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Out of Amaze - Dec 2024



Welcome to our December newsletter

Seasons greetings! This final edition of our newsletter for 2024 includes:

- East Sussex SEND Inspection
- Getting support over the festive season
- Amaze opening hours over Christmas
- NEW Dads group in Eastbourne
- Amaze Christmas Fair
- NEW video and resources about FASD
- Help us plan our strategy for 2025-30
- Latest i-go card offers and news
- Our Amazing Youth Day in Eastbourne
- Latest from East Sussex Parent Carer Forum

- Plus SENDIASS workshops in 2025, Easyfundraising for Amaze, and our Facebook SEND noticeboard.

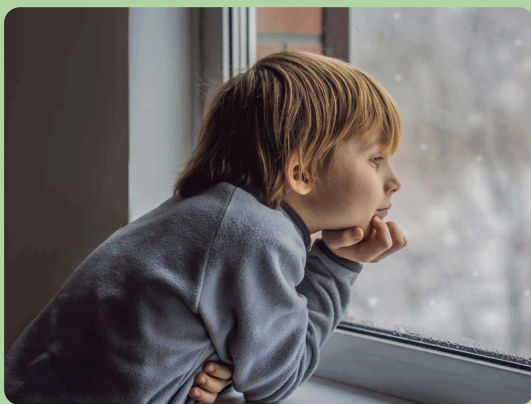
Update on the East Sussex SEND inspection

Last month inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission came to assess how well East Sussex is identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities.

Thank you to every parent and young person who took time to fill out the survey at the start of the inspection. We know the inspectors were impressed at the number of responses (2,234 parent carers and 372 young people) and that they were looking carefully at the messages these gave about your experience of the SEND system in the county, education, health and social care.

[East Sussex Parent Carer Forum](#) did an extraordinary job in representing the SEND community throughout the inspection. Being frank but balanced is a challenging role and ESPCF stepped up 100%! Amaze met the inspectors in our role as [SENDIASS](#) to share which pressing issues parents and young people bring to the advice line. Our [ND Family Support service](#) was also represented as the inspection team wanted to hear about neurodevelopmental pathways locally. It is always hard to tell how an inspection has gone, and we won't hear the outcome until the new year. We will share the news when it comes.

Getting support over the festive season



Crisis support

The festive period can be difficult for many families and having a child with additional needs can bring extra challenges. If you or your child need mental health support over the holidays, there are places you can turn to.

Read where to [Get support over Christmas](#)



Help with the cost of Christmas

If you are struggling to afford Christmas or the cost of living generally, there is help out there from local services, community groups and charities. Visit our website for a

short guide with details of who can help with what.

Get [help with the cost of Christmas](#)

Amaze's top tips for a stress-free Christmas

We can all feel the pressure to create a perfect Christmas, but when your child has additional needs it's really important to do it in a way that works for your family. Some of the parent carers who work at Amaze put together their top tips for reducing stress over the festive season.

Read our [Top tips for a stress free Christmas](#) when your child has additional needs.



Amaze's Christmas opening hours

Amaze's [SENDIASS advice line](#) closes from **Monday 23 December** for Christmas. We re-open at 9am on **Thursday 2 January 2025**. You can leave a message on the answerphone (01273 772289) over the Christmas period or [email SENDIASS](#). We will answer your messages as soon as we can when we return.

New monthly dads group in Eastbourne

Mon 3 February at Old Bank Wellbeing Trust

Would you like to meet other dads and male carers of children and young people with SEND in East Sussex? We know that being a dad or male carer can be isolating; this group will give you the opportunity to make new connections with others experiencing similar things.



[Eastbourne dads group >](#)



Come to our Christmas Fair this Saturday 14 December

Come to All Saints Centre, Lewes, and enjoy a variety of festive activities, perfect for all ages, including:

- stalls where you can buy unique Christmas gifts, treats and decorations
- Santa's Grotto between 12 and 2.30pm (£5 per child, with all money raised going to Amaze)
- face painting (small art £3 per child/ £5 for a full face per child, with all money raised going to Amaze)
- food and drink
- free craft activities for children and young people
- performances throughout the day.

You can pre-book your visit to Santa and see detailed access information on the Events page of our website:

[Book now for Santa's Grotto >](#)



New advice about FASD

Our ND Family Support team has just published online advice for parent carers about **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**, together with a video presentation on [Understanding FASD](#), available on YouTube. The video is co-delivered by a parent carer and NHS paediatrician, Michelle Bond.

[More about FASD >](#)



Help shape our future priorities

To help develop Amaze's plans for 2025-2030, we are keen to hear from parent carers of children and young people with SEND, young people with SEND aged 14-25, and partner organisations in the local area. Times are very tough for families, and for charities like ours. The information you give us will help us to decide what services and support we prioritise in the short-term, and where to focus our fundraising efforts for the future.

