



# Autism

## A Pack for Parents and Carers

Neuro Developmental Conditions Pathway

*Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)*

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## What is this pack and who is it for?

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This pack has been designed for parents and carers of children and young people with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. We hope that it will help you to:

- Have a better understand autism and some of the common difficulties associated with it.
- Learn about strategies that can be used to support children and young people with autism.
- Find out about additional resources available to you and your child.

We hope that you will find this pack helpful. We have tried to provide you with the foundations for understanding autism and the basic strategies that you can try to implement at home. There are many more that might be helpful; however, we suggest that you begin with the foundation strategies outlined in this pack.

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## Acknowledgements

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This pack was adapted from a pack that had been developed by Oxon CAMHS Learning Disability Team, and the South Oxon CAMHS Team, Oxford Health Foundation Trust. Parents also contributed to the development of this pack through allowing us to share their experiences and providing helpful feedback.

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## Contents

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|  |   |
|--|---|
| Overview.....  | 2 |
| Main features of autism.....   | 3 |
| Additional difficulties experienced by children and young people with autism ..... | 6 |
| Strategies and support .....   | 9 |

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## Overview

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### Background

Autism is a lifelong condition that affects how a person communicates and interacts with other people. People with autism also experience a need for sameness or familiarity that leads to them having, for example, unusually strong interests and/or rigid behaviour. Autism is also referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). Autism has had various different names in the past (e.g. Asperger's, classic autism).



Everyone's experience of autism is different. The 'Amazing Things Happen' video by Alexander Amelines (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JdCY-cdgkl>) provides an interesting and useful explanation of autism. This can be accessed via You Tube and can be found in several different languages. There are also additional episodes which look at diversity, communication, perception, behaviour and strengths.

Autism is not an illness or disease. However, people with autism experience a variety of difficulties that can have a significant impact on what they are able to do and their quality of life. There are lots of approaches and strategies that can help young people with autism and their families manage the difficulties associated with autism. Ensuring that a child with autism has the right support in educational settings and that their social, emotional, and behavioural needs are well understood across settings is essential.

### How many people have autism?

It is estimated that approximately one in 100 children in the UK have autism (Baird, 2006, Brugha et al 2009).



### Genetics



Genetic factors play a key role in autism. We know that if an individual's parent or sibling has autism then it is more likely that the individual will have autism.

### Conditions associated with autism

Children with autism are more likely than children without autism to have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Learning Disability, specific learning difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia, Dyscalculia), Dyspraxia, Tourette's and tic disorder, depression, anxiety disorders, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and eating disorders.

A number of physical health conditions are also associated with autism: epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, infantile spasms, neurofibromatosis, and rare genetic conditions such as fragile X syndrome, tuberous sclerosis and rett syndrome.

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## Main features of autism

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The severity of autistic difficulties varies enormously between individuals. This is why autism is referred to as a 'spectrum' disorder or condition. However, everyone with autism experiences significant difficulties with (a) social communication and social interaction and (b) restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. Many people with autism will also have problems with 'executive functioning' – they have significant difficulties with planning, organizing, and regulating their behaviour. Strong sensory preferences and/or sensitivities are also very commonly seen in children with autism.

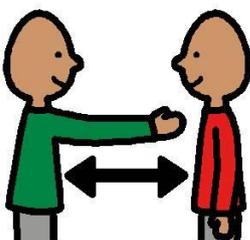
### *Social communication and interaction*

People with autism often:

1. Have great difficulties communicating what they need or want because of their difficulties with verbal and non-verbal communication.
2. Struggle to do 'chit-chat' or to have reciprocal (2-way) conversations (they may not know how to start or keep a conversation going and/or focus on things that interest them/they know about).
3. Find it hard to understand other people's non-verbal communication (facial expressions, gestures) and tone of voice.
4. Have a very literal understanding of language and find metaphors and idioms confusing.
5. Don't know and/or understand the unwritten social rules around what is ok and what is not ok to say (and may, therefore, make insensitive or insulting comments) and how to behave in social situations (and may, therefore, for example, stand too close to another person).



Keep your eye  
on the ball!



