

# Autism Monthly News Round-up

*January 2026*

15<sup>th</sup> edition

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If you have anything autism related you would like to share, please email [aisha.ahmed58@nhs.net](mailto:aisha.ahmed58@nhs.net)

Sign up now! If you would like to continue receiving an email alert to the monthly autism newsletter please email [Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk](mailto:Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk) with subject Autism News and indicate if you would like the alert by WhatsApp or Email. (If you are an existing member of the ARAG you do not need to take any action)

Disclaimer: The information in this communication is intended to support autistic people to find out what is happening locally and nationally that may be relevant to them. The NHS and Newham Council do not endorse any information in this communication and anyone accessing any of this information, including events or activities, should do so at their own risk.

## Local

1	<a href="#"><u>Short Story Competition Results</u></a>
	<p>Thank you for all those who participated in the short story competition, we really enjoyed reading your stories! Judges found it challenging to decide but they eventually agreed on the following 3 stories to put forward.</p> <p><b>Congratulations</b> to Aurora, Jay and Daniel for taking first, second and third place for their winning short stories; we share them with you below, we hope you enjoy reading them as much as we did.</p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Place Aurora</b> </p> <p><u>Living with Autism in Newham: A Year with the Newsletter</u></p> <p>Living with autism in Newham has its challenges. Crowded streets, noisy markets, and endless appointments can sometimes feel overwhelming. But over the past year, the Newham Autism Newsletter has been a small but powerful guide.</p> <p>Each edition arrives like a friendly letter, full of practical tips, local events, and stories from others who understand. I remember reading about sensory-friendly spaces in the borough for the first time—it gave me the confidence to visit the library without feeling anxious. The newsletter doesn't just share</p>

information; it makes me feel seen.

I particularly enjoy the personal stories. Reading about other autistic residents navigating work, school, or social life reminds me that I am not alone. It has inspired me to try new activities and reach out to local groups, something I would have avoided before.

Even small details, like reminders about workshops or surveys, make a real difference. They help me plan ahead and feel included in decisions that affect our community. The newsletter has turned what used to feel like a disconnected experience into a sense of belonging.

Thanks to the newsletter, I feel more confident, connected, and supported. It's more than just information—it's a bridge between my world and the wider community of Newham.

Thank you for this opportunity and for all the work you do to support the autism community in Newham.

One of the judges said:

*"Wow! Another powerful description of the difference the Newsletter has made to someone's life. Great to hear how the Newsletter has given the author the confidence to try new things and that it has helped them to feel more connected in the community"*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Jay**



### How Do You Eat an Elephant?

I get a lot of emails! A daily influx of noise and colours. Emails offering take-away discounts; sales touting everything from toasters to holidays in Spain; tube strikes; rubbish collections; elections. Teasing the next Comic Con, and do I want to meet a Dalek? (The answer, of course, is yes.)

Honestly, most of the emails I receive slip into the void unread. They deliver stress and devour time.

Then, once a month, the ARAG Autism Newsletter lands in my inbox. That, I do read.

I know what you're thinking, and you're right. We're collectively dealing with monumental problems. Homelessness, police brutality, medical negligence, to name but a few. We need help from post-diagnostic autism services that don't exist. But do you know how to eat an elephant? One bite at a time. And the newsletter supplies some tasty nibbles.

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I won't burden you with my life story. Suffice to say, getting my autism diagnosis was a long, traumatic tale. So, receiving autism news means a lot to me. Acceptance. Acknowledgement. Vindication.

I pore over each issue. Volunteer for studies. Look for events where I can share my thoughts. Read the news; enjoy seeing autistic celebrities, like Cat Burns, being visible and proud. Wait for chances to speak to those with power over our lives: Housing, social services, the police. As always, seeking to be heard, believed, valued.

I apply for things I can *be*: I'm, somehow, the Priority Lead for Autism Health & Care Inequalities in Newham, and an Oliver McGowan Co-Trainer.

I think, ultimately, that's the purpose of the newsletter: to hold a mirror up to each of us and to say, "This is you, you're not alone, and there are things that you can do."

