



RENFREWSHIRE CARERS CENTRE
A Lifeline for Carers in Renfrewshire



Autism Spectrum Disorder Information Booklet for Carers

Contents

- 3. Introduction from the Carers Centre Manager
- 4. What is Autism?
- 5. Pathway to Diagnosis
 - Referral
 - Assessment
- 6. Health and Social Care Services for Adults
- 9. Health and Social Care Services for Children
- 11. Home Schooling Resources
- 12. Support for Carers - Renfrewshire Carers Centre
- 13. Autism Organisations, Groups and Clubs
 - Local
 - National
 - Groups for Adults
- 20. Online Autism Resources
- 21. Advocacy, Information and Welfare Rights Services
- 23. Online Benefits Calculators & Support
- 24. Welfare Rights Services
- 25. Entitlements for People with Autism
- 28. Grants
- 30. Parent Guides
- 31. Autism and Neurodiversity Books
 - Adult Non-fiction
 - Adult Fiction

Introduction from the Carers Centre Manager

Welcome to the Renfrewshire Carers Centre ASD Booklet.

Renfrewshire Carers Centre is a one stop shop for unpaid Carers, established by Carers for Carers. We can assist you with all aspects of your caring role and support you through your caring journey. Our staff are caring, experienced, knowledgeable, and many of our staff are Carers or have been Carers previously. We are passionate about supporting Carers and want to ensure Carers are well informed, involved, supported and empowered.

Every person with autism is unique therefore caring for someone with autism involves understanding their unique needs, providing consistent support, promoting independence and looking after their wellbeing. This can involve recognising and responding to unique sensory preferences, communication styles and emotional needs and playing a vital role in navigating the educational, health and social care systems but most importantly being their mum, dad, gran, brother, sister etc.

Caring can also be demanding, intense, and at times, a stressful and scary journey, with Carers often telling us of the isolation they felt, stress, fatigue and worry but it is also filled with love and pride.

Carers have spoken of the benefits of peer support and having a supportive network of family and friends who understand how to support you.

Seeking help and figuring out what works best for you and your loved one can be difficult, however there are many resources to assist you in your caring journey. Our information pack offers guidance on the various types of support you can access. Please get in touch if we can assist you in any way.

Best wishes
Diane



What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how individuals communicate and interact with the world. It is a social communication disorder which affects verbal and non-verbal communication. It affects the way a person communicates, interacts and processes information.

Autism is referred medically and categorised as autism spectrum disorder, although many people (including most autistic people) do not consider autism to be a disorder. Many individuals on the Autism spectrum prefer the term - Autistic Spectrum condition.

An autism diagnosis should be based on the criteria listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5) or the International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision (ICD-11). These manuals are the standard classification systems used by health care professionals to assess and diagnose autism.

Under DSM-5 and ICD-11 the 'core characteristics,' of Autism must be present, (must have been present throughout a person's life) for an 'Autism,' diagnosis to be made. Under these manuals the core characteristics are communication and social interaction differences, restricted and repetitive behaviours and interests and dedicated interests, including sensory differences.

More than one in one hundred people are on the Autism Spectrum. Autistic people are often diagnosed with other co-occurring conditions, such as Epilepsy, Dyslexia, Learning disability, or ADHD. Autistic people are more likely to develop mental health concerns like depression, anxiety, Sleep or eating disorders. 71% of children with autism have at least one co-occurring mental health problem.

International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision: <https://icd.who.int/en/>

Autism Diagnostic Criteria, DSM-5: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-diagnostic-criteria-dsm-5>

Publishment Date:

Please note before reading: this information booklet was published in February 2026. The content is relevant for this time and all links are functional.

We expect this to change as time goes on and hope you can still find the necessary information via a Google search of the same topics. Thank you.

Pathways to Diagnosis

Referral

Children and young people under 18 referrals are made by:

- Health professionals including GPs
- Education staff including teachers
- Social workers

Adult referrals are made by:

- GPs
- Mental health services

Assessment

Pre-school children are assessed by:

PANDA Children's Child Development Centre

Address: Aranthrue Centre, 103 Paisley Rd, Renfrew, PA4 8LH

Telephone: 0141 314 4603

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5146/PANDA-Child-Development-Centre>

Children and young people aged 5-18 are assessed by:

Renfrewshire CAMHS Neurodiversity Team

Address: Aranthrue Centre, 103 Paisley Road, Renfrew, PA4 8LH

Telephone: 0141 314 8981

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/CAMHS>

Adults are assessed by:

Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service

Address: Renfrew Health and Social Work Centre, 10 Ferry Road, Renfrew, PA4 8RU

Telephone: 0141 207 7800

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5045/Renfrewshire-Learning-Disability-Service-RLDS>

NHSGGC Adult Autism Team

Address: East Renfrewshire Health and Care Centre, Drumby Crescent, Glasgow, G76 7HN

Telephone: 0141 451 0885

Website: <https://www.nhsggc.scot/your-health/heads-up-mental-health-support/mental-health-conditions/autism-spectrum-disorder/>

Health and Social Care Services for Adults

Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership - Adult Services Referral Team (ASeRT)

ASeRT is there to help you refer an adult you know for any aspect of social care. Their team are experienced as the first point of contact for care referrals and will make sure your unique situation is managed confidentially. They will collaborate with you to get as much helpful information as they can (such as medical conditions, GP contact details, and personal circumstances), answering any questions you have.

