

AUTISM AWARENESS WEEK



What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others.

Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. If you are autistic, you are autistic for life; autism is not an illness or disease and cannot be 'cured'. Often people feel being autistic is a fundamental aspect of their identity.

Autism is a spectrum condition. All autistic people share certain difficulties, but being autistic will affect them in different ways. Some autistic people also have learning disabilities, mental health issues or other conditions, meaning people need different levels of support. All people on the autism spectrum learn and develop. With the right sort of support, all can be helped to live a more fulfilling life of their own choosing.

The definition of autism has changed over the decades and could change in future years as we understand more. Some people feel the spectrum is too broad, arguing an autistic person with 24/7 support needs cannot be compared with a person who finds supermarket lights too bright. We often find that autistic people and their families with different support needs share many of the same challenges, whether that's getting enough support from mental health, education and social care services or being misunderstood by people close to them. We will continue to fight to make society work for autistic people.

This video from The National Autistic Society, narrated by Alan Gardner, star of Channel 4's 'The Autistic Gardener' explains what a little more.



What is autism?

How common is autism?

Autism is much more common than most people think.

There are [around 700,000 autistic people in the UK](#) - that's more than 1 in 100.

People from all nationalities and cultural, religious and social backgrounds can be autistic.

The National Autistic Society is working to understand the experience of people with autism, including why some communities may not get diagnoses and support they need. To find out more visit www.autism.org.uk.

- [National Autistic Society - Autism and BAME people](#)
- [National Autistic Society - Autism and Gender Identity](#)
- [National Autistic Society - Autistic Women and Girls](#)

How do autistic people see the world?

Some autistic people say the world feels overwhelming and this can cause them considerable anxiety.

In particular, understanding and relating to other people, and taking part in everyday family, school, work and social life, can be harder. Other people appear to know, intuitively, how to communicate and interact with each other, yet can also struggle to build rapport with autistic people.

Autistic people may wonder why they are 'different' and feel their social differences mean people don't understand them.

Amazing Things Happen



This animation, by [Amazing Things Happen](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JdCY-cdgkI), gives an insight into how someone with autism might experience the world.



Last year the National Autistic Society ran a survey across more than 7,000 autistic people and their families to ask them how public attitudes towards autism and autistic people have changed over the past 4 years.

**BELOW ARE THE TOP 5 THINGS THAT THE SURVEY FOUND
PEOPLE WITH AUTISM WOULD LIKE THE PUBLIC TO KNOW**

Autistic people may:

- Feel anxiety about changes or unexpected events
- Be under or over sensitive to sound, smells, light, taste and touch.
This is called sensory sensitivity.
- Need time to process information, like questions or instructions
 - Face high levels of anxiety in social situations
 - Have difficulties communicating and interacting with others

Any of these or a combination could lead to a meltdown or shutdown.

I Want You To Know About... **Autistic Shutdown**

Autistic shutdown is like an internalized meltdown. While the person is experiencing a lot of emotions, they can't express them outwardly.

It may look like this:

zoning out



exhaustion / falling asleep



hiding / defensive position



How can allistic (non-autistic) folks help?

Safety first! Help them to a quiet space w/ minimal stimuli.



Be sensory sensible! Have a kit tailored to their needs.



Eliminate all expectations / demands. They are currently overloaded.



Reduce interaction, giving them space + time.



REMEMBER:

- Autistic shut-down is NOT
- stubbornness
 - laziness
 - disrespect
- Autistic shut-down IS
- involuntary
 - painful
 - exhausting

Please, be patient & compassionate ❤️

Stories from the Spectrum

'Stories from the Spectrum' features voices from across the autism spectrum and highlights the rich variety of autistic experience. There are funny stories, thought-provoking stories, moving and challenging stories. [FIND OUT MORE](#)

"The way people process information can change day to day, which can feel creative, but also chaotic."

Dr Camilla Pang,
scientist and author



"Online gaming means autistic people can play in an environment we feel comfortable in and can control."

Barrington,
autistic board game designer.



"Autism is a significant part of my life but not the only part, and I want my blog to reflect that."

Grace Liu, autistic
blogger and cat lover



"I have always enjoyed art. I didn't speak until I was five, but I communicated through drawings."

Spencer Cotterell,
autistic artist and animator.



"Video conventions should be autism-friendly because there is a thriving community that want to go to these events."



Dan Jones, autistic
content creator



"Small changes can allow autistic people and their families to become a part of their community."

Sara Mangera,
organiser of Finsbury Park
Mosque Autism Hour



"I wanted to be very open about my diagnosis, as it is nothing to be ashamed of."

Emma, autistic
woman and star of
MTV's Teen Mom UK



"My stand-up is very personal. I tell stories, I overshare. So talking about being autistic has become a central part of my act."



