

Behaviour and Neurodevelopmental Service
Mindsight Surrey CAMHS

Whilst you are Waiting Pack for
Children and Young People
awaiting a Diagnosis of Autism
Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

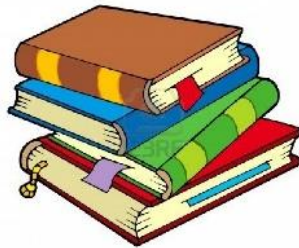


Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation
Trust

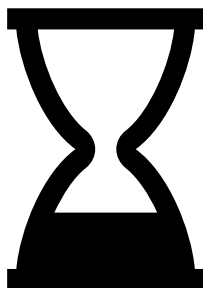


What is this Pack for?

Your parent/carers and teachers think that you find some things difficult and they want to find ways to help you. You are also good at some things and your parents and teachers want to find out what those things are. To help them find these things out, you have been asked whether you want to take part in an assessment for Autism Spectrum Disorder.



However, there may be a long time before you are assessed. We have created this information pack to tell you about the assessment and things that can help you whilst you are waiting.



What is Autism?



Autism is sometimes called Autism Spectrum Disorder (or ASD for short).

Autism is sometimes also called Autism Spectrum Condition (or ASC for short).

Many people across the world have ASD.

When people have ASD, we can also say they are autistic.

You cannot tell if someone is autistic just by looking at them.

ASD does not go away. People are autistic for all of their lives.

What does ASD look like?

Everyone with ASD is different.

They may experience all of the difficulties which often occur for individuals with autism, or they may experience some of these difficulties.

Please note: Research (Kenny et al., 2015) has found that people diagnosed with autism have told us that they prefer to be called "autistic". For this reason, we refer to "autistic people" in this pack.



Autistic people may find it hard to:

Know what other people might be thinking or feeling

Know what to say to people

Understand jokes or sentences with more than one meaning

Be ok with too many changes

Meet new people

Let someone know if they need something

Tell people how they feel

Some autistic people might find other things difficult such as:

Bright lights or colours

Certain smells

Types of clothing or labels in clothes

Being too close to people

Loud noises



Some autistic people may not like some of these things. Other autistic people may like some of these things.

What support might autistic people need:

Autistic people have lots of strengths.

Autistic people also have different things they might struggle with. They just need the right support.

Some people need more support and some people need less support.

'What is Autism?'

Social Story

1

Everyone is different. Some differences are visible, like hair colour or height.



Other differences can't be seen, like our favourite TV show or how we process information



2

Being autistic means that my brain is wired differently than other people's. This means that I understand the world differently.



3

Seeing the world differently helps me to notice details that other people may miss.



Some people with autism have a really good memory and can remember lots of facts.



4

I might know someone with autism and think that I am not like them at all.



That is ok because every person with autism is different.



5

I have things that I am good at and things that I might find difficult.



6

Having autism means that I sometimes find it hard to know what others are feeling, or what to say.



It is ok to not know what to say. I can speak about it with my parents or a trusted friend.

7

I might feel anxious when lots of people are talking and it's noisy.



Going somewhere quiet or listening to music with headphones can help.

8

Autism is just one part of me.



9

There are lots of different things that make me who I am.




10



What will happen on the day of your Assessment?



When you come in for your appointment with us, you will meet with 2 or 3 clinicians who may be psychologists, assistant psychologists, psychiatrists or nurses.

We usually ask that your parents/caregivers sit outside in the waiting room so there are not too many people in the room. This means we can get to know you better.

In this session, we will do lots of different activities. We will talk  about what you like doing, your school and your friends.

We will do some puzzles  and games, look at books  together and may play with some toys.

