

# All things Autism – BPCF Q&A

27.02.2024

# Whistle stop tour

We will cover:

- ▶ Introductions
- How to support your child at home.
- Working with the school.
- Autism support offer.
- Autism Hub.

Please take note of the following disclaimer: The purpose of this Q&A is to provide educational and informational content only. We aim to give you a better understanding of the areas of need and answer some of your questions about the services we offer in Barnet. This information is not intended to replace any medical or health advice, speech and language, or occupational therapy advice given to you by health professionals.

# Introductions

- ▶ Brigitte Jordaan: **Director Children's Social Care**
- ▶ Kim Miller: **Head of Specialist Inclusion Services**

## A note on language - Language Matters

- There are different preferences among members of the autism community about whether to use identity-first ('autistic person') or person-first ('person with autism') language should be used to describe individuals who have received an autism spectrum diagnosis. A survey by Kenny et al., (2016) suggests that many autistic individuals prefer the use of identity-first language, which will therefore be the language adopted in this Q&A and any documents derived from it.
- Many medical terms around Autism Spectrum refer to the words ASD (disorder) or ASC (condition). The Autism Advisory Team and for the purpose of this Q&A the term "difference" will be used as this fits best with the ethos of the Barnet Autism Advisory Team.

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# Key areas

*\* Autistic people report high levels of stress and anxiety, many attribute this to their life experiences - rather than being Autistic.*

Processing information:  
strengths and  
difficulties

Communication -  
receptive and  
expressive

Social understanding:  
this goes both ways

Sensory

Emotional Regulation  
and Stress\* and  
masking / different  
presentations

# Co-occurring ADHD Key areas

22-83% of Autistic people also meet the criteria for ADHD

[neurodivergentinsights.com](http://neurodivergentinsights.com)

Q&A: How does a diagnosis with ADHD present/ overlap?

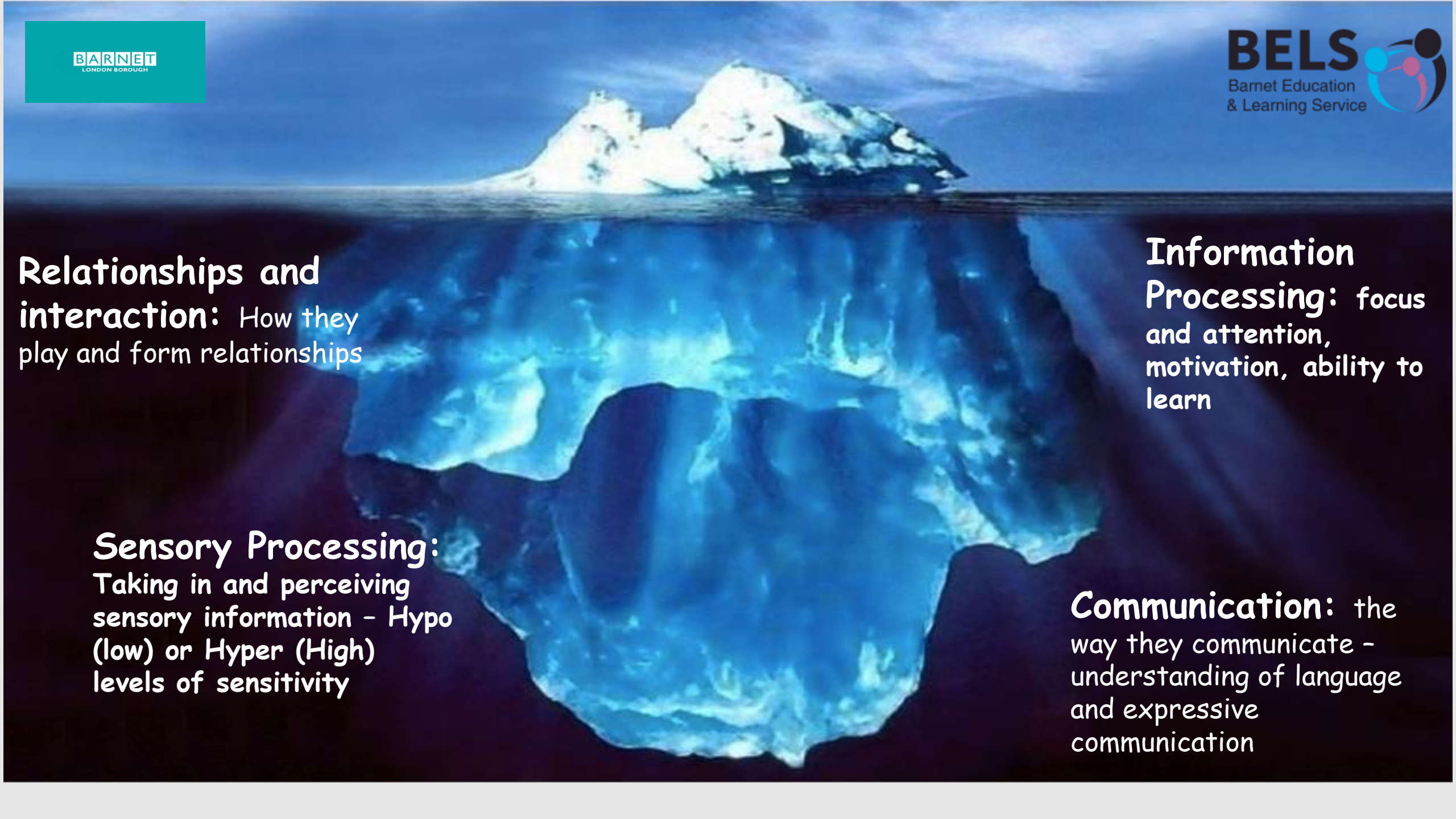
Processing  
information/Executive  
functioning: strengths  
and difficulties  
hyperfocus

