

**AUTISM
INFORMATION
ADVICE AND
RESOURCE PACK**

What is Autism?

Autism is a developmental disability that affects how a person relates to and communicates with other people, as well as how they make sense of the world around them.

It is a spectrum condition, which means that although all people with autism have certain difficulties in common, the symptoms and characteristics can occur in a wide variety of combinations and range from mild to severe.

All people with Autism share three main areas of difficulty, which are known as a 'triad of impairments'. These are:-

1) Difficulties with social communication

- Individuals can have difficulties with both verbal and non-verbal language (such as body language). Some may have very limited speech or not speak at all, whilst others may have good language skills but still find it hard to understand the back-and-forth nature of conversations.

2) Difficulties with social interaction

- People with autism can find it hard to recognise or understand other people's emotions and feelings, and to express their own. This can make it more difficult for them to fit in socially.

3) Difficulties with social imagination

- 'Social imagination' is a skill which allows us to understand and predict other people's behaviour, to make sense of abstract ideas and to imagine situations outside our usual daily routine. This means that people with Autism may find it difficult to predict how others might behave and to cope with changes to their routine.

In addition to these three main areas of difficulty, people with Autism may also experience:-

- Over- or under-sensitivity to sensory information (including sounds, touch, tastes, smells, light or colours)
- Repetitive movements, such as hand-flapping or spinning
- A degree of learning disabilities
- A particular area, or areas, of special interest, which can be intensely focused
- Challenging Behaviour

Around 1 in 100 people in the UK have an Autistic Spectrum Condition. It is present in people from all backgrounds and affects around four times as many males as females.

The disorder does not only affect childhood, but is a lifelong condition; so children with Autism will grow up to be adults with Autism. However, this does not necessarily mean that

the patterns of behaviour present in childhood will never change; as it is a developmental disability which affects all areas of development, symptoms can therefore be different at different ages as the child develops. Some features may not become apparent until later in development, whilst others can disappear with time.

All people with an Autistic Spectrum Condition are unique and have their own individual skills and abilities, as well as areas of difficulty. Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives, while others may need a lifetime of specialist support.

It is common for people with Autism to have additional conditions alongside Autism such as [ADHD \(Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder\)](#), ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), ODD (Oppositional Defiance Disorder).

Below is a wonderful animated video to get an understanding of Autism and what this may look like – type it into google and watch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fy7gUlp8Ms>



South Hampshire branch

The branch supports autistic children, young people and adults as well as their families in the South Hampshire area.

Main information

Type of service: Local groups, Play and leisure, Social groups

Website: <http://www.shantsnas.org.uk>

The branch supports autistic children, young people and adults as well as their families in the South Hampshire area. They run a number of activities which include:

A monthly evening autism support group open to all (autistic people, their parents, carers and family members and professionals who work with them) where people can meet to exchange experiences, skills and understanding. At some meetings they invite guest speakers or have professionals present who can advise on aspects of autism.

A monthly Saturday afternoon family youth club. Children accompanied by their families (including siblings) are welcome. A number of rooms and activities are available during the afternoon, for example table tennis, air hockey, crafts, Lego, books, games and so on.

A monthly Saturday afternoon Lego Club for children aged nine to 13 years old.

A fortnightly social group for children (along with their families) during term time.

A fortnightly social group for teenagers (along with their families) during term time.

A fortnightly friendship group for adults, who take part in activities and have social outings.

A support group specifically for partners of autistic people (whether the partner is diagnosed or not). The meetings are for the partner of the autistic person only (not the autistic person themselves).

Social events for the benefit of individuals and their families.

For people of any age

Aimed at: Adolescent , Adult , Child , Child/adolescent sibling, Parent/carer of a child,
Parent/carer of an adult, Volunteer

Gender: All genders

Contact the service through this online page- <https://www.shantsnas.org.uk/contact>
or email- southhamphshire.branch@nas.org.uk



Information, Advice & Guidance

For adults, young people and children with autism, their parents, carers and professionals

Our information Advice and Guidance team offers a wide range of free services to support individuals, families, and professionals as well as raising autism awareness within the local community.

This service is available pre, during and post diagnosis via the telephone, by email or by appointment at our Hampshire based office. Please note that although we are still available by phone as there is no access to our offices at this time.

We are available on the telephone (Monday to Friday 9 am - 5 pm) and by email. Autism Hampshire offers an information, advice, and guidance service for adults, young people and children with autism, their parents, carers and professionals. The service is available free of charge for people in Hampshire including Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

General Enquiries Tel: 02380 766162

Email: information.advice@autismhampshire.org.uk

Information, Advice & Guidance Offices: Autism Hampshire, 1646 Parkway, Whiteley, Fareham, PO15 7AH

Workshops for families Living in Hampshire and The Isle of Wight

We offer free Autism Support and Information workshops to families and individuals living in Hampshire. These workshops are for families of children and young people who are awaiting an autism assessment in Hampshire.

