



*Leicestershire Aspergers Syndrome Support Group*

**A Brighter Future**

**Handbook &  
Directory of Services  
for Children with  
Aspergers Syndrome or  
Autistic Spectrum  
Disorders**

**2008**

# Leicestershire Aspergers Syndrome Support Group Children's Handbook & Services Directory

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## Introduction

This Handbook and Directory has been produced by members of the Leicestershire Aspergers Syndrome Support Group (LASSG). The group are parents of Adults and Children with autistic spectrum disorders, in particular Aspergers Syndrome.

**This publication provides information about Autism and Aspergers Syndrome, some guidance on strategies and includes a directory of support and services that are available to children (ie up to age 18) with Aspergers Syndrome and their families.** [Please note there is also an Adults Directory available from the contact address below.] The various agencies, statutory and voluntary are not always aware of what is available.

All the agencies listed here are agreeable to their inclusion but we do not have direct knowledge of all of them. **Inclusion does not imply recommendation.**

This booklet is sent to all services listed within and is available to the families of those with Aspergers or autism-related diagnosis. Please contact the address below for (free) copies of this handbook and directory.

*Contact: Lindy Hardcastle, 31 Flaxfield Close, Groby, Leics LE6 0EZ. Tel 0116 291 6958.*

Please let us know if there are any omissions, additions and amendments.

Please email to [Committee@aspergerleics.org](mailto:Committee@aspergerleics.org).

Visit our website [www.aspergerleics.org](http://www.aspergerleics.org) for more information and links to other resources.

PART ONE is the HANDBOOK and PART TWO is the DIRECTORY OF SERVICES.

Each part has its own Table of Contents.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LASSG is grateful for permission to reproduce material from the Post Diagnosis Pack published by the Gateshead Support Group.

LASSG is grateful for permission from NAS to reproduce information on Autism and Aspergers Syndrome from their website [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk).

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# PART ONE - HANDBOOK

## 1 ABOUT AUTISM and ASPERGERS SYNDROME

Extracted from the NAS website [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk) :-

### 1.1 Autistic Spectrum Disorders – the basics

Although it was first identified in 1943, autism is still a relatively unknown disability. Yet autistic spectrum disorders are estimated to touch the lives of over 500,000 families throughout the UK.

People with autism are not physically disabled in the same way that a person with cerebral palsy may be; they do not require wheelchairs and they 'look' just like anybody without the disability. Due to this invisible nature it can be much harder to create awareness and understanding of the condition.

Because an autistic child looks 'normal' others assume they are naughty or the parents are not controlling the child. Strangers frequently comment on this 'failing'.

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### What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and relates to people around them. Children and adults with autism have difficulties with everyday social interaction. Their ability to develop friendships is generally limited as is their capacity to understand other people's emotional expression.

People with autism can often have accompanying learning disabilities but everyone with the condition shares a difficulty in making sense of the world.

There is also a condition called Aspergers syndrome, which is a form of autism used to describe people who are usually at the higher functioning end of the autistic spectrum.

"Reality to an autistic person is a confusing, interacting mass of events, people, places, sounds and sights. There seems to be no clear boundaries, order or meaning to anything. A large part of my life is spent just trying to work out the pattern behind everything."

- A person with autism

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### What are the characteristics of autism?

People with autism generally experience three main areas of difficulty; these are known as the triad of impairments.

- **Social interaction** (difficulty with social relationships, for example appearing aloof and indifferent to other people).

- **Social communication** (difficulty with verbal and non-verbal communication, for example not fully understanding the meaning of common gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice).
- **Social imagination** (difficulty in the development of interpersonal play and imagination, for example having a limited range of imaginative activities, possibly copied and pursued rigidly and repetitively).

In addition to this triad, repetitive behaviour patterns and resistance to change in routine are often characteristic.

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## **What causes autism?**

The exact cause or causes of autism is/are still not known but research shows that genetic factors are important. It is also evident from research that autism may be associated with a variety of conditions affecting brain development which occur before, during, or very soon after birth.

### **1.2 *Aspergers Syndrome***

#### **Introduction**

As soon as we meet a person we make judgements about them. Just by looking we can guess their age or status, and by the expression on their face or the tone of their voice we can tell immediately if they are happy, angry or sad and respond accordingly.

Not everyone has this natural ability. People with Aspergers syndrome find it more difficult to read the signals which most of us take for granted. As a result they find it more difficult to communicate and interact with others.

Aspergers syndrome is a form of autism, a condition that affects the way a person communicates and relates to others. A number of traits of autism are common to Aspergers syndrome including:

- **difficulty in communicating**
- **difficulty in social relationships**
- **a lack of social imagination and creative play**

However, people with Aspergers syndrome usually have fewer problems with language than those with autism, often speaking fluently, though their words can sometimes sound formal or stilted. People with Aspergers syndrome do not usually have the accompanying learning disabilities associated with autism; in fact, people with Aspergers syndrome are often of average or above average intelligence.

Because of this many children with Aspergers syndrome enter mainstream school and, with the right support and encouragement, can make good progress and go on to further education and employment.

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## **Key characteristics**

Aspergers syndrome shares many of the same characteristics as autism. The key characteristics are:

### **Difficulty with social relationships**

Unlike the person with 'classic' autism, who often appears withdrawn and uninterested in the world around them, many people with Aspergers syndrome want to be sociable and enjoy human contact. They do still find it hard to understand non-verbal signals, including facial expressions, which makes it more difficult for them to form and maintain social relationships with people unaware of their needs.

### **Difficulty with communication**

People with Aspergers syndrome may speak fluently but they may not take much notice of the reaction of the people listening to them; they may talk on and on regardless of the listener's interest or they may appear insensitive to their feelings.

Despite having good language skills, people with Aspergers syndrome may sound over-precise or over-literal - jokes can cause problems as can exaggerated language, turns of phrase and metaphors. A person with Aspergers syndrome may be confused or frightened by a statement like 'she bit my head off'. In order to help a person with Aspergers syndrome to understand you, keep your sentences short - be clear and concise.

### **Lack of imagination**

While they often excel at learning facts and figures, people with Aspergers syndrome find it hard to think in abstract ways. This can cause problems for children in school where they may have difficulty with certain subjects such as literature or religious studies.

### **Special interests**

People with Aspergers syndrome often develop an almost obsessive interest in a hobby or collecting. Usually their interest involves arranging or memorising facts about a special subject, such as train timetables, Derby winners or the dimensions of cathedrals.

“I remember Samuel reciting the distances of all the planets from the sun to a baffled classmate in the playground when he was five. Since then he has had many obsessions, which he loves to talk about at length! Some of his more recent interests, such as the Top 40 chart and collecting trading cards, have helped him develop social skills, as he has been able to share them with others. “ **A parent.**

With encouragement interests can be developed so that people with Aspergers syndrome go on to study or work in their favourite subjects.

### **Love of routines**

People with Aspergers syndrome often find change upsetting. Young children may impose their routines, such as insisting on always walking the same route to school. At school, they may get upset by sudden changes, such as an alteration to the timetable. People with Aspergers syndrome often prefer to order their day according to a set pattern. If they work set hours then any unexpected delay, such as a traffic hold-up, or a late train, can make them anxious or upset.

“Simon's employers used to send him out on errands, delivering urgent letters to City firms. Simon enjoyed these duties and performed them punctually but he got extremely upset if delays on the bus or Underground interfered with his schedule.” **A parent.**

These are the main features of the condition, but because every person is an individual, these characteristics will vary greatly and some may be demonstrated more strongly than others.

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### **What causes Aspergers syndrome?**

The causes of autism and Aspergers syndrome are still being investigated. Many experts believe that the pattern of behaviour from which Aspergers syndrome is diagnosed may not result from a single cause. There is strong evidence to suggest that Aspergers syndrome can be caused by a variety of physical factors, all of which affect brain development - it is not due to emotional deprivation or the way a person has been brought up.

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### **Is there a cure?**

Aspergers syndrome is a developmental condition affecting the way the brain processes information and there is no 'cure'; children with Aspergers syndrome become adults with Aspergers syndrome. Much can be achieved to make life less challenging with appropriate education and support.

With time and patience people with Aspergers syndrome can be taught to develop the basic skills needed for everyday life, such as how to communicate appropriately with people.

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### **The importance of early diagnosis**

Because the condition of people with Aspergers syndrome is not as marked as those with autism, they may not be diagnosed for a long time. This can mean that their particular needs may go unrecognised and parents may blame themselves, or worse still blame their child for their unusual behaviour.

“We were lucky to have a relatively early diagnosis for Samuel. As a result, he has had the necessary support and understanding to be able to attend mainstream primary and secondary school. The staff at his secondary school were given a training session on Aspergers syndrome before he started. Of course, there are sometimes problems but he is never just treated as a 'difficult' child, which could easily be the case if his condition were not understood.” **A parent.**

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## What does the future hold?

