



# Monthly Newsletter

## Christmas 2025



**Welcome to PACC's monthly newsletter.**

If you have any questions or require any further information, please email:  
[info@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:info@paccshropshire.org.uk)

PACC- Facebook



PACC- Website



*Merry Christmas  
from everyone at PACC*



*Thank you for your support*

**PACC are closed from Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December until Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January**



## Transitions in Education– A guide for Parent Carers and Family Carers

**READ MORE**



A guide to provide information and signposting for Parent Carers and Family Carers to help them navigate educational transitions for children and young people.



## What has PACC been doing? Issue 2



As part of PACC's commitment to transparency and maintaining good communications about our work we have published the 2nd issue of our activity summary 'What has PACC been doing?'

This issue covers the period August – November 2025 and provides an update on our work across our three core activity areas.

[READ MORE](#)



## National SEND Conversation



*"Government acts on commitment to put parents' experiences at the heart of SEND reform through new public engagement campaign"*

The Department For Education has recently launched a National SEND Conversation to enable SEND families and Practitioners to share their experiences and ideas about how to improve the way support is accessed and delivered. The feedback gathered during this conversation will inform and influence the Schools White Paper, expected early in 2026 and how the SEND system will look in the future. This is not a formal consultation. A public consultation on some aspects of the Governments SEND plans will be launched alongside publication of the Schools White Paper.

This conversation will include a number of different opportunities to participate and share your views, including online discussions and face to face events. PACC will be sharing the experience of Shropshire Parent Carers at the West Midlands in person event in January. There is also an online survey (closes 14th January 2026) that you can complete if you can't attend any of the events.

[READ MORE](#)



## Review launched into mental health, ADHD and autism services



*“Government launches independent review to look at rising demand for mental health, ADHD and autism services and what is driving it”*

Recently there has been significant news coverage of the Govt review into mental health conditions, ADHD and autism, with a suggestion that there is an issue with overdiagnosis.

This can be a distressing and confusing for Parent Carers to hear, especially if they are concerned about the wellbeing of their child and looking for ways to support them.

PACC has worked with the local system for many years looking at how the referral process for both Autism and ADHD assessment works. We know how rigorous this process is and how much supporting evidence has to be provided with a referral. We believe that in Shropshire, the high rate of assessments that result in a diagnosis is a reflection of this and does not indicate an issue with overdiagnosis.

[READ MORE](#)



# SHROPSHIRE SENDiass

Information, Advice and Support Service

**At Shropshire SENDIASS, we provide clear, impartial information, advice, and support to parents and carers of children aged 0 to 25, as well as young people aged 16 to 25, who have or may have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).**

**Whether you're just starting your journey or looking for specific guidance, you'll find resources, advice, and support tailored to your needs.**





# We asked everyone at PACC what their highlight of 2025 has been.....



My highlight was Jess speaking at the PACC planning for the future conference- Jess has come such a long way since she started attending PACC events, what she said and the fact that she was able to say it was just amazing!



Sarah- Influence and Change Strategic Lead

My Highlight of the Year is on the Healthy Lives Programme when we visited Home Farm Attingham. A child made me a 'bravery medal' for hand feeding the slobbery Highland Cow



Ruth- Community Support Rep



I'm alive. I'm grateful for my 50th Birthday present from the NHS and for the huge amount of support I've had from everyone this year ❤️



Simone- Parent Carer Liaison Lead



My Highlight of the Year was being nominated for a Mayors Award. We are so fortunate to have such an amazing Operational team, that work so hard to support the SEND community. It was lovely for this to be recognised. (And getting my 2 puppies!)



Abi- Community Support Strategic Lead

My highlight was the trip to see the Abba tribute band at Theatre Severn. Watching all the Parent Carers and Young People singing and dancing was just a joy!



Louise- Administrator



My Highlight was going to Alderfest, it was a wonderful experience going with so many Young People and their families from Buddies, It felt like our own private festival- everyone had a fabulous time!



Annie- Community Support Rep

My highlight of the year has to be karaoke at PACCfest! Those who performed did so with such passion and enthusiasm, and all who were there were so supportive with their cheers and dancing! It was an absolute sight to behold and such a special thing to be a part of.

Zara- Chair





# Mental Health Support over the Christmas Period

Christmas can be a daunting time, and a time you might feel more pressure to feel or be a certain way. Make sure you are kind to yourself over the Christmas period, and know it is okay to struggle and to talk about your feelings.



