



NAS Tower Hamlets Autism Support

Information Pack for Parents and Carers



Disclaimer:

This information pack has been compiled from information gained directly from the services whose details are included therein, or from information published by those services in information leaflets or on their website. Every care is taken to ensure that the information in the Tower Hamlets Parents' Information Pack is accurate at the time of publishing but inaccuracies may nevertheless occur. If you discover any information which you believe to be inaccurate, please contact NAS Tower Hamlets Autism Support. Your assistance with this is greatly appreciated.

The listed services and links to websites maintained by other organisations are included in the Tower Hamlets Parents' Information Pack to assist you and are provided in good faith. Their inclusion in the pack does not imply that the NAS endorses or supports them, nor does the absence of a service imply that NAS does not support them.

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Contents

Introduction

Early Years	
Education	
Support	
Leisure and Play	

Financial Support, Benefits & Housing

Mobility, Travel & Public Transport	
Health Services	
Information & Training	

Introduction

- **About this Information Pack**
- **Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)**
- **The National Autistic Society (NAS)**
- **NAS Tower Hamlets Autism Support**
- **National Autistic Society Autism Helpline**

About this Information Pack

This pack contains information that may be useful to parents and carers of children (aged 0 -19 years) with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) living in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

The pack has been put together and is maintained by the Family Support Worker at NAS Tower Hamlets, Autism Support.

The pack is organised into 10 sections. As you will see from the index, each section is on a different colour background to make it easier to find the information you need. Where it seemed helpful, the section has an introduction page. All other entries contain information about services and organisations that may be helpful to you, your family or your child. The entry will explain what the service or organisation does and then gives any other relevant information such as when and where their services run, whether the organisation provides transport and how to access the services they provide. The contact details for the service or organisation can always be found in the box at the bottom of the page.

This information pack has been compiled from information gained directly from the services and organisations whose details are included in it, or from information published by those services in information leaflets or on their website. Every care is taken to ensure that the information in this pack is accurate at the time of publishing but inaccuracies may nevertheless occur. If you discover any information which you believe to be inaccurate, please contact the Family Support Worker at NAS Tower Hamlets, Autism Support. Your assistance with this is greatly appreciated.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)

Autism (or an 'autism spectrum disorder' or 'ASD' as it will be called for short in this information pack) is a lifelong developmental disability. It is estimated to affect 1 in 100 people in the UK but due to the 'invisible' nature of the condition, it is still often misunderstood.

ASD, as the name suggests, is a spectrum disorder. This means that, while everyone with an ASD will have common difficulties, it affects different individuals very differently. Some people with an ASD will also have learning difficulties and very limited speech whilst others may have fluent speech and average or above average intelligence (or 'IQ'). Given this, some people with an ASD will be able to live relatively 'everyday' lives; others will require a lifetime of specialist support.

ASD includes a range of diagnoses including autism, Kanner (or 'classic') autism, Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) and Asperger syndrome.

All people with an ASD, no matter what their exact diagnosis, will have common difficulties in three main areas, sometimes called the 'triad of impairments':

1. Difficulty with social communication

People with ASD have difficulties with both verbal and non-verbal language. Many have a very literal understanding of language, and think people always mean exactly what they say.

It helps if other people speak in a clear, consistent and unambiguous way and give people with autism time to process what has been said to them.

2. Difficulty with social interaction

People with an ASD often have difficulty recognising or understanding other people's emotions and feelings, and expressing their own, which can make it more difficult for them to fit in socially. They may not understand the unwritten social rules which most of us pick up without thinking and prefer to spend time alone rather than seeking out the company of other people. They may also appear to behave 'strangely' or inappropriately, as it is not always easy for them to express feelings, emotions or needs.

3. Difficulty with social imagination

Social imagination allows us to understand and predict other people's behaviour, make sense of abstract ideas, and to imagine situations outside our immediate daily routine. Difficulties with social imagination mean that people with an ASD find it hard to understand and interpret other people's thoughts, feelings and actions and predict what will happen next, or what *could* happen next. It also means that they may not understand the concept of danger, for example that running on to a busy road poses a threat to them. Children with autism may enjoy some imaginative play but prefer to

act out the same scenes each time and many people with autism find it difficult to prepare for change and plan for the future or cope in new or unfamiliar situations.

Difficulties with social imagination should not be confused with a lack of imagination. Many people with autism are very creative and may be, for example, accomplished artists, musicians or writers.

With specialist education and structured support all people with an ASD can learn new skills and be supported in living rewarding lives and achieve their full potential.

Autism and Asperger syndrome are both autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). People with autism and Asperger syndrome therefore share the three common areas of difficulty listed above. However, people diagnosed with Asperger syndrome do not usually have the learning difficulties that are often displayed by people with autism.

People with Asperger syndrome are often very competent in their use of language and usually display average or above average intelligence. However, people with Asperger syndrome, like people with other ASDs, still find it difficult to understand non-verbal and non-literal verbal communication, have difficulty in building and maintaining social relationships and can often be unaware of other people's reactions and emotions.

For more information about ASDs and related issues contact the

National Autistic Society Autism Helpline:

0808 800 4104

Monday – Friday
10 am – 4 pm

Minicom: (0845) 070 4003
Email: autismhelpline@nas.org.uk

Or go to www.autism.org.uk

The National Autistic Society (NAS)

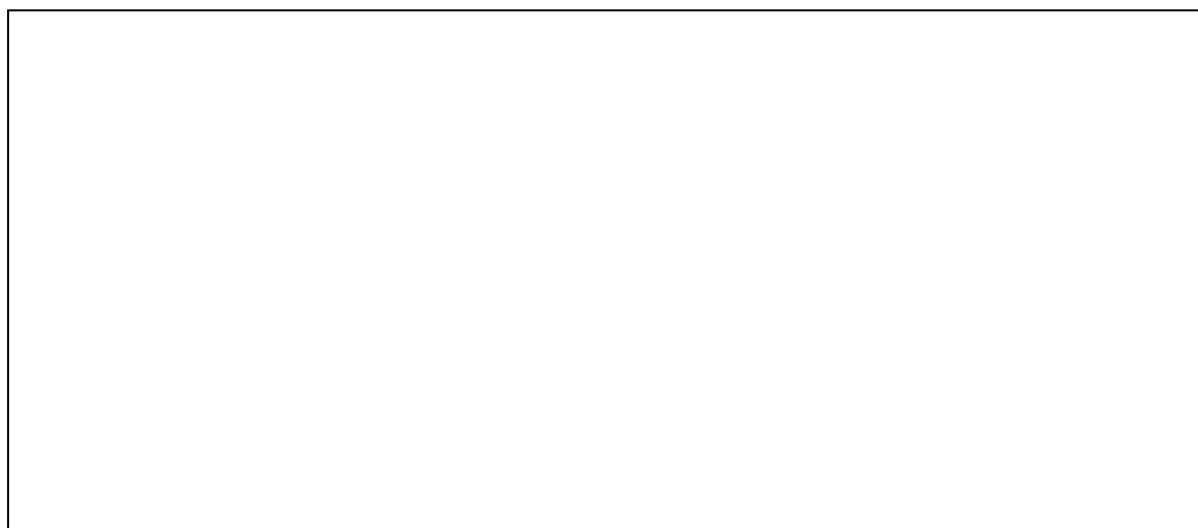
The National Autistic Society is a national charity that champions the rights of individuals with an ASD and their families.

As well as running schools, adult services for people with ASDs and family support projects, the National Autistic Society run several support and advice services, details of all of which can be found in this pack. These include:

- An Autism Helpline (see the previous entry)
- An Education Rights Service (see the *Education* section)
- A Welfare Rights Service (see the *Financial Support and Benefits* section)
- An Education Support Service (see the *Education* section)
- A Befriending Scheme (see the *Short Breaks and Respite* section)
- A Parent to Parent telephone contact line (see the *Support* section)
- An internet-based autism information database and search tool called Signpost (see the *Information and Training* section)

In addition the NAS do a lot of work with the government to try and improve provision and services for those with an ASD and their families. They also seek to raise awareness of ASDs and help people understand them better through research and campaigns.

Languages Spoken: English. Interpreters are available on request.



NAS Tower Hamlets Autism Support

NAS Tower Hamlets Autism Support is a project that is being run by the National Autistic Society in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (Integrated Services for Disabled Children) and PCT. We provide information, advice and support to the parents and carers of children and young people with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) living in the borough.

We can support any family with a child or children (aged between 0 and 19 years) with a diagnosis of ASD (including Asperger Syndrome), living in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. We aim to reach parents soon after diagnosis but support can be given at other times of need.

Some of the services we offer include:

- A home visit, as soon as requested after diagnosis, to meet families and discuss their needs and concerns
- Information and advice to help families learn more about ASDs and gain confidence in meeting their child's needs
- Information about local services appropriate to the needs of the family
- Support in accessing these services
- Ongoing telephone support if desired
- Seminars and workshops about ASDs that are tailored to the expressed needs of families
- A small lending library of books on ASDs and related topics

Languages Spoken: English. Interpreters are available on request. If you require an interpreter then when you telephone please provide your name and, in English, your telephone number, and the language required and we will call you back with an interpreter as soon as possible.

How to access this service: Families can contact the service directly or professional can make a referral on their behalf. Referrals from professionals should be made using the CAF form or relevant statutory assessment.

Contact Details

Contact: Family Support Worker

Telephone: 020 7377 8407
Mobile: 07717 701565
Email: thamssupport@nas.org.uk

Address: The Montefiore Centre
Hanbury St
LONDON
E1 6HZ

National Autistic Society Autism Helpline

The Autism Helpline provides impartial and confidential information and advice to people with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) and anyone associated with that person including family members, carers, teachers and health professionals. Helpline advisers are able to talk about a range of issues in depth and send out information packs and information sheets on a wide variety of key issues. They can also provide details of support in your local area. You can telephone or email your enquiry.

When: The telephone helpline opening hours are 10.00am – 4.00pm Monday to Friday. You can email with an enquiry at any time.

Languages Spoken: English plus there is access to a telephone interpretation service for callers whose first language is not English. To use this interpretation service call the helpline number and you will be asked to say your name, language, phone number and arrange a time when someone can call you back with an interpreter on the line.

