



# Thanet Children and Young People Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Network

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Everyone has a different story



# Welcome and Introduction

Robert Page, Head of St Anthony's School



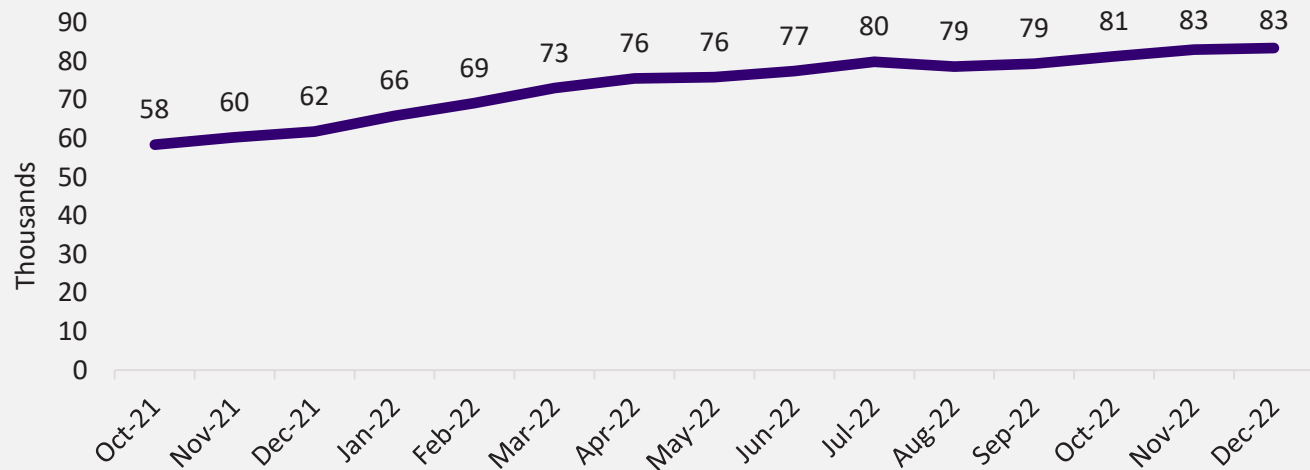
# Autism Data and Existing Pathways

Sue Mullin, Interim Associate Director: Children's  
Mental Health, Children's Commissioning Team, NHS  
Kent and Medway

# National prevalence

- There were 83,340 CYP with an open suspected autism referral in December 2022 for England according to the [latest data](#) published by NHSD.
- This represents a 35% increase when compared to 61,763 in December 2021.

Number of CYP under 17 with an open suspected autism referral in England



- A [study](#) of more than 7 million pupils across England found that 119,821 (1.76%) presented with ASD.
- Of these almost one in five (18%) also had learning difficulties and there was a male to female rate of 4.32.

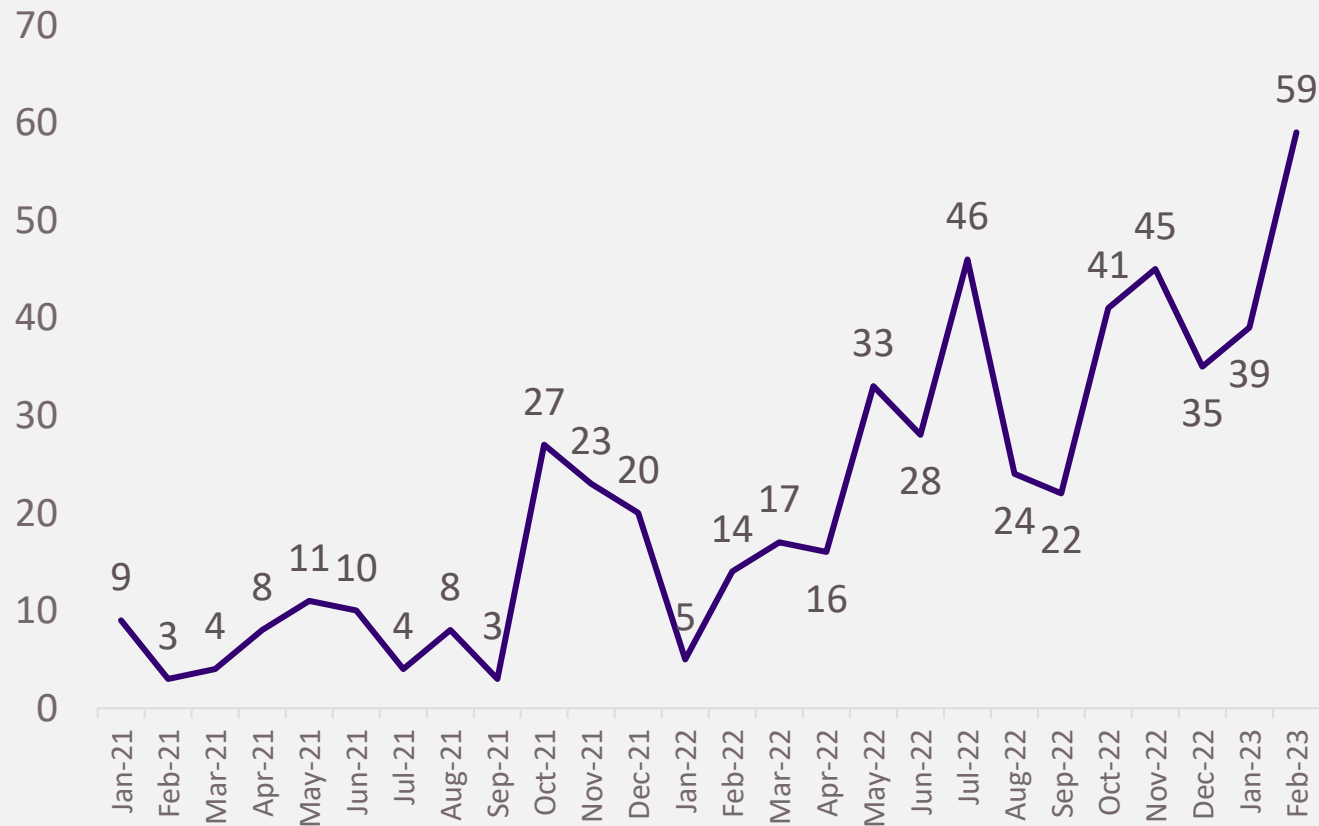
ASD prevalence:  
1.76%

ASD boys:  
2.81%

ASD girls:  
0.65%

# Local data - referrals

Accepted autism diagnostic assessment referrals in Thanet

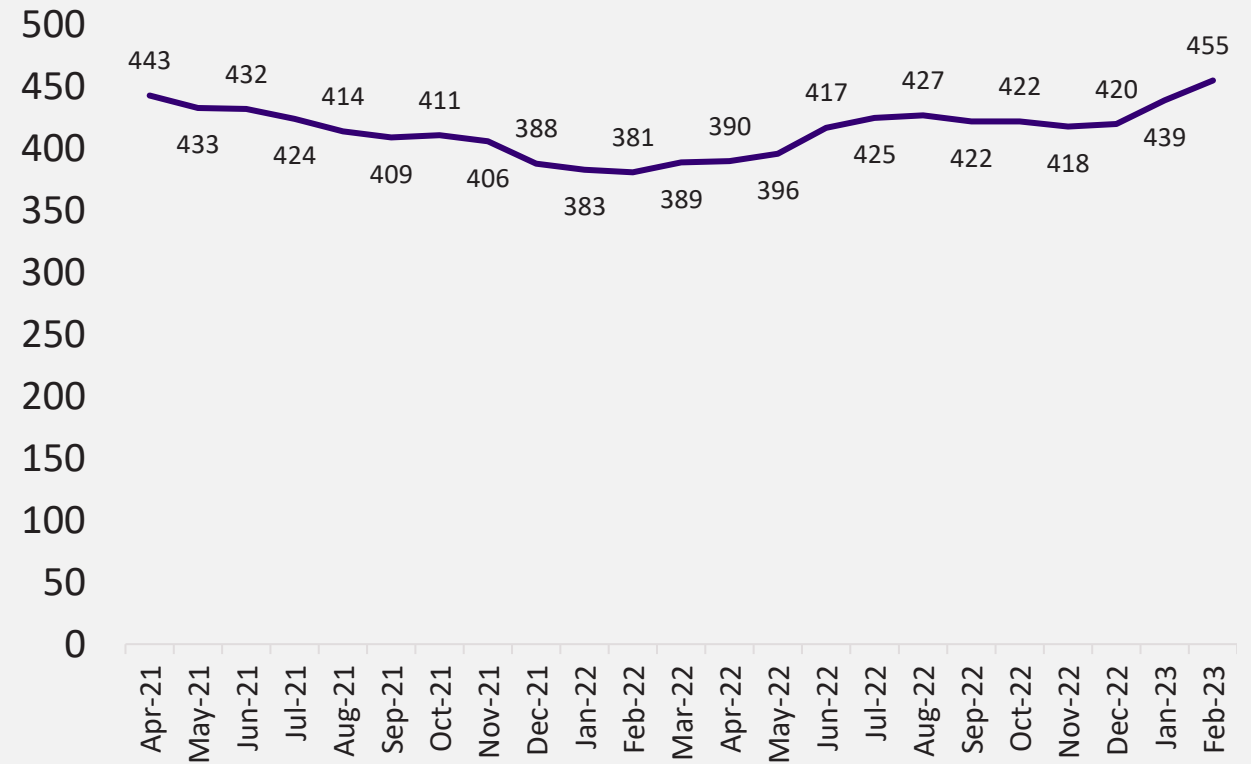


- There were 59 ASD assessment referrals in February 2023 for Thanet.
- This is more than quadruple the number in February 2022 (14) and represents the highest since my records start in January 2021.
- However, this indicator is somewhat volatile, due to the low frequency.