Samaritans- Support for anyone that needs to talk, offers 24/7 support by phone- 116123



Shout: Provides free, confidential 24/7 crisis text support. Text SHOUT to 85258 to connect with a volunteer.



Kooth offers free, confidential and anonymous online support and counselling for 11-23 year olds. Their team will be available to provide mental wellbeing support over the festive period.



Call 111 or visit NHS 111 online for advice if you experience a significant change in your mental health and are not already receiving care from mental health services.



Beat provide support to help young people who may be struggling with an eating problem or an eating disorder. Call 0808 801 0677.



Childline provides a confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem. Call: 0800 1111 anytime



Papyrus provide confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person. Call: 0800 068 3131 or text: 07860 039967 (9am-midnight, 365 days a year).



The Mix provides free, confidential support for young people under 25. Call: 0808 808 4994 (3pm-midnight every day) or email.



**Urgent Mental Health Helpline**

Call 0808 196 4501 for free, 24/7 advice, support, and triage from a mental health professional for all ages.



you can call the 24/7 urgent mental health helpline at 0808 196 4501.





# Community Navigator Service

Offering personalised signposting and Information Provision for families of 0-25 year old's with SEND in Shropshire



[Info@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:Info@paccshropshire.org.uk)

We understand how difficult and overwhelming it can be to navigate your child or young persons journey. PACC's Community Navigator Service is open to any Parent Carer of a child/ young person ages 0-25 with SEND in Shropshire.

## How can PACC Help?

You will be offered an initial 30-minute phone/ Teams call with a Navigator. All of PACC's Navigators are Parent Carers themselves, so have both a lived and work experience of the SEND system in Shropshire. Following the call you will receive an email with information and signposting.

## What can I speak to a Navigator about?

- Social Opportunities
- Finances and Benefits
- Staying Healthy
- Mental Health Support
- Being Part of the local community
- Housing Options
- Support for Parent Carers
- Support for Families
- Employment and Volunteering
- Help navigating the SEND system
- Education
- Education, Health and Care Plans
- Annual Reviews
- Activity Plans

## How long will I wait for a call?

We try to book calls as soon as possible, usually within 72 hours of a request. Our Navigators work Monday to Friday Term-Time only.

## How do I request a call?

You can either complete the linked MS form, or email us with the subject "Navigator Call"

Information & Support | Influence & Change



## Join our mailing list



## Information & Support | Influence & Change



“Shropshire Council ensures that there are different services in place for adults with LD&A including supported living and day opportunities. We'd like to hear from you to understand what is working well and how things could work better. The survey focuses on externally provided services and not those delivered directly by Shropshire Council.”

Day Opportunities for adults with LD&A includes activities and support offered during the day to help people learn new skills, make friends, be more independent, and take part in their community.

Supported Living should enable people to live as independently as possible in their community, with support from staff. This can either involve living by themselves or with other adults who have similar support needs.

**The surveys will close on Tuesday 23 December 2025.**

It is very important that any Young People accessing Day Opportunities or in Supported Living share their feedback to ensure that services meet the needs of those accessing them, Family Carers are also able to provide their feedback!

If you are having any difficulties accessing these services, please get in touch and we are happy to help!

**CLICK HERE**



**Day Opportunities** for adults with LD&A includes activities and support offered during the day to help people learn new skills, make friends, be more independent, and take part in their community.

Shropshire Council would like to hear from you to understand what is working well and how things could work better. The survey focuses on externally provided services and not those delivered directly by Shropshire Council.

**Which Day Centres can we provide feedback on?**

- Blossom Barns
- Innage Lane
- Our Space
- 448's
- The Windfall Project
- Freda's Day Service
- Fordhall Farm
- Cherry Lodge
- Willow Lodge
- Nineveh Ridge Care Farm
- Working Together Ludlow
- Broseley Life Skills
- Condover Day Opportunities
- Crows Mill Craft Centre
- We Are Champions
- Crossbar Alternative Provision
- Erlas Victorian Walled Garden

**Supported Living** enables people to live as independently as possible in their community, with support from staff. This can either involve living by themselves or with other adults who have similar support needs.

**For clarification, this is applicable to all Supported Living settings- while Shropshire Council commission the care and support they do not deliver it.**



# Surveys

PACC collect feedback from Parent Carers and Family Carers via surveys to inform and influence change within the system.

## Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

You can provide feedback on your child/ young person's EHCP- including- Application Process, Annual Reviews, quality of plans and timeliness.



## Barriers to accessing PA's for 14-25 year old's

PACC are currently collecting feedback from Parent Carers about barriers to accessing PA's for their child/ young person aged 14-25 in Shropshire. Feedback collected in this survey will be used to inform and influence change within current Services available for families to access PA's.



## Childcare for school-age children with SEND in Shropshire

PACC are currently collecting feedback about child care for children in Shropshire with SEND. The feedback from this survey will be shared with Shropshire Council to inform information on the Local Offer and identify any themes in feedback shared. All information shared will be anonymised.



## Improving Social Care Experiences

PACC are currently collecting feedback from Parent Carers and Family Carers of how they feel their experience of Social Care in Shropshire could be improved.







# Healthy Lives Holiday Programme 2026

Activities for children and young people with SEND in Shropshire



The Healthy Lives Programme is PACC's Holiday offer. Healthy Lives offers a variety of activities to support physical and mental wellbeing, providing young people with SEND with opportunities to catch up with friends and be active.

## The Healthy Lives Holiday Programme:

- Provides a variety of activities to support physical and mental wellbeing
- Provides young people with SEND with opportunities to catch up with friends
- Provides the opportunity to make new friendships
- Gives the opportunity to try new activities in a safe and inclusive environment
- Develops skills- confidence, independence, communication.
- Provides Peer support opportunities for Parent Carers

## The Healthy Lives Holiday Programme:

- Is not a holiday club
- Does not provide 1:1 support
- Is not childcare
- Does not require a referral. Parent Carers register their child/ young person. No formal diagnosis is required.

February Half-Term

Activities for 8-25 year old's

Easter

Activities for 8-25 year old's

Whitsun Week

Activities for 8-25 year old's

Summer

0-25 year old's, siblings welcome at some activities

October Half-Term

Activities for 8-25 year old's

Christmas

Activities for 0-25 year old's

## Registration now open!!

Are you looking for fun, accessible and inclusive activities to try with your child/ young person? Registration is now open for 2026!

*Please note Children and Young People who accessed during 2025 will also need to complete a new registration form!*

READ MORE



Information & Support | Influence & Change



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

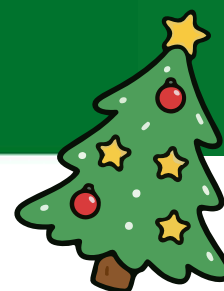


# Festive GARDENS

IN TELFORD TOWN PARK

A MAGICAL CHRISTMAS  
EXPERIENCE FOR ALL THE FAMILY  
**SEN evening NEW for 2025**  
**18 December**

Are you  
looking for  
holiday  
activities?



Check our website for  
more information!



# Christmas

## OPENING HOURS

22<sup>ND</sup> DEC  
23<sup>RD</sup> DEC

\* SEND SESSION  
\* 9.30AM- 5PM

XMAS EVE  
XMAS DAY  
BOXING DAY

CLOSED  
CLOSED  
CLOSED

27<sup>TH</sup> DEC  
28<sup>TH</sup> DEC  
29<sup>TH</sup> DEC  
30<sup>TH</sup> DEC

9.30AM- 12PM  
SEND SESSION  
\* 9.30AM-5PM  
\* 9.30AM-5PM

NEW YEARS EVE  
NEW YEARS DAY

\* SEND SESSION  
CLOSED

2<sup>ND</sup> JAN

\* 9.30AM-5PM





# Multi-Rackets **SEND Sessions**

 At Sundorne Games Hall, SY14RG

Every  
Tuesday &  
Friday!



Ages 8-17  
yrs old!

Learn to play

Pickleball, Tennis, Padel & Badminton  
**Sessions are for All-In Members**



# 6 weeks **FREE!**



Any questions? Contact us on [henry@loveplayactive.co.uk](mailto:henry@loveplayactive.co.uk)





**ROCK!**  
Music School



**New dates added**

**Join the Band!**

**Come and rock out with Rock! Music School!**

**Play Drums, Guitar, Bass Guitar & Keyboard in a real  
rock band!**

**Age 8-17.**

**All levels and disabilities welcome.**

**Every Saturday (Except 27th December)**

**Actio**  
Positive Inclusion for Everyone







alderford

# Ice Skating

SEN SESSIONS

10:30am

29TH NOVEMBER

7TH DECEMBER

13TH DECEMBER

20TH DECEMBER



**What's on in Shropshire  
this Christmas?**

[click here to find out more](#)





## A Mammoth Santa Trail Event

Follow the Christmas trees and elves through the our exhibition.  
Say "hi" to the mammoth himself and finish the trail with a gift from Santa as you meet him in his grotto.  
There will be festive refreshments available at the end of the trail with treats for the adults too!