One of the judges said:

*"A really vivid description of the challenges that autistic people face but, with humour too. Once again it is great to hear how important the Newsletter is to people. A tasty treat, indeed!"*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Daniel**



I was diagnosed at age 19 in 2010 - before this, I had no idea what autism was & for many years after my diagnosis, I tried to run away from it. I did not understand myself.




The monthly Autism Newsletter has helped me tremendously in finding myself again. I've developed friendships, talked to courses, attended many social events & made me feel like I am not alone. It always gives me a buzz when the newsletter comes out as it gives me a chance to find out what is going on in my community as well as be inspired by others who bravely share their stories.




I'm beyond grateful to have been given the opportunity to be able to have my story & poetry shared in the Newsletter, too & very excited to see the Newsletter continue to grow so that other people may have the chance to learn more about themselves & what opportunities are going on both in & around the community.

One of the judges said:



*"A great example of how the Newsletter has helped someone to understand themselves and to realise they are not alone. I'm very happy to hear that the author has found friends through the Newsletter and has grown in confidence"*

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<b>2</b>	<b><u>Newham Peer Support Groups</u></b>
<b>a</b>	<p><b><u>Autism, Work &amp; Anxiety Peer Support Group</u></b></p> <p>Open to those on the waiting list or self diagnosed People in volunteering roles are also welcome to join</p> <p><b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 online 5pm-6pm</b></p> <p>To join please email <a href="mailto:aisha.ahmed58@nhs.net">aisha.ahmed58@nhs.net</a></p> 
<b>b</b>	<p><b><u>Open Peer Support Group</u></b></p> <p>Open Adults Autism Peer Support Group This group meets quarterly on <b>Monday 12-1pm</b>. (can go on to 5pm). Takes place after the ARAG meeting. All welcome to drop in. If you have any questions please email Christina on: <a href="mailto:AutismOutreachNewham@gmail.com">AutismOutreachNewham@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Next group: <b>Monday 26th January, Stratford Library</b></p> 
<b>c</b>	<p><b><u>Carers of Autistic Adults Peer Support Group</u></b></p> <p><b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 11am-1pm</b> Drop In, First Monday every month, East Ham, <b>Central Park Café</b>, inside the park, near Bartle Avenue E6.</p> <p>Join our WhatsApp group to chat and ask questions.</p> <p>To join the group, please complete this <a href="#">form</a></p> <p>For information on the next group meeting, please contact: <a href="mailto:carersautisticresidentsnewham@gmail.com">carersautisticresidentsnewham@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Following session: <b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, 11am-1pm</b> <b>Central Park Cafe</b></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>



d	<p><b><u>Mental Health Peer Support Group</u></b></p> <p>A peer support group hosted by VoiceAbility for autistic residents to offer support to each other around mental health. It will be a safe space to create connections, share tips and helpful services.</p> <p>Drop in: <b>Second Monday of every month, 12:30pm-2pm</b>  <b>The Resource Centre, 200 Chargeable Lane, E13 8DW</b></p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:SpeakOutNewham@voiceability.org">SpeakOutNewham@voiceability.org</a>          Telephone: 0300 303 1660          Website: <a href="http://www.voiceability.org">www.voiceability.org</a></p> 
e	<p><b><u>Beckton Friendship Club</u></b></p> <p>Social group for autistic residents and residents with a learning disability</p> <p>Next group: <b>Saturday 10th January 2026</b></p> <p>Beckton Globe Library 1 Kingsford Way, London E6 5JQ  <b>Second Saturday of the month 2pm – 3:30pm</b>          To attend email <a href="mailto:shamilla.kumari@newham.gov.uk">shamilla.kumari@newham.gov.uk</a></p> 
3 <b><u>Advocacy</u></b>	
a	<p><b><u>VoiceAbility Advocacy</u></b></p> <p>Independent Advocacy Support for Autistic Residents</p> <p>Drop-in: <b>Second Monday of every month 2:30pm-4pm</b>  <b>The Resource Centre, 200 Chargeable Lane E18 8DW</b></p> <p>The Advocacy Drop ins are by appointment only – referrals from the VoiceAbility Website</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:SpeakOutNewham@voiceability.org">SpeakOutNewham@voiceability.org</a>          Telephone: 0300 303 1660          Website: <a href="http://www.voiceability.org">www.voiceability.org</a></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>
4 <b><u>Autism Resident Advisory Group (ARAG) Meeting</u></b>	
	<p>Join us at the next ARAG meeting</p> <p><b>Monday 26th January, 10am-12pm, Stratford Library</b></p>





