



Bristol Autism Spectrum Service

Guide to Carers' support in Bristol

Carers' support

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The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service

www.awp.nhs.uk/bass

The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service is a multi-disciplinary team of psychology, nurses, social workers.

The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service works in four areas (Bristol, BaNES, SGlos, N Somerset).

We offer support to adults (aged 17 onwards) and their supporters eg parents, partners) through one to one bookable appointments and groups.

We are not a crisis team and we do not 'case hold' – we train, advise and support colleagues in NHS, social care or elsewhere.

Getting a diagnosis as an adult

Bristol Autism Spectrum Service offers diagnostic assessments to adults who think they may have autism. To request an assessment if you think you have autism get your GP to refer you to:

Team manager
Bristol Autism Spectrum Service
Petherton Resource Centre
3 Petherton Rd
BS14 9BP

Or just contact us by email or phone at:

Email: Awp.bass@nhs.net

Phone: 01275 796 204

Useful Guides on our webpages

The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service has many useful Guides on their home page:

www.awp.nhs.uk/bass

Guides on Stuff to do, benefits, money, bus pass, driving, and more

We would highly recommend the Stuff to do guide – see www.awp.nhs.uk/media/756970/stuff-to-do-guide.pdf

This Guide includes details of The Bristol Asperger Social Group – join this at 18 years for social activities and to get linked in

Facebook or hello@bristolaspergersocialgroup.org.uk

Book one to one appointments for your son or daughter

Your loved one can phone or email to make an appointment with a member of BASS staff on any topic they wish eg benefits, relationships, housing, trouble with neighbours, considering employment options.

We also run groups on managing anxiety, relationship skills, mindfulness, problem solving, walking as well as workshops on various topics.

To find out more or make an appointment phone 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

Support for parents/partners/carers

Book one to one appointments

You can phone or email to make an appointment with a member of BASS staff on any topic you wish relating to your loved one's support needs and your Carer needs eg benefits, relationships, housing, trouble with neighbours, considering employment options.

To find out more or make an appointment phone 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

*Please join the National Autistic Society (NAS) Avon Branch (parents of 14+ support group)
avon@nas.org.uk*

Get in touch with the Carers support centre 0117 965 2200

www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Ask them about Carers assessment

They also offer workshops, pamper/well-being events and training such as the Caring with Confidence course

Carers assessment

You have the right to an assessment of your needs as a carer

If you care for someone and that care and support has a “significant impact on the carer’s wellbeing” you may be eligible for assistance of some kind.

Or put another way if the care and support you provide means that your, “physical or mental health is either deteriorating or is at risk of doing so” then you may be eligible for assistance of some kind.

Carer is a legal term for parents (and sibs) who provide support / care for a loved one with autism (or other disability/vulnerability).

You can request a Carers assessment in your own right even if your loved one does not wish to be assessed as a child or adult.

The Carers assessment can be carried out by the council or another organisation the council nominates eg Carers Support Centre in Bristol.

In Bristol, if your loved one is receiving services from the council already eg housing or social care, then it would be the council ordinarily carrying out the assessment.

The services that could be provided through a Carers assessment might be a sitter so you can go out for a few hours and know your loved one is safe at home.

Or money for...

- pamper treatments
- gym membership
- holiday
- private counsellor
- money to attend a course
- help with housework
- computer/tablet

Carers' emergency card

This is a card scheme that Carers can choose to carry. It is an emergency card (provided by Bristol city council) which shows your name, a unique identification number and an emergency phone number. If a carer has an accident/emergency or is taken seriously ill, then the card can be used to alert a 24-hour emergency call centre that the person they care for needs help. Steps are then taken to ensure the safety of the person cared for.

Get the card from Carers support centre 0117 965 2200

www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk

You can receive some discounts if you have the Carers' emergency card

- <https://www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/our-services/discounts-for-carers>

Carer's Allowance

Taxable benefit (£62 approx) for a carer:

- aged over 16
- not receiving state pension
- caring for a person for at least 35 hours a week who gets DLA Care at middle or higher rate (or PIP Daily Living at either rate)
- not in full time education (usually about 21 hours or more)
- not earning in excess of approx £116 net income per week (ie take off tax and national insurance PLUS a maximum of half of your net earnings can be ignored if you have child care costs to that amount)

Only one carer can claim Carer's Allowance for your loved one with autism

How Carer's Allowance affects your and the person's income related benefits is quite complex so contact welfarights@Bristol.gov.uk or Citizens Advice for more detailed advice

Use www.workingfamilies.org.uk helpline for advice on claiming if you are juggling work, child care and welfare benefits - 0207 7017 0072.