There are three different surveys, please complete the version relevant to you. The deadline is almost upon us - fill the survey out by the end of the day Monday (16 December) for a chance to win a £25 Love To Shop voucher, just in time to help with Christmas shopping!

[Take our survey >](#)



Latest leisure offers on the i-go card

Got an i-go card? There's loads of great offers and discounts at leisure outlets across the region. The latest offer to be added is 25% off all tickets for [Globetrotters Mini Golf and Games](#) at Camping World in Horsham. Check out all the brilliant offers on the [i-go website](#).

You can find out about eligibility and apply for a card on the website too.



Our Amazing Youth Day

We held our first ever **Amazing Youth Day** in Eastbourne last month. The day was a huge success, with around 30 young people taking part, from both our East Sussex and Brighton & Hove groups. They rotated through different

consultation activities throughout the day, sharing their feedback and ideas to help feed into Amaze's strategic plan and guide us in refreshing our youth participation policy.

They had a great time throwing balls to pick questions to answer, writing their ideas on leaves and sticking them on the Amaze tree, expressing themselves through collage and in post-it notes.

We had some really interesting group discussions together throughout the day and came away with loads of new ideas and useful feedback. It was a super fun day and everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves (and the pizza lunch!).

If any young people missed the day, they can still share their feedback and ideas for our strategic plan through our [menti survey for young people](#).



Autism in Schools group at Ocklynge Primary School.

Coming soon! ESPCF December newsletter

East Sussex Parent Carer Forum's final newsletter of 2024 will be out soon. Highlights include:

- ESPCF report to Ofsted and CQC highlighting key SEND issues from over 2,000 pieces of parent carer feedback
- results of its mental health in schools poll
- round up of the new parent groups happening at schools;
- pics of the team out and about, and more!

Due out next week on [the ESPCF website](#). You can also find the latest updates on the [ESPCF Facebook page](#).

Amaze workshops

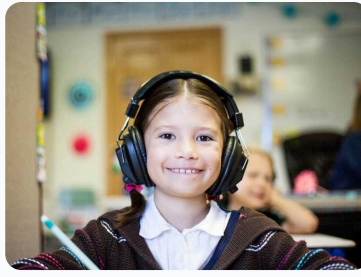


How to claim PIP

This free evening workshop led by Lizzie Batten will help you identify whether your child is likely to get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and help you make a strong claim.

Our next workshop takes place on **Thurs 9 January** from **7 to 9pm**.

PIP workshop:
Book now >

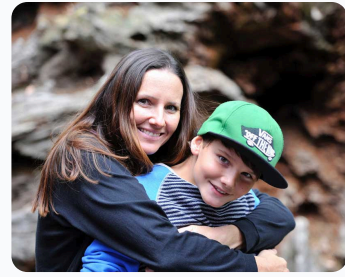


Getting support for my child's SEN in school

A free Zoom workshop for parents who are worried about the progress their child is making at school (where the child doesn't have an EHC plan).

Our next workshop takes place on **Thurs 16 January** from **10.30am to 12pm**.

SEN support workshop:
Book now >



How to claim DLA

This free Zoom workshop will help you identify whether your child is likely to get DLA and help you make a strong claim, whether it is a first claim or a review. The workshop is for parents and carers in Brighton & Hove and East Sussex.

The session takes place on **Fri 24 January** from **10.30am to 12.30pm**.

DLA workshop:
Book now >

Book any of our workshops via the [Events](#) page of our website. You can also find recordings of some of our workshops on our [YouTube channel](#).

Shopping online for gifts?

We're signed up to easyfundraising, which means **you can raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online**. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you [use easyfundraising to shop](#) with them – at no extra cost to yourself! These donations really mount up and **make a BIG difference to us**, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's **completely FREE** and **only takes a moment**.

Join easyfundraising >



Follow our SEND Noticeboard

We know many of you follow the Amaze Facebook page to get the latest advice and news from Amaze, but have you seen our new [Amaze SEND Noticeboard](#)? This page is where we will signpost you to other organisations' SEND activities and events (as well as our own) in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. Local service providers send us their SEND events and activities so that we can share them with you, so make sure you follow the Noticeboard.



[Join the Noticeboard >](#)

Enjoyed this newsletter?

If the newsletter has been a good read, and you can afford to give back, please [make a donation](#) and 'pay it forward' so we can help another family. Thank you.

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This is the East Sussex version of our newsletter. If you would prefer to receive the Brighton & Hove version, please email comms@amazesussex.org.uk

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