



SOUTH WEST CANN COMMUNICATION
October 2026

INTRODUCTION	2
SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS AND CONTACT DETAILS:	2
SOUTH WEST CANN MEETING DATES	2
CHAIR COMMENTS	2
NEW MEMBERS	4
My Max Card	4
EVENTS AND INFORMATION - REGIONAL	5
The Family Support Fayre!	5
Event Spotlight: Ignite Bristol Winter Inclusive Multi-Sport Festival 2026!	7
Join a Walk & Talk This Summer and Autumn	9

INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome to the latest South West CANN Update.

South West Children's Additional Needs Network shares information and helps to increase the reach of your services for children and young people in the region.

Regarding updates and information, if you have material or information that you would like forwarded to the members of the Network, or any updates, please ensure that you email it to Miriam on **southwest@cann-network.org**, before the end of the month.

Thanks to everyone who shared the information below for our latest update, which contains information and sessions for children and young people with additional needs and their parent carers.

You can find these Communications on the SWCANN Website at:
<https://www.cann-network.org/blog/>

SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS AND CONTACT DETAILS:

Admin:	southwest@cann-network.org
Chairs:	chair.southwest@cann-network.org
Bluesky:	https://bsky.app/profile/cannsouthwest.bsky.social
LinkedIn:	https://www.linkedin.com/company/south-west-cann
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/southwestcann

SOUTH WEST CANN MEETING DATES

Please let us know if you need any support accessing the meetings

Future dates:
TBC

CHAIR COMMENTS

As we move into October, our focus across the network naturally turns to two significant milestones in the calendar: World Mental Health Day (10th October) and Black History Month. While both offer vital moments for reflection in their own right, bringing them together prompts us to look deeper at the lived realities of the families we support, particularly around the theme of intersectionality.

Caring for a child or young person with additional needs is a profound, often exhausting journey. The mental health toll on parent carers is well-documented, from chronic stress and isolation to the relentless fight to secure basic statutory provisions. Yet, an individual's caring journey never exists in a vacuum. It intersects with identity, race, heritage, and socioeconomic background—factors that heavily influence how easily a family can access help.

During Black History Month, it is essential that we address the additional structural barriers faced by carers and families from the Global Majority (a term purposefully used to move away from outdated acronyms like BAME, representing the fact that people of colour make up over 80% of the world's population).

Within the additional needs and disability landscape, families from the Global Majority frequently navigate systemic obstacles that compound the pressures of caring:

- **Cultural Competence Gaps:** Mainstream support, clinical assessments, and diagnostic pathways are too often designed through a monocultural lens, failing to account for diverse family structures or cultural communication styles.
- **Under-Representation & Advocacy Burnout:** When parents already feel unheard within clinical or educational systems, having to repeatedly explain or defend their background adds an unsustainable emotional burden.
- **Barriers to Early Intervention:** Persistent disparities mean families from minoritised backgrounds often face delayed diagnoses, lower uptake of available funding and respite, and fewer culturally appropriate mental health resources.

True inclusion requires more than passive open-door policies; it demands intentional, proactive allyship. Supporting the mental health of our parent carers means recognising that one-size-fits-all services inevitably leave families behind.

Across our regional CANN networks, our shared commitment is to keep listening, learning, and challenging these barriers. We encourage all member organisations, partners, and practitioners to take this month not just to celebrate diversity, but to evaluate our pathways, examine whose voices might be missing from our rooms, and ensure our support reaches every corner of our communities.

As always, thank you for your ongoing dedication, collaboration, and collective drive to create an equitable system where every child and carer is valued and supported.

Best wishes

Sarah Okoro and Chereka Carty

NEW MEMBERS

My Max Card



MAX Card is the UK's leading discount card scheme supporting families of children and young people with SEND, looked-after and fostered children, and young Carers.

Cardholders can access free or discounted admission and exclusive offers at participating attractions and venues across the UK, including family attractions, zoos, museums, leisure activities, soft play, bowling and many more.

MAX Card is designed to make days out more affordable and accessible, giving children, young people and their families more opportunities to enjoy experiences together and create positive memories.

The card is issued to the eligible child or young person and can be used at participating venues when they are present. Offers vary between venues, so members can search the MAX Card website to discover participating attractions and check the latest offer before visiting.

MAX Card benefits include:

- *Access to discounts and offers at participating venues across the UK
- *Savings on family days out and activities
- *Offers from both local and national attractions
- *An easy-to-use online venue search
- *Access to additional partner offers and benefits

MAX Cards are available through participating local authorities, charities and other approved distributor organisations.

