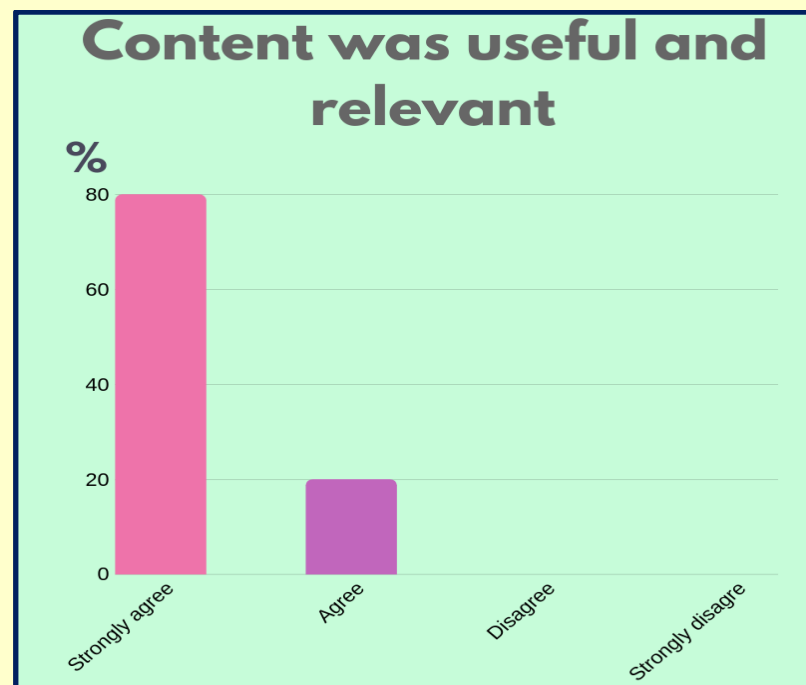



Summary of Feedback about our 2019 Conference: Building Skills for Life

We really enjoyed welcoming you to our 2019 conference! Thank you for joining us and for giving us lots of helpful feedback 😊

We know that the weather and closure of the Orwell Bridge had an impact on attendee numbers this year as we had many cancellations the day before and on the day itself due to travel disruption. However, those of you who were able to join us gave us very positive feedback, finding it 'a really great and informative day'.

100% of you strongly agreed or agreed that the content of the conference was useful and relevant, with 80% of you strongly agreeing.





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We asked you: **What did you find most helpful about the day?**

Some of you found 'every part of the day' helpful and described the conference as 'excellent', finding it 'welcoming and inclusive' and 'extremely well-organised and run.'

We were really pleased that you found it 'very informative' and 'understanding', delivering 'accessible information, advice and guidance in a safe and welcoming space... Perfect!'

Other parents and carers highlighted particular elements which you enjoyed most.

- The largest group of you (57%) said that **finding out about other services and support** was the most helpful part of the day

You commented that the conference was a 'great way of finding out more about local services and ways of helping people (including myself)'. You appreciated 'getting information from professionals' and 'seeing them all in one room' and said it was 'eye-opening to see what services are available'.

You valued having 'the time to get extra information' and the 'opportunity to talk to the stalls' and several of you highlighted that you found the market place stands and information 'very helpful.'

- The next most important element of the day for you was **the chance to meet and share with other parents**.

You valued 'talking to other parents and sharing experiences' and 'hearing others' stories.' You commented 'It was so nice to meet other parents with similar struggles who understood as I did feel very isolated as a parent,'

Practitioners who attended the conference also said that they really appreciated 'speaking to parents face to face to understand the issues' and valued 'making connections – being able to reassure parents/carers about future choices/college transition.'

- 30% of you who filled out evaluation forms found the **afternoon workshops** the most helpful part of the day.

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You found the Psychology workshop (workshop 1) 'great', 'very interactive and informative' with 'lots of ideas and thoughts given'. You thought Raising Resilient Teens (workshop 2) was very useful and 'helped to clarify some things for me'. And many of you enjoyed the Young Person Network session (workshop 3), finding it 'excellent' and 'really enjoyable.'

- You also highlighted that the morning speakers and presentations were helpful and that you valued the 'visuals, videos and drawings. Additional verbal feedback on the day also showed that you appreciated the young person videos in our SENDIASS presentation. A practitioner also said that they 'gained a good insight to how we may improve getting the child's voice'.
- The buffet **lunch** (and there was certainly plenty of it!) was also popular: 'Great food thank you!', 'enjoyed lunch 😊'

We asked you: **What could we have done better?**

17% of you who filled out evaluation forms felt there was 'nothing' we could do to improve the day and you had 'no criticisms'.

