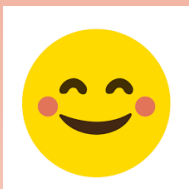


# Autism and You

**A guide for families after diagnosis**



This is a booklet  
**FOR**  
Autistic children and young people  
**MADE BY**  
Autistic children and young people



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The content in this booklet was created with the support of a group of young autistic people – the young people in this group decided on what they thought would be helpful for both parents/carers and other young people after they are told about their ASD diagnosis.

NOW, can I offer you all a genuine “WELCOME” to Autism Services. I hope your journey with us will be as fruitful to your family’s life as it has been to mine. I am the Family Therapist on our team, but I am also the parent of an autistic boy. Coming to the world of autism can often be a daunting experience for parents, for your child, for brothers and sisters: for the whole family. And coming to Autism Services can be equally daunting: an array of new professionals, new terms, new ways of thinking, new strategies... ‘where does everything fit’ and ‘who does what’?! It can be like a tsunami of new information. Sometimes even overwhelming.

The offering of this introduction ‘Our relationship to Autism’ is to invite you to take a little bit of time before launching directly into the service. We have found that by taking this time now it can help make your learning experience much more meaningful.

As a unique family, you will have your own unique relationship to autism, your own unique autism story, so to speak. Family Therapists are drawn to the stories each family bring with them; we think a lot with families about the stories of their lived-experience. As we know, that’s not a ‘Monday-to-Friday-nine-to-five-story’, it’s an ‘all-day-every-day’ story.

Truth be told, no professional can ever know your child or know your lived-experience of living with autism like you do. In other words, you all already bring a lot of your own expertise to this learning.

<https://youtu.be/llmA4ETP3jY>



Click here for more information.

With that in mind, can I invite you to go to following link before continuing; it is a conversation between two parents about their own unique autism story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xoVW8-WQQg>

I am wondering, upon listening, what are you left with? What aspects of that conversation resonate for you most? What parts of their story is useful for helping you think about your story?

# What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how people communicate and interact with the world.

One in 100 people are on the autism spectrum and there are around 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK.

\*\*\*\*\*Every autistic person is unique, should be respected, and should receive a level of support appropriate to their individual needs – in all aspects of life. \*\*\*\*\*



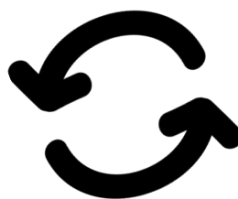
**Social Communication & Social Interaction**



**Social Imagination and Flexibility of Thought**



**Restricted, repetitive interests or activities**



**Restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour**



**Unusual sensory responses**

## Myth Busters

Autism is NOT...



an illness or a disease



something you  
caught like a virus



contagious, you  
cannot pass it on  
to other people



something you can  
grow out of



related to how smart  
you are



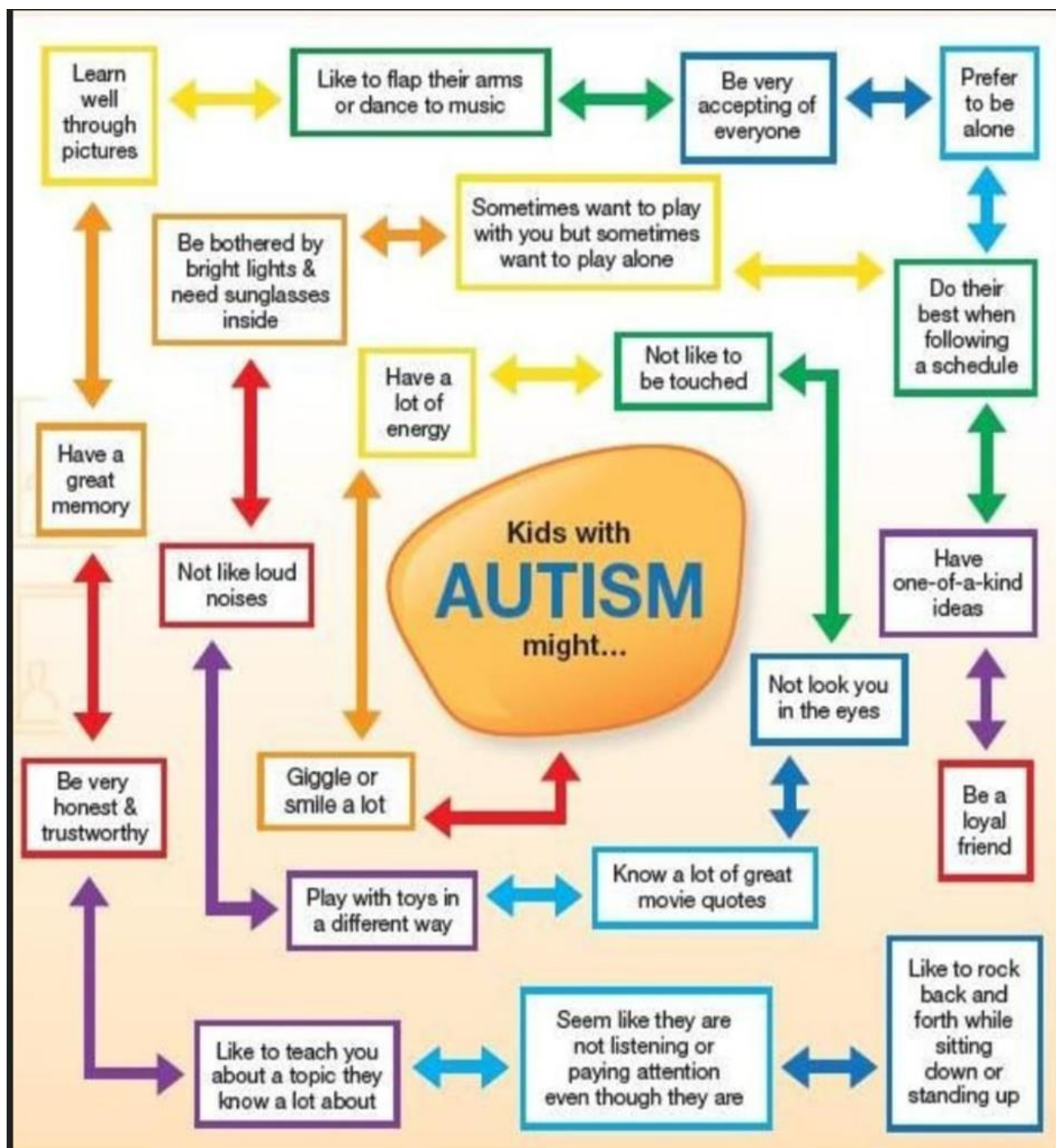
your fault or  
something to be  
ashamed of



