



**What is available to you and your child over 5 with Autism in Dacorum?**

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**Updated 2022**

**This leaflet offers advice and links to local services and national services on topics that impact on families caring for a child with autism. You can find this leaflet online at [www.dacorumspl.org.uk](http://www.dacorumspl.org.uk)**

**For information on all services and support in Hertfordshire [THE LOCAL OFFER](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) website has comprehensive information on all aspects of caring for and support a child with autism and/or disabilities in Hertfordshire. It is a great place to start whenever you feel you might need some support or help – [Hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://Hertfordshire.gov.uk) – The local offer.**

## School

<b>School Special Educational Needs Coordinator SENCO</b>	Speak to your school SENCO about what support is available. Information about the role of senco's can be found on The Hertfordshire Local Offer website. Look for Getting Help at School from your School.
<b>Contact Line – Educational psychologists</b>	Advice line for parents open Wednesdays 2pm-4.30pm 01992 588 574
<b>Hertfordshire Specialist Speech Language, Communication and Autism Teachers</b>	Can be referred to by your school, they will support schools with strategies. Offer a helpline for parents and professionals to call for advice on 01442 453 920 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays 1.30-4pm term time only.
<b>SENDIASS provides independent supporters</b>	To work with families regarding education support needs in relation to EHCP's and process. Website <a href="http://www.hertssendiass.org.uk">www.hertssendiass.org.uk</a> , email <a href="mailto:info@hertssendiass.org.uk">info@hertssendiass.org.uk</a> , Phone 01992 555 847
<b>Autism Education Trust</b>	This website has a parent section and a section for children and young people with useful information on transitions and working with schools. <a href="http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/parents">www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/parents</a>
<b>National Autistic Society</b>	National organisation with detailed information on website regarding autism and school life as well as a specific autism education helpline for advice. <a href="http://www.autism.org.uk">www.autism.org.uk</a> , Look in <a href="http://www.autism.org.uk/Advice">www.autism.org.uk /Advice</a> and <a href="http://www.autism.org.uk/guidance/topics/education">guidance/topics/education</a> Advice on teaching girls and autism, teaching tips for secondary school, transitions advice.
<b>Advice on EHCPs, Special needs good practice in schools and legal advice</b>	<a href="https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/">https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/</a> <a href="http://Ispea.org.uk">Ispea.org.uk</a> <a href="http://Sossen.org.uk">Sossen.org.uk</a> <a href="http://Contact.org.uk">Contact.org.uk</a>

## Health

<p><b>GP</b></p>	<p>The GP should look after your child's general health care and be first point of contact. They can make referrals into community paediatrician service that would make diagnosis for autism. Before seeing your GP the following website has forms that will need completing and explain the referral process.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/your-health/managing-conditions/asd-diagnosis-service/referral-information">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/your-health/managing-conditions/asd-diagnosis-service/referral-information</a></p> <p>GP's hold a Learning Disabilities Register – if your child has a diagnosis they should be on this register. Ask your surgery to include your child. Autism is included as a learning disability in this context as it is medically classed as a neuro disability.</p> <p>After the age of 14 young people on this register can have an optional annual review of health with the GP to support their well-being.</p>
<p><b>Community Services</b></p>	<p>Community health specialist services are normally provided at the Hemel Well Being Centre including hearing tests, sight tests and seeing a paediatrician via a referral from your GP. Hertfordshire also have a specialist dental service you can access via Hemel Well Being Centre.</p>
<p><b>Speech and language services</b></p>	<p>This service supports the development of children's communication skills through speech or alternative methods of communication. They run training for parents as well as providing direct work with children. For children under school age they run drop in service and take referrals directly from parents. For school age children, parents and schools together can make a referral.</p> <p><b>Hertfordshire Speech and Language Services and Occupational Therapy Advice Line</b> run a joint advice line for parents and professionals You can contact them for <b>advice on 01992 470 680 option 3 and then option 1</b>– they will normally call you back on a Wednesday.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/children-young-peoples-therapies-service/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/children-young-peoples-therapies-service/</a></p>
<p><b>Occupational Therapy</b></p>	<p>They can provide advice regarding sensory needs of children and young people. Referrals need to be made via GP or paediatrician.</p> <p><b>Hertfordshire Speech and Language Services and Occupational Therapy Advice Line</b> run a joint advice line for parents and professionals You can contact them for <b>advice on</b></p>

