

Directory of Services
for
Adults
with
Autistic Spectrum
Disorders

Reprint March 2011

Produced by the Leicestershire Branch of the
National Autistic Society

Leicestershire Branch of the National Autistic Society.

Introduction

This booklet has been put together by parents of adults with autistic spectrum disorders. There is advice and support available for autistic people and their families, but it does not always reach those who need it. The various agencies, statutory and voluntary are not necessarily aware of what services others can provide. We have listed autism-specific services and others which support disabled people generally in a variety of ways. We hope the non-autistic-specific services listed here will make use of the information given to access appropriate training and support for their own staff in supporting clients with autistic spectrum disorders. **A guide for supporting people with AS – written by an “Aspie” has been added at the end of the directory – please feel free to copy and use it.**

All the agencies listed here have responded to our request for information and agreed to be included in this booklet, but we do not have direct personal knowledge of all of them - **inclusion does not imply recommendation.**

The booklet is sent to all the services listed in it so that they are aware of each other and is available to autistic adults and their families on request. Please contact us if you would like further copies and they will be sent to you free of charge.

The information was correct at time of printing: March 2011. Please contact us if there are any changes in your entry or if there are other services you think should be included. We would also like feedback from adults and their families about how effective the various organisations are and any other organisations we should be listing.

Contact Lindy Hardcastle, 31 Flaxfield Close, Groby LE6 OEZ. Tel 0116 2916958

The Directory and other useful information can be found on our Website:

www.aspergerleics.org

Entries are organised under the following headings. Some services do not fit tidily into categories, so we have tried to cross-reference as much as possible.

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1. Organisation: The Asperger Syndrome Support Group

Contact: Shelagh Wilson

Address: 9 Knighton Park Road Leicester LE2 1ZA

Telephone: Shelagh Wilson 0116 2701074

Email: shelagh.m.h.wilson@btopenworld.com

Service provided: Regular Support Group Meetings are held on the second Monday in every other month at 7.15 pm at the Baptist Church Hall, Buckminster Road, Leicester. Advice, support and a sympathetic ear for AS adults and their families are always available on the telephone numbers above and from the LAS (see below).

The Support Group also invites speakers to their meetings from a variety of professional and voluntary organisations with an interest in AS. Our ongoing dialogue with many agencies has been fruitful in improving services for AS children and adults.

2. Organisation: Leicestershire Branch of the National Autistic Society (formerly the Leicestershire Autistic Society)

Contact: Jenny Cornwell (Chair)

Address: 9 Kingston Way Market Harborough Leics LE16 7XB

Telephone: 07775 777524 **Helpline phone:** 0116 291 6958

Email: cornwells@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.leicestershireautism.org.uk

Service provided: Information, advice and support on our telephone helpline – available all reasonable hours. A regular quarterly Newsletter – ‘The LinkUp’ which is also on the Website, provides up-to-date information on local affiliated groups, latest information and recreational outings .

We work closely with Education Departments, Social Services and many other statutory and voluntary agencies to improve services for people of all ages on the autistic spectrum and their families.

There are LAS support groups for autistic people and/or their parents around the county – please phone or email for information.

3. Organisation: The National Autistic Society

Address: 393 City Road, London, EC1V 1NG

Telephone: 08450 704004

Website: www.nas.org.uk

Service provided: Helpline, number as above. Information, Advice, Publications.

4. Organisation: National Autistic Society (Regional Office)

Contact: Ester Vickers, Regional Co-ordinator

Address: Castle Heights, 1st Floor, 72 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham NG1 6BJ

Telephone: 0115 911 3360

Email: estervickers@nas.org.uk

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 is charged.

We also work with representatives from the local authorities in the region, raising awareness 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 a consultancy service for statutory, private and voluntary organisations to help them develop training packages to meet their specific needs within the field of autistic spectrum disorders.

5. Organisation: Autism Accreditation, The National Autistic Society

Contact: Lydia Daniels (Interim Director)

Address: Unit 2 Pinkers Court, Briarlands Office Park, Gloucester Road, Rudge Way, Bristol BS35 3QH

Telephone: 01454 423780

Email: accreditation@nas.org.uk

Service provided: The aim of the programme is to assist, encourage and support all services for people with autism to attain and retain accreditation.

In support of this aim the programme promotes the identification and sharing of specialist knowledge and practice in the provision of services for people with autism.

Achievement of this aim will ensure that every person with autism receives support in a service that meets national standards confirming that it understands the nature of autism and is responding effectively and appropriately to the specific needs of people with autism.

6. Organisation: The National Autistic Society Leicestershire Services

Contact: Angela Finne

Address: Grove Brook House Resources Centre, Brook Street, Whetstone, Leics LE8 6LA

Telephone: 0116 2866956

Email: leicester@nas.org.uk

Service provided: Day programmes devised around individual needs also integrating a combination of social communication and social skills development.

Outreach Services - The National Autistic Society provides specialised staff to work within individuals' homes, local communities and local colleges.

Assessment packages - consultancy including recommendations for development.

Training services for carers, professionals and interested parties.
(see also under **Residential and Housing**)

7. Organisation: CLASP: the Carers' Centre

Contact: Charles Huddleston

Address: Unit 19, 4th Floor, Matrix House, 7 Constitution Hill Leicester LE1 1PL

Telephone: 0116 2510999

Email: enquiries@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk

Service provided: Advocacy, emotional support, advice/information, welfare rights etc. for informal carers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

8. Organisation: Leicestershire County Council - Social Services Department

Contact: Jackie Wright (Team Manager)

Address: Brooklands, 34 Northampton Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9HE

Telephone: 01858 465331

Service provided: The Social Services Department has duties and powers under the NHS and Community Care Act and other relevant legislation to undertake assessment and care management of people with social care needs resulting from ill-health and disability.

Subject to eligibility criteria, the Department will then meet the assessed needs identified.

9. Organisation: TRANSLATE

Contact: Jo or Paul

Address: Meetings held at Moira Centre, Moira Street, Loughborough, Leics, LE11 1AX

Phone: 01509 554797

Email: translate_as1@ntlworld.com

Service provided: We hold informal monthly meetings for adults with Aspergers and those who love them. We offer peer support, an information pool and signposting to relevant support services. We also work to raise awareness of AS in adults and the effects upon those adults and their families and loved ones.

10. Organisation: Mosaic: Shaping Disability Services

Contact: Barbara Howard – Director

Address: 2 Oak Spinney Park Ratby Lane **Leicester** Forest East LE3 3AW

Telephone: 0116 2318720. Fax: 0116 2312037

Email: enquiries@mosaic1898.co.uk

Website: www.mosaic1898.co.uk

Service provided: Services for 16-30 year old disabled people – contact Katie Barradell or Rachel Moore

Information Service- with outreach appointment and information helpline – contact Debbie Farrar

“Aspire” Leisure Opportunities – daytrips, Sunbeam narrowboat trips, Sailability – contact Suzy Smalley

2 holiday bungalows at Overstrand – contact [Shamz Karim](#)

Independent Life Project offering 24-hour support to tenants of 3 properties with Flat 7, an assessment flat for independent living – contact Maria Jackson.

