training**

FREE training session for parents.  
Training will include **Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Masking and Autism in girls.**

This training will take place on Zoom and will include the opportunity for a Q&A session.

**Thurs 28th November  
9.30am – 11.30am**

[www.pcfcheshirewest.org/whats-on](http://www.pcfcheshirewest.org/whats-on)



**Bright Futures**  
FOR YOUR JOURNEY AHEAD

[BrightFuturesCare.co.uk](http://BrightFuturesCare.co.uk)  
[info@BrightFuturesCare.co.uk](mailto:info@BrightFuturesCare.co.uk)  
01925 759 162



★ FREE TRAINING OPPORTUNITY! ★

We are excited to offer a FREE online training course exclusively for our members and their families. This is a fantastic opportunity to enhance your skills and knowledge

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[Click Here to Reserve Your Place...](#)

**SEN Panel Process**

Want to learn more about SEND Panel?

**Join us online on Dec 11th, 10.00 - 11.30am**

includes:

**What is a panel?**

**What types of panels are there?**

**Who sits on the panel?**


**How are decisions made?**


**Fit to Submit**

 PCF Event - Online 






“Are you a parent or carer wanting to learn more about the SEND panel process?  
Join us for our Understanding Panel event!”

Details:

 Date: Wednesday, December 11th

 Time: 10:00 - 11:30 AM

We'll cover:

-  What is a panel?
-  Types of panels
-  Who sits on the panel
-  How decisions are made
  -  Fit to Submit

FREE Zoom Event! All parents and carers are welcome!

 **Book your spot today!**

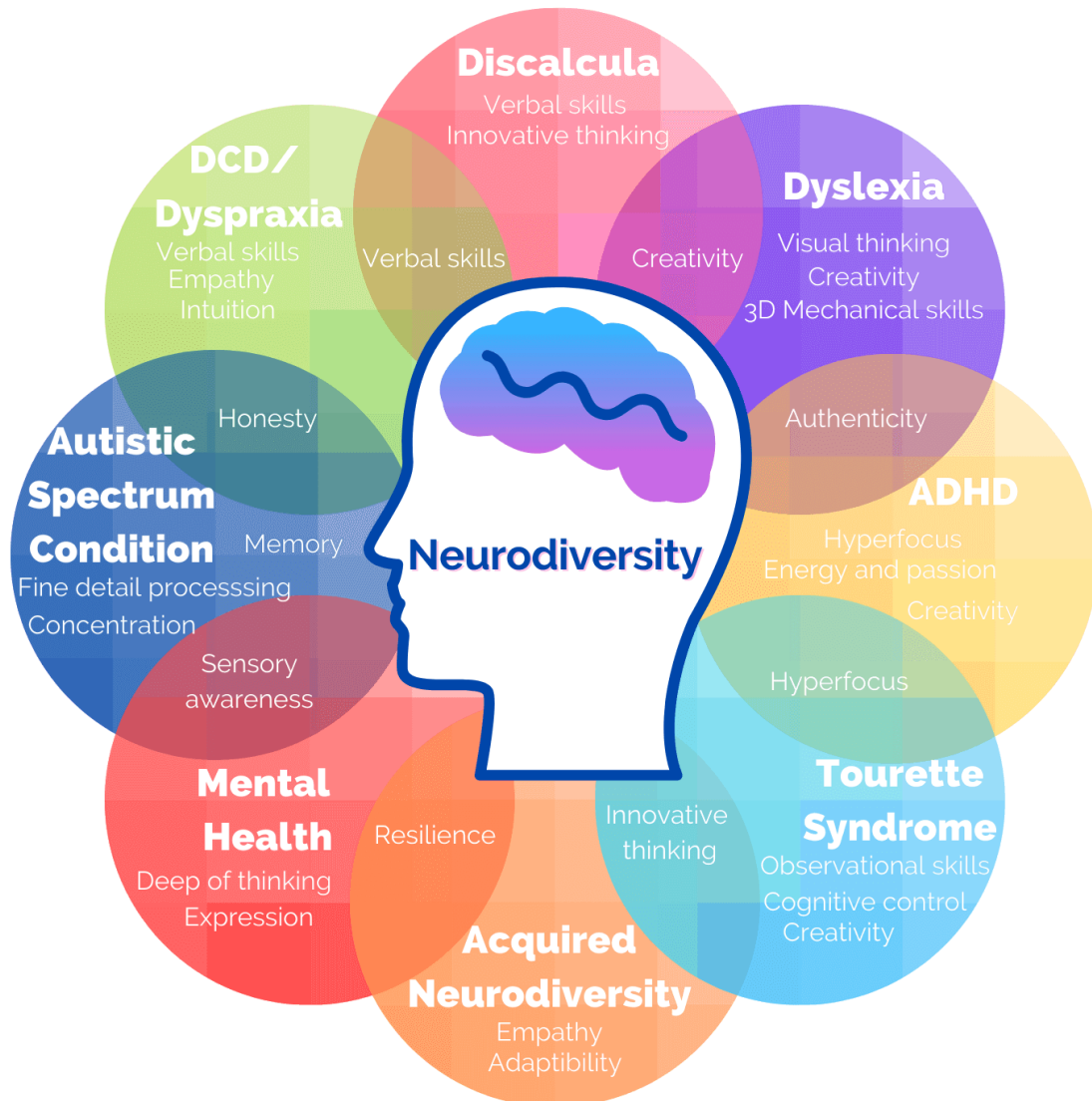
SAVE THE DATES!!!!



