



Building Neuro-Inclusive Futures

Family Booklet



Autism Practical Support

A photograph of two women sitting in chairs, engaged in conversation. The woman on the left is wearing a maroon cardigan over a patterned top and has her hands clasped. The woman on the right is wearing a blue long-sleeved top and jeans, with her hands open as if speaking. The background is slightly blurred, showing an indoor setting.

Welcome to Autism Practical Support!

Hello,

My name is Emily, and I'm the Schools and Families Lead here at Autism Practical Support (APS).

At APS, working with families is at the heart of everything we do. Whether your child is on the autism pathway, has a formal diagnosis or you think your child may be autistic we want to support you.

My role is to help build strong, positive relationships between families, schools, and the wider community, so that every parent, carer and family feels supported and every child has the best chance to thrive.

APS have wonderful services designed to support autistic children, young people and families including a Parent Empowerment Programme, Family Membership and Counselling Services.

For more information, please read on.

Warm wishes,

Emily
Schools and Families Lead



Practical Advice and Support

It is important to us that all parents receive accurate information and practical support.

Our phone lines are open from 9:00-5:00 Monday-Friday and are manned by our experienced team members.

Phone: 0344 850 8607

You're always welcome to email us at **info@cheshireautism.org.uk**, and our admin team will be happy to help.

If you're looking for support around education, your enquiry will come directly to me — Emily, the Schools and Families Lead — and I'll be in touch as soon as I can.

Here's how I can support you:

- A friendly chat and a safe space to talk
- Acting as a link between families and schools
- I can contact schools on your behalf, arrange and attend meetings with you to offer support and help with notetaking
- Practical strategies to support your child in accessing school
- Referrals to other services within APS
- Signposting to external agencies

Please note: I'm not able to offer legal advice.

We also run a drop-in session for parents and carers who want to talk about their child's experiences with school — including masking, mental health and difficulties attending school.

Come and see us from 10:00–13:00 at Denton Drive on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month

Parent Coffee Mornings

APS hosts parent coffee mornings in nurseries, primary, and secondary schools.

These sessions are a lovely opportunity for parents with shared experiences to come together, connect, and offer each other peer support.

They also give us at APS the chance to meet families of autistic children who might benefit from extra support and explore how we can help.

If you think this would be helpful for you and your child's school, please let your school know and drop us an email at info@cheshireautism.org.uk. We are happy to chat with the school about arranging a coffee morning.

Family Empowerment Course

Our in-person and online training courses are designed by parents, for parents, offering practical tools and guidance to navigate the journey of raising a child with autism. We've been there, and we're here to help you.

APS has been commissioned to offer FREE autism parent training programmes for residents in Northwich, Winsford, Chester, Rural Cheshire and Ellesmere Port, on behalf of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The 6 week course is for parents or carers of children aged 0-25 who are on the pathway to diagnosis or that have recently received an autism diagnosis, and are registered with a Cheshire West and Chester GP.

“It has given me tools to manage my child’s behaviour. I also learnt tips from other parents for coping strategies that they use.”

Parent Feedback

Family Empowerment Course Content

Week 1: Introduction to Autism

- What is Autism?
- Understanding the autism spectrum and neurodiversity
- Understanding each Parent’s Story

Week 2: Behaviour

- Understanding and supporting challenging behaviour
- Common interaction challenges and how to address them
- Tools for fostering understanding and connection

Week 3: Sensory Processing

- Exploring sensory differences in autism
- Practical strategies to create sensory-friendly environments
- Case studies and best practices for sensory support

Week 4: Communication and Interaction

- Understanding all communication
- Strategies to manage and support individuals effectively
- Real-life examples and interventions

Week 5: Support Strategies

- Advice on implementing support strategies
- Resource signposting for additional support and guidance

Week 6: Parent Wellbeing Support

- Understanding how to manage expectations
- Resources and support available for parents
- Recap of key strategies and Q&A session

Format: In-person or online courses delivered in Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich, and Winsford in either daytime or evening.

Duration: 2-hour sessions each week or can be adapted for a full day training session

Got any questions about our training course, or interested in finding out more about booking. Email us at info@cheshireautism.com

We also offer paid programmes for parents outside of Chester and Cheshire West. Speak to our team for more details!



Our Memberships

Becoming a member of APS gives you and your family access to a wide range of support and opportunities designed with autistic individuals and their families in mind.

Membership benefits include:

- **Tailored Activities** - From creative workshops and hobbies to fun family events, members can join in on everything we offer.
- **Expert Support** - Our team provides personalised guidance, practical support, and access to helpful resources.
- **Being a part of a Community** - Connect with other families and autistic individuals in a welcoming, supportive space.
- **Counselling Services** - Members can access affordable, subsidised counselling for both children and adults.

APS Family Membership – £20/month

Holiday Club

During the half term breaks and summer holidays we have a holiday club based in Northwich and Chester. We have lots of fun activities such as circus skills, relax cinema screenings and fun crafts such as sand art.

Prices:

£13.50 for a half day

£20 for a full day

Christmas Activities

We are organising fun festive activities during the Christmas period look out for more information on our socials!

A Final Note from Us

We hope this booklet has given you a clearer picture of the support, services, and community available through APS.

At APS, we believe in walking alongside families, celebrating the wins, navigating the challenges, and creating a space where everyone feels heard and valued.

If you'd like to learn more, get involved, or simply have a chat, we'd love to hear from you.

Get in Touch

For further details on any of our support services or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch:



emily.thornton@cheshireautism.org.uk



0344 850 8607 (Request to speak to Emily Thornton - Schools and Families lead)

We'd love to hear from you!



Autism Practical Support

info@cheshireautism.org.uk

APS, Sension House, Denton Drive, Northwich, CW8 1BE

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of autistic individuals by engaging with APS!