Contact Details

Contact: Autism Helpline

Telephone: 0808 800 4104

Minicom: 0845 070 4003

Email: autismhelpline@nas.org.uk

Website: www.autismhelpline.org.uk/helpline

Address: National Autistic Society
Head Office
393 City Road
LONDON
EC1V 1NG

Early Years

- **Local Children's Centres**
- **Tower Hamlets Opportunity Group (THOG)**
- **Tower Hamlets Portage Service**
- **Toyhouse**
- **Early Years Network Tower Hamlets**
- **Tower Hamlets Early Years Service Inclusion Team –
Early Intervention Support Worker**
- **Tower Hamlets Early Years Service Inclusion Team –
Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinators**

Local Children's Centres

There are currently 20 Children's Centres in Tower Hamlets. Each of these will provide the following core services:

- Early learning opportunities including nursery education integrated with day care.
- Baby and toddler activities and stay and play sessions.
- Links to services for children with additional needs and disabilities (e.g. occupational therapy, speech and language therapy etc.).
- Outreach services to families in the area.
- Family support – including support for families of children with additional needs and provision and courses for fathers.
- Health services (e.g. antenatal care, advice on breast-feeding, weaning, diet, healthy eating etc.).
- A base and information point for community childcare services.
- Links with community nurseries, out of school clubs and extended schools.
- Links with local education, training and employment services and access to financial and employment advice.

Age Range: Families with children aged 0 – 5 years.

How to access this service: Families can contact their local children's centre directly and are always welcome to drop in to any children's centre to find out about the services on offer.

Contact Details

To find out where your nearest Children's Centre is and to get its contact details, contact the Family Information Service (FIS).

Contact: Family Information Service Manager / information officer

Telephone: 020 7364 6495

Fax: 020 7364 7943

Email: fis@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: Family Information Service
30 Greaporex Street
London
E1 5mp

Tower Hamlets Opportunity Group (THOG)

THOG are a play group that run inclusive play sessions. Children are welcome with any disability and / or additional need, including those with an ASD / speech and language difficulties / behavioural difficulties. A high staff to child ratio is always maintained and there are many different play activities for children to choose from.

When and where: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am – 12.30pm, Thursday 9am- 12noon at Around Poplar Children's Centre

Transport: THOG run a fully escorted transport service for children in the group with profound disabilities or additional needs or who are in need that covers all of Tower Hamlets. Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Age Range: 2 – 5 years

Languages Spoken: English

How to access this service: referrals can be made by a Social Worker, Health Visitor or other children's professional. Parents can also self-refer by requesting a place in writing. There is often a waiting list for places at this play group.

Contact Details

Contact: Lorraine Dooley, Project Co-ordinator
Kim May, Deputy Manager

Telephone: 020 7987 5167

Email: thog@btconnect.com

Website: www.thog.org.uk

Address: Around Poplar Sure Start Children's Centre
115 3 Colt St
LONDON
E14 8AP

Tower Hamlets Portage Service

Portage is a home teaching service for pre-school children with additional needs. Parents or carers are taught new skills, techniques and activities to practise with their child between home visits to help build on their child's abilities and aid their development.

Age Range: 0 – 5 years. Portage will only work with children who are not already in receipt of daily early years provision.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali and Sylheti. Interpreters available if required.

Transport: home visits.

How to access this service: Professionals can refer by using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or parents/ carers can contact the service direct.

Additional groups and services: A group session is held for the families on the waiting list and regular family events are organised.

Contact Details

Contact: Portage Managers (Joint) – Fawzia Hayton & Debbie Turner

Telephone: 020 7364 6491

Email: portage@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website: www.portage.org.uk

Address: Meath Gardens Children's Centre
1 Smart Street
London
E2 0SN

Toyhouse – Working with Families

Toyhouse Libraries Association Tower Hamlets provides support to families via inclusive play provision, toys and resources for young children and their carers to enjoy together. They run play sessions around Tower Hamlets and have a lending library of toys that children can borrow to extend the play at home. There is a mobile toy library service for referred children with special needs and their families.

Toyhouse runs projects offering stay & play sessions specifically for families living with children with disabilities and / or additional needs, as well as inclusive mainstream Stay & Play with Toy Library sessions – for those with any disability or with none - around the borough.

When and where:

Inclusive mainstream stay and play sessions, as well as those for children with additional needs and their siblings, run at various locations around the borough. Some run during the week and some run at weekends. Please contact Toyhouse Libraries for more information, or you can look on the Toyhouse website.

Please also contact them to find out where your nearest Toy Library sessions run.

Age range: Toyhouse run sessions for both under and over 5s.

Mondays – Baby group under 18 months

Wednesday mornings – 10am to 12pm – Drop in session

Transport: a free taxi service for those with mobility difficulties can be arranged for families referred to the special sessions.

Languages spoken: various incl. Bengali, Sylhetti, Somali, Japanese and some Eastern European languages.

How to access this service: Inclusive play sessions are open to all and families can just drop in. To access the Stay & Play sessions for children with disabilities and their siblings, a referral form must be filled in. This can be done by a professional or the family themselves. Please contact Toyhouse for a form.

Additional groups and services: see the Toyhouse entry in the *Leisure and Play* section.

Contact Details

Telephone: 020 7987 7399

Fax: 020 7537 1355

Email: info@toyhouse.org.uk

Website: www.toyhouse.org.uk

Address: The Toyhouse Centre
92 St Paul's Way
LONDON
E3 4AL

Early Years Network Tower Hamlets

The Early Years Network Tower Hamlets are an 'umbrella organisation' for under-fives groups in the voluntary sector in Tower Hamlets. They provide information to parents about local under-fives groups and also provide advice and support to new and existing groups. In addition they run some parent and toddler groups, holiday stay and play sessions, information days and training courses that aim to enhance the development and education of children under five by supporting parents to understand and meet the needs of their child or children. The Early Years Network also produce a monthly newsletter.

Age range: children under 5 years

When and where: various groups run during term time and school holidays in Tower Hamlets. Contact reception on the number below to find out what is running in your area. Opening hours are Monday – Friday, 10.00 am – 3.00 pm (term time only).

How to access this service: At most groups parents can just drop in. Please contact the Early Years Network for more information.

Contact Details

Name: Early Years Network Tower Hamlets

Tel: 020 7729 5074

Fax: 020 7729 5070

Email: admin@eynth.org.uk

Address: 15 Kelsey St
Bethnal Green
LONDON
E2 6HD

Tower Hamlets Early Years Service Inclusion Team

Early Intervention Support Worker

The Inclusion Team is part of Tower Hamlets Local Authority Early Years Service and is comprised of three Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinators (see next entry) and an Early Intervention Support Worker.

The Early Intervention Support Worker works with families of young children with disabilities and children with additional needs. Their work includes providing support to help families to access service such as stay and play groups, day nurseries and independent playgroups when children have not attended childcare provision.

The role of the Early Intervention Support Worker is to:

- contact and visit families in order to offer information, guidance and support about local services
- accompany and welcome families to services
- support families to access play and learning activities by working in partnerships with other organisations and agencies
- support transitions for children from home to early years setting / nursery school, to ensure that transitions are successful for individual children and families.
- liaise with other agencies in order to support the coordination of support for families

How to access this service: referrals must be made by a professional involved with the family.

Contact Details

Contact: Early Intervention support worker

Tel: 020 7364 6089

Address: Tower Hamlets Early Years Service
5th Floor
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 2BG

Tower Hamlets Early Years Service Inclusion Team

Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinators

The Inclusion Team is part of Tower Hamlets Local Authority Early Years Service and comprises of an Early Intervention Support Worker (see previous entry) and three Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinators.

The Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinators work with private, voluntary and independent early years settings, day nurseries and children's centres to develop their inclusive practice.

Each playgroup and day nursery will have a staff member who is the Inclusion Coordinator for that setting. They are responsible for working with parents to ensure the setting meets children's additional needs.

The Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinator's role includes:

- providing advice and guidance for staff and parents on supporting children with additional needs
- supporting the Inclusion Coordinator for the setting to work with parents to identify children's needs, plan approaches to help children and review progress
- support the Inclusion Coordinators to plan transitions from home to the setting and from the setting to school for children with additional needs
- liaise with other agencies in order to support the coordination of support for children with additional needs

If you plan for your child to attend, or he/she already attends, a **non-maintained early years setting** (one that is not funded by the Local Education Authority) and you would like support from the Inclusion Team then ask to speak to the Inclusion Coordinator **who works at the setting** and they can contact the Inclusion Team. For more information contact the Senior Early Years Area Inclusion Coordinator.

If your child attends a nursery school or a nursery class attached to a school - then you should ask to speak to the Inclusion Coordinator / SENCo **in the school** for help and support.

Contact Details

Name: Senior Early Years Inclusion Coordinator

Tel: 020 7364 4925

Address: Tower Hamlets Early Years Service
5th Floor, Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
LONDON
E14 2BG

Education

- **The Parents Advice Centre (PAC)**
- **Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs (SEN) Section**
- **Tower Hamlets Educational Psychology Service**
- **Tower Hamlets Pupil Services**
- **The Phoenix School**
- **Phoenix Outreach Team**
- **National Autistic Society Education Rights Service**
- **National Autistic Society Education Support Service**
- **Independent Panel for Special Education Advice (IPSEA)**

The Parents Advice Centre (PAC)

The Parent's Advice Centre (PAC) can give advice and support regarding the education of children with any special educational need (SEN). Normally parents / carers will be assigned a caseworker to help them with their particular issue or issues. Caseworkers can give you:

- Advice and information about SENs and the assessment process
- Help resolving any difficulties that arise relating to assessment or support your child receives
- Help in translating and understanding letters and written information
- Support with writing letters and filling in forms
- Support preparing for and going to school meetings (e.g. annual reviews).
- Information leaflets / videos / CDs about SENs
- Advice and support with appeals if your child is excluded from school

It is also possible to get an appointment to see an Educational Psychologist at the PAC to get advice about SEN.

When and where: Drop-in sessions run Tuesday and Friday 9:30am – 3pm at the centre. Sessions with an Educational Psychologist are by appointment only.

Languages Spoken: English, Somali, Bengali, Sylheti. Interpreters for other languages are available on request.

How to access this service: Parents / carers can go to a drop-in session on a Tuesday to see an advisor and will normally be assigned a caseworker. Otherwise parents or carers can contact PAC by telephone or email and book an appointment with an advisor or an Educational Psychologist.

Additional groups and services:

Parents Advice Centre (PAC) Tower Hamlets, Support Groups in the *Support* section.

Contact Details

Name: Please contact reception with your enquiry

Telephone: 020 7364 6489

Email: pac@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: 30 Greatorex Street
Whitechapel
LONDON
E1 5NP

National Autistic Society Education Rights Service

This telephone-based advocacy for education service provides information, support and advice on educational provision and entitlements to help guide parents and carers through education law and any difficult processes they have to go through related to the education of their child. Trained volunteers can also help parents prepare appeals to educational tribunals. You can telephone or email with your enquiry.

When: the telephone line is an answer phone service. Call any time and leave a message and an advisor will call you back as soon as possible.

Languages Spoken: English. Interpreters are available on request.