The aim of the sessions are to provide insight, advice and support prior or during an assessment and diagnosis. Each session will explore a different aspect of your child's unique way of experiencing the world, and suggest practical ways in which their differences can be accommodated and supported.

Each workshop is 3 hours long. The first part consists of a presentation after which there will be an opportunity for questions. The workshops are open to individuals, family members

and others closely associated with the care and support of the child. The course is open to professionals only if they are attending in the capacity as parent or carer.

Information, Advice, Guidance, Signposting & Support

The team have extensive information and knowledge of Hampshire-wide autism related services. They offer information, advice, guidance, support and signposting.

The team also present and attend events to offer support and advice and to raise autism awareness.

This service is available pre, during and post-diagnosis. They support autistic adults, young autistic people and autistic children.

To book in an appointment please email information.advice@autismhampshire.org.uk or call 02380 766162.

Pre, During & Post Diagnostic Pathway

The Information, Advice & Guidance Department is funded through Southampton City Council and CCG, Portsmouth Council and a Hampshire County Council Adult Services Grant to offer support for adults with autism, their families and those connected to them, professionals and the wider autism community.

The Service is based in Southampton and Portsmouth, but also offers drop-in sessions across Hampshire. The Support Service provides advice, guidance signposting and support to:

People who do not yet have an autism diagnosis or who have been referred by their GP for a diagnosis

People after a diagnosis of autism, with specific face-to-face support in helping people understand their diagnosis, what it means for them, and how to make plans to make their life better

Autistic people, their families and other people involved in the person's life and professionals pre-diagnosis, during a diagnosis and post-diagnosis. The advice, guidance, signposting and support is on-going, for as long as a person wishes

People who feel they present with autism characteristics, but do not have a formal diagnosis of autism, their families, others involved in the person's life and professionals.

Anyone who wishes to gain a better understanding of autism. Autism Hampshire manages the Local Autism Directory (LAD) and is able to signpost to a variety of services and information.

Serendipity Community Groups

This leaflet tells you what our serendipity community groups do, who they are for, when the groups run, and how you can join.

What do the Serendipity Community Group do?

Our Serendipity community groups are for adults diagnosed with autism. We accept self-diagnosis.



Groups are supportive and non-judgemental.

Anyone is welcome to join, even if you just come along and listen.



Some groups are online,



and some groups are in person.



All groups are run by a trained volunteer.

Who are the Serendipity groups for?

For all autistic adults aged 18 +.

You can join any group, in any area that you wish.



When are the Serendipity groups run?

The table below shows all the groups we have across Hampshire and when, where, and how often they run:

Group Name	When	Frequency	In Person or Online
Portsmouth Social Group	Monday, 5pm - 7pm	Every other week	In person
St James Park Social Group (Shirley, Southampton)	Tuesday, 11am - 1pm	Every other week	In person
Women's Online Social Group	Tuesday, 7:30pm - 9pm	Every other week	Online
Fareham Social Group	1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10:45am - 12pm	Two times per month	In person
New Forest Social Group	Once a month on Wednesday 1pm - 3pm	Once a month	In person
Serendipity Art Group (Southampton)	Thursday, 3pm - 5pm	Every other week	In person
Eastleigh Social Group	Friday, 4pm - 6pm (Online) Friday, 3pm - 5pm (In Person)	Every week (Alternating between In person and online)	Online & In person
Winchester Craft Group	Sunday, 3pm - 4:30pm	Every other week	In person
Lee on the Solent Social Group	Sunday, 6:30pm - 8:30pm	Every week	In person

How do I join a Serendipity group?

To join a Serendipity social group, you will need to register as a member.

There are 3 ways you can complete the registration form:

1. Our online form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/g1QAmYAg2G>



2. Email.

Please email
serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk
& ask for a registration form.



3. Over the phone (if you don't have access to a computer).

Please call IAG on 02380 766162.



Autism Adventures - Minecraft and Meltdowns

Set up by Michelle Rebello, mum of three on the spectrum, this group aims to support families and celebrate Autism. They also have useful resources for raising awareness and a gamer tags list to join our autists together online. Please request to join the group on Facebook (it is closed to keep member discussions away from individual's timelines).

Members include adults with Autism, parents and carers, professional bodies and local organisations from all over the world.

The group is widely respected and recommended by professional bodies including CAMHS and Autism groups.