# Local data – waiting list

- There were 455 CYP on the waiting list for an ASD assessment in February 2023 for Thanet.
- This is 19% more than February 2022 (381) and represents the highest since my records start in April 2021.
- These numbers have been rising since February 2022 which saw a record low of 381

Waiting list size for autism diagnostic assessments in Thanet





# Thanet Inclusion and Support Service

Stacey Sofianos, Specialist Teacher



## Sleep Support Session

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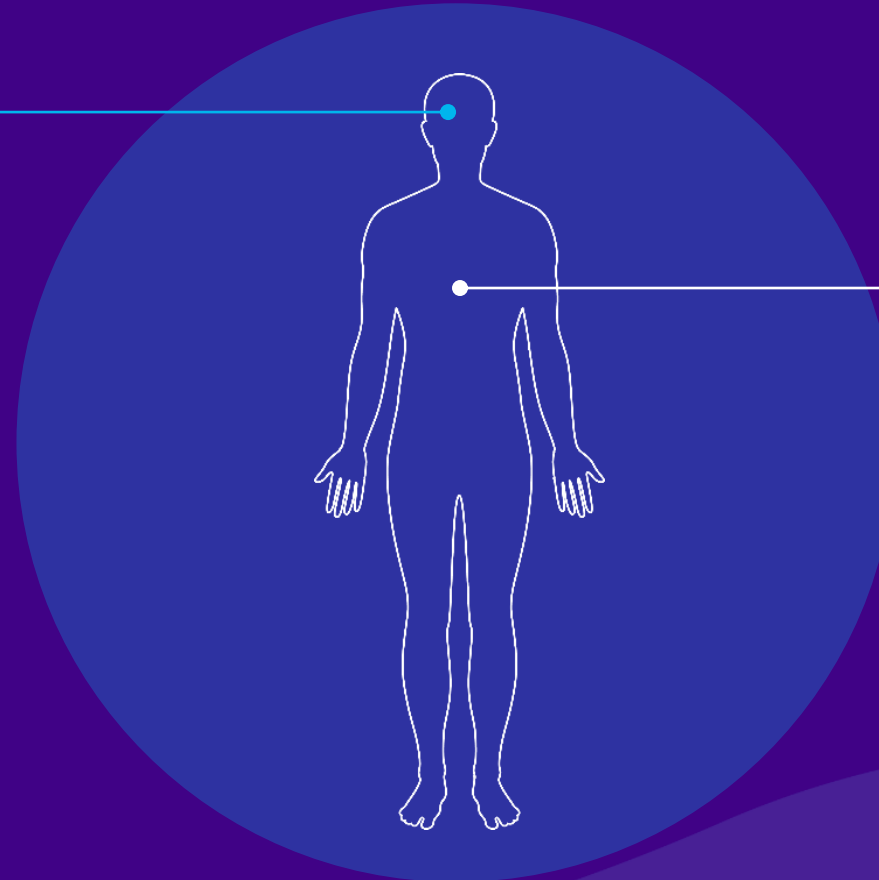


## What happens when you sleep?

**Memory consolidates**

**During sleep the body and brain are very busy**

Body and brain development are maximised



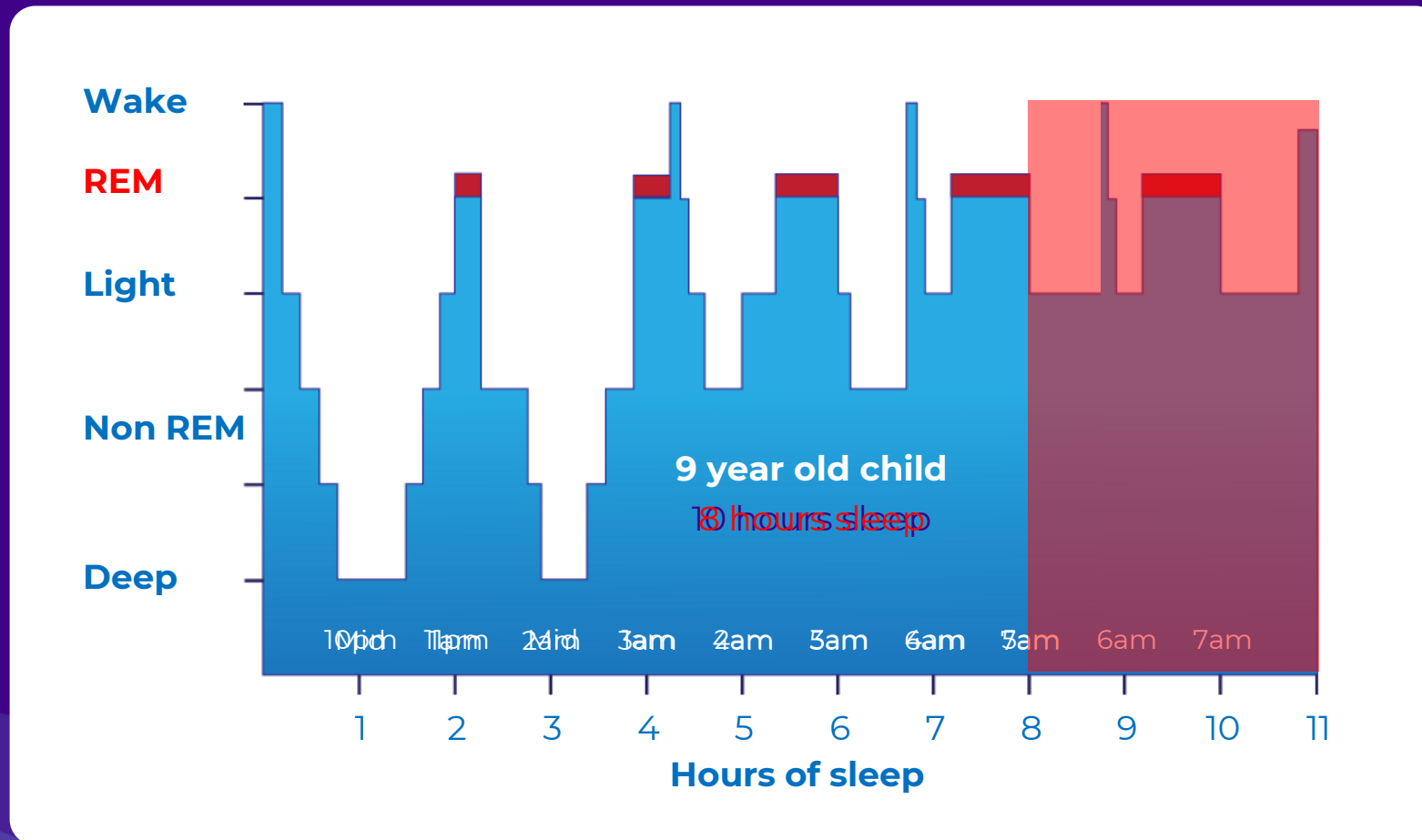
**Growth hormone released**

Muscle mass builds and bone density increases  
Repair and renewal of cells

Immune system strengthens

Hormones released to maintain a healthy appetite

# What does sleep look like?



## Melatonin & Cortisol

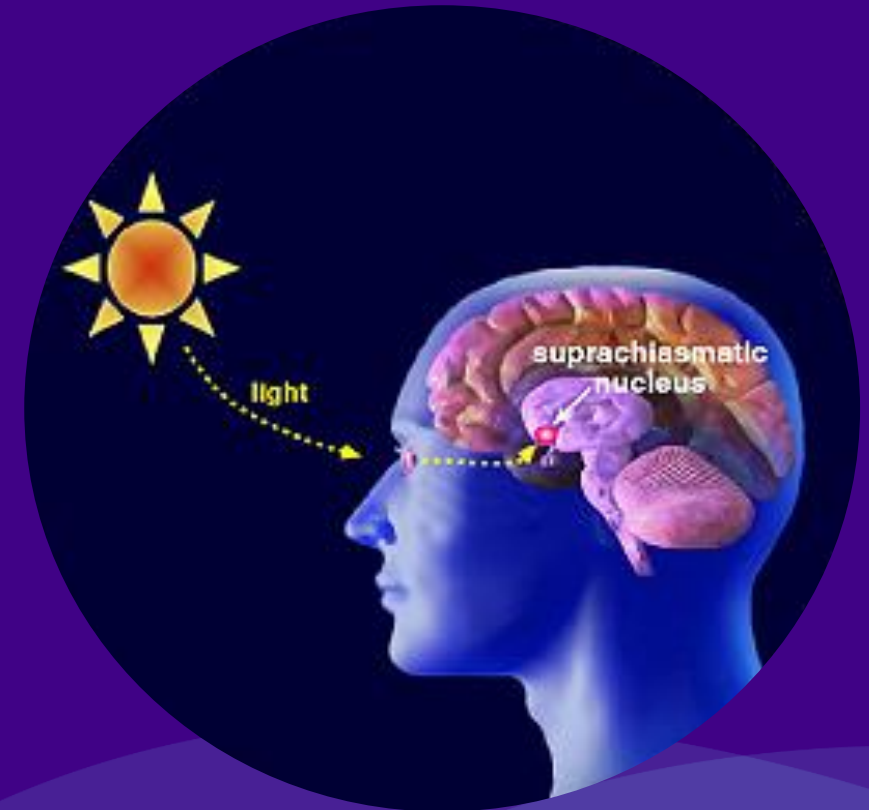
**Hormone production triggered by change from light → dark or dark → light**

### **Cortisol**

- Wakes us up and inhibits sleep
- Also produced in response to stress

### **Melatonin**

- Makes us feel sleepy
- Can be suppressed or disrupted



How much sleep should  
we be getting?



**New baby**

14 - 18 hours



**Nursery aged child**

10 - 12 hours



**Primary aged  
child**

9 - 11 hours



**Teenager**

8 -10 hours



**Adult**

7 - 8 hours

## During the day

- Get out into natural light for at least 30 minutes, as early as possible
- Avoid too many caffeine-based drinks
- Find ways of dealing with stress or anxiety
- Avoid having a nap during the day
- Do not have a long lie-in at weekends



## During the evening

- Clear homework out of the way
- Have a good meal, but not too close to going to bed
- Do any stimulating activities, such as exercise, watching TV, and playing computer games earlier in the evening



## The last hour (wind down hour)

- Switch off your TV, computer, phone, and anything else with a screen
- Have a bath, wind down, and chill out
- Read, or listen to relaxing music
- Stick as closely as you can to the same bedtime and getting up times, even at weekends
- Try a relaxation technique in bed to help you drift off to sleep





## The disappearing chair

A graduated withdrawal is often useful when there is anxiety around bedtime and a child wants a parent/carer in the room with them while they sleep. It works in stages:

1. Sit by (not on) the bed, maintaining physical contact (hand on hand, arm etc.) until child falls asleep. Contact should be still, no stroking.
2. Sit by the bed, not making any physical contact.
3. Move the chair away from the bed but stay in the room.
4. Sit in the chair by the door.
5. Chair is outside of the room, by the door.
6. Child settles in room alone and you get on with your evening.





