

The new Learning Disability and Neurodiversity bulletins will be starting w/b 9th March. To ensure that you continue to receive the appropriate bulletin(s) please complete this very brief form [LD + ND Mailing lists – Fill in form](#)

Studies

[Anxiety, Depression, and Care Barriers in Adults With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)

Are anxiety, depression, and barriers to mental health care more prevalent among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) than those without functional limitations?

[A Comparative Study of Self-Efficacy, Loneliness, and Well-Being in Adolescents Diagnosed With Autism Spectrum Disorder and Specific Learning Disorder](#)

Adolescents diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Specific Learning Disorder (SLD) within the neurodevelopmental disorder spectrum face challenges across various developmental domains that persist throughout their lives.

[Loneliness and Social Connection in Autistic and/or ADHD Males: A Scoping Review](#)

Autistic and/or Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) males report higher levels of loneliness than their neurotypical peers. This scoping review synthesised 82 studies examining loneliness and social connection in neurodivergent (ND) males.

[The Under-Identification of Autism in Females: A Review and Analysis of Sex-Based Scoring Differences Observed in Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule \(ADOS\) Module 3](#)

Emerging research highlights sex differences in autism presentation, raising questions about the validity of clinician-administered diagnostic tools like the gold-standard Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS).

[Autism as a Predictor of Deviant Peer Association: Testing for Dual Systems Model Mediation Effects](#)

Deviant peer association is a robust risk factor for offending, that is, any behavior that violates a criminal law. This can include behaviors like drug use, violence, and theft; among others. Autism is a neurodivergent condition characterized by both atypical cognitive development and challenges with social interaction and communication. Despite these impairments, there is a dearth of research focused on the relationship between autism and deviant peer association.

[Reacting, Retreating, Regulating, and Reconnecting: How Autistic Adults in the United Kingdom Use Time Alone for Well-Being](#)

Firsthand accounts by autistic people describe a need for regular time alone. However, there is little in the literature that explores (1) why time alone is desired, (2) how that time is spent, or (3) where that time is spent. This article describes a neurodiversity-informed, qualitative study that demonstrates the importance and purpose of "alone-time" for autistic adults.

[Self-Reported Strengths and Difficulties by Autistic Young Adults](#)

The autistic community has called for a neurodiversity-affirming perspective of autism. By asking autistic adults about their strengths and difficulties, we can expand our understanding of autism by challenging deficit-dominant narratives and moving towards strengths-informed support tailored to address challenges explicitly expressed by autistic individuals.

[Understanding the Mental Health in Parents of Children on the Autism Spectrum: Beyond Child-Driven Stressors](#)

Parents of children on the autism spectrum experience elevated psychological distress, which can impact both their well-being and child outcomes. While prior research has focused primarily on child-related contributors to parental mental health, parent-specific factors remain underexplored.

Study Summaries

[The joys of parenting autistic children](#)

Broader research on parenting tends to focus on the hard parts, and this has been mirrored in the literature on the experiences of parenting autistic children (Saccà, Cavallini, & Cavallini, 2019). There is little research on positive experiences when parenting autistic kids, or on parenting an autistic child as an autistic parent.

Policies

[Every child achieving and thriving](#)

Reforms to the schools and SEND systems in England to ensure that every child can achieve and thrive.

Guidance

[Services for autistic people and people with a learning disability: Right support, right care, right culture](#)

How CQC regulates providers that support autistic people and people with a learning disability.

[Accessible information about the reasonable adjustment digital flag](#)

Accessible resources providing information about the reasonable adjustment digital flag.

Webinars

[Upcoming webinar: Introducing the Working Together Checker](#)

Join our learning disability advisory group, Bild for the Future, on 5 March at 12:30pm for a special webinar aimed at people with learning disabilities and the people who support them.

[Free learning on neurodiversity for World Social Work Month 2026](#)

Trainer Siobhan Maclean shares her experience of neurodivergence and provides advice to fellow social workers on harnessing their strengths and promoting belonging in the profession, in a free webinar.

News

[New project to examine Prevention of Future Deaths Reports on people with learning disabilities](#)

A new project will examine the implications of Prevention of Future Deaths Reports for social and health care support and services for people with learning disabilities.

[ITV News highlights the punitive use of contact orders against family members](#)

Today 16th February, ITV News have broadcast a news story on contact orders. Forty-five families who have a relative with a learning disability have been banned from visiting their relative or had restrictions imposed on visits after raising concerns about the way their loved ones are being treated.

[Timely autism diagnosis linked to better suicide prevention](#)

A new study has highlighted the link between suicide prevention and the importance of timely autism diagnosis and post-diagnostic care.

[Government releases the long-awaited Schools White Paper](#)

Today the Government has published its Schools White Paper, which lays out plans to reform the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system.

[SEND reform: Education Committee Chair responds to Schools White Paper](#)

Responding to the Government's reforms to SEND support announced in the Schools White Paper today.

[Special educational needs system to be overhauled in England](#)

Only children with the most complex special educational needs will be eligible for education, health and care plans (EHCPs) from 2035 in England, the government has said.

[The key changes being made to special educational needs - at a glance](#)

The government has published plans to reform the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system in England - and there are a lot of new terms to get your head around.

[SEND: Schools white paper includes £4 billion in additional funding for reforms](#)

As part of what it calls "generational reforms" for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), the Government has announced a £4 billion investment over three years to ensure every mainstream school is inclusive.

[A first look at the Government's proposals for SEND reform](#)

The Government has today (23rd February) published its long-awaited plans for education and SEND reform. Here are some initial reflections following a first look at the proposals. The first take is that there are some positives, but also some risks - and that a huge amount rests on implementation.

[Over 254,000 face waits for autism assessment](#)

As of December 2025, there were 254,108 patients with an open referral for suspected autism, latest NHS data has revealed.

[Minimum Income Guarantee changes: disabled adults to get £400 boost](#)

The Minimum Income Guarantee for disabled adults accessing social care is to be increased by 7%, giving working-age adults who receive social care a £400 cash boost.

[A new diagnosis of 'profound autism' is under consideration. Here's what parents need to know](#)

Category describes people who have little or no language, an IQ of less than 50 and require 24-hour supervision.

challenging behaviour

Learning Disabilities and Autism

Asperger Syndrome
quality of life

mental capacity
intellectual disabilities

health information
carers

research



NHS
Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

25 February 2026

[Sex bias in autism drops as age at diagnosis rises](#)

The disparity begins to level out after age 10, raising questions about why so many autistic girls go undiagnosed earlier in childhood.

[Our Royal Patron attends special dinner event in support of young autistic people](#)

We were delighted to welcome our Royal Patron, HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh, at a dinner event entitled 'Inclusive Futures: Education, Employment, and Autism'.



www