	<p><b>01992 470 680 option 3 and then option 1</b> – they will normally call you back on a Wednesday.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/children-young-peoples-therapies-service/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/children-young-peoples-therapies-service/</a></p>
<b>Dental Support</b>	<p>Starting attending the dentist early is important and can ensure children are aware of the environment.</p> <p>If your child cannot cope with a high street dentist you can be referred to the special needs dental service which works from Hemel Well Being Centre.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/special-care-dental-service/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/special-care-dental-service/</a></p>
<b>National health Service Online information</b>	<p><a href="http://www.NHS.UK/conditions/autism">www.NHS.UK/conditions/autism</a> has lots of information on how a person with autism can be supported by the NHS and health services.</p>
<b>National Autistic Society - Health information</b>	<p><a href="http://www.autism.org.uk">www.autism.org.uk</a> has information on supporting autistic people with accessing health care and advice on common health issues.</p>

## Home Life and Parenting

<b>Parent Network Support Groups</b>	<p>Families in focus offer online support groups for those parenting early years children, teenagers and general support groups.</p> <p><a href="http://www.familiesinfocus.co.uk">www.familiesinfocus.co.uk</a>. Friendly supportive groups with topics.</p>
<b>SPACE Support Group</b>	<p>Space are a local Hertfordshire charity who offer support to families with neurodiverse children.</p> <p><a href="http://www.spaceherts.org.uk/space-for-families">www.spaceherts.org.uk/space-for-families</a></p>
<b>ADDvance mini consultation funded by DSPL 8</b>	<p>These are designed to support parents who have just got a diagnosis of Autism to support you at the start of your journey or for parents who have a specific issue regarding supporting their child they want to resolve for example wanting to reduce a certain behaviour or wanting to help their child manage social relationships better. They are short sessions designed to resolve one issue rather than multiple issues. But you can attend more than once ! book via Eventbrite - <a href="http://www.dspl8.eventbrite.com">www.dspl8.eventbrite.com</a></p> <p>ADDvance also run support groups for parenting supporting children in primary, secondary and 16-24 year olds:<a href="http://www.ADDvance.org/support">www.ADDvance.org/support</a></p>
<b>Parenting courses</b>	<p><b>Parenting courses</b> – Hertfordshire County Council funds a huge number of parenting courses to support parents with children who have SEN. These include sleep support, understanding education support, managing anger and anxiety, working with siblings, sensory needs, sleep etc.</p>

	Find these courses on <a href="#">Local Offer Hertfordshire Website under – Find courses and things to do.</a>
<b>Parents who also have autism themselves</b>	<p>Within Hertfordshire there a support group for parents who are also diagnosed with autism themselves. This group can be reached via :</p> <p><a href="https://www.autism.org.uk/directory/p/parents-on-the-autisticspectrumsupport-group-pas">https://www.autism.org.uk/directory/p/parents-on-the-autisticspectrumsupport-group-pas</a></p> <p>When your child is diagnosed with autism a number of parents recognise their own autistic self, adult assessments for autism can be accessed via your GP – you will be referred to mental health services for this assessment or you can pay privately for diagnoses. The waiting list for adult diagnosis has been very long but the local health services are attempting to reduce the waiting time.</p>
<b>Carers in Herts</b>	<p>Provide support and information including a discount card for those undertaking unpaid care including those who are parent carers, they also offer support groups and advice.</p> <p><a href="https://www.carersinherts.org.uk/have-your-say/parent-carers">https://www.carersinherts.org.uk/have-your-say/parent-carers</a></p> <p>Herts Parents and Carers Involvement provide parents with a way to influence and shape services for children with additional needs as well as information on key issues for parents of SEN parents in Hertfordshire, they have a weekly email. Register at <a href="http://www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk">www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk</a></p>
<b>SEND Family Workers</b>	<p><b>SEND Family Workers</b></p> <p>DSPL 8 Fund 3 part time family workers to who have specialist knowledge to support families with children who have additional needs. They can be reached through the Local Schools Partnership offices.</p> <p>Link/Dacorum Tel 01442 401222 Ext 5</p> <p>Gade Telephone 01442 278793</p> <p>Kings Langley Telephone 01923 264504</p>
<b>Local helpline on Autism and ADHD</b>	<p><b>ADD-vance</b> offer a helpline Monday to Friday 9am-1pm 01727 833 963</p> <p>Space have a family support worker who can offer advice and support – book an appointment via <a href="https://spaceherts.org.uk/space-for-families/">https://spaceherts.org.uk/space-for-families/</a></p>
<b>Toileting Advice and Support</b>	Health visitors and school nursing service can advise on toileting and should be your first point of contact.