Contact Details

Name: Education Rights Service

Telephone: 0808 800 4102

Email: education.rights@nas.org.uk

Independent Parental for Special Education Advice **(IPSEA)**

IPSEA is a registered charity offering free and independent advice to parents of children with special educational needs in England and Wales. They can offer advice on:

- local authorities' legal duties to assess and provide for children with special educational needs
- exclusions of children with special needs/disabilities
- actions or inaction by local authorities and/or schools which discriminate against children with disabilities

And can offer support with:

- ensuring that the views of parents/carers are taken fully into account when their children's needs are assessed and decisions are made about their special education provision
- going to an special educational needs tribunal to appeal against a decision about special educational provision

IPSEA is a volunteer-based organisation and many of the volunteers providing telephone advice and Tribunal support are themselves parents of children with special educational needs who have been helped by IPSEA in the past.

Contact Details

Name: IPSEA

Telephone: 0800 0184016 (free advice line)

Office Telephone: 01799 582030

Fax: 01394 446577

Website: www.ipsea.org.uk

Address: IPSEA
Hunters Court
Debden Road
Saffron Walden
CB11 4AA

The Phoenix School

Phoenix is a non-selective state special community school for girls and boys. The school is a specialist school for pupils with language and communication difficulties and severe learning difficulties. The majority of pupils have been diagnosed with ASD. All classes are special classes for SEN pupils.

Phoenix School also run several services and groups, conferences and seminars that are open to anyone in Tower Hamlets who has a child with an ASD, not only those whose children attend the school. The best point of contact is to call the school and arrange to go along to the Parents Autism Support Group (see the Support section) that is held once a month. Please state if you will need to use the crèche service when attending this group.

Age Range: 3 - 19 years. Day pupils only.

Transport : a school mini bus service can be accessed for pick up and drop off if required.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali and Somali.

Additional groups and services:

See Phoenix Parents Autism Support Group in the *Support* section

See Phoenix ESOL classes in the Information and *Training* section

See Phoenix Outreach Team also in the *Education* section

Contact Details

Name: School Office

Telephone: 020 8980 4740

Email: admin@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Website: www.phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Address: 49 Bow Road
LONDON
E3 2AD

Phoenix Outreach Team

The Phoenix School (a special school for children with social and communication difficulties, including ASD) manage an outreach team that support the teaching and learning of children aged 3 – 16 with an ASD who are being educated in mainstream schools.

The team comprises specialist teachers and teaching assistants who will work directly with pupils and will also support teachers in finding appropriate strategies to meet these pupils' special educational needs successfully.

Children who have a statement of SEN will be seen at their school or early years setting by someone from the outreach team around four times per term.

Pupils who don't have a statement can still access support from this team. Schools who are educating such pupils should contact the team for advice and more information about training and support.

How to access this service: The Tower Hamlets SEN Section should refer all pupils with a diagnosis of ASD and a statement of SEN to this team. Parents of pupils who do not have a statement of SEN but who think their child might benefit from the support and involvement of this team at school should request that their child's school contact the outreach team directly.

Additional groups and services:

See Phoenix Parents Autism Support Group in the *Support* section

See Phoenix ESOL classes in the *Information and Training* section

See Phoenix School in the *Education* section

Contact Details

Name:	Outreach Coordinator
Tel:	020 8980 4740
Email:	admin@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Website:	www.phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Address:	The Phoenix School 49 Bow Rd LONDON E3 2AD

National Autistic Society Education Support Service

The Education Support Service (ESS) provides a specialist support service for people with autism aged 3 to 19 and those working with them in a range of educational settings.

Our team has extensive training and experience of working with children and young people with autism in a range of educational settings.

We provide:

- a bespoke service, with support tailored to meet the needs of each pupil. classroom or education setting
- advice on adapting the learning environment for pupils with autism
- support in raising attainment and increasing inclusion for pupils with autism and/or with social communication issues
- support to promote knowledge, understanding and skills for pupils with autism and/or with social communication issues
- opportunities for clients to observe teaching and learning in one of our own schools across the UK

The team offers three main areas of support:

1. Consultancy services

- development support programme for individual pupils or as part of a block placement over the year for a school or cluster of schools

Advice on

- creating an autism-friendly environment
- managing challenging behavior
- creating social skills and communication programmes
- target setting
- writing IEPs
- Curriculum development
- Support for transition

2. Training: We offer a range of trainings sessions, which may take the form of practical workshops that are tailored to your needs. Training sessions can be delivered according to areas identified for development and include, for example, making playtime autism-friendly, managing staff in the classroom or transition training.

3. Observation and assessment: Our assessments are designed to gauge the needs of pupils with autism and to support teaching and learning in their existing school placement. Assessments inform best practice for managing anxiety, addressing sensory issues and developing positive behaviour support strategies.

How to access this service: To find out more about this service or to discuss your specific needs please contact us at the details below.

Contact Details

1st Floor Central Chambers
109 Hope Street
Glasgow G2 6LL

Tel: 0141 285 7117

Fax: 0141 221 8118

Email: educationsupport@nas.org.uk

Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs (SEN) Section

This team is part of Tower Hamlets council and their role includes:

- Administration of the Statutory Assessment procedure for children with SEN
- Advice to parents, schools and other agencies on all matters relating to SEN
- Weekly Pre-Assessment and SEN panels
- Processing delegated Statement Support budget to schools and recoupment

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets SEN Section

Tel: 020 7364 4430

Fax: 020 7364 4303

Website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: 5th Floor
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
LONDON
E14 2BG

Tower Hamlets Educational Psychology Service

This is the team of educational psychologists in Tower Hamlets Council. They support schools in developing teaching strategies to help children reach their full academic potential, working especially to support and improve the achievement of those pupils who have special educational needs.

The service also:

- Provide regular drop-in sessions for parents at the Parents Advice Centre (details can be found later in this section)
- Run parenting groups and offer support to families through a partnership with Globe school
- Offer parenting programmes, in partnership with CAMHS and Adult Psychology, through local Children's Centres (details can be found later in this section)

Age range: Children aged 0 - 19 and their schools and families

Contact Details

Name: Educational Psychology Service

Tel: 020 7364 4323

Fax: 020 7364 3099

Website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: 5th Floor
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
LONDON
E14 2BG

Tower Hamlets Pupil Services

This team is part of Tower Hamlets council and their role includes:

- The admission of children into primary and secondary schools
- Secondary transfer applications to schools in the London and Home Counties area
- Primary co-ordinated admissions to Tower Hamlets Reception Classes
- Appeals against refusals of places at mainstream, state-maintained schools
- Exclusions from school – advice to parents and schools
- The Missing Children Register
- Home to school travel passes
- Home education

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets Pupil Services

Tel: 020 7364 5006

Fax: 020 7364 4311

Email: pupil.admissions@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: 4th Floor
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
LONDON
E14 2BG

Support

- **Phoenix Autism Support Group**
- **Aspergers and High Functioning Autism Parents' Group**
- **Families with Autism 'Coffee & Chat' Drop-in Mornings**
- **Borrow Books Drop-in Sessions**
- **The National Autistic Society Parent to Parent Scheme**
- **The Eva Armsby Family Centre and Outreach Service**
- **Sibs**
- **The Parents Advice Centre (PAC) Tower Hamlets Carer Support Groups**
- **Asian Parents Association for Special Educational Needs Tower Hamlets (APASENTH) Special Needs Support Service**
- **Bangladeshi Parent Advisor Service and Mothers' Support Groups**
- **London Buddhist Centre**
- **St Hilda's East Community Centre Support Groups**
- **Usha Mohila Somity (Bangladeshi Mothers with Disabled Children) Support Group**
- **Jewish Carers' Service**

Phoenix Autism Support Group

This is a support group for parents and carers of children and young people with an ASD. The group has many different speakers who come and talk to the group about various different topics relating to autism and parenting. Group members can suggest topics they would like to discuss and also get the chance to talk about their individual concerns with others.

When and where: Term time only, once per month on a Wednesday, 10.30am – 12.30pm at the Phoenix School. Contact the school or the NAS Tower Hamlets Family Support Worker to find out dates of forthcoming groups.

Languages spoken: English and Bengali – speakers will be interpreted.

How to access this service: if you wish to attend this group please contact the school to get dates for the term.

Additional groups and services:

A free crèche for young siblings is provided while the group runs. The parent's group coordinator MUST be informed in advance if this service is required.

See also:

Phoenix School in the *Education* section.

Phoenix Information and Communication (ICT) Classes in the *Information and Training* section

Phoenix English as a Second Language (ESOL) Classes in *Information and Training* section.

Contact Details

Name: Priti Chanda
Telephone: 020 8980 4740
Email: pchanda@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Website: www.phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Address: Phoenix School
49 Bow Rd
LONDON
E3 2AD

Asperger's / HFA Parents' Group

This group is for parents and carers of school-age children with Asperger syndrome (AS) or High Functioning Autism (HFA).

Parents get the chance to meet each other, share stories and concerns, share ideas about parenting a child with high functioning autism or Asperger syndrome and access information and advice from professionals. This safe space offers parents the chance to talk and / or listen to others who may be in a similar situation.

When and where: the first Tuesday of every month during term-time. 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm at the Osmani Centre. Please contact one of the organisers for a list of dates for this term.

Age Range: aimed at parents of children aged 5 – 19 years.

Languages Spoken: English. Interpreters are available on request if you contact the organisers in advance.

How to access this service: Parents can just come along to the group - no need to book places. Contact one of the group organisers below to get a list of dates for the term or

Contact Details

Name: Richmal Aigrot-Newman (NAS Tower Hamlets)
Telephone: 020 7377 8407
Mobile: 07717 701565
Email: thamssupport@nas.org.uk

OR

Name: Lois Simes (TH ASD Assessment Service)
Telephone: 020 8980 3510
Mobile: 07958 604021
Email: lois.simes@towerhamlets.gov.uk

OR

Name: Mary Rushe (Specialist teacher, Phoenix School ASD Outreach Team)
Telephone: 020 8980 4740
Email: sbrinton@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Address: The Osmani Centre
58 Underwood Road
London
E1 5AW

Families with Autism 'Coffee & Chat' Drop-in Mornings

Informal drop-in 'coffee and chat' support sessions for any family affected by autism spectrum disorder (ASDs) or similar developmental delay disorders. Parents, carers and other family members get the chance to meet other local families, share their tips or experiences and get some support from others who understand.

Families with Autism are a group of parents / carers of people with ASDs. As well as running the drop-in sessions they also produce a quarterly news letter – written by, and for, Tower Hamlets families affected by ASDs. This can be obtained from many local idea stores, children's centres and libraries, or you can be put on an electronic mailing list to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter by email. Copies are also available from NAS Tower Hamlets Autism Support - see the *Introduction* section.

Age Range: family members of any age are welcome.

Languages Spoken: various depending on who attends.

