

Help for Medway families affected by Autism and ADHD

The charity Family Action is delighted to announce the launch of Small Steps, a new 12 month pilot service in Medway, offering specialist and early support for children with suspected or diagnosed Autism (also known as ASC) and ADHD. Small Steps launches on the 14 April on behalf of Medway Council. It provides early support, both practical and emotional, that is individually tailored for families where a child or young person is displaying concerning behaviour, or where they receive a diagnosis of ASC or ADHD. The service offers support pre diagnosis so families can get the right advice and direction from the beginning.

Small Steps works closely with health professionals, education settings and the local authority to enhance what is available to families. It offers information workshops, specialised parenting groups, and can provide parents with a Project Worker or a Volunteer Befriender who will offer home visits and 1:1 support within the family home. Volunteer Befrienders can support families to access social activities, attend medical appointments and offer a listening ear.

We also offer drop in parent support groups, education transition groups and support to access local services and the opportunity to meet other families in a similar situation.

Sue Crabb, Family Action's Operational Manager for Medway said:

"It can be very difficult for families facing the challenges that Autism and ADHD can bring. They can often feel isolated and may not know where to turn to for help. Family Action has a long history of family support and SENDIAS services and has a wealth of knowledge and expertise in this field. Small Steps is here to offer practical and emotional support and we urge anyone who needs that support to get in touch."

Cllr David Brake, Medway Council's Portfolio Holder covering Public Health, said:

"I am very pleased that we are working with Family Action to offer a variety of support for families with children or young people with suspected or diagnosed Autism and ADHD. The new service will provide individual practical and emotional support to families when they need it the most. I would encourage residents to find out more about the support available."

For more information about Small Steps, families can contact the service by telephone on

01634 913219 or by email at MedwaySmallSteps@family-action.org.uk

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Notes to Editor:

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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. We offer free and immediate support to adult family members through our national helpline, FamilyLine and with some 160 community-based services across the UK as well as a range of national programmes, we currently support more than 60,000 families each year.

We help families and individuals to manage their mental health and wellbeing, working with families to reduce the impact of social isolation, poverty, addiction and other significant sources of stress and pressure. We also support families affected by adoption, special guardianship, separation, special educational needs, disability, domestic violence and sexual abuse. In addition, we provide thousands of welfare and educational grants every year to people in financial crisis.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic Family Action has adapted its service delivery to ensure we are still very much there for the people who rely on us. While we have continued to work in person with the most vulnerable individuals and families, many of our services are now being delivered virtually. We have expanded our grants services and network of FOOD Clubs during the pandemic to provide the most vulnerable with emergency financial support as well as food and practical resources to help them get through.

For further information, please visit our website at www.family-action.org.uk

Registered charity number: 264 713

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