<https://mymaxcard.co.uk/>

If you know of any groups that may be interested, please get them in touch!

If you are not yet on the CANN website, you can be added by completing this form:

<https://www.cann-network.org/member-registration-form/>

Please only use contact details that are for public use

EVENTS AND INFORMATION - REGIONAL

The Family Support Fayre!

We are delighted to share this fantastic, FREE SEND event coming up next month, hosted by our friends at North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together (NSPCWT)!

The Family Support Fayre is designed to connect, inform, and support parent carers, families, and professionals across the region.



When: Wednesday 21st October 2026



Where: Weston-super-Mare across 3 linked locations: The Royal Hotel, Winter Gardens, and Sovereign Centre



Cost: FREE

What to Expect:

- 70+ Exhibitors: Covering health, education, local authority updates, and community support services.
- Free Expert-Led SEND Training: Practical sessions covering Autism, sensory processing, masking, eating difficulties, and understanding medically complex needs.
- 5 Keynote Speakers: Sharing vital lived experiences and professional perspectives.
- Welcoming, Accessible Spaces: A chance to chat, discover hidden resources, and meet other families supporting children and young people aged 0–25.

Scan the QR code on the flyer or head over to the North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together page (@nspcwt) to find out more and plan your visit!

Please help us spread the word by tagging a local parent, carer, or SEND professional who would find this helpful.

The Family Support Fayre



Discover, Learn & Connect at Our FREE SEND Event


**Resources and
Information for
families supporting
children 0 - 25 years
with additional needs
and/or disabilities**


**21st
October
2026**


One Event
3 supportive spaces
Connect • Learn • Explore
• The Royal Hotel
• Winter Gardens
• Sovereign Centre



FREE expert-led SEND training
Including Autism, sensory, masking &
eating difficulties sessions



5 Inspiring Keynote speakers
Sharing professional and lived
experience perspectives



**Local SEND Updates &
support information**



**Understanding medically
complex needs**



Over 70+ Exhibitors
Ranging across Health, Educational
and Support services



**A Welcoming space for
families, carers &
professionals**



@nspcwt

Together we make a difference 



Event Spotlight: Ignite Bristol Winter Inclusive Multi-Sport Festival 2026!

Looking for fun, accessible ways for your family to get active this autumn? We're thrilled to share this fantastic, FREE event organised by Ignite Bristol!

The Winter Inclusive Multi-Sport Festival is open to d/Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodivergent people of all ages and their families to come along and try out a wide range of local inclusive sports and physical activities in a welcoming, supportive space.

Event Details:

- 📅 Date: Sunday 22nd November 2026
- 🕒 Time: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
- 📍 Location: 224 Youth Zone, Hartcliffe Way, Bristol, BS4 1GQ
- 🎟 Cost: FREE (Registration essential)
- 🙌 Accessibility: BSL interpreters available upon request during sign-up

Whether you're keen to discover a new passion or just want an active, friendly afternoon out together as a family, it's a brilliant opportunity to see what Bristol has to offer!

A full list of sports and specific accessibility provisions will be announced soon.

👉 Register your free place here:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/0KKt3aALQu>

(Or scan the QR code on the flyer!)

Please tag a family or share with your networks across Bristol and the South West to help spread the word! 💜



Winter Inclusive Multi-sport Festival 2026

A great opportunity for d/Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent people and their families to try local inclusive sports and activities – Full list of sports/ accessibility options to be announce soon

Sign up is now open!



Sunday 22nd November
2026, 1 – 4 pm



224 Youth Zone,
Hartcliffe Way, BS4 1GQ



Please let us know if you
require a BSL interpreter at the event



Register your FREE place using this link or QR code:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/0KKt3aALQu>



Join a Walk & Talk This Summer and Autumn

Walk & Talk for carers looking after someone with Parkinson's

In partnership with [Parkinson's UK](#)

Hanham

Mondays, 14, 21 and 28 September, 5, 12 and 19 October

11.00 am to 12.30 pm

Young Adult Carers Walk and Talk Group (18-25 years)

Being a young adult carer can sometimes feel isolating, but you're not alone.

Looking for a break from your caring role? Our new Walk and Talk group is designed just for young adult carers (18–25), with a new approach! It's a chance to meet others who understand, enjoy some fresh air, and take time for yourself in a relaxed, supportive setting. Whether you're up for a chat or just want a change of scenery, you're warmly welcome.

<https://www.carersbsg.org.uk/our-support-services/walk-and-talk>