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# What we think you should know...



Autistic people have difficulties with interpreting both verbal and non-verbal language like gestures or tone of voice. Some autistic people are unable to speak or have limited speech whilst other autistic people have very good language skills but may struggle to understand sarcasm or tone of voice. Other challenges include:

- Taking things literally and not understanding abstract concepts
- Needing extra time to process information or answer questions
- Repeating what others say to them (this is called echolalia)
- Social interaction

Autistic people often have difficulty 'reading' other people - recognising or understanding others' feelings and intentions - and expressing their own emotions. This can make it very hard to navigate the social world. Autistic people may:

- Appear to be insensitive
- Seek out time alone when overloaded by other people
- Not seek comfort from other people
- Appear to behave 'strangely' or in a way thought to be socially inappropriate
- Find it hard to form friendships.



## Social Imagination and Flexibility of Thought

### People with ASD may :

- Have difficulty with the '*Theory of the Mind*' which is understanding that others have different thoughts, feelings, intentions and points of view from their own. This means that others can be perceived as unpredictable and confusing.
- Have difficulty with imagining alternative outcomes to different situations or predicting what will happen next, based on social rules, rather than the rules of logic.
- Have difficulty understanding or interpreting other's thoughts, feelings or behaviour. Social messages that are communicated through the use of subtle gesture or facial expression are often missed
- Show a limited range of imaginative activity in their play, for example, lining toys up, or collecting, organising and ordering things, rather than engaging in functional or symbolic play.



**Restricted, repetitive  
interests or activities**



**Restricted, repetitive  
patterns of behaviour**

With its unwritten rules, the world can seem a very unpredictable and confusing place to autistic people. This is why they often prefer to have routines so that they know what is going to happen. They may want to travel the same way to and from school or work, wear the same clothes or eat exactly the same food for breakfast.

Autistic people may also repeat movements such as hand flapping, rocking or the repetitive use of an object such as twirling a pen or opening and closing a door. Autistic people often engage in these behaviours to help calm themselves when they are stressed or anxious, but many autistic people do it because they find it enjoyable.

Change to routine can also be very distressing for autistic people and make them very anxious. It could be having to adjust to big events like Christmas or changing schools, facing uncertainty at work, or something more simple like a bus detour that can trigger their anxiety.

A rigid adherence to particular routines, sometimes to a ritualistic extent, and resistance to change is often a feature and likely to be related to making their world less confusing and more ordered.



## Unusual sensory responses

Over- or under-sensitivity to light, sound, taste or touch.

Autistic people may experience over- or under-sensitivity to sounds, touch, tastes, smells, light, colours, temperatures or pain. For example, they may find certain background sounds like music in a restaurant, which other people ignore or block out, unbearably loud or distracting. This can cause anxiety or even physical pain. Many autistic people prefer not to hug due to discomfort, which can be misinterpreted as being cold and aloof.

Many autistic people avoid everyday situations because of their sensitivity issues. Schools, workplaces and shopping centres can be particularly overwhelming and cause sensory overload. There are many simple adjustments that can be made to make environments more autism-friendly.