Communication -  
especially receptive and  
focus

Social understanding:  
this goes both ways

Sensory

Emotional Regulation  
and Stress\* and  
masking / different  
presentations

An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg is above the water line, and the much larger, submerged part is below. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a lighter blue with some clouds. The iceberg is white and blue, with some internal textures visible.

**Relationships and interaction:** How they play and form relationships

**Information Processing:** focus and attention, motivation, ability to learn

**Sensory Processing:** Taking in and perceiving sensory information - Hypo (low) or Hyper (High) levels of sensitivity

**Communication:** the way they communicate - understanding of language and expressive communication

# Q&A Sharing a diagnosis





# Resources/links/websites recommended

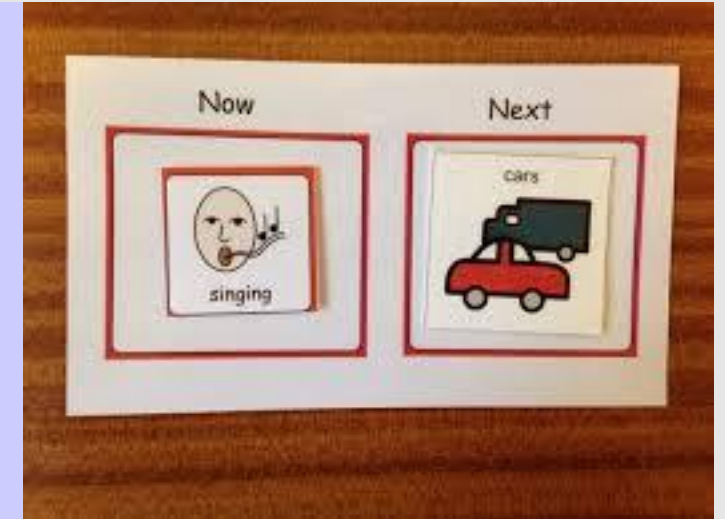
- ▶ [Amazing Things Happen - by Alexander Amelines - Bing video](#)
- ▶ [BBC Sounds - 1800 Seconds on Autism](#)
- ▶ [The Secret Life of Rose: Inside An Autistic Head: Amazon.co.uk: Smitten, Miss Rose, Smitten, Mrs Jodie, Beardon, Dr Luke: 9798665722603: Books](#)
- ▶ [Young people explain autism | Ambitious about Autism - Bing video](#)
- ▶ [BBC Two - Inside Our Autistic Minds, Anton's Film](#)
- ▶ [Autism, Identity and Me: A Practical Workbook and Professional Guide t \(routledge.com\)](#)

Processing  
information

Predictability –  
regulation and  
trust

communication

- Where am I going ?
- What am I doing ?
- How long for ?
- How will I know when I am finished ?
- When can I get back to what I really want to be doing ?





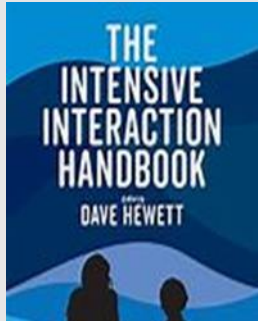
Social communication

Emotional regulation

Too much...  
keep it  
simple and  
systematic.

# Communication and social understanding

- [Young people explain communication | Ambitious about Autism - YouTube](#)
- [Too much information \(autism.org.uk\)](#)
- [Intensive Interaction - Fundamentals of Communication](#)



- (Jason Arday) [Bing Videos](#)
- Jamie Knight 1800 Seconds on Autism [BBC Sounds - 1800 Seconds on Autism](#) (when speech goes away)
- [Resource](#)
- [Understanding and developing communication \(autism.org.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Motivate-Communicate-Games-Activities-Autism/dp/1849050414>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b096hcz2#:~:text=Michael%20Rosen%20finds%20out%20what,Producer%20Sally%20Heaven.>
- <https://www.amazon.co.uk/THAT-CLEAR-Effective-communication-neurodiverse/dp/1916280021>
- <https://www.grandin.com/inc/visual.thinking.html>
- [Infodumping in Autism: What You Need to Know | And Next Comes L - Hyperlexia Resources](#)

# Sensory Differences

- Hyper/ hypo sensitives
- Seeking avoiding
- Sight
- Sound
- Taste
- Smell
- Hearing
- Vestibular
- Proprioception
- Interoception

Sensory  
processing

Emotional  
regulation

"It's very hard for me to conclude I'm hungry," she says. "I feel irritated, or I feel sad, or I feel something [is] wrong. This information is separated, not connected."