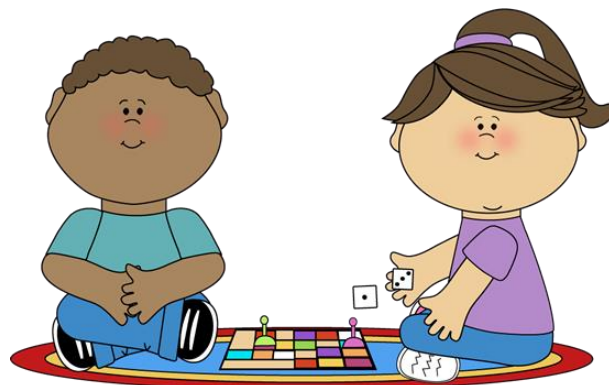
The goal of this assessment is to get to know you, to learn about your strengths and find out what you find more difficult. This will help us to know how best to support you. It is important to remember that there are no right or wrong answers and we just want you to try your best!



When we are finished with our assessment, we might ask you to wait in the waiting room with your parents/caregivers. Then we will ask you all to come and meet with us and we will talk about all of the information we have collected and what will happen next.



This assessment will be approximately 2 hours in duration.



What will happen next?

There are two things that could happen after the assessment. You may be given a diagnosis of ASD, or you may not be given a diagnosis of ASD.

If you are not given a diagnosis:

The clinicians have decided that difficulties that you have may not be explained by a diagnosis of ASD.

You and your parents/carers will be given advice and recommendations that the clinicians think will be helpful to you.

We will think with you about whether you need treatment for other difficulties

If you are given a diagnosis of ASD:

The clinicians have decided that you have Autism Spectrum Disorder. This is a disability. ASD can affect lots of areas of your life.

The information about your diagnosis will be shared with your parents/carers, and your GP. It might also be shared with your school.

It is your choice whether you tell any other people (for example your friends) about your diagnosis.

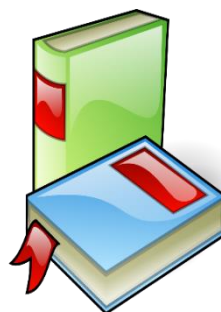
You and your parents/carers will be given advice and recommendations that the clinicians think will be helpful to you. This advice might be about areas of your life that are affected by ASD but also about other areas of your life.

You may have lots of questions after being given a diagnosis or not being given a diagnosis. That's okay! You will be given lots of information and there are lots of people who you can talk to if you want to. You can ask the clinicians in the assessment any questions you have about ASD. You can ask them what the outcome of your assessment means for you.



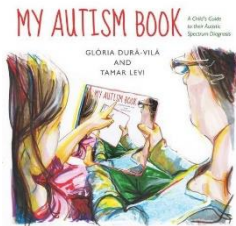
We look forward to meeting you in the assessment.

Whilst you're waiting, there are some books and websites on the next page about Autism that you can look at.



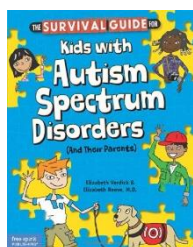
Resources to help you understand autism:

Books



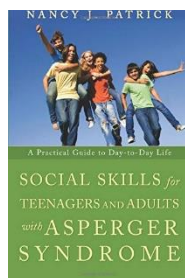
'My Autism Book, A Child's Guide to their Autism Spectrum Diagnosis' by Gloria Dura-Vila and Tamar Levi

You can read this book with your parents to help you to understand autism.



'Survival Guide for Kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders' by Elizabeth Verdick

This book can help you to understand autism and find tools to cope with challenges.



'Social Skills for Teenagers and Adults with Asperger's Syndrome: A Practical Guide to Day-to-day Life' by Nancy J. Patrick

This book has practical strategies for helping teenagers and adults with Asperger Syndrome with social skills, friendships and relationships at home and in the community.

Online resources

Younger children:

Sesame Street have an online storybook and song, starring Elmo, to help explain ASD:

<https://autism.sesamestreet.org/storybook/we-are-amazing/>

<https://autism.sesamestreet.org/video/amazing-song/>



National Autistic Society - 'What is autism? Easy read version':

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/asd/intro-easyread.aspx>

Older children and teenagers:

National Autistic Society - 'What is autism?' information and YouTube video:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/asd.aspx>

<https://youtu.be/Lk4qs8jGN4U>

Girls with Autism: Girl with the Curly Hair Project – animations, posters & guides

<https://thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk/resources/>



THE END



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