



**Parent Carer
Community**
Shropshire

Healthy Lives Summer Programme 2026

Summary Report





Executive Summary

The Healthy Lives Summer Programme 2026, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund provided a significant programme of inclusive sport, leisure and wellbeing opportunities for children and young people with SEND and their families across Shropshire.

Across the summer, the programme delivered 74 activities, providing 898 activity spaces and working with 30 activity providers. More than 250 children and young people with SEND and their siblings were involved, including 68 siblings.

What families valued

A strong theme within the feedback was the importance of having activities where children and young people with SEND could take part, feel included and enjoy themselves without the same barriers they may experience in mainstream community activities.

Families described opportunities for children and young people to try new experiences, develop confidence, build skills and connect with other people. For some, participation represented a significant achievement, particularly where children and young people had previously found accessing community activities difficult.

The programme also had an impact beyond the individual child or young person. Inclusive activities created opportunities for families to spend positive time together, for siblings to participate and for parent carers to connect with others who understood their experiences.

Feedback suggests that Healthy Lives can therefore contribute not only to physical activity, but also to emotional wellbeing, confidence, social connection and reduced isolation.

What families want to see developed

The feedback indicates a need to continue developing the range, geographical spread and accessibility of activities, while ensuring that provision reflects the different ages, needs and interests of children and young people registered with Healthy Lives.

There is also an opportunity to continue strengthening relationships with activity providers, increasing their confidence in including children and young people with SEND and using information from families to shape future programmes.

Overall

The Summer 2026 programme demonstrates the value of creating genuinely inclusive opportunities within local communities.

At the same time, the feedback highlights that accessibility, choice and equity of opportunity remain important areas for continued development.

Families consistently describe the programme as providing opportunities that would otherwise be difficult or impossible for them to access. Key themes looking at the impact of the programme include;

- Access to activities and new experiences
- Feeling safe, accepted and included
- Reduced isolation and stronger connections
- Increased confidence for children and parent/ family carers
- Friendships and belonging
- Positive impact on the whole family
- Affordability matters

PaCC will use this feedback alongside programme data and information from activity providers to identify what worked well, understand where barriers remain and inform the future development of Healthy Lives.

The findings will also be shared with partners and stakeholders so that the experiences of children, young people and families can contribute to wider conversations about inclusion, community participation and improving opportunities for children and young people with SEND across Shropshire.

The Healthy Lives Holiday Programme is PaCC's holiday activity programme for children and young people with SEND in Shropshire. Our programme helps children and young people to:

- Stay active
- Improve their physical and mental wellbeing
- Meet up with friends
- Try new activities
- Build confidence
- Learn new skills
- Feel part of their local community

Over Summer 2026 activities were available for 0-8 years, 8-14 years, 14-25 years and all-age family (where siblings could attend too).

The programme also offers peer support for parent/ family carers, giving the opportunity to meet other families.

Healthy Lives is not a holiday club. Children and young people must attend with a parent carer, family carer or Personal Assistant (PA) who is responsible for supporting them during the activity.

Summary of Summer 2026 Programme:

74

Activities

898

Activity Spaces

30

Activity Providers

113,148

Hours of activity

What happens behind the scenes to make the Programme work?



Creating the Summer Programme- Activity Providers

To help ensure activities were arranged in the market towns where families were registered, families were encouraged to register by the end of June. The registration deadline was promoted through email, newsletters and social media.



The Healthy Lives Holiday Programme is about supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of young people from the Shropshire SEND community, especially those from the Learning Disability and/or Autism communities. It is about making community-based activities accessible to this group, bringing together activity providers into one co-ordinated programme that offers meaningful opportunities to learn new skills, build confidence, make friends and get active.



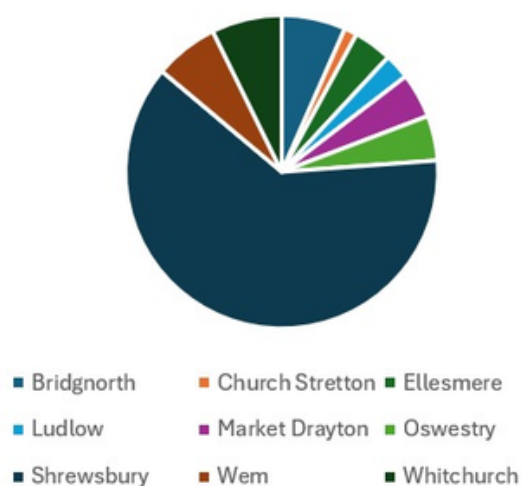
Existing activity providers were contacted, alongside potential new providers in areas where we had not previously offered activities. We also promoted the opportunity through social media and targeted emails to help identify and engage providers in these areas.

Despite our efforts to engage new activity providers, we were unable to secure providers in Bridgnorth & Ludlow. We will continue to explore opportunities to develop activity provision in these areas. This year, we also worked with some of our existing providers who were able to deliver activities in different market towns, helping us to extend the programme into areas where we did not have local providers, however in Ludlow uptake was extremely low, with families travelling there from Shrewsbury.