	<p>We have guest speakers to engage with autistic residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sebastian: Improving Support for LGBTQ+ Residents in Newham</li> <li>Introducing the IMPACT project and exploring residents' ideas to guide our next steps.</li> <li>Jason: Accommodation Strategy &amp; what developments are in the pipeline to support autistic people to access accommodation</li> </ul> <p>To become an ARAG member, register here:  <a href="https://www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/autism/3">https://www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/autism/3</a></p>
<b>5</b>	<b><u>Young People</u></b>
<b>a</b>	<div>  <p><b>ALL ACCESS TEAM</b> Calling all Newham Based 18-25 year old SEND young people!</p> <p>Do you want to join a friendly and supportive SEND group?</p> <p>Are you passionate about making a more Inclusive Newham?</p> <p>Do you want to create change while having fun?</p> <p><b>TUE</b> Every Tuesday 5:30pm-7:30pm</p> <p>The Source - 1 Theatre Square, Stratford, E15 1BX</p> <p>Express your interest with our form! We will be in touch!</p> <p><a href="https://forms.gle/f6wTTKXUDxhAxFoLA">https://forms.gle/f6wTTKXUDxhAxFoLA</a></p> <p>CONTACT US alana.lukens@newham.gov.uk</p> <p><b>YOU TH</b> EMPOWERMENT</p> </div> <p>Express your interest with our <a href="#">form</a></p> <p>Contact us: <a href="mailto:alana.lukens@newham.gov.uk">alana.lukens@newham.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>b</b>	<div>  <p><b>Youth Empowerment Service &amp; Short Breaks</b> <b>SEND Inclusion sessions</b></p> <p>Shipman Youth Zone is offering a SEND Group for 10-18year olds</p> <p>Thursday from 4-5:30pm.</p> <p>Please read the overview of the group and our FAQs attached in the link or QR code</p> <p><a href="https://forms.gle/q1N7FTxnm4KTNeUg9">https://forms.gle/q1N7FTxnm4KTNeUg9</a></p> <p>Express your interest through our form!</p> <p><b>THU</b> Thursday 4:00-5:30pm</p> <p>Shipman Youth Zone</p> <p><b>YOU TH</b> EMPOWERMENT</p> </div> <p>Express your interest through our <a href="#">form</a></p>


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6	<a href="#"><b>Training and Support for Families</b></a>
a	<p><b><u>Language, Communication and Interaction Service (LCIS) Training and Support for Families</u></b></p> <div data-bbox="325 405 533 450"> <p><b>Early Years course for parents/carers</b></p> </div> <p>Early Years parents and their family member or friend can join 4 online sessions to understand their child's needs and find out strategies to support their communication and development.</p> <p>Session 1: Developing Communication Session 2: How children with social communication needs think &amp; learn Session 3: Sensory preferences and emotional regulation Session 4: Problem solving; further support in the community; next steps.</p> <p>For more information about LCIS Early Years courses and to book a place please email: <a href="mailto:Kari.Askey@newham.gov.uk">Kari.Askey@newham.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:Androulla.Kyriacou@newham.gov.uk">Androulla.Kyriacou@newham.gov.uk</a></p> <div data-bbox="687 405 1042 651"> <p><b>LCIS is a team of Specialist Teachers, Speech and Language Therapists and SEN Practitioners.</b></p> <p>We are part of the <b>Specialist Education Support Service (SESS)</b> of the London Borough of Newham.</p> <p><a href="mailto:lcis@newham.gov.uk">lcis@newham.gov.uk</a></p> </div>  <p>For more information about LCIS Early Years courses and to book a place please email: <a href="mailto:Kari.Askey@newham.gov.uk">Kari.Askey@newham.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:Androulla.Kyriacou@newham.gov.uk">Androulla.Kyriacou@newham.gov.uk</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#"><b>Back to contents page</b></a></p>
7	<a href="#"><b>Mental health</b></a>
a	<p><b><u>Recovery College</u></b></p> <p>Newham Recovery College is an NHS service that runs FREE educational workshops and courses. These are designed and delivered by people who have lived experience of mental health challenges, together with people who work in mental health services.</p> <div data-bbox="328 1778 493 1939">  </div> <p><b>Newham Recovery College</b></p>