# OVERVIEW OF TISM EDUCATION TRUST

SPECIALIST TEACHER - STACEY SOFIANOS



# AET

Our mission is to empower the education workforce and support them in securing a positive education that supports wellbeing for all autistic children and young people.

# Autism Education Trust

## Making sense of Autism

Free training for all staff.

AET encourage that all staff have this training to ensure consistency of support across the school.



## Good Autism Practice

- Chargeable course to further develop practitioners' knowledge and understanding.



## Further Training

- Understanding Anxiety
- Autism and Inclusion
  
- Transition?

# Making sense of autism



## AIMS

- Enhance your understanding and awareness of autism and the three areas of difference that affect autistic pupils.
- Equip you with the knowledge you need to begin to make reasonable adjustments in the way you support autistic pupils.

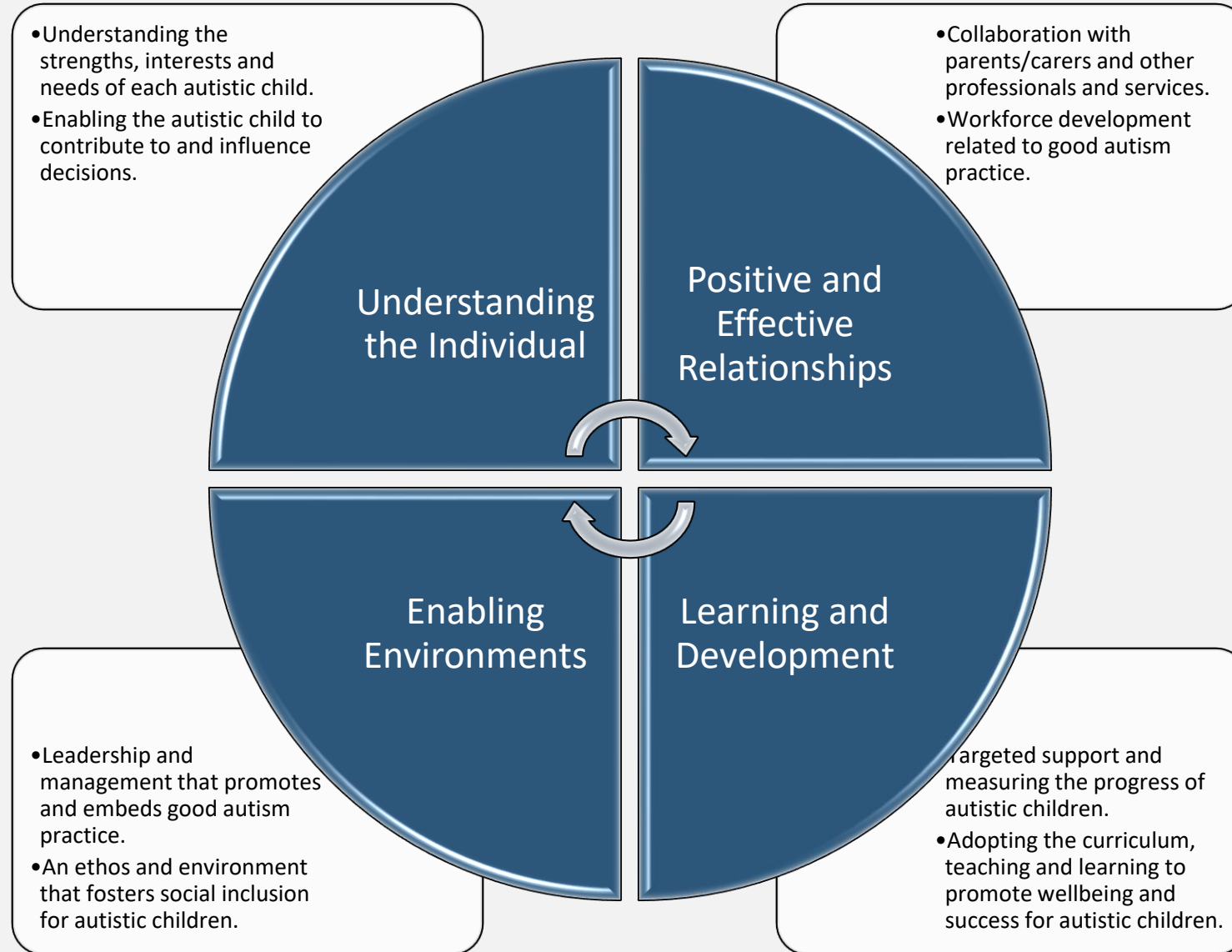


## Standard Framework

By using the AET School Standards, leaders and leadership teams can:

- Identify priority areas to work on.
- Create an action plan to improve school-wide practices.
- Implement reasonable adjustments for autistic pupils.
- Improve the engagement, retention, and academic achievement of autistic pupils.
- Monitor practice and provide evidence of embedding good autism practice.

# How the Eight Principles of Good Autism Practice are embedded in the four themes.



# Good autism practice



## AIMS

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of good autism practice.
- Reflect on and improve their practice in working with autistic pupils.
- Understand strategies and approaches they can draw upon for autistic pupils they work with.
- Reflect on the kind of information they need to collect for the one-page profile and for the pupil-centred education plan.
- Consider how to involve the autistic pupil and their family in the pupil's education.
- Enhance and embed inclusive practice for autistic pupils.

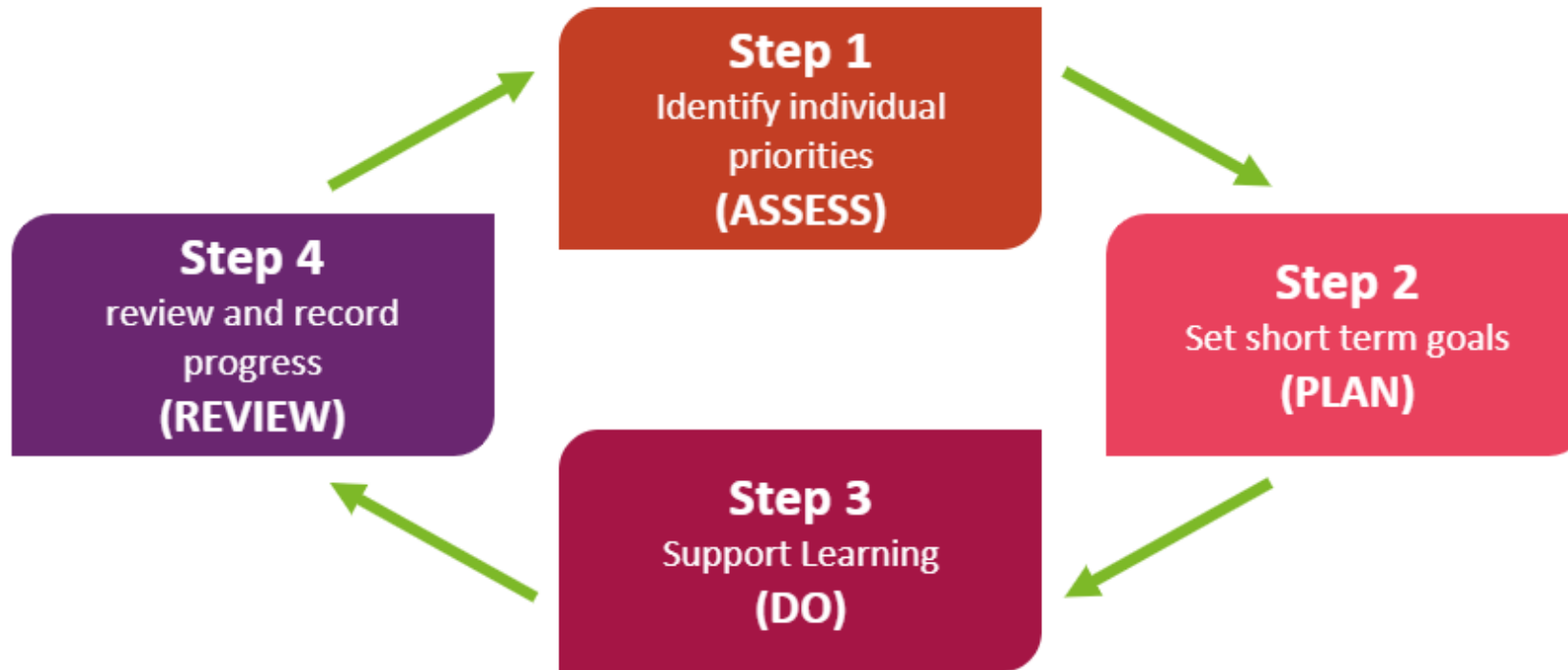


## Competency Framework

Again, looking at the eight principles and four themes.

# Progression Framework

## How do I use the AET Progression Framework









# Progression Framework

## Progress Scale

**Not yet developed (NYD)**

Not present or only beginning to emerge. High level of prompt or support.

**Developing (D)**

Evidence of progress, lower level of prompt or support. Sometimes spontaneous.

**Established (E)**

Is used frequently and maintained over time. Mostly independent / spontaneous, only occasional reminders.

**Generalised (G)**

Consistently used and applied within range of settings/contexts and with a range of people. Independent and unprompted.