At present, there are few facilities specifically for children with Aspergers syndrome. Some children are in mainstream schools where their progress depends on the support and encouragement of parents, carers and teachers. Some children with Aspergers syndrome go to specialist schools for children with autism or learning disabilities.

Because their disability is often less obvious than that of someone with autism, a person with Aspergers syndrome is, in a sense, more vulnerable. They can, sadly, be an easy target for teasing or bullying at school.

As they get older, they may realise that they are different from other people and feel isolated and depressed. People with Aspergers syndrome often want to be sociable and are upset by the fact that they find it hard to make friends.

But the future for people with Aspergers syndrome does not have to be bleak. Adults with Aspergers syndrome can and do go on to live fulfilling lives, to further education and employment and to develop friendships.

In the workplace, people with Aspergers syndrome can offer a great deal - punctuality, reliability and dedication - though informed and understanding employers and colleagues are essential.

## 2 STRATEGIES

### 2.1 Coming to Terms with the Diagnosis

Most parents upon diagnosis need to begin the process of coming to terms with this conclusion. Parents may experience any of or all the following: shock, denial, searching, sadness, anger, anxiety, guilt and acceptance.

There is no right or wrong way. Nor is there an automatic progression through these different feelings. Rather that individuals find their own way through.

Children's reactions are similar to adults but tend to be briefer and more intense. Below is one perspective on how parents can begin to get their head round the diagnosis:

*"Take a deep breath. A big part of the early experience of having an autistic child is what you believe it means. Are you stressed out? Hyperventilating? Mourning the child that was going to be the first high court judge, still to be playing football in the premiership? Your child is the same beautiful individual he was yesterday, before you heard the word 'autism'.*

*These first few weeks are the most dangerous because of the temptation to play the blame game. If you knew what caused this, you could do something about it, right? So it's your husband's fault because you told him not to tickle the baby so much, or because everybody 'on his side' is a little weird, or it's your fault because you had that glass of wine with dinner in the second trimester, or you kept working so late into your pregnancy, or you weren't overjoyed when you found out you were pregnant or...*

*If you have to do that, do it with a friend and not with your spouse. Hurt and blame can cause damage that is hard to repair, and you need each other's support now. The fact*

*is, nobody knows what causes autism; is it genetic, is it related to a virus, is it a metabolic deficiency? Is it related to physical or emotional trauma before or after birth? Maybe in some cases it's one, in other cases another, and in others a combination.*

*Bottom line: if someone wanted to make a child autistic, nobody could tell him or her how. There is no set of chemical or environmental conditions known that creates an autistic child. As you begin to accept your son / daughter as a beautiful little person whose differences have a name, you will lose the need to find blame.*

*Now take another deep breath. It's a whirlwind. A lot of your time will be taken up by this new world, and any assumptions you had about the shape of the rest of your life are being challenged. You are using words and discussing topics that would have sounded like a foreign language just a few short weeks ago. Talk to your partner, your best friend and kids. Do something normal. Play a game. Take a nap."*

### **By a Parent of a child with autism**

#### **2.2 Welcome to Holland**

When you're going to have a baby, it's like you're planning vacation to Italy. You're all excited. You get a whole bunch of guidebooks, you learn a few phrases in Italian so you can get around, and then it comes to pack your bags and head for the airport – for Italy.

Only when you land, the stewardess says, "Welcome to Holland". You look at one another in disbelief and shock, saying "Holland? What are you talking about? I signed up for Italy!" But they explain there been a change of plans and you've landed in Holland, and there you must stay. You go out and buy new guidebooks, you learn some new phrases and you meet people you never knew existed.

The important thing is that you are not in a filthy, plague infested slum full of pestilence and famine. You are simply in a different place than you had planned. It's slower paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy but after you've been there a little while and you have a chance to catch your breath you begin to discover that Holland has windmills; Holland has tulips; Holland has Rembrandts.

But everyone else you know is busy coming and going from Italy. They're all bragging about what a great time they had there and for the rest of your life, you will say: "Yes that's what I had planned".

The pain of that will never, ever go away. You have to accept that pain, because the loss of that dream, the loss of that plan, is a very, very significant loss. But if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you will never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things about Holland!

Carol Turkington – Family Support Institute, Gateshead

#### **One Parent's Experience**

"I went into diagnosis feeling like a parent and came out feeling like a carer"

### **2.3 Relatives and Friends**

The process of adaptation will also include your friends and relatives. They too have to adjust to a different reality. Parents report a range of friends and relatives reactions. Some reported that their relatives were heartbroken. Others blamed the parents of the child for the child's disability. Still others denied the diagnosis, asserting your child is just a "naughty boy or girl". A lot of difficult adjustment is necessary for everyone.

Parents also want to stress things are not as bad as they may now appear and many have achieved lots of improvements in their child's behaviour. Being realistic and hopeful can be the best approach.

### **2.4 Siblings**

Children with a brother or sister with a disability often struggle to cope with this disruption to family life. There are several resources aimed at helping siblings come to terms with this difference from other people. See also [www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk).

#### Reading

'Siblings of children with autism: a guide for families' (1994) by Sandra L. Harris. Published by Woodbine House.

This is an excellent book for both parents and older siblings. It provides an invaluable guide to understanding sibling relationships, how autism affects these relationships and what families can do to support their other children as they cope with the needs of a child with autism.

'My brother is different' (1997) by Louise Gorrod. Published by The National Autistic Society. Price £4.99.

Written by a mother of an autistic child, the book explains an autistic child's behaviour in terms that young siblings will be able to understand. The book is aimed at children aged 5-8.

### **2.5 Parent's Tips**

- ❖ Get a big page a day diary for Appointments, questions for others that come to mind and your child's behaviour. This will help you to learn about your child's trends of behaviour and to notice little but real improvements. This is very important.
- ❖ Buy a trampoline - (otherwise beds may break!)
- ❖ Don't be afraid to question professionals.
- ❖ Start a crash program of self-education. Most parents must become expert at the nuances of early intervention.
- ❖ Solicit help from friends and family. Like diamonds Autism is forever so the sooner you surround yourself with a support system the better you'll be able to deal with the rocky road ahead.

- ❖ Videos: All the DISNEY sing-alongs are good. My child started enjoying 'real life' videos involving sea creatures, wild animals when she was 5. Before then, only animated videos would hold her interest
- ❖ Persevere with helping your children maintain contact with other kids outside school. It can be very tiring but it really helps with their social interactions at a later date.
- ❖ Make sure you talk to other people. Use the phone to keep in contact with friends and relatives; a cordless one is especially useful in talking whilst following your child round the house.
- ❖ If you speak more than one language at home make sure you speak one language when communicating with your child. It is very unlikely they will be able to switch between them.
- ❖ Talk to everyone you can, but form your own opinions.

## **2.6 Tactics**

The following could help when working with those with Aspergers, or the milder end of the autistic spectrum:-

- Structure is GOOD. Free choice can cause anxiety so being specific and clear about what to do, how to do it, how long it should take etc will help
- Clear Rules and Consistency. Check what you have said is understood. Then do follow through and do what you agreed.
- Always forewarn. Tell the person what to expect. Give plenty of notice when you can.
- Use clear and precise language. (Language interpretation is very literal.) Avoid ambiguities.
- Don't always rely on verbal communication. Writing things down really helps. Diagrams and symbols are also good.
- Build in regular breaks as long periods of concentration can be difficult.
- Recognise stress and slow down or stop. Check and agree how to proceed.
- Don't crowd. Allow plenty of personal space.
- Don't overload with information. Allow time for information to be processed.
- Teaching social skills; using role play to model more 'normal' conversation.
- Provide a safe and supervised place for people with AS to meet each other and learn how to socialise.
- Use cognitive therapies to reduce time spent on inappropriate obsessions and motor rituals.
- Aim to transform an obsession into a functional, useful activity.

There is a lengthy and excellent Survival Guide at this website:-  
<http://www.autismandcomputing.org.uk/marc2.en.html>  
This is written by Mark Segar (who is on the Autistic Spectrum).

See also Mark's essay 'The Battles of an Autistic Thinker':-  
<http://www.autismandcomputing.org.uk/marc1.en.html>

### **3 BOOKLIST**

#### **Aspergers Syndrome Support Group Booklist**

The following is a list of books bought by the Group to be loaned out to parents. They are available at the Leicester Group meetings. [See [www.aspergerleics.org](http://www.aspergerleics.org) for details of meetings.]