Direct Payments - contact Haydn Paul

11. Organisation: Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living ‘empowering Disabled People’ (LCIL)

Contact: Eric Day Disability Equality Manager

Address: 5-9 Upper Brown Street, Leicester LE1 5TE

Telephone: 0116 2225005

Email: eric@lcil.org.uk

Service provided: The LCIL is an organisation of disabled people. We provide opportunities for disabled people to undertake new areas of learning involving information technology and work skills. We undertake a range of training and access services to organisations seeking to reduce and remove barriers that prevent disabled people from accessing services. We actively promote the rights of disabled people through workshops, information and newsletters.

12. Organisation: Mencap District Office

Contact: Karen Harland (Information Officer)

Address: Kimberley House, 3rd Floor, Vaughan Way, Leicester IE1 4FS

Telephone: 0116 2422733

Email: karen.harland@mencap.org.uk

Service provided: Mencap offers support, advice and information to people with learning disabilities and their carers. Mencap also offers a service to carers aged 60+ who live in Leicestershire, to offer advice, support and information about future planning and access to relevant services.

Other services include advocacy, Asian community day service, personal support and housing (see under Residential Care & Housing).

13. Organisation: LAMP (Leicestershire Action for Mental Health Project)

Address: 65 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 6YF

Contact: Ian Bates

Telephone: (0116) 255 6286

Contact Times: Mon - Fri 9.30am - 4.00pm

Email: lamp@lampdirect.org.uk

Website: www.lampdirect.org.uk

Service provided: LAMP is a voluntary sector mental health organisation, working throughout Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We provide an Information Service for anyone wishing to find out more about mental health issues or local services, an Advocacy Service offering direct help to people who have mental health difficulties and a Carers' Advocacy Service. We work independently from Health and Social Services, all calls will be treated confidentially.

14. Organisation: Leicester City Council Social Care and Health Department,

The first port of call for people who are not currently receiving services is the Adult Access Team who are based at 1 Greyfriars in Leicester. The main Telephone number is 0116 2531191 during normal office hours, and 0116 255 1606 for emergencies only.

The access Team's initial assessment is crucial in identifying diagnosis and any special needs of the person, and will determine the appropriate pathway to access a Comprehensive Community Care Assessment.

Where the person has an identified learning disability, the person will be transferred to the Learning disability Team for further assessment.

Where the person has identified mental health needs, the person will be transferred to the Mental Health Team for further assessment.

Learning Disability Service

Address: 1 Greyfriars, Leicester

Telephone: 0116 2531191

Contact: Learning Disability Service Commissioning Team Manager

Service provided:

1. Assessment and care management: A Social Work Team will assess need for services under the 1990 NHS and Community Care Act. This is available to adults who have a learning disability and Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Carers who provide more than 10 hours a week of personal care are also entitled to an assessment of their needs as a carer.
2. Based on the assessment of need, a range of services may be arranged. Some of the main services include
 - Community Support Services – help to take part in a range of community based activities that promote independence and social inclusion.
 - Supported Living – support to enable people to live in their own homes.
 - Residential Care
 - Specialist Advocacy Services
 - Short Term Breaks – to enable carers and people cared for to spend time away from one another.
 - Carer Support Services

The learning Disability Service works in partnership with a range of other agencies to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorder. These include the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Housing and Further Education providers.

15. Organisation: Fosse Autism Day Service

Contact: Caitriona Carey

Address: Leicestershire Partnership NHSTrust, Glenfrith Division, Leicester Frith Hospital, Groby Road, Leicester LE3 9QF

Telephone: 0116 2255335

Email caitriona.carey@leicspart.nhs.uk

Service provided: The service is part of the Adult Learning Disability Service but we accept referrals from young people aged 17yrs+ who may be about to leave school and need transition support. We work with people with a diagnosis of Autism who may need support through a period of transition, e.g. leaving school, moving out of home etc. We provide a limited day service to support our transition work with an individual. The service covers referrals within Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland.

16. Organisation: Savera

Contact: Laxmi Chudasama, Project Manager

Address: Savera Resource Centre, 125 Loughborough Rd, Leicester LE4 5LQ

Telephone: 0116 2612837

Email savera125@hotmail.co.uk

Service provided: Savera provides a culturally appropriate and sensitive service to all Asian Communities, taking in factors such as language, religion, gender and culture into consideration.

It also helps to address the stereotypes that exist in relation to mental illness within the Asian Community.

Our overall aim at Savera is to provide a range of services for our users and carers that enable them to enjoy the best quality of life that is achievable in a framework of mutual trust, respect and confidentiality.

We will aim to provide this in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner and according to the needs of the South Asian Community of Leicester.

2. Day Services

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1. Choices for Life

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2. National Autistic Society Day Service

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1. Organisation: Choices for Life

Contact: Katharine Merryweather

Address: Units 1 & 2 Phoenix Business Park, Stephenson Industrial Estate, Telford Way, Coalville LE67 3HB

Phone: 01530 839848 01530 837110

Email: katharine@choices4life.co.uk

Service provided: Choices for Life is an innovative new day-care service for adults with a learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorder. We are dedicated to providing a wide range of social, recreational, rehabilitation and learning experiences.

We are community based and individual programmes are structured in such a way as to provide a service that meets the needs and circumstances of each individual.

2. Organisation The National Autistic Society Day Services

Contact Alasdair Bond/Colette Lucas

Phone 0116 2866956

E mail alasdair.bond@nas.org.uk colette.lucas@nas.org.uk

Service provided A range of Day opportunities - both within the Grovebrook Resource Centre, and accessing sessions within the community.

Full use of TEACCH , PEACS, and session / activity planning to suit individual needs.
Full day or sessional options available

3. Psychiatric Services: Mental Health & Learning Disability

1. Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust: The Brandon Mental Health Unit

1.

Organisation: Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust: Brandon Mental health Unit

Contact: Professor T. Brugha

Address: Brandon Mental Health Unit, Leicester General Hospital,
Gwendolen Road, Leicester. LE5 4PW

Telephone: 0116 258 4899

Email: Julie.Park@leicspart.nhs.uk

Services provided: Autistic spectrum problems are usually apparent from late infancy or early childhood, but can be confused with other mental health and learning disabilities. They can also go unrecognised into adulthood. Therefore, a detailed developmental assessment forms an essential part of a diagnostic evaluation, which normally requires the involvement of the person's parents. This outpatient clinic aims to provide such assessments. We can then make links with other social, educational, healthcare and voluntary agencies in order to develop a care plan to meet the person's needs fully.

We provide: Developmental diagnostic health assessment (Outpatient assessment taking a half day to complete) Liaison with social services Liaison with educational services. Hospital admission for this condition is not recommended and assistance should be sought from Social Services locally, from the general practitioner or local mental health service in case of crisis.

Unfortunately there is no specific specialist service for adults with Asperger Syndrome unless they also have a learning disability but it is hoped that such a service will be developed.

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For residential colleges, see under Residential care and housing

1. Organisation: Leicester College

Contact: Eileen Hersey, Additional Support Manager

Address: Freeman's Park Campus, Aylestone Road, Leicester, LE2 7LW

Telephone: 0116 2242053

Email: EHersey@leicestercollege.ac.uk |

Service provided: The college through its Additional Support Dept offers support to all students with an autistic spectrum disorder.

