



Autism: News, Research &

Community Updates

October 2026 - 24th edition**💬 Editor's Note**

Welcome to our **October edition** of the autism newsletter.

This month, our feature focuses on **Autism, Culture & Diversity**, exploring how culture and community can shape the way autism is understood, recognised and supported. We look at some of the barriers people from different cultural backgrounds may face when accessing diagnosis and support, as well as the importance of representation and inclusion.

You'll also find information about **World Mental Health Day**, October half-term activities in Newham, opportunities to share your views, local peer-to-peer support groups, courses and training, and the latest news and resources relating to autism and neurodiversity.

If you have something you'd like us to feature in a future edition, we'd love to hear from you.

As always, we hope this newsletter helps you feel **informed, connected and supported**. We welcome your feedback, suggestions and ideas for future editions.

Wishing you a positive October! ☀️

Warm regards,

Newham Autism Commissioning Team

and guest editor Pratyusha, Newham Volunteer.

Sign up now! If you would like to receive an alert to the monthly autism newsletter please email 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. Newham Council does 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.

Connect: If you have any autism-related information you would like to share, or feedback on the new-style newsletter, please email autism.commissioning@newham.gov.uk

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[**READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE**](#)

About the Guest Editor

This newsletter has been brought together by a local resident volunteer in partnership with Newham's Autism Commissioning Team. We are incredibly grateful for the time, care and dedication they have invested in bringing together information, events, support and opportunities for the autism community.

Their commitment has helped the Newham Autism Team to continue to offer a resource that keeps autistic residents, families and carers informed, connected and supported. ❤️

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1. What's New in Newham?

Newham's World Mental Health Day Fair 2026

We are delighted to invite you to [Newham's World Mental Health Day Fair 2026](#):

 **Date:** Wednesday, 7 October

 **Time:** 11 am - 3.30 pm

 **Location:** Stratford Town Hall

This year's theme is **Community and Wellbeing**. We're bringing together statutory, voluntary and faith sector organisations, volunteers and local residents for a day of connection, conversation and shared learning to celebrate the work happening across the borough to support people's mental health (MH).

Join us for:

- Meeting MH organisations from across Newham
- Presentations by local organisations
- Wellbeing activities and discussions
- Stalls with resources and information
- Guest speakers
- Lunch, goodie bags and much more

The day is open to everyone – NHS, Providers, Charities, local organisations, residents, general public. That includes **autistic people** living with or have experienced mental health challenges, carers, service users, family members and friends. Whatever brings you through the door, you are welcome.

Reserve your place now: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/newham-world-mental-health-day-fair-2026-tickets-1998427987908?aff=oddttdcreator>

We hope to see you there!



Autism Accessories & Communication Aids Available in Newham

Newham Council highlights four key communication and support accessories designed to help autistic residents navigate daily life, access public spaces, and communicate needs to health, care or emergency professionals:

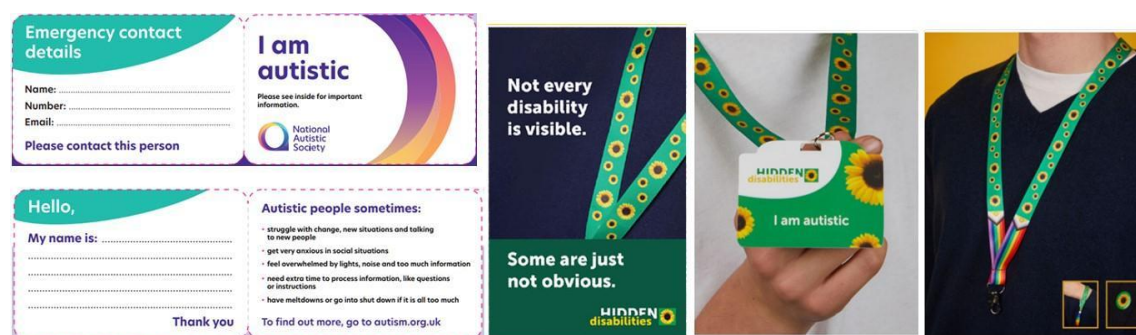
- **Sunflower Lanyard:** An internationally recognised symbol for hidden disabilities,

signaling to staff in public spaces that you may need extra time, help, or understanding.

- **NAS Autism Pin:** A colorful spectrum logo badge from the National Autistic Society to raise awareness, show support, or indicate that you are autistic.
- **Autism Alert Card:** A personal ID card designed to help emergency services and organisations quickly identify that they are supporting an autistic individual.
- **Autism Health Passport:** A practical tool to help autistic individuals communicate specific needs, preferences, and adjustments directly to doctors, nurses, and social care staff.

How to collect yours: These items will shortly be available directly through local Newham libraries.

You can also read full details on the [Newham Council Autism Accessories & Communication Aids page](#).



Funding Available: £1,000 Grants for Autism-Led Activities in Newham

Newham Council is offering micro-grants of up to £1,000 to encourage autistic residents across the borough to lead and run peer-to-peer activities, events, or hobby groups. Designed to help build a vibrant local autistic community, this funding supports initiatives that bring like-minded people together in fun, supportive environments.