# Progression Framework

Eight areas:



- Communication and interaction
- Social understanding and relationships
- Sensory processing
- Interest, routines and processing
- Emotional understanding and self-awareness
- Learning and engagement
- Healthy Living
- Independence and community participation



# OVERVIEW OF FAMILY NURTURE



**TISS**  
THANET INCLUSION  
SUPPORT SERVICE

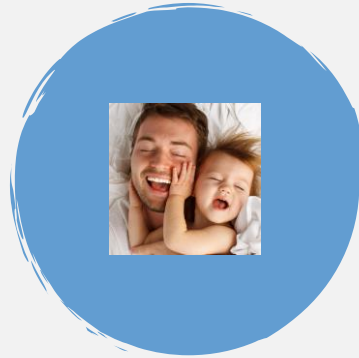


Thanet Inclusion Support Service

# Who said?



**Current research  
in neuroscience**



**Attachment  
research**



**Child  
development  
theory**

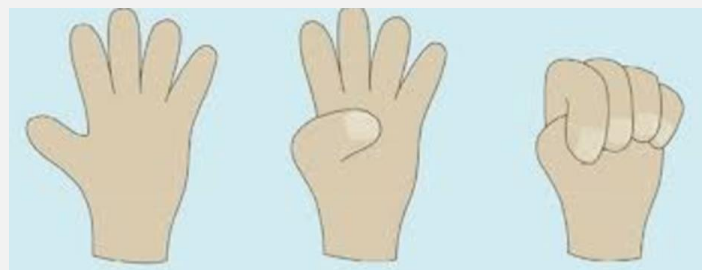


**Research into  
the role of play  
and creativity**

The information  
shared with  
parents and carers  
is all based on:

# A six week course ...

- Supporting parents on a journey of self reflection in a safe, non-judgmental and nurturing environment.
- How the brain develops in the first 3 years of life and why this is so important.
- The adolescent brain and the changes it goes through that affects our adolescent's behaviour.
- Stress Regulation system.
- Key Strategies parents can use at home including attunement, validation, regulation and PACE.
- How to support parents to be curious about their children's behaviour – noticing the best times and trigger times. Parents acting as behaviour detectives.
- The importance of felt experiences, sensory play and metaphors.
- The Nurture-Structure highway.



# THANK YOU

Satcey Sofianos - Specialist Teacher 

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[www.lgs.kent.sch.uk](http://www.lgs.kent.sch.uk) 



# A Good Night's Sleep

Dr Jennifer Sole, Thanet Locality Lead, Emotional Wellbeing Team



a GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Learning from Autistic Young People





# Why is sleep important?

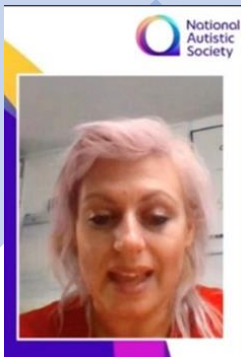
- Sleep is important for the wellbeing of children & young people (CYP), and their parents and caregivers.
- Most young people need between 8 – 10 hours of sleep a night.
- Lack of sleep impacts upon us in many ways including our physical health, emotional wellbeing & mental health, educational attainment, decision making ability.



# Sleep difficulties

- Some CYP find it more difficult than others to relax and to fall asleep
- Some CYP need less sleep than others; however, some CYP may be “over-tired” making it more difficult for them to relax and fall asleep.
- During the teenage years, there a number of different factors that may contribute towards sleep difficulties.





# Background



UCL researcher  
Dr Georgia Pavlopoulou

Asked 54 autistic adolescents, aged 12 to 17 years, to generate their own photos and use objects and words to introduce subjects and ideas that are meaningful and important to them, around the following themes:

The place they sleep and its surroundings  
activities or objects that are related to their sleep habits  
activities

Objects or people that show situations that are related to  
daytime and night-time activities that help them to fall or  
stay asleep

Objects, people or drawings that show or are related to the  
bedtime thoughts and activities that help them to fall asleep













Objects, drawings or actions that show how they feel or  
think about their sleep.

The results identified  
four key factors that  
may play a role in the  
sleep experiences of  
autistic young people:

**focused interests**  
**physical activity**  
**sensory autonomy**  
**during bedtime**  
**having more control**  
**and choice in their**  
**daily lives.**



# Some of the original data

<b>Complete preferred meal routine</b>	<b>Knowing the outcome of completed homework</b>	<b>Playing a table game with clear set of rules with family member</b>	<b>Favorite activity before night time</b>	<b>Bed modifications to feel sensory safety</b>	<b>Sensory autonomy</b>
<p>It's about the expected color, the expected taste</p> 	<p>To know = worry less, not to have to stay up worrying</p> 	<p>Cards game is fun, I know the rules, what can go wrong</p> 	<p>Playing with Lego, reaching a point of effortless satisfaction</p> 	<p>Important to create visual edges around bed</p> 	<p>Being able to choose the smell, the texture, the volume</p> 
<p><b>Checking notes to self and items that remind me of past or future good times</b></p> <p>Feeling good about life, thinking that there is a happy life for me.</p> 	<p><b>Sitting quietly next to family member, non-verbal interaction before going to bed</b></p> <p>Being in their company but not too close, not having to put too much effort or thought.</p> 	<p><b>Rehearsing what will happen tomorrow with mother in bedroom</b></p> <p>Asking her about things and giving me specific answers back, like a game. Like lyrics of a song.</p> 	<p><b>Repetitive reading of focused interest books, audio books or movies' dvds</b></p> <p>Reading encyclopedic books, enjoying reading something very familiar, almost automatic reading.</p> 	<p><b>Engage with play station games that have calming repetitive music and slow motion</b></p> <p>Non-action games with no surprises, just relaxing moving bubbles.</p> 	<p><b>Engage online with teams that present facts about my focused interests</b></p> <p>Harrow Bus Enthusiasts group is relaxing me when at bed.</p> 

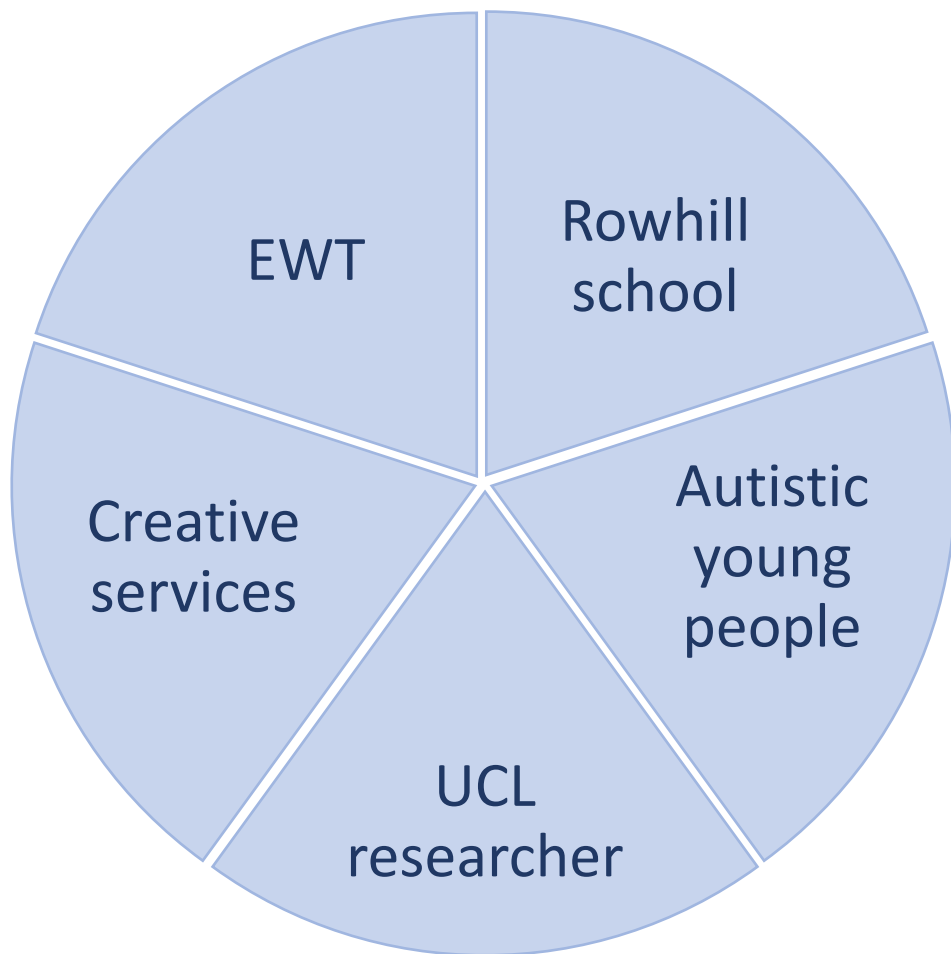
# Results of the research

[Frontiers | A Good Night's Sleep: Learning About Sleep From Autistic Adolescents' Personal Accounts | Psychology \(frontiersin.org\)](#)

“Our results highlight that sleep should be treated *individually* and in relation to the *environmental and personal factors* that affect each autistic person.”



# Our co-production team





# Overview of the co-production process

- UCL researcher, Dr Georgia Pavloupoulou, joined the co-production team to share and discuss the findings of the original research
- Young people discussed the findings of the research and gave feedback that the finding of the original research made sense to them and reflected some of their own personal experiences
- The co-production team worked together to create a leaflet and two animations.
- Additional resources were then created: lesson plan for schools and guided self-help materials for young people.

# Co-produced animation (02:54 mins)





# Co-produced animation (04:01 mins)



## Sleep is important

It affects how we feel and what we do when we are awake. It affects how we learn at school. Our body and our brain need sleep. No one is exactly sure what work the brain does when you're sleeping, but some scientists think that the brain sorts through and stores information, replaces chemicals, and solves problems while we snooze.

### Lots of autistic people have difficulty sleeping.

They might find it hard to fall asleep.

They might wake up a lot in the night.

They might sleep for less time than other people.

There is a lot of advice about how to get a 'good night's sleep' but we don't know whether it is helpful for autistic people. The first line of advice for many autistic young people who struggle to fall asleep, or to stay asleep during the night, is introducing general sleep rules, for example not viewing screens before bed and making sure a bedroom is dark. For some autistic young people this might feel like one more pressure to comply with rules written by, and for, non-autistic people.

To find out more, a researcher worked with 54 autistic young people to understand what helped them sleep. They worked together using photo taking, talking, writing, and drawing to understand their sleep-related activities during the day and before bedtime that contributed to a good night's sleep.

