

Empower Us Project

Our Empower Us Project aims to support families of children, aged 2-11 years old, who have complex needs and/or disabilities (families living in Wirral, Ellesmere Port & Neston). We understand the emotional rollercoaster of parenting, as well as the practical implications of having a child with additional needs. Empower Us offers a safe space to share our experiences and knowledge whilst learning from each other. We offer a wide range of support services including;

- **Empower Us Playgroup**
For children under 5 years old. This group is specifically designed with your child in mind. Through sensory stimulation, play, singing and signing we offer a welcoming and safe environment for you and your child to enjoy, whilst meeting other parents and children in similar situations. Snack and hot drinks will be provided. (There is no charge for this group, however booking is essential due to covid restrictions).
- **Empower Us Afterschool**
Suitable for children with complex needs and/or their siblings, aged 5 - 11 years old. This group focuses on expressing emotions and recognising feelings. Discussing mental health openly is something we are passionate about and this afterschool initiative hopes to relieve some of the stress our children may be feeling. Snack and hot drinks will be provided. (There is no charge for this group, however booking is essential due to covid restrictions).
- **In home support**
From May 2021 we are once again able to offer in-home support, whereby a complex needs coordinator can come out to your home and offer; a listening and non-judgemental ear, practical suggestions and tips on how to play and interact with your child, sensory stimulation, company and fun activities – all from the comfort of your own home.
- **Walk and Talk sessions**
Many parents/carers of children with complex needs feel isolated and can dread outings – we hope to support you to turn this around. Our coordinators have both personal and professional experience of supporting children with additional needs and recognise the impact this can have on seemingly simple tasks such as; popping to the corner shop or walking around the park. We offer Walk & Talk sessions in a variety of local parks/attractions and hope that this will allow you to reintegrate yourself into your local community with confidence.
- **Access to resources/information events**
Our complex needs team have a wide variety of resources which could benefit your child's communication/social understanding and make family life more manageable. We offer visual timetables, Makaton signing packs, speech and language programmes, fun-filled activity packs and much more – all delivered to your door. We also host parent information evenings covering topics such as; Making sense of the senses, Reducing Meltdowns, Food for Thought (which will run virtually/face to face in small groups) Dates to be confirmed.
- **One to one support**
From the comfort of our purposely designed hub, we can offer support and tips on how to engage positively with your child. We understand that parents of children with complex needs may need to do things slightly differently to the rest of the crowd. Our coordinators can share tips and techniques on how to progress your child's development, whilst allowing you the opportunity to discuss your concerns/feelings.
- **Stay & Splash** (Seasonal sessions run through spring/summer school holidays)
We recognise the importance of keeping our children entertained during the school holidays. As lots of our children LOVE water – we are very excited to introduce Stay & Splash sessions! Hosted from our garden, children will be entertained with water pistols, paddling pools and games. Allowing children to paddle and play with peers and parents to catch up with each other (Spaces are limited and booking is essential).

- **Emotional/Practical Support**

Our friendly team are always on hand to talk through any worries or concerns. We understand how isolating parenting can be – having an understanding adult to talk to can turn your day around. We offer emotional support face to face or over the telephone, whatever works for you and your family – we are here.

We hope that in joining our Empower Us outreach project you will make connections with likeminded individuals, many of whom have experienced similar circumstances. Between us we have so much knowledge – lets share it and empower families!

If you, or anyone you know, is interested in finding out more about our Empower Us Project you can contact our Complex Needs Co-ordinator, Elley Kirkham, on 0151 6088288 or email admin@koalanw.co.uk