

Somerset

Autistic Spectrum Disorder – Directory of Services for individuals and their families

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Introduction

This directory has been produced in response to the Somerset Autism Strategy and on behalf of the Somerset Autism Strategy Group. The Group recognise the need for children, young people and adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families, friends and carers to have access to a quick reference guide to support and advice services.

This directory is not exhaustive but aims to be a useful resource. The information contained in the directory is correct at the time of development but can be subject to change at any time.

Disclaimer

The inclusion of groups or organisations in this directory does not necessarily mean that we recommend them or that they are approved by Somerset County Council or Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group. We advise you to take the usual care before approaching or buying any service from any of the listed organisations.

Your Comments

We would like to hear your views and comments about this directory. If you have any feedback or would like to highlight any details which are incorrect or out of date, please contact our carers champions, Claire or Charlotte.

Other formats

This directory can be produced in a variety of formats. Please contact our carers champions, Claire or Charlotte.

National organisations

Autism Alliance	A network of specialist autism charities. Advice and support to small groups.	National Website	www.autism-alliance.org.uk
Autism Independent UK	Offers training, research and information	National Website	www.autismuk.com
Child Autism UK	Information and helpline for parents, families and schools	National	www.childautism.org.uk Helpline 01344 882248
Ambitious About Autism	Charity for children and young people with autism. Provides services, raises awareness and understanding and campaigns for change. My Voice is a website for young people aged 16 – 25 years with content created by young people.	National	www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk info@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk 020 8815 5444
Autistic Intelligence	Group of worldwide experts by experience who share academic research and knowledge about autism	International	www.autisticintelligence.org 07971 471617
Aspergers Syndrome Foundation	Promotes awareness and understand of Aspergers Syndrome	National	www.aspergersfoundation.org.uk info@aspergerfoundation.org.uk
Aukids	A social enterprise producing a magazine every three months providing information, encouragement and support for parents and children.	Cost £16 each year	www.aukids.co.uk aukidsmag@gmail.com
Autism Spectrum Australia	Website offering information, resources, research and support	International	www.autismspectrum.org.au
Contact a Family	Information, advice and support.	National	www.cafamily.org.uk

	Brings families together, campaigns.	For families with disabled children	0808 808 3555
National Autistic Society	Autism Helpline 10am-4pm Monday to Thursday 9am – 3pm Fridays	National, confidential support on autism for anyone affected by or researching autism. Also factsheets and discussion forums	www.autism.org.uk 0808 800 4104 Email enquiry forms

Somerset information and advocacy services

Autism Somerset	Website providing updates on local, regional and national news, policy and developments about autism	Somerset	www.autismsomerset.org.uk
Autism Wessex	A regional charity providing information/advice for people affected by autism, adults with autism, parents, carers, professionals	Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Hampshire	www.autismwessex.org.uk advice@autismwessex.org.uk Info and advice 01305 213135
Somerset Community Care Matters	Specialist advice, advocacy and casework under community care Legislation. Legal advice on NHS, social care and disability rights	Somerset	www.sccm.org.uk enquiries@sccm.org.uk 01823 282538
Somerset Choices	Website giving access to information and advice on adult social care and health and on a range of support services from the public, private, voluntary and community sector.	Somerset	www.somersetchoices.org.uk
SWAN Advocacy	Advocates with specialist knowledge, Providing IMHA, IMCA, Care Act, Generic 18years plus, Independent Health Complaints Advocacy, Paid Representation and Dementia Advocacy Service.	Somerset	www.swanadvocacy.org.uk/somerset/ somerset@swanadvocacy.org.uk 03333 447928
Community Catalysts	Directory of micro-enterprises	Somerset	For further information contact Rhys

	providing a range of practical, one to one support, home support, social and leisure opportunities.	Charges will apply	Davies 07595 411945 Rhys.davies@communitycatalysts.co.uk
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Somerset support groups

