

## Voluntary sector organisations and other useful contacts

### **Connexions Dudley**

Offers free information and support to help you to access education, training and work opportunities, financial support, health services and housing. Service is available up to age 25 if you have a disability or learning difficulty.

Contact: 01384 242414 (Dudley) or 01384 397281 (Stourbridge) or 01384 811400 or visit <http://dudley.connexions-bc.co.uk>

### **Triumph Over Autism Dudley Support (TOADS)**

A support group for parents and carers of people affected by ASC aged 16+.

Contact: Sandra Croot 01384 279621 or 07905 972234

### **No Limits Community Project**

A local charity supporting people affected by high-functioning autism aged 16+ to socialise, develop and realise potential.

Contact: Chris Morgan 01384 376796 or visit [www.nolimits4autism.org.uk](http://www.nolimits4autism.org.uk)

### **Autism Black Country Social Club**

A social events club for adults affected by ASC and their families and carers.

Contact: Paul Lynn 01384 394776 Email: [paul.lynn@talktalk.net](mailto:paul.lynn@talktalk.net)

### **Dudley Advocacy**

Independent, confidential support to help you to communicate, find out about your rights and options and pursue complaints.

Contact: 01384 456877

### **Dudley Volunteer Centre**

Provides information about volunteering opportunities.

Contact: 01384 267414 or [volunteer@dudleycvs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@dudleycvs.org.uk)

### **Benefits**

New claims 0800 055 6688

Existing claims 0845 608 8657

Crisis Loan 0800 169 9891

Community Care Grant, Budgeting Loan 0845 6088649

### **Disability Benefits Enquiry Line**

0800 882200 (national helpline)

access to  
adult social care

advice • support • care

Telephone: 0300 555 0055 or visit our website  
[www.dudley.gov.uk/health-social-care/access-to-adult-social-care](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/health-social-care/access-to-adult-social-care)  
or email us at [accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk)

If you require any assistance with regards to this document or would like to request an interpreter, large print or audio version, please contact the equality and diversity unit on 01384 813400

DACHS1113

## Autistic spectrum conditions

Information, services and opportunities for adults and families affected by autism living in Dudley



**Dudley**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

Adult social care

## What is autism and Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)?

Autism is a lifelong condition that affects how a person communicates, relates to other people and understands the world. A person affected by autism may have difficulty using and understanding verbal and body language; they may have difficulty recognising other people's feelings and needs and expressing their own; and they may have difficulty imagining things they have not experienced. Autism is also called **Autistic Spectrum Condition** or **ASC**. The word 'spectrum' is used because autism can affect people in different ways and to different degrees.

People affected by learning disability can also be affected by autism. People who do not have a significant learning disability may be affected by autism and this is known as high-functioning autism.

**Asperger's Syndrome (AS)** is a form of high-functioning autism. People affected by AS are able to communicate more easily and have average or above average intelligence. Instead of learning disability they may have dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD or epilepsy. With appropriate support people affected by AS can go on to live independent lives.

People affected by autism may have difficulty communicating; for example, they may not understand the 'give and take' nature of successful conversation, they may find it difficult to sustain conversation and they may have a literal understanding of language. People affected by autism may have difficulty interacting with others and making friends. For example, they may behave in an unusual or inappropriate way due to a lack of understanding of social rules and social cues. People affected by autism may also have difficulty with 'social imagination'. They may have difficulty imagining future scenarios or predicting what will happen next, or they may pursue limited interests rigidly and repetitively.

People affected by autism may have problems with their senses leading to over- or under-sensitivity. They may be highly sensitive to background noise, under-sensitive to pain or temperature, attuned to detail or find eye contact uncomfortable. People affected by autism often prefer stable routines and may struggle with change. People affected by autism may have special interests - intense, sometimes obsessive or unusual hobbies or interests.

Autism is sometimes called a hidden disability because people affected are usually no different in appearance to others.

More information about autism is available from:

### **National Autistic Society (NAS)**

Contact: 0845 0704004 or visit [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

### **Autism West Midlands**

Contact: 0121 450 7575 or visit [www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk](http://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk)

### **NHS Choices website**

[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Autism/Pages/Autismhome.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Autism/Pages/Autismhome.aspx)

## Dudley Council services\*

The **Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) Team** provides assessment of social care need and support, subject to eligibility criteria, for people aged 18+ affected by high-functioning autism and their carers. Contact: 01384 813252 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

The **Community Team for Learning Disability (CTLD)** provides needs assessment/support subject to eligibility criteria for adults affected by moderate (with additional needs) to severe learning disability and autism.

Contact: 01384 813252 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults** - if you suspect that an adult with autism is being neglected or abused please contact the ASC Team or CTLD on 01384 813252 or the Safeguarding Unit on 01384 818543 or 0300 555 8574 out of office hours, or **999 in an emergency**.

**When offices are closed and you need to contact Social Care Services urgently please telephone 0300 555 8574. If the situation is life threatening dial 999.**

The **Supporting People Team** provides support to help people to live independently in their own home. This may include help to claim benefits, maintain a tenancy and access health services and activities. Referrals can be made through the ASC Team or directly on 01384 812660.

\* **Please note** that social care services are means-tested and subject to the Council's Charging Policy.

**Autism Drop-in Service** - a Tuesday morning social group for adults affected by high-functioning autism and their carers, based in Stourbridge.

Enquiries to the ASC Team 01384 813252.

**Me & U Project** - a youth club for people aged 10 - 21 affected by ASC and their family and friends.

Contact: 01384 813900 or 07799 070630

**Dudley Carer's Network** - advice and information about services for carers in Dudley.

Contact: 01384 818723. Email: [carers.network@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:carers.network@dudley.gov.uk)

**The Homelessness Team** - help and advice for homeless people in Dudley. Visit/contact: Dudley Council Plus, 259 Castle Street, Dudley DY1 1LQ (0300 555 2345) or any area housing office. Contact 0300 555 8283 for help outside of office hours.

**Community Information Directory** - public database of local organisations and events across Dudley borough. Visit [www.dudleyci.co.uk](http://www.dudleyci.co.uk) or telephone 01384 812965.

## Adult social care, self-directed support and personal budgets

A new approach to social care that promotes choice and control. You participate in an assessment of your needs, which tells us whether you are eligible for services and how much money you may require to meet your needs. This is called your personal budget. Next, you participate in planning what services you will access to meet your needs. This is known as support planning. Some of these services will need to be paid for with your personal budget. You could choose to manage your budget personally and you can buy services from the voluntary, public or private sectors, with assistance if required.

For more information about self-directed support contact the ASC Team on 01384 813252.