

Studies

['Why are we stuck in hospital?' Barriers to people with learning disabilities/autistic people leaving 'long-stay' hospital: a mixed methods study](#)

Transforming care so that people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people can receive support at home rather than in hospital settings is a key priority, but progress has been slow. Despite significant national debate, little previous research has engaged directly with people in hospital, their families or front-line staff to understand the issues from their perspectives.

[Exploring mothers' experiences of accessing an Education Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\) for an autistic child attending mainstream school in the United Kingdom](#)

Many autistic children are educated in mainstream settings, yet despite the benefits it can present challenges for the children and their parents. A legal framework for accessing support for school age children in England are Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Whilst there are anecdotal accounts on accessing EHCPs for autistic children, research is limited.

[A systematic review of research on staff training as an intervention to develop communication in children and adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities](#)

This paper aims to identify to what extent staff training interventions are successful in enhancing the development of communication skills in people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities.

[Extended Reality-Based Mobile App Solutions for the Therapy of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders: Systematic Literature Review](#)

The increasing prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has driven research interest on the therapy of individuals with autism, especially children, as early diagnosis and appropriate treatment can lead to improvement in the condition. With the widespread availability of virtual reality, augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality technologies to the public and the increasing popularity of mobile devices, the interest in the use of applications and technologies to provide support for the therapy of children with autism is growing.

[Using #ActuallyAutistic on Twitter for Precision Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Machine Learning Study](#)

The increasing use of social media platforms has given rise to an unprecedented surge in user-generated content, with millions of individuals publicly sharing their thoughts, experiences, and health-related information. Social media can serve as a useful means to study and understand public health. Twitter (subsequently rebranded as "X") is one such social media platform that has proven to be a valuable source of rich information for both the general public and health officials. We conducted the first study applying Twitter data mining to autism screening.

[Pediatrician and parental evaluation of child neurodevelopment at 2 years of age](#)

The early identification of infants with a risk for neurodevelopmental disorders in the first few years of life is essential for better developmental outcomes. Screenings should be carried out by combining the family pediatricians' and parents' perspectives, the two fundamental sources of information on children's health. The present study has three aims: (a) to test the feasibility of parent-report instruments to detect warning signs in their children's development; (b) to ascertain whether there is an agreement between the family pediatricians' (FP) clinical judgments of warning signs and the parental perceptions; (c) to determine whether there is a link between parents' distress and child development.



[Pragmatic competence in people with dual diagnosis: down syndrome and autism spectrum disorder](#)

Pragmatics is an area that can be affected in a wide variety of disorders. In this sense, Syndromic Autism is defined as a disorder in which a causal link is established between an associated syndrome and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Likewise, Down Syndrome (DS) is one of the main genetically based syndromes in which ASD is described as one of its possible manifestations. In this direction, people with DS are described as social beings whereas in ASD there seems to be a specific alteration of this domain.

[Comparative analysis of emotional facial expression recognition and empathy in children with prader-willi syndrome and autism spectrum disorder](#)

Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) is a rare neurodevelopmental disorder that is often comorbid with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Due to the close association between these two conditions, and recognizing that Theory of Mind (ToM) is related to social behaviors in ASD, there is a growing interest in studying the reciprocity of social communication between these two groups.

[Mapping awareness-raising and capacity-building materials on developmental disabilities for non-specialists: a review of the academic and grey literature](#)

Most children with developmental disabilities (DD), such as intellectual disabilities and autism, live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where services are usually limited. Various governmental, non-governmental and research organisations in LMICs have developed awareness-raising campaigns and training and education resources on DD in childhood relevant to LMICs. This study aimed to comprehensively search and review freely available materials in the academic and grey literature, aimed at awareness raising, training and education on DD among non-specialist professionals and community members in LMICs.

[Disability-related inequalities in the prevalence of loneliness across the lifespan: trends from Australia, 2003 to 2020](#)

Experiencing loneliness can be distressing and increasing evidence indicates that being lonely is associated with poor physical and mental health outcomes. Cross-sectional studies have demonstrated that people with disability have increased risk of experiencing loneliness compared to people without disability.

[Exploring critical intervention features and trial processes in the evaluation of sensory integration therapy for autistic children](#)

We evaluated the clinical and cost-effectiveness of manualised sensory integration therapy (SIT) for autistic children with sensory processing difficulties in a two-arm randomised controlled trial. Trial processes and contextual factors which may have affected intervention outcomes were explored within a nested process evaluation. This paper details the process evaluation methods and results. We also discuss implications for evaluation of individual level, tailored interventions in similar populations.

[Using Q-sort method to explore autistic students' views of the impacts of their anxiety at school](#)

Anxiety is a common co-occurring condition for autistic students; however, little is known about how anxiety may affect their social or academic outcomes in an educational setting. Furthermore, the perspectives of students themselves have rarely been included in the literature. Using Q-sort method, 45 autistic participants aged 7 to 17 years identified the outcomes they perceived were most impacted by their anxiety in the educational setting.