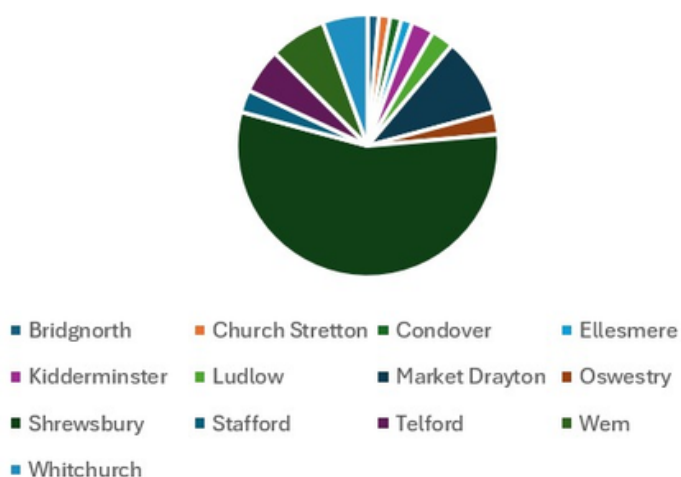
We spoke with providers about their experience of working with children and young people with SEND, what their sessions would involve, and any support they might need, particularly if they were new to the programme. Providers were also given relevant needs information for the children and young people attending their sessions, helping them to understand individual needs and prepare appropriate support.



Location of Participants



Locations of Activities (Nearest Market Town)



Location	Location- Activities (%)	Location- Participants (%)
Bridgnorth	1	7
Church Stretton	1	1
Condover	1	
Ellesmere	1	3
Kidderminster	3	
Ludlow	3	3
Market Drayton	9	5
Oswestry	3	5
Shrewsbury	56	62
Stafford	3	
Telford	6	
Wem	7	7
Whitchurch	6	7

**Activity providers in Bridgnorth and Ludlow have been difficult to engage with- PACC are holding further engagement events in this area to look at how we can improve this.*

Activity Providers

- 2nd Market Drayton Scouts group (new provider)
- Acton Scott
- Animal Family
- Arty Space
- Calmstream (new provider)
- Donkey ears
- Drummond
- Exotic Zoo
- Flaxmill
- Fordhall Farm
- Home Farm
- Identity School of Dance
- Jump in
- Market Drayton Leisure Centre
- Medieval Madness
- My Aspirations
- Pengwern
- Rocking Horse Media
- Sal Tonge
- Serco (Sports Village)
- Shrewsbury Canoe Club
- Shropshire Adventures
- Shropshire Fire and Rescue
- St Johns Ambulance
- Taylor Support
- Train Time UK (new provider)
- Wem Town Hall
- Whitchurch Leisure Centre
- Wolf Yoga
- Wrekin Forest School

Activities

- Bellboat Picnic
- Building Challenge
- Clay Worry Monsters & Fidget Stones
- Come and meet the animals
- Cycling
- Day about town
- Donkey meet and greet and walks
- Farm Trips
- Filmmaking Programme
- Fire safety
- First Aid
- Forest School
- Giant Train Tracks
- Green Screen Media Sessions
- Gym
- Immerse in nature
- Jake story teller
- Kayaking
- Multi-activity day
- Musical theatre
- PACCfest
- Pool Parties
- Pottery Painting- Pre-booked
- Relaxed Cinema Screening
- Music Lesson
- Rowing
- Sensory music and games
- Soft Archery
- Soft Play
- Songs and stories
- Trampolining
- Yoga
- Zoo Trips