"You haven't been invited to my party  
because nobody likes you"

6. Struggle to understand and interpret other people's thoughts, feelings and actions.
7. Have difficulties predicting what will happen next in social situations.
8. Develop complex rules and systems to manage social interactions.

““when someone is talking I look at their face, blink twice then look away. When it is time to leave I do 'hand, eye, door'. Put out my hand to shake, look at their eye, move to the door.”



**Helpful  
Tips**

**Rather than asking how your child is feeling, try asking what they have been doing (e.g. what did you do this morning?) You might then be able to help them work out how they are feeling!**

### ***Restricted and repetitive behaviours, interests, and activities***

People with autism often experience the world as unpredictable and confusing. As a result, they often seek certainty and predictability by focusing on things that interest them/that they know about and/or creating and sticking to routines or set 'ways' of doing things.

“I really like to do my morning jobs...if I don't do them it feels like a bee in my tummy”



**Helpful  
Tips**

**Many people with autism benefit from having a visual planner to help provide them with predictability, which can reduce their experience of anxiety. Preparing them for changes in advance can also help.**

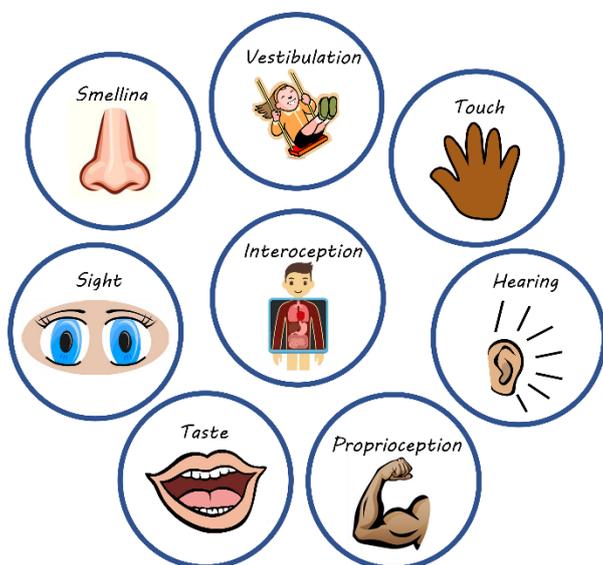
People with autism might have an intense interest in certain activities, objects or people. These can change over time or they can remain the same over many years. The young person might enjoy talking about their special interest but might not be aware that others don't share their interest!



### Helpful Tips

Think about how special interests can be used to learn about other things; for example, an interest in planes could be used to help a child learn about geography and physics!

### Sensory preference and sensitivities



Many people with autism are under-sensitive (hypo-sensitive) or over-sensitive (hyper-sensitive) to sensory input. Sensory input includes tastes, smells, sounds, visual input, bodily movements (proprioception), balance and spatial orientation (vestibulation), and internal physical body states such as feeling hungry or knowing when to use the toilet (interoception).

"I don't like people touching me"

If someone is over-sensitive to sensory information they might feel it very intensely. For example, a background noise that most of us can block out can be experienced as something very intrusive, distressing or even painful to the young person. If they are under-sensitive to sensory information they might have a high pain threshold or not be able to feel extreme temperatures or hunger.

### Helpful Tips

Be a sensory detective! Think about what your child's sensory preferences and sensitivities are; what can help to calm them, what distresses them?

## Executive functioning

People with autism often struggle to:



- Manage time
- Manage attention
- Plan and organise
- Hold key information in their mind
- Avoid saying or doing the wrong things
- Do (or not do) things based on past experience
- Differentiate fiction from fact
- Struggle to manage emotions

### Helpful Tips

Rather than giving a whole list of instructions, break them down into one instruction at a time.

## Additional difficulties experienced by children and young people with autism

### Emotional difficulties



People with autism often have significant difficulties identifying their own feelings/emotions and/or understanding why they are feeling a particular way. Managing strong feelings/emotions is also very often a significant challenge for people with autism. Anxiety is a particularly common difficulty for people with autism. People with autism typically experience much more day-to-day anxiety, and are more likely to have an anxiety disorder, than people without autism. When anxiety becomes overwhelming for someone with autism they may fight (e.g. showing verbal or physical aggression), flight (e.g. running away, avoiding), or freeze (e.g. shutting down, blending into the background, not making a fuss). The young person might also engage in repetitive behaviours or retreat into familiar routines to help them manage their anxiety.