How to access this service: parents and other family members can just drop in.

Contact Details

Name: Families with Autism

Telephone: 020 7613 1719 (answer phone only)

Email: fwautism@btinternet.com

Address: Postal Address Only:

Families with Autism
C/o The Phoenix School
49 Bow Rd
E3 2AD

Borrow Books Drop-in Sessions

Drop-in sessions where parents can read and borrow books and DVDs on ASDs and related topics and from a small lending library and buy second-hand books to read with their child.

When and where: By appointment.

Age Range: parents / carers of children aged 0 – 19 years.

Languages Spoken: English.

How to access this service: parents and other family members can just drop in.

Please note: Up to 3 books and DVDs can be borrowed free of charge for 2 weeks. However, we do require parents to leave a deposit of £10 (either cash or a cheque) that will be fully refunded when the book is returned.

Contact Details

Contact: Family Support Worker

Telephone: 020 7377 8407
Mobile: 07717 701565
Email: thamssupport@nas.org.uk

Address: The Montefiore Centre
Hanbury St
Whitechapel
E1 5HZ

The National Autistic Society Parent to Parent Scheme

Parent to Parent is a 24-hour confidential telephone support service run by the National Autistic Society (NAS). Trained parent volunteers, who have personal experience of autism spectrum disorders (ASDs), provide this support service. The service is for parents or carers of children with autism who would like to speak to someone who might be in a similar situation.

When: parents / carers can call the freephone number at any time and leave a message. A parent volunteer will phone back as soon as possible.

Languages Spoken: English. Some volunteers may speak other languages too. Please contact Nicole Rae to enquire about current volunteers who speak other languages.

Contact Details

Parent to Parent Line
0808 800 4106

Enquiries only:

Name: Nicole Rae
Telephone: 0115 847 3516
Email: Nicole.rae@nas.org.uk
Address: National Autistic Society
Castle Heights
72 Maid Marian Way
Notts
NG1 6BJ

DCOS (Disabled Children's Outreach Service)

Working in partnership with Social Services, this family centre runs various **projects, services, groups and play sessions** aimed at strengthening families and supporting parents in the Tower Hamlets community, including families in difficulty or crisis.

As well as groups and sessions at the centre, Eva Armsby also run an **outreach service for disabled children and young people**. Outreach workers are able to come to the child's home for a period of 6 – 24 weeks and offer parents support with things such as gaining a better understanding of their child's disability, managing difficult behaviour, being consistent and setting boundaries, improving family relationships, feeling more confident about parenting a child with a disability and also to give advice and support to families around sleep management where sleep problems are identified that may be linked to behavioural difficulties.

When and Where: The centre hosts and facilitates many groups; please contact reception for current timetables.

Languages Spoken: English and Bengali. Translators are available on request.

How to access this service: Families can self-refer or just drop in to **groups**. Please check that any group you wish to attend is still running and has spaces available. Places are normally allocated on a first-come, first-served basis so arrive early to avoid disappointment.

To access support from the **outreach service** a family must be referred by a professional via the funding panel, usually a social worker or specialist teacher.

Contact Details

Name: Please contact reception with your enquiry

Telephone: 020 7364 3015

Fax: 020 7780 9605

Address: DCOS (Disabled Children's Outreach Service
Integrated Services for Children with Disabilities)
Mulberry Place
Clove Crescent
London E14 2BG

Sibs

Sibs is a UK charity for people who have a disabled brother or sister.

Siblings have specific needs that require attention at different stages of their lives, including relief of isolation, information, and strategies for coping with the situations they find themselves in. SibS provide information and support, and work to influence service provision for siblings throughout the UK.

The SibS website is a very useful resource for parents and siblings as well as professionals who come into contact with the siblings of disabled children and adults. Parents can sign up to receive newsletters and a weekly tip (go to the 'contact us' section of the website or telephone SibS on the number below). SibS also provide advice and support for those wishing to set up a siblings group.

Age Range: any.

Contact Details

Name: SibS

Telephone: 01535 645453
Email: info@sibs.org.uk

Website: www.sibs.org.uk

Address: Meadowfield
Oxenhope
West Yorkshire
BD22 9JD

The Parents Advice Centre (PAC) Tower Hamlets Carer Support Groups

Several parent / carer support groups currently meet at the Parents Advice Centre. These provide a chance for parents of children with special educational needs to meet each other, voice their concerns and hear from different expert speakers.

SEN Parents Group

This group meets every week and is run by two parent volunteers. They invite a speaker most weeks. The group meets on Thursday mornings 10am-12pm. Contact reception for more information.

Somali Parents Group

This group meets once per term and is for the parents and carers of children with special educational needs from the Somali community. Each meeting a different topic is discussed. Contact reception and ask to speak to Nadia Hassan for more information.

Bangladeshi Parents Group

This group meets every second Tuesday of the month (10am-12pm) and is for the parents and carers of children with special educational needs from the Bangladeshi community. Each meeting a different topic is discussed. Contact reception for more information.

Epilepsy Group

This group meets once per term. Contact reception for more information.

Additional groups and services: Young children can normally use a playroom during all group meetings.

See also Parents Advice Centre (PAC) the *Education* section.

Contact Details

Name: Please contact reception with your enquiry.

Telephone: 020 7364 6489

Fax: 020 7364 4300

Email: pac@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: Parents Advice Centre
30 Greatorex Street
Whitechapel
LONDON
E1 5NP

Asian Parents Association for Special Educational Needs Tower Hamlets (APASENTH) Special Needs Support Service

The Special Needs Support Service at APASENTH can provide a range of support and advice tailored to the needs of Asian / Bangladeshi parents living in Tower Hamlets.

Services include:

- information about other relevant services in Tower Hamlets
- interpreting and translation for parents and carers
- attending meetings and reviews with parents

You can telephone and book an appointment.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, Sylheti and other Bangladeshi dialects.

How to access this service: Parents or carers can contact APASENTH Special Educational Needs service directly or a friend or professional can do this on their behalf.

Additional groups and services:

APASENTH Welfare Rights Service in the *Financial Support and Benefits* section.

APASENTH Short Breaks Services in the *Short Breaks* Section

Contact Details

Name: Special Needs Support Worker

Telephone: 020 7001 2266

Email: info@apasenth.org.uk

Website: www.apasenth.org.uk

Address: Carmine Wharf
30 Copenhagen Place
LONDON
E14 7FF

Bangladeshi Parent Advisor Service and Mothers' Support Groups

The Bangladeshi Parent Advisor Service is part of the Community Learning Disability Service based at Mile End Hospital. The role of the parent advisor is to provide support to any parents from the Bangladeshi community who have a child with a learning disability. They are able to offer emotional support and do things like attend medical appointments or other appointments, talk through parents' concerns and help them to make plans to overcome any difficulties they may face. Parent advisors can also give information about groups and activities in the community relevant to a particular family.

The Bangladeshi Parent Advisor Service runs two Bangladeshi Mothers Support Groups for the mothers that they work with.

When and where: the mothers' support groups run as follows:

- Tuesdays at the John Smith Children's Centre, 9.00 am – 12.30 pm
- Wednesdays at the Parents Advice Centre on Harford St, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Contact the Bangladeshi Parent Advisor service for more information about these groups.

How to access this service: Parents can contact the Bangladeshi Parent Advisors Service directly or a friend or professional can make a referral on their behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Bangladeshi Parent Advisors

Telephone: 020 8121 4444

Email: btl-tr.learningdisability@nhs.net

Address: 2nd Floor Beaumont House
Mile End Hospital
Bancroft Rd
LONDON
E1 4DG

London Buddhist Centre

The London Buddhist Centre runs drop-in social and stress management meditation sessions for carers - called Breathing Space sessions – as well as general meditation sessions and retreats for carers.

When and where:

Drop-in meditation sessions run at the centre at the following times:

Monday to Saturday, 1.00 pm – 2.00pm

Tuesday 11:15-12:45 (free relaxation session for carers)

Wednesdays, 10.20am – 12.30pm

Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, 7.15pm – 9.45pm

Friday evenings, 7pm – 9.45pm

Please contact the centre to find out which of these are Breathing Space sessions for carers and which are general meditation sessions.

Languages Spoken: English.

How to access this service: You can contact the London Buddhist Centre directly or just drop in.

Additional groups and services:

See the London Buddhist Centre in the *Short Breaks* section for information about retreats for carers.

<http://www.breathingspacelondon.org.uk/help-for-carers/mbsr-at-breathing-space/>

Contact Details

Name: The London Buddhist Centre

Telephone: 0845 458 4716

Email: info@lbc.org.uk

Website: <http://www.lbc.org.uk/>

Address: 51 Roman Rd
Bethnal Green
LONDON
E2 0HU

Usha Mohila Somity (Bangladeshi Mothers with Disabled Children) Support Group

This women-only support group runs drop in sessions twice a week. These sessions provide an opportunity for Bangladeshi women to meet other mothers from their community who have a child or children with a disability. The group runs relaxation and leisure activities for example, massage sessions and trips to places of interest, as well as information and training sessions such as childcare advice sessions, relevant guest speakers or advice on healthy living. There are also opportunities for discussion with other parents.

When and where: Term time only.

Drop in sessions:

Wednesdays 9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.

Thursdays 9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.

Sessions are at the Qalb Discovery Home (address below) unless otherwise arranged.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali and Sylheti.

How to access this service: Open to mothers or carers of children with any disability. Please contact Sajida Chowdhury directly or a friend or professional can contact her on your behalf.

Additional groups and services:

Qalb Discovery Home in the *Short Breaks* section.

Contact Details

Name: Usha Mohila Somity Group

Telephone: 020 7375 2792

Email: office@discoveryhome.biz

Address: 31-33 Spelman St
LONDON
E1 5LQ

St Hilda's East Community Centre Support Groups

St Hilda's East Community Centre runs a women's project called 'Boundary' with sessions for women including ESOL classes, a women's forum and women's exercise classes. The project especially aim to reach women from the Bangladeshi community who might have become isolated or are suffering from mental health difficulties such as depression.

St Hilda's East also run legal advice sessions on Tuesday evenings, 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm.

A crèche is available for children while parents attend sessions or groups at the centre.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali and Sylheti.

How to access this service: Families / women can self-refer or just drop in to groups. Referrals can also be made by professionals. Please contact the centre for more information.

Additional groups and services:

St Hilda's East Community Centre Play Sessions in the *Play and Leisure* section.

Contact Details

Name: Women's Worker

Telephone: 020 7 739 8066

Fax: 020 7729 5172

Website: www.sthildas.org.uk

Address: 18 Club Row
Bethnal Green
LONDON
E2 7EY

Jewish Carers Service

This organisation is a charity that supports carers of the Jewish faith, including those caring for children with disabilities. They can offer culturally sensitive support groups, telephone advice and support and sometimes can offer home visits for carers from a support worker. In addition they run residential care homes, day care centres and supported accommodation.