You commented 'I am normally quite critical over things, but you get 10/10 😊'

Other parents and carers highlighted specific areas for change.

Your Comments	Our response and what we have learnt
3 of you would have liked more stalls, possibly 'including other voluntary/charity services and activities unlimited stall.'	We had chosen to offer workshops in the afternoon which meant that there was no separate area for the market place. In this venue, there was only room for 9 stalls around the perimeter of the hall and three in the small back room. As we explained in our presentation, the stalls this year had more of a post 16 focus. We invited many services from across education,

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<p>'Perhaps the service stalls to give 5-minute presentation?'</p>	<p>vocational opportunities, health and social care and the stalls represented were those who responded and booked their place first.</p> <p>In previous years 'Activities Unlimited' have held a stall at our market placed but the stall spaces booked out quickly this year.</p> <p>This is a great idea and something we could look at for future conferences. This year the timeframe for the morning was tight so instead we included a paragraph description in the attendee pack of each of the stalls.</p>
<p>3 of you said you would have liked a quieter venue for workshop 3 (Raising Resilient Teens).</p>	<p>We hadn't realised that so much sound would travel between the rooms for workshops two and three and we are sorry that this impacted on your experience of workshop 3 and the experience of the parenting practitioners delivering the session.</p> <p>If we use this venue again in the future, we will plan the use of the rooms differently, perhaps not offering a workshop in the bar and lunch area.</p>
<p>2 of you would have liked to attend all the workshops and said that you didn't like 'missing out on important information.'</p>	<p>We're glad that you thought all the workshops were useful and we do appreciate that it's difficult having to choose one session.</p> <p>It can be tricky to find the right balance between offering a variety of information (which might not be relevant to everyone) and delivering presentations for all attendees.</p> <p>We have tried different formats in the past. Some years we have offered information for all attendees throughout the day so that</p>

Summary of Feedback about our 2019 Conference: Building Skills for Life

<p>You suggested that maybe each of the workshops could have given 'a short talk' to everyone in the morning.</p>	<p>everyone receives the same presentations, other years we have offered a workshop for everyone in the morning and then a choice in the afternoon.</p> <p>This year we decided to offer several different presentations for all attendees in the morning with a choice of workshop in the afternoon. In this format, if we had offered a 'carousel' of workshops in the afternoon, with parents going from one workshop to another, the sessions would have had to be a lot shorter – around 35 minutes each. Allowing time for moving and settling, many practitioners feel that it isn't enough time to have a worthwhile session, taking parent questions.</p> <p>Thank you very much for this idea which will help inform our discussions for the format of future conferences. We do value your feedback and will continue to explore different ways of offering information to attendees.</p>
<p>2 of you would have liked more information about the workshops on Eventbrite when you booked on.</p>	<p>This is also a matter of striking a balance between putting enough information in the Eventbrite description and keeping it clear and accessible, particularly for parents with specific learning difficulties. We found last year that not all attendees had read the information we put on Eventbrite and parents using mobile phones to register told us that they did not find it easy to scroll through lots of information.</p> <p>We sent out this year's conference description and draft flyer to our SEND Champions for feedback before publishing the event on Eventbrite.</p>

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	<p>Their feedback suggested that it was helpful to keep the Eventbrite description concise but add more information to the flyer which we posted on our website and social media pages and shared in the community. We therefore created a 2-sided flyer with workshop descriptions on the back.</p>
<p>One of you commented you would have liked 'more delegates.'</p>	<p>We agree! We had a much smaller group of attendees this year. We know from email and text cancellations sent to us that the weather had some impact on numbers, but overall bookings were less than usual this year.</p> <p>We had chosen the theme of this year's conference following feedback from parents at last year's conference and we do appreciate that concerns and interests of parents can change through the year.</p> <p>We have had some individual feedback from parents that the day and date was not suitable and several parents in the west of Suffolk said that the venue was too far away for them.</p> <p>We are also aware that we need to do more about promoting our service and the workshops, courses and events we can offer. Exploring more and better ways to promote is part of our plan for the coming year ahead.</p>
<p>Individual comments also included that you would have liked a 'breather' between presentations in the morning and 'tables to sit at'.</p>	<p>Over the years we have tried different conference formats and set-ups.</p>

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	<p>We have had a coffee break in the morning before, but this does limit the amount of information which can be shared.</p> <p>We have also sat attendees at tables for morning presentations. The last time we held a conference at this venue attendees were seated around tables in the hall, but parents fed back that they found it too crowded.</p> <p>We will certainly consider using tables at next year's conference – the decision will depend on the venue and the amount and format of the information which will be shared.</p>
<p>1 of you shared that you would like 'Clearer pathway of provision and links health/social care/education.'</p>	<p>We take this feedback on board and will look at how we can make this clearer next year in any presentations or workshops next year.</p>

We asked you:

What further information or possible future topics would be useful to you?

