



# **Supporting Young People on the Autism Spectrum In Dumfries & Galloway**

## **A Parent's Guide to Information and Support**

Updated September 2022  
To be reviewed September 2024

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## About this guide

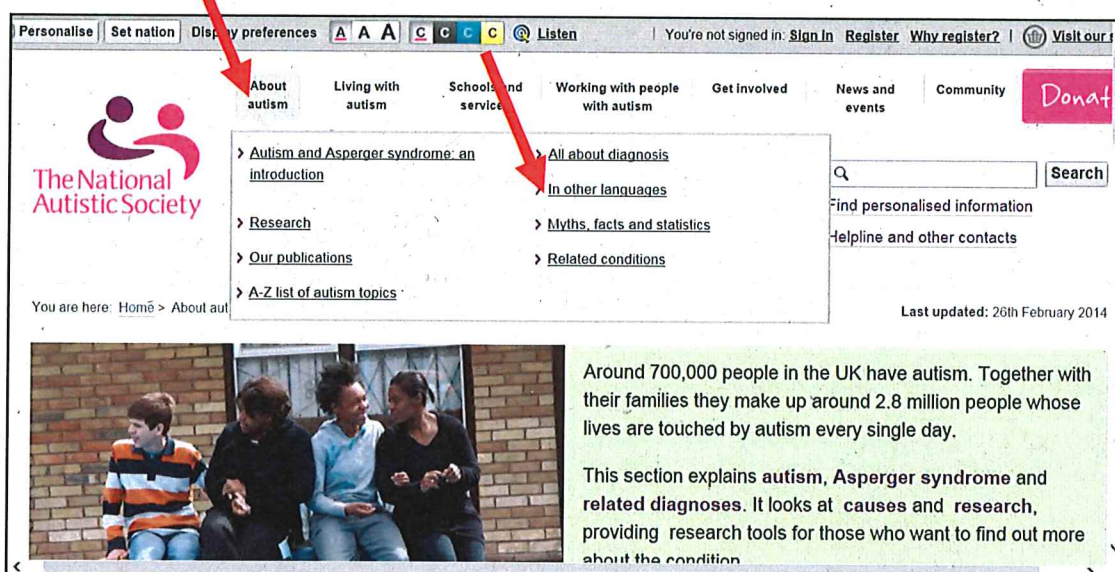
This guide has been created to provide relevant information to parents who have a child or young person on the Autism Spectrum. You should only have been given this guide if you or someone who works with your child has identified possible “traits” of an Autism Spectrum Disorder in your child, if your child is being assessed or if your child already has a diagnosis.

There is a significant amount of information about autism available so in this guide, we will direct you to some local and national sources of information that will help you:

- ☆ Find out more about the Autism Spectrum
- ☆ Consider the support that is available for your child, you and your family

## Other Languages

Information on the “Autism Spectrum”, “What you can do to help” and “After a diagnosis” is available in many languages from the National Autistic Society. You can access this directly on [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk), click on About Autism then “in other languages”

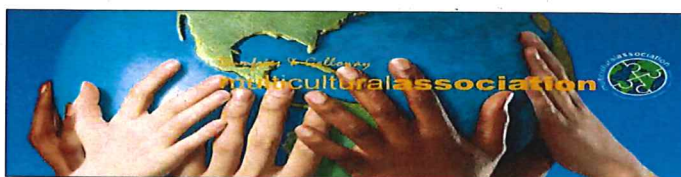


Languages available include:

Albanian	Arabic	Bengali	Chinese
Czech	Dutch (Flemish)	Turkish	English
Farsi	French	German	Greek
Gujarati	Hindi	Italian	Kurdish
Latvian	Mirpuri	Polish	Portuguese
Punjabi	Russian	Somali	Spanish
Sylheti	Tamil	Tigrinya	
Urdu	Vietnamese	Welsh/Cymraeg	

The Dumfries Multicultural Centre may be able to help you access this.

Telephone 01387 254624  
Email [info@dgma.org.uk](mailto:info@dgma.org.uk)  
DGMA Muticultural Centre  
Friars Vennel, Dumfries DG1 2RQ



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

## After Diagnosis

Diagnosis means different things to different people. For some it is a relief as it confirms what they have known for a long time. For some it is difficult to accept and it takes time to understand what Autism is and what it means to their family now and for the future.

As parents you will know how you are feeling and what you need but the following pages aim to share with you some of the things that are available locally and nationally that may help you. All supports mentioned can be accessed from any age up to age 18 when Young People move on to adult services.

There are two key National Groups where you will find lots of useful information.

