

Newsletter - Winter 2024



Dear All,

We are coming to the end of another successful year here at the hub. We have been able to bring together families through a range of activities , training sessions for parents and young people and the team have been able to see the positive impact experienced by families. Seeing those small steps can have a huge effect on confidence and finding a place of acceptance.

We have been supporting young people with autism to come together and share their lived experiences through a recently formed group. They have named the group “Elevate Youth”. The young people attending have already been able to contribute their views as part of the Annual Public Health Report , and the group have been able to share some of the challenges they have faced throughout their school life and how they would like to make a positive difference in this area. They have a shared passion to promote , educate and provide information resources for students and staff in schools to raise awareness and encourage wider inclusion for autistic children and young people.

Young people from the group will be attending the Annual Youth Voice Matters Conference in February 2024. The Conference is part of a Department of Education funded Making Participation Work programme. It is an opportunity for young people with a wide range of needs to come together and have a voice about what matters to them, both locally and nationally. The team listen to the voices of children and young people who attend the hub , to ensure that the continued development of the service is informed by their own lived experiences and individual aspirations.

Myself and the team would like to thank everyone over the past 12 months who have contributed , participated and supported us and of course thank you to all of the families that have attended the hub, including our children and young people . We look forward to widening our reach and celebrating the unique qualities of all our children and young people with autism across Telford and Wrekin.

With thanks

Julie and the Team



Julie
Children's Service
Manager



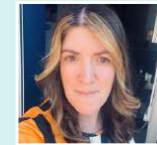
Julie
Team Assistant



Tracey
Team Assistant



Viki
Family Support



Kerry
Autism West Midlands
Case Worker

Volunteering at Telford Children's Autism Hub

Are you looking for a way to give back to your community while having fun and making a positive impact on families?

Consider volunteering for our family hub activity sessions!

Our sessions are designed to provide a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for families to come together and enjoy various activities, such as arts and crafts, games and sports. As a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to engage with families and help create a positive and memorable experience for them.

Volunteering for our family activity sessions is a great way to develop new skills, gain experience working with children and families, and make a difference in your community.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Julie Collins - 01952 457439. We look forward to hearing from you and working together to make a positive difference in the lives of families in our community.



Contact Us

T: (01952) 262062

E: childre autism@tandwcvcs.org.uk

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Suite 12 & 15 Hazledine House
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Shropshire
TF3 4JL



www.telfordautismhub.org.uk/childrens-autism-hub



Telford Children's Autism Hub



[telfordchildre autism](https://www.instagram.com/telfordchildre autism)

TCAH working with the Community...



Disability
History Month



The Christmas
Smile Project
- Gift Giving



Telford Centre
Charity
Christmas Gift
Wrap



SEND (Special
Educational Needs
and Disabilities)
Parent Participation
Summit



Telford Centre
- One Great
Day

Working Alongside Schools



Julie

As part of my role as Team Assistant here at the hub, I have been fortunate enough to be invited into many schools to be a part of their SEND coffee mornings/afternoons, open days and parents evenings.

On a personal level I understand how difficult going to school can be for our young people and their parents/carers too. My daughter who is 15 and has Autism, has always found school extremely difficult and truthfully we have had many difficult years. From the journey there, to classroom layouts, lunch times and just managing to get through the day on a whole. I have seen for myself the importance of our young people having the support and understanding they need and deserve which in turn will enable them to achieve anything that they want too, give them the chance to have the same opportunities as everyone else but most importantly for them to be happy.

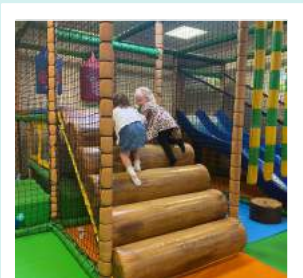
It's been lovely to speak to the staff at schools and hearing about what they are putting in place for our young people along with them wanting to work further with us so that they can adapt and provide more. We are looking forward to providing training for school staff and workshops for the parents/children in the near future along with visiting more schools.

We also understand how hard it can be for parents to attend the hub for the first time or even having the time so its wonderful that schools are enabling their parents to meet us, find out more about the hub and give them the opportunities to gain advice and support from us in a setting that is familiar to them already.

I am really excited to continue working with the schools, now we have entered a new year.



Our Autumn



In the Spotlight



Jaimie, one of our amazing hub parents is looking for participants to help with her research, please see below for more information and how you can take part.

Participants needed.....

Hi, I'm in my final year of studying a Psychology & child development degree at Staffordshire university. I have received ethical approval to conduct my study

'What are parents/carers of autistic girls who mask perceptions of the support from professionals during and after their child's autism diagnosis?'

I need 6-8 participants who will each have one individual interview. You will be asked a series of questions lasting approximately 30 minutes over Microsoft teams (you do not need to have camera on).