# I have Sensory Processing Disorder



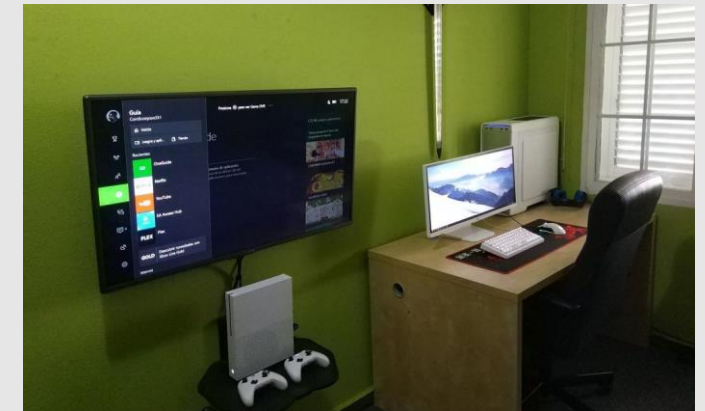
# Sensory Differences



Low arousal  
sensory space vs  
Low arousal spaces



Both spaces should  
allow for a low  
demand and low  
engagement  
approach



# Q&A stimming in the classroom

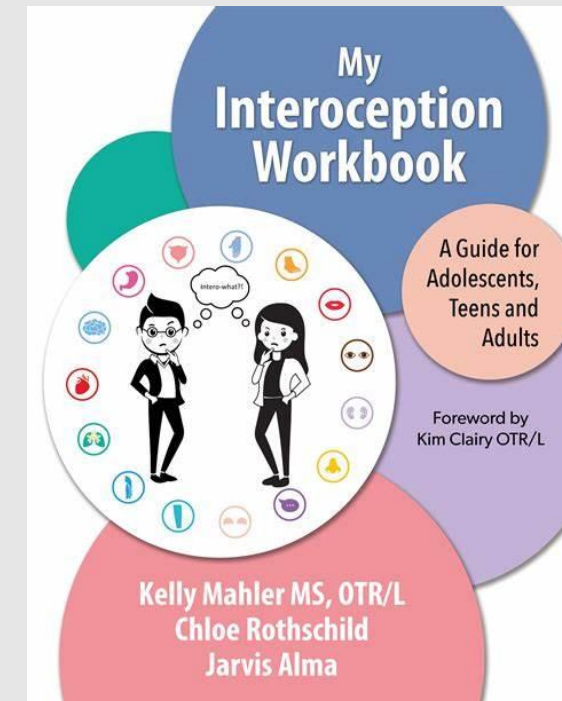
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cy4IM8Q-ETs>