	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stratford Advice Arcade 107-109 The Grove, London E15 1HP</li> <li>• 07823 900600</li> <li>• <a href="mailto:elft.newhamrecoverycollege@nhs.net">elft.newhamrecoverycollege@nhs.net</a></li> </ul> <p>For more info please click here: <a href="https://newhamrecoverycollege.nhs.uk/">https://newhamrecoverycollege.nhs.uk/</a></p>  <p><b>What is a Recovery College?</b></p> <p>Recovery Colleges are places for self-discovery and self-directed learning, where you can find ways to live better and find fulfillment.</p>
<b>b</b>	<p><b><u>Newham Secondary Care Psychological Services</u></b></p> <p>Newham Secondary Care Psychological Services (SPS) is a psychotherapy service supporting people over 18 who are experiencing longstanding and complex mental health needs. This may mean more than one difficulty that has been present for some time.</p>  <p>At Newham SPS we provide clinical consultation and a variety of evidence-based psychological therapies both in individual and group formats. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art Psychotherapy and Music Therapy</li> <li>• Psychodynamic Therapy</li> <li>• Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)</li> <li>• Integrative Therapy</li> <li>• Systemic Therapy</li> <li>• Trauma-Focused Therapy</li> <li>• Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT)</li> <li>• Medical Psychotherapy</li> <li>• <u>Mentalisation Based Therapy (MBT)</u></li> <li>• Dance Movement Psychotherapy and Body-Orientated Psychotherapy</li> <li>• Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing(EMDR)...and more.</li> </ul> <p>We accept referrals from Newham Talking Therapies or other Secondary Care services, such as the Community Integrated Mental Health Service (CIMHS).</p> <p>Please note we do not accept self-referrals or GP referrals and these must come via Newham Talking Therapies or Community Integrated Mental Health Service (CIMHS)</p> <p>For more info please click <a href="#">here</a></p> <p><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>