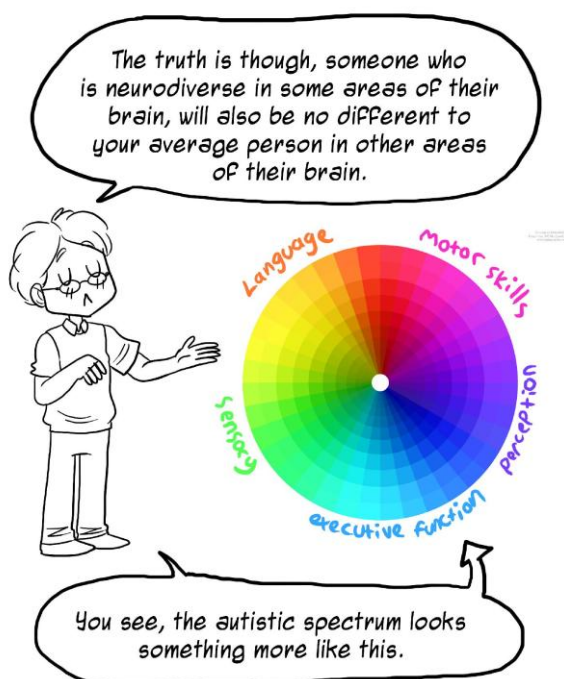
- **Grant Amount:** Up to £1,000 per application.
- **Deadlines:** Applications are reviewed monthly and must be received by the 15th of each month (funding rounds continue monthly until all funds are allocated).
- **How to Apply:** You can view the [Grant Application Guide](#) and complete the [Small Grants Funding Application](#) directly online.
- **Support & Enquiries:** If you would like to discuss or refine your project ideas before applying, email Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk

2. Community Spotlight

This month's Community Spotlight features Rebecca Burgess, an award-winning autistic author and illustrator, who has built a career combining their interests in art, writing and storytelling.

They mainly work in children's books, but have also illustrated informational comics for charities and organisations, worked on board games, storyboarded short films, and most famously created a infographic that explains the autism spectrum- titled 'understanding the spectrum', which is now used by the NHS in it's staff training programs.

Rebecca's career as a full time artist began with this particular piece of work, which was made in 2016 for autism acceptance month and went viral when posted online. This comic that breaks down why autism is described as a 'spectrum' has gone on to be used in various books, presentations, dissertations, and translated into many languages to help people all over the world. It showed many people working in other fields how effective comics can be in breaking down complicated topics into something that's conversational and easy to understand.



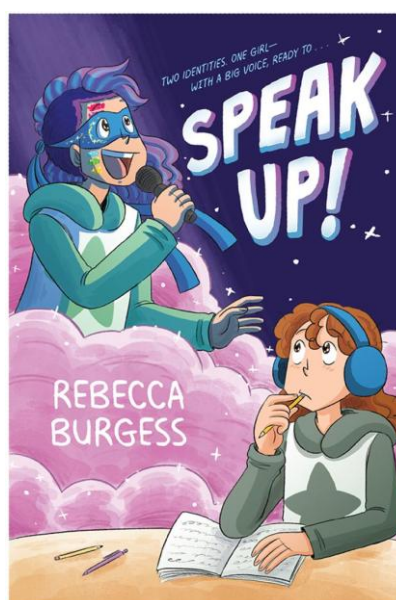
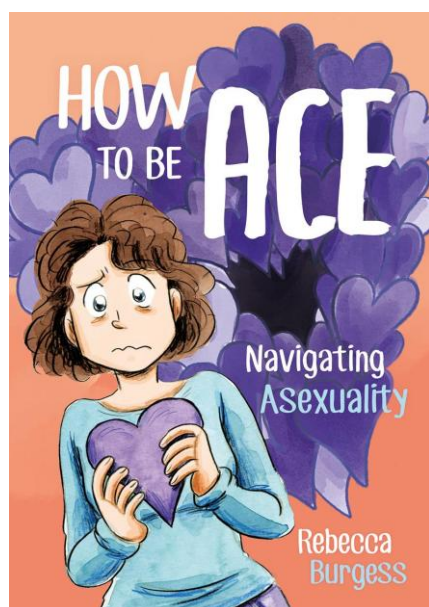
[Understanding the Spectrum - a comic strip explanation | The Art of Autism](#)

And so a few years later, Rebecca made their first foray into publishing, after being asked to create a series of one page educational comics for 'A Spectrum Girl's Survival Guide', a book written by Sienna Castell intended to be a guide aimed specifically for autistic girls and non binary people. The publisher, Jessica Kingsley- a familiar name to many families with autistic children- have continued to work with Rebecca on several non fiction books. The most recent being 'Growing Up Autistic', the sequel to the bestselling 'Being Autistic', both written by

Niamh Garvey, and both informational books for primary school children that aim to explain autism in a positive and affirming way.



It was also through Jessica Kingsley that Rebecca made their debut as a graphic novelist, who published 'How to be Ace', a graphic memoir that explores Asexuality and mental health in the form of a cosy coming of age story. Rebecca has continued to write and illustrate their own graphic novels, with much of their work continuing to share the autistic experience via a variety of fictional stories and autistic main characters.



'Speak Up!', and its sequel 'Stand Out!' both follow 13 year old Mia, as she navigates the usual dramatic highs and lows of being a teenager through the lens of her autism. They also create fictional work for adults, such as the long- running series 'The Pauper's Prince', a romance graphic novel that hopes to break many stereotypes by making an autistic character the lead love interest in a romance story. Rebecca is also looking at autism through the lense of history, currently making the history comic 'Incorruptible'. The graphic novel series about the French Revolution has been highly praised by historians for its nuance and in depth study of a famous revolutionary who many believe in modern day to have been autistic.



Rebecca likes approaching their writing and art around autism with honesty, always injecting their personal experiences and feelings into the characters, both the good and the bad. This approach creates highly emotive stories that continue to be popular especially with autistic readers because of their relatability.

