

Children and Young People's Autism Service (South Staffordshire) update

April 2021



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We remain committed to continuing to provide as full a service as possible during Covid-19 and would ask that you continue to follow national guidance in relation to staying alert and practicing social distancing. You can find out more at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

A duty professional remains available via the service contact number on 0300 303 0691 Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm to offer help and support to families.

Welcome to this month's update from the Children and Young People's Autism Service in South Staffordshire.

Assessments and interventions

We're delighted to report that the team continue to meet the target of offering an appointment to a family to commence an autism assessment within 12 weeks of a referral being accepted.

Likewise, through our partnership with Caudwell Children, appointments remain available via its purpose built centre. Please contact us if you would like more detail on this or if you have previously declined to be seen by Caudwell but now wish to reconsider.

As a reminder, any family currently awaiting an assessment appointment for **new assessments only** and are happy to receive a late notification are asked to email the team at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk with their details so that we can get in touch should an appointment become available at short notice.

The team are also continuing to develop new resources to increase the offer and range of intervention support, please watch this space for updates.

World Autism Awareness Week

This year's World Autism Awareness Week took place from 29 March-4 April and the team has been celebrating in a number of ways.

Throughout the week the team completed a 'walking for autism awareness' event with colleagues taking part and walking around Staffordshire, taking pictures of their individual walks. The weather certainly helped to make for some lovely backgrounds and you can see the fruits of our labours (*pictured right*).



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The team completed the walks and raised funds to deliver Easter gifts to a local children's home who provide care for young people with autism (*pictured left*).

We launched a competition calling on our young service services to use their creative skills by helping us design a new logo. The winning design will be chosen as our new emblem going forwards and the deadline to get entries in is 1 May. For more information on how to get involved visit the service's web page at

www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service.

We also wanted to use this as an opportunity to share links to some great online resources, including a wonderful poem called 'I'm Just Me' by Kenzi, an autistic anti-bullying campaigner about autism and his lived experience which you can view by [clicking here](#). Kenzi's accompanying classroom work sheet, designed to stimulate reflection and action amongst primary and secondary school students has been shared by Derbyshire Autism Services on its website and can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Marina Fournier-Farmer has also done a fabulous job of compiling a number of resources and book suggestions into [this resource sheet](#), hosted on the Joined Up Care Derbyshire website.

Meanwhile, you can read about a series of creative writing workshops for autistic writers, hosted by Writing East Midlands by [clicking here](#). The link also contains a video about the project.

World Autism Awareness Week also provided an opportunity not only to reflect on the hard work that has led to us meeting our target of offering an appointment to a family to commence an autism assessment within 12 weeks of an accepted referral, but to also look forwards to what we feel is a bright future for the service and the families we support. We very much look forward to you joining us on this journey.

Talking Together for Change – get involved in helping to further develop our service

Alongside the logo competition aimed at young service users, we are also seeking greater parent involvement into how the service is run.

The Talking Together for Change programme invites parents and carers to participate in further developing the service. We're holding four online sessions via Zoom where we want to have an in-depth discussion on developing changes together.



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We really hope that parents and carers get involved in what will be an important step for the service. The online sessions take place between 10am-12 noon on the following dates:

- Tuesday 20 April
- Thursday 29 April
- Tuesday 11 May
- Tuesday 25 May

You can find out more about Talking Together for Change via our service web page at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service or by emailing involvement@mpft.nhs.uk.

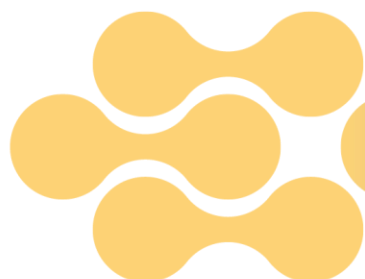
Autism Toolbox

We've been receiving a lot of very positive feedback from parents about our successful 10-week Autism Toolbox initiative. These online workshop sessions cover a wide variety of topics and you can find out more via the service web page at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service

Here is just some of the feedback we've received so far:

- *"This has been really good today, hosts seem to have pitched it right and engaged well and in response to comments as well."*
- *"Great session. A lot of information to take in but it wasn't difficult to follow. I have come away from the morning with a good feeling."*
- *"I have no suggestions for improvement as I love everything about this course. I am sad to think next week is the last session. I have learnt so much and never thank you all enough for helping me. My child hasn't long had his diagnosis and it's been a shock. But this course has helped me to start to understand my child better and how to help [my child], and us cope with everything life is throwing at us."*
- *"It [this final session] was perfect."*
- *"I have really appreciated this course. All the people who have given their time to share their knowledge with us have been wonderful. I know they are only doing their jobs, but they have all done their jobs brilliantly. It is also nice to realise that other parents are struggling and are in the same boat as we are. I will miss talking into my computer on a Thursday."*
- *"Enjoyed every session thank you."*

The programme is open for parents or carers in South Staffordshire whose child or young person has recently received a diagnosis of autism. Please call the office on 0300 303 0691 or email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk to book or find out further details and dates of the individual sessions.



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Online art gallery

We continue to welcome entries for our online art gallery for young people, families and carers to share an image about what autism means to you. This image can be in any medium; i.e. paint, pencil, photo etc. Selected artworks will be exhibited in a virtual gallery on our web page, so you can see what other people have been getting up to creatively. We hope this will be a bit of fun as well as a source of inspiration for everyone and an opportunity to exhibit your work.