How to access this service: Referrals (including self-referrals) are made via the organisation's helpline, Jewish Care Direct.

Contact Details

Telephone: 020 8922 2222 (Jewish Care Direct Helpline)

Telephone: 020 8455 4550 (Family Carers' Service – enquiries only)

Email: jcdirect@jcare.org

Website: www.jewishcare.org

Address: 2-8 Beaumont Grove
Stepney
LONDON
E1 4NQ

Leisure and Play

- **Tower Hamlets Family Information Service (FIS)**
- **Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH)**
- **Toyhouse - Working with Families**
- **Somali Parents and Children Play Association**
- **Attlee Youth and Community Centre Saturday and Holiday Play Project**
- **St Hilda's East Community Centre Play Sessions**
- **Autism-Friendly Cinema**
- **Swimming Lessons Mile End Park Leisure Centre**
- **Urban Adventure Club Siblings Group and Young Carers Club**
- **Disability Sports Activities**

Tower Hamlets Family Information Service (FIS)

Tower Hamlets Family Information Service provide information about childcare, play, leisure, education and out-of-school opportunities for 0 – 20 year olds.

The Family Information Service keep a database of extended schools and holiday play schemes – run by the Tower Hamlets Youth Service – as well as information on youth clubs and leisure activities run by voluntary and independent organisations. If you contact the FIS they can send you a personalised list of holiday schemes, youth groups and other out-of-school leisure activities in your area, appropriate to the age and needs of you or your child.

Limited funding is available through the Youth Service for additional support for children with a disability or additional need, to enable them to access these services.

Languages Spoken: English and Bengali. Translators are available on request.

How to access this service: families can contact the Family Information Service directly or someone may do so on their behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Information Officer

Telephone: 020 7364 6495
Fax: 020 7364 7943
Email: fis@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: 5th Floor
Town Hall
Mulberry place
5 Clove Crescent
LONDON
E14 2BG

Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH)

Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH) promote and support inclusive play throughout Tower Hamlets. Contact them for information on play facilities suitable for children with an ASD, or any other disability, and their siblings.

PATH can also offer advice on creating inclusive play opportunities on your doorstep, including tips about working with teenagers and adults to help the whole community support play. They are also able to offer design guidance for inclusive playable spaces in any setting.

A map of play facilities in the borough can be found on their website.

When and where: PATH staff can be contacted 9am-5pm, Monday - Friday

Transport: families must arrange their own transport to play sessions.

Age Range: 5-16 years

Languages Spoken: English, and a variety of community languages.

How to access this service: Parents and carers wishing to find out more about play in Tower Hamlets should contact PATH directly or a friend or professional can make contact on their behalf.

Contact Details

Name: PATH

Telephone: 020 7729 3306

Email: info@playtowerhamlets.org.uk

Website: www.playtowerhamlets.org.uk

Address: PATH
Oxford House
Derbyshire St
LONDON
E2 6HG

Toyhouse - Working with Families

Toyhouse Libraries Association Tower Hamlets provides support to families via inclusive play provision, toys and resources for young children and their carers to enjoy together. They run play sessions around Tower Hamlets and have a lending library of toys that children can borrow to extend the play at home. There is a mobile toy library service for referred children with special needs and their families.

Toyhouse runs projects offering stay & play sessions specifically for families living with children with disabilities and / or additional needs, as well as inclusive mainstream Stay & Play with Toy Library sessions – for those with any disability or with none - around the borough.

When and where:

Inclusive mainstream stay and play sessions, as well as those for children with additional needs and their siblings, run at various locations around the borough. Some run during the week and some run at weekends. Please contact Toyhouse Libraries for more information, or you can look on the Toyhouse website.

Please also contact them to find out where your nearest Toy Library sessions run.

Age range: Toyhouse run sessions for both under and over 5s.

Transport: a free taxi service can be arranged for families referred to the special sessions for those with mobility difficulties.

Languages spoken: various incl. Bengali, Sylheti, Somali, Japanese and some Eastern European languages.

How to access this service: Inclusive play sessions are open to all and families can just drop in. To access the Stay & Play sessions for children with disabilities and their siblings, a referral form must be filled in. This can be done by a professional or the family themselves. Please contact Toyhouse for a form.

Additional groups and services: see the Toyhouse entry in the *Early Years* section

Contact Details

Telephone: 020 7987 7399
Fax: 020 7537 1355
Email: info@toyhouse.org.uk

Website: www.toyhouse.org.uk

Address: The Toyhouse Centre
92 St Paul's Way
LONDON
E3 4AL

Somali Parents and Children Play Association

The Somali Parents and Children Play Association are there to support parents from a Somali background living in Tower Hamlets. They run play sessions that are open to everyone as well as Saturday play sessions for children with special needs in Mile End Park. Children with an ASD or behavioural difficulties are welcome. Parents may stay and play or possibly leave children for the duration of the session depending on staff to child ratios and children's specific needs.

When and Where: Play sessions for children with special needs are in Mile End Park on Saturdays 12:30pm-2:30pm

Age Range: 8 – 16 yrs for any play where parents wish to leave their child.

Transport: parents must provide their own transport.

Languages Spoken: English and Somali.

How to access this service: please contact the Somali Parents and Children Play Association directly if you wish to attend sessions to discuss your child's particular needs in advance.

Contact Details

Name: Somali Parents and Children Play Association

Telephone: 0203 730 269

Mobile: 07946 835 849

Email: spcplay@ yahoo.co.uk

Address: Somali Parents and Children Play Association
102 Mile End Road,
London
E1 4UN

Attlee Youth and Community Centre Saturday and Holiday Play Project

Integrated play sessions run by trained play workers for children with any disability and those with none. A new activity centre offers the chance to do indoor play activities such as arts and crafts as well as outdoor activities including football, adventure play and many others. The group also hope to organise trips for the young people who attend.

Parents and young people will meet with the playworkers before attending a session to discuss the young person's needs and interests. For those children with a high level of behavioural difficulties parents will be asked to stay and support them during the sessions.

When and where:

Saturdays: 11.30 am – 3.30 pm at Attlee Youth and Community Centre.

Holidays: times vary, please contact Attlee Youth and Community Centre.

Transport : the group have a mini bus available to pick up and drop off a limited number of children each week.

Languages Spoken: English and Bengali (interpreters available on request)

How to access this service: a professional must refer children / young people to this group. Please contact Sereena Keymatlian for more information on referrals.

Contact Details

Name: Saturday Play Project Coordinator

Telephone: 020 7375 3212

Email: info@attlee.org.uk

Website: www.attlee.org.uk

Address: Attlee Youth and Community Centre
5 Thrawl St
LONDON
E1 6RT

St Hilda's East Community Centre Play Sessions

St Hilda's East Community Centre run two play / youth projects. The project s especially aim to reach and support families from the Bangladeshi community but are open to those from any background.

1. Surjamuki (Sunflower) Project. The project includes an after-school / youth club and Saturday club for young people with mild-moderate leaning and physical disabilities. Children with autism are welcome. Activities include creative workshops, indoor / outdoor sports and regular outings

When: Wednesdays 5.00 am – 9.00 pm
Saturdays 10.00am – 5.00 pm

Age range: 11 – 24 yrs

How to access this service: Parents can contact the project directly to self-refer or a social worker or other professional can do so on your behalf.

2. 'Empower Boys' Project. This project is a group for boys only and is not disability-specific but welcomes those with a disability and those without. Activities include sports, trips, outdoor recreation and games workshops and arts activities. The aim of the project is for boys to break down personal barriers and learn new skills through fun activities.

When: Saturdays 4:45pm-7:30pm
Age range: boys aged 11- roughly 13 years

How to access this service: Families or young people can refer themselves to the Empower Boys project or a friend or professional can do so on their behalf.

Additional Groups and services: See St Hilda's East Community Centre in the *Support* section.

Contact Details

Name: St Hilda's East Community Centre

Telephone: 0207 739 8066

Website: www.sthildas.org.uk

Address: 18 Club Row
Bethnal Green
E2 7EY

Autism-Friendly Cinema

Several cinemas in London are now running autism-friendly screenings of children's films. The sounds track is played at a lower level to suit those hyper-sensitive to sounds and sudden loud noises. Low-level lighting remains on throughout the screening and no-one minds if viewers make noise, move around or go out for breaks during the film.

Stratford Picture House Cinema runs a kids' club on Saturday mornings that now includes autism-friendly screenings.

When: on the first Saturday of each month at 11.00am.

Prices: £3 for everyone

Greenwich Picture House and **Ritzy Picture House Cinema** (in Brixton) and some other cinemas also run autism-friendly screenings.

When: various dates during school holidays. Please use the contact details below to find out about forthcoming screenings.

Prices: £2.50 per person (no concession for accompanying adults).

Contact Details

Name: Picture House Cinemas

Telephone: 0207 326 2611
Box Office: 0870 7550 065

Website: www.picturehouses.co.uk

Address: Stratford Picture House
Theatre Square
Salway Road
LONDON
E15 1BX

Swimming Lessons

Mile End Park Leisure Centre

The Mile End Park Leisure Centre runs free, after-school swimming lessons for children and young people with disabilities. Those with an ASD are welcome. Three instructors will be present but if participants have difficulty following instructions without support a parent or carer must support the child or young person in the water.

When and where: Term-time: Wednesdays 6.00pm – 6.30pm.
School holidays: contact Simon Butler for information about similar lessons during school holidays.

Age Range: Lessons for beginners, approximately 6 – 14 years.

Languages Spoken: English

How to access this service: Parents or carers wishing their children to attend these swimming sessions should ring the Community Sports Coach or a friend or professional can do so on their behalf. There is usually a short waiting list for this service.

Additional groups and services:

Siblings are welcome to join their brother / sister in the pool but only to support rather than to receive swimming instruction themselves. Otherwise they are welcome to attend free activities in the Sports hall between 6.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.

Contact Details

Name: Simon Butler

Telephone: 0207 364 3126

Mobile: 07984 015 813

Email: simon.butler@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/sports

OR

Website: <http://www.gll.org/centre/mile-end-park-leisure-centre.asp>

Address: Mile End Park Leisure Centre
190 Burdett Road
Mile End
LONDON

Urban Adventure Club Siblings Group and Young Carers Club

The Urban Adventure Club offers various after-school and holiday activities that may be appropriate for brothers and sisters of a child with an ASD. In particular they run Siblings Group and a Young Carers Club.