[Social media shaping autism perception and identity](#)

The aim of this study was to explore how autistic adults experienced using social media to find information about autism, and how they experienced online autistic communities. There is little research on the rationale why autistic people look for information on autism via social media, and on how such information is perceived from an autistic viewpoint.

[A qualitative exploration of an autism-specific self-compassion program: The ASPAA](#)

As mental health concerns coupled with inadequate supports have been described as reaching crisis proportions in autistic people, there is a pressing need for accessible and effective support systems. While self-compassion has shown various benefits in the general population, its application in supporting autistic individuals remains limited.

[Literacy in nonspeaking autistic people](#)

Autistic people who cannot speak risk being underestimated. Their inability to speak, along with other unconventional behaviors and mannerisms, can give rise to limiting assumptions about their capacities, including their capacity to acquire literacy.

[Feasibility of OT-Parentship: An intervention for parents of adolescents with autism](#)

Parents of individuals with autism face various difficulties, among which are decreased resilience and heightened stress. OT-Parentship is an intervention for parents of adolescents with autism that aims to promote parental resilience and enhance adolescents' participation in daily life. This study examines OT-Parentship's feasibility and explores the improvement of parental resilience and child and parent occupational performance following intervention.

[Exploring the value of family shared reading with young people who have Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities \(PMLD\)](#)

Shared reading with young children is promoted as good practice in national and international policy. Existing literature explores cognitive and developmental benefits of family shared reading for young, typically developing children, but much less is known about benefits for young people with learning disabilities. Additionally, the analysis of 'benefit' is often cast in economic terms to society rather than through the sociological lens of everyday 'family practice'. This paper explores the significance of shared reading for two young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD), a group traditionally characterised as having a developmental age of 24 months or less and who may therefore continue to enjoy shared reading far beyond early childhood.

Blogs

[Why your right to vote is important – A blog by Gary Bourlet](#)

There will be local elections in May and a general election later this year. Every adult in England has the right to vote. But how do we make sure we can? We want to make sure that those of us with learning disabilities are able to use our right to vote.

['Using The Law' – A blog update from Kate Chate](#)

Kate is a Family and Friends member of Learning Disability England's Representative Body, and a Family Consultant for Dimensions UK. Kate has written this Plain English blog for members, about being part of a group called 'Using The Law'.



News

[Landmark review calls on employers to boost support for autistic people](#)

A bold new government-backed review has set out a vision for workplace culture changes to support autistic people to start and stay in work.

[Martha's Rule will 'significantly improve outcomes' for people with a learning disability](#)

NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard has announced that 'Martha's Rule' will be rolled out in NHS hospitals across England. Martha's Rule allows patients and their families to seek an urgent review and get a second opinion on a patient's care if their condition deteriorates.

[Four in 10 family carers considering leaving the workforce](#)

Four in 10 (41%) family carers are considering leaving the workforce or reducing their working hours due to caregiving demands, a new survey has found. The survey, conducted by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) and the Opinium, included 1,530 working-age carers. It reveals that a staggering number of carers are unable to keep up with the demands of their caring roles alongside their jobs.

[Thousands of children with SEND unable to access formal education](#)

Data obtained by ITV News has revealed that 8,660 children in England, Scotland and Wales are unable to access formal education despite having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Furthermore, FOI data from councils in England and Wales reveals that more than 5,000 children who have an EHCP do not have a place at any school.

[Health inequalities in a nutshell](#)

Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people. Here we examine the key data on this complex and wide-ranging issue.

[Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill: consultation \(Scotland\)](#)

People with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people are unique individuals who, like all of us, have potential to develop, skills to offer, and vibrant lives to lead connected to their families and communities. They may think differently and see and experience the world differently. This shouldn't cause them to be marginalised, stigmatised, disadvantaged or excluded.

[Life expectancy lags for autistic people in United Kingdom](#)

The finding confirms past research that links autism to early death, but it also suggests that the life expectancy gap may be smaller than previously thought.

[Common sensory response scores may miss important variations](#)

A person's "overall" score on sensory-seeking, hyperreactive or hyporeactive tendencies may obscure nuances in their individual sensory experience.

[The Guardian view on the special needs crisis: children don't deserve this chaos](#)

A decade after David Cameron's coalition government overhauled provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (Send) in England, it has never been clearer that the system is in crisis. A raft of measures designed to appeal to parents, by promising them greater influence over their children's education, has resulted in a destructive standoff between families, schools and councils – because ministers failed to adequately fund their own policy.



challenging behaviour

Learning Disabilities and Autism

Asperger Syndrome
quality of life

mental capacity
intellectual disabilities

health information
carers

research



Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Community and Mental Health Services

28 February 2024

["A friendship like no other" Buddies Project for people detained in hospital](#)

An innovative West Midlands befriending project has matched 24 autistic people and people with learning disabilities detained within mental health hospitals, with individuals who have lived experience of being a hospital inpatient, creating 'friendships like no other'.