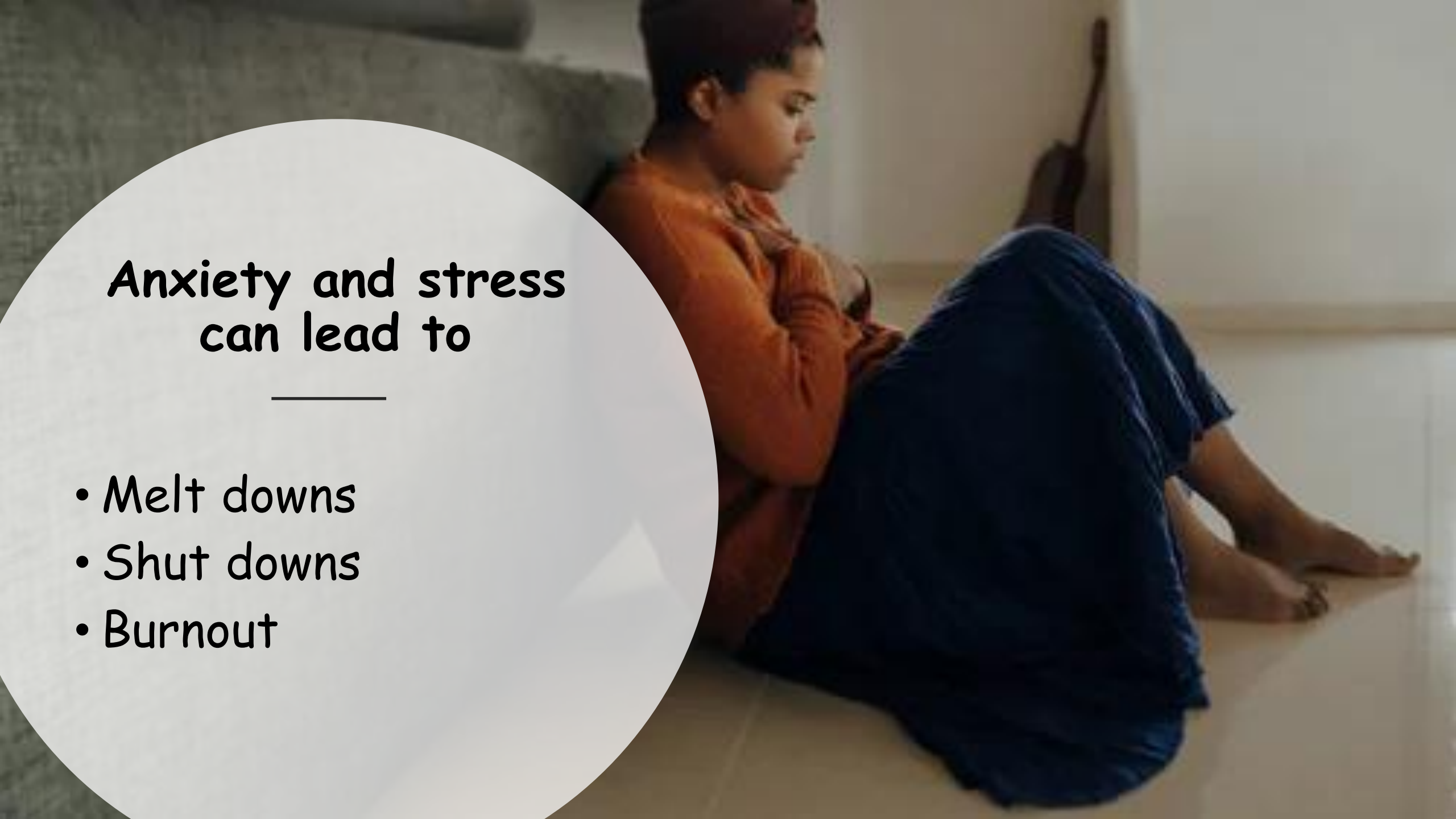




# Sensory Differences

- ▶ [Too much information videos from NAS. Autism TMI Virtual Reality Experience – YouTube](#)
  - ▶ [Interoception: The New Topic in Autism – YouTube](#)
  - ▶ [Kelly Mahler | Interoception | Interoception Activities \(kelly-mahler.com\)](#)
  - ▶ [Understanding Your Child's Sensory Signals eBook : Voss, Angie, Post, Bonnie: Amazon.co.uk: Books](#)
- [BBC One - Christine McGuinness: Unmasking My Autism](#)
- [Bing Videos](#) Video Interview with Luke Beardon, January 2021