1. Aspergers Syndrome – a Guide for Educators and parents. Brenda Myles and Richard Simpson
2. Talking Together – a practical resource for schools and parents about sex and relationships. Lesley Kerr-Edwards and Lorna Scott.
3. Aspergers Syndrome and Sexuality. Isabelle Henault and Tony Attwood
4. Autism and Aspergers Syndrome. Uta Frith
5. Aspergers Syndrome in Adolescence. Liane Holliday-Willey
6. Succeeding in College with Aspergers Syndrome – a student guide. John Harper, Maria Lawlor and Michael Fitzgerald
7. Can't Eat, Won't Eat. Brenda Legge (2 Copies)
8. Aspergers Syndrome – a guide for parents and professionals. Tony Attwood
9. It Can Get Better – a guide for parents and carers. Paul Dickinson and Liz Hannah
10. Autistic Spectrum Disorders – an aid to diagnosis. Lorna Wing
11. What is Aspergers Syndrome and How will it affect me? – A guide for young people. The national Autistic Society
12. Schools, Units and Classes – for children with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome.
13. Of Mice and Aliens – an Aspergers adventure. Jude Welton
14. Adam's Alternative Sportsday – an Aspergers story Jude Welton.
15. Blue Bottle Mystery – an Asperger adventure. Kathy Hoopmann
16. Lisa and the Lacemaker – an Asperger Adventure. Kathy Hoopmann

17. Children and Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome (PDA) – a booklet for brothers and sisters. Julie Davies
18. A Lot to Say. A guide for Social Workers and others working with disabled children and young people with communication impairment. Jenny Morris
19. Kids in the Syndrome Mix. A one stop guide for parents and teachers and other professionals Martin Kutscher
20. Can I Tell You about Aspergers Syndrome – a guide for family and friends. Jude Welton.
21. Challenging Behaviour and Autism. Philip Whitaker
22. Why Does Chris do that? – an understanding of the unique difficulties associated with autism and Aspergers Syndrome. Tony Attwood
23. Build Your Own Life. – a self help guide for individuals with Aspergers Syndrome. Wendy Lawson.
24. An Aspergers Dictionary of Everyday Expressions. Ian Stuart-Hamilton.
25. How to Find Work that Works for People with Aspergers Syndrome – the ultimate guide for getting people with Aspergers into the workplace. Gail Hawkins.
26. How to Live with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome. Chris Williams and Barry White
27. Developing Pupils Social Communication Skills. George Thomas
28. The Good Practice Guide
29. Glass Half Empty, Glass Half Full – an Aspergers Story. Chris Mitchell
30. The S E N Toolkit. Book and Video

Other books pamphlets and videos can be ordered from the following:

NAS Publications  
 E- Motional Ltd  
 Units 2 -3 Gales Gardens  
 Birkbeck Street  
 London E2 0EJ  
[www.autism.org.uk/pubs](http://www.autism.org.uk/pubs)

Jessica Kingsley Publications  
 116, Pentonville Road  
 London N1 9JB  
[www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com) and [www.dotolearn.com](http://www.dotolearn.com)

a website with a range of games and activities to help parents and others develop skills in their children who have disabilities – includes autism

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### 1.1 General Contacts

Leicestershire Educational Psychology Service: 0116 284 5100.  
Leicester City Educational Psychology Service: (0116) 221 1200  
Website [www.leicester.gov.uk/index.asp?pgid=5399](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/index.asp?pgid=5399)  
Email: [psychology@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:psychology@leicester.gov.uk)

The Educational Psychology Service provides specialist support and assistance to schools. It works closely in partnership with parents, teachers, children and others organisations providing services to children / young people (aged 0-19 years) within the local Authority and Health Service. The Pre-School Special Needs Team offers support to teachers in the Foundation Stage in order to facilitate the earliest possible identification of children's special needs.

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Leicestershire Autism Outreach Team (AOT):

The Autism Outreach Team is part of Leicestershire LEA's Specialist Teaching Service. The Team offers support to children and young people with autistic spectrum disorders aged three to nineteen years, their schools and families.

All the children supported by the Team, other than pre-school children and young people in further or higher education, have a Statement of Special Educational Needs that specifies the Team's involvement. They are placed in settings other than specialist autism schools or units. Most of the children are in mainstream provision, although many are placed in the special sector. The work undertaken by the Team includes assessment of individual needs, assistance in planning appropriate interventions and advice in the implementation of teaching and behaviour programmes.

The Autism Outreach Team is involved in the preparation and delivery of training to colleagues in schools, other professionals and to parents. The Team has also written and compiled a range of highly regarded resources, some of which have been published and are available nationally and abroad.

The Autism Outreach Team consists of 10.2 full time equivalent posts. One of the teaching posts is dedicated to supporting pre-schoolers and their families. Another offers advice and support to Further and Higher Education establishments on a traded basis. Two additional full time teachers are deployed to a specialist autism unit attached to a mainstream primary school. The Autism Outreach Team is supported by three practitioners, two of whom work with children of pre-school age and support transition into school.

The Autism Outreach Team seeks to maintain close relations with statutory and voluntary agencies that are involved with the education of children with autistic spectrum disorders in order that the most appropriate and effective provision can be made.

Contact: Specialist Teaching Service: 01530 513 600  
E-mail: [STS@leics.gov.uk](mailto:STS@leics.gov.uk)  
Rutland Autism Outreach: 01572 758496  
Leicester City Learning and Autism Support Team: provides support to schools on an individual, group and whole school basis in relation to special educational needs.  
Tel: 0116 225 4800  
Special Needs Teaching Service, New Parks House, Pindar Road, Leicester LE3 9RN

City and County AOTs provide Parents' Workshops, aimed mainly at parents of newly diagnosed children. New parent workshops which follow on from these, covering specific topics in more detail are being run by the NAS:- HELP!2 Seminars:-  
Michaela Krupinski, Administrator, Lorraine MacAlister, Family Support Programme Officer, 6th Floor, Castle Heights, 72 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham NG1 6BJ  
Tel: 0115 847 3530

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Leicestershire Pre-school Support Worker: Jane Mansfield, (01530) 513600  
(Earlybird)

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LAS helpline 0116 2916958 - Lindy Hardcastle can give advice and signpost callers to other appropriate services.

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NAS Education Advice, Advocacy and Tribunal Support Line 0845 070 4002

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Leicester Community Legal Advice Centre Alliance House, Bishop Street – in the same building as CAB and Consumer Advice Centre. Tel 0845 456 0074.  
National Community Legal Advice helpline is on 0845 345 4 345

Solicitors with a specialty in Education Law:-

Bryony Walker @ Mortimers 01746 761000  
Kate Fletcher, Yogi Amin @ Irwin Mitchell 0870 1500 100

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DFES (Dept for Education and Skills)

Contact for **CODE OF PRACTICE on SEN**

0845 602 2260

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/guidanceonthelaw/dfeepub/jul00/020700>

Andrew Taylor, Special Educational Needs Division

Department of Education and Employment

Area 2T6

Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7925 6363 Fax: 020 7925 6648

E. mail: [andrew.taylor@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.taylor@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)

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## **1.2 Special Schools**

West Gate School, Glenfield Road, Leicester LE3 6DN Tel: (0116) 285 6181

Maplewell Hall School, Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves, Leics LE12 8QY.

Tel: (01509) 890237

Email: [admin@maplewell.leics.sch.uk](mailto:admin@maplewell.leics.sch.uk)

<http://www.maplewell.leics.sch.uk/>

Newbold Verdon County Primary School, Dragon Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leics LE9 9NG Autistic Unit opened in 1999.

Tel: (01455) 822362

Email: [office.admin@newboldverdon.leics.sch.uk](mailto:office.admin@newboldverdon.leics.sch.uk)

Website: <http://www.newboldverdonprimaryschool.co.uk/>

Birch Wood School (Melton Area Special School) Grange Drive, Melton, LE13 1HA

Tel. 01664 483340

Website: <http://www.birchwoodschool.co.uk/> [Contact form on the website.]

Netherhall School, Netherhall Road, Leicester LE5 1DT Tel. 0116 241 7258

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Rutland Local Authority and the Vale of Catmose College are opening an exciting addition to the existing SEN Provision at the College.

From September 2006 this five place provision for KS3 and KS4 pupils with autism will be opening. For pupils needing a high degree of structured teaching coupled with the social potential to benefit from some group teaching with non-autistic and mainstream peers, this provision creates the potential for a truly individualised programme.

The 730 place college already contains the Enhanced Provision for the county. A strong Learning Support Team provides teaching and mainstream support for 15 pupils with a range of Special Educational Needs including ASD. A newly opened life skills area has created a learning environment for food technology, gardening and woodwork.

A few places may be available to neighbouring authorities. For more information or to enquire about a place contact Sandra Craker at Rutland Children and Young People's Services on 01572 758496 or e-mail [scraker@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:scraker@rutland.gov.uk)

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### Research Project

Notschool.net is an online research project looking at ways of re-engaging young people of school age (14+) back into learning. These young people have been out of the more traditional educational systems for a variety of personal and logistical reasons. They include the phobic, ill, disaffected, sick, pregnant and the excluded. Notschool.net is specifically aimed at those for whom traditional alternatives such as home tutoring have not worked.

