



JADES – Specific Areas for Support

Getting local support

PACT for Autism is an Essex-based charity providing support for families, autistic children and adults as well as other neurodiversity. No diagnosis is required to access their support. Key services include:

- Support & Information (call or text **Debbie** 07377 386090 or **Kim** 07377 386093 to discuss the support you need)
- Monthly meetings for parents/ carers with professional support
- Workshops
- Activities
- Autism talks and training.

To find out more, visit www.pactforautism.org.uk/

Families in Focus is a local charity providing advice and support with educational issues and/or benefit advice and can help with filling in forms (DLA, PIP, Carers allowance). They also provide sibling groups and activity clubs. Find out more information here

www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

The **SNAP** charity provides services for parents and carers of children aged 0-25 years with a Special Educational Need in Essex: <https://www.snapcharity.org/>

Accuro is a small local charity providing specialist services for children and young people living with a disability in West Essex: www.accuro.org.uk

Autism Anglia is a charity providing care and support to autistic children and adults and their families in the East of England, including Essex: <https://www.autism-anglia.org.uk>

There are some groups where children with additional needs can play together and parents/carers can meet and chat with visiting health and education professionals. Please contact your local family hub to find out what is currently running:

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/service/healthy-family-service/family-hubs/>

Home-Start Essex offers emotional and practical support to families either through a home-visiting or telephone befriending service. It is most suited to families of children under 8. Parents/carers can self-refer by calling 01245 847410 or a self referral form can be completed online <https://home-startessex.org.uk/referral/>

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Page 1 of 10



Community 360 can provide support for families with children aged 8-19 years in many ways including developing family relationships, improving home safety and supporting emotional well-being for children and families. You can self-refer by calling 01206 505250 or e-mailing families@community360.org.uk. Visit <https://www.community360.org.uk/what-we-do/essex-family-support-service/>

Getting support with educational issues and concerns

SENDIASS - For children and young people in West Essex, there is a parent helpline run by Essex County Council and Families in Focus, known as the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). This service can provide independent advice and support about educational issues. They can also offer support with school meetings. The referrals can be received from parents/carers, children or young people themselves.

Find out more here:

<http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/listing/send-information-advice-and-support-service/>

<https://www.essexsendiass.co.uk/>

Call their helpline on tel: 01245 204338 or complete the self-referral form via the website. Alternatively, send an email send.iass@essex.gov.uk

The local offer and Essex Infolink has a range of support and advice regarding educational issues: www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/

<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/Pages/EssexSchoolsInfolink.aspx>

Families in Focus support and advice on educational issues; including Assessments, Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs), Exclusions, Tribunals and Appeals. They can come and support families in meetings and advise you on how to get the support your child requires: www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk/contact-us/

Global Mediation offers independent SEN mediation service for disagreements between parents and the local authority or school. They can improve communication and understanding between the parties and work towards reaching realistic, practical solutions. To receive mediation advice, contact our Mediation Adviser on 0800 064 4488 or email sen@globalmediation.co.uk. For more information, visit <https://www.globalmediation.co.uk/service/special-educational-needs->

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Page 2 of 10



[disability/](#)

Independent Parental Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) is a registered charity. IPSEA offer free and independent, legally-based information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They provide training on the SEND legal framework to parents and carers, professionals and other organisations. Visit <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

Finding out more about Autism

The National Autistic Society website offers a wealth of information for parents and professionals including strategies, explaining a diagnosis, national support and a helpline/online community: <https://www.autism.org.uk/>

Literature - It can often help to read about other children's experiences of Autism. 'The Reason I Jump' by Naoki Higashida is an excellent book written by a boy with Autism about his experiences. 'Uniquely Human' is a useful book written by Dr Prizant on perspectives of Autism.

"Supporting your Neurodiverse Child" is an information pack available to help families with a neurodiverse child navigate the support that is available in Essex. It is produced by the Essex Family Forum and can be found here:

<https://essexfamilyforum.org/resources/nd-pack>

Families who cannot access this online or who need a hard copy can make a request via above link.

The pack includes practical interventions, resources, hints and tips.