Support is offered via an initial assessment of need by a specialist from the Leicestershire Autism Outreach Service, and the recommended support is currently provided by the Autism Outreach Service and the National Autistic Society and Accredo. The support provided includes 1:1 support in class and often extra-curricular, support in writing assignments and strategies for coping with the course, in-service staff training, development of socialisation skills.

2. Organisation: University of Leicester, AccessAbility Centre

Contact: Dr. Paula Dobrowolski (Head, AccessAbility Centre)

Address: David Wilson Library, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester LE2 7RH

Telephone: 0116 2525002 Fax: 0116 252 5513

Email: accessable@leicester.ac.uk

Website: <http://www.le.ac.uk/accessability/>

Service provided: The AccessAbility Centre (AAC) is part of the University's Student Support and Development Service. The AAC supports all students at the University who have specific learning difficulties, long term conditions, or disabilities. For students with Asperger's Syndrome (AS), the AAC acts as a base where they can work quietly, use the computers, have lunch and read the paper! It also provides a smaller environment within the University which can help to establish social contacts. One-to-one support is available from an in-house Study Adviser who specialises in working with students with AS. Support can also be organised via the AAC with outside agencies such as the National Autistic Society as required. Co-ordination of all support is carried out by the AAC. The various elements of support: in-house, external agencies, a designated person within the teaching department, usually the personal tutor, and parents, form part of a team of support. This type of supportive network has worked well to date, but the system is flexible to meet the needs of individual students. Usually, this support would be funded by the Disabled Students' Allowance which is open to any disabled student in higher education. This funding is an award and does not have to be repaid. See http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/DG_183342 for further information or contact the AAC.

There are at least six other universities who have or are currently supporting students with AS. Further details available on request.

3. Organisation: Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Address: Unit 3, Floor 3, Radisson Court, 219 Long Lane, London SE1 4PR

Telephone: 0800 3285050 (voice) 18001 0800 328 5050 (Text) (Tuesday 11.30am – 1.30pm and Thursday 1.30pm – 3.30pm)

Email: info@skill.org.uk

Website: www.skill.org.uk

Service provided: Skill is a national charity that aims to develop opportunities for people with disabilities and learning difficulties in Post-16 education, training, employment and volunteering.

4. Organisation: ESPA - See entry under ESPA in the Residential Care & Housing Section

5. Organisation: Autism Outreach Service (Leicestershire County Council)

Contact: Tess Coll

Address: Room 600, Rutland Building, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester. LE3 8RA

Telephone: 0116 305 9400

Email sts@leics.gov.uk

Service provided: Assessment, training, consultancy and monitoring of adults with autism who attend Further Education and Higher Education establishments, and of those who work with them. We have knowledge of establishments that have received training from our team and of how individuals with Autistic Spectrum Disorders have fared at colleges within Leicestershire.

6. Organisation: Homefield College

Contact: Lesley Harby

Address: 42 St. Mary's Road, Sileby, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 7TL

Telephone: 01509 815696/ 814827

Email: lesley.harby@homefieldcollege.ac.uk

Service provided: Specialist Residential College providing a range of courses to suit students with learning difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, sensory impairment. City and Guild registered Centre. Students can be residential or day.

7. Organisation: Loughborough University

Contact: Manuel Alonso

Address: Disability Office, Loughborough University, Ashby Road, Loughborough LE11 3TU

Telephone: 01509 222770

Email: disability@lboro.ac.uk

Service provided: We work in collaboration with the local National Autistic Society to provide support for students at the University with Asperger Syndrome.

8. Organisation: Stephenson College

Contact: Gill Houlton/Chris Ison

Address: Thornborough Road, Coalville, Leics LE67 3TN

Telephone: 01530 836136

Email: ghoulton@stephensoncoll.ac.uk

Service provided: Foundation Skills for Life. This 2 year course is designed to meet the many and varied needs of people with learning difficulties. It covers decision making, responsibility, literacy and numeracy/money skills with an emphasis on practical work. Other course components are cookery, art, independent living skills, computing and hobbies.

Foundation skills for Work. This 1/2/3 year course has been developed to meet the needs of young people who need time to explore and develop their career interests and to build up the skills and experience for entry to the world of work at their own pace

9. Organisation: Loughborough College

Address: Radmoor Road, Loughborough, Leics., LE11 3BT

Telephone: 01509 618131

Contact Person: Sue Roberts

Email: sue.roberts@loucoll.ac.uk

Website: www.loucoll.ac.uk

Service provided: General FE and HE provision. Access across college as well as provision for those with learning disabilities.

The college has a specialist support team for learners with autistic spectrum disorders. We liaise with Leicestershire Autism Outreach Team for support when needed. We specialise in supporting people with disabilities, including Autism, to learn the skills to access education, work and housing, and to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and positive relationships

10. Organisation: South Leicestershire College

Address: Station Road, Wigston, Leics., LE18 2DW

Telephone: 0116 2643555

Contact person: Gretta Tharratt

Email: gretta.tharratt@slcollege.ac.uk

Service provided: Support arranged with the National Autistic Society and if appropriate, additional support through the Leicestershire Specialist Teaching Service.

Support includes: one-to-one support, INSET for staff, assessment at interview and support for examinations.

11. Organisation: NAS Leicestershire Services College Support Team

Address: Grovebrook House, Brook Street, Whetstone, Leics LE8 6LA

Telephone: 0116 2866956

Email: Winston.Kimber@nas.org.uk

Service provided: This scheme offers support to students identified by their university or college as requiring ASD specific support. The level of support varies according to need. The intent is to offer structure and security in an environment that some students may find challenging.

The service currently works with over 40 students at De Montfort University, Leicester University, Regent 6th Form College, Nottingham Trent University and Northampton University

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1. Organisation: Accredo Support @ Development Ltd

Address: 21 Church Street Oadby LE2 5DB

Contact: Melissa Webster (General Manager)

Telephone 0116 2721345

Email Melissa@accredo.org.uk

Accredo Support & Development Ltd is an approved provider for both Leicester City (Social Services) and Leicestershire County (Social Services) and is accredited with The National Autistic Societies Quality Accreditation Programme.

Mission Statement:

To support and enable people who have a range of diverse needs (in particular those with Autistic Spectrum Disorders) assisting them to live as independently as respected members of their local community.

To work in partnership with others to provide a wide range of innovative, creative and individualised support packages.

Services provided include:

Supported living Schemes:

Manor court (Hinckley)

Trinity Mews (Hinckley)

Station Road (Hinckley)

The Well House (Dunton Bassett)

Station Road (Glenfield)

Alternatives to day centres:

Thurmaston Skills Centre (Thurmaston)

Oadby Skills Centre (Oadby)

Hinckley Skills Centre (Hinckley)

Community outreach (Leicester City and County)

.

2. Organisation: Advance Housing and Support

Contact: Dave Young

Address: 5 Faraday Court, Conduit Street, Leicester LE2 OJN

Telephone: 0116 255 9935

Email: david.young@advanceuk.org

Service provided: Advance provides a range of housing with varying levels of support according to need. We have group homes, staffed homes and independent flats. Support in some projects is minimal; however we do have 24 hour cover in other projects. We do work closely with other agencies who are involved in supporting our tenants.