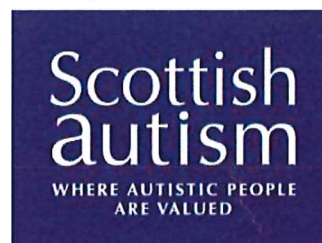
The National Autistic Society—known as NAS

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



Scottish Autism

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



## Understanding the Autism Spectrum

### What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disorder that affects how a person communicates with and relates to, other people. It also affects how they make sense of the world around them. It is a Neurodevelopmental Disorder, just like ADHD, Developmental Language Disorder and Dyslexia. It is a spectrum condition, which means that, while all people with autism share certain traits, their condition will affect them in different ways. People with Autism are just as diverse as people without Autism.

There used to be different terms to describe Autism including Asperger syndrome, High Functioning Autism and Childhood Autism. Now we use the term "Autism Spectrum Disorder" (or ASD for short) to we are all saying the same thing.

### Who is affected by Autism?

Autism is much more common than people think. There are over half a million people in the UK with autism - that's at least 1 in 100 people. People from all nationalities and cultural, religious and social backgrounds are affected by autism. It has always been thought that Autism affects more boys than girls but we are learning more about how to interpret the signs of Autism in girls with Autism and it is now less clear whether there is a difference due to gender or just identification.

Children with autism grow up to become adults with autism and it is widely recognised that identification and a shared understanding have a positive impact on the support children receive and on their later outcomes.

### What causes Autism?

The cause of autism is still being investigated. However, research suggests that a combination of factors - genetic and environmental - may account for changes in brain development. Autism is not caused by a person's upbringing, their social circumstances and is not the fault of the individual with the condition.

Understanding Autism is key to ensuring a child or young person is understood, included, valued and supported to reach their potential.

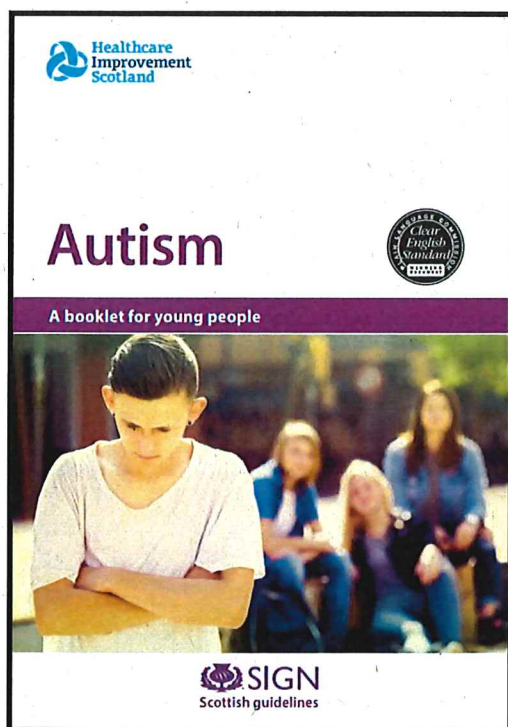
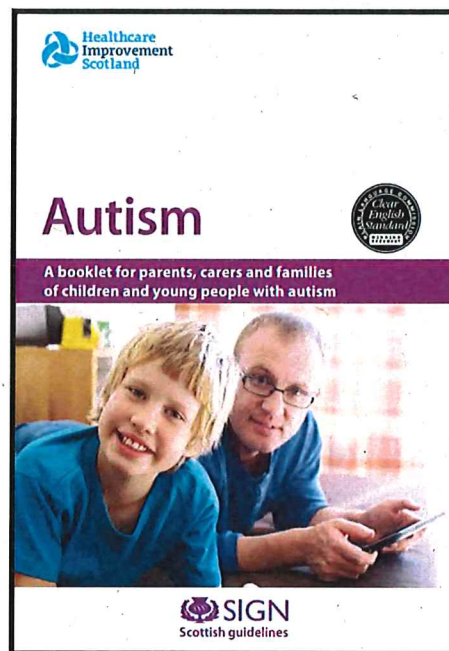
## Finding out more about the Autism Spectrum

### Booklet for Parents and Carers

This booklet is available to download

[www.sign.ac.uk/media/1166/  
pat145\\_parents\\_and\\_carers.pdf](http://www.sign.ac.uk/media/1166/pat145_parents_and_carers.pdf)

If you would like to order copies of these booklets, you can email [sign@sign.ac.uk](mailto:sign@sign.ac.uk)



### Booklet for young people

Available to download

[www.sign.ac.uk/media/1160/  
pat145\\_young\\_people.pdf](http://www.sign.ac.uk/media/1160/pat145_young_people.pdf)

## Finding out more about the Autism Spectrum

### Right Click

Free online parent training programme by Scottish Autism



#### Young Child Programme

Our Young Child programme is focused on providing support to parents of young and recently diagnosed children up to around 8 years of age. This includes topics such as:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Toileting.

Register for this programme.

