

Studies

[Development of an Alcohol Refusal Training in Immersive Virtual Reality for Patients With Mild to Borderline Intellectual Disability and Alcohol Use Disorder: Cocreation With Experts in Addiction Care](#)

People with mild to borderline intellectual disability (MBID; IQ=50-85) are at risk for developing an alcohol use disorder (AUD). One factor contributing to this risk is sensitivity to peer pressure. Hence, tailored trainings are needed to practice alcohol refusal in impacted patients. Immersive virtual reality (IVR) appears promising to engage patients in dialogs with virtual humans, allowing to practice alcohol refusal realistically. However, requirements for such an IVR have not been studied for MBID/AUD.

[The Validation of Automated Social Skills Training in Members of the General Population Over 4 Weeks: Comparative Study](#)

Social skills training by human trainers is a well-established method of teaching appropriate social and communication skills and strengthening social self-efficacy. Specifically, human social skills training is a fundamental approach to teaching and learning the rules of social interaction. However, it is cost-ineffective and offers low accessibility, since the number of professional trainers is limited. A conversational agent is a system that can communicate with a human being in a natural language. We proposed to overcome the limitations of current social skills training with conversational agents. Our system is capable of speech recognition, response selection, and speech synthesis and can also generate nonverbal behaviors. We developed a system that incorporated automated social skills training that completely adheres to the training model of Bellack et al through a conversational agent.

[Long-term Memory Testing in Children With Typical Development and Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Remote Web-based Image Task Feasibility Study](#)

Neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD) cause individuals to have difficulty in learning facts, procedures, or social skills. NDD has been linked to several genes, and several animal models have been used to identify potential therapeutic candidates based on specific learning paradigms for long-term and associative memory. In individuals with NDD, however, such testing has not been used so far, resulting in a gap in translating preclinical results to clinical practice.

[Determining the relationship between over-care burden and coping styles, and resilience in mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder](#)

Stress and over-care burden are problems for mothers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Therefore, it seems necessary to evaluation of coping with stress according to the burden of care for these mothers. This study aimed to determine the relationship between care burden with coping styles and resilience of mothers of children with ASD.

[Virtual Mindfulness Workshops for Parents of Children on the Autism Spectrum](#)

Mindfulness strategies can have a large impact on emotional regulation, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal relationships. Parents of children on the autism spectrum may experience greater stress, depression, and strained interpersonal relationships than those with typically developing children or those with children experiencing other developmental delays. The purpose of the current study was to evaluate the feasibility, acceptability, and initial effects of a virtual Mindful Self-Compassion workshop for parents of children on the autism spectrum and the impact on stress, self-compassion, parenting self-efficacy, and mindfulness.

[How much of my true self can I show? social adaptation in autistic women: a qualitative study](#)

Social adaptation is often aimed at supporting autistic people, yet its specific goals may not include their actual perspectives. That is, the state of adaptation is judged based on the standards and values of non-autistic people. This qualitative study focused on autistic women's perceptions of social adaptation and examined their lived experiences in daily life, as adaptive behaviors have often been reported as a "female autism phenotype."

[Should We Continue to Tell Autistic People that Their Brains are Different?](#)

Autism is often considered to reflect categorically 'different brains'. Neuropsychological research on autism spectrum disorder (ASD) however, has struggled to define this difference, or derive clear-cut boundaries between autism and non-autism. Consequently, restructuring or disbanding the ASD diagnosis is becoming increasingly advocated within research. Nonetheless, autism now exists as a salient social construction, of which 'difference' is a key facet. Clinical and educational professionals must influence this cautiously, as changes to autism's social construction may counterproductively affect the quality of life of autistic people. This paper therefore reviews ASD's value as both neuropsychological and social constructs. Although lacking neuropsychological validity, the autism label may be beneficial for autistic self-identity, reduction of stigma, and administering support. Whilst a shift away from case-control ASD research is warranted, lay notions of 'different brains' may be preserved.

[Knowledge of autism gained by learning from people through a local UK Autism Champion Network: A health and social care professional perspective](#)

Few autistic adults perceive that health and social care professionals have good understanding of autism. The countywide Autism Champion Network evaluated here, is an equal partnership of both staff across sectors (Autism Champions) and individuals with lived experience. Autism Champions take knowledge gained back to their teams to support continuous development of services to meet autistic need. This evaluation aims to examine the professional Autism Champions' perceptions of (1) the knowledge gained through their local network and (2) the enablers and potential challenges of disseminating and applying the acquired knowledge.