3. Organisation: Mosaic: Shaping Disability Services

Contact: Michael Brittan

Address: Harrison Court, 31 Packwood Road, Leicester LE4 2ER

Telephone: 0116 2340487

Service provided: Three housing developments provide supported accommodation. The level of support is negotiated with individual tenants and tailored to suit their needs. Support workers liaise with social workers and other agencies to provide a package of support.

There is an assessment flat available where disabled people considering moving to independent living can stay for a short time to assess their capabilities, difficulties and the level of support they would require.

4. Organisation: Beta Project

Contact: Jill Hay (House Support Worker)

Address: 39 Glenfield Road, Leicester, LE3 6AU

Telephone: 0116 2515695

Service provided: The Project caters for people with a specified learning disability who will benefit from a supportive environment in which to develop their social and life skills to the full. During a maximum stay of two to three years, they will be helped to acquire the necessary skills to move into self-contained accommodation.

We encourage residents to become part of the family group in the house giving each other mutual support and friendship. Residents are encouraged to attend courses, the Neighbourhood Centre and to find part-time employment so that they can develop their skills and meet other people.

The project worker is available five days a week to assist with problems and liaise with outside agencies. A part time worker is available on Saturdays and on a call-out basis on Sundays. We do not provide a twenty-four hour care service.

5. Organisation: Education & Services for People with Autism Ltd (ESPA)

Address: 6/7 The Cloisters, Ashbrooke, Sunderland, SR2 7TW

Telephone: 0191 5102600

Email: mike.smith@espa.org.uk
debra.bartlett@espa.org.uk

Website: www.espa.org.uk

Service provided: ESPA is a registered charity affiliated to The National Autistic Society. We provide a range of services including residential care, domiciliary support and further education for adults with autism and Asperger Syndrome.

ESPA college is commended on the unique way in which students are supported to learn. Staff are highly trained and caring professionals experienced in Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

Our aim is to nurture self-awareness and independence as well as providing appropriate educational experiences through an inclusive learning package.

NOTE: Several young people from Leicestershire currently attend the ESPA College in Sunderland. Access is through Connexions Leicester Shire (see below under Employment, Work Experience and Volunteering)

6. Organisation: The Carr-Gomm Society

Contact: Uche Oshin

Address: 383 Aylestone Road, Leicester LE2 8TA

Telephone: 0116 2833146

Email: via Website

Website www.carrgomm.org.uk

Service provided: Supported accommodation for individuals with a range of needs

7. Organisation: Autism Care UK Ltd (formerly Heath Farm)

Contact: Gary Thompson (Operational Manager)

Address: Heath Road, Scopwick, Lincolnshire, LN4 3JD

Telephone: 01526 320312/322444

Email info@autismcareuk.com

Website www.autismcareuk.com

Service provided: Autism Care provides six comprehensive support solutions on a 5 acre site in the village of Scopwick.

Each home has its own dedicated staff team with staffing ratios dependant on the assessed needs of the clients, and each service user living with people of similar need.

We also have an outcome-focused resource centre which offers day care programmes to individuals in Lincolnshire. These have all been successfully accredited by the National Autistic Society for the last five years.

These services are then complimented by our Lincolnshire supported living and outreach services operating in Sleaford, Lincoln, Grantham, Coningsby and Peterborough which currently provide tailor made packages of support to individuals with Autism and Asperger syndrome.

8. Homefield College (see under Education)

9. Organisation: Creative Support – Parkside Project

Contact: James Brind

Address: 136 Mere Road, Leicester LE5 5GN

Tel. 0116 2201781

Email: parkside@creativesupport.org.uk

Service provided:

Our core project houses six adults with learning difficulties who are encouraged to move on to supported accommodation through the Leicester Housing Association.

10. Organisation: Housing Options

Contact: Nigel King/Maurice Harker

Address: Stanelaw House, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Witney OX29 5RY

Tel. 0845 4561497

Email: enquiries@housingoptions.org.uk

Website: www.housingoptions.org.uk

Service provided: Advice on rented housing and home ownership options.
Advice on any aspect of housing or support for people with a learning disability.
Consultation service to individuals, parents, solicitors and any organisation involved in housing or supporting people with learning disabilities.

11. Organisation: Mencap

Contact: Val Jones (Supported Living Manager)

Address: Suite 23, 3rd Floor, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way Leicester LE1 4SG

Telephone: 0116 2422734

Email: val.jones@mencap.org.uk

Service provided : Support for people with learning disabilities in their own homes and in registered services.

12. Organisation: Ruach Care Limited

Address: The Scholfield Centre, Greenclose Lane, Loughborough, Leics, LE11 5AS

Contact Person: Andy Matthews

Telephone: 01509 235173

Email: info@ruachcare.co.uk **Website:** www.ruachcare.co.uk

Service provided: Residential and supported living accommodation
Outreach Services specifically: Siblings groups, Individual support packages, providing services for people with autistic spectrum disorder; a mental illness or a learning disability.

13. Organisation: Network for Change Ltd

Contact: Darren O'Brien

Address: 150-152 London Road Leicester LE2 1ND

Telephone: 0116 2470335

Email: info@networkforchange.org.uk

Website : www.networkforchange.org.uk

Service provided Network For Change is a local voluntary sector organisation providing Supported Housing, Community Outreach and Resource Centre activities designed to meet the needs of adults whose mental health problems have impacted significantly on their quality of life. Our values and working practice focus on recovery and person-centred approaches to enable wellbeing and potential. Whilst we don't offer services which are specific to those with an autistic spectrum disorder diagnosis we do consider referrals from people with experience of mental distress and Asperger's syndrome.

14. (i) Organisation: The National Autistic Society Leicestershire Services

Contact: Rob Houghton

Address: 19 Camden Road, Braunstone, Leicester LE3 2GF

Telephone: 0116 263 0991/2

Service provided: Domiciliary support services for adults with Autism and AS

(ii) Organisation: The National Autistic Society Leicestershire Services

Contact: Stefan Dziewanowski

Address: Grove Brook House Resources Centre, Brook Street, Whetstone, Leics LE8 6LA

Telephone: 0116 2866956

Email: leicester@nas.org.uk

Service provided: Community based outreach and supported living in a range of housing options. Service Users supported in developing independent living skills are in receipt of their own benefits and are encouraged in budgeting for day-to-day living. Support levels are commensurate with levels of needs. Service Users are encouraged to attend education, employment and a range of leisure pursuits. Support with Social awareness and opportunities.

15. Organisation: The SENAD Group / Sheldon House

Address: 25 Church Street Oadby, Leicestershire LE2 5DB

Contact: Lindsey Johns, Manager

Telephone: 0116 2713520

Email: info@sheldonhouse.com

Service provided: We are a 7 bedded 52 week placement for young adults with Learning Disabilities and associated Challenging Behaviour. We offer sound structure and routine, encompassing Person Centred Planning, and choice. A robust activity schedule as well as educational scope is available.