'Amazing Things Happen' by Alexander Amelines is a very helpful short summary of Autism:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbwRrVw-CRo>

Finding out more information about attention difficulties

Some children experience attention and concentration difficulties. General tips for supporting attention in the class is available at:

			Page 3 of 10
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<https://www.nhs.gov.uk/media/263975/attention-and-concentration-information-sheet.pdf>

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/service/speech-and-language-therapy/attention-and-listening/>

To find out more about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), visit:
<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/services/west-essex-specialist-services/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-service/>

<https://essexfamilyforum.org/resources/nd-pack>

Other helpful websites include:

Living with ADHD www.livingwithadhd.co.uk

ADD-vance www.add-vance.org

ADDISS www.addiss.co.uk

CHADD www.chadd.org

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children

<https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/conditions-and-treatments/general-medical-conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/>

Young Minds

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/adhd/>

The YouTube video “What it is like to have ADHD” is a very helpful short summary of ADHD. www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI7Ro1PUJmE

Finding out more about emotional difficulties

Meltdowns - Many people with difficulties such as Autism have ‘meltdowns’. These are times when a person has an intense response to overwhelming situations. This webpage provides helpful information about meltdowns and how you can help:

			Page 4 of 10
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<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/meltdowns/all-audiences>

It is important for a child to feel emotionally well-regulated in order to optimise their availability for learning and interactions. For a child to feel calm and ready for learning, there must be the correct support in the child's environment. The **SPELL** approach identifies the five principles of best practice when supporting a child with autism; Structure, Positive approaches and expectations, Empathy, Low arousal and Links. Read more about this approach at <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/professional-development/the-spell-framework>

The '**Zones of Regulation**' is an approach used to help children identify how they are feeling and teach strategies to become independent in self-regulation. More is written about this approach at <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/learn-more-about-the-zones.html>

Tools such as **the Incredible Five Point Scale**: www.5pointscale.com/ are helpful for teaching children about emotional wellbeing and how to manage their feelings.

Youth Concern Trust is a local mental health charity which can provide counselling support for children and young people in West Essex aged 5-19. It can also support family members who are facing challenges in relation to a young person's needs. They can work with children and young people pre and post diagnosis of ASD. You can self-refer by speaking to a member of the clinical team on 01279 414090 op 1. <http://yctsupport.com/services/>

Kids Inspire supports children and young people in Essex who are recovering from traumatic experiences or who are dealing with emerging mental health difficulties: <https://www.kidsinspire.org.uk/>

Finding out more about managing anxiety

Some children have difficulty managing their anxiety, the following links may help you understand more about Anxiety:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anxiety/>

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/what-anxiety>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/anxiety-in-children/>

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Page 5 of 10



www.getselfhelp.co.uk

<https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/coping-skills-anxiety/anxiety>

If a young person or parent/carer is concerned for an individual's mental health, they can access the SET CAMHS (Southend, Essex, Thurrock Child and Adult Mental Health Service) by either making an appointment to see their young person's GP with them or by accessing the service for information by calling the central SET CAMHS phone number 0800 953 0222.

Finding out more about challenging behavior

These webpages contain some helpful tips for managing behaviour:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour>

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

Finding out more about sensory processing

Sensory processing issues are difficulties with organising and responding to information that comes in through the senses. Children with these issues may be oversensitive to sensory input, under sensitive, or both. It can help to start by understanding these needs and by making small adjustments to help children manage stress. A useful site to visit is:

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/understanding-sensory-processing-issues>

For more information on identifying your child's sensory preferences and about sensory processing, visit:

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/home-activities-to-include-different-sensory-preferences/>

Many people with autistic traits have difficulty processing everyday sensory information. Too much information can cause stress, anxiety, and possibly physical pain; poor depth perception, problems with throwing and catching and clumsiness. Please see:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/sensory-differences/sensory-differences/all-audiences>

Watch the video from the National Autistic Society to understand what it might be like to have sensory processing difficulties: <https://youtu.be/ycCN3qTYVyo>

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Page 6 of 10



Sensory Spectacle educate about and create awareness of sensory processing difficulties (SPD). They have a range of videos to help you learn about SPD, start to recognise specific SPD needs through repetitive behaviours and characteristics and understand ways to support sensory needs. Learn more here:

<https://www.sensoryspectacle.co.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@SensorySpectacle/videos>

Finding out more about communication

Children with Autism may face certain challenges with social communication. Support for communication must address the environment for the child, putting in behavioural and visual supports, as well as targeting a child's communication system more directly.

