



The Early-Positive Approaches to Support (E-PAtS) Programme

What is E-PAtS?

The Early-Positive Approaches to Support (E-PAtS) programme provides support to families who have a child with a learning or developmental disability in the early years (0-5). This can be both an exciting and challenging period for families. All families need some support from time to time, and this is especially true when their child has additional needs. E-PAtS has been developed by Dr Nick Gore at Tizard Centre, University of Kent with support from a number of families and professionals in response to this. The programme allows carers to help one another and access the kind of high quality information and support they need, when they need it.

What is covered?

E-PAtS is about helping families and children to develop positively and maximise their quality of life. E-PAtS groups provide emotional support, information and resources to help you:

- Access services and supports for your child and family
- Look after your own wellbeing – to help you and your family
- Support your child's sleep, communication and skill development
- Reduce the development and risk of challenging behaviour

When and where?

E-PAtS programmes are provided to small groups of family carers over a 7 week period. Six of the sessions are 2.5 hours long and there is one double session which will be 5 hours long, and this will take place on a Saturday. The programme is delivered by a professional and family carer facilitator team who have both been trained in the programme and are experienced in supporting children with learning disabilities and their families.

E-PAtS is delivered free of charge to family carers. The programme will run from the Vinery Centre in East Leeds. The programme will begin on Thursday 25th April 2019 and will be for 7 weeks. Full details of dates and times are given below:

Programme 2 dates:

Session 1 Thursday 25th April 2019 10am – 12.30pm

Session 2 Thursday 2nd May 2019 10am – 12.30pm



Session 3 Thursday 9th May 2019 10am – 12.30pm
Session 4 Thursday 16th May 2019 10am – 12.30pm
Session 5 Thursday 23rd May 2019 10am – 12.30pm
Session 6 Saturday 8th June 2019 10am – 3pm
Session 7 Thursday 20th June 2019 10am – 12.30pm

Support for travel and child care to allow for carers to attend can be provided wherever needed. All carers who attend the programme will be invited to take part in an anonymous evaluation to help us find more out about how best to provide support in the future (more information will be provided about this).

Is the programme right for me?

E-PAtS is designed for (adult) family carers who have a child aged 0-5 who has a learning disability. In the early years children may have received a diagnosis relating to this or maybe awaiting a formal diagnosis, both of which are fine. Children of families who attend E-PAtS may be described as having or likely to have one or more of the following areas of need:

- A learning disability
- A global developmental delay
- An Autism Spectrum Condition
- A particular syndrome where learning disability is common

E-PAtS asks that family carers can attend all 7 sessions. This is the case even if you or your child are not experiencing a difficulty in one of the topic areas. If this is the case, we have found that it is helpful to give support that can reduce the chance of future difficulties. For the current programme families also need to be living in the Leeds area.

It is also very important to feel that this kind of programme is right for you at the current time. It is often very helpful to discuss the programme, what it involves and your current situation and needs with those who are hosting it before deciding whether or not to take part. Esme Winston Little will be happy to hear from you to do this (esme.winston@leedsmencap.org.uk or phone 0113 2351331).

What should I do next?

If you think that E-PAtS sounds helpful for you and your family and/or have any questions (big or small) you would like to discuss further please contact Esme Winston Little esme.winston@leedsmencap.org.uk or phone 0113 2351331. Please also feel free to fill out the 'expressions of interest' form with your details if this would be helpful and we will contact you as soon as possible.