16. Organisation: Housing Options Centre (Leicester City Council)

Address: Phoenix House 1 King Street Leicester LE1 6RN

Tel: 0116 2527008

Any referrals made to supported housing are via:

Supported Housing Service, Leicester City Council New Walk Centre Welford Place
Leicester LE1 6ZD Tel 2528751 Or 252-6859

Service provided: Supported Housing provides accommodation and support to help with the needs of vulnerable people. Our aim is to work towards independent living leading to a valuable and quality life in the community, Service users receive a more intensive and supportive style of housing management than those in other types of accommodation.

17. Nationwide Provision

1. The NAS list of affiliated establishments for adults - all accredited or registered with the NAS. www.nas.org.uk/nas/accred.html or email: accreditation@nas.org.uk
Tel: 0117 974 8429 and address: Autism Accreditation, The National Autistic Society, Unit 2 Pinkers Court, Briarland Office Park, Gloucester Road, Rudge Way, Bristol BS35 3QH
 2. Residential Care. The NAS has various person-centred services including smaller and larger units, housing, support and independent living. Every unit is a registered care home inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection. Info about adult services; www.autism.org.uk/services
 3. The Hayes Independent Hospital close to Bristol is an independent hospital for adults with Asperger Syndrome who have complex needs (including challenging behaviour) and who are detainable under the Mental Health Act 1983. It is the only service of its kind in Europe. Website: www.autism.org.uk/hayes address: The Manager-The Hayes Hospital, Rookery Lane, Pilning, Bristol BS35 4JN Tel: 01454 632 311 email: Hayes@nas.org.uk
 4. The Association of National Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC) produce a directory of colleges which have received a grading of Grade 3 or above following inspection by the FEFC (prior to Jan 2002) or received a profile of grades that are satisfactory or above following inspection by OFSTED/ALI (since Jan 2002), or have agreement from the Learning and Skills Council to fund learners. To view info re colleges on line see Website: www.natspec.org.uk/memcolls.php
They also have a list of Associate College Members. These colleges are yet to receive a profile of grades that are satisfactory or better following inspection.
Website: www.natspec.org.uk/acollmems.php
- The Learning Skills Council has a helpdesk, phone: 0870 900 6800 or email: info@lsc.gov.uk

6. Employment, Work Experience and Volunteering

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1. Organisation: Posability Ltd

Contact: Ruth Newman

Address: 11th Floor, 60 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FB

Telephone: 0116 2489480

Email: info@posability.net

Website: www.posability.net

Service provided: Recruitment company for people with disabilities who are “work ready”. Permanent and fixed term contracts across Leicestershire: clerical, industrial, technical, managerial.

2. Organisation: LEAT (Leicestershire Employment for Autism Today)

Address: 182 London Road, Leicester, LE2 1ND

Contact Person: Carol Hunt – Manager **Telephone:** 0116 2541664/2857822

Email: 1. carolhunt@btconnect.com 2. leat@btconnect.com

Service provided: LEAT is a charitable organisation providing a wide range of specialist support services to young people and adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD's), and in particular Asperger syndrome, who live in the city of Leicester of the county of Leicestershire.

LEAT is already well known and established as a specialist provider in supporting young people and adults with Asperger syndrome into employment. Through the *Steps into Work* and *Stepping Stones* projects we have provided support, guidance and training to individuals who have been able to access paid employment, work experience/voluntary work and further education as a result. Both projects have proved immensely popular and successful and there has been a demand from service-users for us to deliver a wider range of services.

LEAT Consultancy

In recognition of this need LEAT are continuing to expand and develop their services with the aim of offering a more comprehensive and holistic network of support to people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

This year has seen the innovative development of the LEAT Consultancy from which we are now able to offer individual packages of support. The main focus of the consultancy service is to help and support people with ASD's to improve their independent living skills and become autonomous. This will take the form of highly individualised person-centred training, guidance and support services to include:

- Personal and social skills development
- Developing confidence and assertiveness
- Developing effective communication skills
- Promoting autonomy and independent living skills
- Accessing the local community
- Assistance with independent travel
- Befriending service
- Support into further education
- Support into work experience/voluntary work
- Preparation for and support into employment
- Support with Benefits
- Advocacy service

This list is non-exhaustive and as individual needs vary greatly, the amount and level of support is decided and agreed by the service-user and LEAT Manger at the Assessment stage.

Stepping Stones Project

Funded by The Big Lottery the *Stepping Stones Project* is aimed at supporting young people aged 15-19 years with Autistic Spectrum Disorders or recognised autistic traits during their transition into either further education, work experience, voluntary work or paid employment. The support provided is holistic, person-centred and adapted to individual needs. The types of services we offer include:

- Career advice and guidance
- Benefits advice
- Support and guidance with CV preparation
- Support with selecting Further Education courses
- Ongoing support and guidance in Further Education
- Support with job-search
- Support in preparing for and attending interviews
- Job-coaching
- Public transport training
- Communication with tutors/employers
- Training in social and communication skills
- Independent Living Skills

For further information regarding any of the services LEAT has to offer, please contact Carol Hunt - Manager, either by telephone or email.

3. Organisation: Values (Voluntary Action Leicester)

Contact: Aaron Keen

Address: Active Community Centre, 9 Newarke Street, Leicester LE1 5SN

Telephone: 0116 2575004

Email: aaron.k@valonline.org.uk

Service provided: Support for adults and young people with learning disabilities to enable them to become volunteers in a range of mainstream opportunities including charity shops, lunch clubs, office work, gardening, environmental work and warehouse work.

Support people with a learning disability to become work ready and gain paid employment.

Support is provided by Values on an individual basis according to the needs/abilities of the person. Long-term one-to-one support can be provided, but there may be a short waiting list if the volunteer requires more support.

If you receive an individualised budget you can purchase our service. We can support you to volunteer, gain paid employment and to get involved in everyday activities, such as going to the cinema, bowling, walking or activities that you choose.

4. Organisation: Connexions Leicester Shire Limited

Contact: Phil Pearson, LDD Co-ordinator, who will put the enquirers in touch with the nearest Connexions Centre.

Address: 2nd Floor 6 Millstone Lane Leicester LE1 5JN

Telephone: 0116 2615900

Email: ppearson@connexions-leics.org

Service provided: A network of Connexions Centres exists in the city and county to support all students in the transition from school to adult life. This service is for young people between the ages of 13 years and 19 years. The service can extend up to the age of 25 for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Personal Advisers are employed by the service to support young people with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They attend Transition reviews and work closely with a whole range of agencies to co-ordinate a young person's transition beyond school.

They help to secure appropriate Further Education, Work Based Learning or work with Social Services to develop "Day Care" packages for young people,

They also have close links with a whole range of advice and support services.

5. Organisation: Rathbone -Training Service (See also entry under Housing.)

Contact: Glenda Symmonds (Centre Manager)

Address: 224 Carlton Street Leicester LE1 1QA

Telephone: 0116 2423810

Email: glenda.symmonds@rathboneuk.org

Service provided: Foundation Learning

Employment advisers arrange training and work experience for young people in childcare, care for the elderly, retail, warehousing, manufacturing, hotel/housekeeping, IT and preparatory training. This course covers: Personal and Social Development, Literacy and Numeracy training and vocational training.