A woman with dark hair, wearing an orange long-sleeved shirt and a blue skirt, is sitting on a light-colored tiled floor. She has her arms crossed and is looking down and to the right. Behind her, a guitar is leaning against a white wall. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an indoor setting.

## Anxiety and stress can lead to

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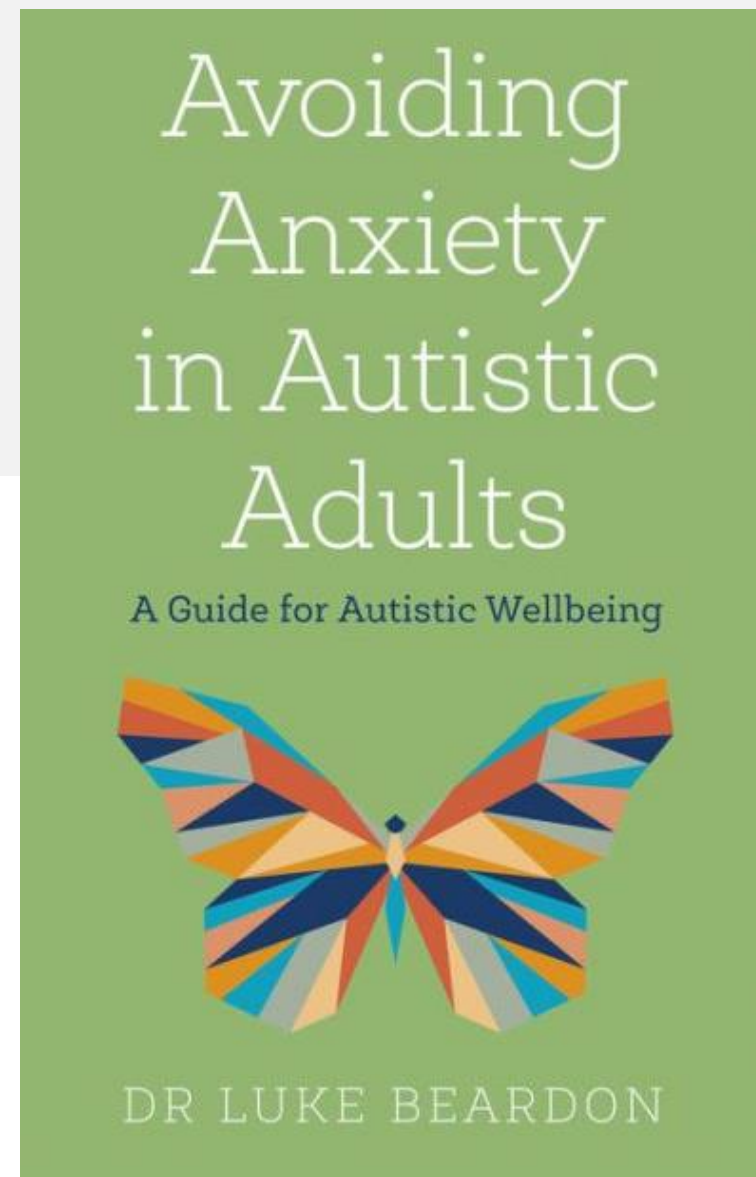
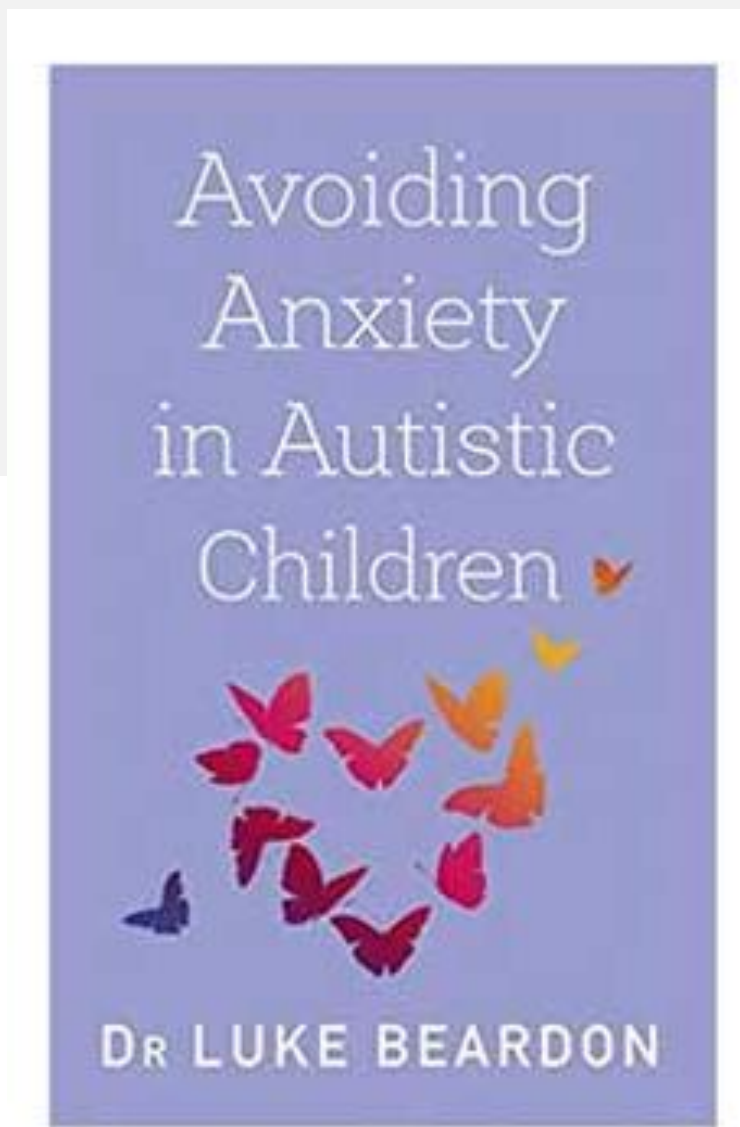
- Melt downs
- Shut downs
- Burnout