All data collected will remain anonymous, the interview recordings will be destroyed after the transcription process.

I will answer any questions and share appropriate information before conducting interviews.

Participants must meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Parents/carers must be 18 years or above for ethical reasons regarding consent and to follow bps guidelines.
- ✓ The child must identify as a girl aged from 5yrs to 13yrs
- ✓ The child must be on the autism assessment pathway or have a diagnosis of autism.
- ✓ Child will be displaying masking behaviors

If you would like to participate in this research please email me on g016406k@staffs.ac.uk

Thank you in advance for your time



Telford & Wrekin CVS were presented with their One Great Day cheque from Telford Centre! A fundraising event was held in September, with a day full of family fun and lots of money being raised for charity. The event was in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital and Telford Children's Autism Hub. Over £2,000 was raised at the event with 50/50 equal split to both charities.



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www.telfordautismhub.org.uk/childrens-autism-hub



Telford Children's Autism Hub



[telfordchildrensautism](https://www.instagram.com/telfordchildrensautism)

**World Autism
Acceptance Week**

2nd April - 8th April

Watch This Space To
See How We Will
Be Celebrating

Through the looking glass...

Talking to your child about their Autism diagnosis



In my role as family support it brings me so much joy to support and connect with our incredible Hub families. I feel humbled and privileged to be able to journey alongside them and offer my support. Through my interactions with parents, I've noticed that many struggle with the challenge of discussing their child's diagnosis with them. I'd love to share some insights on this topic to help make it a little easier.

When it comes to discussing your child's Autism diagnosis, it's important to approach the conversation with care. You want to create a peaceful and comfortable environment, free of any interruptions, to help prevent any added stress or anxiety.

There's no one-size-fits-all approach for when to talk to your child about their diagnosis, as every family is different. Some parents may choose to have the conversation when their child is young, while others may wait until they're older and better equipped to understand.

As a parent, you know your child best, so trust your instincts and choose what feels right for you and your child.

Here are some tips to help make the conversation a little easier and more supportive for your child or young person.

1. Use words that are easy to understand: Try to explain the diagnosis in a way that is simple and straightforward. Avoid using complicated language that might make them feel confused or overwhelmed.
2. Focus on their strengths: Instead of dwelling on the challenges of Autism, take the time to celebrate your child's unique talents and abilities. Help them see that their diagnosis is just one part of who they are.
3. Encourage them to share their feelings: Let your child know that they can always come to you with questions or concerns. This will help them feel supported and valued.
4. Connect with others: Finding a community of other Autistic children and young people can be incredibly helpful. Look for local groups or online communities where your child can connect with others who understand what they're going through.
5. Explore available resources: There are many resources available to help support families and individuals with Autism. Check out organisations like the National Autism Society, Ambitious About Autism, Autistic Girls Network and Autism West Midlands for support, resources, and information. You can also find helpful YouTube channels, like Autistic Young Experts, and books written by Autistic young people. These resources can help your child feel empowered and better equipped to navigate the challenges and opportunities that come with their diagnosis.

Recommended Books



The Secret Life of Rose by Rose Smitten.

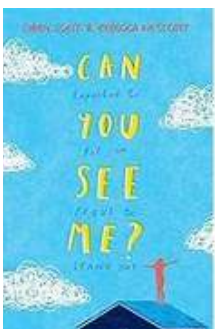
This book will introduce you to life with autism, help you understand those in your life who are autistic from the perspective of an 11 year old autistic girl and her Mum; an autism specialist. It covers subjects such as sensory differences, masking, making friends and eye contact.

The Ice-Cream Sundae Guide to Autism:



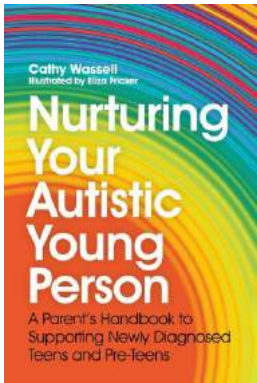
An Interactive Kids' Book for Understanding Autism
Autism is a bit like an ice-cream sundae. There are lots of ingredients that go into it. There are so many types of sundae glasses out there. Some are plain and simple; some are loud and proud! In fact, sundae glasses are a bit like people - we're all different. Because we all have different personalities, autism doesn't look the same in everybody.

This picture-led book uses ice-cream sundae ingredients to represent various aspects of autism such as sensory differences, special interests or rigidity of thinking, explaining the different facets of autism in a neutral way. The reader can create their own individual 'ice-cream sundae' to illustrate their personal strengths and challenges, highlighting how it makes them unique and helping to build confidence and self-awareness. It includes colourful illustrations and workbook activities to help children cement their understanding of autism.



