

Suffolk SENDIASS digital tools and resources

Website

By far, the website is our 'most used' resource with up to 10K page views per month and in a recent development survey this was rated as the top resource families would use. We couldn't possibly respond to this number of people individually and it is encouraging that many get the information they need from our website.

The website supports the helpline and casework offer too as the team can guide families to a specific piece of information relevant to their question.

Analytics gives real insight to the subject areas and specific pages being viewed, which we monitor and review in line with our information and training development.

With the launch of our new web platform, we have just begun to encourage completion of a 'web form' to initiate access and in future we will be offering webchat. We hope by offering these options enquiries will be more focused and will help us meet demand.


Social media

With over 1,700 followers, Facebook is another highly rated source of information by parents/carers who access our service. We regularly post information items and events and monitor trends on our Facebook and Twitter feeds.

We have developed a range of video resources which are uploaded to YouTube and embedded across our website. Time stamps have been a helpful navigation tool for the lengthier ones. Again, these can be used by team members to support the helpline and with casework.

Training

We have adapted our training to work virtually. Some more 'skills based' sessions lend themselves better to face to face, but most have translated really well. We experienced an uptick in the number signing up to our training as a result of these being available online - overall we had over 1,000 registrants in the academic year 2020 to 2021.



Pre-recorded versions of some of our sessions are available 'on demand' for those who register – there seems to be a growing number who don't want to be tied down and would prefer to watch at a time they choose. We favoured the pre-recorded option, to ensure confidentiality – if a camera came on or someone spoke for example.

Coproduction

Working with families and partners is a key part of our development. Using a mix of surveys and 'gathering views' sessions, responses input directly to development. We go back to individuals and groups who have worked with us to share the outcome/result of their involvement.

Engagement with young people has been more difficult recently, with many saying they feel fatigued by online meetings. However, we did get to meet with groups of young people around the design and navigation features of our replacement website in 2021. We hope to return to face-to-face group sessions with young people as we emerge from the pandemic so we can work with them on next steps for our development.

Newsletters

Pre-lockdown these were termly and were more about articles of information and advice which followed the academic calendar. We have been trialling sending these more regularly at two-week intervals and now plan to change this to a monthly issue. We currently have around 1,500 subscribers.

Generic responses

Enquiries to the service by email/digital messages is increasing with a corresponding downward trend of phone calls. We plan to develop a library of fixed responses to specific questions and issues to support team members with helpline and casework enquiries. This will improve efficiency and quality, and also be a helpful tool when training new staff.

Data & activity reports

We have a signed SLA and as part of that must provide biannual and annual reports. In addition, we have been compiling monthly reports. We have found these really useful, for our own service development, to monitor trends, and to share with LA and other partners.

We have made some changes to the categories in our database (we use Crossdata). We would like to be able to refine our reporting and provide more meaningful information



about helpline and casework to share with partners. This remains ‘work in progress’ as we begin to report on the new categories from September 2021.

September 2021