#### Teen Programme

Our Teen programme is for parents with teenagers as we know this can be a particularly challenging time. Topics discussed include:

- Developing skills for independent living
- Supporting siblings
- Talking about relationships

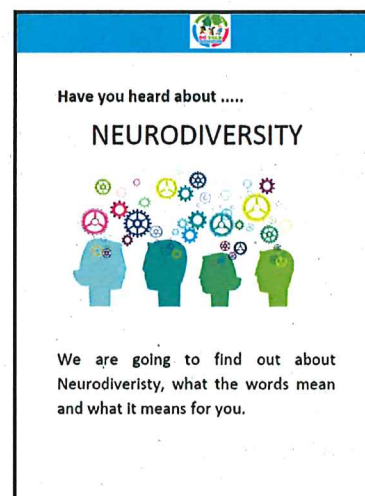
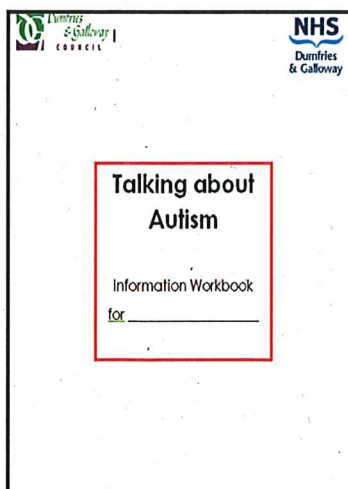
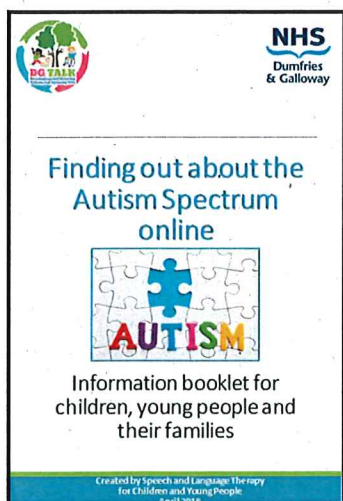
Register for this programme.

Register at

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

### Local resources

As well as information online, we have some local resources that can help to explain more about Autism to young people. These can also be shared by the clinical teams on request.



## Finding out more about the Autism Spectrum

### Girls and Women on the Spectrum

#### Online Support for Women and Girls



Our women and girls programme is for autistic females of all ages, as well as parents, carers and professionals. The programme provides valuable information addressing key health and wellbeing challenges, as well as providing practical advice on a range of issues. We have engaged with women and girls from the autistic community and we have drawn on the expertise of a network of professionals to develop a range of videos and other support materials. The topics covered include: diagnosis, education, employment, positive living and parenting.

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Register online and gain immediate access via a login which is valid for two months. You are also assigned an advisor who can be contacted to answer questions or give more specific advice.

Register at: [www.scottishautism.org/womenandgirls](http://www.scottishautism.org/womenandgirls)

**Scottish  
autism**  
WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE  
ARE VALUED

Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in Scotland No. 81123.  
Registered Office: Hilton House, Alloa Business Park, Whins Road,  
Alloa, FK10 3SA. Scottish Autism is a charity registered in Scotland, No.  
SC 009068

## Accessing Support




### Support Services in Dumfries & Galloway (D&G)

You may find you and your child meet different professionals at different times depending on the needs your child has. However for some children, the understanding and support of people already in their environment provides everything they need.

Services in Dumfries and Galloway provide support based on needs, not a formal diagnosis. Following a diagnosis, it is often the case that your child already has access to the support they need. Many families therefore find that the support provided for their child after a diagnosis is just the same as before. However it is important to know what support is out there in case you feel anything is missing from your child's care at anytime during their childhood years.

In addition to the support available to all children in D&G from GPs, Health Visitors and Teaching staff, some children on the Autism Spectrum need additional support from the following local services in D&G.

#### Key:

-  Families can contact directly (no need to be referred)
-  Referral needed from someone who knows the child
-  Facebook page with parent information about the service

## Accessing Support

### Support for families and siblings

#### Online

The screenshot shows the website [sibs.org.uk](http://sibs.org.uk). The header includes the Sibs logo with a '21 Years' anniversary badge, the tagline 'For brothers and sisters of disabled children and adults', and a search bar. A navigation menu has four items: 'YoungSibs', 'For adult siblings', 'For Parents and Professionals', and 'Get involved'. The main content area features a large image of two boys, one in a wheelchair, with the text 'Floyd is 7' and a sub-headline 'His sleep is frequently disrupted because his brother Arlo needs help at night.' Below this is a green button that says 'Read Floyd's Story' with a right-pointing arrow.