	<p>Hertfordshire Children and Young People's Continence Service will support once you have received support from health visitors' / school nurses and issues have not been resolved.  <a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-continence-service">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-continence-service</a></p> <p>Children's Bowel and Bladder Charity website is called <a href="http://ERIC.org.uk">ERIC.org.uk</a> – offers advice on incontinence and bedwetting.</p> <p>National autistic society also has lots of information on toilet training and bedwetting – <a href="http://Autism.org.uk">Autism.org.uk</a>.</p>
<p><b>Eating Advice and Support</b></p>	<p><b>Speak to your GP, school nurse or health visitor if you are concerned about your child's weight or diet.</b></p> <p><b>Dieticians</b> can be accessed via GPs/school nurses if you have concerns about your child's weight.</p> <p>National autistic society website has lots of information on eating including over eating – <a href="http://autism.org.uk/eating">autism.org.uk/eating</a></p> <p><a href="http://Arfidawarenessuk.org">Arfidawarenessuk.org</a>          Avoidant and restrictive eating disorder charity with advice on autism and eating disorders.</p> <p>BeeZee Bodies offer support and advice to those with children who are overweight: <a href="http://www.beezeebodies.com">www.beezeebodies.com</a></p>
<p><b>Sleep</b></p>	<p><b>Families in Focus and SPACE</b> both run parent courses on sleep approved by the <b>Children's sleep charity</b>.</p> <p><b>The children sleep charity</b> website has leaflets – <a href="http://thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk">the childrenssleepcharity.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Contact a Family</b> is a national disabled children's charity which has leaflets and information on sleep; <a href="http://contact.org">contact.org</a>.</p>
<p><b>Sensory Needs</b></p>	<p>Lots of children with autism have sensory needs – to find out about these and how to support young people with this have a look at the national autism societies webpage on sensory needs:  <a href="https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/sensory-differences/sensory-differences">https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/sensory-differences/sensory-differences</a></p> <p>Occupational Therapist support children and adults with sensory needs. They run Sensory workshops and parents can attend the 2 sessions without a referral, in fact it's a condition for a lot of the referrals that families attend these first:  <a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/childrens-occupational-therapy/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/childrens-occupational-therapy/</a></p> <p>A number of local charities also run workshops on how to support your child's sensory differences – see parenting courses. If your</p>

	<p>child is experiencing behaviour or anxiety difficulties it is often important to consider sensory needs for an autistic child.</p>
<b>Toys and Equipment</b>	<p>Within Hertfordshire the charity Space runs the local authority lending library of equipment and toys for designed for children with disabilities. The list of items and how to receive them can be found here: <a href="https://spaceherts.org.uk/lending-space/">https://spaceherts.org.uk/lending-space/</a></p> <p>The Family fund will fund families on low income with specialist toys and equipment.</p> <p>Nationally there is a charity who provide sensory boxes on loan to families – information about this can be found here: <a href="https://cerebra.org.uk/tag/sensory-toys/">https://cerebra.org.uk/tag/sensory-toys/</a></p> <p>Fledglings is a special needs equipment online shop run by the charity Contact.org: <a href="https://www.fledglings.org.uk/">https://www.fledglings.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>Puberty, sex and relationships</b>	<p>Puberty can start earlier for children with autism.</p> <p>There is also information below for autistic teenagers in relation to gender identity and sexuality.</p> <p>Contact.org.uk – look in section on growing up.</p> <p>Sexeducationforum.org.uk – Relationship, Sex Education for pupils with SEN</p> <p>Autism.org.uk – puberty and sexuality</p> <p>Fumble.org.uk – sex education for young people including sexuality and gender</p> <p>Mencap.org.uk- relationship and sex, sexuality</p>
<b>Support for parents new to understanding autism</b>	<p>SEND school family workers will offer a single meeting to support parents processing and understanding an autism diagnosis for their child.</p> <p>Ambitious about autism offer a detailed pack for parents with information on all aspects of parenting and supporting a child with autism.</p> <p><a href="https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/early-years/parent-toolkit">https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/early-years/parent-toolkit</a></p> <p>National Autistic Society has a website page about post diagnosis which also includes advice on telling children about their diagnosis: <a href="https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/diagnosis/post-diagnosis-support/parents-and-carers">https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/diagnosis/post-diagnosis-support/parents-and-carers</a></p>

