

Autism Support and Information

Where to find services, advice, and support if you or someone you care for may be autistic.

Each section gives a brief description of the services available for people looking for support or advice.

Follow the links below each service description for more information.

Referral, diagnosis, and assessment information:

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Neurodevelopmental Services provide diagnostic assessments for:

Adults [Neurodevelopmental services \(adult\)](#)

Children [Neurodevelopmental service for children and young people](#)

NHS Right to Choose lets you select your NHS-funded healthcare provider, speak to your GP, and request a referral or professional.

[Right to Choose - Surrey and Sussex ICB](#)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Offer West Sussex has information for parent carers about assessments for an **Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)** and how to request one.

[How to request an EHCP](#)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) provide impartial information, advice and support to children and young people who have **SEND (special educational needs and/ or disabilities)** including information about **Educational Health and Care Needs Assessments. (EHCNA's)** for those aged 0-25 and their parent carers.

[SENDIAS - EHC Needs Assessments Information](#)

Specialist support to find employment

The Aldingbourne Trust provide supported employment services for adults with a learning disability and/or autism who need additional help to prepare for work or volunteering through their **WorkAid** programme.

[WorkAid](#)

The Aldingbourne Trust also work in partnership with West Sussex County Council to provide the **Connect to Work** programme, which supports adults with disabilities to search for jobs; submit applications; attend interviews and settle into the workplace.

Connect To Work also supports people with disabilities who are already employed but at risk of losing their job.

[Connect to Work](#)

Support in the community

The Aldingbourne Trust offer group, individual support online & by telephone for people with an autism diagnosis through its **LIMA** (Low Intensity Management for Autism) programme.

[LIMA](#)

West Sussex Libraries offer services for people with disabilities. Services include a **Communication Aid Library**,

Sensory Toy Libraries, and **Home Library Direct** for those unable to visit branches.

The West Sussex Library Service also maintain the **Disability Register**. The register holds information about children and young people age 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to help West Sussex County Council plan and deliver services.

Parents, carers, and young people who share their information with the register, receive regular newsletters offering advice, information, and activities across the county.

Families of children with additional needs who sign up to the **Disability Register** are eligible to apply for a **MAX Card** to use at venues across the UK to get free or discounted admission.

[Understand Me - Communication Aid Library](#)

[WSCC Family Hubs Sensory Toy Libraries](#)

[Home Library Direct](#)

[West Sussex Disability Register](#)

[Max Card](#)

Community hub and outreach services

West Sussex County Council provides **hub and outreach services** for adults with lifelong disabilities including autism.

Services provide independent living support including advice and information and support to access leisure activities.

Support is accessible by self-referral or by professionals.

The community hubs are found in each of the following areas and contact details are available in the links below:

Worthing and Adur:

[Worthing and Adur Connects Support](#)

Chichester and Arun:

[Connects Support - Aldingbourne Trust](#)

Mid Sussex:

[Landing | Signposts \(Mid Sussex\) Ltd](#)

Horsham and Crawley:

[Outreach 3 Way – Dimensions](#)

For referral information, for any of the above locations, please contact: jill.constable@dimensions-uk.org

Support for Carers

West Sussex Parent Carer Forum provide information, support, and training for parent carers of children and young people 0-25.

[West Sussex Parent Carer Forum](#)

Carers Support West Sussex provide information, guidance, and emotional support to unpaid carers in West Sussex.

[Carers Support West Sussex](#)

Education and school support

The **Autism and Social Communication Team (ASCT)** consists of specialist Advisory Teachers (ATs) and Specialist Learning Support Assistants (SLSAs). The team has a range of experience of, and knowledge about, autism and social communication differences (SCD). The team work with parent carers, professionals and others involved with the child's development to maximise inclusive educational opportunities for all autistic children and those with SCD to enable them to reach their full potential.

[Autism and Social Communication Team \(ASCT\)](#)

The **Autism and Social Communication Team** web pages also have links to bitesize training resources on a wide range of subjects.