We also offer Apprenticeship programmes in Early Years Care, Retail, Business Administration, Hospitality and Catering and Elderly Care.

6. Organisation: Disability Employment Advisers

Contact: Named adviser at your local Jobcentre

Disability Employment Advisers are skilled and experienced in helping people with a disability or health problem find or retain work. They are based in Jobcentres.

Service Provided:

- Practical job search assistance and support.
- Work based assessment of your skills and abilities
- Work Preparation through short work experience placements
- Job Introduction Scheme – Employer's subsidy of £75 per week for up to 6 weeks
- WORKSTEP – for people who require a higher level of support who are therefore unable to work in open employment
- Information about Access to Work – a flexible package of financial assistance for people starting work, or in work. This gives an employee practical help to overcome obstacles met at work due to a disability
- Developing good practice with employers in the recruitment of people with disabilities and the retention of employees who become disabled or whose condition worsens.

7. Organisation: Office Print Services

Contact: Agnes Thomson

Address: Bracken Building, Leicester Frith Hospital, Groby Road, Leicester

Telephone: 0116 2255739

Email: agnesthomson@leicspart.nhs.uk

Service provided: Employment, support and therapy

8. Organisation: Remploy

Contact: Brett Horton

Address: 51 Humberstone Gate Leicester LE1 1WB

Telephone 0116 2489620

Email brett.horton@remploy.co.uk

Service Provided: Remploy Interwork is Government funded to work with people with health issues, Learning Difficulties and disabilities to help them get back into work. We work with three main programmes:

Work Preparation – a work placement scheme to enabled people to try a type of work to see if it suits them (Work Trial in conjunction with Job Centre Plus)

WorkStep – employment programme for people who can work 16 hours or more per week but require additional support in the workplace for a period of time

We also work with lots of local and national employers to ensure opportunities are available for people to go into work.

The eligibility criteria for Remploy is JSA (longer than 6 months), Incapacity Benefit, Recent Education Leaver, NI Credits being paid, Income support (Related to Disability) or at risk of losing their job (related to their disability or health condition).

Please call our local rate line for an appointment to see one of our local advisors – 0845 845 2211

9. Organisation: Work in Progress

Address: 94 New Walk Leicester LE1 7EA

Telephone: 0116 255 3331

Email: wip@advanceuk.org

Website: www.work-in-progress.org.uk

Service provided: We help people who feel that their disability or health is a barrier to work. We provide free support to help people into work. For those in work whose job may be vulnerable due to their disability or health we work with them and their employer to help them to stay in work.

We can provide disability awareness training for employers and we can also help employers to review their recruitment policies and procedures to remove barriers for disabled people and people with mental health problems.

Work- In-Progress is the employment services arm of Advance Housing & Support Ltd.

10. Organisation: Worklink – Hinckley & Bosworth area only

Contact: Michelle Hall

Address: Amity House 6 Holliers Walk Hinckley LE10 1QW

Telephone: 01455 636506.

Email: mail@worklinkproject.co.uk

Website www.worklinkproject.co.uk

Service provided: We currently offer volunteering opportunities to both the long term unemployed and those suffering from mental health problems. We receive Referrals from organisations like the LAS and invite prospective volunteers to meet at Worklink to look over the place to see if they would “fit in”.

There are opportunities for volunteers to work in the furniture warehouse, work with electrical goods PAT testing, go out on the van, delivering and collecting furniture and input data into our database. One can gain experience in our PR department, here there are many opportunities to learn how to use computers.

There are opportunities to join a number of courses, run by Worklink or by local colleges. There is the chance to learn basic computer skills, how to “cook and eat” food, photography, First Aid and basic English and Maths and many more. We offer NVQs in Business Administration, Customer Service and Retail.

Our policy is to move our volunteers on from Worklink within 2 years off their start date. Most of our former volunteers have secured some kind of employment.

7 Social and Recreational

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1. **Organisation;** The Monday Club

Contact: Project manager: Chris Covill

Emails will be picked up on **Monday** and **Thursday** evenings.

Mail may be sent to –

The Monday Club, Leicester Central YMCA, 7 East Street, Leicester LE1 6EY.

Email – themondayclub@hotmail.co.uk

Telephone 0116 2556507 (Monday 7pm - 9pm Only) or 07804671783

Service provided: The Monday Club is a social group for adults (18+) with Asperger Syndrome which meets at the Leicester YMCA on Monday evenings from 7 - 9 pm, supported by paid staff and volunteers, all of whom are knowledgeable and experienced in the field of AS. The YMCA provides a warm, safe and friendly base from which planned opportunities are available for the group to improve their social skills and experiences whilst participating in a range of activities in a variety of settings. These activities have included visits to local cafes, bar, restaurants and leisure facilities, all of which are planned in conjunction with members and evaluated afterward to learn from these experiences and monitor their success and appropriateness.

2. Organisation: National Autistic Society Befriending Scheme

Contact: Gillian Keeling

Address: The National Autistic Society, Castle Heights, 4th Floor, 72 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham NG1 6BJ

Local Address: PO Box 7911, Anstey, Leicester, LE7 7ZU

Telephone: 0116 236 7524

Email: Gillian.keeling@nas.org.uk

Service provided: The Befriending Scheme is a free service which provides trained volunteers who offer support to autistic people and their families in a way that meets their individual needs

All Befrienders are carefully vetted before being accepted into the Scheme and they receive a full induction in autism, Asperger Syndrome and volunteering skills. They are also provided with on-going support and training.

Having a volunteer makes it possible for someone with autism to take part in social and recreational activities; it gives family members someone non-judgemental to talk to and can offer temporary respite for shopping/leisure trips etc.

3. Organisation: Riding for the Disabled

Contact: Dawn Whitmore-Kirby

Address: Meadow School of Riding, Deans Lane, Near Woodhouse Eaves, Loughborough, Leics LE12 8TE

Telephone: Yard: (01509) 891690 Home : (01509) 646361 Mobile: 07860 245675

Email: dawnwhitmore@hotmail.com

Service provided: Riding for the Disabled is a national organisation and Dawn is a qualified senior instructor with experience of working with people of all ages with autistic spectrum disorders.

The Riding School is licensed by the local authority (Charnwood BC) and we teach riding for all ages and abilities specialising in teaching people with disabilities and special needs, riding may also be arranged for able-bodied siblings to ride at the same time as special needs.

4. Organisation: Rutland Sailability

Contact: Trish McNair (Chairman)

Address: Gibbert Lane, Edith Weston, Oakham, Rutland LE11 8HJ

Telephone: 0116 277 2719 (Trish McNair, Chairman)

Website: www.rutland-sailability.org

Service provided: Training, support and equipment to enable our members to enjoy the challenge of sailing in a safe, welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

5. Organisation: Wanlip Sailing Club

Contact: Bob Hopkins

Address: 22, Anstey Lane, Thurcaston, Leicester LE7 7JA

Telephone: 0116 2363080

Website: wanlipsc.co.uk

Service provided: Teaching sailing.

