

Emotional Support for PEGIS Parents Navigating the EHCP System



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Welcome

The EHCP process can be overwhelming, emotional, and exhausting, especially when you're fighting for your child's needs and facing tribunal.

This guide is here to support you.

You may feel unheard, anxious, angry or completely drained. That's normal—and you are not alone. This isn't just paperwork; it's your child's future. And that carries weight.

**Take a breath.
This space is for you.**

The EHCP process isn't meant to be personal, but when it's your child; it can feel deeply personal.

It's normal to feel a mix of emotions; anger, frustration, sadness, or overwhelm, especially when decisions are being made by people who don't know your child like you do.

Professionals are trying their best within a complex system that isn't always flexible or easy to navigate.

They may not always get it right—and that's okay to voice your concerns. If you feel decisions aren't fair or don't meet your child's needs, you have the right to challenge them, including going to tribunal.



Your feelings are valid & show how much you care.

Reflection Prompt



When emotions run high it's okay to pause and breathe.



What concerns do I want to raise, and how can I share them clearly and calmly?

What support can I ask for to help me feel confident and heard?

Advocacy Without Burnout

This plan helps you set emotional boundaries, spot burnout early, and give yourself permission to rest.

1. My Weekly Advocacy Limit

(Set a realistic cap so advocacy doesn't take over every corner of your life.)

Example: *No more than 2 hours of paperwork or emails per day.*

My limit:....

2. My 3 Non-Negotiable Self-Care Actions This Week

(These are small things that help you feel human—not just a parent, not just a fighter.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Advocacy Without Burnout

3. My Early Warning Signs of Burnout

(What shows up in your body, mood, or thoughts when you're nearing your limit?)

4. What I'll Do If I Notice Those Signs

(Who or what helps you reset? What can you *give yourself permission* to pause or drop?)



Remember: You don't have to burn yourself out to prove how much you care.

Rest is part of advocacy, too.



Your Hidden Strengths

When you're in the middle of something hard, it's easy to focus on what you think you're doing *wrong*.

But often, those same things are signs of your strength, your love, and your determination.

Let's look at it differently

What You Might Think	What It Might Really Mean
<i>I cry in meetings.</i>	<i>You care deeply. These emotions show how much this matters.</i>
<i>I keep chasing for answers.</i>	<i>You're persistent and determined to get what your child needs.</i>
<i>I'm exhausted.</i>	<i>You've held so much for so long —and you still show up.</i>
<i>I get angry.</i>	<i>You're passionate. You protect what's important.</i>
<i>I feel lost sometimes.</i>	<i>You're navigating something complex without giving up.</i>

Building Positive Relationships

Working with professionals can sometimes feel frustrating or distant. But building a respectful, clear relationship can make a big difference.

Here are some tips to help:

- Be clear and calm: Write down your main points before meetings to stay focused.
- Ask questions: It's okay to ask for clarification if something isn't clear.
- Keep records: Save emails and notes from meetings for reference.
- Acknowledge effort: When someone listens or helps, thank them—it encourages collaboration.
- Take breaks: If emotions run high, it's okay to pause and revisit conversations later.
- Remember common goals: Everyone wants what's best for your child, even if it doesn't always feel that way.



A Message to Professionals



As a parent who has been through the EHCP process, I know firsthand how challenging it can be.

Even those used to paperwork can feel pushed to their limits—and many parents face additional barriers like limited access to technology or unfamiliarity with systems.

I urge professionals to understand these struggles along with the mental and emotional toll associated with the EHCP process, (all while raising SEN children!)

If parents seem off or difficult at times, please remember they're often stressed, worried, and overwhelmed.

Practical Tips

This guide is created with the intention of the emotional experience of the EHCP process; for practical tips, read my blog:

12 Things I Wish I Knew Before Applying for an EHCP.

scan the QR code or head to my blog section on my website

12 Things I Wish I Knew – Before Applying for an EHCP

As a parent of a child with **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**, I understand just how challenging the process of applying for an **Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)** can be.

It's long, frustrating, and emotionally exhausting, and like many SEN parents, I found myself constantly having to **fight** for the support my child needed.

But despite all the hurdles, it was a fight worth having. Now, my son is in



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What Might NOT Help	Why
Doing It All Alone	Exhaustion and isolation can make things worse.
Bottling Up Emotions	Unexpressed feelings build up and cause burnout.
Reacting in the Heat of the Moment	Emotional reactions can harm professional relationships.
Ignoring Self-Care	Stress lowers your energy and focus.
Expecting Immediate Results	The process often takes time and patience.
Comparing Yourself to Others	Everyone’s situation is unique.

What To Try Instead

Reach out to friends, family, or support groups.

Share feelings through journaling, counseling, or trusted peers.

Pause, draft your response, then revisit later.

Take small self-care breaks—breathing, walks, or quiet moments.

Celebrate small wins and steady progress.

Focus on what works best for your family.

What Might
Not Help;

What To Try
Instead

Finding The Words When Emotions Are High



1. Asking for Clarity

"Thank you for the update. Could you clarify [insert topic]? I want to make sure I understand fully before moving forward."

2. Voicing a Concern

"I'm feeling unsure about [issue]. I'd appreciate a follow-up discussion to understand this better."

3. Requesting a Change

"After reviewing the plan, I'd like to request a change to [section], as I believe it would better reflect my child's needs." Refer back to previous reports.

4. Following Up

"Just following up on [issue]. I know things are busy—I appreciate your time and look forward to hearing back."

5. Preparing for Tribunal/Mediation

"As we prepare for the next stage, could you send over any relevant documents or summaries? I want to make sure everything is in order."

Helpful Tip

If you feel emotional while writing, try drafting your email in a note first. Take a break, then reread it with fresh eyes before sending.

You Don't Have to Do This Alone



There are many parents who have walked this path before you. One of the most valuable things you can do is **ask for advice**.

Whether you're stuck on a form, unsure about a deadline, or just need to know you're not alone—other parents can offer insights, empathy, and reassurance.

The PEGiS Facebook group is filled with SEN parents who've been where you are. Many are generous with their time and advice because they *remember how hard it was*.

Asking for help isn't a weakness—it's a strength.

You're not starting from scratch. You're joining a community of parents who understand how hard this can be.



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Emotional Support

I wish I had emotional support during this difficult journey. That's why I'm offering 4 free counselling sessions to PEGIS parents navigating the EHCP system.



Counselling can help you:

- Safely process difficult feelings like stress, anxiety, and frustration
- Prevent emotional overwhelm from affecting your interactions with professionals
- Build confidence to advocate effectively for your child
- Develop healthy coping strategies for ongoing challenges
- Feel truly heard and supported
- Reduce emotional burnout and improve well-being



Please book via my website for a free telephone consultation before booking any sessions.

www.relightcounselling.co.uk