Bethany Black,
autistic comedian,
actor and writer



Animal Care



Everyone is different, but there is evidence to suggest that animals and pets can help people with autism in a number of ways. [Dogs for Autism](https://dogsforautism.org.uk) is one organisation that trains assistance dogs specifically for people with autism.

"Our dogs are 'puppy walked' by professional dog trainers who live locally to our client families. Bonding work and developmental training within the family and with the autistic child/adult starts in early puppyhood. The journey towards final placement is designed to be organic and seamless, with strong relationships building over time."

<https://dogsforautism.org.uk>

"I always find it kind of funny that normal people are always saying autistic children 'live in their own little world.' When you work with animals for a while you start to realize you can say the same thing about normal people. There's a great big, beautiful world out there that a lot of normal folks are just barely taking in. Autistic people and animals are seeing a whole register of the visual world normal people can't, or don't." – Temple Grandin <https://www.templegrandin.com>

Nature and Horticulture



Alan Gardener - The Autistic Gardener

Alan was diagnosed with Aspergers at the age of 55. He has hosted 2 series of the TV show The Austistic Gardener where he and a team of young gardener with autism design and create gardens for clients.

Over the years, Alan has created 40 Royal Horticultural Society gardens and won numerous awards at Chelsea, Hampton Court and Tatton Park.

‘Gardens make me feel happy,’ says Alan. ‘I have the need to grow plants. I have the need to plant seeds and watch them grow. I like being outside, I like being in the environment, I like every kind of weather, the light. Every good gardener needs to love the outdoors.’

Spending time in nature can have a huge range of benefits for everyone.

Organisations such as [Thrive](#) give people with a variety of health and learning conditions, the chance to access therapeutic gardening programmes.

"We have over 40 years' experience of an approach called [social and therapeutic horticulture \(STH\)](#), where trained horticultural therapists work with plants and people to improve an individual's physical and psychological health, communication and thinking skills. Gardening can bring profound positive change, from improvements in physical and mental well-being to gaining skills, knowledge and abilities." [Thrive.org.uk](https://www.thrive.org.uk)



Greta Thunberg ✓
@GretaThunberg



When haters go after your looks and differences, it means they have nowhere left to go. And then you know you're winning!

I have Aspergers and that means I'm sometimes a bit different from the norm. And - given the right circumstances- being different is a superpower. #aspiepower



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Alan Gardener – The Austistic Gardener

“To me, my autism’s a gift. I live in a world of patterns and shapes. Every day is a deluge of sensations and it’s this that I utilize to bring my creative designs to life.”

theautisticgardener.wordpress.com/

Chris Packham

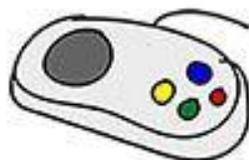
“I’m not a typical autistic person, because there is no typical autistic person.”

Five of my favourite facts about autism

Chris Packham, fact fan, autistic man and ambassador for The National Autistic Society



- 1.** Satoshi Tajiri, the inventor of Pokémon, is autistic.



- 4.** There are more autistic people in the UK than words in the first four Harry Potter books.



- 2.** Mozart, Einstein and Sir Isaac Newton had autistic characteristics and would probably be diagnosed with autism if they were alive today.



- 5.** World Autism Awareness Week is from 26 March to 2 April. Ask your teacher what your school is doing to celebrate it.