You can find Rebecca's work on their [website](#) and [social media](#)!

Share Your Career Journey with Us

Its great to hear Rebeccas story but we would really like to share a story of an autistic person from our local community to feature in a future Autism Newsletter Community Spotlight.

Everyone's path into work is different. Whether you've followed a traditional career route or found your own way, your experiences could help inspire and encourage other autistic people - particularly young people who may be thinking about their own future.

We'd love to hear about:

- Your autism journey
- How you found your way into your current career or profession
- The challenges or opportunities you experienced along the way

- Any advice or encouragement you would give to other autistic people thinking about their future

You don't need to have followed a conventional career path or have a particular job title. We want to celebrate the different journeys, skills, interests and opportunities that can lead to meaningful work and careers.

You might also be interested in this [video](#): Six autistic people share how autism affects their work and lives, and how their strengths help them succeed.

Interested in being featured?

We'd love to hear from you! Please get in touch with us at Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk to find out more about taking part in the newsletter's **Community Spotlight**.

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In addition, we're also looking to showcase the following in the coming editions:

- **Autistic Pride & Excellence:** Spotighting an inspiring autistic individual - whether an artist, advocate, creator, or local hero, making a difference.
- **Positive Local Initiatives:** Featuring local projects, inclusive groups, sensory-friendly spaces, or community programs bringing real benefit to autistic people in Newham.
- **Community Wins:** Celebrating achievements from our own readers and local residents. No win is too big or too small - whether you completed a project, learned a new skill, advocated for yourself, or reached a personal milestone you're proud of.

How to Nominate or Share

Do you have an achievement to share, or know an individual or initiative that deserves recognition? We would love to hear from you!

- **What to include:** A brief description of the person, initiative, or personal achievement, along with a few sentences on why you're celebrating it.
- **How to send:** Reply directly to this email or send your submission to Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk
- **Privacy note:** You can choose to share your story with your name, a pseudonym, or completely anonymously.

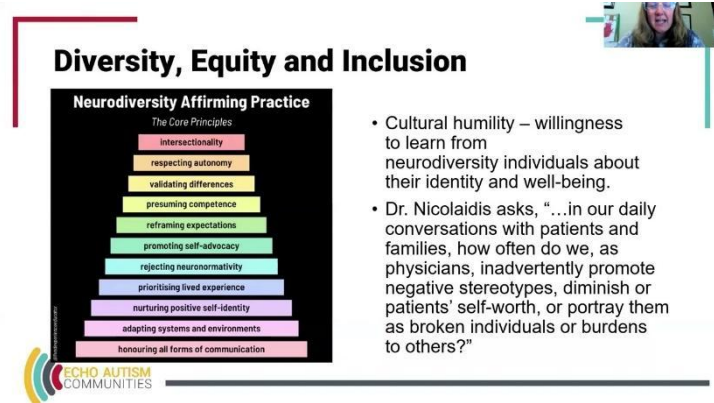
3. October Special Focus

a. Autism, Culture & Diversity

Autism is experienced by people from all cultures, ethnicities and communities, but culture can influence how autism is understood, recognised and talked about.

For some families, autism may be understood differently depending on cultural beliefs, family

experiences, language or attitudes towards disability and difference. In some communities, there may also be stigma around autism or other forms of neurodivergence, which can make it more difficult for someone to talk about their experiences or seek support.



Barriers to diagnosis and support

Research and lived experience highlight a number of barriers that people from ethnic minority and culturally diverse communities can face when seeking an autism assessment or support.

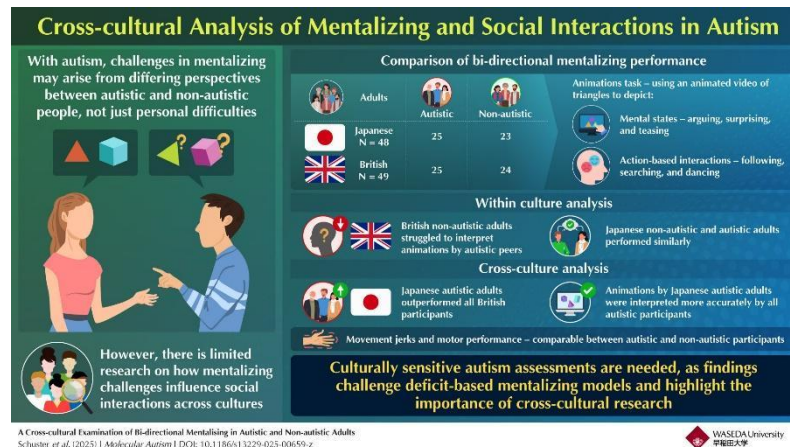
These can include:

- Language barriers, particularly when information is only available in English or uses medical terminology.
- Limited awareness of autism, including differences in how autistic traits may be understood or described across cultures.
- Stigma and misconceptions around autism and disability.
- Stereotypes about what autism looks like, which can mean that some people's needs are not recognised.
- Difficulties navigating services, particularly for families who are unfamiliar with how health, education and social care services work in the UK.
- A lack of culturally informed support, where professionals may not fully understand the family's cultural background or circumstances.

The National Autistic Society highlights that there is still limited research into the experiences of autistic people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. It also identifies potential barriers including racial discrimination, stereotypes and a lack of awareness among

professionals. ([Source](#))

Ambitious about Autism similarly highlights stigma, language barriers and assumptions about behaviour as barriers that can affect children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Families have also reported difficulties accessing information and support when resources are not available in their preferred language. ([Source](#))



Mentalizing refers to the ability to understand our own and others' thoughts, feelings, and intentions. Research into cross cultural mentalizing explores how social and emotional cues can be interpreted differently across cultural contexts.