<b>Siblings</b>	<p>There are a number of resources to support siblings of children with autism.</p> <p>National autistic society resource <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>National siblings charity for siblings of children with disabilities <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Siblings can also have a caring role for their brother or sister. Hertfordshire has a young carers service who offer advice and activities to young carers – <a href="http://www.ycih.org">www.ycih.org</a></p>
<b>Bereavement Resources</b>	<p><b>Mencap</b> has advice, materials and support for supporting people through bereavement. Advice and support <a href="#">HERE</a>.</p> <p>Child specific advice on bereavement can be found at: <a href="http://Childrenbereavementuk.org">Childrenbereavementuk.org</a></p>

## Financial Support

<b>Disability Living Allowance for Children</b>	<p><b>Disability living allowance</b> you may be eligible to claim this for your child, it is not income dependent. Advice on claiming this for a child with autism can be found on <a href="http://Autism.org.uk/about/benefits-care">Autism.org.uk/about/benefits-care</a> or <a href="http://Cerebra.org.uk/helpandinformation/guidesforparents/dla-guide">Cerebra.org.uk/helpandinformation/guidesforparents/dla-guide</a>.</p> <p>The Hertfordshire Money Advice Unit will offer support on completing their Disability Living Allowance – go to <a href="http://Hertfordshire.gov.uk">Hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>You may also be eligible for carers allowance, if you can't work due to caring.</p> <p><b>Turn2us.org.uk</b> Is a website with benefit advice, grant search and advice on energy and water bills.</p>
<b>Grants</b>	<p><b>The Family Fund</b> can be accessed by parents with DLA and low income annually for resources to support their child such as sensory toys, computers or holidays.</p> <p><b>Sky Badger</b> has a full list of grants available to families with disabled children including holidays and bikes for example – <a href="http://skybadger.co.uk">skybadger.co.uk</a></p>

## Community Involvement

<b>Potential Kids and SPACE</b>	These local charities offer activities for children and young people with autism in Hertfordshire. Including girls groups, lego groups and technology groups <a href="http://www.potentialkids.org">www.potentialkids.org</a> and <a href="http://www.spaceherts.org.uk">www.spaceherts.org.uk</a>
<b>Local Offer Website</b>	<a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx">https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx</a> run by the County Council provides detailed information on support available for children with additional needs in Hertfordshire.
<b>Short Breaks</b>	<p>Short breaks offer disabled children and young people the chance to spend time out with others socialising and doing fun activities, giving their families a break and providing them with the confidence their child is well supported by a trained staff.</p> <p>They include holiday and Saturday clubs, and activities range from canoeing and computers skills to lego.</p> <p>You can get up to 40 hours of activities if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>live in Hertfordshire</li> <li>are aged between 5 - 19 with SEND</li> <li>receive a middle or higher rate disability living allowance (DLA) or any personal independence payment (PIP), or</li> <li>have a letter from your GP, your school's special educational needs co-coordinator or another professional, confirming that your need means you require access to targeted services for disabled children and young people.</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/local-offer/support/short-breaks/short-breaks.aspx">https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/local-offer/support/short-breaks/short-breaks.aspx</a></p>
<b>Hertfordshire Additional Needs Database (HAND)</b>	<p>Hertfordshire County Council's voluntary database for children and young people aged 0-25 who have additional needs or a disability which has a substantial impact on their everyday life. HAND offers monthly updates in the newsletter SEND news – you can read and subscribe to this at:</p> <p><a href="https://sendnews.hertfordshire.gov.uk">https://sendnews.hertfordshire.gov.uk</a></p>

