

As a parent/carer

One of the first things you should do, is research the illness. Know your facts and be aware of the symptoms and the impact it can have on you and the rest of the family, as well as the child with the disorder.

Look after yourself and go easy on yourself. As a rule, parents tend to blame themselves if their child is unwell, and it can become physically and emotional exhausting to care for a child with a mental health disorder, but one of the best things you can do to help, is to take care of yourself too. Your child needs you, make sure you can offer the best help you can.

Seek out emotional support for yourself as well as your child. Family therapy sessions can also help.

Monitor your child's symptoms, but do not overbear them, monitor from a respectable distance, but make sure your child knows that you are available to them



The Lotus Mental Health

For more information please visit: www.thelotusmentalhealth.org

Or contact us at: thelotusmentalhealth@gmail.com

Call/text: 07479 44 00 58

Follow us on social media:

The Lotus Mental Health

Autism Information Booklet



The Lotus Mental Health

www.thelotusmentalhealth.org

What is Autism?

Autism is a developmental condition that affects the way a person communicates and interacts with people and the world around them.

Autism is a lifelong condition, with no treatment or 'cure', and instead tends to rely on support, understanding, and patience, from the people around them.

It is considered to be a spectrum disorder, meaning that although autistic people can often share similar traits and characteristics, they are also very different from one another. For example, some people with autism are completely equipped to lead independent lives, whereas others with the disorder, may require more intense, and long-term support.

What are the signs and symptoms?

- Not responding when their name is called
- Avoid eye contact
- Like a strict daily routine – and show distress if the routine is changed
- Have a keen interest in certain subjects and activities
- They might struggle to make friends/prefer their own company
- Tendency to take things very literally
- Don't appear to understand social norms, or situations – unable to 'read the room'
- Show significant distress if they don't like certain tastes, smells, textures etc
- Not smiling when they are smiled at
- Unusual speech patterns – repeating phrases, talking 'at' people, rather than a dialogue
- Little to no interest in pretend/role play
- Repetitive movements – flapping hands, rocking etc
- Don't talk as much as other children
- Struggle to say/explain how they are feeling

What can you do?

Be there for your child, it might sound obvious, but if you don't tell them you're there, will they really know?

Be approachable – if your child wants to speak to you, give them your time

Be supportive – encourage, support and praise

Encourage exercise, family time, and integration – loneliness is a dark place

Encourage your child to openly talk about how they are feeling, without judgement and interruption

Look for hobbies and encourage down time

Actively listen to your child, listen to the words they use

Look out for symptoms

Show positivity to your child

Converse and engage. Even if it's just at mealtimes, or in the car, make use of your time together

Teach your child coping mechanisms - keeping a diary, relaxation exercises

Be proud! Even of the most basic achievements

Be patient! Don't take things personally

Get help! If your child is struggling, take them to their G.P.

Love them and make sure they know they are loved