6. Organisation: Peter Le Marchant Trust

Contact: Lynn Smith

Address: Canalside Moorings, Beeches Road, Loughborough, Leics LE11 2NS

Telephone: 01509 265590

Email address: lynnsmith@peterlemarchanttrust.co.uk

Website: www.peterlemarchanttrust.co.uk

Service provided: provide day outings and holidays on waterways for people of all ages with any kind of disability or serious illness. We have three boats Symphony that can take 26 passengers on day trips, Serenade that takes 10 people on 3/4 night holidays and Meloday that sleeps up to 8 and is available for weekly hire by a family or group with one or more disabled or seriously ill member.

7. Organisation: Food & Activity Buddies

Contact: Angela Roberson

Address: C/O Caldecote Primary school, Hallam Crescent East, Leicester

Telephone: 0116 2252836

Email address: fab@lcchs.nhs.uk

Website: www.leicestercity.nhs.uk/fab

Service provided: 6 week weight management courses across the city for anyone who needs support to lose weight! Our 6 week courses are fun, interactive and designed to help you identify and overcome your food and exercise barriers to make a positive lifestyle change.

Each 2hour session contains an interactive nutrition workshop and exercise session. Our FAB Nutritionists will help you to understand topics such as, food portions, food labels and healthy snacks. Our FAB Exercise Mentors will support you to become more physically active. All exercise sessions are tailored to your ability, so everyone can take part!

8. Organisation: Phoenix Square Independent Cinema and Digital Media Centre

Contact: Box Office – 0116 242 2800 / Email – hello@phoenix.org.uk

Address: 4 Midland Street, Leicester, LE1 1TG

Telephone: 0116 242 2800

Website: www.phoenix.org.uk

Service Provided: We are a fully wheelchair accessible independent cinema with an induction loop system fitted throughout, including in our screens. We also can provide headsets during our screenings for the hard of hearing. We offer a concessionary rate (Of £5.40 peak times and £4.80 off peak times) to those who receive benefit for a disability. This can be claimed by showing a letter or other proof of benefit to the box office.

We also offer complimentary tickets to carers of CEA card carrying disabled guests. If anyone is interested in acquiring one of these cards, we have the forms for them on box office for anyone who asks. The form can also be downloaded from the Cinema Exhibitors Association Website, which can be found at: <http://www.cinema.uk.org.uk/ceacard/>

9. Organisation: Embrace Arts

Contact: arts-centre@le.ac.uk

Address: Richard Attenborough centre, PO Box 138, Lancaster Road, Leicester LE1 7HA

Telephone: 0116 252 2455

Email: arts-centre@le.ac.uk

Website: www.embracearts.co.uk

Service Provided: Fully-accessible and inclusive arts centre at the University of Leicester open to all, providing year-round programme of informal short courses and workshops in wide range of arts subjects, plus events and performances for all the family.

10. Organisation: Leicester City Council Social Services Community Support Team (see entry under Section 1 - Support, Advocacy and Counselling) City residents only

11. Organisation: Mosaic (Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Guild of Disabled People) (See entry under Section 1 - Support, Advocacy and Counselling).

12. Websites

12.1 Leicestershire Branch of the National Autistic Society

www.leicestershireautism.org.uk/

12.2 Leicestershire Aspergers syndrome Support Group

www.aspergerleics.org

12.3 www.asteens.co.uk

Set up by a group of mothers of children/teenagers with Aspergers syndrome, this non-profit site is conducting research via questionnaires in order to report on areas that need improving. It also provides information, news and a place for people to share feelings.

12.4 www.positiveaboutautism.co.uk

Positive About Autism is a new training company providing learning opportunities on autism with a positive style and philosophy. We have customisable in-service workshops for teams and a great programme of autism events.

They welcome parents on courses and like a mix of parents and professionals. The only exceptions are the Positive about Teamwork and Positive from the Start events which are aimed at professionals/practitioners.

12.5 Asperger United

www.autism.org.uk/about-autism/autism-library/magazines-and-reports/asperger-united.aspx

- A quarterly magazine for age 16+ (although some parents subscribe on behalf of their under-16s)
- Edited by a person with High-Functioning Autism.
- Written by people with Asperger syndrome, High-Functioning Autism and other high-functioning conditions on the spectrum, or by professionals with this group specifically in mind.

12.6 Holiday Information Guide 2010 - Family Carer Support Service - www.hft.org.uk

Creatively supporting people with learning disabilities

If you need help with healthcare, finding a job, or a new home. Or if you're looking to make new friends, take up a hobby, or have a holiday, then we can help.

Hft are a national charity, providing local support services for people with learning disabilities in Northern and Central England, the South East and South West. Whatever you need, whether you'd like support for a couple of hours a week, or 24 hours a day, our local teams will be happy to work with you.

The holiday guide full of useful information can be found on both the Aspergers Group Website or the Leicestershire National Autistic Societies site.

13. Books

13.1 Organisation: National Autistic Society

Website: www.autism.org.uk/pubs

Content: A wide variety of books and other resources, discounts if you are a member of the NAS

13.2 Organisation: Essential Reading Plus Ltd

Contact: Duncan Lynch

Address: 45 Old Farm Road, Strawberry Vale, East Finchley, London, N2 9RF

Telephone: 020 8444 3995

Website: www.essentialreadingplus.co.uk

Service provided: Online/Conference bookseller, covering all areas of Special Needs. Are able to provide book display at events where possible, contact duncan@essentialreadingplus.co.uk

8. Benefits

People with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and their carers may be eligible for a range of disability benefits according to their particular needs and circumstances.

For advice contact:

- Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 882200. Calls are free and confidential.
- Leicestershire Welfare Rights on 0116 2779496 (Monday to Thursday mornings 9.30 to 12.30).
- Leicester City Council Benefits Advice Line on 0116 2543399 (Monday – Thursday 1-4 pm)

Benefits and Work is a website that anyone can access, it's a site full of useful information regarding benefits with lots of useful advice and forums where people can chat about benefits - **www.benefitsandwork.co.uk**

9 Aspie Guide

A Guide for Support Workers and Personal Assistants Working with people with Asperger Syndrome

To make it easier to write this document, I will refer to a person with Asperger Syndrome as an Aspie.

Asperger Syndrome is a communication and developmental disorder.

An Aspie misinterprets communication because they are very literal and they cannot read body language.

They are not tuned in to other people's feelings and can appear to be rude and self-centred.

They do not cope well with change and find it difficult to make choices.

They often suffer from stress and depression.

They find it particularly difficult to talk to people they do not know well

All these factors are exaggerated when the Aspie is in difficulties and needs help. This means that just when they most need to be able to express their concerns and listen to advice, they are least able to do so.

Aspies must have their requirements properly understood and met, otherwise they cannot be full citizens.

Communication is at the heart of being human. This makes your job very important.

Tips to help you Communicate with Aspies

- Ask how an Aspie prefers to communicate and what they need you to do.
- Listen carefully and sympathetically and talk to an Aspie in simple language.
- Don't use idioms and metaphors.
- Slow down and listen.
- An Aspie doesn't read body language, and they don't know how to give the right body language either. Don't take this personally.
- Quite often, nonverbal communication is used alongside verbal communication to express the meaning of what one is saying. Be aware though, that the Aspie will not pick up the non-verbal communication, but they will pick up the tone of voice.
- Don't get it into your head that you won't understand an Aspie. This will affect your confidence and make it harder for you.