During its first phase, Notschool.net established a virtual community of 100 young people who were given the opportunity to develop their self-esteem and be reintroduced to learning. This was achieved through the support of mentors, buddies, experts and the use of new technology.

The success of Notschool.net exceeded all expectations and is now in its third phase. It is being rolled out to Education Authorities across the UK and overseas, creating a multinational and supportive learning community.

See [www.notschool.net](http://www.notschool.net) and [www.thecademy.net](http://www.thecademy.net)

Notschool.net is part of TheCademy Working towards inclusion.

### **1.3 Parent Partnership Service/Scheme**

From their website:-

*[Parent Partnership Services \(PPS\)](#) are designed to ensure that parents and carers of children with special educational needs (SEN) have access to information, advice and guidance on SEN matters to allow them to make informed decisions about their child's education. PPS can also help prevent difficulties from developing into disagreements. They are either run at arm's length from the Local Authority (LA), or partly or wholly provided by another provider. The SEN and Disability Act 2001 made PPS statutory, with LAs having a duty to ensure that any parent within their authority is given advice and information about their child's SEN.*

*The Parent Partnership Service is a confidential and impartial service that supports families who have children with Special Educational Needs. We support families of children and young people aged 0 to 19 years with any educational issues. They do not need to have a statement of special educational need or a medical diagnosis of disability.*

*We may help in a number of ways, including:*

- Advice and information over the telephone*
- Home visits*
- Support at meeting with school/local authority*
- Help writing reports*

*We also offer support groups and outreach services in various locations around the county.*

See the website: [http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/education/going\\_to\\_school/parents.htm](http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/education/going_to_school/parents.htm)  
or email: [parent-partnership-service@leics.gov.uk](mailto:parent-partnership-service@leics.gov.uk)

Parent Partnership officers for City and County:- 0116 275 2097  
Blaby Stokes Primary School, Queens Road, Blaby, Leicester, LE8 4EG

#### **1.4 IPSEA**

Independent Panel for Special Education Advice. IPSEA is a volunteer-based organisation and many of the volunteers providing telephone advice and support at Tribunals are themselves parents of children with special educational needs who have been helped by IPSEA in the past. Volunteers providing a second professional opinion service are trained and experienced professionals working in special education, as educational psychologists, speech therapists, teachers, etc.

IPSEA 6 Carlow Mews, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1EA  
Advice line: 0800 0184016  
Contact IPSEA: 01394 384711  
Email (for information only, not advice): [ipsea.info@ipsea.org.uk](mailto:ipsea.info@ipsea.org.uk)  
Website: [www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)

#### **1.5 ACE**

The Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) is an independent registered charity, which offers information about state education in England and Wales for parents of school age children. They offer free telephone advice on many subjects like exclusion from school, bullying, special educational needs and school admission appeals. Advice booklets can be downloaded or ordered from the website.

##### **Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) Ltd**

1c Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ  
Contact: Advice: Freephone Mon-Fri 10-5 pm 0808 800 5793  
Exclusion information line (24hr answer phone): 020 7704 9822  
Exclusion advice line (Mon-Fri 10am-5pm): 0808 800 0327  
Text the keyword **ASKACE** to **68808** and follow the instructions for free booklets, tips and advice tailored to your questions.  
Email [enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk)  
Website [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

#### **1.6 OAASIS**

OAASIS - Office for Advice, Assistance, Support and Information on Special needs – can offer: help and advice via a Helpline, email or letter on any aspect of special educational needs; free information sheets on a range of learning disabilities (including 7 on Aspergers Syndrome and 3 on adult Aspergers Syndrome) and other related SEN topics; publications for more in-depth knowledge; a free mailing list for SEN information 3 times a year; holiday/respite/homes/independent special school lists and more.  
Web: [www.oaasis.co.uk](http://www.oaasis.co.uk)

Helpline: 0800 902 0732

Email: [oaasis@cambiagroup.com](mailto:oaasis@cambiagroup.com)

Address: OAASIS – Freepost, RLYY-TAUC-YRYS, 1-2 Brock House, Grigg Lane,  
Brockenhurst SO42 7RE

OAASIS can also provide advice and prospectuses on Cambian Education's residential special schools and post 16 units specifically for Aspergers Syndrome. Web:

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

## **2 BEFRIENDING**

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**2.2 Menphys – see entry in Section 3 below. 21**

### **2.1 The National Autistic Society at [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)**

Locally information about the befriending service can be obtained from: Gill Keeling, Voluntary Support Officer, NAS, PO Box 7911, Leicester, LE7 7ZU

Telephone: 0116 236 7524

Anyone with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder can request a befriender and the NAS match volunteers to the wishes and interests of the person with ASD and to where they live. Volunteers can be matched with an adult, teenager or child.

### **2.2 Menphys – see entry in Section 3 below.**

### **3 RESPITE & SUPPORT**

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

Service provided: Helpline Information, advice publications

Telephone: (Mon-Fri 10-4 pm) 0845 070 4004  
393 City Road, London, EC1V 1NG  
Website: [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)  
NAS Parent-to-Parent helpline 0800 9 520 520

#### **National Autistic Society (Regional Office)**

Service provided:

The Development Officer organises regional workshops covering a range of topics that are of interest to National Autistic Society members whether parents or professionals.

These workshops are free to members of the National Autistic Society. Non-members may attend but a fee may be charged. Also work with representatives from the local authorities about the needs of people with autistic spectrum disorders and their families, giving advice about provision and sitting on inter-agency forums and working parties. The training and Consultancy Department offers a wide range of training and consultancy services for statutory, private and voluntary organisations to help them develop training packages to meet their specific needs within the field of autistic spectrum disorders.

Contact: Kate Spink 0115 911 3360  
Address; Castle Heights, 4th Floor, 72 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham NG1 6BJ  
e-mail: [kate.spink@nas.org.uk](mailto:kate.spink@nas.org.uk) or [ester.vickers@nas.org.uk](mailto:ester.vickers@nas.org.uk)

### The National Autistic Society Leicestershire Services

#### Service Provided:

Day programmes devised around individual needs also integrating a combination of social communication and social skills development. Outreach service – the National Autistic Society provides specialised staff to work within individuals own homes, local communities and local colleges. Assessment packages – consultancy including recommendations for development. Training services for carers, professionals and interested parties

Contact: Angela Winstanley 0116 286 6956  
Grove Brook House Resources Centre, Brook Street, Whetstone, Leics LE8 6LA  
Email: [Leicester@nas.org.uk](mailto:Leicester@nas.org.uk)

### **3.2 Leicestershire Branch of the NAS**

Information, advice and support on our telephone helpline – available all reasonable hours. Regular Newsletter. We work closely with education departments, social service and many other statutory and voluntary agencies to improve services for people of all ages on the autistic spectrum and their families. We have limited funds available for equipment and staff training for autism related services. We also support playschemes and out of school activities for children,

Offers advice for people with autism and their families. Support is given over the telephone and at meetings. There is a quarterly newsletter produced.

Contact LAS Helpline (Lindy) 0116 291 6958  
For the quarterly newsletter contact:-  
Email [carole@heubeck.freeseve.co.uk](mailto:carole@heubeck.freeseve.co.uk)

### **3.3 Leicestershire Branch-NAS Support Groups**

#### Loughborough ASD Group :

Contact: Carole Heubeck, 5 Grey Crescent, Newtown Linford, Leics. LE6 0AA  
Tel: (01530) 244790  
Email [carole@heubeck.freeseve.co.uk](mailto:carole@heubeck.freeseve.co.uk)

Rutland and Melton Support Group: Contact Carole Gamble 01664 434502

Market Harborough Support Group: SPECTRUM  
Amanda Robson 07597 932794

Birchwood Support group: Contact Lesley Herbert 01664 565155

Castle Donnington Support group:  
ASPECT-Castle Donnington Community College  
Contact Jane Sherwood 01332 850709

Jigsaw Support Group for parents and carers of children with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome. Meets at Menphys Centre, Launceston Road, Leicester.  
Contact Dave Nutting 07954 172913.

### **3.4 LINK-UP**

Contact Carole Heubeck:- Tel: (01530) 244790  
Email [carole@heubeck.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:carole@heubeck.freeserve.co.uk)  
to be placed on the mailing list for the quarterly LAS Link-Up newsletter

### **3.5 Leicestershire Aspergers Syndrome Support Group**

Offers support and information for adults and children with Aspergers Syndrome and their families. Regular support meetings are held bi-monthly (odd months), on the second Monday, 7.15-9.15pm at the Baptist Church Hall, Buckminster Road, Leicester LE3 9TA. Advice, support and a sympathetic ear are always available.