If you'd like to take part, please email photos of your artwork to cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk (please use the words 'Online Art Gallery' in the subject header). The gallery is open to young people under age of 25 with a diagnosis of autism living in South Staffordshire. An entry form, including a range of FAQs and help on how to get help with submitting work is available by [clicking here](#).

Your feedback

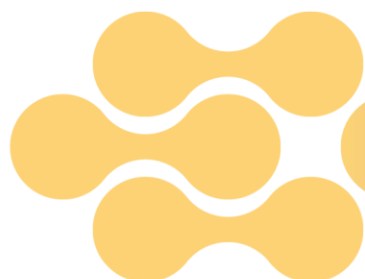
There are a several ways to provide feedback on your experiences relating to the service:

1. Families are provided with a feedback form following completion of their assessment, intervention or when attending a workshop. We would be grateful if these could be returned as your comments and ideas provide valuable knowledge of what we are doing well and where we can review or improve.
2. An online feedback form, available at <http://surveys.mpft.nhs.uk/Survey486/Create?channel=15181>
3. The Trust's Customer Services Team is happy to receive comments and suggestions you may have to improve the Autism service, or any other service provided by the Trust. You can find out more at www.mpft.nhs.uk/service-users-carers/complaints-concerns-and-compliments. The team is open 8am-6pm, Monday-Friday and can be contacted by:
 - Email: palsandexperience@mpft.nhs.uk
 - Freephone: 0800 783 2865
 - A website form is also available via the website link above

Contacting the service

- Telephone: 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday; excluding Bank Holidays)
- Email: cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk

More information about the service can be found via MPFT's website at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service, which features:



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- Referral information (*NB: Referrals into the service can only be made by a professional who has met with the child and family*)
- Meet the team section
- Resources
- Workshop information
- Information should urgent help be required
- Previous service updates
- Frequently asked questions
- Voice for Change session feedback
- Contact details for a number of other useful services and organisations
- Videos

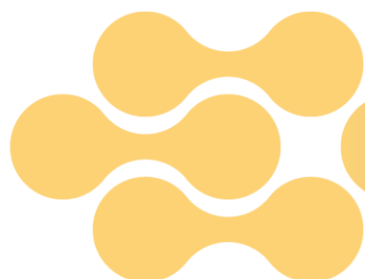
If you need urgent help between the hours of 9am-5pm from Monday to Friday, you can contact the Single Point of Access directly on 0300 303 0691, or call First Response (social care and health) on 0800 1313 126.

If you need urgent help out of hours (evenings, weekends or bank holidays) please contact:

- NHS 111, who have access to on-call mental health professionals; or the
- First Response Emergency Duty Team on 0345 604 2886
- In the event of a medical emergency please go straight to A&E.

The Trust's 24/7 urgent NHS mental health service provides telephone support, advice and triage for all ages. The Freephone number to call for people living in South Staffordshire is 0808 196 3002 (*NB: this telephone line cannot provide advice on Coronavirus symptoms*).

Should a parent/carer have a specific question relating to the care of their child, we ask that they email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.



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Children and Young People's Autism Service What do we do?

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We offer support to families across south Staffordshire around autism! Our service covers both assessment and intervention. See below for some more information!

Assessment

Referral and triage

The team look at all the information. If the team think another service within MPFT is more appropriate we can transfer the referral to that service. We also offer relevant signposting to external services too. If we do this you will receive a letter stating why. If we accept your referral will be contacted about next steps. Sometimes we have to obtain more information before we can accept your referral, for example from school or another professional setting.



Seeking additional information

By agreeing to the referral into our service you consent to us contacting relevant professionals as stated above. We will send out a form asking for some information. Your referral is on hold until this information comes back.



Autism Diagnostic Interview – Revised (ADIR)

This is an interview with the parent/carer in order to gain further information and background on the young person. This may be over the phone or face to face and can take up to a few hours. We call this the "Developmental history".

This will be within **12 weeks** of referral acceptance.



Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)

In most cases you will also require an ADOS as part of the assessment too, but this will be decided by the team on an individual basis. ADOS are either face to face or over video call depending on what's needed. The young person will have to do some tasks with a clinician. But don't worry – it's more fun than it sounds!



Additional assessments

We may need additional assessment if there is a clinical need such as cognitive assessments and school observations. This is judged on an individual basis so isn't always the case.



Intervention

The Autism Toolbox

Our 10 week course covering a wide variety of topics around Autism. See the toolbox poster or our website for more information!

This is our core offer for intervention in the service. Anyone with a young person diagnosed with autism can access this (0-19, 25 with an Education Health & Care plan (EHCP)).



Duty line

We can offer short term help and advice via our duty line. Call the office and our admin team will put you down for a call back from a clinician for some advice.



Anyone with a young person diagnosed with autism can access this (0-19, 25 with an Education Health & Care plan (EHCP)).

Office number: 0300 303 0691
(9am-5pm, Monday-Friday)

*In emergency call 999. In times of immediate crisis contact first response: 0800 131 3126

1:1 Intervention

If after our workshops you still require help you can refer in for some 1:1 support. The team will triage this to assess clinical need.

This support will be a short period of care covering a specific topic such as understanding autism or anxiety. These will be either face to face or virtual over a video call.



Signposting to services

If we think you need a different type of help we will help you find where to go.



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