Full research paper:  
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.583868/full>



If you need to talk to someone, these organisations can help:

**Samaritans:** call 116123

**Shout:** text SHOUT to 85258

**Childline:** children & young people call 0800 1111

**For mental health advice and support in Kent & Medway,** please contact **NELFT** Single Point of Access (SPA):

**Call:** 0800 011 3474

**Email:** nem-tr.kentchildrenandyoungpeoplehealthservices@nhs.net

**Website:** [www.nelft.nhs.uk/single-point-of-access-referral](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/single-point-of-access-referral)

### Acknowledgments:

UCL IOE Early Career Impact Fellowship funding.

The John and Lorna Wing Foundation research funding. Rowhill School, Staff & Autistic Teens' Special Interest Sleep Group.

Kent Emotional Wellbeing Teams & Medway Emotional Support Teams (NELFT)

Scientific Support: Dr Georgia Pavlopoulou, Dr Virginia Lumsden, Prof Richard Mills.

Co-production leads: Helen Thomas, Tabitha Collumbell.

Illustration: Joshua Knowles.  
Design: Briony Campbell.



## A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

### LEARNING ABOUT SLEEP FROM AUTISTIC YOUNG PEOPLE



Recommendations made with and for autistic young people, and for all supporters of autistic young people.



## AUTISTIC YOUNG PEOPLE MADE TWO TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is important to work out sleep routines that work for you, even if that is different from the general sleep advice. Maybe your parents/carers and supportive adults can work out with you what will help you sleep.

2. It is important to consider the following daytime and bedtime "feelgood" factors that may have an impact on the quality and quantity of sleep.

### Focussed interests

Many autistic young people said that they feel happier and more relaxed when they focus on their special interests (themed books, animation, playing an instrument, chatting about favourite movie characters or nature). Time spent on special interests helps them sleep. Some said they plan some time for special interests in the day and at bedtime. They prefer to have a visual agreement with parents/carers on when it is time to stop doing favourite activities, and a few reminders so that they don't get interrupted suddenly.

### Physical activity

Lots of autistic young people said it helps to exercise or play sports. Choosing a time and way that feels alright was important to them (playing basketball alone, being able to change clothes or join a group as much or as little as you want).

### A chance to choose

Lots of autistic young people said that being able to choose how to spend some of their time at home/school helped them sleep. This helped make a balance between things they have to do and things they like to do. They slept better after talking through problems or just sharing their favourite hobbies or achievements with people who listen to them. Being able to make choices at bedtime was also important.

### Being kind to your senses

Autistic people can be sensitive to what they see, smell, taste, touch and hear. Many autistic young people said that before bedtime they get rid of things that feel bad (uncomfortable labels, unwanted noise) and choose things that feel good (creams that smell good, familiar food, soft clothes).

## Things that help in the evening & at bedtime

### Personalised sleep routine

Choosing things that feel, taste, smell, and sound good helped some autistic young people to feel relaxed and safe before they went to bed. For example: special smells from clothes, toys, oils, or body creams; eating certain foods; wearing comfortable clothes; putting things along the edge of the bed; blocking out noises, for example, by turning on a fan.

### Relaxing before bed

Many autistic young people felt more relaxed when they had time to themselves to choose what to do. Some said they find it easier to sleep on days that they do not have extra clubs and activities. Relaxing activities included: listening to music; watching familiar videos; using a self-help exercise; taking a bath; meditating.

### Spending time with family

Spending time with people in a way that is comforting and supportive helped many young people sleep. For example: relaxing in the same room; playing a rule-based game; talking about the day; planning the next day; having familiar bedtime conversations.

## Things that help during the day



### Physical activity

Some autistic young people said that physical activities during the day helped them to feel happier at bedtime. Activities included: swimming; riding a bike; doing gymnastics; or having a short drumming session. They like to do this in a way that feels comfortable (e.g. riding a bike alone to have a feeling of freedom).

### Things that make you feel good

Many autistic young people said they sleep better when there are things that make them feel good during the day. It helped to: plan nice activities for the future; see what interesting lessons they have the next day; talk through schoolwork so they know they can do it; have a good relationship with a teacher; prepare for activities; attend a club they have set up; talk about good things that have happened.

### Focused interests

Spending time on special interests helped many autistic young people relax so that they slept better. It helped to: spend some time doing activities that they enjoy; talk about their favourite topics with family; plan time for their special interest the next day.











# Feedback – “What did you learn”

The importance of personalised support when it comes to sleep

That personalised sleep plans are important for us all, but especially for CYP struggling to sleep

To think about using our senses to help us relax. To think about how choices in the day can help us sleep.

That some people can sleep with loud music.

Our sleep experiences are unique to each of us

Young people know what they need we need to listen before helping

The benefits of sleep  
The impact of lack of sleep on the body  
Various different strategies for young people to employ to support them for good sleep

About the research outcomes and resources that have been developed - films were great.

Art and creativity is so important and valuable in providing a platform for young people to feel heard



**Bill and Leo were inspired by the project to write a song and create a music video about their experiences of sleep:**

**SLEEP!!!**



# Additional resources



## A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

When we make a sleep routine it is important to see if it is working.  
Try your routine for two weeks and track your sleep to see if it works.  
After two weeks you can choose to use the routine or make changes to improve it.



### My Sleep Tracker

Put an x on the line to show how well you slept each day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5. I had a great night's sleep							
4. I slept most of the night							
3. I woke up a bit but i did sleep							
2. I slept a bit but woke up a lot							
5. I was awake most of the night							
What did you do in the day and before bed to help you sleep?							







## A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

When we have trouble sleeping it can be useful to think about what helps us feel relaxed and ready to fall asleep.

These worksheets will consider what helps you sleep and put those ideas into your own personalised sleep routine.

**Stick pictures of things you like in this box**

### What are your interests?

Spending time doing things that interest you can help you get a good night's sleep. Write down some of your interests on the lines below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### How do you stay active?

Some physical activity in the day can help us sleep at night. We all stay active in different ways. Some people like sports or yoga, others prefer to take a walk. Write down some ways that you like to get active on the lines below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Things that make you feel good

Many autistic people said they sleep better when there are nice things to enjoy during the day: perhaps a club they like, favourite lesson or teacher, time with a friend or pet. Write three things you look forward to.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### A chance to choose

There are lots of things we have to do, so it is important to plan how we do them. It helps to save some time for the things we want to do too!

Who can help you plan and solve problems?

When can you have some free time?

Who can you discuss your day with?





## Being kind to your senses

Our senses are important. They tell us about the world around us. Being kind to our senses can help us feel happy and calm so we can get a good night's sleep.

What do you like looking at?	What smells do you like?
What don't you like looking at?	What smells don't you like?
What do you like to touch/feel?	What tastes do you like?
What don't you like to touch/feel?	What tastes don't you like?
What do you like to listen to?	There are two extra senses that people often forget. We sense how we are moving and balancing. We also sense where our body is and what it is doing without looking. The activities below use our extra senses.
What do you like to listen to?	
<p><b>Circle any that you enjoy. Cross out any that you don't like.</b></p> <p>a big squeeze/hug   sit under a heavy blanket   massage   yoga          move something heavy (e.g. weights)   balance          hang upside-down   swinging   jump   pull a stretchy band          scooter/skate   rocking chair   bounce (e.g. on a yoga ball)</p> <p><b>Are there any other sensory activities you enjoy?</b></p>	



## A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

When we have trouble sleeping it can be useful to think about what helps us feel relaxed and ready to fall asleep.

These worksheets will consider what helps you sleep and put those ideas into your own personalised sleep routine.

### How do you relax?

Feeling relaxed can help us get a better night's sleep. For example, might do something we enjoy, take a bath or listen to music. What do you do to relax before bed?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Time with family

Spending time with people in a way that is comforting and supportive helped many young people sleep, like playing games or planning the next day. How do you like to spend time with people?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



## My Personalised Sleep Routine

Stick or draw pictures

What I will do






**Thank you for listening**





# ADHD and Executive Functions

Beverley Nolker, ADHD Sheppey



# Who am I?



Founder of ADHD Sheppey



Devised ADHD Awesome



ADHD Life Coach / Executive Function Coach/  
Mentor / Author





# Predominantly Inattentive ADHD



Fails to give close attention to details/makes careless mistakes.



Has difficulty sustaining attention.



Seems not to listen when spoken to.



Has trouble following through on instructions or finishing tasks.



Has difficulty organising tasks and activities.



Has trouble engaging in tasks that require sustained mental effort.



Often loses things.



Is easily distracted.



Is forgetful in daily activities.



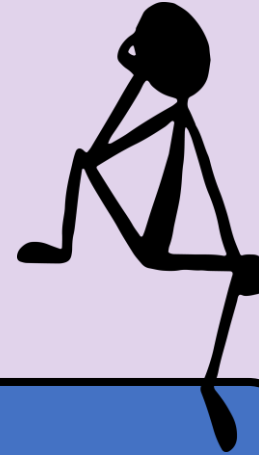
# Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive ADHD

This type of ADHD is displayed with symptoms of impulsivity and hyperactivity. Signs are:

- Fidgets with hands or feet or have trouble sitting still.
- Moves out of seat and around room inappropriately.
- Moves about or climbs excessively.
- Has difficulty being quiet.
- Often seems “on the go” or acts as if “driven like a motor”.
- Excessive talking.
- Blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- Has trouble taking turns.
- Interrupts or intrudes on others.



# Combined ADHD



## Combination Type

- Someone who is diagnosed with combination type ADHD does not display predominantly one type of symptom as with the other two types.





# Developmental Impact of (Undiagnosed) ADHD

## Pre-school

- Behavioural disturbances.



## Adolescent

- Academic problems.
- Difficulty with social interactions.
- Self-esteem issues.
- Legal issues, smoking, and injury



## Adulthood

- Occupational failure.
- Self-esteem issues.
- Relationship problems.
- Injury/accidents.
- Substance abuse.



## School-age

- Behavioural disturbance.
- Academic problems.
- Difficulty with social interactions.
- Self-esteem issues.



## College-age

- Academic failure.
- Occupational difficulties.
- Self-esteem issues.
- Substance abuse.
- Injury/accidents.