### Helpful Tips

You can help to reduce your child's anxiety by trying to provide a structure and routine so that more aspects of their life are predictable!

## Sleep difficulties

Many people with autism will experience difficulties with sleep at some point; they may struggle to get to sleep or to stay asleep or wake early. Increased anxiety, sensory sensitivities, unhelpful routines or a lack of daytime routines and structure can all impact on sleep.



Establishing a healthy sleep routine can really help improve sleep. This can include creating a visual bedtime routine with your child, reducing (or stopping) stimulating activities and increasing relaxing activities at least one hour before bedtime; making the bedroom as comfortable as possible and explaining to your child why sleep is so important. There is evidence that the blue light from screens on phones, tablets and computer screens disrupts the onset of sleep. Stopping exposure to these devices two hours prior to sleep can also be helpful. Helping young people to relax their bodies such as doing deep body relaxation before they go to bed may also help prepare them for sleep.

### Helpful Tips

**Doing quiet fine motor activities (e.g. colouring) can help to produce melatonin which is the hormone that induces sleep!**

## Eating difficulties

Some autistic children will have problems associated with eating which can include;

- Issues with taste, texture and smell of foods
- Not liking the 'look' of certain foods
- Wanting their food separate to not touch other foods
- Overeating; not realising when they are full
- Under eating or having a restrictive palette
- Difficulty trying new things



Having a balanced diet is important and needed for our bodies and organs to function properly, but also it can promote sleep and improve overall wellbeing. There's no need to be too concerned if your child is eating foods from each of the main food groups and if they are growing well. Palates can also change as children grow so don't give up on offering them new foods to try. If you are concerned about your child and their eating habits visit your GP.

### Helpful Tips

**Be creative! For example, cut foods into shapes related to a special interest, disguise vegetables by blending them and mixing into meals.**

## Challenging behaviour

Children and young people with autism are much more likely than children without autism to show challenging behaviour (behaviour that puts them or others at risk and negatively impacts on their quality of life). There are always triggers (although these are sometimes hidden) for challenging behaviour and it is always 'functional' (this means that it achieves something for the person). There are five main reasons why people with autism show challenging behaviour:



**S**ensory

**P**ain

**A**ccess to tangibles/ support

**C**ommunicate needs

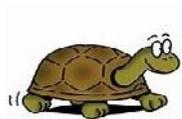
**E**scape/Avoidance



The triggers for challenging behaviour relate to the function of the challenging behaviour. For example, if the trigger for a particular challenging behaviour is being in a noisy and crowded place then the function (or purpose) of the challenging behaviour will be to help the person escape from that situation. Triggers can be internal (thoughts or feelings that the person experiences) or external (things that other people do or that happen in the environment). Triggers can occur immediately before the behaviour ('fast triggers') or in the hours, days or weeks before the behaviour ('slow triggers'). Examples of slow and fast triggers include:

### Slow triggers

- Hunger
- Lack of sleep
- Ongoing pain
- Upsetting event
- Puberty
- Side effects of medication
- Thinking about something



### Fast triggers

- Change in routine
- Stopping favoured activity
- Acute pain
- Asked to do something too difficult
- Environment too noisy or too bright
- Being given the 'wrong' cup
- Something being done in the 'wrong' order



Sometimes it can be hard to work out what has triggered a behaviour because there may be a delay in them processing information. A bit of detective work is required!

Taking your young person for regular check-ups at the doctors and dentists can help rule out any health difficulties that could be causing pain. It is also useful to ensure that they receive regular eyesight checks and ensure that they have had a hearing screen.



### Helpful Tips

Try to remember that challenging behaviour is a form of communication and serves a function (**SPACE**). Making sense of a behaviour is the key to dealing with challenging behaviour, understanding autism can help you to make sense of your child's behaviour.