Don't be embarrassed if you don't understand at first. Accept that you will make mistakes but don't stop communicating.

- Treat an Aspie with respect.
- Respect an Aspie's privacy.
- Be honest about what you find difficult.
- Be aware of the impact of an Aspie's impairment on them. It is easy to misinterpret their ability to understand or co-operate if you do not do this.
- Don't offer too many choices – keep it simple.
- Don't look too far ahead – break the problem down into small steps and only present the Aspie with one step at a time.
- Don't talk about what other people have done in similar circumstances – this has little relevance for most Aspies.
- Write down as simply as possible what the Aspie needs to do, if anything, and what you are going to do.
- Aspies find it easier to communicate their negative feelings by writing them down. Please accept this.
- Don't over react if they do express a negative feeling towards the way you are handling them. They will feel unable to tell you their negative feelings at all.
- As a Support Worker you will need to put the feelings of an Aspie first before your own. You have to adapt to the Aspie. The Aspie is not able to adapt to you.

This article can also be used as a guide for families.

By Debbie Hudson

10 Thought for the Day!

Understanding Neurotypicality

Neurotypicality is a pervasive developmental condition, probably present since birth, in which the affected person sees the world in a very strange manner. It is a puzzle; a enigma that traps those so affected in a lifelong struggle for social status and recognition.

Neurotypical individuals almost invariably show a triad of impairments, consisting of inability to think independently of the social group, marked impairment in the ability to think logically or critically, and inability to form special interests (other than in social activity). It is my hope that this article will help us understand the very different world of the neurotypical.

Neurotypical individuals show difficulty in forming an individual identity, or in thinking outside of the bounds of the accepted norms of their social groups. It appears that each group a neurotypical belongs to will have its own set of "official" opinions, and each neurotypical within that group is expected to adopt those beliefs. As strange as it sounds, they generally do so very readily, and are not hesitant at all to help enforce those beliefs and ensure group homogeneity of opinion. There appears to be an innate drive for the neurotypical to fit in with groups in that manner, and their own innate opinions and desires are modified automatically to fit the group ideal. This bizarre lack of independence explains the tendency for neurotypicals to engage in fads of various sorts, or for the existence of certain trends. Neurotypicals will change the way they talk or dress according to these trends, and other neurotypicals will admire and imitate such "trendy" behavior. As such, neurotypicals are easy prey for TV commercials or other means of advertising that seek to portray the purchase or use of various products as socially desirable or "cool."

The need for neurotypical individuals to "jump on" the latest trend is a function of their excessive level of concern of how they are perceived by others. Neurotypicals form their self-image based at least as much on the opinions of their peers as they do on their own opinions. They do not perceive themselves as individuals in the manner that you or I do; they see themselves as individual members of a group, but in practice, the opinions of others weigh heavily upon them, and there is a great drive to obtain the acceptance and admiration of others around them, including complete strangers. There is a built-in tendency for neurotypicals to blend in, to become "one of the herd," so to speak. Most of them never realize how much their opinions are dictated by the group. They want the things that the group deems desirable, and they internalize that desire so fully that it feels to them as if it was an internally-motivated desire.

The overdeveloped social centers of the neurotypical brain are also responsible for their odd, inefficient communication style. We've all seen the strange tendency neurotypicals have to hide their true communicative intent beneath layers of often contradictory statements. They tend to state things implicitly rather than explicitly, and with a level of vagarity that often results in miscommunication. This appears to be an outgrowth of the

neurotypical person's desire to maintain popularity and social status; they seem to believe that by stating potentially annoying or offensive things indirectly, their popularity will be better maintained. This obsessive concern with social standing makes communication with neurotypicals rather difficult at times. They are incapable of expressing things directly, in a manner that can be easily and unambiguously interpreted by anyone that knows the language. They are also limited in their capacity to interpret statements directly without trying to find hidden meanings in them; they often misunderstand the most basic statements in this way.

People with neurotypicality tend to communicate in a very vague manner. They make guesses as to the level of knowledge of the listener, and omit parts that the listener is presumed to know. It is rather obvious that this guessing will often be wrong. Unfortunately, the listener that does not understand will generally not ask for clarification of such ambiguities, for fear of the speaker thinking that he is stupid or ignorant. As is usually the case with neurotypicals, image and status is more important than effective communication and the truth in general. Communication between neurotypicals is very limited in this way, and the fear of being seen as stupid prevents either party from verifying the content of the conversation. As such, most miscommunication goes undetected by at least one, if not all, neurotypicals that had engaged in such a conversation.

The neurotypical individual typically has a very limited capacity for logic or rational thought. The most recent research on the topic suggests that neurotypical people are not able to separate their emotions from their logic, and they often confuse the two. This is an obvious explanation for the sometimes appalling illogicality evidenced in neurotypical behavior. Neurotypicals typically exhibit very limited critical thought, and they are easily led to believe some rather illogical things. Sadly, most societal positions that require logic and rational thought are occupied by neurotypicals, which is a function of their sheer numbers more than any fitness for the job. Such jobs include important functions like jurors, legislators, judges, voters, doctors, and many others. If their herd mentality did not result in excessive rates of reproduction, their numbers would be smaller, and they would be of more use in job titles like salesperson, receptionist, cashier, and others where rational thought is less emphasized than social interaction.

Neurotypicals have a very limited ability to concentrate on one topic for great lengths of time, or repeatedly. The apparent absence of special interests in neurotypicals is notable. Their concentrations on normal areas of interest like computers, machines, scientific interests, history, or other academic subjects, are limited, and are short in duration as well as relatively infrequent. It appears that nearly all neurotypicals share one singular special interest, and that is socializing. This is the only activity that the person with neurotypicality can engage in for more than short periods of time. The stereotyped neurotypical mannerism of "chatting," or communicating verbally with others even where no relevant or useful information is exchanged, is notable, and can be observed very often in neurotypicals that

are engaging in perseverative social behavior. Why the neurotypical mind is limited in its flexibility insofar as selection of a special interest is not known at this time. This social interest is not terribly useful as far as society in general is concerned, and the neurotypical is unlikely to be capable of significant innovation, or of fostering societal advancement.

Without significant intervention, neurotypicals will continue to be dependent on us for generations to come. Unfortunately, the neurotypical herd mentality results in an excessive rate of birth of offspring that are genetically predisposed to be neurotypical, and as such the incidence of neurotypicality remains frighteningly high. Fortunately, the percentage of neurotypical births has been in decline recently, although it is still far too high for comfort. As long as the numbers of neurotypicals are so high, it is unlikely that they will allow us to institute any remediative efforts to help them overcome their disability. We may think it is so sad to see neurotypical children being trained to maintain a group mentality and to forsake true individualism, but at this point it is unlikely that the neurotypical parents of these children will be able to overcome their aforementioned logic impairments to realize how important intervention is if their children are to live to their fullest potential. It is up to us to educate them, and to get them to see that every child is entitled to greatness, even if he was diagnosed with neurotypicality. There can be hope for a better future if we can reach these children in time.