Several useful strategies to support communication for autistic children are detailed on the NAS website:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/tips>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/understanding-and-developing-communication>

The Hanen Communication charity also provides evidence-based parent/professional tips and strategies to help support children at different levels of language:

www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Parent-Tips.aspx

The West Essex Speech and Language Therapy webpage has many useful links to other communication charities and toolkits to help speech and language development:

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/services/west-essex-specialist-services/speech-and-language-therapy/>

The charity **Speechandlanguage.org** provides information for parents/carers and practitioners to help children develop their speech, language and communication skills. The progress checker supports you to review your child's progress with talking, listening and understanding. There is also a wealth of online resources. Visit <https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/information-and-support/>

Finding out more about social interaction

	Page 7 of 10
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Many children with language and social communication difficulties may experience challenges with knowing how to start, maintain and end interactions successfully.

There are some practical resources on how to support social interaction skills available at:

www.tes.com/teaching-resources/blog/social-skills-support-sen-students

Some children might benefit from accessing school-run interventions to help them practice taking part in meaningful interactions that foster friendships and positive self-esteem. Available resources include the Talkabout series and Socially Speaking. Talk to your child's educational setting to see how they support friendships through schemes such as 'school buddy', 'circle of friends' or friendship/buddy benches.

Several useful strategies to support social interactions for children with Autism are detailed on the NAS website: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/family-life-and-relationships/making-friends/parents-and-carers>

'Standing up for myself' by Evaleen Whelton is a book written for teenagers and older children who are neuro divergent who need direction to understand themselves, their boundaries and spot signs of manipulation. It offers an effective alternative to social skills groups.

Finding out more about play

To help your child develop their play skills, it is important to make the play fun by initially playing in the same way as your child. By following your child's usual play interests, they are more likely to want to stay in the interaction. This might mean that you play in unusual ways together but this is ok. As your child allows you to join in their play, you could try to show them one new idea.

The following article may be helpful to know more about how to develop your child's play skills with you: <http://www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Articles/you-are-childs-best-toy.aspx>

To understand the types of play and learning through play visit

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/early-years-development/learning-and-play/why-play-matters>

<https://www.earlyyearsmatters.co.uk/eyfs/a-unique-child/play-learning/>

Finding out more about learning disability

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To find out more about learning disability please visit:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/

Many of the local charities previously listed will provide helpful support and information.

Finding out more about Global Development Delay

Some children with Autism also have a diagnosis of global development delay. Find out more about Global development delay with the following information:

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/conditions/global-development-delay>

<https://contact.org.uk/conditions/global-developmental-delay/>

Finding out more about repetitive motor mannerisms

Most children with Autism display repetitive motor mannerisms, here is some information that you might find helpful:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/stimming/all-audiences>

<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/behaviour/repetitive-behaviours-and-stimming>

Finding out more about obsessions, routines and rituals

This is a helpful webpage all about children and adults who prefer routines and rituals, and who have special, fixed interests:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/obsessions/all-audiences>

Finding out more about fine and gross motor skills

Some children with Autism have difficulties with their fine and gross motor skills. HCRG Care Group Occupational Therapy Page has a variety of leaflets on everyday skills such as cutlery and dressing divided into preschool and school age toolkits.

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/article/early-years-therapies-toolkit/>

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/article/school-age-therapies-toolkit/>

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Finding out more about toileting

This is a comprehensive guide to toilet training for children with additional needs:
www.autism.org.uk/about/health/toilet-training.aspx

You may find some helpful tips on this website:
<https://www.eric.org.uk/>

Finding out more about smearing

This webpage is helpful for children who smear and play with their excrement (faeces).
<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/smearing/all-audiences>

Finding out more about eating difficulties (including restricted diet)

For children who have restricted eating, see this page for more information:
<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/eating>

There are some general strategies listed for children with sensory eating issues:
<https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/a-z-eating-difficulties/#Sensory-issues-around-food>

Follow the 'Useful Links' for Supporting Sensory Eating Difficulties at:

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/service/speech-and-language-therapy/eating-and-drinking-difficulties/>

Finding out more about sleeping

Many children with a variety of problems, including Autism and ADHD have difficulties sleeping. See below: www.autism.org.uk/about/health/sleep.aspx

<https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Supporting-Sleep-with-Five-steps-Lisa-Rudge-1.pdf>