8	<a href="#"><u>Employment Opportunities</u></a>
a	<p><b><u>Paid Roles: Newham Autistic Residents Roles</u></b></p> <p>We are looking for <b>2 autistic residents</b> who would like to be involved in delivery of the Newham Autism Action Plan: Let's Talk Autism.</p> <p>This role will be paid as per the Newham Reward and Recognition Policy; the hourly rate is currently <b>£13.85/hour</b>. Hours relating to each role vary depending on the role and how much time you have to offer; this will also be agreed with the Lead Autism Commissioner.</p> <p>The 2 roles available include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Carers Rep</b> (must represent a carers of autism group)</li> <li>• <b>Young Persons Rep</b> 18-25 (must represent an autistic YP group)</li> </ul> <p>All post holders must be a member of and attend the <a href="#">ARAG</a> in a voluntary capacity, aside from the ARAG Co-chair. The ARAG feeds into the ASDB; this Board has a central remit to oversee the successful delivery of the Autism Action Plan. If you would like to discuss any roles or need support with your nomination form please contact <a href="mailto:Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk">Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk</a></p> <p>For more info and to apply click <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>Applications must be received by the 15th of each month, if vacancies continue the application round continues until all vacancies are filled.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#"><u>Back to contents page</u></a></p>
9	<a href="#"><u>Financial Support</u></a>
a	<p><b><u>Hardship Support</u></b></p> <p>Many people are struggling as the cost of living rapidly increases. If you find yourself struggling with energy, food costs, facing hardship, or emergency you can apply for Our Newham Money Hardship Support.</p> <p><b>Who can get Hardship support?</b></p> <p>You can apply for Our Newham Hardship Support if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are aged over 16 and the person liable for the household bills.</li> <li>• Are a Newham resident or have been place out of Borough by Newham temporary accommodation.</li> <li>• Have less than £1000 in savings on the day before the last main payment (Universal Credit/wages).</li> <li>• Are in receipt* of a qualifying benefit such as:</li> <li>• Income Support</li> <li>• Universal Credit</li> <li>• Income Related</li> <li>• Employment and Support Allowance</li> </ul>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pension Credit</li> <li>• Housing Benefit</li> </ul> <p>Our Newham Money Hardship Support Scheme is discretionary, which means that, unlike other benefits you do not have a legal right to get help. If you are in severe need but you think you don't meet the criteria you should still contact us.</p> <p>For more info please click <a href="#">here</a></p>
<b>10</b>	<b><a href="#">Funding</a></b>
<b>a</b>	<p><b><u>Local Newham Autism Grants £1K</u></b></p> <div data-bbox="1182 674 1356 804" data-label="Image">  </div> <p>This funding aims to encourage autistic residents in Newham to bid for running peer-to-peer activities, events, or hobby groups that bring like-minded people together in a fun, supportive environment helping to build an autistic community.</p> <p>To apply for funding of up to £1000 please use the links below:</p> <p>Use the link to view the <a href="#">guide</a>          To view the application click <a href="#">here</a> On this page click the link on the right hand side: small grants funding application          Applications must be received by the 15th of each month, if funding is still available the funding round continues until all funding has been allocated.</p> <p>If you would like to discuss or develop your ideas further please email:  <a href="mailto:Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk">Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk</a></p> <p>For more information about this grant, please see the <a href="#">July newsletter</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>
<b>11</b>	<b><a href="#">Local things to do or Activities</a></b>
<b>a</b>	<p><b><u>Lunchtime Dance Classes at Sadler's Wells East</u></b></p> <p><b>Take a break, feel the rhythm – dance, recharge, and connect with us</b>          Looking to get up and move on your lunch break? Join us for a free dance class!</p> <p>Located on <b>The Dance Floor</b> at <b>Sadler's Wells East</b> in Stratford, these sessions are perfect for all skill levels and ages, whether you're after a reason to get up from the desk, or live local and want to try something new.</p> <p>With classes in a range of genres, boost your energy, meet new people and build your dance skills with us.</p>

	<p>Our sessions are adapted for seated exercise, making them accessible for everyone.</p> <div data-bbox="295 286 1005 618">  </div> <p><b>Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 1pm-2pm</b>  <b>The dance floor, Sadler's Wells East</b>  <b>FREE</b></p> <p>For more info please click <a href="#">here</a></p> <div data-bbox="1031 277 1378 685"> <p>Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 1 pm – 2 pm</p> <p>The Dance Floor, <a href="#">Sadler's Wells East</a></p> <p>Free</p> <p>Register at the Welcome Desk on arrival</p>  </div>
b	<p><b><u>Nutrition Kitchen</u></b></p> <p><i>Nutrition Kitchen is offering a <b>free hot meal</b> service for any Newham residents and families who may be in need of food.</i></p> <p><b>*Every Tuesday • 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM*</b></p> <p><b>*Location: East Ham Leisure Centre 324 Barking Road, E6 2RT*</b></p> <p>Anyone in need of a hot meal can come and receive one free of charge, along with drinks and fruit.</p> <p><b>This service is open to all Newham residents.</b></p> <p>Please share and forward to anyone who might need this service</p> <p><u>nutrition kitchen</u>  <i>helping families understand food</i></p> <p>Contact us:          Tel: 020 3793 5049          Mob: 07526 580621          Website: <a href="https://nutrition-kitchen.co.uk/">https://nutrition-kitchen.co.uk/</a>          We are located inside East Ham Leisure Centre, 324 Barking Road, London, E6 2RT</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>