Hft (formerly known as Home Farm Trust)

Offer UK wide information service for carers

www.hft.org.uk/familycarersupport

familycarersupport@hft.org.uk

0117 906 1751

The Equality Act 2010

It is against the law for any service to discriminate against you (or against a family member, sibling or partner, because of your disability)

Services include:

- shop
- employer
- School/college
- University
- day centre
- public body
- voluntary organisation

Autism including Asperger syndrome is considered as a disability under the Equality Act 2010

if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities

'substantial' means more than minor or trivial

'long-term' means more than 12 months

The Equality Act 2010 contains two key duties

1. not to treat a disabled person less favourably for a reason related to their disability and
2. to take all reasonable steps or make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage

Talk to the organisation if you think you may have been discriminated against eg in college or at work

Consider getting further advice from local law /welfare rights agencies or Bristol Autism Spectrum Service 01275 796 204

You may also wish to discuss any possible discrimination case with the Equality Advisory and Support Service:

0808 800 0082

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Getting social care support - aged 18+

Your council must undertake an assessment for any adult (18 years and older) with an appearance of need for care and support under The Care Act 2014.

This legal duty is arranged through a part of Bristol City Council called Care Direct 0117 9222 700

If you want to think about getting social care support get advice from Bristol Autism Spectrum Service staff if you are aged 18 years and older (01275 796 204 or awp.bass@nhs.net)

If you request an assessment someone from the Council (usually a social worker) will phone to ask you questions about what you find easy and difficult in your everyday living; this may then lead to a social worker visiting probably from the Preparing for Adulthood team who work with teenagers up to 25 years of age.

The Autism Act 2009 (statutory guidance March 2015) says:

“Local Authorities must ensure that any person carrying out a needs assessment under the Care Act 2014 has the skills, knowledge and competence to carry out the assessment in question and is appropriately trained. Where the assessor does not have experience in the condition, the local authority must ensure that a person with that expertise is consulted.”

To qualify for support under the Care Act 2014 (if you aged 18 and over) you must usually have:

significant difficulty in at least **two** areas of daily living...

and

...these must be having considerable detrimental effect on well-being

These are the headings of daily living in the Care Act:

- a) Managing and maintaining nutrition
- b) Maintaining personal hygiene
- c) Managing toilet needs
- d) Being appropriately clothed
- e) Being able to make use of the adult's home safely
- f) Maintaining a habitable home environment

- g) Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships
- h) Accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering
- i) Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport and recreational facilities or services
- j) Carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child

After they have visited and assessed the council may decide you can have a support person to help you at home for a few hours /week

This help may be organized through a Direct Payment (money you get to buy your own support) or through a local care agency

You can use a Direct Payment to pay someone you know even sometimes a family member if they don't live in your home

The council will make a financial assessment and may ask you to contribute money towards your care costs

If you want to think about getting social care support get advice from Bristol Autism Spectrum Service staff if you are aged 17 years and older (01275 796 204)

Mental well-being

If you have an autism diagnosis you often have times when you feel more anxious than the average person and some with autism also experience low mood /depression.

Sometimes talking about ways to improve your mood and manage your anxiety can help. Many people report that taking medication can help too.

If you or the person with autism wants to think about getting counselling or therapy around low mood or anxiety get advice from Bristol Autism Spectrum Service as we have staff who can meet with you and help you decide what kind of support you need. Book an appointment on 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

Or you can go direct to Bristol Wellbeing Therapies and book an initial assessment on 0117 982 3209

If it is an emergency call the Mental Health Line on 0300 555 0334

Bristol Well-Being is the free NHS provider of therapy

If you or the person needs support with anxiety or low mood difficulties then you are able to call Bristol Wellbeing Therapies and book an initial assessment on 0117 982 3209. They offer courses and one to one appointments to teach techniques that you are able to use at home to help manage your mental health

<http://bristolmentalhealth.org/services>

This will give you a good overview of all mental health support services provided in Bristol

Private therapy and counselling

As well as private counselling there is also Free/low cost counselling (Bristol) - see Guide to Mental Health www.awp.nhs.uk/bass

Some private counsellors costs vary from £10 -£30/hour. They should be registered members of organisation like The British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP) or www.bps.org.uk (psychologists)

If a person is developing serious mental health problems

In this circumstance you/they should seek advice from your GP. They may be eligible for support through mental health services (Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Trust)

If it is a mental health emergency call the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Trust Bristol Mental Health Line (what was called the Crisis line). This is available 24/7 and manned by mental health professionals - 0300 555 0334

BristolMindline is available 0808 808 0330 – Wednesday to Sunday from 8pm to midnight if you need someone to talk to

Also there is Samaritans Bristol – 24 hours local and national helplines

Bristol: 0117 983 1000 UK: 116 123 – free to call

Text: 07725 909090

[Samaritans Bristol website](#)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Drop-in: 7:30 am to 9:00 pm

The Samaritans of Bristol

37 St Nicholas Street

Bristol BS1 1TP

Housing

Two main questions are:

Where to live

...and

What support is required?