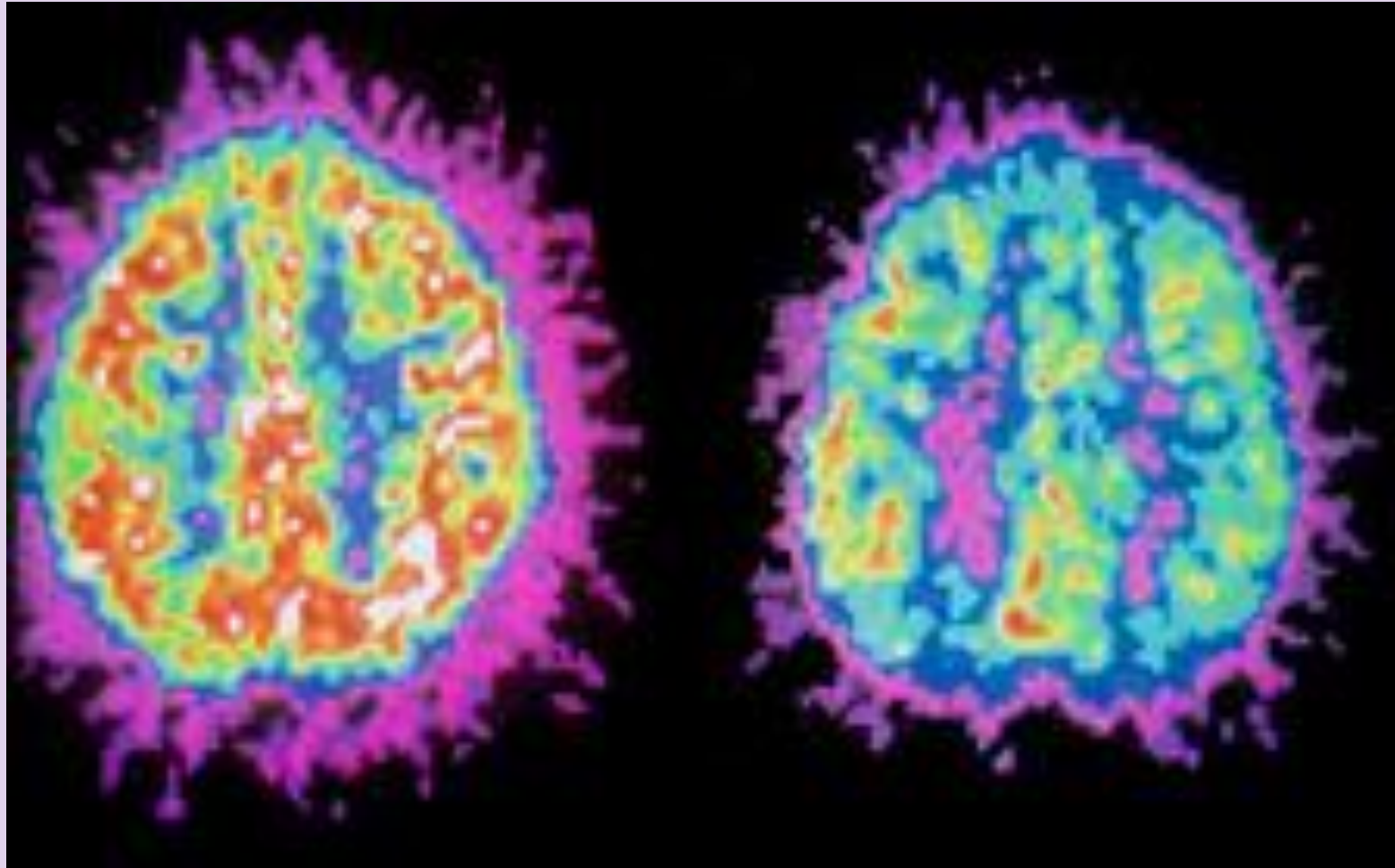


<https://www.contemporarypediatrics.com/view/adhd-adolescents-will-you-know-it-when-you-see-it>

M. BAREN MD

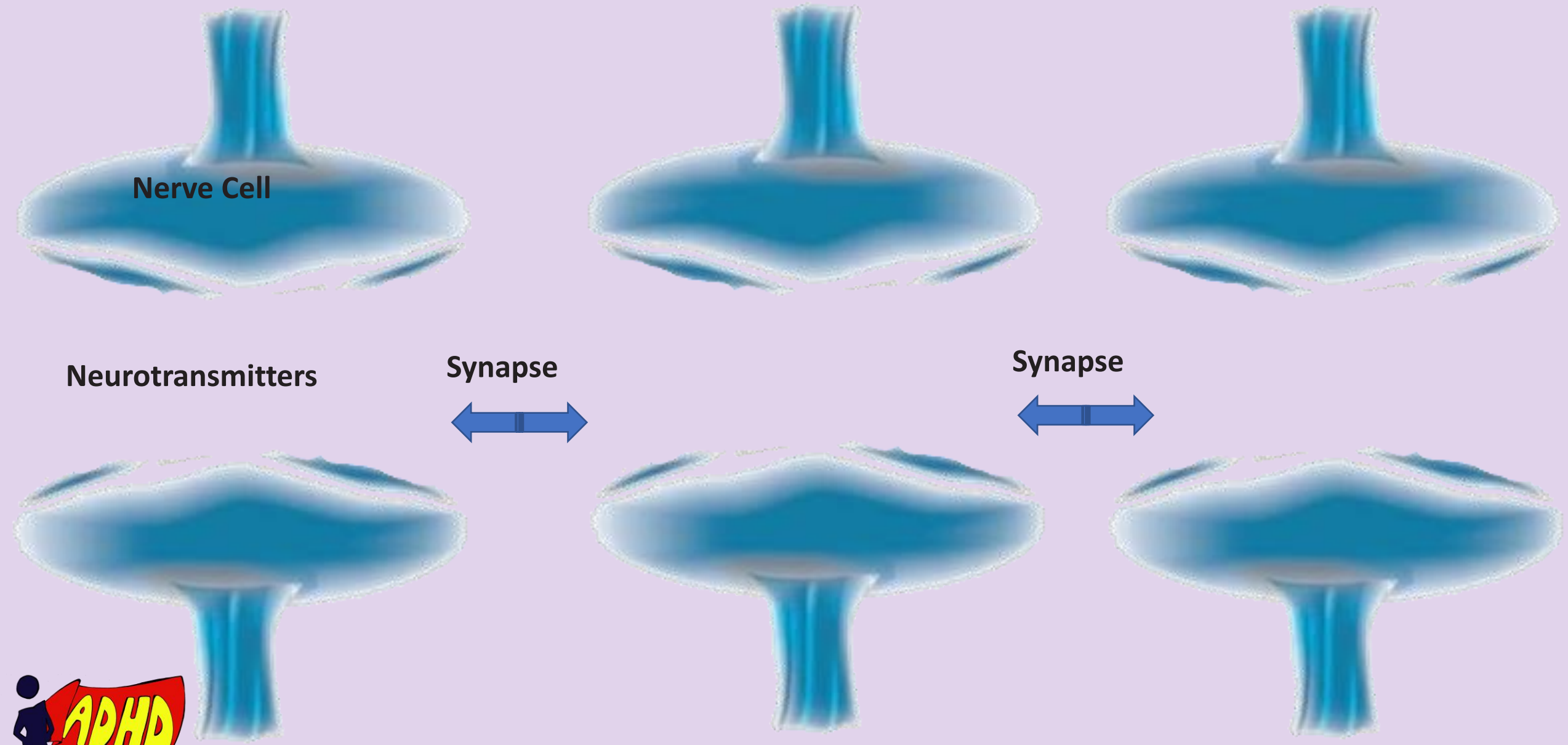


# Which one is the ADHD brain?



# Neurotypical Nerve Cell

# ADHD Nerve Cell





*"Pay attention!"*

*"Get back on task."*

*"Sit Still!!!"*



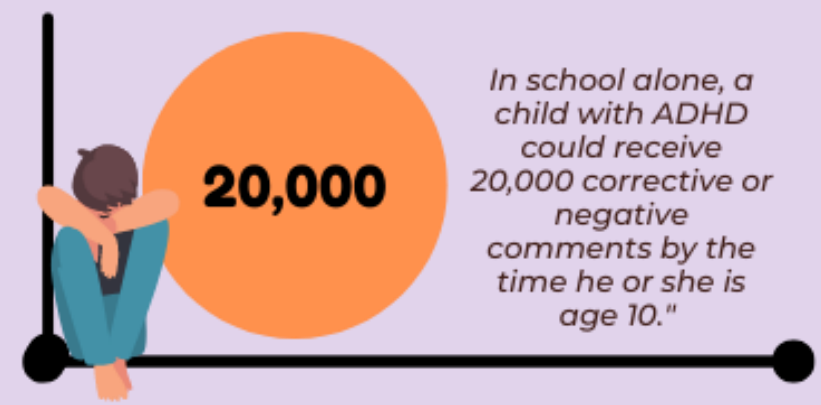
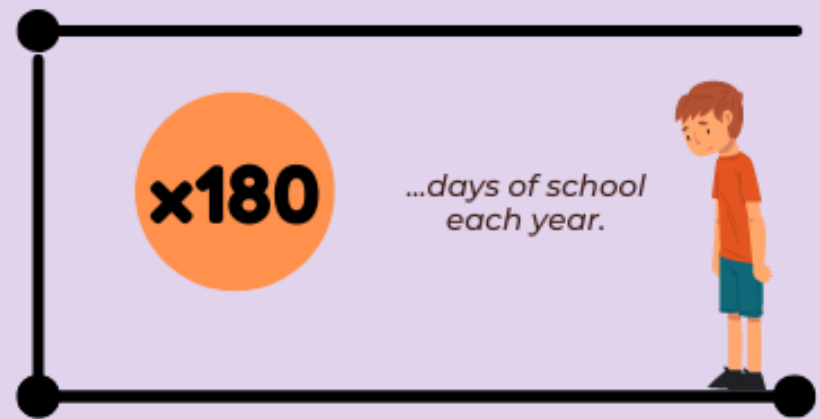
Let's say the child is in class six hours a day...

**=18**

negative comments

That's more than 3,200 non-positive comments directed at a child each year and does not include a single annoyed comment from a coach or an angry scolding from a parent.

**=3,240**



In school alone, a child with ADHD could receive 20,000 corrective or negative comments by the time he or she is age 10."





