

Recent months have been tough for everyone and this is especially true for families with children who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Due to the lockdown, together with their children perhaps not understanding why they cannot go out, go to school and see their friends, these families have faced even more isolation and anxiety.

However, help is available for families in Walsall through Walsall SENDIAS, Family Action's information, advice and support service. Working closely with Walsall Council and other Walsall partner organisations, the service works in line with the Walsall Right 4 Children programme.

The service is available directly to parents/carers, children and young people in the Walsall area who request support. The service also delivers training to professionals across the area to raise awareness of SEND issues and how agencies can work together to support children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

It provides children, young people (aged 0–25) and their parent/carers with free impartial, confidential and accurate information, advice and support services about education, health and social care matters as it relates to their special educational needs and/or disabilities. It will also support independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents, enabling them to take part effectively in discussions and decisions relating to their education, health and care provision.

**One parent, whose family is supported by Walsall SENDIAS said,**

*"We just wanted to say thank you - we are so happy and so impressed with how quickly Walsall SENDIAS arranged support for us. We are absolutely over the moon with the support you gave us."*

**Louise Hudson, Operational Manager, Family Action said,**

*"With the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown increasing isolation, families with children who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities need support now more than ever. Family Action's aim is to provide the help these families need and to make a positive difference to their lives."*

*"Working collaboratively with Walsall Council and other Walsall partner organisations and families themselves, we hope to build upon and improve services and outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Walsall."*

**Councillor Chris Towe, Portfolio Holder for Education and skills, Walsall Council said,**

*"We are pleased to offer this support for families in Walsall and I encourage them to get in touch with Family Action if they are supporting children with additional needs."*



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*"Working closely with partners, this support service will strengthen and improve the current offer for families and ensure positive outcomes for families especially during these increasingly challenging times."*

To find out more information and to access the service please ring **0808 802 6666** or email [walsallsendiass@family-action.org.uk](mailto:walsallsendiass@family-action.org.uk).

**End**

**Contact details:**

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**Notes to Editor:**

**Family Action** is a national charity committed to building stronger families and brighter lives. Since the charity was founded in 1869, we have continued to help children and families overcome the challenges they face through a wide range of practical, emotional and financial support. With some 160 community-based services across the UK, we currently support more than 60,000 families each year.

We help families to manage their mental health and wellbeing and to tackle behavioural issues and parenting challenges, family conflict and domestic abuse. We also work with families to reduce the impact of social isolation, poverty, addiction and other significant sources of stress and pressure.

Our work covers the whole life span and includes help for parents-to-be and for parents and carers of children of all ages, a wide range of services for children and young people and services for adults affected by mental ill health. Our family work stretches from intensive whole family support to more targeted services supporting families affected by adoption, special guardianship, separation, special educational needs, disability, domestic violence and sexual abuse.

Based in and working with Children's Centres, GP surgeries, schools and other local partners, our specialist services include Multi Systemic Therapy, children's trauma therapy, child to parent violence, social prescribing, supervised child contact and a range of mentoring and befriending services. We also provide some 2,000 welfare and educational grants every year to people in financial crisis.

Through the National School Breakfast Programme, we provide a healthy breakfast to more than 280,000 pupils every school day. We also offer free and immediate support to adult family members through our national helpline, FamilyLine (via telephone, email, online chat and 24/7 text service), and are recognised as a leading provider of specialist training and consultancy.



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During the Covid-19 pandemic Family Action is adapting its service delivery to ensure we are still very much there for the people who rely on us. Many of our services are now being delivered virtually and we have prioritised keeping in contact with people. At the same time we have fundraised additional money so that we can greatly expand our network of FOOD Clubs, provide our most vulnerable service users with emergency financial support and distribute other practical resources to help people get through lockdown.

**Registered charity number: 264 713**

[www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk), [twitter.com/family\\_action](https://twitter.com/family_action), [www.facebook.com/familyaction/](https://www.facebook.com/familyaction/),  
[www.instagram.com/family\\_action/](https://www.instagram.com/family_action/), [www.linkedin.com/company/family-action/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/family-action/)

**Walsall Council:**

**Website: [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk)**

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