You can make a care referral online, by email, over the phone, or by post. Anyone can make a referral including family members, hospital nurses, social workers, neighbours, and a person can also refer themselves. They will then pass your referral on to the appropriate care service to ensure that the right care is given at the right time.

ASeRT - Adult Social Care

Telephone: 0300 300 1380

Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5040/Adult-Social-Care>

Renfrewshire Community Health & Social Work Team

The initial point of contact to access a wide range of day, respite and support services, including health and social work services. The community team consists of a range of practitioners and services including Nursing, Psychology, Physiotherapy, Social Work, Speech & Language Therapy, Psychiatry and Occupational Therapy.

Referrals can be made via:

ASeRT - Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service

Telephone: 0300 300 1380

Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5045/Renfrewshire-Learning-Disability-Service-RLDS>

Autism Connections

Autism Connections aims to increase knowledge and understanding of autism among services. As well as working with Renfrewshire HSCP services, they offer advice, direct support and training to Renfrewshire Learning Disability Services working with adults with autism.

Spinners Gate Resource Centre

Address: 15 Maxwellton Road, Paisley, PA1 2RH

Telephone: 0141 487 1026

Email: autismconnections@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/4957/Autism-Connections>

The Gateway

The Gateway provides learning opportunities for people with autism and complex learning disabilities. To access the day opportunities at The Gateway, people need to live in Renfrewshire, be aged 18 or over and have a dual diagnosis of autism and complex learning disability.

ASeRT - The Gateway

Telephone: 0300 300 1380

Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5052/The-Gateway---adults-with-autism-and-complex-learning-disabilities>

Disability Resource Centre

The Day Centre provides services for physically disabled and sensory impaired people in Renfrewshire. The Centre enables people to socialise and network as well as taking part in activities. Referrals for the service should be made by contacting:

ASeRT - Disability Resource Centre

Address: 74 Love Street, Paisley, PA3 2EA

Telephone: 0300 300 1380

Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5029/Disability-Resource-Centre>

Flexicare

Flexicare provides a service for young people and adults (14+) with learning disabilities and or autism living in Renfrewshire. They have a network of trained volunteers and sessional workers who offer personalised support to help people with a learning disability or autism participate fully in social, recreational and educational opportunities within their local community.

Anchor Centre - registered day service for people who have a profound or complex learning disability and associated health problems.

Address: 51-55 Stock Street, Paisley, PA2 6NG

Telephone: 0141 487 1026

Referrals for the service should be made by contacting:

ASeRT Flexicare - Social & Recreational Opportunities for Young People and Adults with Learning Disabilities or Autism

Telephone: 0300 300 1380

Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5179/Flexicare---young-people-and-adults-with-a-learning-disability-or-autism-to-take-part-in-social--recreational-opportunities>

Respite Services

Weavers Linn is a 10-bed residential facility for adults with learning disabilities and autism. The service allows everyone staying in the facility opportunities to enjoy activities gain and maintain independence within a supportive, safe and therapeutic environment.

Referrals for the service should be made by contacting:

ASeRT - Weavers Linn Respite Centre

Telephone: 0300 300 1380

Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/directory/short-break-providers/weavers-linn-respite-centre/>

Health and Social Care Services for Children

Renfrewshire Children with Disabilities Social Work team provides a social work service where the primary need is directly related to the issue of the child's disability. General childcare issues which are not related to the child's disability are supported by social work area teams.

Children with Disabilities Team

Address: Renfrew Health and Social Work Centre, 10 Ferry Road, Renfrew, PA4 8RU

Telephone: 0300 300 1199

Email: childrenwithdisabilities.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Children's Services and Criminal Justice Services

Address: Paisley Office, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1TZ

Telephone: 0300 300 1199

Email: childrenandfamilies@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Renfrew Health & Social Work Centre

Address: Renfrew Office, 10 Ferry Road, Renfrew, PA4 8RU

Telephone: 0300 300 1199

Email: childrenandfamilies@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Johnstone Town Hall

Address: Johnstone Office, 25 Church Street, Johnstone, PA5 8FA

Telephone: 0300 300 1199

Email: childrenandfamilies@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Emergency contact

If you need to contact social care urgently out of office hours, call Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Services.

Telephone: 0300 343 1505.

Website: <https://www1.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/3315/Childrens-Services-local-social-work-offices>

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

The team is made up of specialists in clinical psychology, psychiatry and nursing with input from speech and language and occupational therapy teams. They assess and treat moderate to severe mental health disorders in children and young people under 18 years of age.