Autism and identity

For many autistic people, autism is one part of their identity alongside their culture, ethnicity, race, language, religion, gender and other identities.

Understanding these different parts of someone's identity can help services and communities provide support that is more respectful and relevant to the individual. It is also important that autistic people from different backgrounds see their experiences represented in the information, services and communities around them.

Resources and Further Reading

[Being an autistic person of colour](#)

[Autism and Culture: Understanding Diversity in Autism Support](#)

[Autism and BAME people](#)

[Understanding race and racism](#)

[A conceptual framework for understanding the cultural and contextual factors on autism across the globe](#)

[The Autism Spectrum as a Source of Cognitive and Cultural Diversity](#)

[UK's black children 'face cultural barriers' in accessing help for autism and ADHD](#)

A thought for this month: What can we do to make autism information and support more inclusive?

Listening to autistic people and families from different cultural backgrounds, providing accessible and translated information, and recognising that there is no single way to experience or understand autism can all help create more inclusive services and communities.

b. World Mental Health Day Awareness

World Mental Health Day takes place on **10 October**, providing an opportunity to talk openly about mental health, check in with the people around us and think about the support we may need.

The theme for 2026 is “Lived experiences heard: Real voices, real change”, highlighting the importance of listening to people with lived experience and ensuring their voices help shape mental health support and services.

For autistic people, mental health can be affected by a range of factors, including sensory differences, social pressures, masking, changes to routine, isolation and difficulties accessing appropriate support. Everyone's experience is different, and what helps one person may not work for another.

This World Mental Health Day, consider:

- Checking in with someone you care about.
- Making time for activities that help you feel comfortable and connected.
- Talking to someone you trust if things feel difficult.
- Asking what support someone needs rather than making assumptions.



Find out more: [World Mental Health Day – Mental Health Foundation](#)

See also [Newham's World Mental Health Day Fair 2026](#)

c. Hate Crime Awareness Month

A hate crime is a crime or incident that is motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone because of characteristics such as **disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity**. Disability hate crime can happen to a person or their property.

For autistic people, this can include being targeted, harassed, threatened or treated unfairly because of being autistic or disabled. Hate crime is not always easy to recognise, and you do not have to be certain that something is a hate crime before asking for advice or reporting it. In 2024/25, police forces in England and Wales received reports of nearly 12,000 disability hate crimes. ([Sources](#))

It is also important to remember that **you can report a hate crime if you have witnessed something happening to someone else**, not just if you have experienced it yourself.

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Where to get help

If you or someone you know has experienced a disability hate crime, there are different ways to get support:

- **In an emergency:** call **999**.
- **For non-emergency police reports:** call **101**.
- **Newham's 24-hour Safeguarding Helpline: 020 3373 0440** if you are concerned about an adult at risk of abuse or neglect.
- **True Vision:** provides information and support for reporting disability hate crime.
- **Crimestoppers:** call **0800 555 111** if you would prefer to report anonymously.

Newham Council also has an Easy Read Disability [Hate Crime booklet](#) and [reporting form](#), which can help explain what disability hate crime is and how to report it.

More resources:

[Stop Hate UK](#)

[True Vision](#)

[Mencap](#)

[Dimensions](#)



If something has happened and you're not sure what to do, you don't have to work it out on your own. Speaking to someone you trust or one of the services above can be a first step towards getting support.

4. Autism Residents' Advisory Group (ARAG)

Here are the details for the next meeting:

 **Date:** Monday, 19 October

 **Time:** 11.30am - 1.30pm

 **Location:** Stratford Library, 3 The Grove, London E15 1EL

Guest speaker: **Community Pharmacist.**

Are you taking medication to support your autism or related needs? Have you ever felt unsure about your medication, the advice you've been given, or hesitant to ask your GP or local pharmacist questions?

Join us for an informative session with a community pharmacist who will discuss **STOMP (Stopping Over Medication of People with a Learning Disability, Autism or Both)** and the support available to autistic residents.

Bring your questions and get trusted advice in a welcoming and supportive environment.

Online attendance is an option for residents if you can't get there in-person. A meeting link will be sent to members closer to the date.

You can join the ARAG (if you aren't already a member) using the e-form [here](#). Please email autism.commissioning@newham.gov.uk if you require any help completing the form.

Note: The **Autism Open Peer Support Group meeting** will follow immediately afterwards – see next article below.

5. Community Hub

Peer to Peer Support Groups

Autism Adults Open Peer Support Group

Drop in to the Autism Adults Open Peer Support Group to share your experiences, connect with others, and feel supported in a safe, welcoming, and neuro-friendly space. This group starts straight after the [ARAG](#) meeting finishes, if you have time, come and join the ARAG meeting.

Location

John Hopkins Room

Stratford Library

3 The Grove Stratford London E15 1EL

When

Monday at 1:30-2.30pm

For more information:

Email: autismoutreachnewham@gmail.com



Free

Staging a Musical Show

Autistic adults are invited to join a creative performance group where participants can explore **music, movement and drama** while working together towards the creation of a musical show.

The sessions offer a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment where participants can build confidence, develop creative skills and connect with others through the performing arts. No previous experience is required.