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## Strategies and support

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### *What support can Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) offer you?*

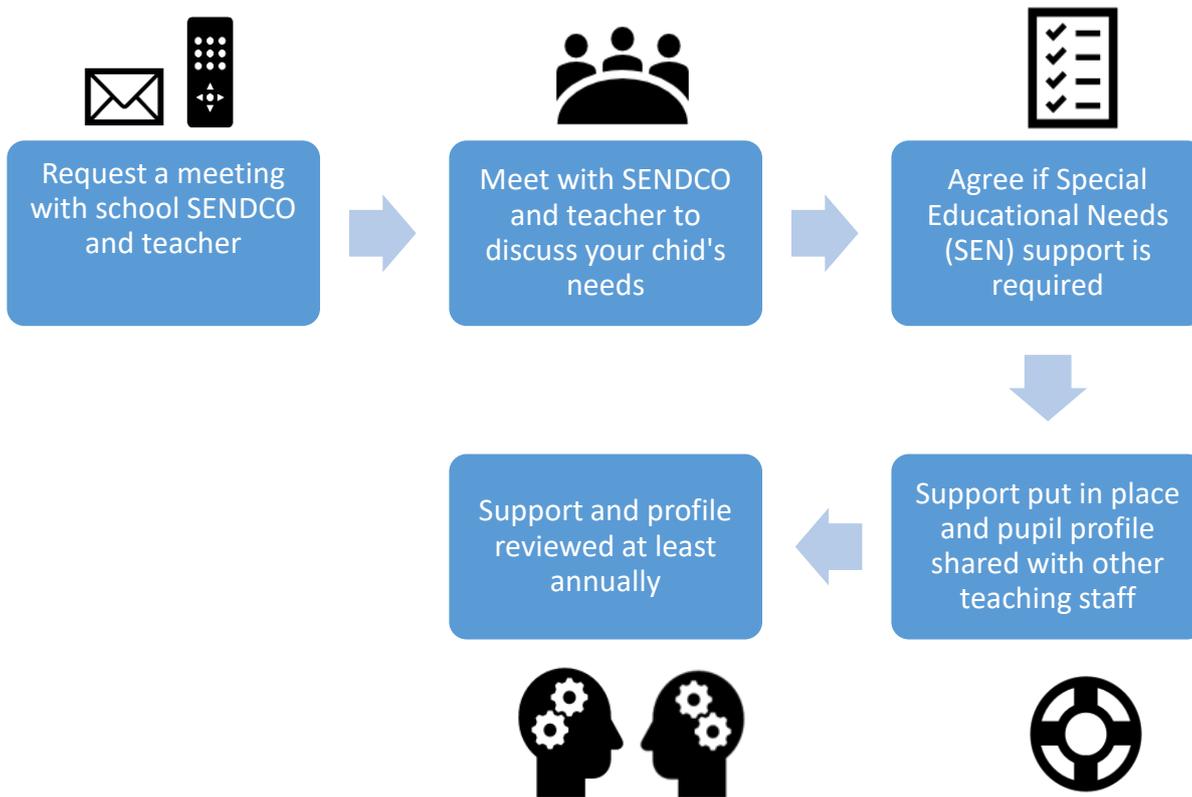
Following a diagnosis, all parents are asked to attend the CAMHS post diagnostic group which is run in partnership with Autism Family Support. The 'All Things Autism' course consists of six weekly sessions, with each session being two and a half hours long. This course is the initial treatment we offer and attending this will really help you to develop a better understanding of your child's needs in relation to their autism.

There are also several different services that CAMHS can offer should your child need further mental health support. More information can be found on our website <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/oxon/>. We operate a self-re-referral process for young people and parents or carers, and therefore, you can do this a number of ways;

- call the CAMHS Single Point of Access on 01865 902515 or
- email [OxonCAMHSSPA@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:OxonCAMHSSPA@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk).
- make an online referral <https://secureforms.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/>
- request your child's GP does this for you.

### *Education*

Getting the right support in education is important and your child may be entitled to extra help in school. Please be reassured that most teachers have experience of teaching children with autism and will be aware of how to give support.



Your child’s school may also wish to seek advice and support from their named Specialist Advisory Teacher from the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENS) Communication and Interaction Team. More information about this service can be found at <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/services-support-children-learning> and contact details are listed in the support and resources section below.

If your child’s needs are complex then you can request a formal Education and Health Care Plan assessment to explore what provision is necessary to meet their needs. More information about these can be found at <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/education-health-and-care-plan-assessment>.