## National

1	<h3><a href="#">Share Your Views</a></h3>
a	<div data-bbox="311 369 1029 436">  </div> <h2 data-bbox="331 470 885 515">Research Study Opportunity</h2> <p data-bbox="331 526 774 600">Researchers at The University of Manchester seek volunteers to take part in research to test out the autism@manchester research involvement toolkit</p> <p data-bbox="323 622 454 649"><b>ARE YOU:</b></p> <div data-bbox="323 660 638 936"> <p>1. _____ Over 18?</p> <p>2. _____ Autistic, either diagnosed or self-identified?</p> <p>3. _____ Comfortable expressing yourself in verbal and / or written English?</p> </div> <div data-bbox="670 660 973 907">  </div> <ul data-bbox="331 952 997 1146" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study involves using an online toolkit designed to encourage more people to become involved in research by helping them to understand how to get involved and what to expect.</li> <li>• Participants will then join a discussion group (either video call or text based) with 4-8 other people.</li> <li>• Using the toolkit will involve around 5 hours and the discussion will last approximately 90 minutes and you will receive a small reimbursement for your time. The researchers have obtained advice from the Autism@Manchester expert by experience group during the design of this study and are from The NIHR School for Primary Care Research and The University of Manchester.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="338 1169 912 1220" style="background-color: #e6e6fa; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px;"> <p><b>Please contact: <a href="mailto:erin.beeston@manchester.ac.uk">erin.beeston@manchester.ac.uk</a></b></p> </div> <p data-bbox="338 1236 1002 1272">This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee. Project no.: *2025-22695-41456</p> <p data-bbox="284 1317 973 1348">Please contact: <a href="mailto:erin.beeston@manchester.ac.uk">erin.beeston@manchester.ac.uk</a></p>
b	<div data-bbox="438 1411 1197 1579" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p data-bbox="284 1608 1369 1747">DGH Neurodivergent Consultancy is doing a more in-depth follow up to their 2024 survey into Autistic Language Preferences. Please could you take some time to do this survey and help build a robust data set?</p> <p data-bbox="284 1787 1353 1863">The aim of this survey is to gather the preferences of both Autistic and non-Autistic people for language when talking about autism.</p> <p data-bbox="284 1899 614 1930">To complete the <a href="#">survey</a></p> <p data-bbox="986 1937 1385 1975" style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>



2	<b><u>Neurodiverse Resources</u></b>
a	<p><b><u>Stimpunks</u></b></p> <p>Stimpunks.org is a radically inclusive space led by and for neurodivergent and disabled people. Blending mutual aid, community care, and educational resources, we reimagine learning, working, and living through the lens of neurodiversity, disability justice, and lived experience. Our site offers rich content on neurodivergent design, sensory access, monotropism, and noncompliant pedagogy—centering voices that move through the world differently and advocating for systems rooted in access intimacy, creativity, and interdependence.</p> <p>To visit the website:  <a href="https://stimpunks.org/">https://stimpunks.org/</a></p>   
b	<p><b><u>Delving into the Complexity of Unmasking Safely</u></b></p>  <p>Kieran began by conceptualising masking; busting some of the myths that surround it; and looking at why we do it. Jade then delved into how we might be able to start unmasking safely, and considered why it's not as simple as a lot of the mainstream narratives suggest.</p> <p>The webinar drew on our previous work, training, and resources, as well as adding new context, content, and practical application.</p> <p>To read the full article please click <a href="#">here</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>
c	<p><b><u>Helping Kids Thrive During the Holidays: Coping with Changes in Routine</u></b></p> <p>For many families, the festive season and summer school holiday period signals a time to celebrate and reflect on the year gone by, and to decompress from the modern families often gruelling schedule of school, work, sport and other activities. Whilst this time may still represent this for neurodivergent families and children, the festive period is often more challenging.</p> <p>Neurodivergent children, especially autistic and ADHD children, rely on predictable routines to feel safe, regulated and confident. Though the routine</p>

