



# Signposting Information for Autistic adults living in Plymouth

This booklet is for adults who are waiting or have received a diagnosis of an Autism from Plymouth's healthcare system. We have produced this for you because we know it can be difficult to find out what information and support is on offer and how best to find it. There is a great deal of information in here but we have designed it in sections so that you can refer to the section you need when you need it.

This advice and guidance has been created from information provided by Devon Adult Autism and ADHD Service (DANA) and reviewed by people who are on the autistic spectrum. We have tried to bring together the most important and up to date advice; however, as this is a developing area, we are always pleased to receive new information along with your suggestions for improving this pack.

If you would like to pass on any comments or suggestions, please contact:

[Jointcommissioning@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:Jointcommissioning@plymouth.gov.uk)

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## Useful Contacts

### **The Autism Services Directory (run by National Autistic Society)**

This is a directory of services and support for autistic people spectrum disorder, their families, and people who work with them.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/directory.aspx>

### **Urgent help collated by the National Autistic**

The website link below contains a list of helpful numbers for you in you need urgent help.

Website: <https://www.autism.org.uk/contact-us/urgent-help>

### **The Autism Directory**

The Autism Directory is an online directory website that aims to pull together the help and support that is out there and signpost autism families to the help they need. The Autism Directory is easy to use and can be re-visited to get information, support, and help.

Telephone: 01443 844764

E-mail: [hello@theautismdirectory.com](mailto:hello@theautismdirectory.com)

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

### **National Autistic Society (NAS), South West regional team**

If you are living with autism as an adult or as a family, the NAS teams provide specialist help, information, and care across England. Their local services include their residential homes, one-to-one support, support in your home, daytime hubs, and support in further and higher education.

The South West regional team is based at Kingsley House set in spacious, well-established grounds on the outskirts of Bideford in North Devon. Offering residential and day services, they provide a wide range of leisure and learning opportunities for autistic adults in a specialist-learning environment.

The National Autistic Society

Church House

Church Road, Filton

Bristol BS34 7BD

Tel: 0117 974 400

Email: [swregionalteam@nas.org.uk](mailto:swregionalteam@nas.org.uk)

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers confidential advice, support, and information on health-related matters. It provides a point of contact for patients, their families and carers. It can help you with health-related questions and help resolve concerns or problems when you are using the NHS. The PALS can also provide

information about the NHS, including the complaints procedure should you wish to make a complaint.

Contact: Derriford Hospital; tel 01752 439884

**Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)**

If someone feels that their autism affects their ability to drive, they are required to notify the DVLA. Further information is available on this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/asd-and-driving>

## What is Autism?

*“Autism influences how people experience and interact with the world. It is a lifelong neurodivergence and disability. Autistic people are different from each other, but for a diagnosis they must share differences from non-autistic people in how they think, feel and communicate. Being autistic means you may feel things and react to them differently to non-autistic people. You may find socialising confusing or tiring, and you may become overwhelmed in loud or busy places. You may have intense interests, prefer order and routine, and use repeated movements or actions to calm yourself or express joy. You might mask your discomfort to fit in, which can lead to mental illness..”*

**(National Autistic Society)**



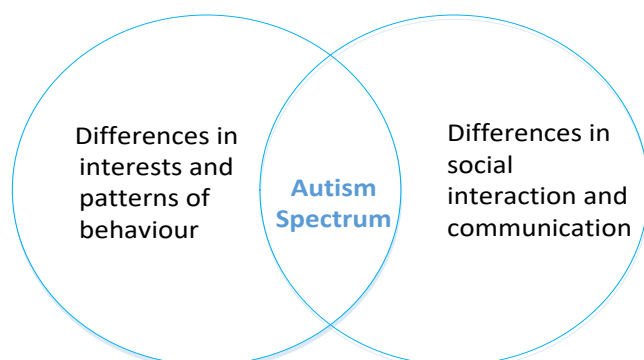
Throughout this booklet, we will use the term **Autism** to refer collectively to all the different autism diagnoses, such as Childhood Autism and Asperger Syndrome. We will talk later about the differences between these diagnoses, but first of all we will look at what they have in common.

### **What do Autistic adults have in common?**

Autistic adults show differences in two main areas:

- Social interaction and communication
- Patterns of behaviour, interests, and activities

The diagram below illustrates this:



You may also have heard of the term ‘triad of impairment’ to describe the differences that people with autism have. This is referring to the same set of differences.

Later we will talk more about what these differences are.

## **What causes Autism?**

Autism is a **neurodevelopmental** condition: this means that they are the result of differences in the way the brain develops and processes information.

Researchers are still trying to understand what causes Autism. However, we know that:

- People first show the differences associated with Autism in childhood.
- We expect these differences to stay with the person throughout their life (although they may find ways of adapting or adjusting to them)
- There seem to be hereditary links, i.e, the characteristics of Autism can run in families
- Some people can show characteristics associated with Autism but not meet the full criteria for a diagnosis.
- Autism are not caused by 'bad' parenting
- Autistic adults are more likely to have (or show symptoms of) other neurodevelopmental conditions, such as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyspraxia, and Dyslexia.

## **How common is Autism?**

- Research now suggests that about 1.1% of the population have an AUTISM; that means approximately 700,000 people in the UK have an AUTISM
- Over the years, we have become better at recognising when people have an AUTISM; however, there are many other reasons why people may not be diagnosed until later in their life.
- Autism are more common in men: the ratio is considered four men to every one woman. However, it is thought that women with Autism may be under-diagnosed.

## **Why do we call it the Autism spectrum?**

We describe it as a spectrum because Autistic people are all affected differently by the symptoms of autism.

Like any other person, all Autistic people are different!



## **Main characteristics of Autistic adults**

These are examples of some of the differences that people with autism may show.

### **Social communication and interaction**

Autistic people can find it difficult to communicate effectively with other people. For example, they may:

- Find it difficult to understand gestures, facial expressions, or tone of voice
- Find it difficult to know how to start, maintain and end conversations
- Find it difficult to grasp the underlying meaning of certain conversations and to understand jokes, metaphors, and sarcasm
- Have unusual eye contact, e.g., avoidant, or overly intense
- Have an unusual style of speech
- Find it difficult to have a mutual sharing of ideas and feelings

Autistic people often find it difficult to understand how to behave and interact with other people. They may have particular difficulties in terms of:

- Understanding unwritten 'social rules' or non-verbal cues. For example, how close to stand to other people, or what is an appropriate conversation topic
- Appearing aloof and uninterested in other people
- Finding it difficult to make and keep friends
- Autistic people often find social situations difficult. There are so many social rules that people without autism learn instinctively; however, autistic people often have to work at learning these rules, which can be confusing and can cause anxiety.

### **Some communication difficulties that autistic people could experience may include:**

#### **Taking things literally:**

People do not always mean exactly what they say; often people use shortcuts or learnt phrases. For example, someone saying, "I'll be back in five minutes" does not always mean he/she will be exactly five minutes.

#### **Giving too much information:**

Often people ask general questions in conversation but don't often expect a long and detailed answer. You may learn to notice signs that people are getting bored of a conversation; for example, if they keep yawning, stop looking at you, or stop asking you questions.

#### **Missing social cues:**

People do not always like to say directly what they mean if they think it will be

impolite. Instead, they say things or use their body language or actions to imply something. These cues can be learnt, but are not always easy to work out.

### **Body language:**

This can vary across situation, but it can often be intimidating for people to stand too close and talk loudly to other people. It can make them feel afraid.

### **Changing social rules:**

The way a person should act or behave often depends on the situation and person they are speaking to. Much of our social interactions with others are based on unspoken or unwritten social “rules” For example, it would be appropriate to say 'Hiya' or “alright” to a friend but not to someone you were meeting in a formal setting. When meeting a new client at work, the social rule would be to say “hello”

### **Ways to tackle some of these difficulties:**

- If you know the person, you may find it helpful to tell them about your communication style
- Asking people to be specific when giving you instructions
- If you are not sure what someone means, try to ask him or her
- Try to consider the perspective of the person who you are communicating with
- Develop your social skills by attending social groups, using internet resources and chat rooms or volunteering with local charities.

### **Patterns of interest, behaviour, and activities**

Autistic people may have:

- Difficulties understanding and interpreting other people’s thoughts, feelings, or actions
- Difficulties imagining alternative outcomes to situations, or predicting what will happen next
- Difficulties in generalising things that they have learnt across different situations
- A fondness of routines and doing things in particular ways
- Strong or unusual interests that can be very important to that person
- Differences in how they react to sensory information, e.g., being over or under-sensitive to things like noises, touch, or texture.

### **Strengths**

Autistic people often experience difficulties in their lives as mentioned above; however, these differences can also result in having many **strengths**. For example:

- Loyalty and dependability in relationships with other people
- Honesty

- An ability to do certain things in very precise careful ways
- An enthusiasm for unique interests and topics, which can make them extremely knowledgeable
- An ability to notice details that other people may miss
- High sensitivity to certain things

## **Autism and associated conditions that can affect physical functioning**

Autism is often diagnosed alongside other conditions. It is important to support people with more than one condition in a way that meets all their needs, while understanding that the needs arising from autism are distinct.

Please see the link that describes the other commonly co-occurring conditions associated with autism:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/other-conditions/>

The National Autistic Society describes how to manage self-care and other physical tasks in this link:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/physical-health/keeping-healthy>

Research and good practice have highlighted the benefits of specific types of exercise to improve physical functioning for autistic people:

<https://community.autism.org.uk/f/health-and-wellbeing/37051/benefits-of-exercise-for-neurodivergent-individuals>

There are different approaches and therapeutic interventions that can help autistic people who may have physical impacts from autism or other related condition. Sensory assessments and motor interventions can be used to support autistic people. Motor interventions refer to any treatments and therapies which aim to improve motor functioning, i.e., control, coordination and movement of the whole body or parts of the body.

Please see the link for more information:

<http://www.researchautism.net/autism-interventions/types/motor-sensory-interventions>

## **Resources and support**

### **Passport to individual autism support**

The NAS provides a free printable autism passport that can help people to better understand your personal social and communication needs.

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/social-health/adult-care-and-wellbeing/disability-support/autism/passport-to-individual-autism-support-the-national-autistic-society.pdf>

### **Autism Alert Card**

A free card you can get if you are diagnosed with autism. You can carry it round to show if you get stressed or into communication difficulties.