Contact: Shelagh Wilson – Chair 0116 270 1074  
Lindy Hardcastle (LAS helpline) 0116 291 2958  
email [info@aspergerleics.org](mailto:info@aspergerleics.org).

### **3.6 CLASP the Carers Centre**

Unit 19, 4th Floor, Matrix House, 7 Constitution Hill, Leicester, LE1 1PL  
Telephone: 0116 251 0999 Fax 0116 251 3514

Part of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, CLASP is a charitable organisation providing quality services to carers across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. These include an advocacy service, befriending and volunteer scheme, counselling services, benefits advice, training sessions and a support group for carers, as well as information and advice on a wide range of services, facilities and other organisations. They also produce a quarterly newsletter for carers with events, information and any updates on local and national developments relating to carers. They have considerable experience supporting carers, across a range of cared for ages and disabilities and can offer home visits. They can provide:-

- advocacy and support regarding any caring issue, e.g. support carers at meetings or liaising with professionals on your behalf etc;
- a befriending service by trained and CRB checked volunteers;
- benefits advice for carers and the individuals they care for;
- a chance to meet other carers and enjoy a wide range of social and leisure events;
- a listening ear to let off steam!;
- a counselling service to help resolve emotional difficulties you may have as a result of your caring role;
- training for carers on a wide range of topics including stress management, IT skills, lifting and handling, confidence training and first aid;

- quarterly newsletter for carers on the circulation database;
- language support for those speaking Asian languages;
- access to internet linked computers for carers' use;
- a well stocked information area for carers;
- a weekly drop-in session on Tuesday mornings 9.30 -12.30.

### **3.7 Mencap**

Mencap Information Service provides information and advice for families of children and adults with learning disabilities. Having both local and national organisations the service is aimed at carers of people with learning disabilities and other interested groups, eg Social Workers, Community Nurses etc. Self referrals can be made. The service provider has informed us that workers are CRB checked.

Information about Mencap can be obtained from [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk) and from the Information Officer, 54 Ryder Road, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE3 6UJ  
 Telephone: 0116 285 6514  
 Email: [niccilucas@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:niccilucas@yahoo.co.uk)

### **3.8 Menphys**

Information about the services Menphys can offer can be obtained from [www.menphys.org.uk](http://www.menphys.org.uk)

#### Menphys Special Outreach Service

This service supports the families of disabled children and young people aged 0 –19 years. Offers listening and befriending., empowering and outreach. Helps access information on resources, support groups and childcare. Raises awareness of disability related benefits, other financial support and help in claiming. Also provides Disability Equality Training and support for childminders and other Early Years Providers to break down barriers faced by disabled children, young people and families when accessing childcare, play and leisure activities. Parents/carers can contact Service direct. Covers Leicestershire and Leicester.

The Special Outreach Service (SOS) service is at [www.menphys.org.uk/sos](http://www.menphys.org.uk/sos)  
 Service Manager: Lyn Edwards  
 Tel: 01455 899111  
 Email: [lyn.edwards@menphys.org.uk](mailto:lyn.edwards@menphys.org.uk)

#### Main Office

Menphys SOS, 27 Upper Bond Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 1RH.  
 Telephone: 01455 899111  
 Fax: 01455 894875

Covers the districts of Blaby, Oadby and Wigston, North West Leicestershire , Hinckley and Bosworth

#### Branch Office Melton:

Menphys SOS, Birchwood Area Special School, Grange Drive, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 1HA  
 Telephone: 01664 483315

Covers the districts of Melton, Harborough and Charnwood

#### Branch Office City:

Menphys SOS, C/O Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Mantle Road, Leicester LE3 5HG

Telephone: 0116 225 2060  
Fax: 0116 225 2061

### **3.9 LAMP (Leics Action for Mental Health)**

Registered charity promoting mental health in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland. Works primarily with people experiencing mental distress and with carers. Its advocacy and information services empower people to make informed choices, to express their views and to access rights and entitlements.

Contact: 0116 255 6286  
Email [lamp@lampdirect.org.uk](mailto:lamp@lampdirect.org.uk)  
Website [www.lampdirect.org.uk](http://www.lampdirect.org.uk)  
Leicestershire Action for Mental Health Project, 65 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 6YF

### **3.10 Parent & Carer Council (PCC)**

From their website:-

*We are a County group of Parents and Carers of children with a wide range of special needs and disabilities. We have all experienced the challenges and difficulties that can be faced in getting the support and care our children need.*

*We share a common goal...we are committed to making services better for our own children and others. We are all service users and apply the expertise and experience we have gained in caring for our children to help others.*

*We want to help to improve the services provided by:-*

- *Health Care*
- *Education settings, playgroups, leisure facilities*
- *Social Services*
- *Voluntary agencies*

For further information including details of all local groups and how to get involved:

Contact Sue Harrison 07968 857598 or Jane 07870 688973

C/O Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Mantle Road, Leicester LE3 5HG

Website:- [www.parentcarercouncil.co.uk](http://www.parentcarercouncil.co.uk)

email [sue@parentcarercouncil.co.uk](mailto:sue@parentcarercouncil.co.uk) or [jane@parentcarercouncil.co.uk](mailto:jane@parentcarercouncil.co.uk)

### **3.11 Leicestershire Portage Service**

The Leicestershire Portage Service is a home-visiting service for pre-school children who have special needs. It is based on the common-sense principle that parents are the key figures in the care and development of their child. Leicestershire Portage Service now has a new base at Rothley House, Coalville.

The Leicestershire Portage Service is appropriate for children:

- from birth to 4½ years
- with significant learning difficulties
- who live in Leicestershire
- who are not at playgroup or nursery for more than 2½ days a week.

Parents need to be able to work with their child for a short period each day, and record this. Portage is one of several services available and it may not suit every family. The Portage Managers will visit to discuss this following the referral to the Leicestershire Portage Service.

See the website [www.portage.org.uk](http://www.portage.org.uk).

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

Rothley House, Coalville Business Park, Jackson Street, Coalville, Leics, LE67 3NR  
Tel 01530 513640

### **3.12 BRIDGES**

This is the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland initiative and is a way of helping young people with needs get the services they require and making sure those services are co-ordinated. Bridges is for all children 0-19 years and will help identify vulnerable children and make sure the agencies providing services are aware of each other and that progress on services can be followed to ensure the child's needs are met. It provides 4 elements of support:-

- a) A children and young persons service directory and website to access information [www.irtbridges.org.uk](http://www.irtbridges.org.uk)
- b) Shared contact information
- c) A common system across agencies for contacting and assessment needs
- d) "Signal" information that highlights concerns to link workers to find better solutions.

Telephone: 0116 305 8727

email [irtbridges@leics.gov.uk](mailto:irtbridges@leics.gov.uk)

Bridges ISA Programme, 16 Leicester Road, Blaby, Leicester LE8 4GQ.

### **3.13 Special Needs Family Support Centre (Red Cross)**

The centre provides an information and support service for carers of children and young people with any special needs or disability. The centre has a Sensory room, ball pool, computer suite, toy library and large play area. An outreach service is available throughout Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The centre is open Monday– Friday 9am – 4.30pm

Contact: Anne Payne

0116 271 0359

Special Needs Family Support Centre, Bradbury House, 54 Kenilworth Drive, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5LG

### **3.14 REALITY**

Reality aims to support the whole family unit through Autistic Spectrum Disorder/Aspergers Syndrome. No formal diagnosis is required. Reality hold monthly Support Group meetings at the New Parks House / Parkfield School, Pindar Road, New Parks, usually between 11am and 1pm on the first or second Thursday of the month. The group organise activities, trips & outings for the whole family. We are a friendly group and welcome new members. To find out more and to be added to Reality's mailing list contact as below.

Contact Leisa Smith 0116 241 4079  
Mobile: 07879 428553  
Email: [leisa\\_smith3@hotmail.com](mailto:leisa_smith3@hotmail.com)  
40 Skampton Road, Goodwood, Leicester LE5 6TP

### **3.15 Afasic**

Afasic is the UK charity representing children and young adults with speech, language and communication impairments, working for their inclusion in society and supporting their parents and carers. Provides information for parents and professionals and produces a range of helpful publications and newsletters.

Contact: Helpline Mon-Fri 10.30 am – 2.30 pm 0845 355577  
Email [info@afasic.org.uk](mailto:info@afasic.org.uk)  
Website [www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)

### **3.16 The Glebe House Project**

This project supports adults and children with a learning disability. The children's service includes an After School Club, full days of activities on Saturdays and playschemes during the school holidays.