Email: michellerebello@hotmail.co.uk

Social Media: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AAMinecraftAndMeltdowns/>

<https://twitter.com/McraftNMeltdown>

Autism Friendly Chill-Out Sessions at Woolston Library

Autism Friendly Chill-Out Sessions at Woolston Library.

For the sessions the meeting room will be set up with low lighting and large, portable sensory equipment available. Additionally bean bags and a range of books will be utilised to create a comfortable calm space for families to use, either to stay in or dip in and out of as they use the full range of library resources and services elsewhere in the building. They welcome chewys, ear defenders, pushchairs and any other aids you want to bring. A social story and shoe park will be available for the events.

If you have any questions or queries please phone on 023 8083 3007 or visit 'Ask the Library'

here: <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/libraries/library-activities/askthe-library.aspx>

Southampton Libraries Facebook page:

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

See: <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/libraries-museums/using-library/local-libraries/woolston-library.aspx>

Benefits Advice

For information on welfare rights, funding, and benefits here are some useful guides:

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) - Government Benefits

Financial support for those unable to work and help working for those able

Contact:

- [0800 169 0310](tel:08001690310)
- <https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/overview>

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) offers:

- Financial support for people unable to work
- Personalised help so the person can work if is able to
- You can apply for ESA if you're employed, self-employed or unemployed.
- You might be transferred if you've been claiming other benefits like Income Support or Incapacity Benefit.

Family Fund

Grants for disabled children aged 0-17

Contact:

- [Family Fund, York, Yorkshire, YO32 9WN](mailto:info@familyfund.org.uk)
- [01904 550055](tel:01904550055)
- info@familyfund.org.uk
- <http://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

Family Fund provide grants to low-income families raising disabled and seriously ill children and young people aged 0-17.

They help ease the additional pressures families face and can help with essential items such as washing machines and clothes but also sensory toys, computers and much needed family breaks together.

Financial Assessment - NHS

Means test - for social care

Contact:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/help-from-social-services-and-charities/financial-assessment-means-test/>

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Information from the NHS on getting a financial assessment for your care.

Hampshire County Council: Direct Payments

Information for those needing care services and equipment

Contact

- [0300 555 1386](tel:03005551386)
- adult.services@hants.gov.uk
- <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/direct-payments>

Direct Payments is money paid by Hampshire County Council to individuals over 16 or carers eligible to receive Social Care Services. It enables people to have greater choice, control and flexibility as to how their care needs are met, allowing people to live more independent lives.

You can receive Direct Payments as an alternative to receiving services from Adult Services which County Council will arrange for you. Direct Payments is not a benefit, nor will it affect any benefits you currently receive. It is not counted as taxable income.

Groups and Forums

Adult entries

Speaking Space Day Service

Specialising in communication for people with a learning disability or autism

Contact: Fleming House, Alma Road, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8ED

02380 987134

Email: officespeakingspace@co.uk

Website: <https://www.speakingspace.co.uk/contact-us/>

ASD/Asperger Support group

3 Counties Counselling and Autism Assessment for adults, aged 18 plus

Contact:

Tel: 07767329624

Email: info@3ccaa.co.uk

Hampshire Autism Voice (HAV)

Group for parent, carers and people with autism established within the Hampshire Autism

Partnership Board (HAPB)

Website: <http://www.hampshireautismvoice.org.uk/>

Mencap Southampton

Working for children, young people and adults with learning disabilities

Contact:

Southampton Mencap, , Southampton, Hampshire, SO17 2NF

Tel: 023 8058 4088

Email: admin@southamptonmencap.co.uk

Website: <http://www.southamptonmencap.org/what-we-do/>

National Autistic Society (NAS) South Hampshire Branch Social Groups

Social groups for children and adults with Asperger's or autism

St Patrick's Church Hall, Woolston, Hampshire, SO19 9BD

Email: southampton@shantsnas.org.uk

Website: <https://www.shantsnas.org.uk/activities>

The G.R.O.W Social Club

For adults with learning, mental and physical difficulties

Fairways House, Southampton, Hampshire, S014 0QB

Tel: 02382549999

Email: thegrowproject@srglimited.co.uk

Website: <https://thegrowproject.co.uk/social-clubs-day-trips/>

Solent Mind Support Line

Our experienced advisors will offer you support and ideas to help you to cope if you:

- are feeling anxious or low and want to talk to someone
- would like practical guidance on how to stay well at home
- want specific support such as benefit or bereavement services, or;
- are caring for someone else and would like support.

Our help is available to everyone and you do not need to be receiving any other kind of mental health support to be able to call us.

Our Support Line is not a counselling or therapy service, but our wellbeing experts will be able to listen to you and offer bitesize support, information and signposting.

Contact details & opening hours

[023 8017 9049](tel:02380179049)

Weekdays: 9am-7pm

Weekends: 10am-2pm

Solent Peer Support Groups

Peer Support is an opportunity for people to use their own experiences to help each other.