## Try this

- Autism Advisory Team 'Energy Accounting Programme'
- Look out for Luke Beardon talks through the Autism Advisory Team
- Two books on anxiety by Luke Beardon:
- BICS – low level response

▶ [Avoiding Anxiety in Autistic Children: A Guide for Autistic Wellbeing \(Overcoming Common Problems\): Amazon.co.uk: Beardon, Luke: 9781529394764: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/9781529394764)



## Autism and Overwhelm



The same activities that can cause a meltdown one day may not have the same effect the next day, but why is this?

Each activity we do or stimulus we come across adds to 'The Bucket'. Stimuli may be something as simple as bright lights or background noise. Things we enjoy can also add to the bucket.

As each individual stimulus adds to the bucket, the water level begins to rise. Some activities that calm us such as stimming or time alone can help to empty the bucket before it overflows.

If things are being added to the bucket faster than it slowly empties the bucket can overflow, causing a meltdown.

Meltdowns are different for everyone. Please give us space and time and don't judge us. Meltdowns are out of our control.

@autisminsightsandme

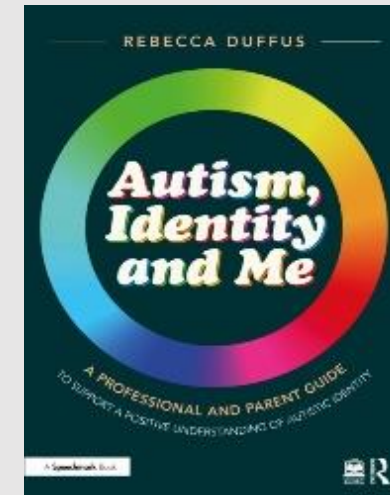
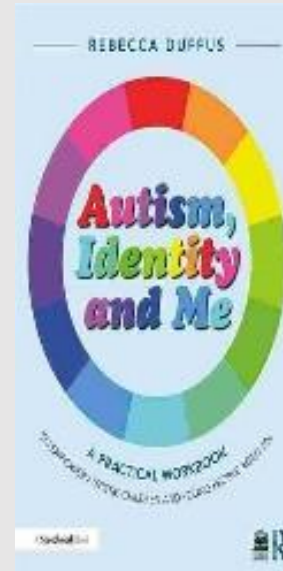
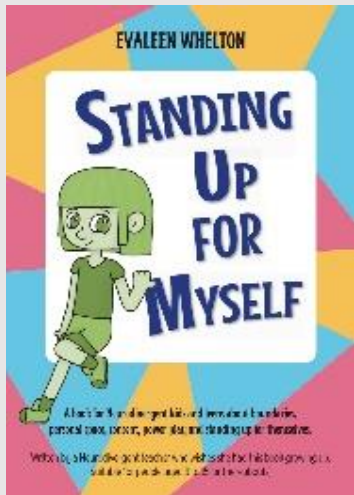
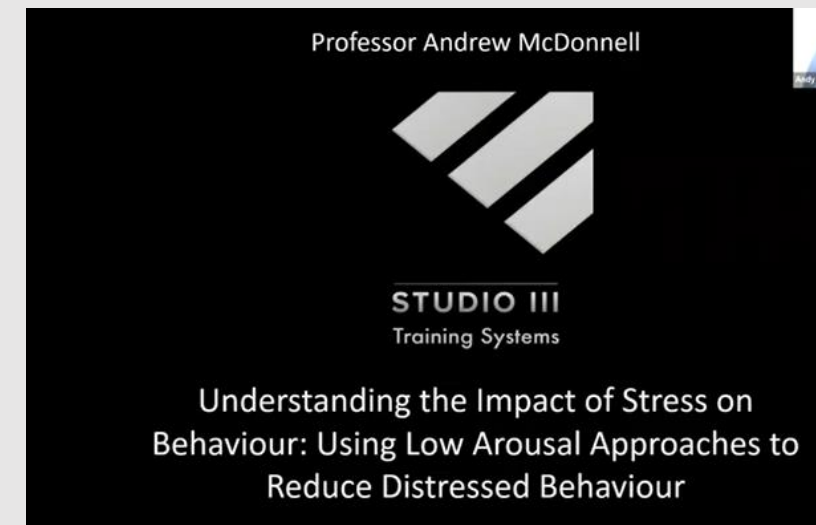
## Try This:

- AAT -in school support for Energy Accounting and Training
- Autistic flow
- Low arousal sensory spaces
- Adult responses to overwhelm: Reflect on how others may contribute to overwhelm.
- BICS
- CAMHS

# Emotional Regulation

[What is the Low Arousal Approach? \(studio3.org\)](http://studio3.org)

[Social stories and comic strip conversations \(autism.org.uk\)](http://autism.org.uk)



[Conversation on creating a low arousal environment to reduce stress \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

# Autism Support offer – Mental Health



- ▶ BICS: [Talk about it | Barnet Council](#)
- ▶ CAMHS - <http://www.behcamhs.nhs.uk/professionals/barnet-camhs.htm>
- ▶ Paediatric Team
- ▶ Kooth

# ▶ Working with School

Q & A – my child presents differently at home and school. When does masking start?

Understanding masking and its depth and nuance for your child is important both at home and school.

Autistic masking refers to a complex and often exhausting phenomenon where Autistic individuals consciously or unconsciously conceal their true selves to navigate social situations more comfortably.

This is sometimes helpful and allows an autistic person to adopt responses, expressions, and communication styles.

While masking can help individuals blend in and cope with societal expectations, it comes with significant challenges and cost.

The constant effort to camouflage natural tendencies can lead to mental and emotional exhaustion, contributing to burnout and heightened stress levels.

Moreover, the long-term consequences of masking may include difficulties in forming authentic connections, a diminished sense of self, and an increased risk of mental health issues.

Recognising and understanding autistic masking is crucial for fostering empathy and creating inclusive environments that accommodate diverse neurodivergent experiences.

# Working with School

## Q&A: communication

1

Ask school to seek support from the Autism Advisory Team to not only request advice but also explore the option of receiving training on essential skills such as masking and emotional regulation.

2

Establish clear communication with the school, particularly with the Classroom Teacher (CT) Form Tutor or Head of Year.

3

Collaborate with the SENDCO and Teachers to agree upon a communication plan, specifying preferred methods of communication, and setting specific timeframes for responses.

4

Establish a defined period during which new strategies will be implemented and assessed for effectiveness. This should be part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle.



# Working with School – Q&A what are reasonable adjustment?

Toilet passes and support with avoiding detentions should be a reasonable and easy adjustment that can be made at school.

If there is a need for low sensory time this can also be discussed with school.

Having a good support plan in place is important to ensure that provision is made for your child.

Emotional regulation plans and Energy Accounting plans can be supported by the AAT.

# Working with School

- ▶ Local Offer Page SENDCO Zone Parent Zone and Autism Page (coming soon) [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / SENDCO Zone](#)
- ▶ Autism Advisory Team – offer - [2002-autism-advisory-team-information-working-with-the-team.pdf](#) ([barnetlocaloffer.org.uk](http://barnetlocaloffer.org.uk))
- ▶ Educational Psychology - [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Organisations / Educational Psychology Team](#)
- ▶ BICS - [BICS - Supporting Children and Young People's Wellbeing and Mental Health Service | Barnet Council](#)

# Autism Support offer – home and Education

- ▶ Home start - [Home - Home-start Barnet \(homestartbarnet.org\)](http://homestartbarnet.org)
- ▶ Early Years Team – pre-diagnosis - <https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/pages/senco-zone/early-years>
- ▶ SOC Com pathway – pre-diagnosis
- ▶ BEAM - [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Info and Advice / Early Years / Barnet Early Autism Model \(BEAM\)](#)
- ▶ Autism Advisory Team - [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Info and Advice / How to get help / How specialist education services can help / Autism Advisory Team](#)
- ▶ Resources for Autism - [Home - Resources for Autism](#)
- ▶ Mencap - [Home - Barnet Mencap](#)
- ▶ Post 16 Team - [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Organisations / Post 16 Participation and Placements Team](#)
- ▶ BEETS - [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Info and Advice / Preparing for Adulthood / Education, training and employment / Careers advice](#)



Professionals and parents will deliver modules designed to increase your knowledge and skills with understanding Autism and using practical strategies to support your child.