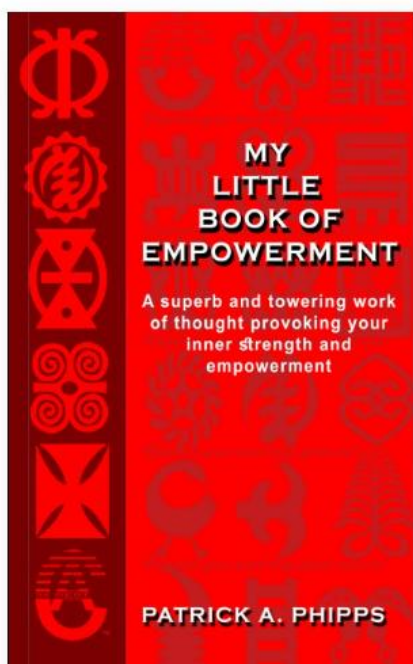
and schedule of school and after school activities, followed by the weekend, can often be difficult to manage for these children and their families, it is often the absence of this predictability which is even more difficult to cope with.

## SPENCER Health

To read the full article please click [here](#)

### 3 [Book](#)

#### a My little Book of empowerment by Patrick Antony Phipps



His decision to write **My Little Book of Empowerment** was based on the desire to share solutions and methods for dealing with problems that can occur in life and business.

Patrick shares the many mistakes that he has made along the way and hopes that this book will work to transform them into positive lessons that will help to empower others to combat problems with better solutions in the future. It also shows how some negative circumstances can even be avoided completely. This book contains Patrick's instructional methods for you to follow in your daily life. Committing these new methods to your subconscious mind may be empowering, or even life changing.



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### 4 [Sleep](#)




#### a Bedtime Stories for Adults


Struggle to sleep?  
Why not try listening to bedtime stories for adults.  
Switch off by getting lost in a story to doze off.

Here are a few links to try:





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The COZIEST bedtime story: The Rainy Day Bakery   Sleep Story-telling <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9np6f1PgMY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9np6f1PgMY</a></li> <li>• Calm Sleep Stories   Stephen Fry's 'Blue Gold' <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mGifCwig8I">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mGifCwig8I</a></li> <li>• Bedtime Story to Help You Sleep   The Underwater City   BetterSleep <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8epISV1wus">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8epISV1wus</a></li> <li>• Deep Sleep Story – Inspired Story for Adults to Sleep (Travels and Dreams #1) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4fBgXgxjig">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4fBgXgxjig</a></li> </ul> <p>There are many more! Check them out!</p> 
<b>5</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Mental Health</a></u></b>
<b>a</b>	<p><b><u>Tips for Coping with Seasonal Affective Disorder</u></b></p> <p>Although seasonal affective disorder is very common, it's not something you hear talked about enough. It is similar to depression, except it comes and goes in a seasonal pattern, with the symptoms usually being mainly present during the winter. These symptoms include low mood, a lack of energy, a loss of pleasure in activities you would normally enjoy, and feelings of irritability.</p> <p>Read the tips <a href="#">here</a></p> <p><b>YOUNGMINDS</b></p> <p>Check out youngminds website for great info on staying well in the winter months and lots more <a href="https://www.youngminds.org.uk/">https://www.youngminds.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>6</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Carers and Family Support</a></u></b>
<b>a</b>	<p><b><u>Caring for a Family Member or Someone Else Close to You?</u></b></p> <p>Our mission is to make life better for carers. We provide information and advice on caring, help carers connect with each other, campaign with carers for lasting change, and use innovation to improve services.</p> <p><b>Become a member</b> Joining Carers UK is <b>free</b> and takes just a few minutes</p> <p>For more info and to join: <a href="https://www.carersuk.org/about-us/why-were-here/">https://www.carersuk.org/about-us/why-were-here/</a></p>  <p><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>