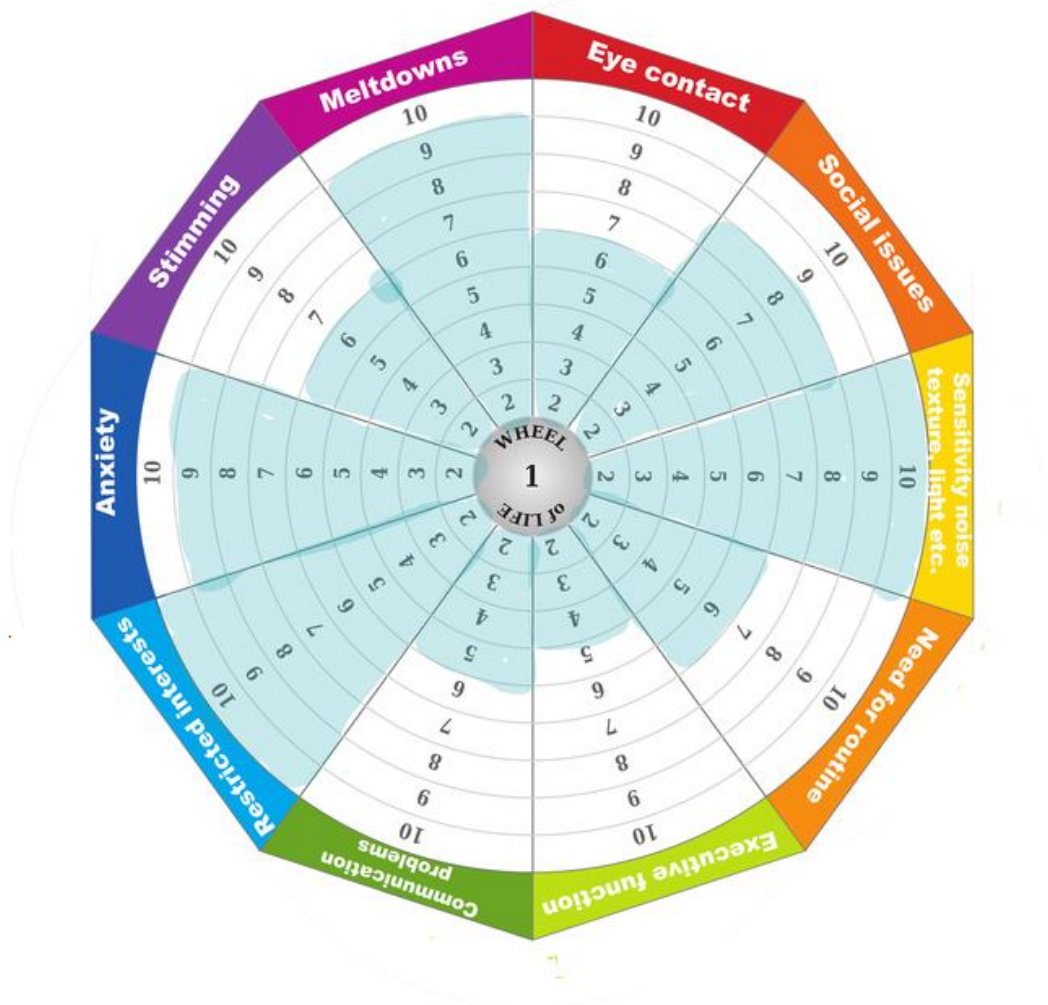
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# Autism Pie Chart - rather than a spectrum

Each person's individual pie chart is different.



Each section of a person's pie chart represents a different part of their autism. The numbers show how much each section affects the person in their day to day life. Ten being the highest.

## **TOUCH** OF A GENTLE PAT ON THE SHOULDER . . .

### **HYPERSENSITIVE:**

can feel like a hard punch.

### **HYPOSENSITIVE:**

needs deep pressure and may feel irritated by light touch.



## **SOUNDS** THAT YOU MAY NOT BE AWARE OF . . .

### **HYPERSENSITIVE:**

All build up and might overwhelm someone.

### **HYPOSENSITIVE:**

May need to turn the volume up and seek out loud noises.



## **SMELLS** THAT YOU MAY NOT NOTICE . . .

### **HYPERSENSITIVE:**

Overpowering and may cause headaches and nausea.

### **HYPOSENSITIVE:**

May not even notice or might like to wear strong aftershave



## **LIGHTS** THAT SEEM FINE TO YOU . . .

### **HYPERSENSITIVE:**

Could be dazzling, blinding and disorientating.

### **HYPOSENSITIVE:**

May not be able to see clearly or may need extra light.



## **TASTES** THAT ARE QUITE STANDARD TO YOU . . .

### **HYPERSENSITIVE:**

Could taste out-of-date or undercooked.

### **HYPOSENSITIVE:**

May prefer strong tastes or seek out sweeteners and spices to put in meals.



## **STANDING STILL (PROPRIOCEPTION)** . . .

### **HYPERSENSITIVE:**

Might cause dizziness or the need to stim.

### **HYPOSENSITIVE:**

May need to change position to read the space around them.]



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# Masking, especially girls.

Autism masking, also known as Autism camouflaging, can be a complex survival strategy used by some people with ASD to navigate their way through a neurotypical world.

Masking is something many children with ASD do. This is when they learn, practice, and perform certain behaviours and suppress others in order to be more like the people around them.

Sometimes people with ASD mask or hide behaviours that they feel won't be accepted by others. It generally involves intentionally learning neurotypical behaviours and mimicking them in social situations.

Masking or hiding who you really are can be anxiety provoking and cause a sense of identity loss and lead to low self-esteem and self-worth.