Coping with Aspergers through Support (CATS)	For people with Aspergers Syndrome or carers. Social group, visits, walks.	Bridgwater and surrounding areas First Wednesday each month 7.30pm United Reformed Church, West Street, Bridgwater	mrsteveatkinson@btinternet.com 07747127334
Minehead ASC/Aspergers Support Group	For people on the autistic spectrum, people with Aspergers Syndrome and their carers Please email before attending	Minehead Meet first Saturday each month, 10 – 11 or 3 – 4, Reading Room, 17 Friday Street, Minehead, TA24 5UB	Cathryn or Peter pcwilson@talktalk.net
Open Storytellers	Offer a range of day services, courses, workshops and events/activities including Friends Meet-ups, Sensory Book Club	Frome area People with learning difficulties , people with additional communication needs	www.openstorytellers.org.uk 01373 471171 info@openstorytellers.org.uk
Yeovil Aspergers Drop-In Group (Autism Wessex)	Social group. Range of activities, information and advice. Newsletter for members.	Yeovil Adults 18years and over Meets every two weeks	www.autismwessex.org.uk enquiries@autismwessex.org.uk 01305 213135
Somerset National Autistic Society Social Group	Social group for parents, carers, young people and adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Somerset Monthly meetings at Henhays Centre	alexandracrick@hotmail.co.uk 07411933054
The Hub	Micro enterprise work groups. Work and training opportunities for young people with additional needs in a range of locations and businesses.	Yeovil Age 14 plus with additional needs	www.thehubyeovil.co.uk 01935 429277 contact@thehubyeovil.co.uk

Somerset support groups and services – children and young people

The Unstoppables	Young person's champions group. An opportunity for children and young people with special educational needs	Mendip Ages 10 – 25 years Meet first Thursday each month, Shepton and Frome Fee	jxlang@somerset.gov.uk 01823 359868 Also Facebook
Bridgwater Rising Stars	Weekly stay and play group for children with additional needs	Bridgwater Ages 0 – 5 years Meets Sydenham Children' Centre	Text Gem Salter 07887666184
Escape Support Group	Support group for the whole family where there is a child with additional needs. Social activities, trips, swimming, theatre and age-specific events.	Somerset Children and Young People Membership fee	www.escapesupportgroup.com help@escapesupportgroup.com 01823 442160
Frome Autistic Support Team	Coffee, chat and support	Frome Meets Bridge Children's Centre, Haysdown First School	Contact Sarah 07977913339 for dates pylefarm@talk21.com
Children's Autism Outreach Team (CAOT)	Team works with children, young people, parents and carers to support and empower. Provide strategies when appropriate and aims to increase social opportunities.	Somerset 0 – 13 years with a diagnosis of autism	0300 1232 224
Somerset Autism Friends	Set up by parents who attend CAOT but also open if your child has not yet got a diagnosis	Somerset 0 – 13 years	Facebook
Short Breaks Team	Opportunities for children and young	Somerset	01823 358117 or

	people with a disability or a learning need to spend time away from their principal care giver and give parents/carers a break from caring.	8 – 18 years Newsletters and calendars of activities	For a referral pack Somerset Direct 0845 345 9122
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Family, carers and friends

Somerset Parent Carers Forum	For anyone caring for children/young people with any disability and/or additional need. Aim to empower and involve parent carers to have their say in order to influence local and national decision making. Directory of Services for parents/carers on website. Training.	Somerset Ages 0 – 25 years See website for details of support groups in Bridgwater Chard Frome Wells Wincanton Wellington Yeovil	www.somersetpcf.org.uk help@somersetpcf.org.uk 01458 259384 or 07543 680365 Facebook Groups Finding your Way http://www.facebook.com/groups/FindingYourWay/ For Dads only http://www.facebook.com/groups/FindingYourWaydads/
Bridgwater Parents Support Group	Support Group for parents of children with autism, Aspergers, learning disabilities, complex needs	Bridgwater and Villages 2 nd Wednesday each month 10.00 – 2.00 Sydenham family Centre	Terry.thake@sky.com 07846934113 Claire Cole 07704405324
Early Bird Licensed Team (National Autistic Society)	Training programme for parents, carers and children	Somerset Delivered through CAOT	earlybird@nas.org.uk 0808 800 4102
Mendip Autism Support Group (MASG)	Support to parents and carers of children with a diagnosis or possible diagnosis.	Mendip Day time meetings last Monday monthly term time, also evening meetings	Lyndy.graham@gmail.com 01749 675647