It contains some advice for people about how best they may be able to help - e.g., by giving you extra time to process information, and a calm quiet place if you are distressed or suffering sensory overload. Approved by the Devon Police.

You apply for one at:

<https://www.dimensionsforautism.life/autism-card>

### **Other resources**

There are plenty of websites where you can also find some help and support on social communication. The NHA has some help and tips on its website, which you can find here: <https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/resources/understanding-and-supporting-the-social-interaction-of-autistic-children-and-young-people/>

## **Types of Autism**

Over the years, a number of different diagnoses (or labels) have been used to describe autistic people. Here are some of them:

- Autistic Disorder
- Childhood Autism
- Asperger Syndrome
- High-Functioning Autism
- Atypical Autism
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder (not otherwise specified)

A new diagnostic system (DSM 5) uses the term **Autism** to replace all the terms above, and this is increasingly being used by clinicians.

## **Sensory Differences**

Some people on the autism spectrum experience differences in how they process information from the world around them. Different people may be under or over sensitive to different sensory experiences.

Sensory differences are increasingly being recognised as a characteristic of the autistic spectrum and is now included in the diagnostic criteria for Autism in the DSM-V

Some people describe experiencing intense sensory experiences in terms of **sounds, lights, smells, touches or tastes**. However, they may also experience differences in terms of other senses, such as pain perception, temperature perception and balance. To date, we do not really know why sensory issues occur in association with autism, but we do know that they tend to be lifelong issues. There are some ways to adjust your lifestyle to minimize experiences of sensory sensitivities.

## **Build self-awareness**

- Being aware of your sensitivities can make it easier to modify your environment as needed
- Ask people close to you to be more understanding
- At work, discuss the possibilities of adjusting your environment with human resources or your boss.

## **Avoiding or tolerating aversive sensory experiences**

- Recognize that some events / places are just too much and give yourself permission to limit the time you spend there or avoid them
- Take a break from sensory irritants and recharge your coping abilities

## Reducing the intensity of the experience

- Carry earplugs to use in the event of loud noise
- Use sunglasses or a baseball cap in bright areas or try changing, dimming, obstructing, or turning off the light

Look on the National Autistic Society website for further information and advice  
<http://www.autism.org.uk/sensory>

## Assessment and Diagnosis Services

Your local authority provides children's services, education, adult social care, housing support, cultural and leisure services (e.g., libraries, sports development), a children's disability register, a parent partnership service, a Learning Disability Partnership Board, and a Portage early years' service.

### Plymouth City Council

[www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk)

Email: [enquiries@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@plymouth.gov.uk)

Tel: 01752 668000

### Devon County Council

[www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)

Email: [customer@devon.gov.uk](mailto:customer@devon.gov.uk)

Tel: 0845 1551015

## CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service) – NHS Only

CAMHS provides assessment and therapeutic intervention to children and young people and their families where there are specific needs regarding their emotional health and wellbeing.

### Plymouth

[www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk)

Email: [customerservicespch@nhs.net](mailto:customerservicespch@nhs.net)

Tel: 01752 435122

### Devon

[www.virgincare.co.uk](http://www.virgincare.co.uk)

Email: [vcl.devonspa@nhs.net](mailto:vcl.devonspa@nhs.net)

Tel: 0330 0245 321

There is a range of local support services for children and adults, which you can find on the Plymouth Online Directory by searching 'autism.' For example:

### Plymouth Adult Aspergers Branch:

Here is a link to the new NASPAAB new webeden website.

<http://www.nasplymouthadultaspergersbranch.webeden.co.uk/home/4594252535>

A Plymouth Autism Parent Support group started running last year. It uses a Facebook page now but is getting its own email address soon- details on the 'Support Groups' page.

Contact Ellie Scott or Tara Vassallo

E-mail: [NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk)

Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Autism>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalAutisticSociety>

### **Autism Hope and Future (Independent and Private)**

Sharon Horswell is a specialist Speech and Language Therapist who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of children and young people with autism and social communication disorders. She is experienced in contributing to multi-disciplinary assessments and is trained to use specialist assessments including the ADOS. Sharon can provide therapy tailored to the person's individual profile of needs and is trained and experienced in approaches such as Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), TEACCH, Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS), Intensive Interaction and Lego Therapy. Sharon is able to attend educational tribunals and has received training in providing court compliant written evidence.

Email: [autism.hope.future@gmail.com](mailto:autism.hope.future@gmail.com)

Tel: 07706 885960

[www.autismhopeandfuture.co.uk](http://www.autismhopeandfuture.co.uk)

### **Reach (Hannah's at Seale-Hayne) – NHS & Private**

Reach is a charity that is open to everyone and, with no waiting lists, offering a provision of assessment, diagnosis, intervention, consultancy, advice, and support for individuals of all ages with a range of disabilities and support needs.

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

Tel: 01626 325800

## **General Autism resources**

Below is a selection of sites and resources providing information about Autism, including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Asperger Syndrome, that we hope you will find helpful.

### **British Psychological Society (BPS)**

This is a link to the BPS autism e-learning modules, where you can complete a short online course about autism.

<http://www.bps.org.uk/news/raising-awareness-adult-autism>

### **Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for autistic adults in England**

This document, published by the Department of Health, outlines the autism strategy in England. 'Think Autism' sets out a clear programme that the Department of Health and other government departments will be taking to improve the lives of people with autism, primarily through taking actions that will support local authorities, the NHS, other public services, and their partners with their local implementation work.

It is available to download by:

1. Searching: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health>
2. Click on 'publications'.
3. Search '**Think Autism**': an update to the government adult autism strategy
4. Select either the normal or simplified version to view.

### **NHS choices**

This website contains information about diagnosis, symptoms, and treatment.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/getting-diagnosed/>

### **Autism Hangout**

Autism Hangout is YouTube page with short video tips from Tony Attwood on how best to deal with the daily challenges of autism.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/autismhangout>

### **Colourse7en**

A website about Autism that is run by an autistic person.

<https://www.calmerbynature.com/health/autism-facts.php>

### **The Autism Research Centre**

This is the website of the Cambridge University Autism Research Centre run by Professor Simon Baron-Cohen, a well-known researcher in the autism field.

The website contains links to numerous research articles about autism.

<http://www.autismresearchcentre.com/>



### **Temple Grandin**

A website run by Temple Grandin, a well-known autistic woman. A film about her life was also made starring Claire Danes.

<http://templegrandin.com/>

The link below will take you to one of Temple's articles (*Social Problems: Understanding emotions and developing talents*) in which she describes how she has grown to understand emotions and developed her talents to find her perfect job.

<http://www.autism-help.org/story-emotions-talents-autism.htm>

### **Autism Digest**

This website has regular blogs from Temple Grandin and other autistic people. It contains further information and articles on topics related to autism.

<http://autismdigest.com/>

### **Tony Attwood**

Run by the psychologist, Tony Attwood, this website contains a wide range of resources and information.

<http://www.tonyattwood.com.au/>

## **Charities**

*Below is a selection of sites and resources with information regarding local and nationwide autism charities that we hope you will find helpful.*

### **The National Autistic Society**

This is the website of the largest UK autism charity. It contains a huge amount of information about autism, including advice for those with a diagnosis, and details about available support.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/>

### **The National Autistic Society Plymouth Branch**

The National Autistic Society's Plymouth Branch provides support for parents and carers with children and adults on the autism spectrum. It offers a monthly daytime parent/carer support meeting with regular visiting speakers, as well as time and space for people to chat. You can also contact the Branch for information and advice.

<http://nasplymouth.org.uk/>

Contact Ellie Scott for times, dates, and more information.

Email: [NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk)

### **Routeways, Plymouth**

We are a Plymouth charity that supports children and individuals with autism and other disabilities. We run several projects including:

- Devonport Park Activity Centre provides activities including horticulture, outdoor education, creative play, and personal development
- Volunteer Opportunities for people aged 18 and over, on Wednesday and Thursday mornings
- Rooted Club for young people with a disability aged 8 – 16, offering opportunities to get involved in cooking, gardening, crafts, and other social activities. Siblings are very welcome every Monday 4pm - 6pm (term time only) and Saturdays 10am - 1pm (all year round)
- Short Breaks and Respite for Disabled Children & Young People. The Beckly Centre is a Routeways project where disabled children and young people can enjoy positive and inclusive fun social activities in a friendly, caring, and supportive environment at our accessible premises located in beautiful Radford Park, Plymstock.
- Regular weekend and evening activities run throughout the year with additional weekday activities during all school holidays offering opportunities to join in small groups with a wide range of play, social and practical activities.

We cater for a broad spectrum of additional or special requirements, disabilities, and conditions. Services provided can include personal care and one to one support for children and young people. The Beckly Centre is registered with OFSTED. We are able to accept young people aged from six and upwards.

Please contact us on the website below to find out more about costs or using Beckly as part of your Local Authority funded care package.

[www.routeways.org.uk](http://www.routeways.org.uk)

### **Resources for Autism**

Resources for Autism is a registered charity. We provide practical services for children and adults with an autistic and for those who love and care for them. We have a team of trained, enthusiastic, and kind staff and volunteers offering a wide range of support. All our staff are autism specialists who understand communication and sensory needs

<http://www.resourcesforautism.org.uk/>

### **Research in Autism**

This is the website for a UK charity exclusively dedicated to research into interventions in autism. <http://www.researchautism.net>

### **Space4Autism**

SPACE4AUTISM is a voluntary-run charity set up by parents in 2005. We support the whole family by holding monthly parent support meetings/workshops, and events, clubs for all ages and a whole lot more - see below for more details.

Register on the website to receive up to date information on everything going on at SPACE4AUTISM and beyond.

<http://space4autism.com/>

### **Youth Enquiry Service (YES) (The Zone)**

A service for young people living in Plymouth and surrounding areas. YES can provide free, safe and friendly information, support and counselling on:

- Education and training
- Health and Wellbeing
- Help in emergencies
- Housing
- Independent living
- Leaving care support
- Money, relationships
- Rights and benefits
- Sexual health
- Volunteering and work
- Any other issue important to you!