[Home - Autistic Girls Network](#)

# Noise cancelling headphones for Autism



Something many people don't understand about autism spectrum disorder is why children on the spectrum cover their ears a lot. There is good reason for this. The brain differences associated with autism mean that loud or chaotic environments can be physically painful and emotionally stressful.

Autism makes it difficult for children to concentrate in loud environments or when distracted by surrounding stimuli. Some children with autism also struggle with sensory processing disorder (SPD). A person with SPD may underreact to some stimuli such as cold temperatures and overreact to other stimuli like loud noises.

Both autism and SPD can make it especially challenging for the brain to filter unimportant input. This can lead to behavioural meltdowns in some children because they are overstimulated and don't know how to handle it. However, these sensory overload situations are normal to the child even when they don't express their discomfort in extreme ways. The younger the child, the more likely it is that he or she doesn't understand that not everyone experiences external stimulation in the same manner.

# STIMMING

Stimming (Self-Stimulatory Behaviour) is a series of repetitive actions which help regulate the body's sensory system in autistic people.

Almost everyone engages in stimming to some degree in their own way. They might crack their knuckles, tap their feet, or even just hum and whistle. Autistic people are usually more overt when stimming. Flapping their hands, rocking back and forth and repeating certain words are just some of the ways they regulate their sensory processing.



It's important to be aware and understanding when an autistic person is stimming. Some methods may appear odd or even inappropriate to onlookers, especially if it's an adult, but drawing attention to their stimming will only cause more distress.

If an autistic individual doesn't get an opportunity to stim and meet their sensory needs, then they may withdraw and 'shut down' or experience a meltdown.

## WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO BE OVERLOADED?

- YOU HAVE 20 WINDOWS OPEN ON YOUR COMPUTER.
  - YOU MUST KEEP TRACK OF ALL OF THEM. THE COMPUTER IS GETTING HOT.
  - IT FREEZES - NO ACTION - NO AMOUNT OF BANGING THE KEYBOARD WILL MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.
  - IT IS IN SHUTDOWN MODE. THE FAN IS RUNNING TRYING TO COOL IT. YOU CAN DO NOTHING BUT WAIT.
  - THIS IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE IN TRYING TO COOL IT. YOU CAN DO NOTHING BUT WAIT.
  - LOUD NOISES (EARS AND HEAD HURTS).
  - I FEEL DIZZY AND SICK.
  - I HAVE TO MAKE SENSE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING.
  - I AM ASKED QUESTIONS BUT NO WORDS ARE COMING OUT
  - TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE TOUCHING ME - IT HURTS.
- STOP WORLD, I WANT TO GET OFF!**

# Fidget Toys

*How do fidget toys help people with ASD?*

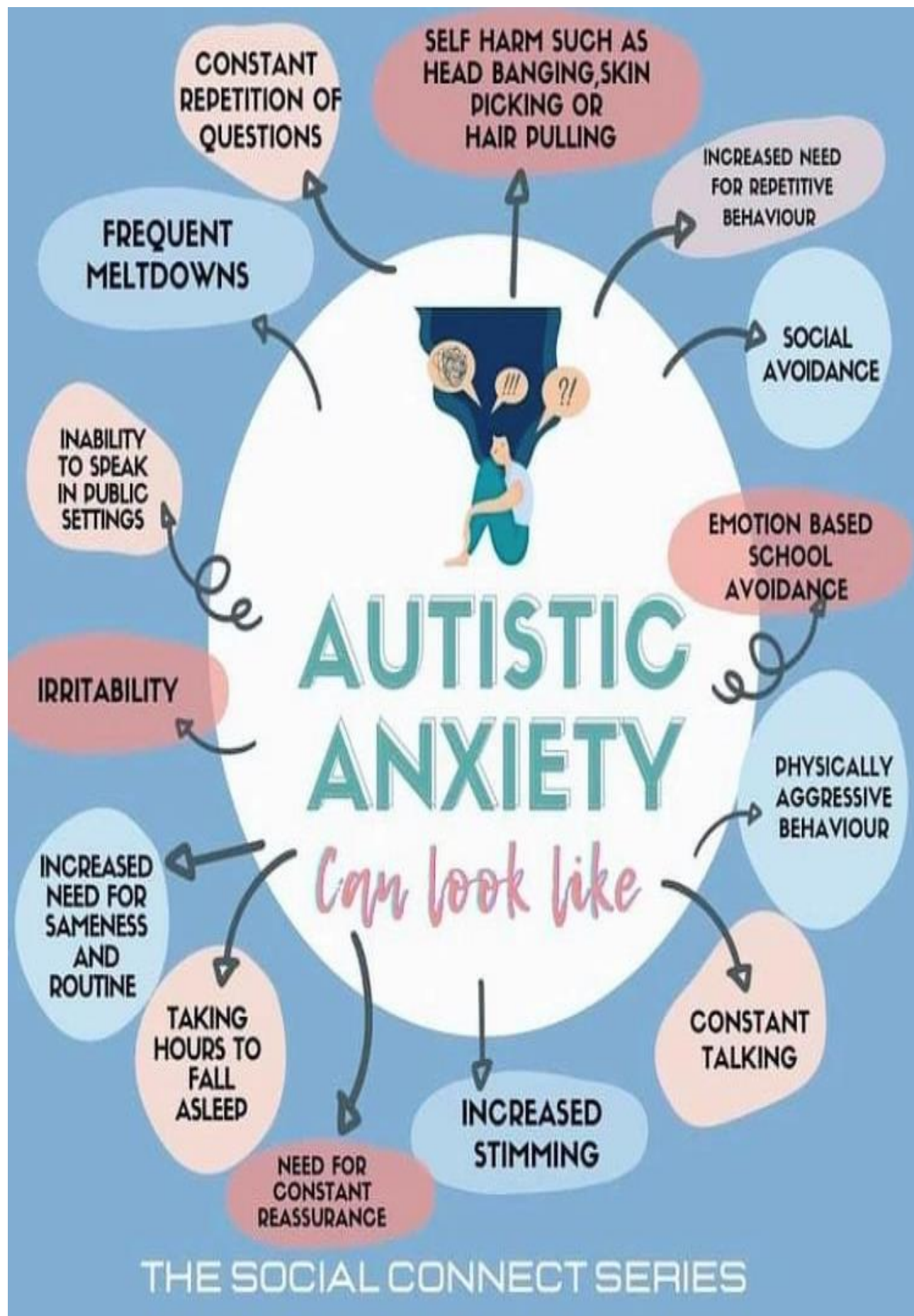
Fidget toys help children with autism to relax, focus, and calm down before, during or after a scenario or event.