Can You See Me, by Libby Scott and Rebecca Westcott

With diary entries written by eleven-year-old Libby Scott, based on her own experiences of autism, this pioneering book, written in collaboration with esteemed author Rebecca Westcott, has been widely praised for its realistic portrayal of autism.



Nurturing Your Autistic Young Person: A Parent's Handbook to Supporting Newly Diagnosed Teens and Pre-Teens

Cathy Wassell, CEO of Autistic Girls Network, has tailored this handbook to support parents with older children or teenagers who are at the identification stage, walking them through the basics in an engaging and accessible manner. She addresses key challenges for this age group, including co-occurring conditions, puberty, and safeguarding, as well as looking to the future, advising on schooling options, and beyond.



The Secrets of My Spectrum (Book by Callum Knight)

For years, Callum struggled to navigate the world he lived in and meet social expectations before being told he was autistic at age thirteen. Wishing others understood more about the challenges of being on the spectrum, the teen shares his insights, perceptions, reactions, and experiences, from the triggers that lead to anxiety and shutdowns to tips for coping with stressful situations such as travelling, socialising, and communicating.

Sensory: Life on the spectrum

Sensory: Life on the Spectrum contains illustrated explorations of everything from life pre-diagnosis to tips on how to explain autism to someone who doesn't have it, to suggestions for how to soothe yourself when you're feeling overstimulated. With unique, vibrant comic-style illustrations and the emotional depth and vulnerability of memoir, this book depicts these varied experiences with the kind of insight that only those who have lived them can have.



Talking to your child or young person about their Autism diagnosis can be a challenging process, but with the right support and resources, it can also be a positive and empowering experience. Remember to stay positive, emphasise their strengths, and provide open communication and support.



Our regular offers for those registered with the Hub



Grab a cuppa, relax and enjoy the opportunity to meet our team, talk with other parents, share ideas and offer support



SEND support and play for early years families including those without a diagnosis. The drop in session is run alongside SENDIASS. The session offers a safe play area for children, a non judgemental environment and an understanding environment filled with support, friendship and advice.



Our DUGOUT/Youth sessions are for 11 - 18 years old and their families (siblings included). It provides the perfect opportunity for you to spend quality time together in a relaxed, friendly environment. Each session has a variety of activities available, allowing you to have fun together as well as meet with other families from our hub.



Our family fun sessions are for primary aged children and their families (siblings included). It provides the perfect opportunity for you to spend quality time together in a relaxed, friendly environment. Each session has a variety of activities available, allowing you to have fun together as well as meet with other families from our hub.



Love games and puzzles? Then come along and join us for Cafe Uno. We have a variety of games and puzzles for you to enjoy. You're more than welcome to bring your own if you prefer. Open to all our registered families (siblings included).



Introducing 'elevate youth' – the new name chosen by our Young Person's engagement group! We are currently working with Shropshire Youth Association to create 12 sensory boxes for Secondary Schools in Telford & Wrekin and also producing a timeout card that can be used by students in need. **If you'd like to be part of our next meet up, please contact us. YOUR VOICE MATTERS!**

To register with the Hub your child will need a diagnosis of Autism. Please email us childrensautism@tandwcvcs.org.uk or call 01952 262062 and we will happily register you.



Upcoming Workshops

Rising To The Challenge

TELFORD CHILDREN'S AUTISM HUB

Rising To The Challenge is a six-week programme covering a range of topics relating to Autism. We will support parents/carers with a greater knowledge and understanding of autism whilst providing strategies.

Date	Time	Topic
23rd Jan	10.30am - 12.00pm	Autism in education
30th Jan	10.30am - 12.00pm	Autism and communication & literacy
06th Feb	10.30am - 12.00pm	Autism and social & emotional
20th Feb	10.30am - 12.00pm	Autism and sensory & physical
27th Feb	10.30am - 12.00pm	Autism and anxiety
07th Mar	10.30am - 12.00pm	Autism and behaviour

For more information and to book your place, please email the team on childrensautism@tandwcvcs.org.uk

Would you like to be an Autism Champion?

Want to know how to make your business more Autism friendly? Would you like to know how to create the right environment and provide the correct support to your Autistic community? Come along and join us for our Autism Champion training! Our training is available to any professional organisation within the borough of Telford & Wrekin.

Let's Talk Autism .. Q & A

TELFORD CHILDREN'S AUTISM HUB

Let's talk Autism...

Q & A with our Autism Specialist Advisor Kerry

Date: 7th February 2024
Time: 10.30am to 12.00pm
@ Hazledine House, Central Square, Telford Centre, Telford, TF3 4JL

This is an informal parent led chat about all things Autism. So come along, relax with a cuppa and talk with our Autism Specialist Advisor about any Autism related topics.