Tel: 01752 265775

Email: [enquiries@thezoneplymouth.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@thezoneplymouth.co.uk)

[www.thezoneplymouth.co.uk](http://www.thezoneplymouth.co.uk)

## **Benefits**

People with autism – and those who care for them – may be entitled to financial support and services from local authorities. However, it is important to note that benefits are awarded based on an assessment of need rather than by diagnosis. This means that having a diagnosis of an autism does not automatically entitle you to receiving benefits.

Some benefits are paid to meet basic living costs, some are paid for specific expenses such as rent, and other benefits are paid if you meet certain criteria such as being in full-time work. The benefits system can be confusing and daunting as there are dozens of different benefits and many have complex rules.

Below is a selection of sites and resources that provide information around benefits and financial support services that we hope you will find useful.

### **The National Autistic Society (NAS)**

The NAS website contains detailed information about the different types of support you could be entitled to and how you can apply for this. Please follow the link below. <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/benefits-and-money>

It also offers a benefits information pack through its Autism Helpline. You can request this pack by sending a text with your name, address and age to 07903 200 200 or call the Helpline on 0808 800 4104.

The NAS has also developed a 'Managing Money' website with free tools and resources to help autistic people learn how to:

- Budget
- Set up a bank account
- Pay bills
- Use a cash machine

The site also provides information on different issues including:

- Scams
- Going abroad
- Hoarding money
- Compulsive spending.

To access the NAS Managing Money site, please follow the link below.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/at-home/managing-money.aspx>

### **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)**

This website has a range of fact sheets on the benefits system. You can also use the website to find your local CAB office to arrange a telephone or face-to-face appointment. Your local CAB can provide further advice around benefits and help

you to complete benefit claim forms.

[http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/benefits\\_e.htm](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/benefits_e.htm)

### **Gov.uk**

This site provides information on what benefits are available and how to apply for them including facilities to download benefit application forms. There is also a 'Benefits Advisor' service where you can do an online assessment of your financial situation to see what benefits you may be entitled to claim.

<https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>

### **Welfare rights**

This website contains information about welfare support.

[www.welfarerights.net/home.php](http://www.welfarerights.net/home.php)

### **The Money Advice Service**

If you are struggling to manage your finances, it is important to seek help and advice early to avoid the problem getting worse. The Money Advice Service offers free, unbiased and independent advice on issues such as:

- Debt
- Bank accounts
- Budgeting
- Savings and planning
- How life events such as losing your job, having a baby or setting up home might affect your finances.

Tel: 0300 500 5000

<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/categories/benefits>

## **Information and Advice Services**

### **Plymouth Online Directory**

POD is an online list of services in Plymouth. If you type 'autism' into the keyword search field, you can find lots of services and groups to help in Plymouth. The web address is: <https://www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com>

There is a Facebook page for the POD Local Offer, and you can find family information:

<https://www.facebook.com/podplymouth/>

### **Improving Lives Plymouth (formerly DIAC)**

Improving Lives Plymouth provides a free, specialist disability advice, information, and support service. The service is for disabled people and carers as well as local statutory and voluntary organizations. Improving Lives Plymouth helps disabled people and carers with information about other service providers and supports them to access these services and receive the help needed to lead an independent life. It also works in partnership with a number of organisations to enable disabled people and carers to meet with them in their fully accessible centre.

The service is open Monday 10am to 1pm and Tuesday to Friday 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm.

Tel: 01752 201065

Email: [infoandadvice@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk](mailto:infoandadvice@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk)

[www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk](http://www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk)

### **Sensory Integration (SI) Network**

The SI Network is free to join and provides members with up-to-date information and breaking news about the developments in Sensory Integration theory, practice, and research.

[www.sensoryintegration.org.uk](http://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk)

Tel: 0118 324 1588

### **Plymouth Information Advice and Support for SEND (PIAS)**

Plymouth information, Advice and Support for SEND (PIAS) provides information, advice and support relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for parents, carers, children, and young people within the Plymouth Local Authority area. It can support with choosing schools, education, and training settings. Information provided is impartial and confidential.

**Contact:** Jan Cutting Healthy Living Centre, Scott Business Park, Beacon Park Road, Plymouth, Devon, PL2 2PQ

Opening hours: Monday - Thursday 9.00am - 5.00pm, Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm. Other times by arrangement

Email: [pias@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:pias@plymouth.gov.uk)

Tel: 01752 258933 / 0800 953 1131

### **The British Institute of Learning Disabilities – PBS Awareness Course**

This course forms part of the Department of Health's Positive and Safe Programme and is about the organisational culture needed to put the Positive and Proactive Care guidance into practice. It has been designed for staff and carers who support vulnerable people, and the purpose of the course is to raise awareness of the principles and practices embedded in PBS.

<http://www.bild.org.uk/capbs/pbs-awareness-course/>

### **MindEd – Autism & Related Problems**

MindEd is a free online e-learning resource for everyone with a duty of care for children and young people, whether this be through their work or outside it in a voluntary or charitable capacity. MindEd is developed and supported by a group of multi-disciplinary organisations, known as the consortium. Its members are the Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health; the Royal College of Psychiatrists; the Royal College of Nursing; the Royal College of General Practitioners; the British Psychological Society; the National Children's Bureau and Young Minds.

Autism and Related Problems

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/445688>

Complex Neurodevelopmental Problems

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/447103>

Behavioral Management in Special Education Needs -

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/511784>

Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder -

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/505731>

Supporting Autism Spectrum Disorder

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/505960>

Autistic Spectrum Matters

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/505735>

Mild to Severe Learning Disability

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/513655>

Hidden Disabilities Matter

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/511196>

Autism: Combining Therapies and Collaborative Treatment -

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/480831>

Neurodevelopmental Disorders (CT): Families and Professionals -

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/480825>

Autistic Spectrum Issues

<https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/447238>

### **FutureLearn – Understanding Autism**

FutureLearn offers a diverse selection of courses from leading universities and cultural institutions from around the world. This course aims to help learners understand more about autism, including diagnosis, the autistic spectrum and life with autism.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/autism>



## **Social Care**

Care and support is the term used to describe the help some adults need to live as well as possible with any illness or disability they have. It might also include emotional support at a time of difficulty. It can include:

- Help with independent living skills
- Help seeing friends
- Help caring for families
- Help with being part of the community

Autistic people (including those going through a diagnosis) are entitled to a social care assessment. This is an assessment of your care and support needs and can lead to further support or signposting. However, it is important to note that, while an individual is entitled to an assessment, this does not mean they will definitely be deemed eligible to receive care.

Following your diagnosis, you may wish to speak to Adult Social Care Services for advice and information, or to ask about having an assessment of your social care needs.

## **Communication Interaction Team – Social Communication and Autism Support**

We work with children and young people aged up 19 years with social communication needs including those with a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder.

Please see this link to more detailed information about what the team can offer.

<https://plymouthonlinedirectory.com/article/1307/Communication-Interaction-Team>

Email [AccessEarlyHelp@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:AccessEarlyHelp@plymouth.gov.uk)

- Phone 01752 668000

## **Advocacy**

Sometimes it can be hard for people to access support and information or ensure their wants and needs are being listened to. In these situations, some people may find it useful to use an advocate. An advocate is an independent individual, someone who is not involved in that person's care or in other services they receive. The aim of an advocate is to provide unbiased support and information and to:

- Ensure that a person's personal wishes and views are considered
- Defend and promote their rights
- Find information and access services

- Explore different options
- Help you tell people if you are unhappy with a service, you have received

Although an advocate can provide support and talk through options with you, they cannot make decisions, solve problems for you, or give their opinion. An advocate may, if an individual chooses and gives permission, support them at interviews and meetings, write letters on the individual's behalf and speak on behalf of the individual in situations where individuals feel unable to speak for themselves.

Local authorities in Plymouth and Devon may access an advocate if someone has difficulty being involved in care and support processes and has nobody appropriate to support them through that process. Having an advocate can be valuable for an individual in situations where they might struggle to make their views known and understood. Situations where someone might need an advocate include undergoing a needs assessment, preparing and reviewing care and support plans or if they are undergoing a safeguarding enquiry or review.

### **Plymouth Advocacy**

The Advocacy People are an independent charity that specialises in the provision of advocacy and related services.

They provide advocacy support through well-trained and highly motivated advocates who enable their clients to express themselves, ensuring that everyone who uses health and social care services can have their voice heard on issues that are important to them.

All our staff are committed to the central advocacy principles of independence, confidentiality, and empowerment.

In Plymouth, The Advocacy People delivers services in partnership with Plymouth Highbury Trust and RAD.

<https://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk/>

Tel: 0300 440 9000

**NASPAAB: National Autistic Society Plymouth Adult Autism Branch**

Email: [NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk)

## **Self-advocacy**

Self-advocacy is speaking up for yourself and making your own needs known. The National Autistic Society has created a booklet especially to help autistic adults do this. The aim is that by filling out relevant sections of this booklet an individual will be able to make their needs known.

The booklet includes sections on the different difficulties someone with an AUTISM might experience, and what could help with these difficulties, as well as sections relating to education, employment, financial, health and religious needs amongst other things. It also allows an individual to state their hopes and aspirations relating to different things.

For more information about self-advocacy and to access this booklet, please visit the NAS website:

<http://www.autism.org.uk/about/adult-life/advocacy.aspx>

## **Rights and Choices**

### **Should I disclose my diagnosis?**

Whether you disclose your autism diagnosis is entirely **your choice**. You are not legally obligated to disclose your diagnosis and whether you decide to might depend on the types of difficulties you may have (and how they may affect your work), as well as the type of job you do and your relationship with your employer.

Disclosing your diagnosis may allow you to discuss any difficulties with your employer and think about any reasonable and appropriate adjustments that could be made in order for you to achieve your potential. It may also help colleagues to understand and support you.

Furthermore, if you were to disclose your diagnosis you would also then be protected under the **Equality Act (2010)**. This means that you should not be treated unfairly on the grounds of your autism diagnosis, which is included as a disability under this act. Naturally, some employers will be more understanding and accommodating than others will, so it is good to weigh up your decision carefully.

### **Autism Act 2009**

The Autism Act 2009 was the first ever disability specific law in England. As a result of the Autism Act, the Government has to set out a strategy for supporting autistic adults as a whole, as well as produce guidance for local health bodies and councils.