They can help decrease fear and discomfort, ultimately helping them play naturally. Furthermore, sensory toys help develop social learning skills like negotiating, planning, and sharing.

## Types of fidget toys

- Fidget Spinners: usually made from plastic or metal, are a three-pronged tool that fits in your hand and is meant to be spun.
  - Stress Balls    •Putty    •Fidget Cubes
- Chewable Pendants and Mindful Breathing Straws





# The Coke Bottle



If an autistic person has a '*meltdown*' all of a sudden, it is not your or their fault!

If you compare your child's/your body to a coke bottle – gradually over the day the coke bottle gets shaken every time your child/you experience something difficult or overwhelming (the person gets more and more annoyed) eventually the smallest thing can cause them to explode.

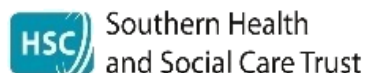
This has because *fizz* has been building up all day!

It's helpful to engage in activities throughout the day to take out the fizz e.g. going to a calm space, listening to music and/or movement breaks etc.



© Designed and Drawn by Mid-Becken Centre for Autism

Click on the picture to the left for more advice



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# How can you help someone with Autism?

Give the person time to process a question.  
(count to 10)

Use visual instructions and supports.

An autistic person may prefer to step away from crowded social situations, and that's okay!

Give them enough time and space to vent.

An autistic person may need to be alone sometimes and that is fine!

Prepare them for anything new or a change – they like to know 5W's.

Understand that autistic individuals find changes in routine and environment difficult.

Be aware of the sensory environment and ask them about their sensory needs and preferences.

Provide instructions in as clear a way as possible.

See the person first, not the disability.



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# Autism: the positives



Understanding, embracing and celebrating different ways of thinking and doing can release the true power of the autistic mind. Here we look at the positive features of autism.



## Attention to detail

- Thoroughness
- Accuracy



## Methodical approach

- Analytical
- Spotting patterns, repetition



## Deep focus

- Concentration
- Freedom from distraction



## Novel approaches

- Unique thought processes
- Innovative solutions



## Observational skills

- Listen, look, learn approach
- Fact finding



## Creativity

- Distinctive imagination
- Expression of ideas



## Absorb and retain facts

- Excellent long term memory
- Superior recall



## Tenacity and resilience

- Determination
- Challenge opinions



## Visual skills

- Visual learning and recall
- Detail-focussed



## Accepting of difference

- Less likely to judge others
- May question norms



## Expertise

- In-depth knowledge
- High level of skills



## Integrity

- Honesty, loyalty
- Commitment



## Remember

**Every** experience of autism is **unique**. No one person will identify with every positive feature of autism. We all have **individual** skills, attributes and characteristics that are as unique as our personalities – this is the **power of neurodiversity**.



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# Telling your child about their diagnosis...

## When should I tell my child?

This is your decision; it is entirely up to you. However it would be advised that this is done prior to your child commencing specialist ASD intervention work. Some parents tell their children about their diagnosis when they're quite young (primary school age), as their child becomes aware of their differences and starts to ask questions. Other parents wait until their child is slightly older, as they feel they will understand the diagnosis better.

## How should I tell my child?

There isn't one 'right' way to tell your child about their diagnosis. However, here are some points to consider:

- Who is the best person in the family to help bring up the subject? If your child is comfortable with a grandparent or aunt, it might be a good idea to get them involved too.
- Choose a moment when you're both in a calm mood and in a familiar place where you both feel comfortable. Autistic children can find it difficult to process new information, especially if they're feeling anxious, stressed or are in an unfamiliar environment.
- Try to make sure you won't be interrupted. Your child may need time to think about what you're saying or to ask questions.
- Be there if your child wants to talk or ask questions. Some children may not want to ask questions face to face. Having a pen and piece of paper, question box, diary or email system can make it easier for some children to ask personal questions. It also gives them more time to process your answer or think of other questions.