If the person with autism wants to think about housing and/or support hours get advice from Bristol Autism Spectrum Service as we have staff who can meet with you and help you decide what kind of support you need. Book an appointment on 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

BUT.... If you are homeless or about to be, phone housing advice in the first instance - 0117 352 6800

Some possible situations:

- Living with parents
- Private renting alone, or with friends
- Renting through housing association or Supported living provider
- Home ownership
- Residential care
- Homelessness

But there are many different ways of living and financing these housing options

Living with parents

Lots of young and some older adults have to live with parents

Some parents are happy for their loved one to remain living with them indefinitely

Even if a child lives with their parents they can still request a Care Act 2014 social work assessment (through Bristol City Council Care Direct) eg to help them prepare for a move

If you are preparing them to get used to not seeing you every day, try going away for hours, then day, then overnight, then weekend/week

If moving out of parental home...

Consider:

1. Starting off with a trial move?
2. Where to live? Not in rough area with noisy, anti-social neighbours
3. Does the person need their own flat or will they prefer a shared house?
4. How will they avoid isolation?
5. How many hours support will they need?
6. Who will pay for the support? (some providers include Cintre, Milestones, Keyring, Brandon Trust, but there are lots of others)

Housing through HomeChoice

HomeChoice is the organisation in Bristol who manages 'council houses' or 'social housing'

You may wish to try renting using Home Choice (usually a very long wait, but applying to be on HomeChoice may be requirement of getting any help so worth doing anyway)

You can apply to HomeChoice if you have...

- Lived in Bristol two years (or close family has and you need to live near them)
- Income and savings are both below £40000
- No evidence of "serious unacceptable behaviour" in a previous property e.g. rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, possession orders, eviction etc.

If you apply to HomeChoice (eg online or at Customer Points) they will put you in one of four bands

You are only likely to make successful housing bids for properties if you are in the highest priority (Bands 1 and 2)

Get Bristol Autism Spectrum Service and others to write reports on your behalf to state why you should be considered as higher banding (eg due to over-crowding, domestic violence, relationship breakdown, harassment from neighbours or others)

More likely to get housing on HomeChoice if you are aged 50 and older

Private renting

This option is difficult if you are on benefits – a flat is difficult to obtain in the first instance and also difficult to pay for (as housing benefit may not cover rent)

Have a look at Guide to Housing on www.awp.nhs.uk/bass or use this link:

<http://www.awp.nhs.uk/media/890220/Guide-to-Housing-and-social-care.pdf>

You can still ask Bristol City Council social care for support hours email: adult.care@Bristol.gov.uk
eg:

'I would like a social work assessment for my son who is 20, has an autism diagnosis and would like to move out of the parental home but he will require some support hours because he cannot live independently and is socially vulnerable'

- May help if you can be guarantor
- May help if you can pay more costs upfront
- May help if you have got references eg from college tutor
- Lots of prejudice against people on benefits. Perhaps you are: "In between jobs" or "self employed"
- Your presentation/appearance is sometimes important factor
- Get friends to assist with searching and looking out for a place

Check every week/daily:

- The Evening Post and Trade-It papers, also accessible via the internet:
www.bristolpost.co.uk www.tradeit.co.uk
- And search daily the following websites:
- www.rightmove.co.uk
- www.dssmove.co.uk
- www.bristol.gumtree.com
- www.thisisbristol.co.uk - and follow the link for classifieds. www.letsbristol.co.uk
- www.nestoria.co.uk
- <http://uk.easyroommate.com>
- www.spareroom.co.uk

Book appointment with Bristol Autism Spectrum Service staff on

01275 796 204 to discuss housing if you wish

Supported living

Supported living is where a person lives in a home often with others with similar needs and there is some staff oversight from few hours/day/on call to staff on site most of the day

It could be that you think supported living is the best option, for example until the person has more independent skills

Ask for a social work assessment email adult.care@Bristol.gov.uk and explain why you want an assessment ...

'my son is 20, has an autism diagnosis and would like to move out of the parental home but he will require some support hours because he cannot live independently and is socially vulnerable'

Bristol City Council social worker or similar will assess the person and may offer supported living.