The Siblings Group is a youth club that aims to reach the brothers and sisters of children with a disability, especially an ASD. The club offers siblings the chance to spend time with other youngsters their age and enjoy activities such as climbing, canoeing, archery, skateboarding and many others. They will also get the chance to talk about their experiences of having a disabled sibling and learn to support each other. Sibling groups can often be a very positive experience for the brothers and sisters of a child with autism and frequently lead to the making of firm friends.

The Young Carers Club may also be open to siblings who help to care for their brother or sister with ASD, or those who care for a sick or disabled parent.

Age Range: 8 – 19 years.

When and Where:

Siblings Group: Mondays 6.30 – 8.30, Urban Adventure Base, Mile End Park.

Young Carers Club: Tuesdays 5.30 pm – 8.30 pm Urban Adventure Base, Mile End Park.

Other groups and activities run on other nights of the week and some outings and activities are run during the holidays. Contact the Base to get more information.

How to access this service: Parents / carers should contact Helen Denny or another youth worker at the centre to get a consent form that must be completed and returned before children / young people can attend.

Contact Details

Name: Senior Youth Worker - Adventure Projects

Telephone: 020 7364 0925

Email: Helen.denny@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: The Urban Adventure Base
150 Burdett Rd
Mile End Park
LONDON
E3 4JT

Disability Sports Activities

Tower Hamlets provide a range of sports groups and activities for children and young people with disabilities including those with an ASD.

Athletics

Age range: 8+ years

When: Saturdays (term-time only) 11.30am–12.30pm (8-16 year olds),

Where: Mile End Stadium

How to access: Parents/carers should contact Simon Butler (see contact details below)

Indoor Athletics

Age range: 9-16 years

Please contact Simon Butler for more information.

Swimming

When: Wednesday 6.00pm – 6.30pm

6.30pm- 7.00pm

7.00pm- 7:30 pm (adults)

Age range: 6-16+ years

Where: Training pool

Mile End Park Leisure Centre

How to access: Time slots depend on ability. Parents/carers should contact Simon Butler.

Contact Details

Name: Simon Butler (Active Community Coordinator)

Telephone: 0207 364 3126

Mobile: 07984 015 813

Email: simon.butler@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/sports

Financial Support, Benefits and Housing

- **Introduction**
- **National Autistic Society Welfare Rights Service**
- **Tower Hamlets Law Centre**
- **The Parents Advice Centre (PAC) Claim the Max**
- **Bethnal Green Rights Shop**
- **The Limehouse Project**
- **Island Advice Centre**
- **Bromley-by-Bow Centre Welfare Rights Service**
- **APASENTH Welfare Rights Service**
- **The Disability Alliance**
- **Working Families**

Introduction

As a family caring for a child with a disability you or your child may be entitled to various benefits, services and grants over and above those you might ordinarily receive.

The main benefits, grants and services relating to your status as the family of a child with a disability are:

- Disability Living Allowance
- Family Fund Grants
- Carer's allowance
- Services or direct payments from children's social services to help you meet your child's care needs (for more info see *the Short Breaks and Respite* section).

Benefits you might also be entitled to include:

- Child tax credit
- Child Benefit (everyone with a child is entitled to this)
- Working tax credit
- Income support
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit

There are many different organisations that can help you working out which benefits to apply for and when and how to apply. Some of these will also help you to fill in and send off the relevant forms and some can also offer advice or support with housing issues. The main organisations that can offer this kind of help in Tower Hamlets are listed over the following pages.

Sometimes a social worker would also be able to help you with claiming any benefits you are entitled to.

A useful website is the Directory for People Living with Disability in Tower Hamlets that lists organisations that can offer support around benefits as well as other issues such as housing, health and transport. The website address is:

www.lddirectory.org.uk

National Autistic Society Welfare Rights Service

The NAS operates a welfare rights service providing telephone advice and support in all aspects of social security benefit entitlement. This includes advice on which benefits you may be entitled to, help in completing claim forms, what to do if you think a decision is wrong and how to appeal to a tribunal. You can telephone the autism helpline to arrange a telephone appointment with the welfare rights advisor or you can email with your enquiry. Alternatively you can fill in an enquiry form on the website.

When: the Autism helpline is open for telephone enquiries from 10.00 am – 4.00pm Monday – Friday. Someone at the helpline will take some details and arrange a telephone appointment with the welfare rights advisor.

Email or online enquiries can be made at any time. If you have an email enquiry it would be helpful if you could say the name of the benefit you are enquiring about and make your enquiry as detailed as possible.

Languages Spoken: English. If you require an interpreter then please call and give your name and, in English, your telephone number and a convenient time for an advisor to call you back and an advisor will then call with an interpreter on the line.

Contact Details

Name: Welfare Rights Service

Telephone: 0808 800 4104

Email: welfarerights@nas.org.uk

Address: Welfare Rights Service
National Autistic Society
Head Office
393 City Road
LONDON
EC1V 1NG

Tower Hamlets Law Centre

The Tower Hamlets Law Centre has specialist advisors in the following areas of Law: Housing, Immigration, Welfare benefits, Debt, Education and Employment & Discrimination.

You have to be screened before an appointment is offered. An eligibility test will also be carried out to check if we can assist you under Legal Aid.

Sessions: Please call and check what drop-in sessions are available.

An evening advice session runs each Monday starting from 6:30pm which alternates fortnightly between housing advice and employment advice – please call to check and confirm session is still running.

The Law centre does not offer a form-filling in service, except for disability living allowance and attendance allowance forms – You must be screened and book an appointment for this service.

Opening Hours are 10:00am -2pm
Evening Advice session 6:30pm- 8pm

How to access this service: Contact the centre directly or a friend or professional can do so on your behalf. You will be screened and then contacted if it is something they can provide legal advice on.

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets Law Centre

Telephone: 020 7247 8998

Fax: 020 7247 9424

Email: info@thlc.co.uk

Website: www.thlc.co.uk

Address: Tower Hamlets Law Centre
214 Whitechapel Rd
LONDON
E1 1BJ

The Parents Advice Centre (PAC)

Claim the Max

Every week an advisor from Claim the Max is present at the PAC. This advisor can advise parents / carers about benefits entitlements and can offer help with filling in claim forms.

When and Where: Monday mornings at the centre. Appointments only. Please telephone ahead to book for appointment.

Languages Spoken: English. Translators are available on request.

How to access this service: You can contact PAC directly or a friend or professional can do so on your behalf. Please be aware that there is often a waiting list for this service.

Additional groups and services:

Parents Advice Centre (PAC) in the *Education* section.

Parents Advice Centre (PAC) Tower Hamlets Support Groups in the *Support* section.

Contact Details

Name: PAC reception

Telephone: 020 7364 6489

Email: pac@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: Parents Advice Centre
30 Greatorex Street
Whitechapel
LONDON
E1 5NP

Bethnal Green Rights Shop

The Bethnal Green Rights Shop offer advice on welfare rights, benefits and money.

When and Where:

- **Telephone advice** can be offered Monday to Thursday, 10.00 am – 12.00 pm
- **Drop-in advice sessions** at the Rights Shop run on Mondays and Wednesdays 9.30am - 1.30pm
- **Advice sessions by appointment** can be arranged for Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Please call during the telephone advice line opening hours to book and appointment.

Languages Spoken: English and Bengali.

How to access this service: You can contact the rights shop directly or a friend or professional can do so on your behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Bethnal Green Rights Shop

Telephone: 020 7739 4173 – Islington rights 02075613685

Fax: 020 7613 3758

Address: 296 Bethnal Green Road
LONDON
E2 0AG

The Limehouse Project

The Limehouse project can give advice on many issues including all benefits and housing. The project aims to "alleviate the difficulties and help realise the aspirations of the most deprived members of the local communities, particularly those of ethnic minority origin, women, young people and children.

Services available:

- Support in understanding which benefits you are entitled to
- Support filling in benefits claim forms
- Help and advice surrounding bills, debts etc
- Advice and information about housing, housing benefit and council tax
- Legal advice

When and Where: The advice service is primarily delivered from two main sites – Hartford Street Multicentre and Cheadle Hall (addresses below).

- **Telephone advice is available as follows:**
St Anne's - Tuesday and Thursday 2pm - 5pm
- **Drop-in advice sessions are run as follows:**
Harford Street Multicentre – Mondays and Wednesdays 9.30am -1pm
St Anne's – Tuesdays 9.30am -1pm

People will be seen on a first come, first served basis so it's best to arrive early. Home visits cannot be offered.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, Urdu and Arabic.

How to access this service: You can contact the Limehouse Project directly or a friend or professional can do so on your behalf.

Contact Details

Name:	St Anne's	Harford Street Multicentre
Telephone:	020 7538 0075	020 7780 3110
Fax:	020 7537 7725	
Address:	St. Anne's 791 Commercial Road London E14 7GB	Harford Street Multicentre 1 st floor 15 Harford Street London E1 4FS
Website:	www.limehouseproject.org.uk	
Website:	www.limehouseproject.org.uk	

Island Advice Centre

The Island Advice Centre offer advice for the local community on a range of issues, including housing, benefits, debt, employment, immigration, consumer and legal issues

Services available:

- Support in understanding which benefits you are entitled to
- Support filling in benefits claim forms
- Help and advice surrounding bills, debts etc
- Advice and information about housing, housing benefit and council tax.
- Advice and information about immigration and related issues

When and Where:

- **Telephone advice** is available all day Monday, Tuesday and Fridays 10am-12pm

- **Drop-in advice sessions** run as follows:

WELFARE BENEFITS - Wednesdays 10am to 12pm

DEBT AND HOUSING - Friday 10am to 12pm

Appointment sessions are run in the afternoons at some GP surgeries in Tower Hamlets. Please contact Island advice on the number below for more information and to book an appointment.

Home visits are occasionally possible if family circumstances make it very difficult to come in to advice sessions.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, Sylheti and Somali.

How to access this service: You can contact Island Advice Centre Directly or a friend or professional can do so on your behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Island Advice Centre

Telephone: 020 7987 9379

Fax: 020 7093 0075

Email: admin@island-advice.org.uk

Website: www.island-advice.org.uk

Address: Island House
Roserton Street
LONDON
E14 3PG

Bromley-By-Bow Centre Welfare Rights Service

Bromley-by-Bow welfare rights officers provide an advice and advocacy services for users of the centre and those living nearby.

Services available:

- Information and advice about benefits
- Support in understanding which benefits you are entitled to
- Support filling in benefits claim forms

When and Where: Drop in sessions are held at various locations in Tower Hamlets at various times. Please contact the Welfare Rights Service for more information or to book an appointment with an advisor at the centre.

Home visits cannot be offered.

Languages Spoken: English and Bengali.