PCF Virtual Forums via ZOOM

Thursday 13th March 2025 – Zoom

Transitions and Pathways.



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10am – 2pm.

## Neurodevelopmental Forum

at Hartford Golf Club

**All Welcome** - Come along for the whole event or just drop in for a coffee.

We are planning to have a range of services and charities present who will be able to share with you what's on offer in our area.

**More details to follow...**

**Includes Lunch & Refreshments.**

Free Event - Free Parking - Wheelchair Accessible.

[Click Here to Reserve Your Place...](#)



## PCF BLOGS.....

In order to keep you up to date on all of the workstreams we are attending to ensure that your experiences are heard we are creating a new BLOG area on our website.

**PCF CWaC**  
Parent Carer Forum  
Cheshire West & Chester

**Advocating for SEND Families:  
Productive Meetings with Local MPs**

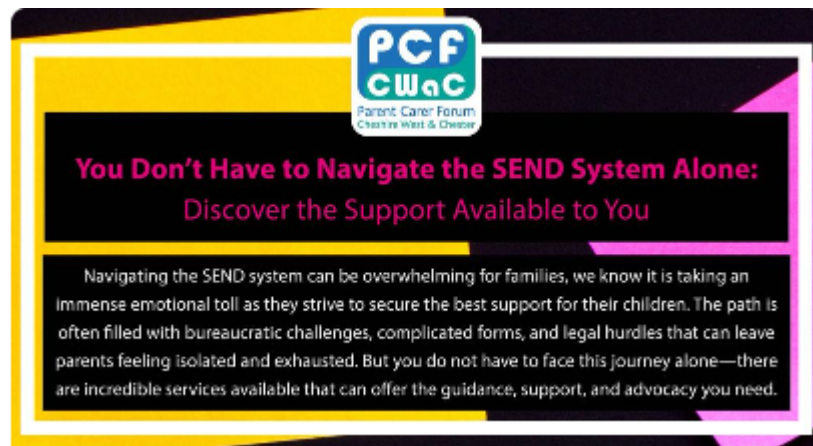
Over the summer break, our Chair, Julie Duff, has been actively meeting with local MPs to ensure that the voices of families with children with SEND are heard loud and clear.

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The Parent Carer Forum Cheshire West is committed to amplifying your voice—not only through the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) but also by feeding back directly with local MPs to push for meaningful change in SEND support and policies. 🗨️🤝

Together, we're making sure your experiences and insights influence decision-makers, ensuring SEND services reflect the needs of our children. ❤️✨

For more information [Click Here](#) 🖱️



☀️ Are you navigating the world of SEND? ☀️

If you're a parent or carer feeling overwhelmed by the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) system, Navigating the system is hard. Here to help is a few go to places to get you started 💡🗨️ This provides practical information, guidance, and support to help families understand SEND processes and services. 🤝✨

From services to support like Disability Positive, Cheshire Warrington Carers and Koloa to peer groups such as TinySteps, Space and Autism Cheshire. 📄🔍

Need help getting started? Contact us at [contact.pcfcwac@gmail.com](mailto:contact.pcfcwac@gmail.com) / message/ phone: 07900 840867 and we can get you on your way.

👉 Find out more and explore here:

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[PCF Website](#)



**healthwatch**  
Cheshire West

# Share your experience of accessing your GP

Your feedback helps to shape and  
improve future services

Fill out the survey at:

[https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HW\\_CHESHIREWGP/](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HW_CHESHIREWGP/)



It's time to share your experiences with GP services in Cheshire & Merseyside. Your feedback will help improve access and services for all. Take the survey now.