Aranthruie Centre - CAMHS

Address: 103 Paisley Road, Renfrew, PA4 8LH

Telephone: 0141 314 8981

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/CAMHS>

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and Language Therapists work with children who have a range of speech, language, communication, difficulties.

Aranthruie Centre - Speech and Language Therapy

Address: 104 Paisley Road, Renfrew, PA4 8LH

Telephone: 0141 314 4601

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5147/Speech--Language-Therapy>

Paediatric Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapists support children and young people with difficulties including handwriting, motor coordination difficulties, sensory processing difficulties, and disability access.

Aranthruie Centre - Paediatric Occupational Therapy

Address: 104 Paisley Road, Renfrew, PA4 8LH

Telephone: 0141 314 4601

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5144/Paediatric-Occupational-Therapy>

Renfrewshire Advice Line Community Paediatric Services

Specialist Children Services have an advice telephone line, where parents / Carers can seek advice and support for children and young people, with day-to-day activities. The service covers Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy.

Physiotherapy: Tuesday, 11am – 1pm

Speech and Language Therapy: Wednesday, 10am – 12pm

Occupational Therapy: Thursday, 9.30am – 12pm

Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership - Advice Line

Telephone: 0141 314 4624.

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/AdviceLine>

School Nursing

School Nursing Service provides support for all schoolchildren in mainstream education. They focus on child health issues, maintaining standards of care delivery and the implementation of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). They also deliver universal screening for height and weight measurements in Primary One and Primary Seven.

Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership - School Nursing

Telephone: 0141 314 4649

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.hscp.scot/article/5122/School-Nursing>

Home Schooling Resources

Scottish Home Education Forum

Websites:

- <https://scothomeed.co.uk/>
- <https://educationalfreedom.org.uk/find-your-local-group/>
- <https://glasgowhomeed.wordpress.com/>

Lochwinnoch Library

Address: Old School, High Street Lochwinnoch, PA12 4AB

Telephone: 0300 300 1188

Email: libraries@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Lochwinnoch Library has a support group for parents who are home schooling on a Tuesday from 10.30am-12.30pm.

Renfrewshire Council

Email: joyce.young@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Parents/guardians are within their rights to make a request to home educate rather than have them taught at one of the local authority schools.

Home education is a right conditional upon parents providing an efficient education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

Renfrewshire Council will support parents who choose to home educate by providing advice and information. Parents are advised that the Council is required by law to make sure the education provided at home is appropriate to the child. Please contact: Joyce Young, Inclusion Support Officer.

Forest school - A forest school based in Lochwinnoch.

Website: <https://goodinthewood.co.uk/>

Off Grid Community SCIO

Address: Off Grid Community Woods, Aidans Brae, Clarkston, Glasgow, G76 7EP

Telephone: 07769 229 503

Email: jacqui@offgridcommunityscio.org

Website: <https://offgridcommunityscio.org/>

Support for Carers - Renfrewshire Carers Centre

Parents caring for someone under 18

Renfrewshire Carers Centre runs a daytime and evening group for the parent Carers who have an under 18 who has autism. Diagnosis is not needed to attend these groups. The groups provide a safe space for ASD Carers to meet face-to-face, share experiences with others in a similar situation, and develop an emotional and practical support network. We also arrange social activities and outings.

<https://renfrewshirecarers.org.uk/support-groups/>

Autism training

Our training offers short training courses for Carers to improve their caring skills and knowledge, and opportunities to learn from other Carers. Courses are based around caring for someone with a particular illness as well as providing tools for looking after the Carers own health and wellbeing.

<https://renfrewshirecarers.org.uk/training/>

Young Carers

Young Carers are children and young people aged 18 or under who often help look after their siblings who have autism. The Young Carers service provides information and training on Young Carers rights and services. A Young Carers Worker is there to listen and advocate on behalf of Young Carers. The Young Carers service offers opportunities for the young Carers to learn about autism through training and meet other young people who are going through a similar situation whilst getting a break from their caring role. We provide weekly and monthly support groups for young Carers aged 8 to 18.

<https://renfrewshirecarers.org.uk/young-carers/>

Breaks

We've got grants you can benefit from to get the time out for yourself and take a well-deserved break from your caring role.