For more information and to book your place contact our team on [01952 262062](tel:01952262062) | childrensautism@tandwcvcs.org.uk

Autism Champion Training

TELFORD AUTISM HUB

Autism Champion training is an advisory course providing:

- An overview of autism
- Detail on the challenges experienced by autistic children, adults and their families
- Guidance on how you can effectively support autistic people in your place of work

Grounded in practical experience, the course provides a good base knowledge for those looking to improve their overall knowledge in autism and topics related to the autistic experience in various environments.

Provided by **autism west midlands**

When & Where?
14th February 2024
10.00am - 12.30pm
Telford & Wrekin CVS
Suite 12 & 15 Hazledine House
Central Square, Telford Centre
TF3 4JL

To book your place contact
childrensautism@tandwcvcs.org.uk
(01952) 262062

Very informative. Great to share thoughts and ideas

★★★★★

It was an excellent session and definitely increased my awareness

Practical tips to think about in the workplace

Let's Talk Autism .. The Teenage Brain

TELFORD CHILDREN'S AUTISM HUB

Let's talk Autism...

The Teenage Brain

Date: 19th March 2024
Time: 10.30 - 12.30
@ Hazledine House, Central Square, Telford Centre, Telford, TF3 4JL

The Teenage Brain looks at how the brain develops and helps parents understand how these development changes can affect behaviour and routines in Autistic young people

For more information contact our team on [01952 262062](tel:01952262062) | childrensautism@tandwcvcs.org.uk

Teen Confidence Workshop



**TELFORD CHILDREN'S
AUTISM HUB**

Teen Confidence



There will be 6 interactive sessions that are delivered to a small group of up to 8 young people

We concentrate on helping our young people learn more about themselves and autism in a fun and informal way.

The young people who attend will get an opportunity to interact and socialise with other young people, we encourage them to learn more about themselves and how autism is unique to them as an individual.

- **6th March - 4.30pm - 5.30pm - My Autism**
- **13th March - 4.30pm - 5.30pm - Anxiety and worries**
- **20th March - 4.30pm - 5.30pm - Social interaction and communication**

Half Term Gap For Two Week

- **10th April - 4.30pm - 5.30pm Anger and emotions**
- **17th April - 4.30pm - 5.30pm - Sensory**
- **24th April - 4.30pm -5.30pm - Happiness and wellbeing**

A note from our Autism Specialist Advisor



Kerry

I am fairly new, I started my job role here in April 2023. I work alongside Tracey, Viki and Julie at the Telford Childrens Autism Hub. My role here is to support parent/carers and offer advice and strategies through 1:1 advice appointments.

I enjoy working with the team here, my favourite part of my job role is meeting new parent/carers and being involved in supporting activities we provide to the local community. Here are some useful website links, I often direct parents to these websites to help them on their journey to support their child or young person.

•Autistic Girls Network

<https://autisticgirlsnetwork.org/>

This is great resource for parents, it provides information on how autism can present differently in females.

•Ambitious about autism

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

This website has a lot of useful resources that covers everything from education, exclusions, managing behaviours, meltdowns/shutdown and advice on how to discuss autism with your child, it also has a support platform for parents.

•Studio 3 low arousal approach

<https://www.studio3.org/free-webinars>

This website is a brilliant resource for parents. Low arousal approach is a great strategy to try. On this website you can find free webinars to support parents with a range of understanding regarding autism.



Dates for your Diary

Coffee and Chat

A relaxed support session for our parents/carers

11.15am - 12.15pm

5th February

26th February

4th March

11th March

18th March



Primary Family Fun Session

A session for our primary aged children and their parents/carers

4.00pm - 5.00pm

20th February

19th March



DUGOUT

A session for 11 - 18 year olds and their parents/carers.

4.30pm - 6.30pm

1st February

7th March





Early Years Programme



SEND Support & Play For Early Years Families

9:15am to 10:45am

Monday 5th February
SEND Support & Play @ Hazledine House

9:15am to 10:15am

Monday 19th February
Soft Play @Dobbies Garden Centre , Donnington

9:15am to 10:45am

Monday 4th March
SEND Support & Play @ Hazledine House

9:15am to 10:15am

Monday 18th March
Soft Play @Dobbies Garden Centre , Donnington

9:15am to 10:15am

Monday 15th April
Soft Play @Dobbies Garden Centre , Donnington

Join us for our Early Years sessions where we offer a safe and fun area for your child/children to play while you enjoy a chat with other parents. You will also get to meet Michelle from SENDIASS Telford & Wrekin and Viki from Telford Children's Autism Hub!

The team at SENDIASS Telford and Wrekin is committed to providing free, confidential and impartial advice and support to parents and young people regarding special educational needs and disability.

We understand the challenges you may face and are here to support you every step of the way.

Don't miss out on this chance to connect with other families and receive valuable support and advice from our teams

If you would like to attend any of these sessions please contact us on 01952 262062 or email us on childrensautism@tandwcvs.org.uk

