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Mission Statement

SNAP Cymru will enable and empower families (parents, carers, children and young people) to have their voices heard within the area of special educational needs, and support them to influence policy and practice in the planning and delivery of services at both local and national levels.



SNAP Cymru :

- Provides information and support
- Provides advocacy and disagreement resolution services
- Promotes participation and self advocacy
- Promotes partnership working between families, young people and professionals



What is Partnership?

The '5 Rs' of Partnership

- Rights
- Roles
- Responsibilities
- Relationships
- Reality (resources!)



Why Is It Necessary?

- Statutory responsibility
- Seeing the whole child
- Relieving stress and anxiety
- Effective links to the home

Promoting Partnership

In our work we meet families who feel they need information and support, over and above that which they have already received.

SNAP Cymru Provides:

- Additional Information
- Explanation of Information
- Time to Listen
- Options for A Way Forward

SNAP Cymru's Experience.....Children.....

- Have high expectations of themselves
- Want to fit in - need to please
- Are threatened by exclusion
- Identify with failure at a very young age
- Would rather not be 'special'
- Generally do not like to be withdrawn from mainstream classes



SNAP Cymru's Experience.....

..... Parents.....

- Parents care about their children
- Have an urgent need to understand why their child is struggling to learn
- Are desperate to know - so that their child will be understood and helped
- Are often at their wits end, trying to cope with their child's frustration and disappointment
- Have an increased awareness of disability and inclusion issues - media and internet
- Worry about exclusions

..... They have a terrible fear of school exclusion

often experience exclusion in the community
and have difficulties accessing ordinary
community facilities for play and leisure

have little or no respite opportunities

worry about the affect on siblings and the
relationships within the wider family network

often they feel they're not being listened to...

Parents tell us...

"I'm not a bad parent"

"He's not a bad boy
...there has to be something wrong"

"It's tearing our family apart"

".....excluded
from the Community Centre"

"I can't access childcare -
no provision to access the breakfast
club or the after school club"

"Our neighbours have complained
- we've had a letter from the
council"

" No respite, we haven't been to a
family wedding for years and my

Parents want:

- their child's needs identified
- an assessment and diagnosis/explanation
- intervention including advisory support
- possibly medication and or therapy
- behaviour managed at school
- help to manage the behaviour at home
- Resources to help children learn

Parents still experience:

- A maze of professionals with differing priorities
- Different criteria for assessment
- Differing attitudes and expectations regarding disability and inclusion
- Differing attitudes in particular, to ADHD, EBD, DCD and ASD
- Isolation and confusion.....



...these experiences lead to unnecessary levels of anxiety for parents and children

"I've tried talking for months. Something needs to happen before it's too late...school say I need to keep him at home for a while until we know - but I can't not go to work..."

"I have spent months driving around in my lunch hour to pick her up, have lunch and get back again"

"Where do I go? What should I do next? Who can help me?"

"Why is nothing happening?"

"School say I must fight for a statement"

In Practice

- Not all children who present with difficulties need specialist assessment
- Many specialist assessments do not result in a diagnosis requiring specialist intervention.
- Longer waiting lists for assessment result in some children with serious problems not being seen early enough.
- The 'wait' for a 'diagnosis' sometimes hinders other action
Parents are left feeling they are being passed from one professional to another and going nowhere and where interim support packages are working, parents still want the assessment **"just in case"**

Problems !

- Backlog of referrals - specialist services often at crisis point
- Inefficient and ineffective use of all resources
- Inequality - those that shout loudest - post code lottery on specialist services
- Children and young people's needs not identified soon enough

A Coordinated response

The SEN Code of Practice Wales (2002) encourages:

a **Graduated Response** - Early identification of need and intervention:

Early Years /School Action - parents, child and school working together

Early Years/School action plus - parents, child, school and other appropriate multi - agency professionals working together

Formal Assessment - a clear path through for those children whose additional needs are more complex or severe

Solutions

- Early Years Identification and follow through interventions
- Teacher assessment
- Initial teacher training - SEN/Disability integral to core training and not considered a 'specialist' subject
- Joint initial training
- Effective coordinated referral systems between all agencies - with established protocols
- Increased awareness in all professionals of learning implications of diagnosis or difficulty, with early counselling and positive support networks in place
- Joint commissioning of services, bringing flexible funding for provision to meet needs of individual children
- Incentives to encourage development of innovative "thinking outside the box" services.

Benefits of an inclusive multi-agency response...

...for parents and professionals

-instils confidence in a clearly defined system
-everyone is working together in the interests of the child
-ensures that all children receive the best and most appropriate and timely, provision.

It's up to all of us to make it work !

Benefits of an inclusive multi-agency response..

.... **for children and young people will be....**

- confidence that their needs are being identified and provided for in the most appropriate and timely way
- confidence that they are being listened to and are understood and supported
- Renewed confidence in their own abilities
- Pride in their achievements

Children And Young People.....

- ..are unique individuals with little choice of what is on offer
-have little or no involvement in the planning of services
- ...are far more flexible than service providers AND parents!
-need to participate, as far as they are able, in decisions which affect them