The National Autistic Society offer an Education Advice Line that can advise you on your child’s education rights and entitlements and on what you can do if your child isn’t getting the support that they need. Call: 0808 800 4102 or email [educartionrights@nas.org.uk](mailto:educartionrights@nas.org.uk)

## Strategies that can help with anxiety and challenging behaviour

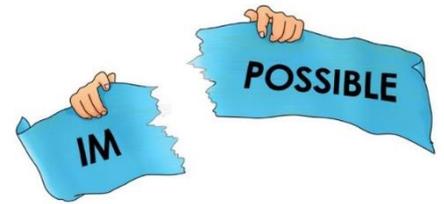
Children and young people with autism can be helped by others making changes to the social and physical environment around them and through others supporting them to learn new ways of coping. Making even small changes might initially increase your child's level of anxiety so you might see an increase in challenging behaviour. We would recommend only introducing one change at a time and sticking to it because the initial level of anxiety should reduce. You can also try the following strategies:

1. Try to provide structure and routine for your child (e.g. by introducing a visual timetable). This should make day-to-day life more predictable for them and reduce anxiety.
2. Prepare your child for changes and transitions. Some children need a lot of advanced warning about (major or minor) changes and transitions, others benefit more when they are told about changes or transitions only a short time in advance. You will need to work out what suits your child best.
3. Provide 'bridging activities' (activities that distract or motivate the young person before during and immediately after a transition) at times of transition (e.g. on the journey to or from school).
4. Make sure that your child has regular breaks or 'down time' built into their day. They might need time on their own or to spend time engaging in a special interest in order to recharge their batteries and reduce anxiety.
5. Support the young person to understand instructions or rules by providing pictures or photographs (e.g. on a mobile phone or iPad). Examples might include using:



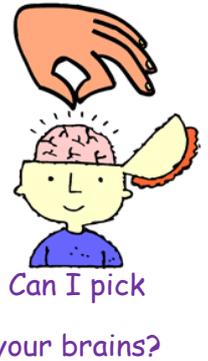
- An egg timer or a sand timer to help the young person wait – remember some young people will prefer one that ticks whilst others will not be able to tolerate the noise.
- Now and next cards (e.g. a picture of the current activity and a picture of the next activity). If the young person struggles when plans are changed last minute, try to help them anticipate a possible alternative activity or a plan b, e.g. in advance tell them if it's raining we will go to a café instead of the park.
- Visual timetable or calendar.

6. Talk about positives rather than focusing on negatives or when things have gone wrong. For example, tell them what to DO rather than what NOT to do; for example, rather than saying 'don't stand so close to me', try 'can you show me good personal space? Well done!'. This way they learn something.



7. Use short simple sentences, repeat if needed and allow time for them to process what you have said.

- Avoid using sayings, metaphors and idioms (e.g. I'll take your word for it) or abbreviations (e.g. OMG); say what you mean!
- Be specific! Avoid saying 'maybe' 'soon' 'later'.
- Repeat sentences the same way, because half the sentence might be processed each time, if you change everything it's like starting a new sentence.
- Check the young person has understood what you have said; "did that make sense?".



8. Break steps down – ask them to do one thing at a time (when they are more able / comfortable with a task then the number of steps could be increased).

9. Take account of the moment. Consider mood, background noise, levels of understanding, social and task demands. Stress, tiredness and anxiety all affect processing and ability to cope.

10. Try not to give the young person too many options and instead use a limited choice, i.e. would you like an apple or a pear (ideally ensuring they like either/or both options). This helps to give them some choice and a sense of control but reduces the demand and is less overwhelming.



11. If your child struggles with special occasions and holidays, use your child's interests to mark the occasion. You can also try to:

- Buy gifts that are related to the young person's interest
- Go on days out that are linked to the young person's special interests (e.g. JCB Land or the train station)
- Go to familiar places
- Limit the number of places that you visit in a single holiday
- try to replicate some home structure, e.g. take your own duvet cover, same foods that you have home.

There are many online resources that provide visual tools that you can download for free and some autism websites listed in the next section also offer advice on strategies.