Your child may have met other children or people with ASD. You could explain that although people with ASD have some things in common, they are all different.

"I would have liked my parents to have told me that noises can be difficult"

The following might be helpful:

[Autism: talking about a diagnosis](#)

[What is autism?](#)

[Telling a child about his/her autism spectrum diagnosis - YouTube](#)

# Testimonials

## Sarah -Testimony

Autism falls on a large spectrum so it is important to be aware that not everyone with autism is the same.

I like many people with autism think very literally, so it can be very difficult to understand certain jokes or phrases as we don't understand why the joke is funny. It may take someone to explain why the joke was funny.

Routine and structure is very important to me and others with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) as it enables me to remain calm. Knowing what is happening next gives me a sense of control. If my routine is unexpectedly changed this can cause me to panic.

### Autism Services:

When I was eleven my parents told me that I was autistic. They showed me a video to help me better understand it. I joined some groups with children like me. The groups were around me understanding ASD and my special interests. During these groups I met lots of other young people that did not judge me, but instead understood me. I feel that through these groups I have made genuine friends and they have helped me become more confident. I feel that I am finally around people who I can share my interests with both inside and outside school.

## Struggling Socially:

This is something that comes to mind when people think of autism. I've never been great socially and I still struggle at times today. I try to get involved in conversations more, but when I do most of the time I just end up sitting or standing in silence, or I feel awkward when I do talk.

However, with practice I do feel this is something I am improving on, especially since meeting other people with the same or similar interests to me.

## Special interest /Obsessions:

When I have a special interest I will research it as much as possible to know every detail there is about it. If someone then asked me about my special interest I would overload them with information. I feel more comfortable having a conversation about my special interest as my friends are into the same things as me.

## Testimony of Emily a 15-year-old girl

My mum and dad told me I got my diagnosis when I was six years old. I do not really remember much about it. I am not even sure when my parents told me that I was autistic; they did not really make a big deal about it, and it did not really seem like a big deal. It just made me think this is me and who I am now!

When I was younger, I attended a lot of occupational therapy appointments with Pauline and Rosie, I really enjoyed them and they also helped me feel more relaxed, although I do still have trouble writing and trying to put my thoughts into words.

I did not struggle too much with making friends in primary school, although some of the other pupils in the school did make me feel sad. They knew that certain noises annoyed me and they would do them to make me feel bad. When I tried to stand up for myself, they would mock me, but other kids in my class would shout at them to stop.

When I went to secondary school, I did not know anyone in the school. It was very scary and stressful, I was incredibly sad all the time, and I struggled to make friends; but two people, Janice and Harry, were nice to me from the start, and we are still good friends today. They know I have autism and they understand that sometimes trivial things to others seem very big to me, and I will get stressed. They help me to calm down, and they also help to make me feel good about myself.

Although I have friends, sometimes I do feel different to others, it is not so bad, my dad says it is boring to be the same as everyone else.

I now like to vibe (chill) in my room, and chat to my friends, but I do tend to ramble on a bit, and I sometimes have to remind myself to stop, although my friends are good and they never really say anything, and accept me for who I am.

I have accepted me as me and I have been lucky as I have gotten older, I have never really encountered people who have been judgemental or made me feel bad. Having autism is good too - I get to see the world differently from everyone else, and I even get to jump to the front of the line at Disney and Universal Studio.

Art created by young people during a creative therapy group:



# Famous people with Autism

Although the diagnosis of autism was not what it is today, it is certainly nothing that has developed in recent times. Researchers and academics have considered famous people throughout history, and have concluded that it is likely that they were autistic.

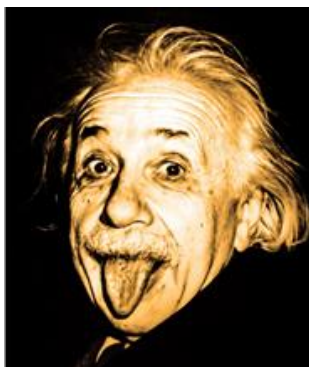
Below is a list of some famous people throughout history who are believed to be autistic, the list could be lengthy but I have included people who I was surprised to find out were autistic.

One thing I noticed when doing my research was that there was no one particular field of interest that autistic people gravitated towards, so like my dad would say Autism is a spectrum, and is influenced by our personality, loves and soul.



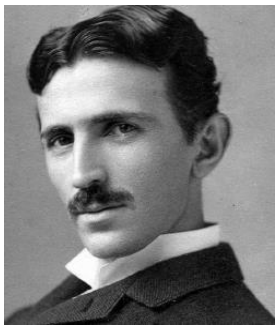
**Isaac Newtown** - Born 4 Jan 1643 died 31 March 1727

The earliest researched example of a person with any form of autism. Discoverer of gravity, or more accurately he formulated the theory of universal gravitation. He also formulated the three laws of motion. He was said to prefer his own company and loved to read, non fiction though, wanting to read about science and mathematics. Newtown was hypersensitive to any type of criticism.