Survey Link - #BetterGPServices

[→](#) Find more information on their website:



# Energise

by Endorphins

## NESTON AFTER SCHOOL CLUB FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND!



### JOIN THE ENERGISE FAMILY IN NESTON!

Enjoy **fun** and **inclusive** activities and games suitable for all abilities!

Chess tournaments, slime time, Arts and crafts, biscuit and cake decoration, music and dance, VR sessions and 'Bingo Madness'!

Neston Community and Youth Centre, Burtin Road, Little Neston. CH64 9RE

Thursdays - 17:00 - 19:00

Week 1: 4-11 years Week 2: 12-18 years

Contact bookings: [bookings@endorphins.uk](mailto:bookings@endorphins.uk)

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🕒 17:00 - 19:00

Join us for the following range of amazing activities:

🎨 Arts and Crafts

🎮 VR

💃 Dance

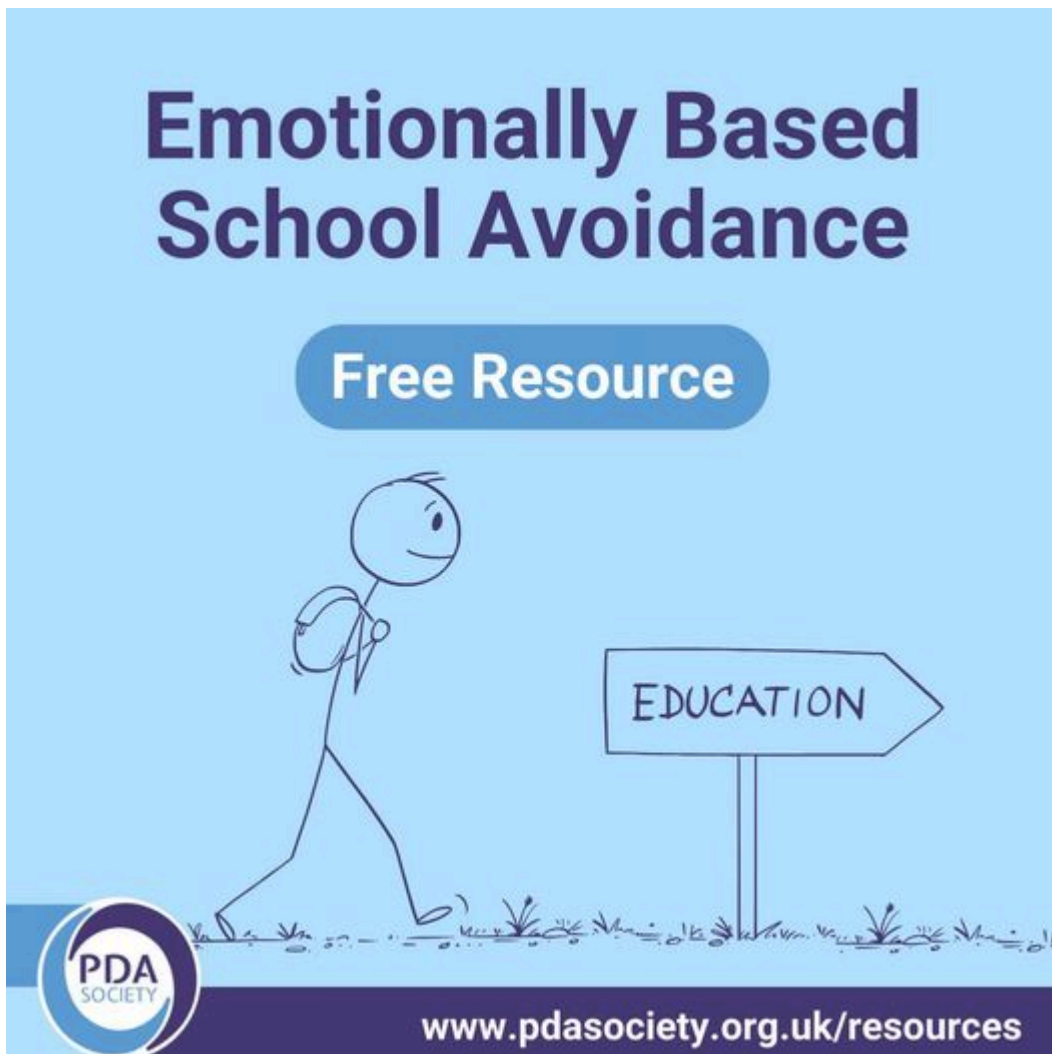
🎵 Music

🎲 Board games &amp; Chess tournaments

🍰 Biscuit &amp; cake decorating

🌟 Sensory Play

Contact our bookings team to book your place!