Healthy Lives Summer Programme 2026

Summary Report

173

**Children & Young
People with SEND**

68

Siblings

enjoyed activities through the
Healthy Lives Programme this summer



**BUILT
CONFIDENCE**



**TRIED
SOMETHING NEW**

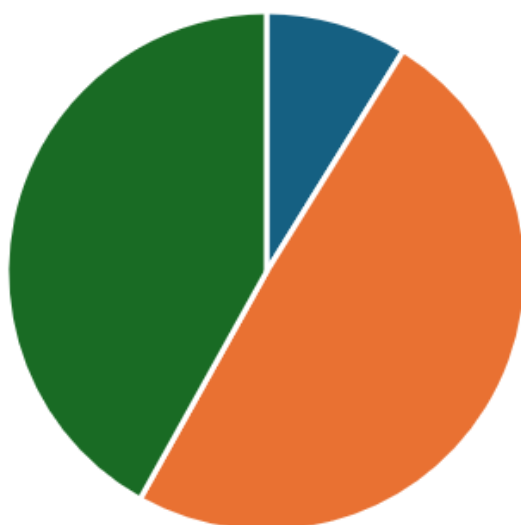


**MADE NEW
FRIENDS**



**HAD FUN
THIS SUMMER**

Age of Children and Young People



■ 0 to 8 years ■ 8 to 14 years ■ 14 to 25 years

**54% of
attendees were
new to the
programme this
year.**

Diagnosis/ Description of Needs



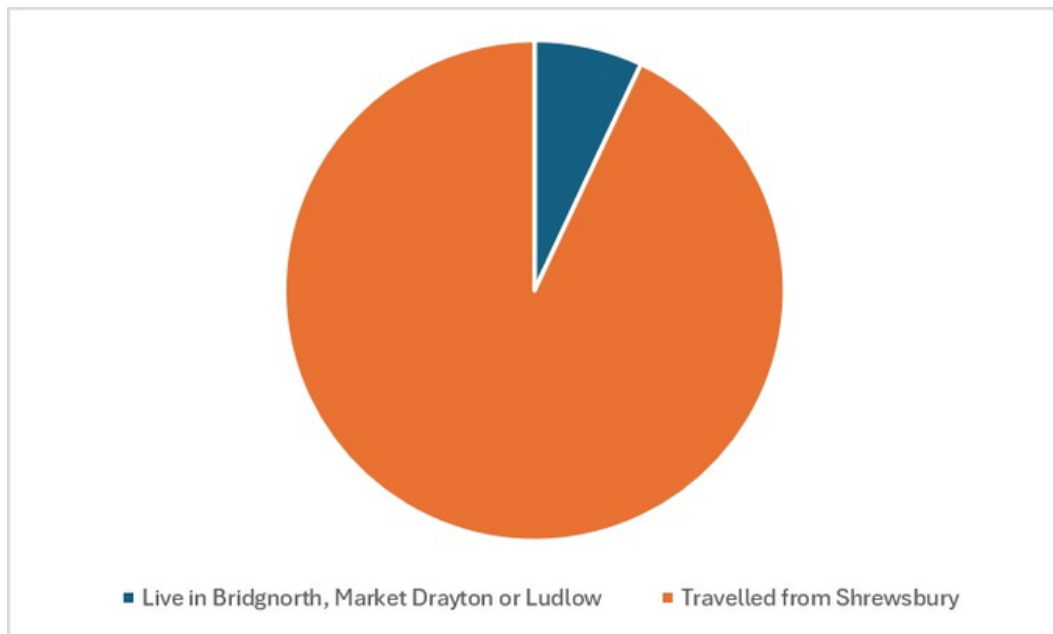
- Autism
- ADHD
- Chromosome Abnormality
- Down Syndrome
- Non-verbal
- Anxiety
- Sensory Needs
- Global Development Delay
- Learning Disability
- Learning difficulties
- Cerebral palsy
- Other

The programme supported children and young people with a broad and often complex range of needs. Families could identify more than one need, reflecting the fact that many participants had overlapping needs and required activities to be flexible and responsive.

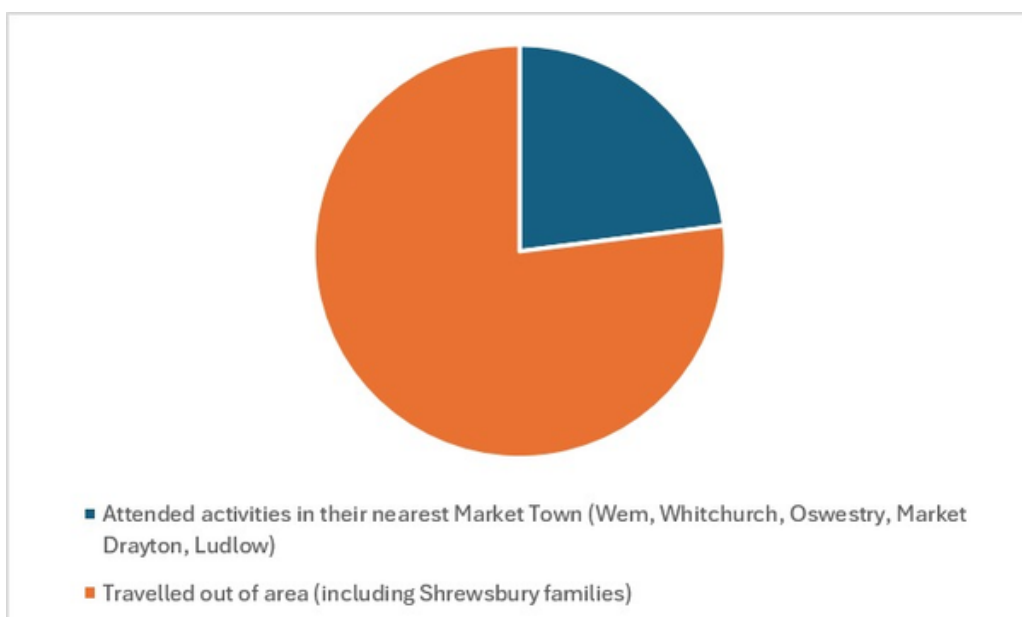
This demonstrates that Healthy Lives was not supporting one single group of children and young people. Participants had a wide range of communication, sensory, emotional, developmental, learning and physical needs.