How to access this service: You can contact the Bromley-by-Bow welfare rights service directly or a professional can do so on your behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Welfare Rights Officer

Telephone: 020 8709 9700

Fax: 020 8880 6608

Email: connect@bbbc.org.uk

Website: www.bbbbc.org.uk

Address: Bromley by Bow Centre
St Leonards St
LONDON
E3 3BT

Asian Parents Association for Special Educational Needs in Tower Hamlets (APASENTH) Advice and Advocacy Services (Welfare Rights Service)

APASENTH Welfare Rights Workers provide culturally appropriate advice, information and advocacy services to people with disabilities and their families in Tower Hamlets. They aim to support families from South Asian / Bangladeshi backgrounds.

Services available:

- Information and advice about benefits
- Support in understanding which benefits you are entitled to
- Support filling in benefits claim forms
- Help and advice surrounding bills, debts etc
- Interpretation and translation service (Bengali and English)
- Advice and information about housing, housing benefit and council tax

When and Where: Drop-in sessions run Monday – Thursday from 10.00 am – 12.30pm.

You can also call ahead and make an appointment to see an advisor. Appointments are available Monday – Thursdays 2pm – 4.30pm and Friday 10am-5:30pm

Home visits are occasionally possible if family circumstances make it difficult to attend a session, although this is subject to an advisor being available.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali and Sylheti.

How to access this service: You can contact the APASENTH welfare rights service directly or a friend or professional can do so on your behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Welfare Rights Workers

Telephone: (020) 7001 2272

Fax: (020) 536 6666

Email: info@apasenth.org.uk

Website: www.apasenth.org.uk

Address: Carmine Wharf
30 Copenhagen Place
LONDON
E14 7FF

Disability Rights

The Disability Rights is a nation-wide charity organisation whose principal aim is relieving the poverty and improving the living standards of disabled people. They gather and disseminate information on social security benefits and tax credits for disabled people, their families, carers. The Disability Rights undertake research into the needs of disabled people and have produced many useful publications including the Disability Rights Handbook. They have also produced a range of other books, guides and information sheets, many of which are available on the website.

The Disability Rights cannot give advice directly about individual cases but they can signpost to relevant sources of information for disabled people, their families or professional advisors who wish to learn more about welfare rights of those with disabilities.

When and Where: The office line is open Mon-Fri, between 10.00 and 12.30pm and 1.30 and 4.00pm for those who want information about Disability Alliance publications and campaigns.

Look on the website for the number of the different helplines which include: **Disabled Students Helpline, Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS), Independent Living Help Line, and Member Organisations Welfare Rights Advice Service**

Languages Spoken: English

Contact Details

Name: Disability Rights UK

Office Telephone: 020 7250 3222

Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org

Website: <http://disabilityrightsuk.org>

Address: 12 City Forum
250 City Road
London

Working Families

Working Families is a national organisation which provides advice and guidance for parents and carers regarding their employment rights, returning to work, maternity and paternity leave and flexible working options. Their website contains a section specifically for parents/carers with a child with a disability.

How to access: Parents/carers can find in-depth information on the organisation's website. They can also speak to an advisor by calling the helpline (see number below)

Contact Details

Helpline: 0300 012 0312

Email: advice@workingfamilies.org.uk

Website: www.workingfamilies.org.uk

Mobility, Travel and Public Transport

- **The Freedom Pass Scheme**
- **The Independent Travel Training Scheme**
- **The Taxicard Scheme**
- **Tower Hamlets Community Transport**

The Freedom Pass Scheme

Freedom passes exist to provide free public transport in London for people with disabilities that significantly affect their mobility. These passes can be used 24 hours a day, seven days a week for London Underground, London Buses and DLR. Eligible applicants must be regular users of public transport.

Applications: Application forms can be downloaded at the web address shown below or can be obtained by telephoning the Mobility Team. Completed applications should be returned to the Mobility Team by post.

Eligibility: To be eligible for a freedom pass you must be ordinarily resident in Tower Hamlets and over the age of two. You must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Receive the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance
- You have a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking
- Are registered blind
- Use a disabled person's car supplied by a government department, or receive a grant towards your own vehicle
- Receive a war pensioner's mobility supplement – confirmed by a current award letter
- You drive motor vehicles regularly and have a severe disability in both upper limbs and a unable to turn by hand the steering wheel of a motor vehicle even if it is fitted with a turning knob

In some cases you will be subject to an assessment by the council to determine if you meet the eligibility condition.

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets Mobility Team

Telephone: 020 7364 5003

Email: generalenquiries@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website:

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/251-300/280_freedom_pass_for_disabled.aspx

Address: Tower Hamlets Council
Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 2BG

The Independent Travel Training Team

This team provides individual and tailored support for children and young people to develop their skills and understanding aiming towards travelling independently, especially between home and school and around school. They can cover many aspects of travel in their training for young people including road safety, personal safety, recognizing landmarks, timetables, maps, telling the time, understanding money, street furniture, hazards and using public transport. This team have much experience of working with young people with an ASD.

Age Range: 11 + years

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali and British Sign Language (BSL).

How to access this service: Parents should ask their school, the Parents Advice Centre or another professional to refer to this service on their behalf. The child or young person referred must live in Tower Hamlets.

Contact Details

Name: Amanda Flynn or Holly Barker
Sharon Whiteman (Manager)

Telephone: 020 7364 0818

Email: Sharon.whiteman@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: Independent Travel Training Team
Building and Development Team
Children Schools and Families
4th Floor, Resources
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 2BG

The Taxicard Scheme

The taxicard scheme offers reduced fares in black cabs for people who have a disability that prevents them from using, or significantly limits their use of, public transport.

For each trip you take in a cab with your taxicard, you will have to pay the first £1.50. The council will then pay up to £10.30. If the trip costs more than £11.80 you will have to pay the extra.

In Tower Hamlets, there are 4 Taxicard bands:

- Band 1 gives up to 4 journeys a month
- Band 2 gives up to 8 journeys a month
- Band 3 gives up to 12 journeys a month
- Band 4 gives up to 16 journeys a month

The band you are awarded is determined under LBTH criteria. Any unused journeys can be carried forward for use in subsequent months.

Applications: Please contact the Tower Hamlets Mobility Team.

Eligibility: To be eligible for a Taxicard you must be ordinarily resident in Tower Hamlets and meet at least one of the eligibility criteria.

You are automatically eligible for a Taxicard if you:

- receive the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance
- are registered blind
- receive a war pensioner's mobility supplement

All other applicants are assessed under LBTH discretionary criteria. All applicants will be assessed to determine which band they fall into.

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets Mobility Team

Telephone: 020 7364 9791

Email: generalenquiries@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website:

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgsi/251-300/275_the_taxicard_scheme.aspx

Address: Tower Hamlets Council
Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 2BG

Tower Hamlets Community Transport

Community Transport is a small voluntary organisation that provides minibuses for local organisations who are members of Community Transport.

Languages spoken: English, Bengali, Hindi.

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets Community Transport

Telephone: 020 7987 6447

Fax: 020 7987 0804

Email: simon@thct.org.uk

Website: www.thct.org.uk

Address: 25-27 Newell Street
LONDON
E14 7HP

Health Services

- **Tower Hamlets Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessment Service (ASDAS)**
- **Dieticians**
- **Occupational Therapy (OT)**
- **Children's Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service**
- **Tower Hamlets Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**
- **Tower Hamlets Psychology and Counselling Service**
- **East London Asian Family Counselling Service**

Tower Hamlets Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessment Service (ASDAS)

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessment Service (ASDAS) is made up of various health and social care professionals including specialist paediatricians, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and social workers. They are a part of Integrated Services for Disabled Children – a section of Tower Hamlets Council.

The team's role is to complete diagnostic assessments of children when it is thought that the child *may* have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). They will also provide advice for the families of children they assess.

Languages Spoken: English. Interpreters are available on request.

Age range: 0 – 19 years.

How to access this service: a professional (such as your GP, health visitor, child's teacher or social worker) must refer children to this team.

Contact Details

Name: ASD Assessment Service (ASDAS)

Telephone: 020 8980 3510

Fax: 020 8981 9298

Address: Wellington Way Centre
1a Wellington Way
LONDON
E3 4NE

Dieticians

A dietician can give advice around diet and eating and can sometimes test for allergies and intolerances.

There are some specialist dieticians in Tower Hamlets who work with children with disabilities, including autism, although which dietician you are referred to (if any) will depend on the nature and severity of problems your child is encountering. Sometimes your GP will be the one to help with these issues.

Some parents of children with autism believe that sticking to a special diet can help with their child's behaviour and mood (you can get an information sheet on dietary interventions from the NAS Autism Helpline / NAS website or from your NAS family support worker). However, **it is highly advisable to consult your GP or a dietician before starting any special diet or dietary intervention**, especially if your child will only eat a limited number of foods to begin with.

How to access this service: referrals to a dietician will normally be made by your GP or consultant paediatrician if you are seeing one.

Contact Details

Make an appointment to see your GP and if they think it is appropriate they can make refer you to one of the dieticians in Tower Hamlets.

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Occupational Therapists offer help to those who struggle with various everyday activities. OT is often provided for people who have a disability that affects daily living activities such as toileting / toilet training, dressing, washing, feeding etc.

For children and young people with an ASD, OT can also sometimes be helpful for those who are experiencing sensory processing issues.

As well as giving suggestions about how to help your child improve at a certain task or how to meet your child's sensory needs, occupational therapists can also provide equipment or make adaptations to your home to improve safety / access.

There are some Occupational Therapists in Tower Hamlets who specialise in working with children and adults on the autism spectrum.

OT sessions can be run at home, in a clinic, in a school or nursery setting or local Children's Centre.

How to access this service: different professionals might refer you to an Occupational Therapist including the ASD Assessment Service (ASDAS), your GP, Health Visitor or child's school. You can also contact the Occupational Therapy Team directly and request an assessment (either by phone or a home visit) to determine whether you are eligible for some support from an Occupational Therapist.

Contact Details

Name: Tower Hamlets **Children's** Occupational Therapy Service

Telephone: 020 8223 8897

Fax: 020 8223 8349

Address: 1st floor Hastings Ward
Mile end hospital
Bancroft road
London
E1 4DG

Email: Bhnt.childrensot@nhs.net

Name: First Response Team (**adults**)

Telephone: 020 7364 5005

Fax: 020 7364 3860

Email: adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: Mulberry Place (GP)
PO Box 55739
5 Clove Crescent
London E14 1BY

Website: http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/151-200/180_occupational_therapy.aspx

Children's Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service

Speech and Language Therapists work with people who have difficulty in communicating for one reason or another. Speech and language therapy is often provided for people who have a disability that affects their ability to communicate or their ability to eat and drink well.

Speech and Language Therapists are able to assess speech, language, communication and feeding abilities and can carry out therapy to assist with specific difficulties. They may also be involved in the implementation of alternative communication systems such as visual symbols or picture exchange systems or various kinds of sign language.