## Mental Health Support

<p><b>School Nursing Services</b></p>	<p>School nursing health for Kids and Teens provides support in relation to mental health - Parents/carer can make a referral for their child via</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/school-nursing/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/school-nursing/</a></p> <p>The following websites have been supported by Hertfordshire to support children and young people's health and well-being.</p> <p>Health for Kids: <a href="https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/hertfordshire">https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/hertfordshire</a></p> <p>Health for Teens; <a href="https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/">https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>1 2 1 short term early support and advice</b></p>	<p>Pupil Support Worker – supports children and young people in schools with low level needs related emotional well being such as social skills, worries and friendship issues; To make a referral: Link/Dacorum Tel 01442 401222 Ext 5 Gade Tel 01442 278793 Kings Langley Tel 01923 264504</p> <p>Children's Well Being Practitioners also offer 1 2 1 support, parent training and support for parents on areas such as anxiety, low mood and behavioural concerns.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-service/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-service/</a></p>
<p><b>Healthy young minds in Herts</b></p>	<p><b>Healthy Young Minds in Herts</b> – website containing tips for parents and young people including a “Wellbeing signposting guide for young people” and tips for parents.</p> <p><a href="https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/">https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>Early Intervention from NHS</b></p>	<p><b>Step 2</b> – Is an early intervention CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service) for children and young people in Hertfordshire aged 0-19.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/step-2-camhs/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/step-2-camhs/</a></p> <p>Referral is by any Hertfordshire professional including school or G.P. via the Single Point of Access (SPA)</p> <p><a href="https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/contact-us/">https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/contact-us/</a></p> <p>Parents can also refer to Single Point of Access is they are concerned their child is having a mental health crisis</p>

<p><b>Emergency Mental Health Support</b></p>	<p>If your child is not known to mental health services and is having a mental health crisis contact the Single Point of Access who can provide advice and access to services.</p> <p>Herts residents of all ages, including carers, GPs and other professionals can contact our 24/7 Single Point of Access (SPA) Mental Health Helpline team at any hour of the day or night, 365 days a year. The team can provide support for Herts residents who are experiencing a mental health crisis, need some mental health support or just want to talk on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Freephone 0800 6444 101 or</b></li> <li>• <b>NHS 111 and select option 2 for mental health services</b></li> <li>• <b>If they are seriously ill or injured, dial 999 for the emergency services.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Support for persistent complex mental health</b></p>	<p><b>NHS Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service</b> Professionals can directly refer a child or young person up to 18 if they have severe, persistent and complex mental health problems.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/">https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/</a></p>
<p><b>Specialist support where autism impacts on ability to access other services.</b></p>	<p><b>PALMs – Positive behaviour, Autism, Learning Disabilities and Mental health services.</b> This service will provide support in relation to sleeping, toileting, feeding and challenging behaviour to children and young people who can't access Step 2/CAMHS and have a diagnosis of autism and/or learning disabilities. Health services, family support workers and schools can make referrals to PALMS available on their website.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/palms/">https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/palms/</a></p>
<p><b>Autism and Anxiety</b></p>	<p>A number of autism and learning disability charities offer detailed information about supporting those with anxiety and depression. Including specific apps and books for young people themselves. The following charities have specific support which are hyperlinked to the relevant pages.</p> <p><a href="https://www.autism.org.uk">Autism.org.uk</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk">Learningdisabilities.org.uk</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.mencap.org.uk">Mencap.org.uk</a></p>

## Girls and Autism

<p>Girls have been under represented in autism diagnosis.</p> <p>However many more girls have been recognised as being autistic over the last few years.</p>	<p>Local groups</p> <p>Spectrum girls is running through <b>ADDvance</b>.</p> <p><b>Potential Kids</b> Hertfordshire also run girls autism groups. <a href="http://www.Potentialkids.org">www.Potentialkids.org</a>.</p> <p><b>Space</b> – runs also a girls group- <a href="http://www.hertsspace.org.uk">www.hertsspace.org.uk</a> at various points during the year.</p>
<p>National advice</p>	<p>Autism.org – girls and women provides information on autism.</p> <p>Flying Under the Radar is a helpful booklet on girls, autism and school suited for parents and teaching staff.</p> <p><a href="https://barrycarpentereducation.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/girls_and_autism_-_flying_under_the_radar-final.pdf">https://barrycarpentereducation.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/girls_and_autism_-_flying_under_the_radar-final.pdf</a></p> <p>National Autism Society also has helpful webpages on girls and women with autism</p> <p><a href="https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism/autistic-women-and-girls">https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism/autistic-women-and-girls</a></p>