Those of you who filled our evaluation forms offered a variety of different ideas including:


<p>Understanding and dealing with anxiety, self-esteem and confidence or anxiety/OCD/depression and trauma.</p>	<p>Last year we had a morning's workshop for all attendees around identifying and managing anxiety delivered by a Clinical Psychologist. This year the Suffolk Parent Carer Network were delivering a conference in February around children and young peoples' emotional wellbeing and mental health.</p> <p>While deciding on a different theme for our conference this year, based on parent feedback, we did want to include some information around emotional wellbeing. We invited Suffolk Mind to have a</p>
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Summary of Feedback about our 2019 Conference: Building Skills for Life

	<p>stall as they can offer a range of courses, training and therapeutic services to help young people better understand mental wellbeing and how they can help improve or maintain their own. This can include courses on anxiety management, anger management, ecotherapy and counselling and a supportive online community.</p> <p>We also invited the Parenting Team to offer a Raising Resilient Teens workshop because this includes strategies for helping build emotional resilience.</p> <p>We do recognise that the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people continues to be a significant concern for many families who contact our service and we will consider including more information or presentations about this in next year's conference.</p>
<p>ASD, sensory training and theraplay training and diagnostic pathways.</p>	<p>We are not health practitioners ourselves, but we are always happy to explore inviting practitioners who are experts in their field to deliver workshops and presentations at our annual conference</p> <p>At last year's conference the Sensory Processing and Integration workshop delivered by specialist Occupational Therapists was particularly popular.</p>
<p>School SEN support and info about the EHC (Education, Health and Care) process and EHCPs.</p>	<p>Among the workshops we can offer parents and carers is a 'SEN Support in Schools' session which explores the process of SEN support, how parents and pupils can be involved, including support for pupils with medical conditions and disabilities.</p> <p>We also offer an EHCP workshop which is aimed particularly at parents who are going through the EHC needs assessment process and are unsure what to expect next or who already have an EHC Plan for their child but have never felt very confident in how to use it. This session examines sections of the EHC Plan, the importance of specificity, who is responsible for what in the Plan and how to challenge.</p>

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	<p>When any SENDIASS workshop or course is booked, details of the session and how to register are posted on the calendar at the bottom of our News and Events webpage here:</p> <p>https://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk/news-and-events</p> <p>Details are also highlighted on our Facebook pages. Do look out for the next workshop in your area. We have offered one of our workshops as part of our conference in the past and may well do so again in the future.</p> <p>We also have a lot of information and videos on our website and SENDIASS YouTube channel around SEN support in schools and the EHC process which we hope you will find helpful:</p> <p>https://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk/information-and-advice/parents-and-carers</p>
<p>Challenging the education process.</p>	<p>If you are wanting advice and help in challenging aspects of your child's education, do contact us to talk this through.</p> <p>We are an impartial service, at arms-length from the LA, and will explore your options with you, beginning with any possibilities for informal resolution. We take a solution-focussed approach, encouraging positive partnership between services and families but if you would like support with an appeal, (for example regarding a Permanent Exclusion or an EHC appeal to the SEND Tribunal) we can help you with putting together your case and, if we are available, supporting you at a hearing.</p>
<p>More info on job opportunities/work experience, post 16 transition and getting young people to work – e.g. Disability Confident to do a chat about how it works.</p>	<p>Thank you very much for flagging up the Disability Confident scheme which supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to their work.</p> <p>Other parents may be interested in finding out more here:</p> <p>https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/</p>



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	<p>We hope that many of you had the chance to pick up the new Post 16 Transition guide which the LA has recently produced. If you didn't and are interested in finding out more, you can access an electronic copy of the guide here:</p>
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https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/suffolk/enterprise/files/send_16_transition_guide.pdf

Thank you again for taking part in the conference 😊