Speech and Language Therapists work for various teams in Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust. Most children diagnosed with an ASD will be seen by the Social Communication Disorder Team.

Speech and language therapy sessions can be run at home, in a clinic, in a school or nursery setting or local Children's Centre (see the *Play and Leisure* section).

Tower Hamlets Speech and Language Therapy Service also sometimes run drop-in sessions and workshops for parents, giving advice about activities parents can do at home to support their child's language / communication development.

Age Range: 0 – 16 years.

How to access this service: different professionals might refer you to a Speech and Language Therapist including the ASD Assessment Service (ASDAS), your child's school, your GP or Health Visitor. In some cases speech and language therapy may be accessed through the Local Education Authority if it is recognised as an educational need on a child's statement of Special Educational Needs.

Contact Details

Name: Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

Telephone: 020 8223 8943

Fax: 020 8223 8349

Website:

www.barthealth.nhs.uk

Address: Community health services
Hastings Ward
1st Floor Mile End Hospital
Bancroft Road
London
E1 4DG

Tower Hamlets Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

CAMHS offer services to families where the child or young person is demonstrating behaviours or feelings that are concerning or very difficult for their families to manage.

Various multi-disciplinary teams within Tower Hamlets CAMHS teams can offer therapies to children / young people and their families to try to alleviate the emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties the young person is facing. There is a multi-disciplinary team in Tower Hamlets is dedicated to helping those children / young people with a social communication disorder, such as ASD, and their families.

CAMHS teams also sometimes complete assessments and diagnoses, usually for children aged over 5.

How to access this service: Referrals to the CAMHS must be made through your local generic CAMHS team. There are two of these: the West team serving post codes E1 and E2 and the East team serving postcodes E3 and E14. Your GP, health visitor, social worker or other professional must refer families to this service.

Contact Details

Name: CAMHS **West** Team (post codes E1 & E2)

Telephone: 020 7426 2375

Fax: 020 7426 2494

Address: 18 Greatorex Street
Whitechapel
LONDON
E1 5NF

Contact Details

Name: CAMHS **East** Team (post codes E3 and E14)

Telephone: 020 7515 6633

Fax: 020 7573 3770

Address: Emanuel Miller Centre
1st Floor, 11 Gill St
Limehouse
LONDON
E14 8HQ

Tower Hamlets Psychology and Counselling Service

Living with a child with autism or receiving a diagnosis of autism within your family can cause added pressures and worries in your life and sometimes lead to unforeseen difficulties within your family.

Counselling can enable individuals and families to think through any issues that may be affecting their lives and to deal with difficult life events.

Counselling can also help with:

- Depression
- Relationship problems
- Social problems
- Stress
- Long-term illness

The Tower Hamlets Psychology and Counselling Service offer various services including disability counselling and family counselling.

Counselling sessions can be one-to-one or for couples or families.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, Sylheti, Sign Language and French.

How to access this service: Your GP, other health professional or social work professional needs to make a referral for you to this service.

Contact Details

Name: Psychology and Counselling Service

Telephone: 020 77913660

Fax: 020 77913669

Address: Steels Lane Health Centre
384/398 Commercial Rd
LONDON
E1 0LR

East London Asian Family Counselling Service

Living with a child with autism or receiving a diagnosis of autism within your family can cause added pressures and worries in your life and sometimes lead to unforeseen difficulties within your family.

Counselling can enable individuals and families to think through any issues that may be affecting their lives and to deal with difficult life events.

The East London Asian Family Counselling Service is a voluntary organisation offering free counselling sessions to Bangladeshi women and their families.

The service might be useful for anyone suffering from:

- Depression
- Isolation / Loneliness
- Relationship problems
- Domestic Violence
- Mental health problems

Or for those who just feel they need to talk to someone confidentially.

Counselling sessions can be one-to-one or for couples or families.

Languages Spoken: Bengali and Sylheti.

How to access this service: you can contact the Asian Family Counselling Service directly or a health / social work / other professional can make a referral on your behalf.

Contact Details

Name: East London Asian Family Counselling Service

Telephone: 020 7739 5058

Fax: 020 7739 5053

Address: Oxford House (first floor)
Derbyshire St
Bethnal Green
LONDON
E2 6HG

Information and Training

- **National Autistic Society *help!* Programmes**
- **National Autistic Society EarlyBird Programme**
- **National Autistic Society Autism Services Directory and Signpost**
- **Information on ASDs in Community Languages**
- **Tower Hamlets Family Information Service (FIS)**
- **Phoenix Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Classes**
- **Phoenix English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Classes**

National Autistic Society autism seminars for families

The National Autistic Society (NAS) run programmes and seminars for the parents and carers of children with an ASD, including Asperger Syndrome.

The NAS delivers seminars nationally and support families to:

- develop an understanding of autism
- gain awareness of sensory needs of children with autism
- discuss experiences of getting a diagnosis
- identify how autism can affect families
- explore practical ideas for developing communication strategies
- clarify support that families may be entitled to and ways to access this
- discuss why children with autism often have challenges with anger
- identifies a low arousal approach for support through stressful situations
- explore the cycle of anger and possible support strategies
- examine strategies for managing feelings
- consider sensory systems and how effective these may be
- examine how sensory information may be processed differently
- discuss how people with autism may experience different senses.

Families can book two places on a one day seminar for £30 (inclusive of VAT) which includes a full resource pack of useful information, advice and support guidelines.

When and where:

A **1 day seminar** is run every term in Tower Hamlets by NAS Tower Hamlets - Autism Support. Ask your SENCo or the NAS Family Support Worker (see introduction section) for details of when the next seminar will be.

Contact Details

For more details of seminars coming up, and to book a place, contact:

The Family Support Seminars

Tel: 07425 624 592 (normal call charges apply)

Email: help@nas.org.uk

National Autistic Society EarlyBird Programme

The EarlyBird course was devised by the National Autistic Society for parents of children with a diagnosis of autism aged 0-5 years. It aims to help parents to:

- Understand their child's autism
- Develop communication
- Manage inappropriate behaviours
- Take a positive approach
- Feel more confident and more in control

Courses run over one academic term with 6 sessions at the school spread over 6 weeks and three home visits from the EarlyBird trainers.

Currently the Phoenix School are running EarlyBird courses for Parents in Tower Hamlets. They also run a modified course for parents of slightly older children.

When and where: Sessions at the school are on Tuesday 10:30-12:00, every week for 12 weeks (term-time only). The 12 weeks comprise of 9 school visits and 3 home visits.

Please see attached leaflet/ timetable of all parent support provided by Phoenix School.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, some Sylheti.

How to access this service: You need to book on to an EarlyBird course in advance. Parents can book themselves on directly. Usually parents attend an information meeting at the school the term prior to the start of the course to find out about the course and book a place if they want to. To find out when the next parents information session is, contact the school (see below) or the NAS Tower Hamlets Family Support Worker (see the *Introduction* section).

Additonal groups and Services: Phoenix School in the *Education* section.

Phoenix ESOL and ICT classes also in the *Information and Training* section.

Phoenix Parents Autism Support Group in the *Support* section.

Contact Details

Name: Veronica Armson or Mary Rush
Priti Chanda (Coordinator/interpreting)

Telephone: 020 8980 4740
Fax: 020 8980 6342
Email: pchanda@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Website: www.phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Address: 49 Bow Road
LONDON
E3 2AD

National Autistic Society Autism Services Directory and Signpost

Signpost is a web tool that allows you to search a web-based directory of autism services in your area. The directory is called the Autism Services Directory and is run by the National Autistic Society. Signpost allows you to enter some details about your son or daughter together with your address and then Signpost will search for appropriate services in your area.

To use signpost, just go to www.signpost.autism.org.uk and follow the instructions.

Alternatively, you can access and search the Autism Services Directory without the help of signpost by going to www.autismdirectory.org.uk.

If you cannot go on the internet, you can access the Autism Services Directory by telephoning the Autism Helpline and asking them to search for services in your area.

Age range: any.

Contact Details

Telephone: 0808 800 4104 (NAS Autism Helpline)

Websites: www.signpost.autism.org.uk
www.autism.org.uk/directory

Address: National Autistic Society
Head Office
393 City Road
LONDON
EC1V 1NG

Information on ASDs in Community Languages

The National Autistic Society can provide written or recorded information about ASDs in a variety of languages. All written information in other languages can be accessed through the NAS website by going to www.autism.org.uk/languages. Written information sheets and recorded information CDs in other languages can also be sent out by the Autism Helpline (see below / the *Introduction* section) or by the NAS Tower Hamlets Family Support Worker (see also the *Introduction* section).

Support and information from the Autism Helpline advisors can also be offered in over 150 languages through Language Line interpreters. Call the Autism Helpline and, in English, give your name, your telephone number and the language you require and an advisor will call you back with an interpreter on the

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Tower Hamlets Family Information Service (FIS)

Tower Hamlets Children's Information Service provide information about childcare, play and out-of-school opportunities for 0 – 20 year olds.

They can help you to find out about early years settings, childminders, schools and other services in your local area.

They also provide information on jobs in childcare and training for childcare professionals as well as support in developing childcare services.

Languages Spoken: English and Bengali. Interpreters are available on request.

How to access this service: families can contact the Family Information Service directly or a friend or professional can do so on their behalf.

Contact Details

Name: Manager / Information Officer

Telephone: 020 7364 6495

Fax: 020 7364 7943

Email: fis@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Address: 30 Greatorex Street
Whitechapel
E1 5NP

Phoenix Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Classes

Weekly classes for parents or carers of children with an ASD who want to improve their computer skills. Open to all ages and abilities.

When and where: Term time only. Thursday afternoons at Phoenix School.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, some Sylheti.

How to access this service: if you wish to attend these classes please contact the school.

Additional groups and services:

Phoenix School in the *Education* section.

Phoenix English as a Second Language (ESOL) Classes also in the *Information and Training* section.

Phoenix Parents Autism Support Group in the *Support* section.

Contact Details

Name: School Office
Telephone: 0208 980 4740
Email: admin@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Website: www.phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Address: Phoenix School
49 Bow Rd
LONDON
E3 2AD

Phoenix English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Classes

Weekly classes for parents or carers of children with an ASD who want to improve their English. Open to all ages and abilities.

When and where: Term time only. Thursday mornings at Phoenix School.

Languages Spoken: English, Bengali, some Sylheti.

How to access this service: if you wish to attend these classes please contact the school.

Additional groups and services:

Phoenix School in the *Education* section.

Phoenix Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Classes, also in the *Information and Training* section.

Phoenix Parents Autism Support Group in the *Support* section.

Contact Details

Name: School Office

Telephone: 020 8980 4740

Email: admin@phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Website: www.phoenix.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Address: Phoenix School
49 Bow Rd
LONDON
E3 2AD