<https://renfrewshirecarers.org.uk/carers-breaks/>

Autism Organisations, Groups, and Clubs

Local

Star Project Neu Narrative

Address: 12-14 Wallace Street, Paisley, PA3 2BU

Telephone: 0141 889 5850

Email: daisy@star-project.org.uk

Website: <https://star-project.org.uk/>

Renfrewshire Autism Support – Private Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/931686146887605/>

National

National Autistic Society Scotland

Address: Clockwise, Savoy Tower, 7th Floor, 77 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, G2 3BZ

Telephone: 0141 221 8090

Email: scotland@nas.org.uk

Website: <https://www.autism.org.uk/scotland>

Scottish Autism

Address: Hilton House, Alloa Business Park, Whins Road, Alloa, FK10 3SA

Telephone: 01259 720 044

Email: autism@scottishautism.org

Scottish Women's Autism Network (SWAN)

Email: info@swanscotland.org

Website: <https://swanscotland.org>

The Autism Network

Email: info@theautismnetwork.co.uk

Website: <https://www.theautismnetwork.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AutismNetworkScotland/>

Disability Clubs

Glasgow Disabled Scouts

Address: The Scout Association, 21 Elmbank Street, Glasgow, G2 4PB

Website: <https://glasgowdisabledscouts.org/>

Riverbrae Scout Group

Email: ian@renfrewshirescouts.org.uk

Paragon music

Address: CCA 350 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3JD

Telephone: 0141 354 0234

Email: admin@paragon-music.org

Website: <https://www.paragon-music.org/>

St Mirren Football Club

Address: Greenhill Rd, Paisley, PA3 1RU

Telephone: 0141 889 2558

Email: foundation@stmirren.com

Include Me 2 Club

Addresses:

- **James McGuire Building**, 124 Main Street, Barrhead, G78 1SG
- **Cardonald**, 25 Lammermoor Ave, Cardonald, Glasgow, G52 3BE
- **Cowan Park Lodge**, Darnley Road, Barrhead, G78 1SS

Telephone: 0141 881 0544

Email: info@includeme2club.org.uk

Website: <https://www.includeme2club.org.uk/>

ASD Ultimate Warriors

Address: Tannahill Centre, 76 Blackstoun Road, Paisley, PA3 1NT

Email: weareultimatewarriors@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ultimatewarriorspublic/

Pony Buddies

Address: Mid Gavin Equestrian Centre, Howwood, Johnstone, United Kingdom, PA9 1DL

Telephone: 0741586875

Email: Colettefowler84@outlook.com

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ponybuddies/>

Pachedu and School of African Cultures Nkwado Support

Telephone: 07377 937 941

Address: Tannahill Centre, 76 Blackstone Street, Paisley, PA3 1NT

Email: Chinedu Achunine - chinedu.achunine@pachedu.org or

Anita Nalumansi - anita.nalumansi@pachedu.org

Pachedu provides family support workshops, drop-in peer support groups, cultural awareness events and social and recreative activities and outings.

Able 2 Sail

Address: Kip Marina, Inverkip, Greenock, PA16 0AW

Telephone: 0141 226 0202

Email: contactus@able2sail.org.uk

Website: <https://www.able2sail.org.uk/>

Able 2 Sail charity provides the opportunity for children and adults with disabilities and their families to sail a cruising yacht. The charity has its own specially adapted yacht to make it accessible for children and adults with a physical disability.

The Fairway Club

Address: Glenburn Community Centre, Fairway Avenue, Paisley, PA2 8DX

Telephone: 07491 675 730

The Fairway Social Club meet on Tuesdays 6.30 - 8.30pm. It is aimed at all ages for those with a learning disability, but anyone is welcome to come along. Activities include Games, Pool, Bowling, music, quizzes and many other activities. Tea/Coffee and snacks with a £1 entry fee.

Autastic Club

Address: Johnstone Community Sports Hub, Beith Road, Johnstone, PA5 0JA

Email: Autasticclub1@gmail.com

Autastic Club provide fun play sessions and activities. Various activities planned through the year as well as a regular weekend club. Siblings can also take part. Parents stay for the session. The Saturday sessions are on at 11am and 1pm.

Autastic Club also have a 'Hangout' session from 6.30pm till 8pm. These sessions are for kids aged 10 and above and their sibling's at: Station Seven, 7 Quarry Street, Johnstone, Renfrewshire, PA5 8DY.

One REN - Active Families Disability Sport and Activity Community Club

Address: On-X Linwood, Brediland Road, PA3 3RA

Website: <https://oneren.classforkids.io/>

For 12yrs - 18yrs with any disability. Take part in a weekly club where they have bouncy castles and sports led by qualified coaches (siblings welcome). A parent/guardian must stay in the club, but they are encouraged to take part!

ASN Friendly Splash Session

Address: Johnstone Community Sports Hub, Beith Road, Johnstone, PA5 0JA

Every Sunday 2.30pm - 4.00pm

They have inflatables and these sessions are in a segregated area of the pool!

Autism Friendly Football

Address: Renfrew Leisure Centre, Paisley Road, Renfrew, PA4 8LJ

Tuesdays from 4.15pm to 5pm.

At Riverbrae school, a curriculum sports programme is delivered on a Monday and Friday morning. Mary Russell lunch clubs are delivered throughout the week.