Following the Summer Programme, we reviewed attendance patterns across different locations. We found that 93% of participants attending activities in Bridgnorth, Market Drayton and Ludlow had travelled from Shrewsbury. Families living in Bridgnorth, Market Drayton and Ludlow who requested these activities were given priority when places were allocated.

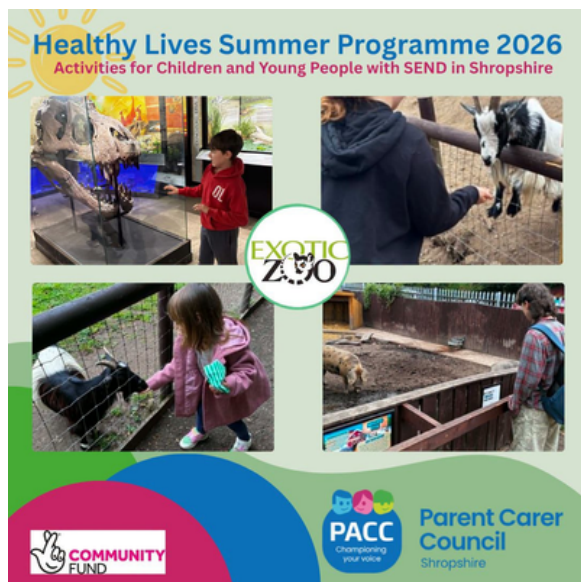
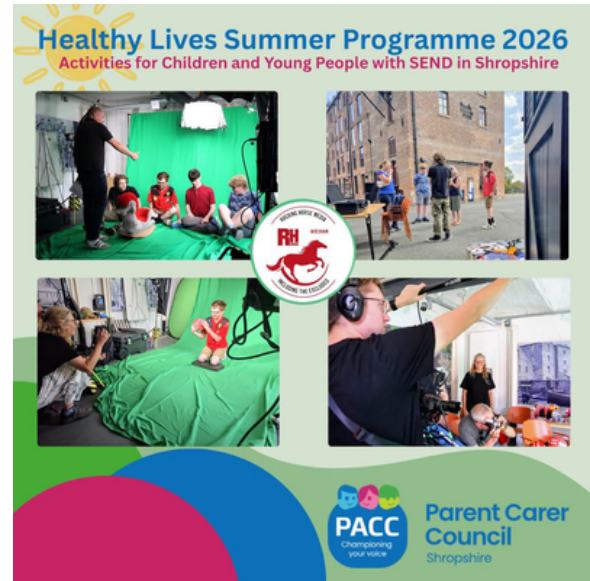
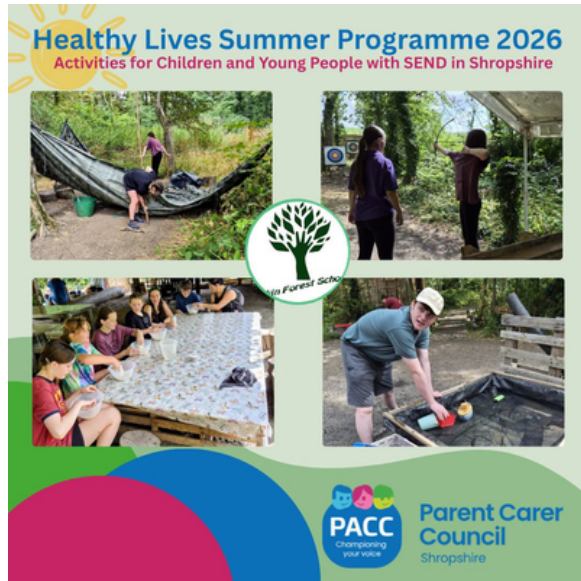


We also reviewed attendance patterns to understand whether families mainly attended activities within their local area or were willing to travel to activities elsewhere. 77% of participants travelled outside their local area to take part in activities, showing that families were willing to travel to access activities that suited their needs and interests.



Social Media

Posts are shared daily on Facebook of that days activities. Some examples below:



Feedback from families

Families are sent a Feedback Form via Email weekly over summer, the form is also shared on social media. There were 73 responses this summer.

Families were asked to rate their experience from 1 (poor) to 5 (Excellent)



Families were asked to provide their experience feedback. We have provided some highlights in feedback families have shared with us:

Animal Family

What a fabulous session. The young people seemed to thoroughly enjoy it. The session could have been longer or reduce the amount of talking that the adult does before the animals are passed around for handling. The talking and information being shared by the presenter was very interesting for me but my daughter is unable to listen and concentrate on what is being said for more than a few moments so I wonder whether it would be better to reduce the talking at the beginning a little. It was a great session though

Home Farm

Great to met by someone from PACC. All three boys had a great time. The farm was wheel chair friendly.

We had a great time- the farm was quite big and we enjoyed feeding the animals. Really good fun.

Really well thought out. The providers have been incredibly welcoming and there have been the PACCs team on hand welcoming us and making sure all runs smoothly. We have thoroughly enjoyed them as a family but especially my son, he has really got involved and felt calm and included.