[Social engagement and loneliness in school-age autistic girls and boys](#)

This study examines the relationship between social engagement and loneliness in female and male autistic children and adolescents in school-based social settings. Secondary aims sought to explore the emergence of loneliness across different age groups and differences in social engagement and loneliness between genders.

[Respite and connection: Autistic adults' reflections upon nature and well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic](#)

The Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns provided opportunities to engage and reconnect with nature, with many people noting associated benefits to well-being. Research from the pandemic period has largely focused on the way neurotypical or general populations experienced nature; less is known about how autistic people used nature to support well-being during this time.

News

['The rot has to stop – look at the pattern of behaviour'](#)

Last Friday, 4 people were convicted for the crimes they committed working at Whorlton Hall.

[Whorlton Hall verdicts: Can further scandals be prevented?](#)

The conviction of four care workers for mistreating patients at a specialist hospital in County Durham has once again underlined the vulnerability of people with learning disabilities and autism in such places. The government describes the abuse as a "terrible set of events that should never have happened". There have been many official promises of better, more appropriate services. Despite that, change remains slow.

[Whorlton Hall Trial concludes](#)

Four support workers found guilty of ill-treating people with learning disabilities and autistic people.

[Inquests into deaths of people with a learning disability or autism are "woefully inadequate"](#)

Investigations into deaths of people with mental ill health, a learning disability or autism are "woefully inadequate", and inquests often isolate and demonise families, according to a new report by INQUEST.

[Number of autistic people in mental health hospitals latest data – March](#)

This is the most up-to-date record of how many autistic people and people with learning disabilities, both adults and children, are currently in inpatient units in England. It also shows how long they have been in these units for, when their care and treatment is checked and what kind of unit they are in.

[People with complex disabilities facing barriers to work](#)

Half of jobseekers with complex disabilities feel they do not have the support and equipment they need to look for work, according to new polling by the charity Sense. The research found that there was lack of support while looking for roles, inaccessible recruitment practices and unsympathetic employers.

[Charity offers free, unlimited support and advice for unpaid carers](#)

The learning disability charity Hft is offering free support and advice to unpaid carers who live in England and support someone who is autistic or has a learning disability.

[Consultation on framework to improve airline experiences for disabled passengers launches](#)

The UK Civil Aviation Authority has launched a consultation for feedback from disability rights groups, individuals, and the aviation industry on a proposed framework to improve airline experiences for disabled and less mobile passengers. Running until 21 July 2023, the consultation, which launched on 25 April 2023, is seeking views around what best practice looks like.

[New study reviews autonomy in care homes for older people with a learning disability](#)

Older people with a learning disability who are residents in care homes have a clear view on their autonomy in making independent choices, according to new research. The study, published in the Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities, found that although support staff are mindful of preserving residents' autonomy, this is limited in practice.

[ADASS publish a new roadmap for social care](#)

Millions of people are in pain or distress because they aren't getting the care they need with family and friends also being pushed to the edge, according to a new report from the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).



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[What kind of autism research should we do, and where should we do it?](#)

On 23 March 2023, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the most recent findings from their Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network of 11 sites across the United States. They reported that 1 in 36 children across the ADDM sites meet the “case definition” for autism, with prevalence ranging from 23.1 per 1,000 in Maryland to 44.9 per 1,000 in California. They documented co-occurring intellectual disability in 37.9 percent of those with autism.

[Trials of arbaclofen for autism yield mixed results](#)

Autistic children and teenagers who took the investigational drug arbaclofen fared no better than controls on a rating of social skills, but they showed significant improvements in atypical behavior and other measures, according to the results of two clinical trials presented today at the 2023 International Society for Autism Research annual meeting in Stockholm, Sweden.

[Learning disability nursing boosted by new professional development opportunities](#)

All learning disability nurses have the opportunity to develop in key specialist areas following the launch of the [Learning Disability Nursing CPD Award](#) – an online training programme open to anybody with an interest in learning disability nursing.