RIGHT 2 DANCE

Address: West Primary School, Newton Street, Paisley, PA1 2RL

Telephone: Aileen Palombo - 0141 849 1292 / 07508 884 760

Email: info@right2dance.com

Right2Dance is a community dance organisation providing high quality dance classes for people with Physical, learning and sensory disabilities throughout Renfrewshire and beyond.

Saturday, 10am to 11am & 11am to 12pm (3-4 yrs/5-7 yrs)

Saturday, 1.15pm - 2.15pm (8-20 years)

Cost £3.50 per class.

Glasgow Science Centre - Free Carers Ticket

Address: 50 Pacific Quay, Glasgow, G51 1EA

Telephone: 0141 420 5000

Email: contact.us@gsc.org.uk

Website: <https://www.glasgowsciencecentre.org/>

The Science Centre has relaxed, autism-friendly hours which run every Sunday from 10am - 1pm.

Gravity Active Trampoline Park

Address: Braehead, Kings Inch Road, PA4 8XQ

Website: <https://gravity-global.com/active/glasgow/activities/sen-sessions/>

The Trampoline Park has interconnected trampolines and obstacle courses. They offer dedicated SEN sessions.

Autism Friendly Cinema

Address: Showcase Cinema de Lux Paisley, Griffen Avenue, Phoenix Business Park, PA1 2BH

Telephone: 0141 887 0150

Website: <https://www.showcasecinemas.co.uk/sensory-friendly-screenings/>

Showcase's autism friendly showings, every Sunday at 10.30am.

Glasgow Film Theatre (GFT)

Address: Access Film Theatre 12 Rose Street, G3 6RB

Telephone: 0141 332 6535

Website: <https://www.glasgowfilm.org/access-film-club/>

GFT provide Access Film Club, which includes a film screening and post film chat in a friendly environment. Access film club takes place on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6pm. It costs £6.50 and Carers receive a free ticket.

Take 2 Access

Website: <https://www.glasgowfilm.org/take-2/>

Take 2 Access is hold a monthly neurodivergent friendly family film. Every child attending receives a free ticket for themselves and two adults.

Groups for Adults

South End Action Centre

Address: 57 Stock Street, Paisley, PA2 6NL

Time: Mondays, 9:45am to 11:45am

Togetherness Group

Telephone: 07483 301 393

Email: Kirsteen.jamieson@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Tuesdays, 6pm to 8pm

Adults and Families can come together to socialise. Activities include painting, arts & crafts, reading, singing, games, gardening and learning new skills.

Thursdays, 9:30am to 11:30am

Tabletop Gaming Group:

Play tabletop games in a group and you can feel free to bring your own game to play.

Quietly Confident Group:

Focus on building confidence by exploring a wide variety of topics and taking part in activities including group discussions, team building, getting to know the community, walks and discovering nature. Please contact Kirsteen Jamieson for more information.

Paisley Job Centre

Address: 49a High St, Paisley, PA1 2AN

Neurodiverse Monthly Drop-In Group

This is to look at improving opportunities and raising awareness of the support available for anyone interested in moving forward into work, further education, training, volunteering, or local social groups.

Renfrewshire Autism & Neurodiversity Group - Social group for adults with autism

Address: Finding Your Feet Charity Hub, St James House, 25 St James Street, Paisley, PA3 2HQ

Email: rant53889@gmail.com

Time: Tuesday evenings

West College Scotland Centre for Performing Arts

Address: Inchinnan Building, Renfrew Road, Paisley, PA3 4DR

Telephone: 0141 487 0160 or 07508884760

Email: info@right2dance.com

Time: Tuesdays, 7pm to 7:45pm

Right2Dance – Revitalise class Breathe, unwind and relax. Gentle movement class. Free to attend.

Time: 6.00pm to 8.00pm – Wednesday

Creative Group - A new group for autistic adults to do creative activities. Arts and crafts materials are available. Feel free to bring your own crafts. No booking required. For further information – please contact by email.

Email: Adult.learning@renfrewshire.gov.uk.

Dates-n-Mates

Address:

C-Change Scotland, Melisa House (suite 2a), Brand Place, Glasgow G51 1DR

Telephone: 01414272957

Email: renfrewshire@datesnmates.or.uk

Website: <https://datesnmates.org.uk/dates-n-mates-renfrewshire/>

Dates-n-Mates organise a variety of events and opportunities including pub nights, dancing, speed dating, discos and training workshops. They are offering their members events in-person and online. In partnership with Includeme2 Club, they co-host CLUB LATE – Scotland's largest inclusive club night with some of Scotland's best DJ's.

Online Autism Resources

Autism Toolbox

Website: <https://www.autismtoolbox.co.uk/>

The Autism Toolbox is a free online resource developed to support the inclusion of autistic learners in Scottish Early Learning and Childcare settings, Primary and Secondary schools.

NHS Kids Website - Joining in with Sensory Differences

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/childrens-services/kids-life-skills/joining-in-with-sensory-differences>

Renfrewshire Autism Support Facebook Page

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/931686146887605/>

Colouring Outside The Lines

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/ColouringOTL/>

This is a Facebook page that brings together parents of Autistic girls.