Drummond- Canoeing

Great and so inclusive for all abilities .

Had a really great day. Jamie was explaining lots of different things as we went up the river, so learnt a lot. Had a lovely picnic sitting on the riverbank, watching the world go by.

Donkey EARS

Lovely interactive activity, patient staff, volunteers and mostly the donkeys!

I'd rate it higher if I could! Such a joyous experience. We feel so lucky to have been allocated this event & we could both go with Lucy. It was so relaxing & absolutely wonderful to spend 2 whole hours with the donkeys 🥰

Fordhall Farm

Lovely relaxing morning spent in gorgeous surroundings. The lovely farmer George showed us around and did a few activities with us. Pond dipping being a favourite. We were allowed to stay after the tour and use their picnic benches in the quieter area which was so kind. We then had cake and drink in the cafe and spent some money in the farm shop! Ops! 😊

Group leader was brilliant. Well paced activities and able to engage all participants.

Flaxmill

Wonderfully paced event. Fully inclusive with talented leader who kept everyone engaged

Kayaking- Shrewsbury Canoe Club

Its a great activity that certainly includes all abilities. The team of volunteers are so on hand and encouraging and i have certainly seen Will's confidence grow within the sessions.

A fantastic session. The instructors were fabulous with the young people and everyone seemed to have lots of fun. It was great to see huge smiles on faces and confidence growing in the skill of kayaking.

Medieval Madness

My child always enjoys these sessions. He is too old for regular soft play now but absolutely loves it so we rely on SEN sessions and always try to attend them when they're on offer

PACCfest

Highlight of the summer programme. All the entertainers engaged really well (with parent carers and young persons). Very relaxed atmosphere which created opportunities to chat to other parent carers without needing to be by our young person's side every minute... which allowed them to relax and explore in a supportive environment too. The band were amazing. We love PACC fest. Just perfect.

Such a wonderful few hours where our young ones r safe & can disappear & have fun with their friends & us parents know they're safe, so we can chat & catch up too!! So many lovely activities too & fab food & music.

Pottery Painting- Arty Bridgnorth

A lovely relaxing morning, but the lady running it wasn't the most chatty & helpful!! But she was very polite, & my daughter had a great time 😊

Rocking Horse Media

Absolutely brilliant, so much time given to children to make the experience enjoyable. Henry really enjoyed it and couldn't wait until Friday for the next session. The equipment was very impressive and he really felt like he was on a film set. He really struggles to make friends and this has really helped because we are relatively new to the area and his Sen teacher recommended the activity for him.

Rowing- Pengwern Rowing Club

Fabulous session. Great fun on the rowing machines and we really enjoyed rowing on the river too. She especially enjoyed riding in the speed boat!

Sal Tonge

A lovely, joyful session. Sal knows the likes and needs of the different participants

Absolutely brilliant as always, my son loves Sal and this is the only way he would get to see her

Shropshire Adventures

Absolutely fantastic day out couldn't praise it more. The staff and the range of activities are fab

We had a fabulous time, the organisers was very patient and great with the kids. The place was well organised and very clean. Would definitely want to go again. This really does help me and my son feel like we fit in. It means so much to be part of these special activities, I can't put it towards how much it supposed us. Thank you all so much

Soft Archery

Different chilled activity, again lovely understanding staff and volunteers who were able to spend time with my son.

Sports Village- Gym

We were unsure how she'd get on, but Paula was so amazing with her, that she had such a productive hour & can't wait to go back!!

Story time- Jake Evans

Great activity. Highly recommend. The drawing pictures was a highlight.

Wem Town Hall- Cinema

This was a new activity first for my daughter. Didn't have a clue how she would cope or even stay. But she surprised us and smashed it which was amazing. For the cost of £5 this was something that helped us in case she didn't last very long, as actual cinema prices are such a lot of money. The venue is great and the SEN element to it was so good. This was a real hit.

Worry Monsters- Calm Stream

Brilliant activity. The lady who ran it was so so lovely and patient. Venue was ideal. Only it was such a shame that it was only two families at the activity and appeared there were some no shows. It meant my daughter virtually had an 1-2-1 which she loved! Again, difficult to connect with anyone as such within the hour, and my daughter didn't get any child interaction, only adult.

The workshop was extremely well organised and resourced. The lady who ran it was great and allowed us extra time to finish our activity.

Wrekin Forest School

I loved this because although there were staff there it was a very low demand session. The two girls who worked there were really nice.

We have thoroughly enjoyed them as a family but especially my son, he has really got involved and felt calm and included. At Wrekin Forest school he actually got to try archery and zip lining and in my wildest dreams I didn't think he would be able to do activities like that. On top of that my older two children got to join in and spend time with other siblings like them. Even with the age gap Benjamin being 10 and my eldest 15 they all really enjoyed the activities. We have one activity left at medieval madness and I will absolutely leave feedback for that.

Overall Experience

All the activities were age appropriate, inclusive and accessible for both children.