## Helpful Tips

The Falkirk Council Children with Disabilities Team have a selection of useful free downloadable practical approaches at home for parents and carers. You can access these on their website <http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/social-care/disabilities/young-people-with-disability.aspx>

### **Benefits**

You may be entitled to claim some benefits for you or your child; some of which are available regardless of your income or employments status. These include;

- Disability Living Allowance/ Personal Independence Payments (PIP for over 16)
- Carer's Allowance
- Extra Child Tax Credit
- Income Support or Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit or Council Tax reductions

You can find out more about which benefits you may be entitled to by looking on the gov.uk website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>. Alternately you can visit your local advice centre (e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau) who will also be able to help with filling in claim forms.

### **Other support and resources**

#### 1. Local support organisations

##### **Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO)**

Autism Family Support (AFSO) offers information, advice and support to families of children and young people on the autism spectrum in Oxfordshire. They organise weekly youth groups and school holiday activities for young people with autism, training for parents, young people and professionals as well as monthly free coffee and advice sessions with visiting speakers across the County. [www.afso.org.uk](http://www.afso.org.uk) or 018 4433 8696



##### **Autism Oxford**

An active group run by experts by experience (parents) and volunteers who organise conferences and training events for families and professionals. Speakers include local young people with autism and leading world experts in the field. They also manage the Oxfordshire Autism Alert Card, a credit card sized card that can be used when the young person finds themselves in a situation where they need help or need to give an explanation. [www.autismoxford.org.uk](http://www.autismoxford.org.uk) or 01844 353 292



## Oxfordshire Autistic Society for Information and Support (OASIS)

Oxford based parent led charity, which offers information and support to parents and carers of children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder. They organise holiday Play Days for children and their families in Oxfordshire. [www.oasionline.org.uk](http://www.oasionline.org.uk) or 079 0014 4493



## Parents talking Asperger's

A Christian faith-based support group for families with children or young people with Asperger's in West and North Oxfordshire. <http://www.parents-talking-aspergers.co.uk> or 01295 269455



## Thomley Hall Activity Centre

Specialist play equipment, loan library, sensory room, arts & crafts, games, ball pit, outdoor activities, bikes, swings. [www.thomleyhall.org](http://www.thomleyhall.org) 01844 338380



## The Parasol Project

Their work with children and young people is split into services for children aged 5 to 12 years and services for young people aged 13 to 19 years. They provide inclusive, fun and engaging activities for disabled and non-disabled young people.

<http://www.parasolproject.org/>



## Early Help Team - The Family Solutions Service

One joined up service for supporting children aged 0-19 (up to their 25th birthday if children have special educational needs with an Education Health and Care Plan in place) and their families. The Early Help Team work closely with partner agencies to provide a range of services including open access and programmes related to parenting, school readiness and access to education, employment and training (EET). They also provide targeted case work, as well as specialist EET and substance misuse case work, via Aquarius. This service can be accessed via the Locality and Community Support Service; North Tel: 0345 2412703: Central Tel: 0345 2412705: South Tel: 0345 2412608



<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/integrated-childrens-services>

## Oxfordshire Family Information Service

Managed by Oxfordshire County Council this directory lists a range of information and resources.

<https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/disabilities.page?disabilitieschannel=0>



## Oxfordshire County Council Local Offer

The local offer for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) brings together information about education, health and care services for children and young people from 0 to 25 with SEND.

<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer>



## Special Educational Needs Support Services (SENSS) - Communication and Interaction Support Service

SENSS is a countywide Special Educational Needs (SEN) teaching and advisory support service. The Communication and Interaction Service is part of the Oxfordshire SEN (Special Educational Needs) support services. Their specialist advisory teachers can offer tailored support to schools in working with a child with autism.



<https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=zqM-8kFrHo4>

01865 323070 - SENSS Central | 01865 323070- SENSS South | 01865 816970 - SENSS North  
Email: [CommunicationandInteractionTeam@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:CommunicationandInteractionTeam@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## SENDIASS

Offers impartial information, advice and support to parents of children and young people with SEN and disabilities. [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sendiasm](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sendiasm)

01865 810516 or text 07786 524294 or [sendiasm@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendiasm@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



## Children's Integrated Therapy Services – Oxford Health

Children's Integrated Therapies in Oxfordshire include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and speech & language therapy. Their website contains lots of helpful resources. Referrals for targeted work are made by school or a health professional such as your GP or School Nurse.