### **The Autism Strategy**

This is a plan set out by the government to help autistic adults achieve the things they need, including finding employment. There have been two strategies set out to

date. The first was Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives (2010). The second strategy was Think Autism (2014), developed using feedback from individuals with Autism, their family and professionals on the first Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives strategy.

You can read more about the Autism Strategies on the National Autistic Society website here:

<http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategy/overview.aspx>.

## **Education**

There is a variety of higher education courses including:

- Adult learning courses
- Online courses
- Evening courses
- Workshops
- Part time

Some people attend courses for personal development just for the pleasure of learning; others enrol as a first step back into learning, for work or business purposes, to increase employability, or to gain skills that they can use in their local community. Below are some links that may be helpful if you are looking to learn new skills and develop your knowledge.

### **Learn Direct**

Learn Direct offers a wide range of courses including:

- [English](#)
- [Maths](#)
- [Computers and IT](#)
- [Job seeking and employability](#)
- [Life skills](#)

Learn Direct has several local centres across Devon, follow the link below to find the centre closest to you.

<http://learndirect.co.uk/>

Plymouth centre: <https://www.learndirect.com/help/centre/learndirect-plymouth/>

Tel: 0345 241 2533

### **Learn Devon**

Learn Devon provides adult and community learning courses on behalf of Devon County Council. With centres in Tavistock, Totnes, and Newton Abbot, it offers courses for leisure, apprenticeships, qualifications, and skills

<https://www.learndevon.co.uk/>

### **Exeter College**

Exeter College is committed to the success of our students offering a wide range of courses: full time, part time, apprenticeships and training for all ages

<http://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/>

### **Petroc College**

Petroc is Devon's leading college, providing a range of courses including apprenticeships, high education, part-time and adult evening classes

<https://www.petroc.ac.uk/>

## **The National Autistic Society**

The NAS website contains information about further and higher education for people on the autism spectrum.

1. Follow the link: <http://www.autism.org.uk>
2. Select **Living with Autism** tab
3. Click on **Education and Transition**
4. Select **Further and Higher Education**

**Autism Education Trust:** for help with primary and secondary education.

<http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk>

## **First Class Support**

First Class Support offers a bespoke specialist support service for disabled students at education institutes in the South West of England. First Class Support specialise in academic mentoring and one to one study skills support, as well as other non-medical help (NMH) including library assistance, note-taking, electronic notetaking, study assisting and many more. All support is designed around the needs of student and the specific academic and support programmes of the education institution. Our goal is simple; we want the students we support to feel comfortable, safe, and confident with their studies, as well as enjoying and making the most of their time in academia.

[www.firstclass-support.co.uk](http://www.firstclass-support.co.uk)

Email: [admin@firstclass-support.co.uk](mailto:admin@firstclass-support.co.uk)

Matthew Mitchell - Tel: 01752 358641

## **Plymouth Outreach Service**

Plymouth Outreach delivers a person centred engagement package to people with autism and Asperger's in the local area.

[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

Email: [sw.services@nas.org.uk](mailto:sw.services@nas.org.uk)

## **CEDA – Caters for ages 5+**

CEDA works with disabled adults and children in ways that make sense for them, always keeping the individual at the centre of the service. We listen, learn and act, to enable each person to be who he or she wants to be, as visible and valuable members of the community.

[www.cedaonline.org.uk](http://www.cedaonline.org.uk)

email: [info@cedaonline.org.uk](mailto:info@cedaonline.org.uk)

Tel: 01392 360645

## **ASD Bright Ideas**

ASD Bright Ideas produce a wide range of bright and colourful visual aids and resources

[www.asdbrightideas.co.uk](http://www.asdbrightideas.co.uk)

## **University**

### **National Autistic Society (NAS)**

The link below has some useful Autism specific information on choosing and applying to the right university for you. It provides insightful answers to frequently asked questions such as:

- What course should I take?
- How do I apply?
- What support can I expect?
- Do I have to disclose my disability?
- What help can I get with funding?
- Which university should I choose?
- What facilities will there be?

To find the answers to these questions and more, visit the link below.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/transitions/england/starting-college-or-university>

### **Autistic University Students**

Many universities now have dedicated websites for autistic people – the article below explains some of the support that has been put in place to help autistic students

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/mortarboard/2013/may/07/how-students-with-aspergers-cope>

### **Autism Center for Education Research University of Birmingham -**

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/centres-institutes/autism-centre-for-education-and-research>

## **Employment**

Competition for jobs is increasing, and finding and maintaining employment can be tough. Autistic adults might need some extra support to help them both secure a job and sustain employment.

Concerning employment in those with autism, strategies set out to move towards more personalised support in finding employment for those with disabilities, which is to include autism, and start ensuring Job Centre Plus advisors are aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments for autistic people where required.

## **Resources**

*Please find below a selection of resources designed to give you information on employment and related issues.*

### **National Autistic Society**

There is a wealth of information on all things work-related under the “Employment” section of the National Autistic Society’s website:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/employment>

This section of the site includes information on a number of different topics:

- Finding work
- Interacting with people at work
- Bullying
- Links to other information

The National Autistic Society also provides information and training courses. One course is for people with autism and focuses around communication, assertiveness, being organised and coping with anxiety. There is also a course for employers and colleagues on the needs of autistic people. If you think this might be helpful for the people you work with. More information about these can be found on the employment section of the website.

### **Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs)**

You can access DEAs through your local Jobcentre. Disability Employment Advisers can offer:

- An employment assessment to help you identify what type of work or training suits you best
- A referral, if needed, for a specialist employment assessment with a Work Psychologist to help you prepare to find and stay in work
- A job-matching and referral service - the DEA can let you know about jobs that match your experience and skills and provide advice about Access to Work, if required
- A referral, where appropriate, to the Work Programme to help you prepare for and stay in work
- A referral, where appropriate, to a programme for disabled people, like Work Choice or
- Residential Training
- Information on employers in your area who have adopted the ‘two ticks’ disability symbol

<https://www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled/looking-for-a-job>



**Pluss**

An organisation based in Plymouth that supports autistic people diagnosis to find work and a career.

The link below describes the supported employment service for autistic people.

<https://seetec.co.uk/programme/plymouth-neurodivergent-employment-service/>

Website address is [www.pluss.org.uk](http://www.pluss.org.uk) and the phone number is 0800 334 5525

**Step One** (formerly St Loyes Foundation)

Step One is a Devon-based charity aiming to help people with physical, mental health, sensory and other disabilities or with long-term health conditions improve their quality of life and degree of independence. It also provides support around employment. Step One has been created through a merger of St Loyes Foundation

(Exeter) and The Community Care Trust (Torbay) [www.steponecharity.co.uk](http://www.steponecharity.co.uk)

Tel: 01392 255428

The following fact sheets may also be helpful when thinking about employment.

<http://www.autism-help.org/story-autism-finding-work.htm>

<http://www.autism-help.org/adults-aspergers-work.htm>

**Prospects, employment, and support for jobseekers:****The National Autistic Society**

The National Autistic Society, in conjunction with Remploy, offers support for jobseekers who have an AUTISM.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/working-with/support-for-employers/jobseekers.aspx>

We are continuing to develop a range of online modules - you can find the full list via this link:

<http://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/training-consultancy/online.aspx>

We also have a new NAS Women and Girls online module -

<http://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/training-consultancy/online/women-and-girls.aspx>

The target audience for this is professionals. It is free to access but please note that we recommend that this is accessed on a pc or tablet rather than a mobile phone.

**Remploy**

Remploy provides a range of employment services to support disabled people and those experiencing complex barriers to work.

<http://www.rempoy.co.uk/>

## **Training providers**

### **HOPE Programme**

HOPE stands for Help Overcoming Problems Effectively. A licensed programme that helps people who are living with and whose lives are affected by a health condition achieve 'What's important to them.' These courses are free to attend and run for 6 weeks for 2½ hours each session at various times and locations in Torbay and South Devon. They are run by trained HOPE facilitators who are health and social care professionals alongside volunteers who are living with a long-term condition.

<https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/cancer-support-services/the-lodge/the-lodge-hope-programme/>

Tel: 01803 655404

### **Devon Care Training**

Devon Care Training is a training facilitation and signposting consortium that consists of public, private and voluntary sectors of care. Amongst its services is a programme of training based on the identified needs of members and those of the market place. Courses are heavily subsidised and offered at a reduced rate to members. Previously, it has delivered courses on managing autism through diet, aspects of autism, communication, care planning, Asperger syndrome and autism spectrum disorders. You can view a current list of events on the website, which is updated regularly. Devon Care Training also hosts an annual conference that attracts large numbers of providers across the region.

Email: [dctc@devon.gov.uk](mailto:dctc@devon.gov.uk)

[www.dct.org.uk](http://www.dct.org.uk)

Tel: 01392 382071

### **PECS level I (basic) 2-day workshop**

This intensive two-day training is designed to teach participants the theory behind the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and the protocols for how to appropriately implement the six phases of PECS. Participants will learn how to implement the six phases of PECS, plus attributes, through presenter demonstrations, video examples and role-play opportunities. Participants will leave the workshop with an understanding of how to implement PECS with individuals with autism, related developmental disabilities, and/or limited communication skills. This workshop is the basic accredited training in PECS for parents as well as professionals.

What you will learn:

- Everything you need to know to begin successfully implementing PECS; the theoretical background, including how to develop effective educational environments
- A review of visual strategies useful for communication
- The six phases of PECS, where to start and when to move on

- Strategies for motivating your child/student to communicate
- How to move from a single picture exchange to sentences
- How to teach picture discrimination with two or more pictures
- The criteria for transitioning from PECS to other communication modalities
- The key Pyramid components to designing effective educational environments
- Strategies to create an abundance of opportunities for communication
- The relationship between PECS and traditional communication training approaches.

Learning first-hand will teach you how to move through this structured approach and avoid misunderstandings which can prevent progress.

Email: [pyramiduk@pecs.com](mailto:pyramiduk@pecs.com)

<http://www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com>

Tel: 01273 609555

### **The Plymouth Autism Network**

The Plymouth Autism Network (PAN) brings academics, practitioners, carers, and individuals interested in autism together to share research, ideas, and experiences.