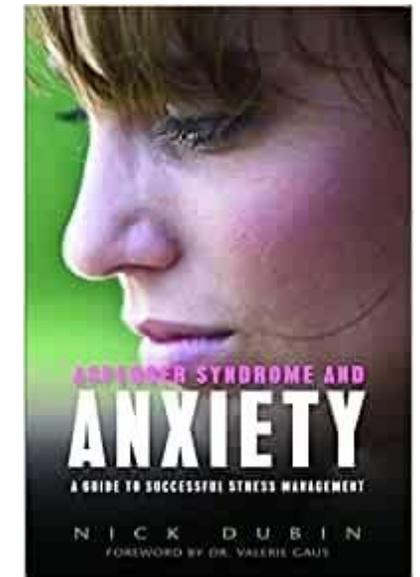
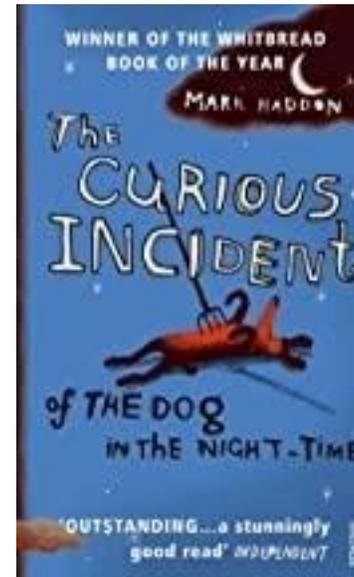
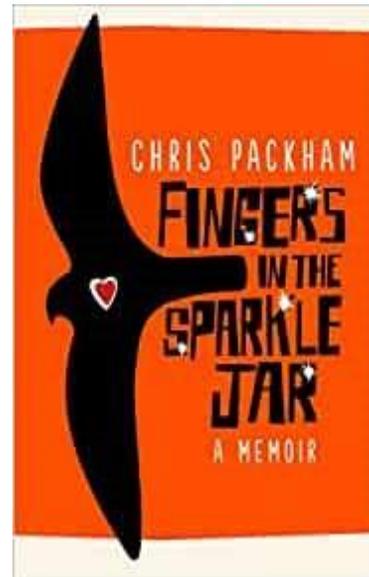
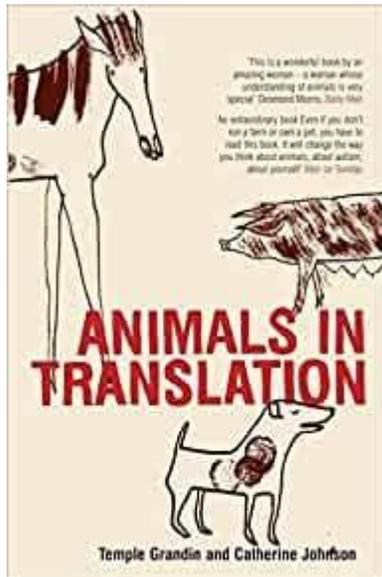
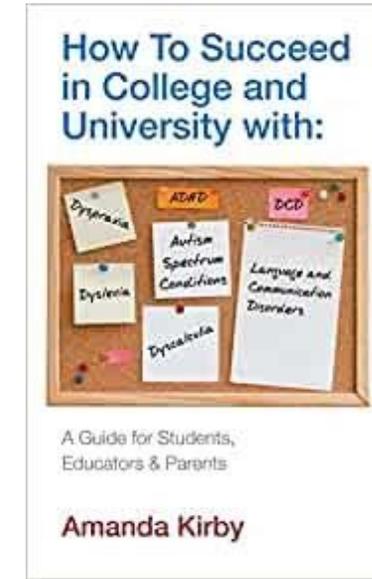
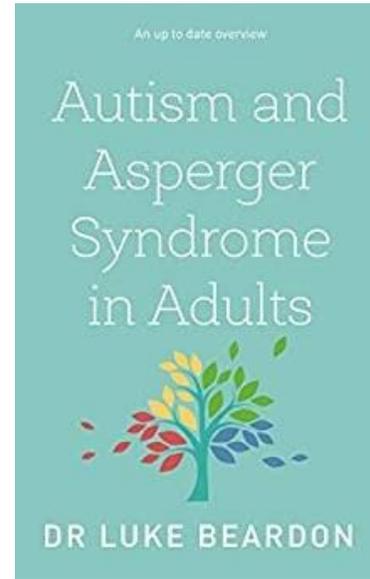
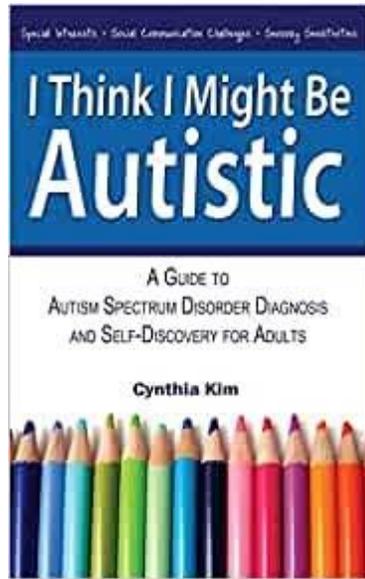
- 3.** 90% of autistic people have sensory issues. This means we experience the world really intensely but we sometimes find it too bright, loud and confusing.



autism.org.uk/waaw



AVAILABLE AT CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE LIBRARIES



WHERE TO GO FOR INFORMATION AND ADVICE

At Capel Manor

At Capel Manor please speak with one of our Learning Support Coordinators if you require any advice or guidance on ASD.

Enfield/Brooks Farm/Regent's Park

Jo.Lam@capel.ac.uk &
Abul.Hasnat@capel.ac.uk

Crystal Palace

Jennet.Snider@capel.ac.uk

Gunnelsbury Park

gareth.allen@capel.ac.uk

Mottingham

Sharon.Pedrero@capel.ac.uk

Nationally

[The National Autistic Society](#) provides help and advice to people with autism and their families, including a helpline, advice on transitioning from school and a directory of services available within the UK.

[Visit their website for more information](#)

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines.aspx>

[Action for Asperger's](#)

Action for Asperger's is a UK charity that caters for all ages from 3 years and upwards providing autism-specialist counselling.

<https://www.actionforaspergers.org/>

[NHS Website](#)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/>