The criteria for accessing the programme:

- Barnet Resident
- Child has a diagnosis of Autism
- Child is 0-6 years old

To book [Click here](#) or scan QR code:



Location:
















Morning sessions 10:00-11:30 in person at Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, NW4 4BG

\*\*please note no in-person sessions 28<sup>th</sup> February or 6<sup>th</sup> March\*\*

Afternoon sessions 13:00-14:30 on ZOOM (link to be sent before sessions)



## BELS Autism Parent/Carer programme (0-6yrs)

Programme Content	
<p><b>1. Introduction to Autism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is autism?</li> <li>• Autism and early education.</li> <li>• Autistic voice.</li> <li>• Strategies for support.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: BEAM Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 In-person session- 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  	<p><b>2. Understanding Sensory Processing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of our 5 senses and 3 hidden senses.</li> <li>• Practical strategies to promote alertness and calm.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: Occupational Therapist Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 In-person session- 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  
<p><b>3. Promoting Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of speech, language, and communication.</li> <li>• Strategies for promoting this in the home.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: Speech Therapist Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 In-person session- 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  	<p><b>4. Eating and Drinking Difficulties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of development of eating and drinking skills.</li> <li>• Practical strategies to use at home.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: Occupational Therapist &amp; Speech Therapist Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 In-person session- 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  
<p><b>5. Emotional Regulation and Promoting Predictability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of visuals and other strategies for setting up routines in the home, managing changes and transitions.</li> <li>• Enhancing predictability as a way to support emotional regulation.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: BEAM &amp; parent Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 ZOOM (not in-person this week) - 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  	<p><b>6. Toileting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of development of toileting skills.</li> <li>• Strategies for promoting using the toilet at home.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: BEAM &amp; parent Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 ZOOM (not in-person this week) - 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  
<p><b>7. Sleep</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding how to improve sleep.</li> <li>• Practical strategies to promote good bedtime routines.</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: BEAM &amp; parent Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 In-person session- 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p>  	<p><b>8. Understanding Education Health and Care Plans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is an EHCP?</li> <li>• How can an EHCP help my child?</li> <li>• How long this process takes?</li> <li>• Who can help?</li> </ul> <p>Professionals: SENDIASS Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 In-person session- 10:00am-11:30am Live ZOOM session- 1pm-2.30pm</p> 



## BELS Advisory Team for Autistic Children and Young People

### BACPAC: Barnet Autism Course for Parents And Carers. An Online Parent/Carer Training Course

A comprehensive training and support programme for parents/carers of children aged 6-19, with a diagnosis of Autism.

This course is available free of charge to families living in Barnet.

A 5-session morning or a 6-session evening online training course, covering topics including:

- An overview of what it means for your child to be Autistic.
- Communication.
- Sensory needs.
- Understanding emotional regulation/'behaviour'.

This course also gives parents/carers an opportunity to meet each other and share experiences.

Please only sign up for **one** of these courses and please do not sign up if you have already attended this course, or the Cynnets Course.

#### BACPAC: Barnet Autism Course for Parents and Carers. Spring Term 2024 One, A 5-session morning course.

Dates and times:

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 10-11.30am

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January **Unfortunately this course is now fully booked but there are still spaces on the evening BACPAC course February/March 2024 - see below**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January

Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 10-11.30am

Sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/e/bk36SQqZCL>

#### BACPAC: Barnet Autism Course for Parents and Carers. Spring Term 2024 Two, A 6-session evening course.

Dates and times:

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 6.30-8pm

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 6.30-8pm

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 6.30-8pm

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 6.30-8pm

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 6.30-8pm

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 6.30-8pm

Sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/e/Ck9wbPpm7Z>

For any enquires please email [Autism.Team@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:Autism.Team@barnet.gov.uk) with 'BACPAC course' as the subject, thanks.

[Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Parent and Carer Zone / Events / BELS Advisory Team for Autistic Children and Young People Parent/Carer training. Relationships and Sex Education Programme via Zoom, Spring 2024. / Search Results](#)



**BELS Advisory Team  
for Autistic Children and Young People  
Parent/Carer training.**

**Relationships and Sex Education Programme via Zoom,  
Spring 2024.**

**Aims of the 3 Week Virtual Programme:**

- For Barnet parents/carers to develop their understanding and confidence relating to puberty, sexual wellbeing, and relationships and how these areas might be experienced by their **Autistic child/children**.
- To offer parents/carers the opportunity to participate in activities that they can use to explore puberty, sexual wellbeing, and relationships with their children at home.
- To meet with other parents/carers in a mutually supportive virtual environment.