National Autistic Society Mendip Branch	Parent support group once a month in Frome. Info and advice.	Mendip	Contact Branch Officer 07785950911 Mendip@nas.org.uk
National Autistic Society Somerset Branch	Supports parents and promotes awareness of ASD	Somerset Meetings every 3months	somerset@nas.org.uk
National Autistic Society North Somerset Branch	Support to parents of children and adults with autism	North Somerset Monthly meetings in Portishead	northsomerset@nas.org.uk
National Autistic Society – Parent to Parent Service	UK wide confidential telephone service providing emotional support to parents and carers of children or adults with autism	National	0808 800 4106 (Free from landlines and most mobiles) 24 hour answerphone with call back facility.
National Autistic Society Specialist Behaviour Advice Service	Information and advice to parents and carers also professionals. Adults with autism can also self refer.	National	behaviour@nas.org.uk also by helpline number 0808 800 4104
Sibs	Only UK charity representing the needs of young and adult siblings of people with disabilities	National	www.sibs.org.uk
Taunton Aspergers Group	Group for parents and carers of an adult also for partners.	Somerset Meets 7.30pm 3 rd Thurs each month Cheddon Fitzpaine Village Hall, TA28JY	www.tauntonaspergersgroup.co.uk 01823 368396
Wells Support Group	Relaxed chat for parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities	Tramways West Street, Wells 7.30 – 10pm	For dates contact help@somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk 01458 259384
Compass Carers	Support for unpaid carers, information, advice, emotional support, signposting, training, telephone helpline	Somerset All carers	www.compasscarers.org.uk 01823 282823

Young Carers	Support for young people who are in a substantial and regular caring role. Information, support, activities, groups, advocacy	Somerset Aged 8 – 18 years	childrens@somerset.gov.uk 0300 123 2224
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Education, employment and volunteering

Alblifeskills	Taunton based organisation offering community based day services, individual support, activities, social and training opportunities	Taunton Deane	www.alblifeskills.org info@alblifeskills.org 01823 252945
Aspire Employment Support	Specialised employment support service for people with learning disabilities living in Somerset. Individual placement support, CV development, job coaching and support to employer and employee.	Somerset	http:base-uk.org/about/members/somerset-county-council 01278 447721 or 07919540745 aspire@somerset.gov.uk
Choice Advice Service	Advice and support to all parents on the schools admissions and appeals procedures	Somerset	choiceadvice@somerset.ov.uk 01823 356903
Dimensions Supported Employment Team	Support for people with learning disability and/or autism to find employment. Job matching.	Somerset	www.dimensions-uk.org/support-services/supported-employment supported_employment@dimensions-uk.org 0300 303 9001
Weston Bay (Weston College)	Residential training for people on the autistic spectrum.	Weston and surrounding areas	www.weston.ac.uk 01934 411411
Somerset You Can Do	Volunteering opportunities across Somerset	Somerset	www.somersetyoucando.org.uk enquiries@somersetyoucando.org 01278 664180
Disability Rights UK Disabled Students Helpline (national Autistic Society)	Information relating to post school education, colleges and universities	National	www.disabilityrightsuk.org Helpline 0800 328 5050

National Autistic Society Support for Employers	Information and support for employers and colleagues who want to find out more and how to support colleagues.	National	Online information and advice on a range of employment related topics
National Association of Specialist Colleges	Online directory	National	www.natspec.org.uk
Independent Supporters	Help and support for young people with special educational needs as they prepare their Education, Health & Care Plan	Somerset	info@somersetsend.org.uk 01823 355578
SENDIAS	Impartial information and support for carers of children with special educational needs. Leaflets relating to SEN, telephone enquiry line, individual support and a website.	Somerset	www.somersetsend.org.uk info@somersetsend.org.uk 01823 355578
The Hub	Range of training and development opportunities. Micro enterprise work experience in different business areas	Yeovil Young people 14 years and over with a learning disability or additional needs	www.thehubyeovil.co.uk contact@thehubyeovil.co.uk 01935 429277