Contact: Sue McGrath 01509 218096  
Email [annfolkes.glebe190@virgin.net](mailto:annfolkes.glebe190@virgin.net)  
Glebe House (Charnwood) Ltd, 190 Forest Road, Loughborough LE11 3HU

### **3.17 Break**

BREAK is a registered charity that provides help for children, adults and families with special needs - such as challenging behaviour or physical and learning disabilities. More information can be obtained from [www.break-charity.org](http://www.break-charity.org).

### **3.18 Take-a-Break Scheme (County)**

The aim of this scheme is to enable carers to take a break. To apply your child must be in receipt of High or Middle rate Care Component of the DLA (Disability Living Allowance) OR High Rate Mobility Component. The child must also have no other help from Social Services. Contact Caroline Coxon 07786 626564

### **3.19 Break Away Scheme (City)**

Contact Bena Blankley 0116 299 5799

## 4 HEALTH

*[Under development]*

Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is a specialist NHS provision for children and young people, experiencing significant mental health difficulties. The Service has two main functions. The first is to assess and treat mental health difficulties and developmental disorders; the second is to assist the vital role offered by other services in supporting children and young people experiencing these difficulties.

CAMHS prioritises children and young people who have acute mental health problems and are at risk of harming themselves or others. Where this risk is felt to be immediate and critical, the service operates a 24-hour 'on-call' rota.

CAMHS, Westcotes House, Westcotes Drive, Leicester LE3 0QU  
Tel: 0116 2252918  
Website: [www.camhs.org.uk](http://www.camhs.org.uk)

Child and Family Psychiatric Service  
Westcotes House, Westcotes Drive, Leicester LE3 0QU  
Telephone: 0116 225 2900/2855  
Fax : 0116 2252899

Adolescent Psychiatric Unit  
Oakham House, 7 Herongate Road, Leicester LE5 OAW  
Telephone: 0116 2252800  
Fax: 0116 2252801

SCHSS – Children's Health Services Bridge Park Plaza  
Paediatrics, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language etc  
Bridge Park Road, Thurmaston, Leicester LE4 8PQ  
Telephone: 0116 225 2525

## 5 SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH (Formerly Social Services)

Leicester City Social Care and Health Department provides a wide range of support services for children, young people and families.

### Leicester City Social Care and Health ACCESS TEAM

1 Grey Friars, Leicester LE1 5PH 0116 253 1191

Outside hours emergencies 0116 256 8374

Website [www.leicester.gov.uk](http://www.leicester.gov.uk) under 'your council and services'.

The Duty and Assessment team at the address above are the first point of contact for all enquiries about services. It provides an assessment of children's needs and determines whether a child needs support or protection by Social Services or 'sign posts' families to more appropriate resource providers. There is an initial assessment worker responsible for assessments of disabled children. Following assessment the family may be referred on to a long-term child care team or to the Specialist Disabled Children's Team.

### Leicestershire County Council Social Care and Health

The Family and Information Service, Leicestershire County Council, County Hall, Leicester Road, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8RL. Telephone: 0116 305 6545

email: [childrensocialcare@leics.gov.uk](mailto:childrensocialcare@leics.gov.uk)

Adults Section 0116 265 7404

Educational Enquiries 0116 305 6631

Outside hours emergency contact 0116 255 1606

Website [www.leics.gov.uk](http://www.leics.gov.uk) under 'social care'.

The government is implementing across the UK a unification of all children's education and services as a single provision. The new Directorate brings together staff from a range of disciplines, working together to provide support for children, young people, schools, families and carers. It is called Children and Young Peoples Services. The new provision brings together staff formerly working in Social Care & Health, Community and Environment and Education Services in order to create integrated services for children, young people and families.

## 6 BENEFITS

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### **OVERVIEW**

The benefits system is a maze which can seem impenetrable. Most of the benefits available are for ADULTS with Autism or CARERS. The benefits mentioned here are those relating to the under 18s with autism or their carers.

Most benefits are accessed through Job Centre Plus. Contact Addresses are below but they can be accessed at the website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

See also the Disability & Carers Service at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/benefits/dcs/> which is part of the Dept of Work and Pensions (DWP).

There is also information on the UK government website [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) . Follow the links for DISABLED PEOPLE and CARING FOR SOMEONE. You will then see FINANCIAL SUPPORT or MONEY MATTERS.

The benefits to consider are:-

#### **Income Support**

This is a means-tested, non-contributory, non-taxable benefit. It may be claimable for young people (16+) at college or in residential care accommodation.

#### **Employment and Support Allowance**

This benefit includes young people (16+). It is for those unfit for work through illness or disability. To qualify applicants may need to go through the Personal Capability Assessment (PCA). The applicant may be 'passported' through if receiving DLA. The requirement for NI contributions is waived for claimants under 20.

#### **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)**

This is a very important benefit for all children. It is made up of 2 components – mobility and care. It is payable on grounds of physical and/or mental health problems. Receipt of DLA can have a positive knock-on effect on other benefits.

Contact **Disability Benefits Unit**, Warbreck House, Warbreck Hill, Blackpool FY2 0YJ. Tel 0845 712 3456.

#### **Carers Allowance**

This is a benefit paid to some carers. The carer must be 16 or over (no upper age limit). Carers must not be in education over 21 hours per week and must be spending 35+ hours per week caring for the someone in receipt of Attendance Allowance or DLA

middle/high rate of care component. Claimants may also be able to earn a small amount on top. NB Getting CA may affect other benefit entitlement so get advice.

First port of call should be your local Job Centre Plus. These provide integrated work and benefits services.

2a New Walk, Leicester LE1 6TF Tel: 0116 206 8200  
2 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 3JD Tel: 0116 206 8000  
60 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6DS Tel: 0116 252 9000

Website is [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) .

See also [www.benefitsnow.co.uk](http://www.benefitsnow.co.uk) .

### **Direct Payments**

Direct payments are local council payments for people who have been assessed as needing help from social services, and who would like to arrange and pay for their own care and support services instead of receiving them directly from the local council. A person must be able to give their consent to receiving direct payments and be able to manage them even if they need help to do this on a day-to-day basis.

Direct Payments can be paid to: [note this is not automatic]

- People who are physically disabled or have a sensory impairment
- People who have a learning disability
- People who are experiencing mental ill-health (but there may be some restrictions)
- *People aged 16/17 with any of the above disabilities*
- *Parents of disabled children*
- Older people with community care needs
- Carers, from age 16 upwards, of people with community care needs

More information, including a document 'A parents guide to Direct Payments', is available from the Department of Health website. A link to this, and the relevant government website, can be found on the Leicestershire Aspergers Syndrome Support Group website [www.aspergerleics.org](http://www.aspergerleics.org) on the INFORMATION page.

Direct Payments are organised through Social Services (see Section 5) or through Mosaic (see below)

Agencies that are useful:-

#### **6.1 Advice**

- Benefit Enquiry Line is 0800 82200. Calls free and confidential.
- The Leicestershire Welfare Rights Advice Line is 0116 277 9496, This may have ceased operation as we can't get a response. If anyone has information on this please let us know.

#### **6.2 Leicester Benefits Processing**

60 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6DS

Tel: 0116 252 9000

### **6.3 Mosaic – Shaping Disability Services**

Mosaic's aim is to deliver a range of information and services that disabled people want; services that promote inclusion, independence, choice, empowerment, respect and dignity. They have volunteers who are expert on the benefits system and will help claimants get it right.

Contact

0116 251 5565

E-mail: [enquiries@mosaic1898.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@mosaic1898.co.uk)

2 Richard III Rd, Leicester LE3 5QT.

[www.mosaic1898.co.uk](http://www.mosaic1898.co.uk)

### **6.4 Department of Health (DOH)**

See their website [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk).

### **6.5 Department of Work and Pensions**

See their website [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) under DISABLED PEOPLE AND CARERS.

## **7 LEISURE/RECREATION**

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### **7.1 Leisure Centres**

Soar Valley Leisure Centre, Mountsorrel

0116 237 5267

#### **SWIMMING**

They offer a trial lesson to assess a child's ability and needs. The child can then be incorporated into a class with an instructor who has experience of ASD. If the child needs more support then one-to-one can be offered. Normal rates.

#### **STREET DANCE & FOOTBALL**

They are happy to discuss the child's needs with an instructor, then assess and offer suitable classes.

Hinckley Leisure Centre

01455 610011

HLC runs integrated programmes. If additional help is required they can provide that support by way of an extra instructor. Parents can also help. They are keen to help children on the autistic spectrum within the group environment.

Activities offered at HLC:-

- Football
- Swimming
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Trampolining.

Several under-5 activities

Holiday camps:-

- Karate
- Go-Karting
- Golf
- Junior Curling

Normal Rates.

Enderby Leisure Centre

0116 275 0234

ELC runs many junior classes and could offer all of these with one-to-one support. Any interested parents should ring to discuss requirements.