The network aims to provide meetings and events to facilitate collaborative, informed, and high-quality research and practice focusing on Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Faculty of Education and The School of Psychology at the University of Plymouth jointly fund PAN.

[www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/autism](http://www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/autism)

Email: [PAN@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:PAN@plymouth.ac.uk)

### **Community Links South West**

Community Links SW is a social enterprise with experience of working with families, agencies, and schools. Current services include Family Support, Counselling, ADHD/AUTISM Support, Early Years Education, Okehampton Music Centre, Conferences and Training, Children's University and Collaborative Events for Schools.

[www.communitylinks-sw.co.uk](http://www.communitylinks-sw.co.uk)

Email: [info@communitylinks-sw.co.uk](mailto:info@communitylinks-sw.co.uk)

Tel: 07808523111

### **Positive about Autism**

Positive about Autism is a training company providing workshops on autism. It also has a range of useful information resources and autism news updates on its website.

[www.positiveaboutautism.co.uk](http://www.positiveaboutautism.co.uk)

**Free Training Courses:****University of Bath: SMART-ASD: Matching Autistic People with Technology Resources**

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/supporting-autism>

**Charged training courses****The British Institute of Learning Disabilities**

This course forms part of the Department of Health's Positive and Safe Programme and is about the organisational culture needed to put the Positive and Proactive Care guidance into practice. Designed for staff and carers who support vulnerable people, the purpose of the course is to raise awareness of the principles and practices embedded in PBS.

<http://www.bild.org.uk/capbs/pbs-awareness-course/>

**British Psychological Society (BPS)**

This is a link to the BPS autism e-learning modules, where you can complete a short online course about autism.

<https://learn.bps.org.uk/local/intellicart/view.php?id=27>

**MindEd**

MindEd is a free online e-learning resource for everyone with a duty of care for children and young people, whether this be through their work or outside it in a voluntary or charitable capacity. MindEd is developed and supported by a group of multi-disciplinary organisations, known as the consortium. Its members are the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health; the Royal College of Psychiatrists; the Royal College of Nursing; the Royal College of General Practitioners; the British Psychological Society; the National Children's Bureau and YoungMinds.

<https://www.minded.org.uk>

**Free Online Books/Reading:**

Segar, M. Coping: A Survival Guide for People with Asperger Syndrome.

<http://www-users.cs.york.ac.uk/~alistair/survival/survival.pdf>

**Families**

Many websites offer support for families and friends of autistic people .

The Devon Adult Autism and ADHD Service offers a support group for the family and friends of those diagnosed.

<https://www.dpt.nhs.uk/our-services/adult-autism-and-adhd>

**AspergerSyndrome.me.uk**

The idea of this website is to help families and friends who need some help or support with a child or adult with the condition Asperger Syndrome.

<http://www.asperger-syndrome.me.uk/>

**Talk about Autism**

Talk about Autism is an online discussion forum and community for parents, carers, and family members of people with autism, people on the spectrum, and professionals. It is a safe and friendly place to share your story, get support and discuss how autism impacts on your life.

<http://www.talkaboutautism.org.uk/>

**Mind**

While not specifically for autistic adults spectrum diagnosis, Mind, the leading mental health

charity in the UK, has lots of information for loved ones supporting someone with mental health difficulties. It includes numerous useful links from supporting someone to seek help for anxiety and depression and dealing with issues such as self-harm, to supporting them with more practical issues such as budgeting and finance.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/>

**Carers UK**

Carers UK works to improve the lives of carers by providing information and advice on carers' rights and by campaigning for changes that make a real difference to carers. If someone is caring for an adult with autism at home, they can get help and advice from Carers UK.

Helpline: 0808 808 7777

Email: [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org)

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

**Plymouth Parent Partnership**

Plymouth Parent Partnership is a universal support service for all parents and carers in the Plymouth area. It includes a specialised service to parents and carers of children with additional or special needs and disabilities. Providing impartial and confidential information and support.

<https://www.plymouthias.org.uk/>

email: [pias@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:pias@plymouth.gov.uk)

Tel:01752 258933

## **Relationships**

Relationships can be difficult for anyone to understand. However, autistic people may particularly struggle with certain aspects of developing and maintaining relationships. Some find it difficult to know the ‘rules’ of friendships and relationships; other autistic people may prefer to spend time on their own and may have less interest in spending time with others. Because of their unique differences, autistic people can bring a number of positive qualities to a relationship.

Below is a selection of resources providing information and support around sexual and romantic relationships that may be useful for an autistic person and their partner.

<https://www.helpguide.org/mental-health/autism/adult-autism-and-relationships>

### **AS and relationships that work**

This is a forum for people in a relationship where Asperger Syndrome has been diagnosed, or is suspected, in one or both partners.

<http://forums.delphiforums.com/asworks/start>

### **Synapse**

Synapse has a site called autism-help.org that has a huge amount of information to support autistic adults. The following links in particular provide advice on different aspects of relationships:

- Sexual relationships.  
<http://www.autism-help.org/adults-aspergers-sexual.htm>
- Advice for partners of autistic adults.  
<http://www.autism-help.org/adults-partners-aspergers.htm>
- Advice on some ways in which to deal with relationship difficulties.  
<http://www.autism-help.org/adults-aspergers-relationships.htm>

### **The National Autistic Society (NAS)**

The NAS website provides lots of information for partners of autistic adults. The “FAQ from partners of autistic adults” has lots of tips and information (*you can find the link to this on the right-hand side of the webpage below*).

<http://www.autism.org.uk/about/family-life/partners.aspx>.

## **General information on relationships**

There is also a huge amount of general information about relationships available online, including the different challenges that some people may face in their relationships. While these resources are not specifically designed for individuals on the autism spectrum, they may still be relevant for some individuals.

### **NHS**

This PDF provides general advice around sexual health and sexual relationships.

Topics discussed include:

- Intimate health matters
- Sexually Transmitted Infection's (STI's)
- Fertility and contraception
- Communicating about sex

·[https://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CCASH\\_Leaflet\\_tri-fold\\_v1.1.pdf](https://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CCASH_Leaflet_tri-fold_v1.1.pdf)

### **Relate**

Relate is a charity offering support face-to-face, by phone and through its website. It offers various different kinds of support including:

- Advice
- Relationship counselling
- Sex therapy
- Workshops
- Mediation
- Consultations

·<http://www.relate.org.uk>

### **LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans) Foundation**

If you would like any advice or support relating to gender or sexuality, there is a whole wealth of information on LGBT Foundation's website. The site has pages on a number of different topics including:

- Coming out
- Staying safe (physically and mentally)
- Bullying and discrimination
- Mental Health
- Relevant news articles and how to get involved in their causes

·You can find the site here: <http://lgbt.foundation/>

### **This is ABUSE**

The government has a separate website where you can learn about what abuse is

and what counts as an abusive relationship. You can log onto the site if you have any questions or simply want to learn more. It also has a huge number of links to different services where you can get support. Simply click on the “worried about abuse” tab and go to the “need help” section.

<http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>

## **Splitz**

Splitz is a charity who offer support for women and young people across Southwest England experiencing the trauma of domestic abuse. As well as offering help for victims of abuse, it also offers support and programmes for perpetrators of abuse wanting support to change. For more information, see the website or contact the Devon team:

<https://www.creditoninandaround.co.uk/business-listing/splitz-devon-domestic-abuse-service>

Tel: 0345 155 1074 ([landline call rate](#))

Enquiries: [admin@splitzdevon.org](mailto:admin@splitzdevon.org)

## **Leisure & support groups**

### **Leisure Groups**

Leisure and interests are a matter of personal taste so it would be difficult for us to list all of the groups and activities to cover all interests. Good sources for local information include:

- Internet
- Library
- College or adult learning service
- Church
- Community centre
- Council offices
- Sports centres

There are some local leisure events specifically for autistic people:

### **Autism-Friendly Cinema Screenings**

Autism-Friendly Screenings are film screenings especially for people on the autism spectrum and their families, friends and carers.

On the last Sunday of every month, The Vue Plymouth hosts a sensory-friendly screening designed to be an inclusive and welcoming environment for those with sensory sensitivities and their loved ones. Adjustments include:

- Sound and lights on low
- Freedom to move around
- No trailers
- Take your own food and drink



For more information and for how to book tickets, visit this website:

<https://www.dimensions-uk.org/get-involved/campaigns/autism-friendly-cinema-screenings/autism-friendly-screenings-vue/>

Tel: 0345 308 4620

### **Care Farming**

Care Farming is a traditional working farm offering a daycare service to adults with learning disabilities, based in mid Devon. We teach agricultural skills to our clients and do a variety of activities from growing vegetables, working with animals on the farm to arts and crafts. We have found our services and environment to be therapeutic and beneficial to people on the autism spectrum.

Tel: 01884 855 837 / 07958548009

email: [l.e.knight.fam@gmail.com](mailto:l.e.knight.fam@gmail.com)

[www.knightfarm.co.uk](http://www.knightfarm.co.uk)

### **AUTISwiM**

Every Sunday 3.30pm-4.30pm. Weekly family general swimming session for all Plymouth families affected by autism. Parents, siblings, etc welcome.

Harewood House, Plympton, Plymouth PL7 2AS

01752 307008

## **Befriending/ mentoring/ support groups**

The following groups offer support for autistic people and/or their families and friends

### **Autism Assemble (Working well with autism)**

A social enterprise who holds regular social evenings for people with High Functioning Autism (HFA) or Aspergers Syndrome aged 18+ in the Marina Bar and other venues in Plymouth.

Usually, the meetings are on two Tuesdays a month from about 6.30pm - 10pm.

They also organise other activities and events.

See their Facebook page for dates and details.

### **Plymouth Autism Hub**

The Plymouth Autism Hub provides a safe, friendly space for autistic adults aged 16 and above to socialise and enjoy activities like crafts and board games. There is access to free wifi, free refreshments and sessions on topics like using social media. Transport is available if needed.

Plymouth Autism Hub activities are free to people with autism and are funded by People's Health Trust, for local people wanting to create fairer places to grow, live, work and age. We hope this project will support autistic adults to lead the project and decide what activities they want to see.