# Executive Functions



**START HERE**

Task Initiation

Goal Directed Persistence

Metacognition

Emotional Regulation

Flexibility

Sustained Attention

Response Inhibition

Planning & Prioritisation

Working Memory

Time Management

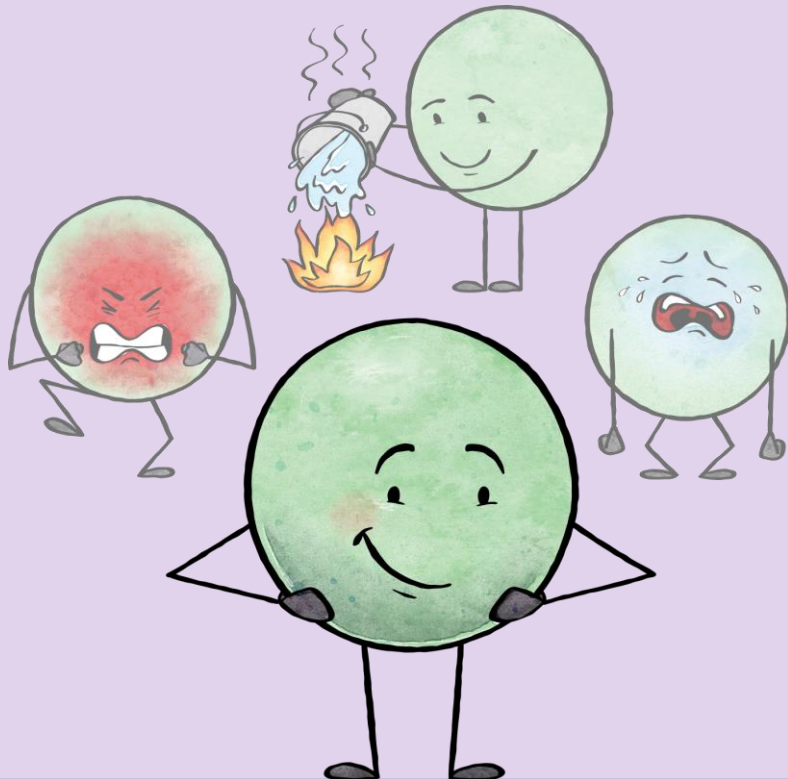
Organisation



Dawson / Guare Model

# Emotional Control

People with ADHD feel emotions more intensely than people without the condition. For many, difficulty with emotional regulation is one of the most challenging symptoms to manage.





# The ADHD Iceberg

**Impulsivity**

**Hyperactivity**

**Inattention**

**30% Developmental Delay**

**Disturbed Sleep**

**Impaired Sense of Time**

**EF Deficits**

**Not Learning Easily from Rewards & Punishment**

**Rejection Sensitivity**

**Neurotransmitter Deficits**

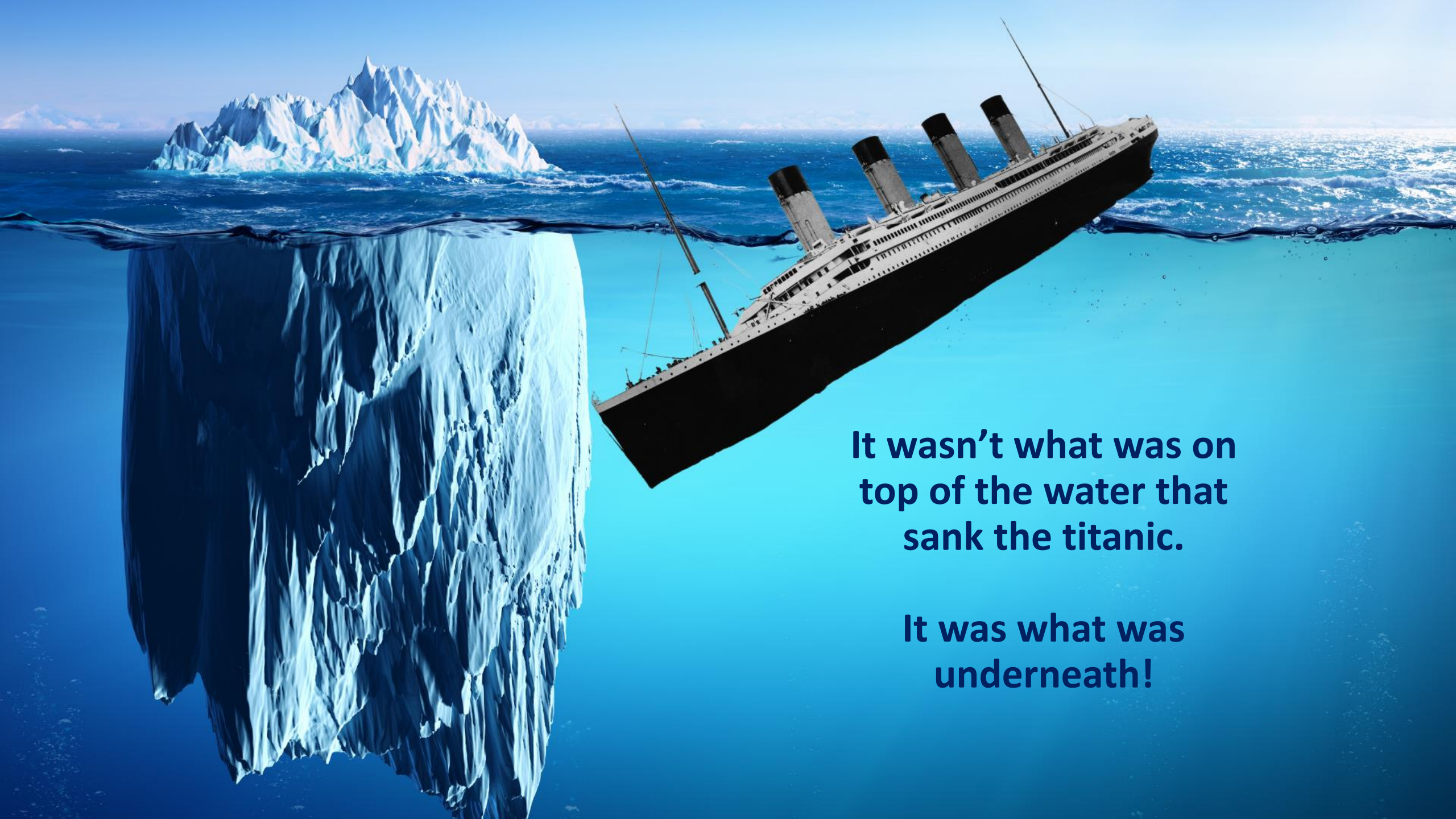
**Co-morbidities**

**Low Frustration Tolerance**

**Low self-esteem**

**Lack of social / emotional support**





**It wasn't what was on  
top of the water that  
sank the titanic.**

**It was what was  
underneath!**



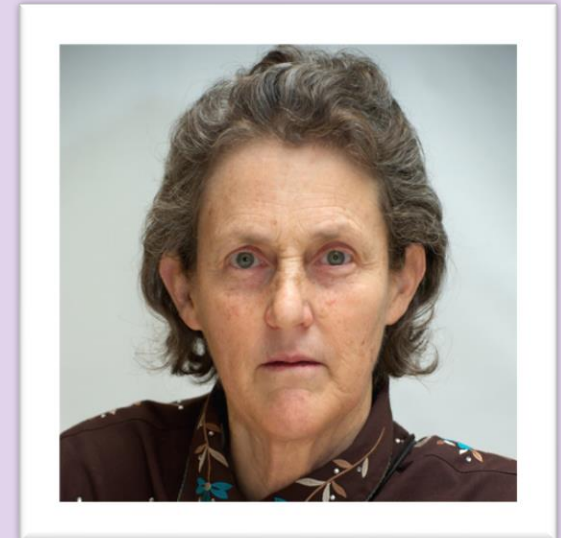
Dr Russell Barkley

“Remove ADHD from the realm of moral judgement. Because that is how most relatives and family members view this undiagnosed patient; as a character flaw as a personality deficit and moral failing.

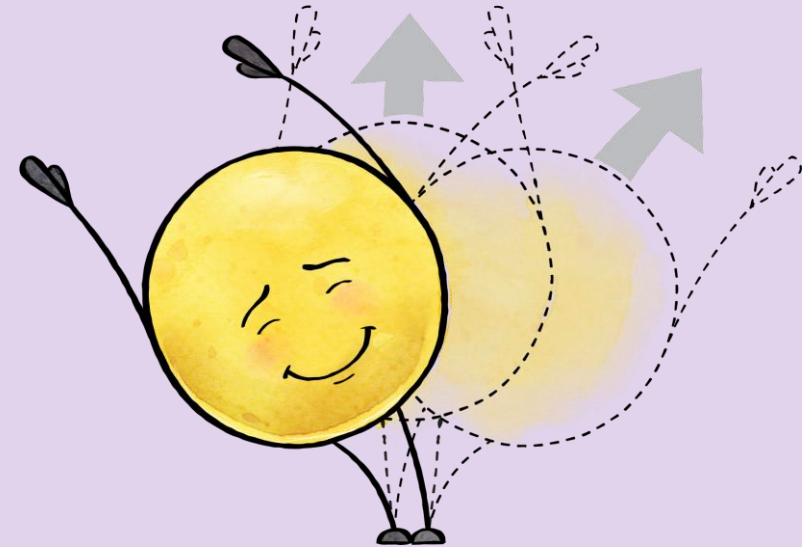
You could be different if you wanted to be. It’s merely a choice that you are making.

We need relatives, partners and spouses to understand this is not a choice. This is the disorder.”

“There needs to be more emphasis on what a child CAN do instead of what they cannot do.”