Step into the  
Magic of  
Christmas at  
Love2Stay,  
Shrewsbury

Santa's Grotto • Twilight Trail • Storytime with  
Mrs Claus • Christmas Market



# Christmas in Comer Woods

Wander through the woodland and look out for trees decorated by local community groups.

BOOKING NOT NEEDED

FREE EVENT



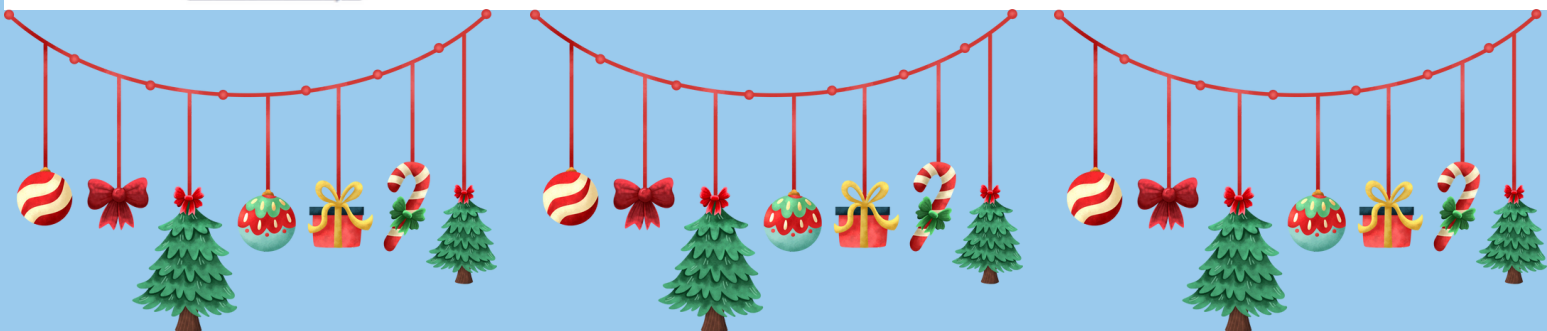
## Easy Christmas crafting ideas for your family



There are lots of easy Christmas crafting ideas that you can do together with your children to add a personal touch to your festive celebrations. Not only are they fun and rewarding, but it's a lovely way to make some memories with your family. And some of these crafts make great gifts for others too.

Today we're sharing some ideas you can try out at home with things you probably have around the house already:

- [Homemade wrapping paper](#)
- [Christmas cards](#)
- [Snow globes](#)
- [Baubles](#)
- [Cranberry sauce](#)
- [Clay decorations](#)
- [Fruit cake in a jar](#)





## CHRISTMAS & AUTISM



### We don't put up Christmas decorations.

Christmas can be overwhelming for autistic children. Bright lights and noisy decorations can be difficult for those with sensory sensitivities.

- ❁ Decorate gradually to help your child adjust, adding a few items each day. Involve them to give a sense of control and empowerment.
- ❁ Create Christmas-free areas within your home with no decorations.
- ❁ Choose appropriate lights dependent upon your child's sensory preferences; you can also use lights which offer different brightness settings. Ensure you avoid lighting that will be too overwhelming for your child.



### PLAN IN ADVANCE

Many autistic children thrive on structure and routine, so change can be difficult. It's important to prepare for the whole festive season.

- ❁ Visual aids such as visual timetables, social stories and lists can help you plan for Christmas and reduce uncertainty.
- ❁ Plan ways to prevent or help your child with sensory overwhelm, like breaks, ear defenders, or a quiet space.
- ❁ Typical Christmas traditions may impact more significantly on autistic children – such as the sudden noise of pulling crackers.
- ❁ Inform loved ones of ways to support your child during visits, such as quieter activities, no lights, and familiar foods or routines.



### CREATE QUIET SPACES

A quiet, safe space for your child when they get overwhelmed is beneficial not just at Christmas but all year around. The space could include sensory toys or activities that support regulation.

Ensure your child knows they can spend time in this space or time alone whenever needed.