<https://nextdoor.co.uk/pages/autistic-adults-in-plymouth-plymouth-gb-eng/>

### **Parent Carer Voice**

PCV is Plymouth's official parent/carer forum. We are a group of volunteer parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Together we work in partnership with our local authority to help improve the range of services in education, health and social care for families in the Plymouth area. We organise events like parent training workshops.

Email: [Hello@plymouthpcv.co.uk](mailto:Hello@plymouthpcv.co.uk)

Tweet us or see our facebook page – Plymouth PCV

### **'Contact a Family'**

Contact a Family provides support, advice, and information for families with disabled children no matter what their condition or disability.

In the South West of England, we offer our services through a team of home-based workers and volunteers. Working at a local and regional level, we have up to date information on local services and sources of support for families with disabled children.

Email: [helpline@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cafamily.org.uk)

Telephone: 0808 808 3555

### **Different Together**

Different Together is a safe, supportive, and understanding community for the **partners of people** affected by Asperger Syndrome (AS).

[www.different-together.co.uk](http://www.different-together.co.uk)

Email: [info@different-together.co.uk](mailto:info@different-together.co.uk)

### **Barnardos Cygnet Parent/Carer Support Programme**

This programme is designed for parents and carers of children and young autistic people aged 5-18 years. It is delivered over six x 2.5-3-hour sessions which cover a number of topics: autism and diagnosis; communication; sensory issues; understanding behaviour; managing behaviour; and choice of topic decided by parents/carers.

[www.barnardos.org.uk/cygnet](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/cygnet)

Tel: 01274 513300 (Call for information on local providers)

### **Devon EarlyBird Team – Caters for pre-school children/families**

The NAS EarlyBird Programme is a three-month programme for parents/carers of a pre-school (not yet of statutory school age) child with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. It combines group training sessions for parents with individual home visits when video feedback is used to help parents apply what they learn, whilst working with their child. The teams offering EarlyBird have been trained and licensed to deliver EarlyBird programmes by the NAS EarlyBird Centre. Please telephone or email the NAS EarlyBird Centre to find out contact details for the EarlyBird team based in your area.

[www.autism.org.uk/earlybird](http://www.autism.org.uk/earlybird)

Email: [earlybird@nas.org.uk](mailto:earlybird@nas.org.uk) Tel: 01226 779 218

### **Family Information Service**

The Family Information service provides information and advice to all families with a child or children with additional needs in Devon. The service is also available to any professional working with families or directly with children. The co-ordinators can help you: get information about the local and national services and support available to you and your child; send you a copy of the termly newsletter which has information regarding local and national services, charities, and support services for families of children with additional needs; and link in to the Facebook page for news of courses, events, and new and changing services for families of children with additional needs.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/early-years-and-childcare/childcare-parents/devon-family-information-directory/>

### **South West Autism Community Interest Company (CIC)**

South West Autism Community Interest Company (CIC) aims to provide support for children and young people on the autism spectrum and their families. Due to the local waiting list for diagnosis, a firm diagnosis is not necessary. Our services include social skills, life/independence skills, group work, anxiety management, enabling, intervention work in schools and colleges, tutoring (from a qualified teacher), transition support, parent support, sibling support and training for professionals and parent/carers. The service also provides social skills, independence and life skills, anxiety management, enabling, parent support, sibling support, tutoring, training and workshops for professionals and parents/carers.

<http://www.southwestautismupport.com>

Email: [gmcullagh@sky.com](mailto:gmcullagh@sky.com)

Tel: 07580 225057

### **The Devon Autism Centre**

Certified Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) consultants offering a full range of high-end services to children and adults including training, outreach, and residential services. Training programs are suitable for all levels. It offers a nationwide service and includes independent expert reports, home visits, visits to nursery, school and college, tribunals, and educational appeal committees.

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

Email: [info@devonautismcentre.com](mailto:info@devonautismcentre.com)

Tel: 0844 500 3699

### **NAS Tavistock and District Asperger Support Group**

NAS Tavistock and District Asperger Support Group (NAS TAD AS Group for short!) became part of the National Autistic Society (NAS) network of local groups and branches in 2014. Our groups are TAD WAVE - Women with Asperger's Voice Exchange, which is our original group for women only and TAD Carers Group - for parents and carers of autistic adults. These are small, friendly groups and we try and meet monthly in Tavistock for a coffee and a chat. As a group we have three main aims: to provide mutual support of adults with Asperger Syndrome and their carers living in the West Devon area; to raise awareness of the needs of adults with Asperger Syndrome; and to improve availability of Asperger Syndrome information for those living in Devon.

<http://www.nasbranch.org.uk/tavistockanddistrict>

### **NAS Plymouth Adult Asperger's Branch**

NAS Plymouth Adult Asperger's Branch (NAS PAAB) offers support to adults with Asperger Syndrome and high-functioning autism. They provide weekly support meetings, as well as time and space for people to chat. This enables positive social interaction where individuals can achieve a sense of identity. We arrange social events such as walks, barbeques, cinema outings and quiz evenings periodically throughout

the year. We also offer information, support, and signposting to other services where possible. Please note that volunteers run his branch and, due to personal commitments, there may be a delay in them answering your enquiry.

[http://www.nasplymouthadultaspergersbranch.webeden.co.uk/home/4594252535?preview=Y;use\\_flash=1](http://www.nasplymouthadultaspergersbranch.webeden.co.uk/home/4594252535?preview=Y;use_flash=1)

Email: [NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:NASplymouthadultaspergersbranch@nas.org.uk)

### **Parents United Through AUTISM/ADHD**

A group of parents/carers with young people or persons in education, on the autism spectrum and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diagnosed or going through the process.

[www.facebook.com/momanddadunited](http://www.facebook.com/momanddadunited)

Email: [h.hardy211@btinternet.com](mailto:h.hardy211@btinternet.com)

### **South Devon Asperger Group**

This is a support group for children aged 5-18 years with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Asperger syndrome and autism and their families.

[www.asperations.co.uk](http://www.asperations.co.uk)

Email: [asperations@ymail.com](mailto:asperations@ymail.com)

Contact: Paul Waring - 07719 414729

### **Friends and Families of Special Children**

Provides services for families and carers of children with special needs in the Plymouth area. It is based at Virginia House that is open on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10am-12pm. It aims to provide support for families in the form of groups where adult carers can meet other people in similar situations. It also provides holiday workshops and after school clubs for the whole family, as well as separate social activities for young carers in the Fun and Freedom Club. The group aims to bring about improvements in state-provided services for children with special needs. This includes promoting the interests of children and raising awareness about the gaps in provision both locally and nationally. The group is friendly, informal, and supportive. It does not have an emphasis on any specific condition or disability but suggests that, regardless of the type of additional need, each family experiences similar concerns.

Email: [info@friendsandfamilies.org.uk](mailto:info@friendsandfamilies.org.uk)

Tel: 01752 204369

## **Mental health and promoting mental wellbeing**

Like all people, autistic adults can suffer from mental health problems. It is thought that every year, one in four people experience mental health difficulties. There is evidence to suggest that Autistic adults are also more likely to experience common mental health problems. While there are many different types of difficulties that people with or without Autism might experience, the two most common things that people struggle with are anxiety and depression. Furthermore, as anxiety can lead to people feeling sad and depressed and vice versa, struggling with a mixture of anxiety and depression is common.

People can seek help for mental health difficulties in numerous ways. First, however, it is good to understand more about different difficulties like anxiety and depression and some common signs that might help you to understand if you are experiencing these types of difficulties and, if so, how you can access support.

### **If either you or someone else are in urgent need of support:**

If you are in urgent need of support for any mental health difficulties, there are a number of different contacts you can call.

During office hours:

- Your GP
- Your community worker (if you are receiving care from a service within Devon Partnership NHS Trust).

Outside office hours:

- Plymouth Emergency Duty Team: 0845 6000 388
- Samaritans: 08457 909090

**If you or somebody else's life is in immediate danger, call 999.**

### **Anxiety**

Anxiety is a common but unpleasant feeling that many of us will experience throughout our lives. People can experience anxiety about a range of things, such as meeting other people, experiencing new situations or worrying about their or other people's health.

While anxiety is a normal emotion, sometimes it can reach a level where it has a significant impact on a person's everyday life and may mean that they are not able to do or enjoy the things they want or need to do. If you or others are concerned about anxiety or would like some more information, please refer to the links later in this section.

## Some symptoms of anxiety:

### Mental experiences:

Feeling out of control  
Difficulty 'switching off'  
Trouble sleeping



Feeling helpless  
Feeling 'on edge' or irritable  
Racing thoughts

### Physical experiences:

Trembling  
Increased heart rate  
Feeling nauseous



Sweating  
Feeling breathless  
Muscular tension

## Depression

It is not unusual for someone to feel low, sad, or tearful sometimes, especially when something particularly upsetting has happened. When someone might feel sad most of the time and when these feelings go on for longer than you might expect, depression becomes a problem. Some people might also isolate themselves or not do as much as they used to.

There are many things that someone might experience if they are feeling depressed. These can include:

## Some symptoms of depression:

### Mental experiences:

Feeling low  
Feeling sad or tearful  
Lack of motivation



Feeling irritable  
Not enjoying things you love  
Feeling lonely

### Physical experiences:

Tiredness  
Loss of appetite  
Poor memory



Feeling sluggish  
Aches and pains

## **Other mental health difficulties**

While anxiety conditions and depression are two of the most common types of mental health problems that people experience there are also many others; for example, OCD, eating disorders and bipolar disorder.

For more information about other mental health conditions, please see some of the links listed below. In particular,

Mind <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

and the <https://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/inpatient-mental-health-neurology>

It is important that if you have concerns about your mental health, you seek support. Below are some suggestions about how you can access such support.

## **Help and support**

There are many ways in which you can seek support. We are living in a society where the importance of mental health and well-being is increasingly being recognised with many campaigning for better support, more understanding and reduced stigmatisation of mental health difficulties.

The avenues listed below are just an example of a few. You will be able to find even more links to support by searching online or speaking to a health professional such as your GP.

In addition, some people may find it helpful to talk to friends and family about difficulties or worries they have. They may be a good source of support and it could help them to understand you and how you are feeling.