Different Minds One Scotland

Website: <https://www.differentminds.scot/>

The Girl with the Curly Hair Project

Website: <https://thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk/>

Training and advice for women and girls by young woman with ASD.

Advocacy, Information and Welfare Rights Services

You First Advocacy Service

Address: 47 Causeyside Street, Paisley, PA1 1YN

Telephone: 0141 849 1229

Email: advocacy@youfirstadvocacy.org

You First is an advocacy service for adults within Renfrewshire who have Mental Health Issues, Learning Disabilities, Physical Disability or are 60 years or older. They provide support with health and social care services, housing problems, benefits, debt, care packages, hospital treatment, complaints and support to those who are subject to the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act.

Let's Talk ASN Scotland

Address: Govan Law Centre, 18-20 Orkney Street, Glasgow, G51 2BZ

Telephone: 0141 445 1955

Email: letstalkasn@edlaw.org.uk

Let's Talk ASN Scotland is a service for parents of children with additional support needs who need support in relation to a dispute with an education authority. Also, young people (aged 16 or 17) with additional support needs themselves.

My Rights, My Say

Website Enquiry Form: <https://myrightsmysay.scot/>

My Rights, My Say is a service supporting children aged 12-15 to use their rights. They provide advice, information, advocacy, legal representation and a service to independently seek children's views about the support they receive with their learning to support a child making a reference to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

Call Scotland

Telephone: 0131 651 6236

Email: info@callscotland.org.uk

Website: <https://www.callscotland.org.uk/>

Call Scotland help children and young people across Scotland to overcome disability and barriers to learning created by their environment, and to fulfil their potential. It has a range of apps for children with special needs including autism.

Enquire

Telephone: 0345 123 2303

Email: info@enquire.org.uk

Website: <https://enquire.org.uk/>

Enquire is the national advice and information service on additional support for learning for families, teachers, education authorities.

Contact Scotland

Email: scotland.office@contact.org.uk

Website: <https://contact.org.uk/about-contact/local-teams/scotland/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/contactinscotland>

Contact Scotland charity is for families with disabled children. They will source information from early years to transitions into adult life.

Lead Scotland Disabled Students' Helpline and Information Service

Telephone: 0800 999 2568

Email: info@lead.org.uk

Website: <https://www.lead.org.uk/>

Lead Scotland's Helpline provides information on applying for educational courses and training programmes, sources of funding for disabled learners, support for disabled learners in a range of learning environments, support and funding for Carers, and information regarding disabled people's rights in post-school learning under the Equality Act.

Govan Law Centre Education Law Unit

Email: advice@edlaw.org.uk

Website: <https://govanlawcentre.org/education-law-unit/>

Resource Templates: <https://govanlawcentre.org/elu-helpful-resources/>

Govan Law Centre's Education Law Unit is Scotland's expert legal resource on school education, tackling discrimination, human rights and the rights of disabled pupils and pupils with additional support needs.

Sleep Action (formerly Sleep Scotland)

Email: sleepsupport@sleepaction.org

Scottish Sleep Support Line Service provides tailored sleep support to any family in Scotland with a child aged 18 months to 18 years experiencing sleep issues, whether typically developing or with any suspected or diagnosed additional support needs. The training team can provide training to professionals across the UK who are working with children, young people and adults who experience issues with their sleep. They provide information, resources & signposting to enquirers.

Online Benefits Calculators & Support

Use an independent benefits calculator to find out what benefits you could get, and how to claim. Use one of the following calculators:

Turn2us

Website: <https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk/AboutYou>

Information on income-related benefits, tax credits, Council Tax Reduction, Carer's Support Payment (previously Carers' Allowance), Universal Credit and how your benefits will be affected if you start work or change your working hours.

Entitledto

Website: <https://www.entitledto.co.uk/>

Use Entitledto's free benefits calculator to see what you are entitled to.

Policy in Practice

Website: <https://www.betteroffcalculator.co.uk/calculator/new/step1>

For information on income-related benefits, tax credits, contribution-based benefits, Council Tax Reduction, Carer's Allowance, Universal Credit, how these are calculated and how your benefits will be affected if you start work or change your working hours.

Step Change Debt Charity

Telephone: 0800 138 1111

Website: <https://www.stepchange.org/>

Step Change offer free debt, bankruptcy and budgeting advice.

Welfare Rights Services

Advice Works

Address: Johnstone Town Hall, 25 Church Street, Johnstone, PA5 8FA

Telephone: 0300 300 1238

Email: adviceworks@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/help-money-and-benefits>

Advice Works Offer free confidential and independent advice on money and debt issues including budgeting, negotiating with creditors, and mortgage and rent arrears. They will check you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to and help with benefit claims.