Enjoyed every second and really appreciate the opportunity to try new activities with friends and feel included and valued

Always friendly PACC staff on hand. Activities are well thought out and to places that are accessible and understanding of the needs of my child.



Feedback from Activity Providers

We all love delivering these session and have so much fun with all that attend.

The presence of PACC staff / volunteers is essential to smooth running and enables participants to feel able to take creative risks safely.

Rewarding, fun and satisfying

Ran very smoothly with good communications

We appreciate that coordinating a programme of this size involves a significant amount of planning and communication, and overall we found the programme to be a positive experience

PACC's approach fits well with the way we work - participant centered

Seems to work well and a very valuable provision for SEND families

Overall, we felt the programme was well organised and provided a valuable opportunity for us to deliver inclusive creative activities to children and young people with SEND.

Families were asked what difference the programme has made to their family:

It's been great to have activities to do with the cost element being so generous. It somehow has given me confidence to take my daughter out knowing other SEN families will be at the activity with no judgement.

It's given something to look forward to. For me I feel I can take him with less anxiety around what to expect and how he might react etc.

This particular activity was new and has meant being able to try something new which my daughter loved.

A huge difference so far he will continue to attend the other sessions going forwards. We are quite isolated in Hodnet and moved up from Devon so this has made a huge difference to be able to meet up with other parents/carers and young people with additional needs. Thankyou and I'm happy to support and volunteer as I am a qualified OT many thanks for what you are doing for Henry. The impact is already huge and he is so excited for the next session on Friday.

To be able to try new things without spending a fortune is great. The variety of activities is fantastic. Provided social interaction for young adult and parents and activities that wouldn't otherwise be accessible.

"My child is Autistic and we do not get the opportunity to spend time with children with SEN. It is great they get the chance to do this through your scheme.

Just a cheeky suggestion, the children seemed to love the Christmas party so going forward, would there be a possibility of a Summer one to end the sessions with a get together? I would be happy to help in the future.

While I have the chance, I just want to thank you for doing what you do for our children.

As my son's main care giver I usually find the summer holidays quite a lonely experience and even when we get the opportunity to go out as a family it can be difficult, even in 2026 not everyone is accepting. The PACC activities gave us the opportunity to go out without judgement, to be included. The chance to just be around other families like ours, to chat and laugh and join in. We have been to PACCs Santa and loved it but I was never brave enough to take the first step to do other activities... I once tried to sign my son up for a SEND football club (with completely different organisers) and he was "too SEND" and it made me a little apprehensive of trying again... But I'm so glad I did with PACCs! I can't wait for future activities!

"Chance to try different things or challenges which wouldn't usually access on own (first aid). Social interaction (parents and young person). Change of scenery. Chance to meet new parents and young people and also get to know other young people better....building a stronger, supportive network between families.

These PACC activities allow our young people to try new activities and develop their skills in a safe supportive environment. She would never try someone these things in a mainstream setting but she is full of self confidence in the Healthy Life's activities. Thank you PACC team

This summer we have 3 HLP activities so that is 3 less activities/days out for me to have to plan myself

Some nice activities with friends

We go to places now that we may never have ventured to without PACC's intervention. We are very grateful that Evie has these opportunities that she looks forward to every holiday. Thank you.

We would really have struggled to find interesting and appropriate things to do, so these sessions are brilliant.

We feel supported and not alone. Sometimes life can feel lonely even when surrounded by others. We've done things that we wouldn't perhaps do without your support. Thank you

Brill scheme thankyou for all you do

Our son does not have any 'friends' as such due to his PMLD. His life outside school is with older adults. So our son being able to enjoy some activities in the company of others more his age is very precious to us.

I had fun with daddy and met a friend we love horses and sang the songs

Life changing big difference. With having a variety of differently baked and age children, it is so difficult to find activities as inclusive as the ones in the healthy lives programme. We look forward to the summer so much as we get to spend much needed time together and really enjoy spending time with others also. Due to sensory issues, finance, medical issues etc, going away on holiday isn't really an option for our family, however the summer healthy lives programme IS our holiday. It is the highlight of our whole year. Seeing my children interact in ways that they are accepted, celebrated and included is something very rare. We are beyond thankful for every minute of hardwork put in to creating the programme. Thankyou Thankyou Thankyou!!xxx

Meeting people i don't see anymore.

Massive!

Being able to get out of the house and experience things we wouldn't usually do has been brilliant. It is also nice to meet other SEND parents and share experiences.

These sessions are so valuable to enable our young people the opportunity to experience activities that they would not be able to access in a mainstream group.

Thank you so much PACC team x

A huge difference to us as a family. His Dad passed away a few years ago and we moved up here to Shropshire not knowing about what would help him to improve his confidence and self esteem. Without these sessions we would have found it incredibly difficult to find suitable activities that he could take part in that would meet his needs and encourage friendships outside of school. Thankyou so much :)

It has been particularly good to get helpful advice from another send adopter about ehcps and all sorts of things.