Classes offered:-

Swimming  
Badminton  
Gymnastics

Loughborough Leisure Centre

01509 611080

Disabled Swimming Group Sundays

Hermitage Leisure Centre, Coalville

01530 811215

Multi-sports session for autistic children Monday 5.30 – 6.30 pm.

Aylestone Leisure Centre

0116 2333040

DISC - Disabled Sports Club The group hold meetings every Thursday 7.00 – 10.00pm at the Aylestone Leisure Centre. The group covers all physical handicaps and they have facilities for physical recreation and socialising. Integrated – accept carers too! Joining fee applies.

Aylestone Leisure Centre, 2 Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6LU

Also at Aylestone Leisure Centre The Pyramid Club This club offers people with disabilities the opportunity to go swimming and meet together with carers as well. It meets on Tuesday evenings from 7.00pm – 9.00pm, swimming from 8.00pm at

Aylestone Leisure Centre

0116 2333040

Aylestone Leisure Centre, 2 Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6LU

Hood Park Leisure Centre

01530 412181

Activity Group Thursday 5-6 pm for children with any special need.

North St, Ashby-De-La-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1HU

## **7.2 Horse Riding**

Hinckley Equestrian Centre

Private Lessons available. Semi-private lessons can be arranged for groups as small as 4, if a group of parents wanted to get together and book.

Prices:-

up to 10	£16 per person
10-16	£16.50 per person
17+	£17 per person

[Comment from owner is that one of the stable hands has Aspergers so the staff are aware of the implications and are very supportive.]

Riding for the Disabled

Contact Dawn Whitmore, Meadow School of Riding, Beacon Cottage Farm, Deans Lane, nr Woodhouse Eaves, Loughborough. 07860 245675

This is a national organisation and Dawn is a qualified senior instructor with experience of working with people of ages and autistic spectrum disorders.

### **7.3 Swimming**

Oadby Pool 0116 271 0386  
Ellis Park, Brabazon Rd, Oadby, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 5HB

They are happy to integrate children with Aspergers into all lessons. There is a maximum of 8 per class so space can be limited in the pool. If the child needs more space, one-to-one will be offered. Normal rates.

Wigston Swimming Pool 0116 288 1758

Disabled swim Monday and Friday 8.30 am to 9.30 am. FREE.  
Can also be included into group sessions. Normal rates.  
Can also provide one-to-one lessons. Normal rates.

Swimming Sessions at Bosworth Community College specifically for families with children on the Autistic Spectrum within the age range of 4-18 years. 3.15pm. to 5.30pm. Sats.

Staffed by a qualified Swimming Teacher and two Lifeguards, experienced in working with children on the Autistic Spectrum and their aim is to provide a safe, secure and non-threatening environment so that the children can enjoy themselves and parents can relax. Each family participating in the swimming sessions is asked to contribute £2.50 per session to help defray the running costs of the project.

Contact Josh Wilson 07950 379447  
Email at [josh@boscol.globalnet.co.uk](mailto:josh@boscol.globalnet.co.uk)

South Charnwood Pool Syston, Sunday 2- 3.15 pm, cost £1.

The Shepshed Disabled Swimming Group meets at Hind Leys swimming pool on Saturday mornings 10.30 to 12.30, cost 75p adults, 50p children. The group is open to people of all ages and abilities and their friends, family and carers.

Contact John and Nina Turner 01509 506392

Coalville Swimming Club for People With Special Needs. Swimming for all abilities. Families welcome.

Wednesday 6pm-7pm Desford  
Thursday 7.30pm – 8.30pm Ibstock  
Contact: Jill Stidever 01530 243352

The Pyramid Club This club offers people with disabilities the opportunity to go swimming and meet together with carers as well. It meets on Tuesday evenings from 7.00pm – 9.00pm, swimming from 8.00pm at Aylestone Leisure Centre 0116 2333040  
Aylestone Leisure Centre, 2 Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6LU

### **Additional Useful Nos:-**

Mark Fritchie  
Loughborough Town swimming Club

07971 165928

Also see LEISURE CENTRES (7.1) above for more swimming.

#### **7.4 Beavers/Scouts/Brownies/Guides**

##### Scouts and Cubs

Scouts Council 0116 277 8998  
Pauline Wells is the Special Needs contact 0116 2592791

Contact the above numbers for local groups.

##### Guides and Brownies

The Guide Headquarters 0116 254 5290

Contact the above number for local groups.

##### Leicester Woodcraft Folk

LWF works with children for a world based on peace and justice. It encourages children to work together and share their enthusiasm and skills. Ages 6-10 in varying groups.

Email [Adrian\\_hastings@hotmail.com](mailto:Adrian_hastings@hotmail.com) for details of groups that will support Aspergers children. There are several groups throughout Leicestershire.

#### **7.5 Jigsaw**

Provides support, help and advice to families of autistic children from 0-19 years. Diagnostic advice, counselling, benefits advice, social events for family, playscheme in the summer, toy and book library, fundraising and Parentline, sibling classes, educational statementing advice, playscheme and parent workshops. Run by parents, services provided by trained counsellors and professional bodies.

Contact Dave Nutting, 29 Weaver Road, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester. 07954 172913  
Email: [sumkindasyndrome@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sumkindasyndrome@hotmail.co.uk)

#### **7.6 Clubs**

The Victory Youth Club at Countesthorpe Community college caters for young people aged 12-19 with mild to moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities, The staff are experienced in working with young people with autistic spectrum disorders. The group meets on Monday evenings from 7-9 pm and is looking for new members.

Contact Sue Popham 0116 2642316  
Christine Essex 0116 2771555

\*\*\*\*\*

Lutterworth Youth Group is a new group for children from the age of nine upward meets at Lutterworth Youth Centre on Thursday evenings from 7-9 pm. This group would

benefit children with special needs who would like to be part of a youth club and also work towards awards on activities that they help to plan, deliver and participate in.

Contact Lee Kramer 01455 205140  
[Lee is keen to recruit more children with ASD to the group.]

\*\*\*\*\*

Youth Group at Shepshed for 11 (year 7) to 18 year olds who have mild physical, mild learning or social interaction difficulties. There is a particular emphasis on including those children who cannot attend, or who do not want to attend, a mainstream club, but may be able to be integrated into one with the development of their social skills and abilities. This includes, for example, those with cerebral palsy, dyspraxia, aspergers syndrome and high functioning autistic spectrum disorder.

The group meets at the Youth Centre at Hind Leys College, Shepshed, on Friday evenings from 7.15pm to 9.15pm. There is a mix of social activities and games, suitably modified or adapted where appropriate and occasional trips and outdoor activities.

Contact Rachel Wade 0116 220 9408

\*\*\*\*\*

YOUTH CLUB for 14-19yrs  
at the Constance Jackson Centre, Western Park, Hinckley Road, Leicester

Contact Nicci Lucas 078555 09942

\*\*\*\*\*

LETS DO..... are 6 week block sessions including dance, drama, arts, music etc these run on weekend mornings for children aged 8-13

Contact Nicci Lucas 078555 09942  
development officer for Leicester Mencap Society

\*\*\*\*\*

A Gym Club for children with disabilities aged from two to twelve. The club meets at Shepshed High School on Wednesday evenings in two sessions from 5-6 pm and 6-7 pm according to age and ability. Costs are substantially reduced for children in receipt of DLA.

Contact John and Nina Turner 01509 506392

\*\*\*\*\*

Melton and Rutland Siblings Activity Club Meets once each month at the Parks School in Oakham. 6.30-8.30 pm. There is a room where parents can chat and make coffee if desired. For children up to age 16. Activities include swimming crafts, indoor and outdoor games, visits and bowling. Whilst always aiming to have FUN we are also mindful of giving the children an opportunity to learn more about ASD and to have a chance to talk about their own situations.

Contact Kay Smith 01572 722404 (days) 01572 770765 (evenings)

\*\*\*\*\*

Crossroads Caring for Carers After School Club is an after school club is for Leicester City children with Autism Spectrum Disorder aged 5 - 8 years. Paid and trained support workers are provided to help children through play activities. Currently operating 4pm - 6pm Tuesdays with transport provided.

Contact: Arkwright House, Longfellow Road, Leicester LE2 6BT..Tel: 0116 270 6319  
E-mail: [enquiries@leicestercrossroads.org](mailto:enquiries@leicestercrossroads.org)

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## **7.7 Other Activities**

Wanlip Sailing Club Contact Robert Hopkins 0116 236 3080

\*\*\*\*\*

Badminton Contact Carol Spencer 07725 074533  
Carol is the coordinator for the whole of Leicestershire and would be able to inform of suitable classes.

\*\*\*\*\*

Gymnastics Contact Maxine Smith 01509 237145  
For ages 2 to 7 years. Ring to find out locality of groups.

\*\*\*\*\*

Tumble Tots Contact Wendy Campbell 01509 414826  
For ages 6 months to 7 years. Ring to find out locality of groups.