[Email Endorphins](#)

**Emotionally Based  
School Avoidance**

**Free Resource**

EDUCATION

**PDA  
SOCIETY**

[www.pdasociety.org.uk/resources](http://www.pdasociety.org.uk/resources)

Sadly, we know that schools are struggling to adapt to the needs of PDA children. It can feel overwhelming supporting a PDAer who is struggling in education if you can't access any help.

child's needs are met and understood.

Whether you're a parent, carer, or educator, this resource is packed with strategies, practical advice and recommended approaches to help you advocate for your child's needs.

You can access the resource here:



## CBT GROUP INTERVENTIONS FOR PARENTS OF ANXIOUS CHILDREN

### AUTUMN 2024 GROUPS

Parents can self refer on to the groups

**✓ Fear-Less IN PERSON**  
Ellesmere Port Kingsley Resource Centre 12.30pm to 2.30pm:

5 November, 12 November, 19 November, 26 November, 5 December & 10 December

OR

**Winsford Library 10am to 12pm:**

4 November, 11 November, 18 November, 25 November, 2 December & 9 December

For parents/carers of school aged children (6 to 14 years) with moderate to severe anxiety.

An evidence based intervention delivered over 6 weeks and includes understanding anxiety, learning to encourage your child's coping skills and to manage their anxiety as well as problem solving skills and learning to feel confident as a parent.

**✓ Timid to Tiger ONLINE**  
10am to 12pm

16 October, 23 October, 6 November, 13 November, 20 November, 27 November, 4 December, 11 December & 18 December.

For parents/carers of primary school aged children (5 to 11 years) with mild to moderate anxiety.

An evidence based intervention delivered over 9 weeks and includes understanding the science behind anxiety, parental modelling of anxiety, how to safely expose your child to their anxiety triggers, and how to support your child to develop in confidence using techniques such as special play and rewards.

CWP are delivering a series of **FREE** group interventions for parents.

Support,  
Friendly  
non-  
judgemental

To join a group parents/carers **MUST** attend one of the drop in sessions listed below. You can drop in at any time:

8 October 9.30am to 11.30am  
1829 Building Countess of Chester Hospital

11 October 9.15am to 11am  
Overhall Children's Centre Winsford

11 October 10am to 12pm  
Kingsley Resource Centre Ellesmere Port

For more Information email: [cwp.cheshiremhstadmin@nhs.net](mailto:cwp.cheshiremhstadmin@nhs.net)

Helping people to be the best they can be





[www.cwp.nhs.uk](http://www.cwp.nhs.uk)

(CWP) is offering **FREE** Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) group interventions for parents of anxious children this autumn! 🍂

These supportive and non-judgemental sessions are designed to equip parents with the tools they need to help children cope with anxiety—whether you're facing mild or severe cases. Sessions are tailored for different age groups and needs, including:

- ◆ **Fear-Less (IN PERSON)** for parents of school-aged children (6 to 14 years) with moderate to severe anxiety.
- ◆ **Timid to Tiger (ONLINE)** for parents of primary-aged children (5 to 11 years) with mild to moderate anxiety.

The groups will help parents understand anxiety, teach coping strategies, and provide confidence-building skills that make a real difference in family life. 🍊

#### 📅 **Autumn Groups Start Soon!**

- Ellesmere Port & Winsford for Fear-Less (in-person)
- Online for Timid to Tiger

✉ **For more details or to self-refer, email:**

## USEFUL CONTACTS



Live Well Cheshire West - <https://www.livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk>

Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) - Tel 0300 123 7001 <https://www.livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/Services/1279>

SEN Team - Tel 0151 337 6505  
[senteam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:senteam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Starting Well - <http://www.startingwell.org.uk/>

West Cheshire 0-16 CAMHS Tel - 01244 393200  
<https://www.cwp.nhs.uk/services-and-locations/services/west-cheshire-0-16-camhs/>

IPSEA- Call-in Helpline Tel- 0300 22 5899  
<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/service-overview>

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## Get Involved with the PCF....

We are always looking for new parents and carers to join us. You can attend meetings, give feedback to influence the services your child or young person uses or help us to identify the gaps in services. Also, a chance to meet other parents and learn about what's on offer in Cheshire West & Chester.

To contact us.....visit our website [www.pcfcheshirewest.org](http://www.pcfcheshirewest.org)

**email** [contact.pfcwac@gmail.com](mailto:contact.pfcwac@gmail.com)

or join us for one of our meetings.

We hope to see you soon!



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