[https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service\\_description/oxfordshire-childrens-therapy/](https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service_description/oxfordshire-childrens-therapy/)



## 2. National support organisations

### National Autistic Society (NAS)

Leading UK charity for autism. Their website is full of really helpful reliable information and advice. They also have a helpline that runs Mon-Fri 10am-4pm. Find out information about family days out, benefits, autism friendly cinema screenings in Oxfordshire. <http://www.autism.org.uk> 0845 070 4004



## Ambitious about Autism

A national charity for children and young people with autism. They provide services, raise awareness and understanding, and campaign for change. They also have a range of practical information, advice and resources including other people's experiences and stories on their website.

[www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk) 020 8815 5444



## Autism Speaks

Autism Speaks is an American organisation but their website contains some useful information and advice. You will need to register and sign in to download their free resources.

[www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)



## The Autism Directory

A directory for local autism groups across the UK.

[www.theautismdirectory.com](http://www.theautismdirectory.com)



## Cerebra

National charity supporting children up to 16 years with brain conditions including autism. Offering advice and guidance including around sleep issues as well as a library where you can borrow books, e-books and sensory toys. <http://www.cerebra.org.uk/> [info@cerebra.org.uk](mailto:info@cerebra.org.uk) 0800 328 1159.



## Autism Education Trust (AET)

The AET is a not for profit programme led by two national autism charities; The National Autistic Society and Ambitious about autism. It promotes and supports partnerships throughout the education system to improve educational access, experience and outcomes for children and young people with autism. Their site contains lots of useful resources, a 'Kids' area and The Den' aimed at children and young people with autism. [www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk) or 0207 903 3650



## Educating Autism

This website contains lots of free autism friendly educational resources and teaching materials.

[www.educationautism.org](http://www.educationautism.org) [hello@educateautism.com](mailto:hello@educateautism.com)



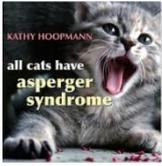
Helpful  
Tips

There are lots of other organisations out there that can offer support, advice and resources. Those listed in this pack can also signpost you to more so it is worth visiting their websites!

## Further reading

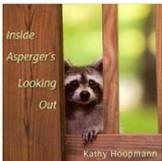
We do not endorse any book however here are some suggestions that you might find helpful.

### Overview of autism



All Cats have Asperger's By Kathy Hoopman (2012)

This book explores autism using photos of cats and their characteristics, it focuses upon individuality and the potential for people with autism. A very useful book to share with young people as well as family and friends.



Inside Asperger's Looking Out by Kathy Hoopman (2012)

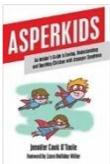
This book, through the use of animals focuses upon how Autistic individuals experience the world and celebrates the unique characteristics and difference that autism brings. A very useful book to share with young people as well as family and friends.

### Parenting children with autism



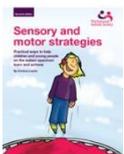
Parenting a child with Asperger syndrome – 200 tips and strategies by Brenda Boyd (2003)

This book offers practical parenting advice and strategies.



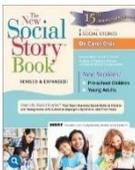
Asperkids – An Insider's Guide to Loving, Understanding and Teaching children with Asperger's syndrome by Jennifer O'Toole (2012). This book offers practical parenting advice and strategies.

### Sensory and motor difficulties

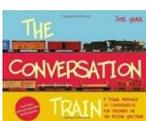


Sensory and Motor Strategies: Practical ways to help child and young people with autism learn and achieve by Corinna Laurie (2014). In the second edition of the best-selling Sensory strategies, Corinna Laurie, a specialist occupational therapist, looks at: our senses, and how they can affect behaviour; strategies to reduce the impact of sensory and motor issues and improve outcomes for children.

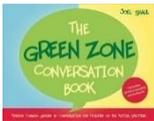
### Communication, social skills, and relationships



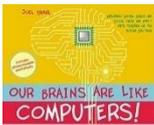
The New Social Story Book by Carol Gray (2010). Social Stories provide real social understanding and this book offers over 150 of the most requested Social Stories, and also teaches you how to write Social Stories yourself.