b	<p><b><u>Contact for Families with Disabled Children</u></b></p> <div data-bbox="295 250 671 730">  </div> <p>We are Contact, the charity for families with disabled children We support families, bring families together and help families take action for others. They offer a range of support some of which includes: <b>Telephone support</b> We run a <b>free advice and information helpline</b> for parents and carers with a disabled child aged from birth to 25, living in any part of the UK If you are looking for emotional support, book an appointment with <b>our Listening Ear telephone support service</b>.</p> <p>For more information: <a href="https://contact.org.uk/">https://contact.org.uk/</a></p>
7	<p><b><u>Financial Support</u></b></p>
a	<p><b><u>Turn2us</u></b></p> <p>Turn2us is a national charity providing practical help to people who are struggling financially. A free service that helps people in financial need to access welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help.</p> <p>For more info: <a href="https://www.turn2us.org.uk/">https://www.turn2us.org.uk/</a></p> <div data-bbox="1209 1167 1358 1267">  </div>
8	<p><b><u>Things to do or Activities</u></b></p>
a	<p><b><u>Natural History Museum: Wildlife Photographer of the Year Relaxed Exhibition Viewing</u></b></p> <p>Our relaxed viewings allow our disabled and neurodiverse visitors to see the newest edition of our Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition away from the daytime crowds.</p> <p>With a reduced capacity, careful lighting and low-noise levels, these viewings allow you to explore the natural world in all its beauty and fragility through the work of the world's best wildlife photographers. From the peaks of the high mountains to the deep polar seas, meet the incredible creatures that call these places home in this year's selection of stunning images.</p> <p>For more info please click <a href="#">here</a></p> <div data-bbox="272 1917 719 2007">  <p>Natural History Museum</p> </div> <p><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>

<b>b</b>	<p><b><u>Explore Tower Bridge</u></b></p> <p>Relaxed Opening is a dedicated, low-capacity session created specifically with neurodivergent visitors in mind. Held on the second Saturday of each month, Relaxed Opening offers visitors a calm, stress-reduced environment to explore Tower Bridge at their own pace - aiming to create a more comfortable environment to make everyone feel at ease.</p> <p><b>What happens during Relaxed Opening?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further reduced visitor numbers inside the attraction with no guided tours or group bookings</li> <li>• Hand dryers switched off. Disposable hand towels provided</li> <li>• Reduced volume of soundscapes and video</li> <li>• Visitors are encouraged to explore Tower Bridge in the way that they feel most comfortable.</li> </ul> <p>For more info please click <a href="#">here</a></p> 
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## Social Media

	<p><b><u><a href="#">YouTube</a></u></b></p>
	<p><b><u>Treat Yourself Like Someone You Love (How To Learn To Love Yourself)   Adam Roa   TEDxKlagenfurt</u></b></p> <p>When his viral poem “You Are Who You’ve Been Looking For” touched over 250 million people worldwide, spoken word artist Adam Roa was thrust into the spotlight and a personal crisis.</p> <p>In this incredibly moving TEDxKlagenfurt talk, he shares the raw truth behind the poem’s success: he didn’t yet know how to love himself. Adam blends spoken word and raw storytelling to share what it really takes to rebuild a relationship with yourself. With vulnerability and poetic insight, he reveals how self-love isn’t a switch you flip but a relationship you build. Day by day. Breath by breath. Choice by choice..</p>  <p>To view the TEDx Talks: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2L4s6mdKUc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2L4s6mdKUc</a></p> <p>Shared by a local autistic resident</p>  <p><a href="#">Back to contents page</a></p>

**Podcast****Will a Review into Mental Health Fix a System in Crisis? The story**

Today, Health Secretary Wes Streeting is announcing an independent review into rising demand for mental health, ADHD, and autism services. Amid soaring welfare costs and long waiting lists, the government says the system needs to be transformed. But with Streeting previously claiming that some mental health conditions are 'overdiagnosed', are the right problems being tackled?

Listen to the podcast [here](#)



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