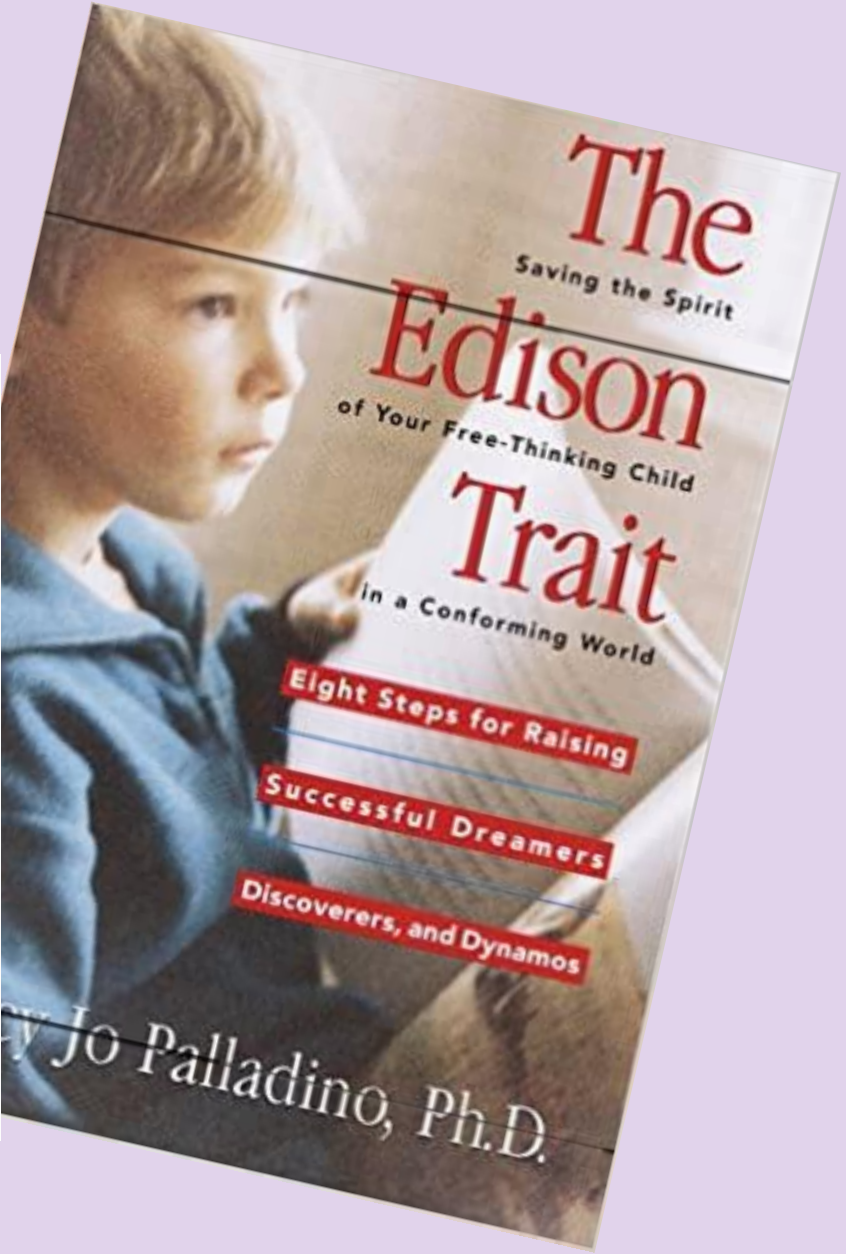
# Divergent Thinking





# The Edison Trait

By Lucy Jo Palladino





# Additional Resources

Angela Ford, KCC



# FAMILY SUPPORT INFORMATION SERVICE

Available to people wanting to know more about ASC. A diagnosis is not necessary to access our service as we believe pre-diagnosis support is equally important.

Email support, information and advice. Discussion of issues/difficulties and possible ways to resolve them.

Weekly Telephone Clinic.

Access to a huge variety of information sheets e.g. Behaviour, Eating, Sleep, Anxiety, Meltdowns etc

Advice with Education, Health and other relevant services.

Support with applying for some benefits such as DLA/PIP.

A chance to meet other parents/carers at support groups.

Training for professionals.

Workshops for parents/carers.



# MAILING LIST:

This is a large information sharing forum with over 4000 members including parents/carers and professionals.

Sharing of current information, resources, activities, events, training/workshops, coffee mornings, support groups etc. You can also ask the group questions and ask for replies to other questions asked. It's totally anonymous and all members are blind copied in.

# PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS:

(Autism diagnosis not necessary)

These provide a great opportunity to meet up with other parents/carers in similar situations to discuss ideas and experiences. Chat with people who understand and share information etc. These are currently running virtually through Zoom.

(Dates can be found on the website and are also sent via the mailing list)



(GENERIC INTERNET IMAGE)



# REFERRAL PROCESS:

Please refer families to our website where they can book a telephone appointment via the phone clinic link or book onto an information session/ workshop for various topics - (About Autism, Anxiety, Behaviour, Sensory, Education, DLA).

Links are below:

**Website:** [www.katfamilysupport.co.uk](http://www.katfamilysupport.co.uk)

**Phone Clinic:** <https://www.katfamilysupport.co.uk/phone-clinic>

**Workshops:** <https://www.katfamilysupport.co.uk/info-sessions>

**FAQs:** <https://www.katfamilysupport.co.uk/q-a>

**Useful Links:** [USEFUL LINKS | KAT Family Support](#)



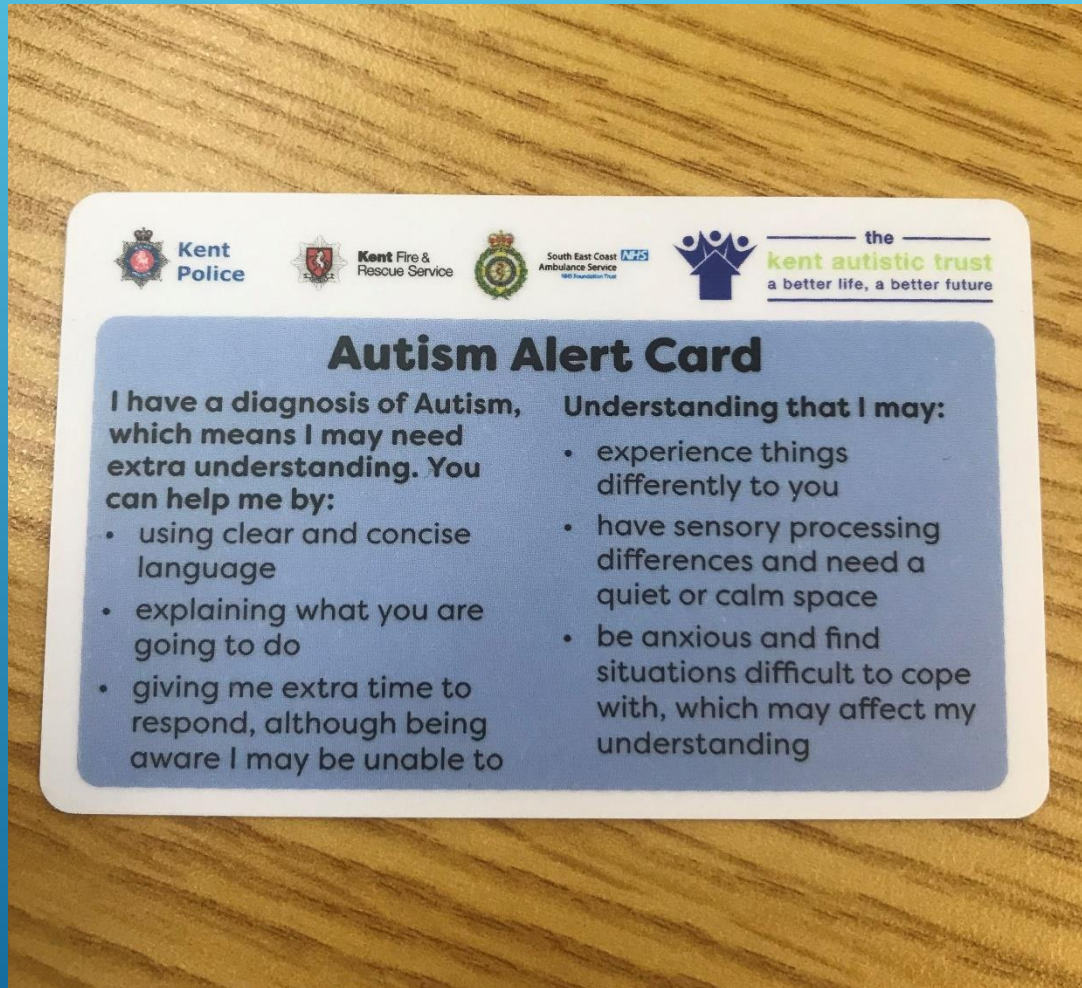
# AUTISM ALERT CARD

These cards are issued for a small donation to children/adults with a diagnosis of autism.

(Go to the website where you can find further information and download an application form)

Click on link:

[AUTISM ALERT CARDS | KAT Family Support](#)



# FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE FOR ADULTS 18+

**Emilymay runs the following groups:**

- **Autistic adult groups via Zoom twice a month. These are groups for autistic adults to meet and learn more about themselves.**
- **Autistic women groups via Zoom held twice a month. The groups were created for women who have masked most of their lives to have a safe space to explore their autism.**
- **Informal carers groups. These are held twice a month. They are an opportunity for unpaid carers to talk to others that will understand with no judgements and may give more information on how to support themselves and the people they care for.**



# FAMILY SUPPORT INFORMATION ADVISORS

**Wendy Boorman (children)**  
**[wendy@kentautistic.com](mailto:wendy@kentautistic.com)**

**Emilymay Miles (adults)**  
**[emilymay@kentautistic.com](mailto:emilymay@kentautistic.com)**







**Family Support Service relies solely on grants and donations to keep the service going.**

**To join our lottery to help raise vital funds please click on the following link**

**<https://www.kentautistictrust.org/weekly-lottery>**

**You can also donate at:**

**[www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/kentautistictrust/familysupportappeal](http://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/kentautistictrust/familysupportappeal)**



**Join our weekly lottery!**  
For your chance to win £25,000

For as little as £1 per week, you have the chance of winning £25,000 every Saturday, whilst supporting a cause you care about.

**[www.kentautistictrust.org/weekly-lottery](http://www.kentautistictrust.org/weekly-lottery)**

Website: [www.kentautistictrust.org](http://www.kentautistictrust.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KentAutistic/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/kentautistic>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/thekentautistic/>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/kent-autistic-trust>







# Contact

If you have any questions or would like any further information, please contact us at [wellbeingforschools@kent.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeingforschools@kent.gov.uk)