**Albert Einstein** - Born 14 March 1879 died 18 April 1955

Developed the theory of relativity. Had severe speech delays as a child, and also had echolalia (quietly repeating a sentence to himself before saying it out aloud). He was very socially awkward, when asked about this he tried to deflect by saying "I do not socialise because social encounters would distract me from my work and I really only live for that, and it would shorten even further my very limited lifespan". He lived to a very strict routine, and order in his environment.



**Nikola Tesla** Born 10 July 1856 died 7 Jan 1943

No, not the inventor of the car (but that is believed to be another autistic person), but a genius inventor of numerous things, most importantly the method of AC transmission of electricity.

Had an eidetic memory (precisely recall images and objects)

Very regimental daily schedule. Was obsessed with the number 3



**Satoshi Tajiri** Born 28 Aug 1965

The creator of Nintendo's Pokemon franchise. Was a huge gamer, obsessed with arcade games, as a child he was obsessed with insects, so much so that he was known as "Dr Bug".



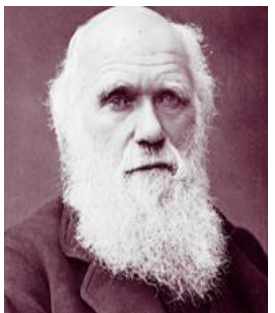
**Tim Burton** Born 25 Aug 1958

A film director known for gothic and fantasy styled films. My favourite is Charlie and the Chocolate factory. Although not formally diagnosed, Burton himself believes he is autistic, as he has identified many of the indicators in himself.



**Dan Aykroyd** Born 1 July 1952

A famous actor who starred in several massive movies from Ghostbuster to the Blues Brothers, started off in the American comedy series Saturday Night Live. Was obsessed with Ghost and Law enforcement which he says helped him get a role in the Ghostbusters movie. Aykroyd's imagination, creativity and ability to maintain focus on particular subjects of interest provided him with the tools for his success.



**Charles Darwin** Born 12 Feb 1809 Died 19 April 1892 The author of "On the Origin of Species" detailing evolution Known to be hyper-focused. Was very quiet and isolated as a child, who avoided direct contact with others, but was very caring and devoted to his family. Known to be a visual thinker. Developed the world's first study of how people interpret and understand the emotions of others.



**Bill Gates** - Born 28 Oct 1955. Co Founder of Microsoft. Was the richest person in the world until 2017 - now unfortunately only the 4th richest person in the world. Finds it difficult to maintain eye contact, talks in a monotonous voice, rocks back and forth in meetings, or when in groups. Found it difficult to pick up social cues from others.



**Susan Boyle:** 1 April 1961. A Scottish singer who rose to fame in 2009 after appearing as a contestant on Britain's Got Talent. She was raised to believe she had a learning disability. After leaving school with few qualifications, Boyle took part in government training programmes, and performed at local venues. Boyle's debut studio album, was released in 2009 and became the UK's best-selling debut album of all time, and set a record for first-week sales by a debut album. In 2012–13 she was diagnosed with Autism.



**Greta Thunberg** 3 January 2003. Swedish environmental activist who is known for challenging world leaders to take immediate action for climate change mitigation. She was diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome in November 2014. Greta has been subjected to many attacks based on her diagnosis, Greta herself accuses critics of "autism bashing".



**Sara-Jane Harvey** 6 November, 1986. Autistic Presenter and Advocate; better known online as "Agony Autie", an English YouTuber who makes videos about Autism. Sara is autistic and was diagnosed at the age of 26 after her sons diagnosis. She openly and courageously shares what's in her heart and on her mind. Sara is shedding light on autistic behaviours and the different experiences being autistic entails. Sara has 30K followers across all platforms.



**Ella Tabb** 3 August. Better known online as "Purple Ella", is autistic, and makes videos about her life with autism and hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (hEDS), and shares her thoughts, ideas and tips on life as a proud disabled adult. She has 49k subscribers on her YouTube channel, 13k Instagram followers and 96k TikTok followers.



'**AutistiX**' is an indie rock band based in the UK; all members have autism. They had difficulties developing relationships and making friends with other musicians. So, they created their own band! Band members talk openly about autism and even write about it in their music.



'**Steviet7**' Born 1989.

YouTuber and Gamer from Grimsby, who has Autism.

He celebrates 14 Million views on his channel. Steven makes gaming related videos with his most popular being a review on Game Boy Micro, with almost half a million views on that particular video alone to date. He says making videos has increased his confidence, whilst allowing him to develop his skills in animation and video creation.