### INVOLVE YOUR CHILD

Involve your child in any Christmas planning and discuss their preferences, concerns, and what they might feel uncomfortable with.

For example, they may like to receive one present at a time, or prefer their presents unwrapped. Small adaptations can make gift-giving and other activities more enjoyable for everyone!



### Our child won't eat a traditional Christmas dinner.

Christmas dinner doesn't have to look the same for everyone. Some autistic children prefer to stick to the same foods and have difficulties trying new or different foods.

When planning your Christmas meal, consider your child's safe foods, or make a separate option for your child to enjoy.

### CELEBRATE YOUR WAY

Christmas is about creating joyful, meaningful moments, and there's no one-size-fits-all celebration. By adapting the festive period in ways that suit your family, you can bring out the joy of the season in a way that's inclusive for all.



### SCHOOL HOLIDAY CHANGES

Schools often make many changes for the Christmas period including decorations, Christmas trees and changing the schedules (especially towards the end of term).

Talk to your child's school about how they can support your child to prepare for this as well as discussing how your child feels about the changes.

Some schools will invite children to take part in a nativity or school play – make sure your child's needs are being considered in all festive activities.

Social stories may help with events like this, but there is also no pressure to participate at all.



# IPSEA

All children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have a legal right to an education that meets their individual needs. But many tens of thousands of children and young people with SEND are not getting the support they are legally entitled to.

At IPSEA, we are here to change that.

We are the leading charity in the field of SEND law in England, and we provide free and independent legal advice and support to families of children and young people with SEND. We also provide training on the SEND legal framework, and we influence policy at both a local and national level.



# Keeping the magic in Christmas for disabled children

- **Keep routines steady** - stick to usual meal times, familiar spaces, and predictable rhythms to help reduce anxiety.
- **Introduce Christmas gradually** - put decorations up early (what better excuse!). Keep décor minimal if flashing lights or clutter can overwhelm.
- **Do Christmas their way** - buffet instead of big dinner, nuggets instead of turkey, no Christmas jumpers if they hate them, follow their lead.
- **Make gift-giving low-pressure** - skip wrapping if it's overwhelming. Use a Christmas sack or box instead. Set up toys in advance with batteries ready to reduce waiting and overwhelm.
- **Pace the presents** - don't open everything at once, spread gifts over a few days if needed.
- **Be flexible and take the pressure off** - spread activities across the month, skip traditions that stress them out, and focus on what brings your family joy.

## Supporting a child who finds Christmas overwhelming

Christmas can be hard for your child if they struggle with crowds, noises and changes in routine. The festive period can be overwhelming for autistic children and children with ADHD, sensory issues or anxiety.

It can help to plan and adapt your celebrations around your child's needs.



## Top 10 Tips For a Calmer Christmas



# Tea & Time

A **SEND sational** place for a cuppa and company with other SEND parents/carers feel free to bring along little ones

**Come along on Tuesdays**  
**1.30pm–3.00pm**  
**(term time only)**



To meet other families in the community

Coffee, Biscuits, Cakes & Fruit will be provided

**£3 per week**

Meet at The Lodge , Upton Lane,  
Monkmoor, Shrewsbury, SY2 5RR



Scan this QR code to complete the form so our staff are aware of any allergies you have before you attend



[kerry@sya.org.uk](mailto:kerry@sya.org.uk)



[www.sya.org.uk](http://www.sya.org.uk)



07710095802



The Lodge @  
Monkmoor



# YOUTH CONNECT

**A DROP IN FOR  
HOME EDUCATED YOUNG PEOPLE**

**MEET IN A RELAXED FUN SPACE TO  
CONNECT, MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND TAKE  
PART IN INFORMAL ACTIVITIES, SHARE  
IDEAS & PROJECTS TOGETHER**

**@ THE LODGE, UPTON LANE,  
MONKMOOR, SHREWSBURY, SY2 5RR**

**TUESDAYS TERM TIME ONLY  
3.30PM - 5PM**

**£1.00 per  
week**



Scan this QR  
code to complete  
our membership  
& consent form



[kerry@sya.org.uk](mailto:kerry@sya.org.uk)



[www.sya.org.uk](http://www.sya.org.uk)



07710095802



The Lodge  
@Monkmoor





# What's On This Christmas

Shropshire  
**family**  
Information Service



**Want to advertise events  
in our future newsletters?**

email [info@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:info@paccshropshire.org.uk)  
for more information