



SENDAT OUTREACH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: EDITION 5

Preparing for Adulthood –Young people 11-16

Welcome! Here is our weekly newsletter containing ideas and links to support teachers and families of pupils with complex SEND during the Covid-19 crisis.

You do not have to be on our caseload to access these materials, and a member of the team will be happy to speak with you if you would like further advice or information.



Health and wellbeing

It is very important, particularly at the moment, to be thinking about how to maintain good physical and mental health. It is also useful to know where to seek help and support, and know what support you can get in the future.

There are lots of great websites and YouTube videos that give support regarding exercise and healthy eating. It is also important for young people to begin to take control and have increased responsibility for their own health and fitness.

You may not be aware that all young people who are registered with their GP as have a learning disability are entitled to a free yearly health check. This starts at 14 years and continues annually through adulthood.

You can visit the NHS website to find out more information about this service:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/annual-health-checks/>

It is also important to take care of our mental health. Parents can often feel this is an area that they are less confident in when supporting their child. This website offers some helpful tips on how to support your child with their mental health: <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

There are also some great sites that are more accessible and appealing to young people:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://riseabove.org.uk/topic/my-mind/>

Community

As our young people grow and develop it is very important for them to continue to be part of their local and wider community. This has been challenging over the last few months. Many organisations have moved their sessions and meetings to online platforms. Here are two websites you can look at to see what is on offer in your local area now that things are starting to open up:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/home.page>

<https://www.thesource.me.uk/>

Now is also a good time to think about making connections for the future. Connecting with people and making links with supportive communities is positive for parents but also young people themselves. There are lots of support groups both locally and nationally:

<https://spcn.org.uk/>

<https://disabilityhorizons.com/>

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/>

There are also lots of things you can do as a family to strengthen your community links. You can keep it small and local. You could create a newsletter, write a blog or make a video for family and friends.

Now that some of the restrictions are easing you could think about people or places you can visit that will help ease your child back into their pre-lockdown routine.



Employment

Everyone has their own unique skills and strengths. There are some very inspirational disabled people who have used their skills and talents to achieve great things. There are some inspirational examples here:

<https://disabilitypower100.com/>

As well as helping to support their learning of key skills in English and Maths, take some time to think about their personal skills and talents. You can support them to identify and realise their potential by helping them to create a CV or make a folder about their skills and achievements.

You can also support them to improve some key work related skills at home. Try practising sending emails, making phone calls or writing letters. The BBC Bitesize website has some very useful resources that focus on work based functional skills:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zmqj2nb>

You could test your team work and problem solving skills as a family by trying team building games such as newspaper tower building:

https://www.teachengineering.org/activities/view/duk_to_wer_tech_act

Support them to take some time to think about what they would like to do in the future. Where could they study or train? What skills do they need to practise? You could research together some of the Post 16 education and training settings in your area.

Independence

Now is a good time to practise or learn new skills at home. Planning and cooking a meal for the family. Using and managing money. Have they got a bank account? Being responsible for their day. Making a plan, and agreeing some goals and targets with the family.

There are some great online practical resources on this site that can be used to learn and improve independent living skills:

<https://www.skillsworkshop.org/category/context/independent-living>

Encouraging them to be proactive, "Don't just wait to be asked". You could prompt them to negotiate for some kind of reward or motivation.

Think about revisiting how to keep safe online:

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-11/Internet-Safety-web-2016.pdf>

How can they be more independent with their personal care? Visual prompts or lists to encourage making their bed, cutting their nails etc. It is also never too soon to encourage making choices and taking responsibility. Think about how to help them express their opinion. Creating a list using words or pictures that show what is important to them now and in the future.