#### In Person

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

The screenshot shows the website for the Dumfries & Galloway Carers Centre. The header features the logo 'DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Carers centre' and a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'Projects & Services', 'Who We Are', 'Whats On', and 'Get Involved'. The main content area has a purple background with the text 'welcome to the Dumfries & Galloway Carers Centre' followed by a paragraph: 'We provide information, advice and support to anyone who cares for a relative or friend. We also aim to raise awareness of the needs of Carers and the contribution they make to care in the community.' To the right of the text is a cartoon illustration of a woman with red hair and a man in a blue shirt holding a white bag.

## Accessing Support


### Additional Support for Learning Teacher

Support children to achieve their learning goals in school through support, advice to class teachers and learning plans.

 At your child's school

### Autism Outreach Service (AOS)

Support children to achieve their learning goals in school through

 by referral

### Educational Psychologist


Support families and schools where a young person's needs impact on their participation, engagement and attainment in school.

 01387 273784

Email: [Supportinglearners@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:Supportinglearners@dumgal.gov.uk)


### Inclusion Support

Support children who need significant support to engage with mainstream learning.

 by referral


### Pre-School Educational Visitor

Support children during their early years with aspects of their development and engagement with early learning provision.

 by referral


### Social Worker

Support families when home life is difficult either because of Autism or because of other things that affect the child and family as well as Autism.

 030 33 33 3001

### Clinical Psychologist

Provide support where anxiety, behaviour and attachments have a significant impact on everyday life.

 by referral

### Speech and Language Therapist

Support the communication of young people to ensure they can express their needs, wants and to engage with the world around them.

  Advice line 01387 220013

Email [dg.talk-advice@nhs.scot](mailto:dg.talk-advice@nhs.scot)

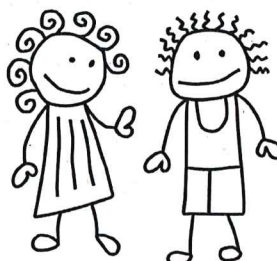
### Occupational Therapist

Support children to engage with their occupations, the everyday activities that are important for children's learning and growth.

  Advice line 01387 241882

Email [dg.OT-enquiry@nhs.scot](mailto:dg.OT-enquiry@nhs.scot)


## For you and your child



### CAMHS


Support children who have mental health conditions such as depression, clinical anxiety, eating disorders, ADHD.


 01387 244662

 Email [dg.camhs-mail@nhs.scot](mailto:dg.camhs-mail@nhs.scot)

### Dietitian


Support the health and wellbeing of children and young people through food and nutrition.



 by referral

### Physiotherapist


Support children with their motor skills, movement and performance of gross motor tasks.

 01387 244581




### Paediatrician

Review children's developmental milestones and monitor their health and growth.

 by referral

### Community Children's Nurses

Support children health and aspects of development relating to physical health.

 by referral

## Accessing Support

### Enquire

Enquire is the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning. Providing easy to understand advice and information about additional support for learning legislation and guidance for families and professionals.

[Enquire.org.uk](http://Enquire.org.uk)

### The Family Fund

Are the UK's largest provider of grants to low-income families raising disabled and seriously ill children and young people. We help ease the additional pressures families face. We can help with essential items such as washing machines, fridges and clothing but can also consider grants for sensory toys, computers and much needed family breaks together.

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

### Carers Centre

Provide a range of local Dumfries and Galloway support for parents give information about the wide range of supports that may be available



[info@dgalcarers.org](mailto:info@dgalcarers.org)

## For you and your family



### Parents Inclusion Network (PIN)

Local support for parents of children and adults with a disability. Provides valuable information and family days during school holidays.



[parentinclusionnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:parentinclusionnetwork@gmail.com)

### Youthwork D&G Mental Health In schools

As part of the Scottish Government current programme, there is a commitment to provide counselling within schools across Scotland to support young people from P6 - S6.



<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/21022/Mental-Health-Support-in-Schools>

### Supporting Autism Together

Local Dumfries and Galloway sessions held for autism problem solving and resources.

(accessed through PIN)

### Scottish Autism

#### Autism Advice Line (Scotland)



01259 222 022

Provided by Scottish Autism the Advice Line is open Monday to Friday 9:30am - 4pm.

"Here to provide reliable information throughout the individual's whole life journey".

### Sleep Scotland

Established in 1998, we have supported thousands of people to have healthy sleep. We are the leading provider of sleep support, training and resources in the UK. We work with professionals, families and employers to promote healthy sleep for everyone.

Website: <https://sleepscotland.org/>

Helpline for families: [sleepsupport@sleepscotland.org](mailto:sleepsupport@sleepscotland.org)

### Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

DLA is for families of children with disabilities to help with the extra costs of looking after a child with additional needs.

[www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children](http://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children)

## Any questions?

Use this page to write down any questions you have.



You might have people already involved who can answer them. You might find some of the links in this booklet help to answer them. If not, get in touch with one of the services on page 12 or speak to your child's Health Visitor or school teacher who will be able to signpost you.