Through friendly, informal groups, participants can learn together, support each other and give each other hope. From rock climbing to photography or just simply a tea and a chat, we create spaces where everyone feels safe, accepted and understood.

The groups are run by people who have experienced their own mental health problems, which means everyone can mutually support each other whilst all views and experiences are equally valued.

Our peer support groups are funded by Southampton Integrated Commissioning Group and Mind.

Who is it for?

Peer Support is for anyone who feels that connecting with others could help their emotional health. You do not need to have a diagnosed mental health issue and you do not need to be accessing other kinds of wellbeing support to join us. Just simply pop along to a group of your choice without any referrals.

We understand coming along to a group or activity for the first time can be difficult, so if you would like to talk to someone or meet up with one of our team first, we're happy to help.

Contact Details & Opening Hours

The dates and timings of our groups can be found below. You can contact us with enquires during the following times:

Monday: 9am - 5pm

Tuesday: 9am - 5pm

Wednesday: 9am - 5pm

Thursday: 9am - 5pm

Friday: 9am - 4.30pm

Saturday: Closed

Sunday: Closed

T: Text 'Peer Support to [074 5127 6010](tel:07451276010) and we will call or text you back.

E: sidebyside@solentmind.org.uk



About Us

Welcome to Southampton Autism Support Service.

We are currently a self-funded, Community interest Company, Southampton based autism support service. We provide support, guidance and advocacy for families with children/young people (4-18). We support people who are diagnosed or with suspected Autism

We assist families with children/young people with a suspected/diagnosis of autism. We offer support at any stage of the diagnostic process including post diagnosis. We are volunteers with both personal and professional experience.

We know from experience, that the beginning of this journey in particular can be very overwhelming and may feel isolating at times. Our hope is that we can reduce these feelings by offering a guiding hand through this process from one of our autism family support workers. Our goal is to help raise confidence and empower families by giving them the tools to help deal with the wonderful world of autism.

What we do:

- *Autism Family support workers (one to one)
- *Assess support and Resolve workers
- * SEN sessions
- *Support with understanding/navigation the diagnostic process
- *Support at meetings with schools, CIN, housing, Dr's ect; (advocacy)
- *Help with form filling/communicating with professionals

- *Signpost to relevant agencies
- *Accompanying to support groups
- *Support Group face to face and online
- *Basic advice around benefits/entitlement
- * Courses around Autism
- * Courses for school refusers
- * Life skills courses for 16+

Call: 023832 3203320 or 07803458097

Email: southamptonautismservice@gmail.com

Fb: [Southampton Autism Support Service - SASS | Facebook](#)



Helping people with disabilities to get more out of life

Call:07715356062

hello@supportbuddies.org

48 Dimond Road, Southampton, SO18 1JS

HOW WE CAN HELP

Support Buddies delivers support for people with a variety of needs, including those with challenging behaviours, physical disabilities or other health conditions.

Our approach means that each individual will receive support that is tailored to their specific needs, however complex those needs might be.

You'll notice we don't use the word 'service user' or 'care' and

you won't see us in branded uniforms when out and about in the community. The reason for this is that we're passionate about ensuring that we develop trust with individuals, making them feel as comfortable as possible at all times.

By offering people using our services the benefits of [community based support](#), we are able to provide the kind of support that develops their confidence and social skills, as well as establishing a beneficial routine. By offering this kind of support they are able to maintain independence, while still experiencing a fulfilled life.

What we offer:

- Active Support
- Social & Emotional Support
- Learning Support
- Domestic Support



Choices Advocacy Southampton

We provide the following types of Advocacy for adults:

Community Advocacy (sometimes called professional or non statutory advocacy) for

- people with a learning disability or autism
- people with mental health issues
- people with physical disability or sensory impairments and acquired brain injury
- older people including those with dementia or cognitive impairments

Issues that we can provide advocacy for include

- getting the right care and support
- accessing services
- finding out information
- supporting you to make decisions and choices about the important things in your life (including parenting and child protection issues)
- making a complaint when things go wrong

Person Centred Planning/Life Planning for people to inform their care and support plans

Self Advocacy groups for people with a learning disability or autism

Statutory Advocacy for people who are living in Southampton but funded by other local authorities for example:

- Care Act Advocacy
- Relevant Person's Representative (before LPS comes into force)

Advocacy for people who are funded wholly by Continuing Health Care

- to support them with care and support plans
- support with planning for Personal Health Budgets

Local authorities or CCGs who wish to refer for advocacy may need to commission our service.

Please call us on 02380 783715 or email hello@choices-advocacy.org.uk and a member of the team will be able to help you.