\*\*\*\*\*

Archery. The Blaby Tox Disabled Archery Club meet once a fortnight on a Saturday 2pm until 4pm at the Scout Hut (behind the Scout Headquarters) on Winchester Road, Blaby. All ages and all disabilities welcome.  
Contact Jean Gamble 0116 277 2726 for more details.

\*\*\*\*\*

Activity Group for those with Autism. It is called "SPACE" (Support and Play for Autistic Children with Energy!). Monthly on the first and third Saturday of the month. 10am – 12 noon, cost £2.50 (£1.50 for siblings). There is a separate room for parents with tea/coffee and chat for the duration of the session. Siblings welcome.  
Castle Donnington Community College 01332 810528  
Contact Jane Sherwood 01332 850709

SPACE will also be running 5 summer holiday sessions on Thursdays (starting 20<sup>th</sup> July 2006). 10am – 12 noon. £2.50 (siblings £1.50)

\*\*\*\*\*

REALITY (a support group for families with children with A.S.D. and associated disorders) runs weekend activities at the Outdoor Pursuits Centre, near Red Hill Circle. These include Archery, Quad Biking, Climbing wall etc. groups are targeted at age 5 to 10 and 10 to 16 but are adjustable to fit in with siblings or parents concerns over abilities. They also organise coach trips.

Contact Leisa Smith  
Email:

07879 428553  
[leisa\\_smith3@hotmail.com](mailto:leisa_smith3@hotmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

Phoenix Arts  
Screenings for children on the autistic spectrum.

0116 255 4854

Every 2 months a screening is shown with more lighting and lower sound levels for a more relaxed atmosphere. Price £1-2 per person.

\*\*\*\*\*

Activity Club – Whitwick  
Contact: Jane Hall

07870 688973

\*\*\*\*\*

JIGSAW run an annual Summer PLAYSCHEME.

Contact Dave Nutting, 29 Weaver Road, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester. 07954 172913  
Email: [sumkindasyndrome@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sumkindasyndrome@hotmail.co.uk)

\*\*\*\*\*

SCAMP (Student Community Action Playgroup) is a student led playgroup for children aged between 8 and 15 with a varying range of mental and physical difficulties. Through a variety of games, we help such children improve their basic motor skills, social skills and fitness levels; and most importantly, have fun! Every Sunday during university term time in the Charles Wilson Sports Hall, University of Leicester from 2.15 to 3.45 pm. Parents stay with their children during the play session and siblings are also very welcome. All our volunteers are trained and police checked.

Contact SCAMP  
Email [contact@le.ac.uk](mailto:contact@le.ac.uk)

0116 223 2241

\*\*\*\*\*

## **7.8 MOSAIC Services to Young People**

Services to Young People provides support and activities to all disabled young people aged between 16 and 30 years (except steps youth club which is from 11 to 19 years) who live in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Has included youth club, arts and crafts, boating.

Contact MOSAIC

Rachael Moore, Co-ordinator or Lee Alldis, Project Worker      0116 251 5565  
[www.mosaic1898.co.uk](http://www.mosaic1898.co.uk)

## 8 USEFUL WEBSITES

**Autism Resources** [www.autism-resources.com](http://www.autism-resources.com)

**Autism UK** Society For The Autistically Handicapped. [www.autismuk.com](http://www.autismuk.com)

**Autism Medical** AutismMedical.com is an independent website evolved from the dovetailing of two innovative UK charities, Allergy induced Autism and Visceral, both dedicated to the investigation and treatment of dietary, gastrointestinal and immune issues in autistic spectrum disorders..

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

**Autism Research Centre** The Autism Research Centre (ARC) is part of the School of Clinical Medicine within Cambridge University, and is partnered with NAS. Its aim is to understand the biomedical causes of autism spectrum conditions, and develop new and validated methods for assessment and intervention. [www.autismresearchcentre.com](http://www.autismresearchcentre.com)

**Action for ASD** (formerly CASSEL) Support & advice on Autistic Spectrum Disorders including Aspergers Syndrome. [www.actionasd.org.uk](http://www.actionasd.org.uk)

**Autism Awareness** A message board. A place to raise awareness, share ideas, views and information with other people who care about autism. [www.autism-awareness.org.uk](http://www.autism-awareness.org.uk)

**Autism Connect** A general information website covering news, information, events. [www.autismconnect.org](http://www.autismconnect.org)

**ASC-U.S** The Aspergers Syndrome Coalition of the U.S. is a national non-profit organisation committed to providing the most up-to-date and comprehensive information on Aspergers Syndrome and related conditions. [www.asperger.org](http://www.asperger.org)

**Aspergers and ASD UK Online Forum** This is a discussion forum which will be of particular interest to UK parents/carers and friends of anyone with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder. [www.asd-forum.org.uk](http://www.asd-forum.org.uk)

**AspergerInfo.com** A small discussion group web page, offering a safe place to ask questions, share experiences, and discuss treatments relating to Aspergers Syndrome. As a community discussion board, AspergerInfo.com lets you share the information and the hope that will help others as they confront the challenges associated with Aspergers Syndrome. [www.aspergerinfo.com](http://www.aspergerinfo.com)

**AS Support Group Online** A website support group with opportunities to leave messages, read articles and interviews, plus quizzes etc. [www.assupportgrouponline.co.uk](http://www.assupportgrouponline.co.uk)

**Autism Treatment Centre of America.** Home of The Son-Rise Program®, a powerful and effective treatment for children and adults challenged by Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD), Aspergers and all other developmental difficulties. [www.son-rise.org](http://www.son-rise.org)

**BBC Autism & Aspergers Website** The CBeebies BBCi website has a section on Autism with interesting articles by parents and other useful links. [www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/special\\_needs/autistic](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/special_needs/autistic)

**BRIDGES** (the Identification, Referral and Tracking Initiative for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland) is a way of helping children and young people with special needs to get the services they require and make sure those services are co-ordinated. It will help to identify vulnerable children and make sure the agencies providing services are aware of each other and that progress on services can be followed to ensure the children's needs are met

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

**Different Worlds.** A support group for parents, carers, friends and relatives of children and young people, as well as adults, who have been diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome or any of the other Autistic Spectrum Disorders. [www.differentworlds.org.uk](http://www.differentworlds.org.uk)

**Face 2 Face** A one-to-one befriending service for parents of disabled children.

[www.face2facenetwork.org.uk](http://www.face2facenetwork.org.uk)

**LAMP** (community mental health site)

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

**Libraries** For checking availability of books:-

Leicester City

[www.leicester.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/libraries)

and follow the CATALOGUE link on the left hand side

Leicestershire County

<http://libraries.leics.gov.uk/TalisPrism/>

**Mental Health Foundation.** This site is run by the Mental Health Foundation, the leading UK charity working in mental health and learning disabilities. Here you will find the latest news and events on mental health issues, as well as information on problems, treatments and strategies for living with mental distress.

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

**MIND (For Mental Health)**

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

Mind is a leading mental health charity in England and Wales. working to create a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress by:-

- advancing the views, needs and ambitions of people with mental health problems
- challenging discrimination and promoting inclusion
- influencing policy through campaigning and education
- inspiring the development of quality services which reflect expressed need and diversity
- achieving equal rights through campaigning and education.

**National Autistic Society**

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

**O.A.S.I.S.** Online Aspergers Syndrome Information And Support

<http://www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger/>

**Parent Carer Council (PCC)**

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

**PARIS** (Public Autism Resource and Information Service) [www.info.autism.org.uk](http://www.info.autism.org.uk)

**Public Autism Awareness** This website is designed to be a gentle step by step guide into the fascinating and rewarding world of Autism. Meet new friends on the forums or add a story. There are four different boards within the site covering General Discussion, Education, Diet, and an ASD to ASD contact board. [www.paains.org.uk](http://www.paains.org.uk)

**SIBS (Website for Siblings)**

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

Sibs is for people who grow up with a brother or sister with special needs, disability, chronic illness. This group of people are often referred to as 'siblings'. There are at least 2 million of these siblings in the UK. Growing up with someone with special needs can be very rewarding and very difficult at the same time. Our purpose is to make a positive difference to the lives of siblings - to make growing up with someone with special needs a bit easier.

Sibs is a registered charity and the majority of trustees are adult siblings.

**Software.** A website with many links to software resources for Autism.

<http://neurodiversity.com/software>

**Special Educational Needs.** This is an educational site by a solicitor which contains a wealth of information that might be of interest and support.

<http://www.specialeducationalneeds.co.uk/index.htm>

**TEACCH** (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped CHildren)

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

**Dr Tony Attwood** Link to Dr Tony Attwood's web site. [www.tonyattwood.com.au](http://www.tonyattwood.com.au)