Location

Beckton Globe Library
1 Kingsford Way, London E6 5JQ

When

Thursdays at **1:00pm**

- 8 & 22 October
- 5 & 19 November
- 3 & 17 December

The programme will continue until **20 May 2027**.

Find dates and session details:

[Staging A Musical Show For Autistic Adults Series | Newham Libraries](#)

Register:

[Staging a Musical Show for Autistic Adults Registration Form](#)

For more information:

Email: kevinplummer65@gmail.com

Come along to express your creativity, make new connections and be part of an exciting collaborative musical production in a supportive and autism-friendly environment.

 **Free**

Workplace Coaching for Autistic Individuals (online)

Led by an autistic coach and trainer Morwenna Stewart, the 10 week programme aims to support autistic adults in building confidence, navigating workplace relationships, and developing practical strategies to thrive at work authentically.

There are 2 sessions left, **Wednesday 30.09.2026 & 14.10.2026** at **6-7pm** you can still join:

1. **Problem-solving workplace challenges.** Reasonable adjustments, self-advocacy, sensory/environmental challenges.
2. **Consolidation and planning.** Setting goals, identifying ongoing supports, confidence-building.

Register here: [Registration form: Work coaching group for Autistic people \(online\)](#)

For more information, email morwenna.stewart@yourcoachingpartner.co.uk or watch this [video](#)



Free

The Pineapple Project

The Pineapple Project is dedicated to supporting autistic adults who may be experiencing mental health challenges by creating opportunities for creativity, friendship and personal growth.

Through inclusive, sensory-friendly activities such as 3D modelling, sculpture, silk fabric printing, gratitude art, exhibitions and collaborative workshops, participants are supported to develop new skills, express their creativity and connect with others in a safe and understanding environment.

The project plays an important role in reducing social isolation, promoting positive mental wellbeing and helping individuals feel valued, connected and empowered within their community.

October start date tbc, register to get the invite

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/RruGpGXAm2?origin=lprLink> or use the QR code:



Free

East London Recovery College - Young Adult Social

The [East London Recovery College](#) runs a free weekly (every Wednesday) Young Adult Social group specifically for ages 18 and over who are navigating mental health and life recovery.

There is no need to register – just turn up on the day.

Join the next session on

 **Date:** Wednesday, 7 October

 **Time:** 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

 **Location:** 86 Old Montague Street, London, E1 5NN

 **Free**



NEW Gaming Group for Autistic and Neurodivergent Adults

Connect Coaching is starting a new gaming group for autistic and neurodivergent adults from October.

The group will meet at **The Heroes Guild in Walthamstow**, a dedicated gaming venue with a board game library and tabletop RPGs. No previous gaming experience is needed, and you do not need to bring anything.

The group is designed to provide a relaxed way to socialise through shared activities, with the structure of games helping to make socialising feel more comfortable and accessible.

 **Where:** The Heroes Guild, 112F High Street, Walthamstow E17 7JY (second floor above Sainsbury's, around five minutes from the stations)

 **When:** From October; the day and time will be confirmed based on registrations of interest

 **Cost:** £5 per session

 **Who can join:** Autistic and neurodivergent adults

Accessibility: The venue is on the second floor and is not currently step-free. This is being flagged in advance for anyone who may need step-free access.

Interested or have questions?

Contact Alex at alex@connectcoaching.net to register your interest.

More Local peer-to-peer support groups

More peer-to-peer support groups can be found here: [Local autism peer support groups – Peer to peer support groups – Newham Council](#) including:

- Carers of Autistic Adults – 05.10.2026
- Late Diagnosed Peer Group – 06.10.2026 & 20.10.2026, see also free resources [here](#)
- Therapeutic Gardening for autistic residents – Monday PM weekly

Advocacy and Support

Open Support Surgeries for Autistic Residents

Do you need to speak with a **senior professional**?

Open Support Surgeries session for Autistic Residents takes place every third Friday of the month. Book an in-person or online **30min slot** at the next Open Surgery to have your concerns heard.

This month, on **Friday 15 October**, the professionals include:

- **Tony Pape: Autism Team Manager, Adult Social Care**
- **Kelly Watson: Metropolitan Police and**
- **Joe Mutter, LB Newham Community Safety**

Kelly and Joe will be able to talk to you about your concerns regarding crime, anti-social behaviour and the criminal justice system. October is **Hate Crime Awareness Month** so there will be a particular focus on that issue.

Please email Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk to book a slot.

Senior Professionals lined up, including:

November – University of East London, Careers Advisor

December – no open surgery during December

January – Children Services SEND

February – tbc

March – Community Pharmacist, see also [ARAG](#) information above

Local Health & Wellbeing Support with Well Newham

Looking for local health advice, community groups, or wellness support? The [Well Newham](#) platform is your go-to hub for staying well in our borough.

- **Health Resources:** Find reliable guides and local health advice tailored to Newham residents.
- **Directory of Services (powered by Joy):** Explore an up-to-date listing of local initiatives, support networks, and community activities—with new services added regularly.

Visit the [Well Newham Directory](#) to find support near you.

6. Resource Spotlight

Discovery Programme by Thriving Autistic

The Discovery Programme offers free, self-paced online resources **for recently identified Autistic adults**. The programme includes six modules covering topics such as masking and burnout, sensory experiences, communication and relationships, Autistic attention, and self-advocacy.

The resources include videos, downloadable guides and practical tools, and can be accessed at any time.

Find out more: [Discovery Programme – Thriving Autistic](#)



7. News & Knowledge Hub

Free School Meals

With the start of the new school term, it's worth asking yourself: Is your disabled child entitled to free school meals but missing out? This might be because they cannot eat the food provided due to sensory or dietary needs or they are being educated at home because of their disability or they are waiting for a suitable school place.

