

## 2. East Sussex

# 4. Get help, support and information for Autism and ADHD in East Sussex

Find services, advice and support if you or someone you care for has or might be Autistic or ADHD. (Add as a *clickable table of contents*)

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## For young people

### What is Autism and ADHD?

Autism and ADHD are ways your brain works differently. You might find some things harder or easier than others. Lots of people have these, and it is okay to ask for help. Everyone is different, and you might need help with more than one thing at the same time. For example, your mental health, learning, or how you feel at school or home. They may all be linked.

Some people are [autistic and have ADHD](#) (sometimes called AuDHD). This might be diagnosed, or they might notice traits of both.

### Support for you

You might want support if you:

- Find it hard to manage your feelings
- Have trouble with sleep or eating
- Struggle with friendships or social situations
- Feel overwhelmed by noise, lights, touch, or feelings
- Find it difficult to concentrate or organise tasks
- Need a lot of extra help with school or work
- Want to learn more about yourself

If this sounds like you, there is support available.

## What to do in a crisis or urgent situation

### If you feel unsafe or in crisis

Are you a young person feeling low, anxious, or unable to cope? Are you thinking about hurting yourself or someone else? You are not alone. Help is available right now.

If you have a safety plan, follow it.

### Get help straight away

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 999 or go to A&E.

### Talk to someone today or tonight

You can speak to someone now or within a few hours. All these services are free, confidential and open 24 hours a day:

- Text the word [SUSSEX](#) to 85258 for support. **You'll chat via text message with a mental health professional who can help.** Messages won't show on your phone bill.
- Call [NHS 111](#) and choose the mental health option to **speak to a trained mental health professional.** They will ask you questions and offer help, or **guide you to the right service.**
- Call [Samaritans](#) on 116 123. **You can talk confidentially about anything that's on your mind.** This service listens and offers support but **does not give advice.**

### Support and groups for young people

- For young people aged 14 – 25 years: [Amazing Futures](#) offers inclusive youth groups. These are safe, welcoming spaces to meet others and get support in East Sussex.
- For autistic children and young people, or those with disabilities or complex needs (aged 8–25, or 18–25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan): [Aspens](#) offer support in East Sussex.
- [Ambitious about Autism](#) provides online peer support and a youth network for autistic young people aged 16–25.

### Trusted information - find out more

#### About ADHD

- [Children's guide to ADHD.](#)
- [Teenagers' guide](#) to ADHD.
- For help with emotional wellbeing, mental health, and [ADHD: Young Minds](#) offer a helpline, resources, training, outreach, and publications.
- [Information, resources and top tips for young people](#) from Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT).
- To learn words to describe your experiences and share with others: [Neurodivergent Glossary](#).
- ADHD [Resource Guide](#) by Healthline.
- Useful information and helpful activities for teenagers living with ADHD from [Janssen UK](#)

#### About Autism

- National Autistic Society [resources for autistic teenagers](#)
- For help with emotional wellbeing, mental health, and [Autism: Young Minds](#) offer a helpline, resources, training, outreach, and publications.
- [The Curly Hair Project](#) supports autistic people and those around them. It was founded by autistic author Alis Rowe. They use animated films, stories, comic strips and

diagrams to make their work interesting and easy to understand.

- To learn words to describe your experiences and share with others - [Neurodivergent Glossary](#)

## For parent carers

### Understanding your child's needs

If your child may be, or has been diagnosed as, autistic or ADHD you might have lots of questions. It is normal to feel overwhelmed. You and your child may also need support with more than one issue, or with needs that overlap and affect each other.

Some people are [autistic and have ADHD](#) (sometimes called AuDHD) - this might be diagnosed, or they might notice traits of both.

### What to do in a crisis or urgent situation

Is your child struggling to cope? Does it feel like a crisis? You are not alone. Help is available.

If your child already has a safety plan, please refer to that.

### Get help straight away

- If your life, or someone else's life, is in immediate danger - call 999 or go to A&E.

### Speak to someone today or tonight

If you need support for yourself or your child, you can talk confidentially to someone now or within a few hours. All these services are free and open 24 hours a day:

- Text the word [SUSSEX](#) to 85258 for support. You or your child can text this number to chat with a mental health professional. Messages won't show on your phone bill.
- Call [NHS 111](#) and choose the mental health option. Speak to a trained mental health professional who will ask questions and offer help or guide you to the right service.
- Call [Samaritans](#) on 116 123. Talk confidentially about anything that's on your mind. This service listens and offers support but does not give advice.