Citizens Advice Bureau – CAB

Address: Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau, 7 Glasgow Road, Paisley, PA13QS

Website: <https://renfrewshire.cas.org.uk/>

CAB benefits advice service is free. **Renfrewshire Carers Centre** has CAB in the Centre on Tuesdays - by appointment only.

Telephone: 0141 887 3643

Email: enquiries@renfrewshirecarers.org.uk

Money and benefits advice in schools (School Support Service)

Telephone: 0141 889 2121

Email: ren-bureau@paisleycab.casonline.org.uk

Website: <https://app.10to8.com/book/schoolsupportservice/>

If you're a parent or Carer with a child at secondary school or an Additional Support Needs (ASN) school, you can make an appointment.

Entitlements for People with Autism

The Blue Badge Scheme

Telephone: 0300 300 0300

Address: Blue Badge Team, Renfrewshire Council Customer Service Centre, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Email: blue.badge@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://www1.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/12576/Blue-Badges>

People with a diagnosed mental or cognitive disorder including ASD which means they have little or no awareness of danger from traffic may be considered for a Blue Badge. To apply for a Blue Badge for this reason – please use the link above.

National Entitlement Card

Email: freebus@spt.co.uk

Website: <https://www.spt.co.uk/tickets/concessions/>

The National Entitlement Card allows disabled people to travel on any bus service anywhere in Scotland free of charge. Go to their website to apply.

Motability Scheme

Telephone: 0300 456 4566

Website: <https://www.motability.co.uk>

The Motability Scheme helps people with a disability exchange their mobility component of their PIP/ADP allowance for a new car.

RADAR - accessible toilet key

Website: <https://www.radarkey.org/order>

Radar keys will open over 9000 accessible public toilets all over the UK.

Changing Places

Website: <https://www.changing-places.org/>

Changing Places toilets have extra features that a standard disabled toilet does not. This can include an adult changing bench, a hoist system and plenty of space. You can find a toilet or plan a journey with accessible toilets along the route using the Changing Places Toilet Map on their website.

Disabled Persons Railcard

Website: <https://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/>

The Disabled Persons Railcard entitles the card-holder and a Carer or companion one third off most adult rail fares on the National Rail network. Costing £20 a year or £54 for a three-year card, you can buy one at any staffed ticket office or by posting the application form available online.

National Express Disabled Coach Card

Website: <https://www.nationalexpress.com/en/offers/coachcards/disabled>

Disabled Coach card offers a great way to save 1/3 on standard fares to across the UK. The Disabled Coach Card is £10. Purchasing a Disabled Coach Card is easy, simply complete your details at the website above.

ASD Alert Card

Websites: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/downloads/i-am-autistic>

These cards are available at the above websites. These cards can be shown to emergency or public services in situations where communication is difficult for the person.

Access Card

Website: <https://www.accesscard.online/apply-or-renew/>

The Access Card is a physical card which acts as a photo ID that can be used to easily communicate your access requirements to events and venues. The card shows a photo ID and translates a person's disability into symbols, highlighting the barriers they face and the reasonable adjustments they might need. The Access Card app provides you with a personalised directory of venues, with accessibility information to help you plan your trips. It costs £15 for 3 years.

Sunflower Lanyard

Website: <https://hdsunflower.com/>

If you have a disability that may not be obvious but would appreciate support, there is a lanyard you can wear to signal this. Airports: If you're due to fly from a UK airport, you should be able to ask for a lanyard from an airport assistance desk.

Supermarkets: Request the lanyard at Tesco, Argos, Sainsburys, M&S where you can buy the lanyard.

ASD Bright ideas Suppliers of Autism, PECS and Visual Resources

Website: <https://www.asdbrightideas.co.uk/>

Autism Info - Visual Resources

Website: <https://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/autism-information/visual-resources/>

Access to Work

Telephone: 0800 121 7479

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply>

Access to Work helps people get support if they have a disability or health condition. They provide grants to help pay for specialist equipment and assistive software, support workers, like BSL interpreter, a job coach, costs of travelling to work, adaptations to your vehicle and physical changes to your workplace.

Invest in Renfrewshire

Telephone: 0300 300 1180

Email: invest@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Invest in Renfrewshire offer a range of support to help people with disabilities and Mental health barriers to employment, including access to occupational health help.

Disability Housing - Home2Fit

Website: <https://www.home2fit.org.uk/>

Home2Fit is a national database that helps disabled people search for accessible housing.

Grants

For a full list of grants available go to:

- <https://fundingscotland.com/>
- <https://www.disability-grants.org/>
- <https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/>
- <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/grants-low-income/>

The Independent Living Fund Scotland Transition Fund

Telephone: 0300 200 2022

Website: <https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/>

ILF Scotland aims to help young people, between the ages of 16 and 25 living with disabilities, with the transition after leaving school to be more independent. The maximum amount that a person will be able to get is £4000. Money from the Fund can be used to help people with disabilities to participate in activities.