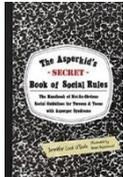
The Conversation Train by Joel Shaul (2014). A visual approach to conversation for children with ASD aged approximately 5-13. The book contains engaging photocopiable worksheets and colouring pages to help promote skill generalisation.



The Green Zone Conversation Book by Joel Shaul (2014). This book provides a simple visual model to help children experience more success in finding common ground in conversation.



Our Brains are Like Computers by Joel Shaul (2016) Exploring social skills and social cause and effect with children on the autism spectrum



The Asperkid's Book of Social Rules by Jennifer Cook O'Toole (2012). A handbook of the not so obvious social guidelines for teens and pre-teens with autism. This book gives respectful, funny insights, full of illustrations, logic and even a practice session or six (in comic strip style).



Making sense of sex by Sarah Atwood (2008). A forthright guide to Puberty, Sex and Relationships for people with autism. This book gives clear, complete and unambiguous information about puberty

## Emotional and behavioural difficulties



Overcoming Your Child's Fears and Worries by Cathy Creswell & Lucy Willetts (2007).

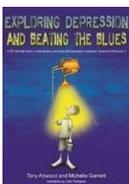
Based on techniques developed and practised by the authors, this book teaches parents how to use cognitive behavioural techniques with their children and in so doing, become their child's therapist, helping them to overcome any fears, worries and phobias.



All Birds have Anxiety by Kathy Hoopman (2017). Using photographs of birds, this book helps young people to explore what it means to live with an anxiety disorder and how to begin to make changes.



The Panicosaurus – managing anxiety in children including those with autism by K.I. Al-Ghani (2012). This illustrated book helps younger children explore anxiety and think about ideas that might help them manage their anxiety.



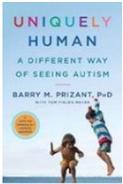
Exploring depression and beating the blues Tony Attwood and Michelle Garnett (2016). A self help guide to understanding and coping with depression in autism using a cognitive behavioural approach.



The Red Beast: Controlling Anger in Children with Asperger's Syndrome by K.I. Al-Ghani (2008). This fully illustrated children's storybook is written for children aged 5+, and is an accessible, fun way to talk about anger, with useful tips about how to 'tame the red beast' and guidance for parents on how anger affects children with Asperger's Syndrome.

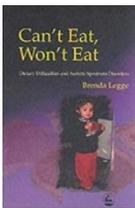


Behavioural Concerns and Autistic Spectrum Disorder by John Clements and Eva Zarkowska (2000). Explanations and Strategies for Change is a practical and comprehensive account of how people who attract autism labels can come to behave in ways that give rise to serious concerns in other people and, sometimes, themselves.

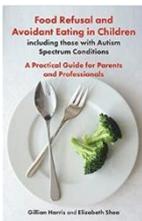


Uniquely Human; A different way of seeing autism. By Dr Barry M Prizant (2015). Taking a strength based approach this book looks at enhancing abilities, building on strengths, and how to offer supports that will naturally lead to more desirable behaviour and a better quality of life.

## Eating difficulties

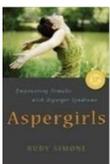


Can't Eat, Won't Eat: Dietary Difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorders by Brenda Legge (2002). Drawing on the authors own experience, and parents, children, and professionals with first-hand knowledge of dietary difficulties, and their advice and comments form a key part of the book.



Food Refusal and Avoidant Eating in Children, including those with Autism Spectrum Conditions: A Practical Guide for Parents and Professionals by Gillian Harris and Elizabeth Shea (2018)  
This book enables the reader to understand food refusal and avoidant eating and work with it, gradually increasing the range of food a child can eat. It includes 'box outs' with case studies, points of interest and action points to make this an accessible and resourceful read.

## Girls with autism



Aspergirls by Rudy Simons (2010). A book to empower girls and women with autism to lead happy and fulfilled lives.

Helpful  
Tips

Your local library will have books on autism or they can order them from another library which are free to borrow!