### Understanding diagnosis and assessments

- Find out more about [autism assessments](#) (NHS)
- Find out more about [ADHD assessments](#) (NHS)

### Referral, diagnosis, and assessment information:

- **For ADHD**
  - For 6+ years old - [Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- **For Autism**
  - For under 11 years old in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove: [East Sussex Healthcare child development clinic](#)
  - For under 11 years old in West Sussex and Brighton and Hove, or under 9 years old in Chichester: [Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust child development clinic](#)
  - For 11+ years old: [Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)
  - For under 11 years old in West Sussex and Brighton and Hove: [University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust child development clinic](#)

The [NHS Right to Choose Framework](#) lets you select your NHS-funded healthcare provider, following a referral from a GP or professional.

### Who can you speak to?

If you think your child may be Autistic or ADHD, speak to:

- Your GP
- A health visitor (for children under 5)
- Any other health professional you or your child see, such as another doctor or therapist
- Your child's SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) at school

### **Support before and after the assessment**

The [East Sussex Local Offer](#) provides information about all the local services for families, children and young people.

### **Get local help and support**

- For guidance, training, and chances to connect with other parent carers, [Amaze supports families in East Sussex](#).
- [East Sussex Parent Carer Forum](#) for parent carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in East Sussex.
- For parent carers of children and young people waiting for, undergoing, or after assessment, for autism, ADHD, and related conditions - the [Amaze ND Navigation Service offers](#) telephone support, information, resources, and workshops.

### **Managing behaviour, sleep, and health concerns**

- Children's Speech and Language Therapy helps with speech, language, communication, and swallowing: [East Sussex Children's Integrated Therapy and Equipment Service](#).
- [Sleep support services](#) can help if your child has trouble sleeping.
- [The Health and Care Passport](#) is a quick way to give health and social care staff important info about your child's needs.

### **Your child's sensory needs and environment**

- [Amaze factsheets](#)
- [National Autistic Society](#) information
- [Think ADHD](#) information

### **Education and school support**

Every school has a SENCo to help with special educational needs.

- **For help with school-related issues, contact [East Sussex SENDIASS](#)**
- **Autism support in schools** includes the [Communication, Learning and Autism Support Service \(CLASS\) in East Sussex](#). This provides support, training and guidance to schools and families of children with special educational needs
- **ADHD support in schools includes the [Communication, Learning and Autism Support Service \(CLASS\) in East Sussex](#)**. This provides support, training and guidance to schools and families of children with special educational needs
- **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**
  - An [EHCP](#) provides extra support for children with higher needs. You can apply if your child needs more help than the usual services provide.
    - [Getting an EHCP in East Sussex](#)
    - [Advice on EHCPs from East Sussex SENDIASS](#)
  - **Emotional and mental health support** If your child finds school hard because of anxiety or emotional reasons, support is available:
    - [Information for East Sussex parents](#)
    - Children not in school [fact sheet on Emotional Based School Avoidance](#) for tips about coping with school avoidance, from Amaze.
    - [School avoidance and mental health](#) information for parent carers from Young Minds.

## Parent groups and peer support

Parent groups and peer support can connect you with others who understand what you're going through. They help you share ideas, feel heard and find support.

- Regular online and in-person support groups across Brighton & Hove and East Sussex, with [Amaze](#).
- Link with other parents of autistic children and young people, with [Mascot](#).
- Peer support for parents and carers, caring for someone with an Autistic mind, with or without a diagnosis across all of Sussex, with [Autism Support Crawley](#)

## Trusted information and learning or training for parent carers

- **Online training and awareness** for parents and carers covering a range of differences that young people may be experiencing, including Autism and ADHD.
  - [Amaze factsheets](#) and videos
  - [Autism Central workshops](#)
  - [Workshops for parents and carers from Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- **Autism** specific websites
  - [National Autistic Society](#)
  - [Child Autism UK](#)
  - [Autistic Girls Network](#)
  - [Ambitious About Autism](#)
  - [Aspens](#)
  - [Autistic Parents UK](#)
- **ADHD** specific websites
  - [ADHD UK](#)
  - [ADHD Foundation](#)
  - [ADHD Girls](#)