"Fun, enjoyment, tried new things .. my daughter and me.

Gave us planned activities to do

Got us doing physical activities

Time spent with others who we are, and/or are becoming familiar with

A HUGE thank you, always appreciate everything that goes into the programme "

It was a lovely family day outing and enjoyed meeting new people

Being able to enjoy activities as a family and not worrying, I can relax and so can he.

Fantastic sessions which give our young people the opportunity to experience these activities in a safe supportive group. Thank you PACC

Amazing opportunities for our young people to attend fantastic sessions where they feel safe, supported and comfortable with their friends and family around them. Thank you PACC

Getting her out trying different things has made a huge difference to our summer
A massive difference, thank u 😊

Attending events like this is really lovely as it's something the whole family can do & b together

Trying new activities such as the above makes us feel very lucky

It's been lovely for her to get out & do something different to her every day life & we r extremely grateful to u all 🥰

The PACC activities have given us again a chance to try new things and meet with friends in a relaxed environment where we know we will be welcomed. We're so grateful for the time and energy spent making the holidays fun for us. Thank you 😊

Other activities have been great and helped so much just being for sen families.

Its given us more reasons to get out but mainly in quiet enviroments

It's a life saver!! He likes to be out and about meeting new people and catching up with people he knows. Always reassuring knowing people are there who are understanding regarding his needs.

Able to be confident to try this activity out knowing people are there to help and support myself and my son

Provided us with opportunities to do different fun activities with the family

Its given us places to go that we would never have been able to go and experiences that we would never have done. We've spent time with friends who just get us.

Inspired to seek out similar activities in local area.

Allowed us to be part of a community and to take part in fun activities which other families take for granted. Thankyou! Xx

I like going because I know I can be myself

It has made it so enjoyable for us because there isnt any stress trying to arrange things for her to do and she has enjoyed them all.

A chance to go to a structured activity and meet other families

Its got us out of the house and doing things we dont normally do. Its helped us both and we have really enjoyed the activities meeting new people and catching up with old friends too

It was a lovely morning having fun and seeing him enjoy doing different activities that he hasn't done before

We have really enjoyed the activities and felt relaxed at the settings

Great to be able to relax in the settings. Thank you so much.

Lovely to keep connected with other parent carers and friends. Fun activities to look forward to. Big thanks!!

"We can take part in all Different things. Where not one person makes you feel like you should be there. They are all supportive.

This has really helped with me and my son- not feeling isolated and we have enjoyed all off the activities. Thank you so much "

The chance to try activities that I was previously apprehensive about undertaking with Charlie but I will do them all again - thank you!

Getting her out, trying new things that lead on to permanent new clubs is just wonderful, & makes a huge difference. Thank u xx

Huge, coming to these events for my daughter she knows she will encounter friendly peers who understand. She can be herself. For my son it's accessing activities he wouldn't otherwise be able to access. As well as meeting people who generally enjoy his company and want to become friends. Our summer plans are built around this programme as we trust the activities to be suitable for us. It pushes us to go out as a family and try new things together.

"To have enjoyable days .

out with friends and parents has been amazing.

The hard work that goes into it by everyone is most appreciated "

It was lovely having a couple of adventures to look forward to and focus our day on Opportunity to get out the house and go out together, see other families and friends as its very lonely and isolating in the holidays and the opportunity to have some fun with no judgement thank you so much for all that you do we really appreciate you all

I nearly chickened out of taking her to this session as my confidence is at rock bottom but I am so glad I put my big girl pants on and trusted PACs would have chosen something amazing for my daughter to do and know the staff at identity would be so supportive and kind.

It has given me opportunities to be with friends and meet new people.

Absolutely everything. We have tried so many new things surrounded by people that understand, have patience and pass no judgement. Such a safe space.

It means that he has been able to meet up with friends like his brother and sister have been doing and he's carried out exercise at the same time.

We had 3 activities but 2 were too far to travel for only 1 hour. The activities were good in the range we could apply for. There's more for children with high or complex needs this year. However by the time they've got there and acclimatised it's time to go.

He is able to be out without his mum or dad !

An opportunity to attend activities with no judgment, an opportunity for my son to be himself and meet like minded young people.

"I enjoyed the two days out with my family.

"Enabled young person to access activities that wouldn't usually be able to access and such a wide variety of activities available to choose from. Enables young person to learn new skills, socialise, get fresh air (depending on activity), and, above all, relax and have fun in supportive environment. Great for parent to meet up with other parent carers too.

PACCFest is a favourite as it brings so many young people and parent carers together in supportive environment where we all keep an eye out on our respective young people and socialise at the same time.

Whilst we as parent carers are never 'off duty', PACCFest is one of the few events to finding some fun and relaxation for everyone."

