

# Autism - Children

Autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition, (a disability) that may affect how people communicate and interact with the world. It is understood in the context of a spectrum, meaning it impacts individuals differently and uniquely, and can present with a range of challenges, including difficulties with social interaction, communication, and sensory processing.



## What to do if you think your child might be autistic.

**Step 1** Check for signs of autism – see the link below to the NHS website which will give you a list of signs of autism in children.

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/signs/children/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/signs/children/)

**Step 2** Write a list of the signs of autism you think your child has and ask people who know your child well (like friends, family or teachers) if they have noticed any possible signs you could add to your list.

**Step 3** Talk to someone about it. You can speak to:

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

**Step 4** Refer your child to have an autism assessment, parents and carers can self-refer at the website link below (For children and young people aged 0-19):

[www.hdft.nhs.uk/services/childrens-services/specialist-childrens-services/autism-assessment/](http://www.hdft.nhs.uk/services/childrens-services/specialist-childrens-services/autism-assessment/)

**Step 5** Right to Choose, If you are based in England under the NHS, you now have a legal right to choose your mental healthcare provider and your choice of mental healthcare team, this includes referrals relating to Autism assessments.

This service is offered through the NHS and is free – for more information regarding Right to Choose please see the link to the Lambert Medical Centre Website

[www.lambertmedicalcentre.co.uk/services/requesting-a-referral-via-right-to-choose-for-adhd-autism-assessments/](http://www.lambertmedicalcentre.co.uk/services/requesting-a-referral-via-right-to-choose-for-adhd-autism-assessments/)

### Useful websites

[www.autism.org.uk/](http://www.autism.org.uk/)  
[www.resourcesforautism.org.uk/](http://www.resourcesforautism.org.uk/)  
[www.easyhealth.org.uk/](http://www.easyhealth.org.uk/)  
[www.daisychainproject.co.uk/](http://www.daisychainproject.co.uk/)  
[www.compass-uk.org/services/compass-phoenix/](http://www.compass-uk.org/services/compass-phoenix/)

### Support groups for parents / carers

Library in Thirsk fortnightly on a Tuesday 10-12noon.  
Library in Northallerton on the first Monday of the month from 10am to 12pm noon.