Depending on your family's circumstances, you may be able to ask the school or local authority to provide an alternative, such as food vouchers or a suitable meal your child can eat.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Jess's Rule: Three strikes and we rethink

Still experiencing the same symptoms after 3 GP visits?

- ✓ Ask about **Jess's Rule**
- ✓ Request a review of your symptoms
- ✓ Discuss whether further tests or specialist advice are needed

Find out more: [Jess's Rule – NHS England](#)



Autism & Employment Guides

Starting a new job or navigating the workplace can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to navigate it alone. [Ambitious about Autism](#) has created practical guides to help autistic young people understand their rights, decide whether to disclose, and ask for workplace adjustments.

Download your autism and employment guides today and feel more confident navigating the workplace.

[Download your guides](#)

see also: [Professional Connection Webinar](#) & our [spotlight](#) & [video](#)

Autism and ADHD Benefits Rise Fastest in Less Deprived Areas

New analysis by the Nuffield Trust shows that the proportion of 16–17-year-olds receiving Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for autism or ADHD has increased across England since 2019. While rates remain higher in more deprived areas, the fastest growth has been in the least deprived areas, where the proportion more than tripled from 0.8% in 2019 to 2.5% in 2025.

The analysis also highlights potential differences in access to diagnosis and disability benefits, particularly among different communities.

[Read more here](#)

Young People Aren't Snowflakes - Mental Distress is Rising, says Head of Official Review

Prof Peter Fonagy, who is leading an independent review into mental health, ADHD and autism, says the rise in mental health difficulties among young people is real. He highlights pressures including **economic uncertainty, employment challenges and social media**, and says young people today face a more difficult environment than previous generations.

[Read more here](#)

Virtual Queue for Disabled Visitors at Alton Towers

Alton Towers is introducing a new **virtual queuing system** for visitors with accessibility needs later this year. The updated Ride Access Pass will allow eligible visitors to wait for rides through an app instead of standing in physical queues, so they can spend their waiting time somewhere more comfortable.

The eligibility criteria will remain unchanged following earlier concerns from disabled visitors and families. Disability organisations, including the **National Autistic Society** and Scope, have welcomed the new approach.

[Read more here](#)

South London SEN School Praised for its Support of Autistic Pupils

Park House School in Wandsworth has been recognised by Ofsted for its personalised approach to supporting autistic pupils. The school focuses on understanding individual needs, communication, emotional wellbeing and developing pupils' independence and confidence.

Pupils were described as safe, happy and well cared for, while parents praised the school for improving their child's communication, reducing anxiety and helping family life become calmer.

[Read more here](#)

[Update on the PIP Review](#)

The Timms Review into Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is holding a series of workshops with disabled people and other participants in the coming weeks.

During the workshops they will discuss some of the [emerging recommendations](#) to come out of the review so far. This includes welcome proposals such as reducing unnecessary award reviews. However, some will cause concern including the idea to replace cash benefits with non-cash support.

Students with EHCPs have higher rates of severe absence from college than their peers

A new report from the Children's Commissioner, called Hidden NEETS, has found that disabled young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) have [higher rates of severe absence than their peers](#). Colleges identified a range of barriers to attendance, including mental health difficulties, poverty, caring responsibilities and transport problems. This shows the importance of disabled students being financially supported and given help to access to education.

Resources for Child Support in Schools Across England

Navigate your child's educational journey with confidence using these expert-curated factsheets:

[Extra support in mainstream school](#): Understand SEN support, how schools should adapt, and the four-part graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review).

[Education, Health and Care needs assessments](#): Learn how to request and navigate the formal local authority assessment process when your child needs more help than standard school support.

[Education, Health and Care plans](#): Discover what these legally binding documents include and how they secure tailored provisions for children with more complex needs.

8. Share Your Views

The Big Conversation on Care

The Casey Commission is inviting **residents, carers and community members** to share their views and experiences of adult social care in England.

[The Big Conversation on Care](#) is a national engagement programme gathering people's experiences, ideas and views to help inform recommendations about the future of adult social care.

If you would like to have your say, you can take part online by **3 November 2026**.

The **link to the survey** is below:

[Take part online | The Casey Commission](#)

Feel free to share this opportunity with your networks, members, and anyone who may wish to contribute.

Nights Out in Newham

Our Social Value and Be Connected Team would like to hear from **autistic people**, and those who support them, about what activities they would like to see in their local area.

Whether it's music, games, quizzes, meeting new people or something completely different, we are pleased to hear your ideas.

Complete the survey [here](#).

This survey is also for residents with a learning disability and physical disability.



9. Courses & Training

Professional Connections Webinar – Ambitious about Autism

Jodie Hill is the Founder and Managing Partner of Thrive Law, as well as a neurodivergent solicitor, ED&I consultant, coach and trainer, author and campaigner. She is passionate about employment law, mental health and wellbeing, equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) and neurodiversity.

She is a vocal spokesperson for neurodiversity in the workplace and regularly trains leaders, managers, and teams with a view to creating neuroinclusive environments where everyone can be their best and truest selves.

Jodie will talk about the successes and challenges she has experienced in her career so far, as well as her advice for autistic young people entering her industry.

 **Date:** Tuesday 6 October

 **Time:** 12.00 - 12.45pm

 **Location:** Online via Zoom

[Book your free space now](#)

10. Things to Do in September

Newham

Pumpkin Crafts

Get ready to unleash your creativity with our super fun in-person pumpkin crafts event! Perfect for kids aged 10 to 15, this is your chance to dive into colorful and spooky pumpkin decorating.