## **NHS Services**

If you are worried about anxiety, depression, or any other mental health difficulties, the first person you can contact is your **General Practitioner (GP)**. They will be able to discuss your concerns with you and may be able to offer you support or refer you to another service to help you with your difficulties, if appropriate. This may involve seeing mental health professionals, such as counsellors, psychological therapists, nurses, clinical psychologists, or psychiatrists.

## **Plymouth Options (IAPT) Depression & Anxiety Service**

Supporting you to manage depression, anxiety, stress, OCD, phobias, and life pressures.

At some time in our lives, most of us find ourselves feeling low, worried, fearful, or distressed. Plymouth Options offers a range of services to help.



DAS is part of Devon Partnership NHS Trust. It provides a free and confidential service including a range of therapies for adults who may have difficulties relating to depression or anxiety. There are sites across Devon and several different ways you can access this support. Firstly, you can speak to your GP who can refer you. You can also contact them directly or complete a self-referral form online.

For more information and to access this and their self-referral form see their webpage on the trust site: <http://www.dpt.nhs.uk>

Contact: Ground Floor 73 Exeter Street, Plymouth PL4 0AH

Tel. 01752 435419

The NHS website also has plenty of information about mental health difficulties, including many links to further support:

<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx>

### **Information and Advice - Plymouth (formerly DIAC)**

Information and Advice provides a specialist disability service to support people with physical or sensory impairment, disability, long-term health conditions and mental health issues. We have Mental Health Support Workers who are able to meet with clients and support them in accessing advice and service.

Contact: Ernest English House, Buckwell Street, Plymouth, PL1 2DA

0344 411 1444. Phone lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am - 8pm and Saturday 8am - 1pm

Finally, **Moodjuice** is a site created by NHS Scotland. Not only does it have a huge amount of information on depression and anxiety, but it also contains some self-help information about how you might cope with these difficulties yourself:

<http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/>.

## **Other services**

### **The National Autistic Society**

This website contains information about common mental health problems, specifically aimed at autistic adults . Please see the link below.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/about/health/mental-health.aspx>

### **Mind**

Mind is the leading mental health charity in the UK, offer advice and support to all people experiencing mental health difficulties. Its site includes information on different types of mental difficulties, advice on supporting someone else, typical medication and treatments that might be available for some difficulties and legal rights, amongst other things.

Visit the website to find out more or alternatively you can call the helpline in office

hours (9am-5pm) for support:

<http://www.mind.org.uk/>

Tel: 0845 766 0163

Mind also has local services in Plymouth. The details for the centre are:

*Plymouth and District*

- Phone (9.30am-5.00pm, Monday-Friday or leave a message): 01752 513694
- Email: [info@plymouthmind.org.uk](mailto:info@plymouthmind.org.uk)
- Website: <http://www.plymouthmind.org.uk/>

### **Rethink Mental Illness**

This is another big mental health charity and similarly has lots of advice and information relating to a range of mental health difficulties. It also has a phone helpline. To find out more, the details are:

<https://www.rethink.org/>

Tel: 0845 456 0455

Email: [advice@rethink.org](mailto:advice@rethink.org)

### **Recovery Southwest**

Recovery Southwest is a non-profit organization based in the south-west of England that is raising awareness of the new understanding of how best to deal with mental health issues. As well as offering advice on recovery, it also provides a space for people to share their personal stories about mental health and recovery.

For more information, see the website: [www.recoverysouthwest.co.uk](http://www.recoverysouthwest.co.uk)

### **Anxiety UK**

This is a charity aimed at supporting those with difficulties relating to anxiety. It has lots of

information on the website if you would like some more anxiety-specific support.

You can also call during office hours (9.30am-5.30pm) or email:

Website: <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Tel: 08444 775 774

Email: [support@anxietyuk.org.uk](mailto:support@anxietyuk.org.uk)

### **Depression Alliance**

This is a charity aimed bringing people with depression together and campaigning for increased awareness and reduced stigma. You can find the website here:

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

There are also a number of other sites focused around providing **self-help resources** for depression and anxiety. <https://moodgym.anu.edu.au/welcome>

### **Talk to Frank**

If you are worried about drugs (including alcohol), you can log on to Frank's website for information, including of taking each drug, and support. It also has a helpline, live chat sessions online (2pm-6pm, see the website) and advice on what to do in a drug-related emergency.

Website: <http://www.talktofrank.com/drugs>

Phone: 0300 123 6600 (open 24 hours) Text: 82111

## **Promoting mental wellbeing**

Even if you are not currently concerned about anxiety, depression or other mental health difficulties, it is good to be aware of your mental wellbeing and ensure you are looking after yourself. There are numerous resources online.

**Devon Partnership NHS Trust** is especially keen to promote mental wellbeing. It has developed the **5 Ways to Well-Being** to encourage people to live a happier, healthier, and more satisfying life. The five ways are:

### **1. Connect**

Connect with the people around you (family, friends and colleagues) and invest time into these relationships.

### **2. Keep learning**

Try something different or learn a new skill. Not only can learning something new be fun but it can also boost your confidence.

### **3. Be active**

Exercising can make you feel good. Find an activity you enjoy.

### **4. Take notice**

Be aware of the world around you and how you are feeling. Appreciate the little things in your environment.

### **5. Give**

Do something nice for a friend or a loved one. Not only can this be rewarding for you but it will help you connect with the people around you.

For more information, find the Five Wells to Well-Being link on the Looking After Yourself section of the trust's website:

<http://www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk/Looking-after-yourself.342.0.html>.

## **Budgeting and Finance**

### **The Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)**

The CAB has numerous pages of information and resources on how to manage money budget and resolve debts.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/>

The CAB also has a budgeting tool: On this tool, you can enter all your sources of income and expenditures and see how much you have left over monthly to spend, save

or pay off debts. It allows you to print a PDF of your generated financial statement. This statement is designed for you to be able to give to creditors but you could also use this for your own personal use.

<https://budgetplanner.adviceguide.org.uk/guidancenotes.html>.

### **My Money Steps**

The Citizen's Advice Bureau also recommends a website called My Money Steps, developed by the National Debtline. You can enter all your financial details into their tool if you are worried about paying back debts (of any size) and it will give you advice and a personalized plan of how to deal with any problems. This site also contains some other resources and contact details should you wish to get advice via email or phone

<https://www.mymoneysteps.org/>

### **The National Autistic Society (NAS)**

The NAS have a page on managing money. While some of the information on there is very simple, there are also some links and information on how to budget etc.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/benefits-and-money/personal-finance/managing-money>

### **The Money Charity**

The Monday Charity's website also has lots of information and resources. It also has information

about workshops on different aspects of money management.

<http://themoneycharity.org.uk/>.

### **Barclays Bank**

Barclays has a site that is set up specifically at helping people learn to manage their finances called Money Skills. You can view the site and access the resources here:

<http://www.barclaysmoneyskills.com/>.

### **Step Change**

Step Change also has lots of information and resources on how to deal with debt amongst other things. They also have a free phone number for financial advice (0800 138 1111). You can find more information on their site.

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

### **Looking for financial advisors**

Devon County Council recommends two different sites which can be used to find independent financial advisors should you wish to. Please note that advisors listed on these site may not have been individually vetted by the council, rather these sites simply may be good tools to help you find someone appropriate. These are:

- Vouched for: <https://www.vouchedfor.co.uk/>
- Unbiased: <https://www.unbiased.co.uk/>

## **Books**

Please see below for a list of books about autism that may be of interest. These are just a sample of the increasing number of books being published in this area. The publisher Jessica Kingsley produces a wide number of books about many different aspects of autism. You can view their catalogue at: <http://jkg.com/>

### **General books about autism**

- **Segar, M. Coping: A Survival Guide for People with Asperger Syndrome.**

Written by someone with Asperger Syndrome, it offers advice on topics ranging from body language and conversation skills to finding the right friends amongst many other things.

Download it free via the link: <http://www-users.cs.york.ac.uk/~alistair/survival/survival.pdf>

- Attwood, T. (2014). **Been There. Done That. Try This!: An Aspie's Guide to Life on Earth.** Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London.
- Attwood, T. (2008). **The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome.** Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London.
- Baron-Cohen, S. (2008) **Autism and Asperger Syndrome.** Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Frith, U. (2008) **Autism: A Very Short Introduction.** Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Shore, S. & Rastelli, L. (2006). **Understanding Autism for Dummies.** John Wiley & Sons.
- Wing, L. (2003). **The Autistic Spectrum: A Guide for Parents and Professionals.** Robinson Publishing

### **Autobiographies written by people on the autism spectrum**

- Tammet, D. (2007). **Born on a Blue Day: A Memoir of Aspergers and an Extraordinary Mind.** Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.
- Grandin, T. (2006). **Thinking in Pictures.** Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.
- Willey, L. (1999). **Pretending to be Normal: Living with Aspergers Syndrome.** Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London.

### **Diagnosis**

- Murray, D. (Ed., 2006). **Coming out Asperger: Diagnosis, Disclosure**

**and Self-Confidence.** Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London.

### **Relationships**

- Stanford, A. (2002). **Asperger Syndrome and Long-term Relationships.** Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London
- Marshack, K. (2009). **Life with a Partner or Spouse with Asperger Syndrome: Going Over the Edge? - Practical Steps to Saving You and Your Relationship.** Autism Asperger Publishing Co.
- Aston, M. (2001). **The Other Half of Asperger Syndrome: A Guide to Living in an intimate relationship with a partner who has Asperger Syndrome.** Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London.