# Additional Resources;

Autism NI - [Autism NI](https://autismni.org) – <https://autismni.org>

Middletown - [Middletown Centre for Autism - Middletown Centre For Autism \(middletownautism.com\)](http://middletownautism.com)

SHSCT Autism Services - [Autism Services | Southern Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](http://hscni.net)

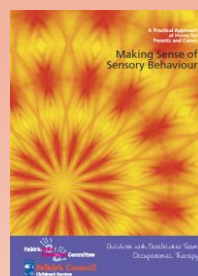
Autism Wales - [Home - Awtistiaeth Cymru | Autism Wales | National Autism Team](https://autismwales.org/en/) – <https://autismwales.org/en/>

The National Autistic Society - [National Autistic Society \(autism.org.uk\)](http://autism.org.uk)

Children In Northern Ireland - [Home - CiNI \(ci-ni.org.uk\)](http://ci-ni.org.uk)

You can double click on the pictures beside, these cover the following;

- Autism at home
- Sharing the diagnosis of ASD
- Making sense of sensory behaviour



# Books

**The Reason I Jump:** The inner voice of a thirteen-year-old boy with Autism Author: Naoki Higashida.

**Supporting Spectacular Girls:** A Practical Guide to Developing Autistic Girls' Wellbeing and Self-Esteem.

**Geek Girl Collection** - By Holly Smale.

**Thinking in Pictures;** My Life with Autism – Temple Grandin.

**A Kind of Spark** – Elle Mc Nicholl.

**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time** – Christopher John Francis Boone.

**The Secret Life of Rose:** Inside An Autistic Head.

**Uniquely Human:** A Different Way of Seeing Autism.

**A Different Kettle of Fish:** A day in the life of a physics student with Autism Author: Michael Barton.

# Videos

**Temple Grandin: The World Needs all Kinds of Minds -**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/temple\\_grandin\\_the\\_world\\_needs\\_all\\_kinds\\_of\\_minds?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/temple_grandin_the_world_needs_all_kinds_of_minds?language=en)

**Amazing Things Happen -** by Alexander Amelines

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbwRrVw-CRo>

**How Autism Freed Me to be Myself –** by Rosie King

[https://www.ted.com/talks/rosie\\_king\\_how\\_autism\\_freed\\_me\\_to\\_be\\_myself?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/rosie_king_how_autism_freed_me_to_be_myself?language=en)

**Walk in My Shoes - The Donaldson Trust**

Created in partnership with 17 year old Erin Davidson.

[Walk in My Shoes - The Donaldson Trust \(donaldsons.org.uk\)](http://donaldsons.org.uk)

**Top 10 Female Autistic Traits** by Olivia Hops

[10 Female Autistic Traits | AUTISM IN GIRLS – YouTube](#)

**Autism TMI Virtual Reality Experience-**

by the National Autistic Society

[Autism TMI Virtual Reality Experience – YouTube](#)

**Embracing a positive Autistic identity** by Shadia Hancock

[Embracing a positive Autistic identity - YouTube](#)

# Apps: iOS & Android

## Relaxation:

### Headspace

[Guided Meditation and Mindfulness - The Headspace App](#)

### Calm Harm

[Home - Calm Harm App](#)

### SAM – Self-help for the mind

[Self-help App for the Mind \(SAM\) | Self-help App for the Mind \(SAM\) \(mindgarden-tech.co.uk\)](#)

## Educational:

### Magic Fluids Free

[Magic Fluids Lite - fluid sim – Apps on Google Play](#)

Magic Fluids app creates an interactive dynamic live wallpaper, it can help an individual with autism to calm down and relax while watching magical swirls of flowing colours.

### Aiko & Egor Animation 4 Autism

[Aiko & Egor:Animation 4 Autism on the App Store \(apple.com\)](#)

A family sharing app, showing animations and interactive characters where the user can imitate and interact. It can help children to learn about underwater characters.

## Games:

[Dr. Panda Beauty Salon on the App Store \(apple.com\)](#)

### Dr. Panda Beauty Salon

Exercise the creative mind and unleash individual fashion sense. This app can greatly stimulate the ability to adapt and blend with new environments.

# Autism NI fact sheets

Autism NI have developed a number of fact sheets to support you with a range of common themes, including:

- Autism
- Family including siblings
- Benefits and financial support
- Adults and autism
- Girls and autism
- Education

Please visit [autismni.org/factsheets](https://autismni.org/factsheets) to access these or click on the link underlined below;

[Factsheets — Autism NI](https://autismni.org/factsheets)

## The Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS) is a regional service that provides advice and support for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Office	Telephone No
Armagh Office	028 3831 4471
Ballymena Office	028 2566 1480
Belfast Office	028 9078 4230
Dundonald Office	028 9056 6392
Omagh Office	028 8225 4552

[Autism Advisory & Intervention Service \(AAIS\) | Education Authority Northern Ireland \(eani.org.uk\)](#)

[Code of practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs | Department of Education \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

# What's next?

A diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and engaging with Autism Services can often be a daunting experience for parents, carers, for your child, for brothers and sisters, for the whole family. We aim to make your intervention journey informative and supportive at a time that is right for you.

We recognise that parents/carers are the expert when it comes to knowing and understanding their own child/young person's needs.

Therefore, we aim to work jointly with you, to equip you with skills and strategies that will make a real difference and promote best outcomes for your child and family.

At any point in your journey you can access support from autism services.

If you would like support from autism services please complete referral attached and send to [autism.services@southerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:autism.services@southerntrust.hscni.net) or contact autism services on 028 37566777.

We would like to thank the young people that helped in creating this booklet! We hope that this is an extremely valuable resource that will provide you with support at the start of your post-diagnostic journey.

**Please do not hesitate to  
contact us if we can help in any way.**

## **Autism Services contact details:**

**Telephone: 028 3756 6777**

**Email: [autism.services@southerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:autism.services@southerntrust.hscni.net)**