Love the healthy lives programme. The sessions allow my child the freedom to be just him. If the timings are no good to us, I use Abi's ideas to speak to the providers to see if they have other sessions on or get inspirations for future holidays. The only difficulty for us is that there are a limited number that allow siblings and therefore we can't attend the others due to child care. Just as an aside, his sibling is a vital part of our child's life and she can sometimes feel a bit left out, so these sessions with siblings are great as she also sees how other siblings are together. For next year, please put on more forest school sessions, the kids absolutely loved it. And Thanks again to Abi for all the hard work she puts in to organise this amazing programme xx



Feedback Reflection

The feedback shows that the Healthy Lives Programme has had a significant positive impact on children and young people with SEND and their families over the summer. Families consistently describe the programme as providing opportunities that would otherwise be difficult or impossible for them to access.

Access to activities and new experiences

Families valued being able to try a wide variety of activities, particularly those that their children may not feel able to access through mainstream provision. The programme encouraged children and young people to try new things, develop skills and, in some cases, discover activities they wanted to continue afterwards.

Feeling safe, accepted and included

One of the strongest themes is the importance of having environments where families feel welcomed, understood and free from judgement. Parents described being able to relax because they knew their child's needs and differences would be accepted. Young people also described being able to "be myself."

Reduced isolation and stronger connections

The programme helped families get out of the house, meet other parent carers and spend time with people who understand their experiences. This was particularly important during the school holidays, which several families described as potentially lonely and isolating.

Increased confidence for children and parent/ family carers

The impact was not limited to children and young people. Parent/ family carers described gaining confidence to take their children to activities they might previously have avoided because of anxiety about how their child would cope or how other people might respond. Children and young people were also described as developing confidence and independence.

Friendships and belonging

Families valued opportunities for children and young people to meet peers, maintain existing friendships and develop new ones. This was especially significant for young people who have limited opportunities to socialise with peers outside education.

Positive impact on the whole family

Healthy Lives provided something for families to look forward to and reduced the pressure on parents to find appropriate activities throughout the holidays. Family activities and opportunities for siblings to participate were particularly valued.

Affordability matters

Families highlighted the financial accessibility of the programme. Reduced-cost opportunities enabled some families to experience activities that would otherwise be unaffordable, particularly where holidays or traditional family days out are difficult to access.

Areas for development

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, but families also identified some practical areas to consider. These included more sibling-inclusive activities, more sessions such as forest school, activities closer to where families live, and longer sessions where children need time to acclimatise before participating. One family specifically noted that travelling a significant distance for a one-hour activity could make attendance difficult.

Overall

The feedback suggests Healthy Lives is doing considerably more than providing summer activities. Families describe it as creating an accessible SEND community where children and young people can participate, develop confidence, build friendships and be themselves, while parent carers experience greater confidence, connection and reduced isolation.

For some families the impact is particularly substantial, with respondents describing the programme as "a life saver," "life changing" and the highlight of their year.

Both activity Providers and children, young people & parent/ family carers have highlighted how helpful having PaCC reps at activities has been to support delivery of activities, connect with families and have a familiar face there.



Reflection

This summer, we increased the number of activities available compared with previous years, in response to the growing number of children and young people registered for the programme. We also broadened the range of activities offered, using feedback from families who took part last year to help shape the programme.

There were fewer music activities available this summer. This was due to a combination of provider availability and lower uptake of some music sessions in previous years. In response, we introduced alternative types of activities. We will review participation and family feedback to understand how successful these were and use this learning to help shape future programmes.

During the summer holidays, all administration and programme management is carried out on a voluntary basis. Following a review of the workload from previous years, this summer we invited Parent and Family Carers known to PACC to volunteer as Activity Reps. This helped share the workload and reduced the amount of additional voluntary time required from PACC Reps to provide cover across the programme. 1 member of staff was paid for the support they provided at activities over Summer.

Plans for next Summer

Over the next eight months, we will continue to explore opportunities to develop activity provision in Bridgnorth and Ludlow. So far, we have contacted potential providers directly and held in-person engagement events, although these did not attract any attendees.

We will continue to work with Parent and Family Carers in these areas to identify existing local activities, organisations and providers that could be supported or utilised to expand the range of accessible opportunities available to SEND families.

We will explore options and trial a reminder service for families to try and reduce the number of “no shows” to activities next summer.



A Thank You from PaCC

The Healthy Lives Programme would not be possible without the incredible people who take part in it, support it and work behind the scenes to make it happen.

To the children, young people and families – thank you for joining us. Thank you for trying new activities, sharing your experiences and feedback, and trusting us to create opportunities that work for you. Your participation is what brings Healthy Lives to life.

To our activity providers – thank you for working in partnership with us, adapting your activities, welcoming families and helping us create inclusive opportunities for children and young people with a wide range of needs. Your flexibility, enthusiasm and commitment have been invaluable.

And a very special thank you to our wonderful PaCC volunteers. So much of what makes Healthy Lives possible happens behind the scenes. From planning and coordinating the programme, managing bookings and administration, communicating with and supporting families and providers, to attending and supporting activities and managing the many moving parts throughout the programme – an enormous amount of time, care and hard work goes into making it all happen.

Healthy Lives is a genuine team effort, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who has played a part in making the programme possible.