### **Books available from Plymouth Libraries**

- Loving Olivia: Bringing up my autistic daughter – Astor, Liz
- Stress and coping in autism – Baron, M. Grace
- Not even wrong: adventures in autism – Collins, Paul
- Unstrange minds: a father remaps the world of autism – Grinker, Roy Richard
- Reason I jump: one boy's voice from the silence of autism – Higashida, Naoki
- Autism – Lennard-Brown, Sarah
- Louder than words – McCarthy, Jenny
- George and Sam: autism in the family – Moore, Charlotte
- Send in the idiots: how we grew to understand the world – Nazeer, Kamran
- Different croaks for different folks: all about children with special learning needs – Ochial, Midori
- Thomas has autism – Powell, Jillian
- Songs of the gorilla nation: my journey through autism – Prince-Hughes, Dawn
- God of war: a novel – Silver, Marisa
- Autism – Snedden, Robert
- Little book of the autistic spectrum – Todd, Samantha
- Voices from the spectrum – Ariel, Cindy N
- Living with autistic spectrum disorders – Attfield, Elizabeth
- Asperger's syndrome: a guide for parents and professionals – Attwood, Tony
- Autism and Asperger's syndrome – Baron-Cohen, Simon
- Essential difference – Baron-Cohen, Simon
- Hints and tips for helping children with autism – Betts, Dion. E



- Autism and play – Beyer, Jannik
- Sensory perceptual issues in autism and Asperger’s syndrome – Bogdashina, Olga
- Parent to parent – Boushey, Ann
- Autism spectrum disorders – Bowler, Dermot. M
- Stand up for autism – Derbyshire, Georgina. J
  
- How to understand autism – Durig, Alex
  
- Finding out about Asperger syndrome – Gerland, Gunilla
- Will of his own – Harland, Kelly
- Autism: a parent’s guide – Hawkes, Hilary
- Adolescent and adult neuro-diversity handbook – Hendrickx, Sarah
- Autism, access and inclusion on the front line – Hesmondhalgh, Matthew
- User guide to the GF/CF diet for autism – Jackson, Luke
- Parents’ education as autism therapists – Keenan, Mickey
- Autism and diet: what you need to know – Kessick, Rosemary
- Explaining autism spectrum disorder – Lawrence, Clare
- Sex, secuality and the autism spectrum – Lawson, Wendy
- Understanding and working with the spectrum of autism – Lawson, Wendy
- Life with a partner or spouse with Asperger syndrome – Marshack, Kathy
- Speed of dark – Moon, Elizabeth
- Parenting across the autism spectrum – Morrell, Maureen. F
- Girls growing up on the autism spectrum – Nichols, Shana
- Could it be you? – Pauc, Robin
- Understanding autism in early years – Perepa, Prithvi
- Autism spectrum disorders in the secondary school – Plimley, Lynn
- That’s life with autism – Ross, Donna Satterlee
- Autism life skills – Sicile-Kira, Chantel
- Adolescents on the autism spectrum - Sicile-Kira, Chantel
- Asperger marriage – Slater-Walker, Christoper
- Boy who loved windows – Stacey, Patricia
- When your child has Asperger’s syndrome – Stillman, William
- Does my child have autism? – Stone, Wendy
- Parent’s guide to children with autism – Tilton, Adelle Jameson
- Toilet training for individuals with autism or other developmental issues – Wheeler, Maria
- How to live with autism and Asperger syndrome – Williams, Chris
- Nobody nowhere – Willams, Donna
- Teaching young children with autism – Willis, Clarissa
- Autistic spectrum – Wind, Lorna
- In the key of genius – Ockelford, Adam

- Real boy – Stevens, Chris

## **Social Media**

- <https://www.facebook.com/NationalAutisticSociety>
- <https://en-gb.facebook.com/myautismawareness>
- [http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for\\_children\\_young\\_people/whats\\_worrying\\_you/autism\\_aspergers](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_children_young_people/whats_worrying_you/autism_aspergers)
- <http://www.webicina.com/autism/autism-related-community-sites-facebook-groups-and-forums/>

## **Mobile apps**

Touch screen devices have revolutionised the way autistic people are able to communicate, learn and develop. An application (app) is a piece of software that you can download to your device. There are thousands of apps available to parents, educators, and autistic people, from expensive communication solutions to fun games.

Prices vary dramatically, and some of the more complex apps are more of an investment.

Similarly, there are many cheap and free apps that are also highly effective in helping autistic people to develop a wide range of skills. Here are a few suggestions:

*(The suggestions below are not endorsed by us nor have we tested them. The suggestions are based on various internet site recommendations and some reports from what clients have found useful. Some apps have in-app purchases and not all apps are designed for both Android and Apple devices. The descriptions of the apps listed below are provided by the developers).*

### **Communication- Language**

#### **Proloquo2Go -£109.99**

‘Proloquo2Go provides a full-featured augmentative and alternative communication solution for people who have difficulty speaking. It provides natural sounding text-to-speech voices, high- resolution up-to-date symbols, powerful automatic conjugations, and a default vocabulary of over Seven thousand items, advance word prediction, full expandability and extreme ease of use.’

*Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch and the iPad.*

#### **Grace – Picture Exchange for Non-Verbal People- £22.99**

‘Grace is a non-speaking, simple picture exchange system developed specifically

for people with autism. Users can select pictures to form a semantic sentence that they can share by tilting the device to create a full screen view, and pointing at each card to hear the listener read each word (full screen view is not needed on the iPad). Users learn to attempt their own vocalisations with the pictures serving as a back-up or prompt, encouraging independent social interaction. Comes with a basic vocabulary of pictures, which can be fully customized using images from your camera, phone or the Internet.'

*Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch and the iPad.*

### **iCommunicate - £5.99 for iPod / £29.99 for iPad**

'iCommunicate allows users to create pictures, flashcards, storyboards, routines, and visual schedules, and record custom audio in any language. Add pictures from your camera, phone or the Internet. Helps teach social skills to children and young people with autism.'

*Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch and the iPad*

### **Emotions**

#### **AutismXpress - £0.00**

#### **AutismXpress Pro- £1.19**

'Designed to encourage people with autism to recognise and express their emotions through a fun and easy to use interface using basic facial expressions. AutismXpress Pro offers two new games to help people with autism interpret emotions and understand facial expressions.'

*Both are compatible with iPhone, iPod touch and the iPad.*

### **Depression and anxiety**

#### **Self-Help for Anxiety Management (SAM) - £0.00**

'The Self-Help for Anxiety Management (SAM) app from the University of the West of England can help you regain control of your anxiety and emotions. Tell the app how you're feeling, how anxious you are, or how worried you are. Then let the app's self-help features walk you through some calming or relaxation practices. If you want, you can connect with a social network of other SAM users. Don't worry, the network isn't connected to larger networks like Twitter or Facebook, so you won't be putting your feelings on blast.'

*Compatible with IPod, Ipad and Android.*

#### **Worry Box - £0.00**

'Have you ever wished you could put all your worries in a box, leave them there and walk away?'

The Worry Box app may let you do just that. The app functions a lot like a journal: Write down your thoughts, anxieties, and worries, and let the app help you think them through. It will ask questions, give specific anxiety-reducing help, and it can even direct you to help you reduce your worries and anxiety. It is all password-protected, so you can feel safe sharing the details of your stresses.'

*Compatible with Android and Apple devices*

### **CBT Keeper- £0.00, upgrade to remove ads costs £1.27**

'Relies on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to help the user overcome anxiety and depression. CBT Keeper is a mobile app that teaches simple techniques to help you overcome depression and anxiety. It's built upon the principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), a proven treatment for depression, anxiety, and many other mental illnesses. CBT works because it helps you change the negative thoughts and behaviors that drag you down.'

### **Childrens apps**

- <http://www.b12patch.com/blog/autism/10-great-ipad-apps-for-autistic-children/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-18694168>
- <http://www.gadgetsdna.com/10-revolutionary-ipad-apps-to-help-autistic-children/5522/>

### **Apps for teenagers and adults**

- <http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/Global/News/Apps%20for%20Autism.aspx>
- <http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file90494.pdf>
- <http://bestandroid2014.com/autism/autism-apps-for-android-20.html>
- <http://blog.sfgate.com/lshumaker/2010/09/15/autism-and-the-ipad-choosing-apps-for-teens-and-adults/>
- <http://www.autismpeaks.org/autism-apps>
- [http://researchautism.net/pages/autism\\_autistic\\_asperger\\_spectrum/autism\\_resources/autism\\_apps](http://researchautism.net/pages/autism_autistic_asperger_spectrum/autism_resources/autism_apps)
- <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/autism-apps/id441600681>

### **Apps recommended by the NHS**

#### **Sleepio- £0.00 with in-app purchases**

'Sleepio is an online programme that helps people overcome sleep problems. It's based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and evidence suggests it can even

help people with long-term sleep problems. The course lasts six weeks, but you get 12 weeks support from the Sleepio community. Throughout the course you will have weekly online meetings with "The Prof", a virtual sleep expert who is there to guide you.

Sleepio is being used by the NHS in a few areas as a self-help therapy for people who have a combination of poor sleep and depression or anxiety.'

*Compatible with Apple and Android devices.*

### **Big White Wall- £0.00 (NHS) or £25.00 per month**

'Big White Wall is an anonymous digital service that supports people experiencing common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. It is available around the clock and is staffed by trained "Wall Guides" who make sure that the community is safe and supportive. Big White Wall is available on the NHS in some areas, or you can join by paying a subscription of £25 per month.'

*Compatible with Apple and Android devices.*

### **Brain in Hand (£49 per month or £99 with additional support from the NAS)**

[www.braininhand.co.uk](http://www.braininhand.co.uk)

Brain in Hand provides people with personalised support from an app on their phone. Features include instant access to pre-planned coping strategies, a diary to help structure time and "recipes" for difficult to remember tasks, a monitor to track anxiety levels and a system to request support if things do not go to plan. - See more at:

<http://braininhand.co.uk/#sthash.tljyyACC.dpuf>

While this app could be considered quite expensive it is possible for some individuals to get funding for this. For more information you can read more about buying the app and funding here <http://braininhand.co.uk/who-we-help/individuals-parents-carers/>

## **Social skills**

### **QuickCues- £0.00 with in app purchases at £3.99**

'QuickCues is a social script app that helps teens and young adults on the autism spectrum to handle new situations and learn new skills. Social scripts have been used successfully for years, but QuickCues makes these tools mobile and easy to use in everyday situations. With Quick Cues you can add four additional modules each priced at £3.99.

The Communication module comes pre-installed and provides help with conversations at school or work, listening, and talking on the telephone. It also gives tips on reading body language and finding shared interests with others. Available for additional purchase via the In-App purchase are Life Skills Module, Socialization Module and the Coping Module.'

*Compatible with Android and Apple devices.*

### **You Tube**

- <http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalAutisticSoc>
- <http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=youtube+resources+for+autism&qprt=youtube+resources+for+autism&FORM=VDRE>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GB4gNp7bow>
- <http://iidcautismresources.blogspot.com/2009/09/from-youtube-understanding-asperger.html>