**Who can attend?**

Barnet parents/carers of Year 4 to Year 9 Autistic students **who have already attended the BACPAC parent/carer 6-week programme or other relevant parenting/carer support programmes e.g. National Autistic Society Early Bird or Early Bird Plus programmes**. Knowledge gained from these foundation programmes is needed to underpin discussion of the themes covered in the 3 sessions.

**Dates:**

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Time:**

6.30-8pm

**The course is free, but it is essential that parents/carers sign-up via this link:**

<https://forms.office.com/e/qAQpZJM7H6>

For any enquires please email [autism.team@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:autism.team@barnet.gov.uk) with 'RSE programme' as the subject, thanks.

▶ Barnet Parent carer group  
RFA parent carer group

[Autism.Team@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:Autism.Team@barnet.gov.uk)



Barnet Advisory Team for Autistic Children and Young People

## Barnet Parent/Carer Group

Who	What	Where
For parents/carers of Autistic children and young people in Barnet.	Monthly meetings. The option of either a morning or an evening meeting.	Online via zoom.
Facilitated by the Advisory Team, who host the sessions.	Parents/carers meet in an informal space and can share experiences, discuss worries and seek advice from their peers.	



### If you are interested in joining the group:

Please email [autism.team@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:autism.team@barnet.gov.uk) and you will be added to the mailing list for the group.

You will receive any information about future sessions via email.

There is an additional group for parents/carers of Autistic children/young people with significant learning difficulties, who may access specialist education settings. If you are interested in joining this group specifically please contact us.

**Contact:** [autism.team@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:autism.team@barnet.gov.uk)

# Autism Support offer – home and Education

## Q&A: What is available socially for Autistic young people

The controversy about social skills – Autistic individuals often possess unique perspectives and communication styles that differ from neurotypical norms. Therefore, teaching neurotypical social skills to a neurodiverse person can lead to masking and further confusion.

12-week summer group – led by Autistic mentors - Pilot

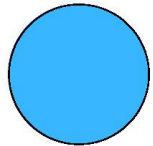
AAT: Encourage the school to create spaces and supports for neurodivergent YP during unstructured times

AAT: Autistic online social group



# RfA Every Person Club

resources for  
autism



## Fun social club for autistic young people

A welcoming space for young autistic people to build on their social and communication skills with new friends and fun games/activities empowering them to explore their identities and the social world around them.

**Explore:** identity, self-confidence and socialising.  
**For:** Ages 13-19  
**Costs:** £5  
**When:** Every Monday 6-8pm in Temple Fortune

Contact Us for More!  
0208 458 3259  
badams@resourcesforautism.org.uk  
Resources for Autism  
858 Finchley Road  
London  
NW11 6AB

"A loves coming, she enjoys it greatly. The Team are well prepared and committed, imaginative and supportive."

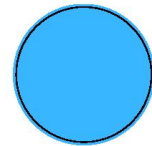


[Every Person Club Flyer \(barnetlocaloffer.org.uk\)](http://barnetlocaloffer.org.uk)



# RfA Wednesday Club

resources for  
autism



## Fun social club for autistic young people

Our club offers a fun, empowering place for young autistic people to make new friends whilst taking part in social games, activities and outings.

**Explore:** Confidence, independence and leadership.  
**For:** Ages 12-16  
**When:** Every Wednesday 6-8pm in Temple Fortune  
Enquire further for costs

Contact Us for More!  
0208 458 3259  
badams@resourcesforautism.org.uk  
Resources for Autism  
858 Finchley Road  
London  
NW11 6AB

"I enjoy making new friends and [RfA Staff] understand about my feelings."



[Wednesday 858 Club Flyer \(barnetlocaloffer.org.uk\)](http://barnetlocaloffer.org.uk)





SUPPORT US



BECOME A MEMBER



BOOK A SESSION



SUPPORT US

# THE PLACE TO BE FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE...

Open 6 days a week with 20+ activities every session. Just turn up - no booking required!

JOIN TODAY!



# Autism Support offer – social care

▶ SAT

**BARNET**  
LONDON BOROUGH

**BELS**  
Barnet Education  
& Learning Service 

# Q & A on EHCP process and how to get one:

- ▶ SEND Q&A and SENDIASS: [Barnet SEND information advice and support service \(SENDIASS\) | Barnet Council](#)
- ▶ Process:



# Q &A: EHCP process and how to get one

Things that will help panel decide on an EHCPNA

1. School have used the assess, plan, do, review cycle and are able to show that support is needed above Ordinarily and Available. [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Senco Zone / SENCO Essentials](#)
2. Ensure both your views and that of your child are clearly stated.
3. Even if it is a parent application they will need school views before they can assess.
4. The process is 20 weeks.

# Q&A : Is there any Extra - curricular support like Swimming, sports & music classes provided by Barnet council ?

- ▶ BACE: [BACE Holidays provide a lifeline during school holidays \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- ▶ Short Breaks: **Who can apply**
- ▶ To be eligible for a short break service, the child or young person must:
  - be between 0 and 19 years old (until 19th birthday)
  - receive an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) + falling in one of the Groups (A or B).
  - receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the middle or high rate
  - Offer and how to apply: [Disabled children's activities \(short breaks\) | Barnet Council](#)

# Autism Support offer – social care

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# Audience questions