 **Date:** Wednesday, 28 October

 **Time:** 4pm-5:30pm

 **Location:** Newham, 517-519 Barking Road, London E13 8PS

[Register here for free](#)

East Autumn School

East Autumn School is a brand-new, free creative learning programme at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for 12-17 year olds who live or study in Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets or Waltham Forest.

Taking place over one exciting week **from Monday 26 October - Thursday 29 October**, the programme is packed with hands-on workshops, behind-the-scenes experiences and opportunities to learn from people working in some of east London's most exciting organisations.

From joining an e-sports event planning course with Staffordshire University to going backstage at ABBA Voyage for a workshop in lighting and audio design, there are a wide range of different interactive workshops which are led by organisations from across the Park and east London.

You'll have the chance to explore creative, cultural and educational industries, discover career pathways you may never have considered and gain real-world skills, confidence and experience to take your skills to the next step.

Registrations will close on 5 October and each course has limited spaces so sign up now to have the best chance of securing your spot.

[Get your tickets here](#)

October Half-Term Activities in Newham

Newham families can enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities during the October half-term, including swimming, inflatable pool sessions, soft play, junior gym and fitness classes. There are also free multi-sport activities such as football, cricket and basketball taking place in local parks and leisure centres.

Find out more on [Newham Council Website](#)



Across London

Celebrate Black History Month in London

Dive into [Black History Month in London](#) with a stellar lineup of talks, workshops, live music and exhibitions across the capital. Enjoy snacks, street food and entertainment at **Black Eats Fest** in Hackney Bridge (3 to 4 October), or head to **Black Culture Market** in Lambeth to support emerging African Caribbean businesses (10 to 11 October).



You can also try your hand at a **Family Drumming Workshop** at Crate St James in Walthamstow (4 October), take a seat at **Holborn's Top Secret Comedy Club** for their Black History Month Special (8 October), or embark on a **walking tour of black history in Brixton** (18 October). Don't forget to see **London, Sugar and Slavery**, a permanent exhibition at [London Museum Docklands](#), and check out **The Music is Black: A British Story** – a [V&A](#) exhibition charting 125 years of black music history.

As we celebrate Black History Month, it is vital to acknowledge the intersection of race and neurodivergence. For multiply marginalized autistic individuals, navigating systemic barriers, prejudice, and a world often built for the majority can require working twice as hard. True inclusion means celebrating diverse cultural backgrounds, honoring unique lived experiences, and ensuring that our community spaces actively embrace and support autistic people of all cultures and heritages.

Diwali on the Square

Head to Trafalgar Square on **Sunday, October 25, 2026**, for London's massive, free outdoor Diwali celebration. Expect live music, dance performances, and vibrant cultural displays.

 **Date:** Sunday, 25 October
 **Time:** 1pm-7pm
 **Location:** Trafalgar Square, Westminster, WC2N 5DN

 **Free**



Tips for a Sensory-Friendly Diwali: Large public festivals involve big crowds, loud live music, dance performances, and strong food scents, which can sometimes lead to sensory overload. To help autistic family members enjoy the celebration:

- **Pack a comfort kit:** Bring noise-cancelling headphones, sunglasses, or fidget tools.
- **Plan ahead:** Check performance timetables so you can choose when to experience the main stage or step away during peak noise.
- **Identify quiet spots:** Look around Trafalgar Square for slightly quieter perimeter zones where you can take a breather if needed, and give everyone permission to leave early if it becomes too overwhelming.

Carnival Roots: Roehampton Celebrates

Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, October 27, 2026**, at [The Focus Hall](#). This free, family-friendly event celebrates Caribbean culture with live steel pan music and carnival costume-making.

[Reserve your spots here](#)

 **Free**



Hair-Raising Halloween at Hyde Park

Free, educational holiday activities celebrating Autumn and Halloween. Fun for the whole family!

Go with the whole family and take part in a host of free creepy crawly Autumn and Halloween-themed activities including:

- Investigating our 'feely boxes' in the Witches' Den
- Exploring our hair-raising nature trail, discovering fascinating facts along the way
- Learning about the bats in The Royal Parks
- Listening to a spooky story!

[Book your spots here](#)

 **Free**

11. Media

Local Radio

NuSound Radio

Join us on **30 October** for Autism Hour, where Precious Homes, a local supported accommodation provider, will discuss how supported living offers opportunities, and how it can support autistic people to step into adulthood and live as independently as possible.

The programme airs on the **last Friday of every month from 12pm–1pm**, featuring guest speakers and conversations about autism and the local community.

You can listen back to previous programmes via the [Radio Interviews archive](#).

Other speakers are lined up for the rest of the year, including: **November** - Community Mental Health Services, outlining the support available in Newham
December – there is no autism show in December



Book

Twelve-year-old Mia is secretly the viral online singer Elle-Q, expressing her autistic identity and feelings through songs produced with her nonbinary best friend, Charlie. When a local talent show arises, Mia must decide whether her fear of bullies and judgment will stop her from sharing her true voice and protecting her friendship. You can purchase this graphic novel by Rebecca Burgess [here](#).



See also [spotlight](#)

Instagram

Not all “Autism Acceptance” is actually inclusive. Performative autism acceptance often centres the voices already heard, while multiply marginalised Autistic people continue to be excluded. True inclusion requires more than awareness posts and symbolic gestures. It requires systemic change.