Leisure

Autism Friendly Cinema Screenings	Taunton Odeon, Cineworld Yeovil	Taunton, Yeovil, Wells	https://www.dimensions-uk.org/autismfriendly
Your IT Now	Help to use internet and technology safely. Specialist courses	Somerset Private - charges	www.youritnow.co.uk 07809299760
Somerset Libraries	Books and DVDs – Somerset Autism Collection	Somerset	www.somerset.gov.uk/autismcollection
Magdalene Farm	Various events, sleepovers, short-breaks, activity days, family breaks	Not autism specific	www.magdalenfarm.org.uk info@magdalenfarm.org.uk 01460 30144
Horseshoes and Handprints	Therapy through close contact with horses and other animals. Activity for	ASD and other additional needs.	www.horseshoesandhandprints.org 01460 394375

	whole family	Fees	
SASP (Somerset Activity Sports Partnership)	Range of activities on offer across the county	Somerset	www.sasp.co.uk Alex Stephens 01823 653990
Tesco	Autism Quiet Hour	9am – 10am Saturdays	Check with local store

Other

Safe Places	Places such as shops or cafes where a vulnerable person can ask for help safely. Locations have a Safe Places sticker in the window	Website lists locations across Somerset as well as leaflets for Schemes Users and Locations	www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/safeplaces
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Social media

ASD Friendly	Community of parents and carers of people with autism or aspergers syndrome	National	www.asdfriendly.org
Ambitious About Autism	Online community	National	www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/talk-about-autism
Aspergers and ASD UK Online Forum	Help, support, friendship to anyone whose life is affected by ASD	National	www.asd-forum.org.uk/forum
Autism Connect	Dept of Health A social networking site for people with autism and their families	National	www.autism-connect@autismwestmidlends.org.uk
Autism and Aspergers in the Family Support Forum	For parents and carers of people with autism. Adults on the spectrum also	National	http://autismandaspergersinthefamily.freeforums.org/index.php

	welcome.		
Autism UK Forum		National	www.autismuk.com/forum/
National Autistic Society e-befriending	On-line social contact and companionship	National Age over 12 years	e-Befriending Officer 02920 629314 e-befriending@nas.org.uk
National Autistic Society	Community discussion forum	National	http://community.autism.org.uk
Talk about Autism	Online community, question and answer service, and mentoring for parents, carers and people on the spectrum	National	http://www.talkaboutautism.org.uk
Wrong Planet	USA based web community for individuals, parents of those with Autism, Aspergers Syndrome and professionals	International	www.wrongplanet.net

Somerset non-autism specific support and information services

Age UK Somerset	Information, advice, help with benefits. A range of exercise classes for the people over 50	Somerset	www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset 01823345013
Citizens Advice	Free, confidential advice on a range of financial, benefits, consumer and legal matters	Sedgemoor Taunton Deane South Somerset Mendip	Helpline 03444 889623 <u>For local opening times:</u> www.sedgemoorcab.org.uk www.tauntoncab.org.uk www.mendipcab.org.uk www.citizensadvicesouthsomerset.org.uk
Farming Community Network	Help and support for farming communities	Somerset	Helpline 0300 111 999 e-help chris@fcn.org.uk
Mind in Taunton and West Somerset	Mindline out of hours telephone support line	Somerset 8pm – 11pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays	www.mindtws.org.uk 01823 276892
SARI	Casework, training, advice and support to anyone who is a victim of	Somerset	www.sariweb.org.uk sari@sariweb.org.uk

	hate crime		General enquiries 0117 9420060 Reporting a hate crime 0800 1712272
Samaritans	Confidential telephone listing service, 24 hours a day, every day	National	116123 e-help jo@samaritans.org
Victim Support	Local victim of crime care team	Somerset	www.victimsupport.org 01460 55535
West Somerset Advice Bureau	Free, confidential advice – similar to Citizens Advice service	West Somerset	www.westsomersetadvice.org.uk 01643 704624