You can apply by using their online application service.

Lifeline 4 Kids

Website: <https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/organisation/lifeline-4-kids/>

Lifeline 4 Kids provide equipment to help improve the quality of life for children with disabilities. They provide specialised equipment such as specialised computers and sensory toys.

Newlife Nurses

Telephone: 0800 902 0095

Email: nurses@newlifecharity.co.uk

Website: <https://newlifecharity.co.uk/>

New Life Nurses provide information, grants, and care. They man a national Helpline which supports families of disabled children. New life Foundation offers grants for essential medical equipment.

Caudwell Children

Website: <https://www.caudwellchildren.com/>

Caudwell Children provides funding for children under 19 years. Equipment Services - mobility equipment including wheelchairs and therapeutic bikes. Sensory equipment for Autistic children.

Treatment Services - providing access to treatments not available in the UK. They also offer a STEP Programme providing therapy for children with brain injuries including Conductive Education.

Cerebra - Toy and Book Library

Telephone: 01267 244200 / Helpline: 0800 328 1159

Website: <https://cerebra.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CerebraCharity/>

The Toy and Book library allows families to borrow specialist books and toys for free from the easy-to-use library. Brain conditions include (but are not limited to) autism, ADHD, Down's syndrome, learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and developmental delay.

Parent Guides

A range of legal, social, financial, educational, and health issues that families may encounter.

Family Fund

Telephone: 01904 550 055

Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Website: <https://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

The UK's largest charity providing grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children. Whether you need a kitchen appliance; clothing and bedding; sensory or play equipment; technology for your child, or a much-needed family break, they are there to help.

Eligibility - Families in Scotland can apply for a grant every 18 months. You can apply if: you're the main Carer for a disabled or seriously ill child, aged 17 or younger, you have been resident in Scotland for at least six months and you have a low income from working, or benefits.

Family Fund - Your Opportunity

Website: <https://www.familyfund.org.uk/grants/schemes/your-opportunity/>

Your Opportunity is a dedicated grant programme which aims to enhance the life of disabled, or seriously ill, young adults, aged 18 to 24 years.

Take a Break

Address: Take a Break Family Fund, Unit 4, Alpha Court Monks Cross Drive, York, YO32 9WN

Telephone: 01904 571093

Email: info@takeabreakscotland.org.uk

Website: <https://takeabreakscotland.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/takeabreakscotland>

The Take a Break scheme provides short breaks for families with disabled children. Grants can be used for a break, an activity. Applicants must be: A Scottish resident and either A Carer of a disabled young person aged 0-20 years or A disabled young person 20 years and under.

Autism and Neurodiversity Books

Adult Non-Fiction

- Addison, Alina: The audacity spectrum: leading with care, courage and non-conformism
- Aherne, Daniel: The Pocket Guide to Neurodiversity
- Balfe, Abigail: A different sort of normal
- Beardon, Luke: What works for autistic children
- Davis KC, How to Keep a House Whilst Drowning
- Green, Julie M: Motherness: a memoir of generational autism, parenthood, and radical acceptance
- Hendrick, Sarah and Hendrick, Jess: Women and Girls on the autism Spectrum
- Katy, Emily: Girl unmasked: how uncovering my autism saved my life
- Kiran, Ritu: The autism parents' club: simple strategies for managing common challenges
- Kustow, James: How to thrive with adult ADHD: 7 pillars for focus, productivity and balance
- Pink, Richard: Dirty Laundry, Why adults with ADHD are so ashamed and what we can do to help
- Pink, Richard and Roxanne: SMALL TALK
- Price, Devon: Unmasking for life; a guide to embracing your autism in a neurotypical world
- Mate, Gabor: Scattered Minds
- Richings, Rosemary: Stumbling through space and time, living with dyspraxia
- Stephens, Jordan: Drugs, Avoidance & Heartbreak
- Wharmby, Pete: Untypical

Adult Fiction

- Feeney, Elaine: How to Build a Boat
- Greene, John: Turtles All The Way Down
- Higashida, Naoki: The Reason I Jump
- Lette, Kathy: The Boy Who Fell to Earth
- Smale, Holly: Cassandra in Reverse Junior
- Antrobus, Raymond: Can Bears Ski?
- Balen, Katya: The Space We're In
- Robbins, Rose: Loud!
- Bailey, Lily: When I Feel Red
- Dooley, Aoife: Frankie's World
- Gooding, Louise: Wonderfully Wired Brains: An introduction to the world of neurodiversity
- McNicoll, Elle: Like a Charm
- Rutter, Helen: Reggie Houser has the Power
- Scott, Libby: Can You See Me?



0141 887 3643

enquiries@renfrewshirecarers.org.uk

www.renfrewshirecarers.org.uk



St. James House, 25 St. James Street, Paisley, PA3 2HQ

Renfrewshire Carers Centre is a Scottish Registered Charity
Charity Number: SC023986