Click to view the full post:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DWCghjpknNo/>

Performative Autism Acceptance Looks Like:

- | | Neuroinclusion |
|--|----------------|
| ✗ Savourism rather than solidarity | |
| ✗ Reframing ableism rather than dismantling it | |
| ✗ Acknowledgement without changing practices and behaviours | |
| ✗ Not being inclusive of multiply marginalised autistic people | |
| ✗ Valuing professional knowledge and research regardless of lived experiences | |
| ✗ Not making space for various autistic experiences in all of its cultural, racial and authentic diversity | |

Youtube

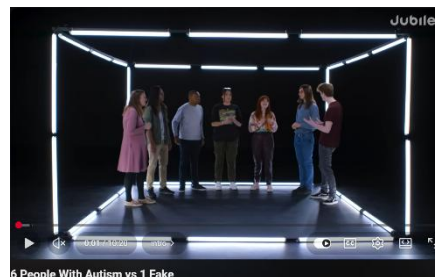
This video explores different cultural perspectives on neurodivergence, including Indigenous frameworks, Māori perspectives, collectivist cultures, and spiritual interpretations of sensitivity and difference.

Click to watch the full video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kC8zS8er-RM&pp=ygUZYXV0aXNtIGN1bHR1cmFslGRpdmVyc2l0eQ%3D%3D>



This is a fun, lighthearted video where six individuals, who are all on the autism spectrum, engage in a conversation. Among them, one person is a 'mole' (someone who is not autistic) and the group spends the video trying to identify who it is. The atmosphere is warm and respectful as they discuss their personal experiences, views on diagnosis, and the challenges of navigating a world not designed for their neurotype.



Click to watch the full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Olq0O03eyt8>

TV

The Residence 🎬

Looking for a fresh, engaging mystery to watch on Netflix? *The Residence* has become a massive hit within the neurodivergent community. While it is never explicitly stated, the main character is wonderfully, authentically coded as autistic. The show is receiving high praise for celebrating her extreme attention to detail, refreshing honesty, and all-consuming passion for birds to crack cases.



NEW 🍁 **OCTOBER 2026**

AUTISM EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

■ **Support & Community**

■ **Activities & Learning**

■ **Information & Advice**

★ **Weekend Events**

[Contents Page](#)

WEEK 1

1 OCT

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

WEEK 2

5 - 11 OCT

 Carers of Autistic Adults Group

 Mon 5 Oct | 11am-1pm

 Central Park Café

 Therapeutic Gardening

 Mon 5 Oct | 2pm-4pm

 Cody Docks

 Late Diagnosed Group

 Mon 5 Oct | 6pm-7pm

 Online

 Professional Connection Webinar – Ambitious about Autism

 Tuesday 6 October | 12.00 - 12.45pm

 Online

 World Mental Health Day Fair

 Wed 7 Oct | 10am-3pm

 Stratford Town Hall

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 Wed 7 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

 Young People's Social

 Wed 7 Oct | 5:30pm-7:30pm

 86 Old Montague Street, E1 5NN

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 Thu 8 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

 Staging a Musical Show

 Fri 9 Oct | 1pm-3pm

 Beckton Globe Library

 Black Culture Market

 10-11 Oct

 Lambeth Town Hall

WEEK 3

12 - 18 OCT

 Therapeutic Gardening

 Mon 13 Oct | 2pm-4pm

 Cody Docks

 Workplace Coaching

 Wed 14 Oct | 6pm-7pm

 Online

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 Wed 14 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 Thu 15 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

 Open Surgery

 Fri 16 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Stratford Advice Arcade

WEEK 4

19 - 25 OCT

-  ARAG Meeting
 Mon 19 Oct | 11:30am-1:30pm
 Stratford Library
-  Adult Open Peer Support Group
 Mon 19 Oct | 1:30pm-2:30pm
 Stratford Library
-  Therapeutic Gardening
 Mon 20 Oct | 2pm-4pm
 Cody Docks
-  Autism Friendly Hairdresser
 Wed 21 Oct | 11am-3pm
 Chargeable Lane
-  Autism Friendly Hairdresser
 Thu 22 Oct | 11am-3pm\
  Chargeable Lane
-  Staging a Musical Show
 Fri 23 Oct | 1pm-3pm
 Beckton Library
-  Diwali on the Square
 Sun 25 Oct | 1pm-7pm
 Trafalgar Square

WEEK 5

26 - 31 OCT

-  Therapeutic Gardening
 Mon 26 Oct | 2pm-4pm
 Cody Docks
-  Autism Film Club
 Mon 26 Oct | 6pm-8pm
 Queen Mary Uni, 1 Westfield Way, London E1 4PD
-  Pumpkin Crafts
 Wed 28 Oct | 4pm-5:30pm
 517-519 Barking Road, E13 8PS

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 Wed 28 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

 Autism Friendly Hairdresser

 Thu 29 Oct | 11am-3pm

 Chargeable Lane

 Autism Hour

 Fri 30 Oct | 12pm-1pm

 Online / Radio

HOW TO JOIN

ARAG  Join ARAG Autism Film Club  Register Here Autism Friendly Hairdresser  Register Here Autism Hour  https://nusoundradio.com/ Black Culture Market  Free Tickets Professional Connection Webinar – Ambitious about Autism  Book Here	Pumpkin Crafts  Book Here Staging a Musical Show  Register Here Support Groups & Therapeutic Gardening  Newham Peer Support Groups Workplace Coaching  Register Here World Mental Health Day Fair  Book Here
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