[ASCT Bitesize training resources](#)

Peer Support and Parent groups

ASSA is a peer support self-advocacy group for people in coastal West Sussex diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, high functioning autism, or similar autism spectrum disorders.

[Contact ASSA](#)

Aspective West Sussex (formerly known as Aspergers Voice self-advocacy group) is a peer support self-advocacy group run by and for adults with Autism Spectrum Condition / Asperger's Syndrome, in northern West Sussex.

[How to Contact Aspective](#)

Autism Support Crawley are a peer support group for parents and carers, caring for someone with an autistic mind, with or without a diagnosis across all of Sussex.

[Autism Support Crawley](#)

Reaching Families support families of children with special educational needs by providing information, training, and peer support.

[Reaching Families](#)

West Sussex Mind Parenting Support provide peer support, with online and face-to-face meetings to help you build strategies and meet others, with links with other parents of autistic children.

[West Sussex Mind Parenting Support](#)

mASCot is a parent led peer to peer support network for families with autistic children, whether that's from the point of recognising it may be autism, being on the diagnostic pathway or with a full diagnosis. They bring families together and enable them to connect with others in similar situations as themselves.

[mASCot | Autism family support](#)

Autism Partnership Board. The Autism Partnership Board (APB) is made up of autistic people, family and friend carers, representatives from health and social care, and community services. The board works to improve the lives of autistic adults and their families living in West Sussex. It works for and with autistic people as equal partners.

[Autism Partnership Board](#)

WorkingTogetherAS@westsussex.gov.uk

Adults' Services Customer and Carer Group. This group is made up of people who are interested in working with West Sussex County Council to develop services and improve the support provided to people with social care needs and their family and friend carers.

Adults' Services Customer and Carer Group welcomes members from all backgrounds to strengthen the voice of people with experience of social care. Meetings are held six times a year, in-person, but there are options for people to join online, if preferred. For more information contact:

WorkingTogetherAS@westsussex.gov.uk

Information, learning and training for parent carers

Reaching Families have published a series of fact sheets written for parent carers by parent carers. They are designed to provide parents with bite-size information that helps them get started, whether in understanding their child's condition or a key topic like behaviour, Disability Living Allowance, or choosing a school.

[Reaching Families Fact Sheets](#)

Autism Central offer online events for families of autistic people to learn, reflect and work together, and share knowledge and skills, including virtual meetups, education family guide sessions, and reflective sessions.

All events are free NHS England commissioned sessions delivered by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.

[Autism Central](#)

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Workshops for Parents and Carers is a series of pre-recorded webinars for parent and carers. The topics cover a range of difficulties that young people may be experiencing. Including ADHD, anxiety and autism.

Each workshop gives an overview of a specific difficulty and also some hints and tips on how young people can be supported. There are also links to some resources that you may find helpful.

[Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Workshops for Parents and Carers](#)

West Sussex SENDIAS provide impartial information, advice and support to children and young people who have SEND (special educational needs and/ or disabilities) for those aged 0-25 and their parent carers.

[West Sussex SENDIAS Service](#)

Autism specific websites

Autistic Girls Network support autistic women, girls, and their families by providing education, resources, and community, helping them develop a positive sense of self.

[Autistic Girls Network](#)

The National Autistic Society provide support, information and practical advice for autistic adults and children in the UK, as well as their family members and carers.

[National Autistic Society](#)

Child Autism UK supports children, families, and professionals across the UK by providing training, support, and advice.

[Child Autism](#)

Ambitious About Autism offer a range of services that empower and support autistic young people. They work with autistic young people, their families, employers, and professionals to increase autism confidence and create opportunities.

[Ambitious about Autism](#)

Aspens provide care and support to adults and children on the autism spectrum and with learning disabilities; meeting their needs and aspirations and empowering them to learn and grow through a network of services across the South-East.

[ASPENS](#)

Autistic parents UK are the only national, autistic-led charity offering essential support services, resources, education, and a thriving community for autistic parents.

Autistic Parents UK support autistic parents and offer online peer support groups, monthly webinars, and live Q&A sessions, one to one peer support sessions, and training and professional supervision.

[Autistic Parents UK](#)