Often the person will have a tenancy if they live in supported living

Shared Lives

There is also a scheme called Shared Lives which is when a person lives with another family, if they need to leave parental home but need a nurturing family environment.

Housing Support Register

One option is to apply to the Housing Support Register.

The four key eligibility criteria are:

- 1.Applicant must be 'vulnerable' (autism plus other definite concerns)
- 2.Applicant must be in need of 'housing-related support' to prevent homelessness
- 3.Applicant to Accommodation Based or Floating Support services must have recourse to public funds (eg benefits)
- 4.Applicant must have a clear local connection with Bristol, or have special circumstances (which can be evidenced)

Residential care home

Ask for a social work assessment email adult.care@Bristol.gov.uk and explain why you want an assessment ...

'my son is 20, has an autism diagnosis and would like to move out of the parental home but he will require full time residential support because xxxxx'

Bristol City Council social worker (or similar person) will assess the person and may offer residential care but only if less support would not work

Residential care would be usually be funded by social care, benefits and possibly family top up (sometimes NHS money also)

In residential care you usually have live in staff and you share with other people

You get to keep some money each week

Talk to Bristol Autism Spectrum Service about local service providers we may know of

Home ownership

Parents might be able to:

- buy a flat
- leave property in Trust
- your loved one could inherit your home

Homelessness

If you about to made homeless talk to one of the specialist homeless agencies listed at the end of this section, and/or Bristol Autism Spectrum Service

These agencies can give advice on how to proceed and your rights

Get a letter from Bristol Autism Spectrum Service to take to housing advice stating good reasons why you are vulnerable and so the council has a homelessness duty to meet

In an emergency ie you need to move that day call housing advice 0117 352 6800

Housing advice contacts

CHAS Bristol 0117 935 1260

National Housing Helpline 0808 800 4444

South West Law 0117 314 6400

Avon & Bristol Law Centre 0117 924 8662
www.ablc.org.uk

Advice West
www.advicewest.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) - www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing

Bristol Citizens Advice Bureau
0117 926 8801
www.bristolcab.org.uk
housingemergency@bristolcab.org.uk

Shelter 0344 515 1430

Have a look at Bristol Autism Spectrum Service Guide to Housing and Social Care:

<http://www.awp.nhs.uk/media/890220/Guide-to-Housing-and-social-care.pdf>

Contact details for some Bristol agencies who provide support workers

These are just some of the providers. Some provide community support workers and some also provide accommodation

Brandon Trust 0117 907 7200 www.brandontrust.org

Cintre 0117 924 4654 www.cintre.org

Milestones trust 0117 970 9393 www.milestonetrust.org.uk

Freeways 01275 372 109 www.freeways.org.uk

Second Step 0117 909 6630 www.second-step.co.uk

Supported Independence 0117 9246438 www.supportedindependence.co.uk

Keyring 0117 941 5355 www.keyring.org

Keyring set up a circle of support by having about 6-8 people living in a close geographical area.

There is a staff member locally

Silvacare 0117 964 2828 www.silvacare.org.uk

Useful entitlements

Disabled Persons Railcard

The Railcard allows cheaper train travel anywhere in the UK.

If you are aged between 5-15 years you usually get 50% off most fares and 1/3 price off for an adult companion. It may prove cheaper to get a Family Railcard so check first!

If you are aged 16 years and older and disabled you get 1/3 off your own ticket and 1/3 off for an adult companion.

To be eligible you must be receiving DLA Mobility or middle/higher rate DLA Care or any rate of Personal Independence Payment.

A one-year card costs about £20 for a disabled person (or £54 for three years).

Helpline: 0845 605 0525

Web: www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

Email: disability@atoc.org

Disabled Coachcard

National Express

For people aged 16 years plus

(3-15 years get 50% off anyway)

Costs £10 for one year and you get 1/3 off travel

www.nationalexpress.com

08717 81 81 81 for booking enquiries.

You may need to provide proof of disability on the coach eg DLA, PIP or registered disabled card, (no longer giving these out but may have old one) or Pink Card may work.

If you buy the card in person at Bristol Bus station you get a card with automatic proof of your disability.

Bus pass - All England Concessionary Travel Scheme – through the Council eg if you are not able to drive because of a learning disability, or you cannot react to road conditions safely
<http://www.awp.nhs.uk/media/834045/guide-to-driving-and-the-disabled-persons-bus-passpdf.pdf>

You can use your bus pass anywhere within England. Your journey on local bus transport can start:

9am to 4am Monday –Fridays and all weekends and bank holidays in Ex Avon area
9.30am – 11pm elsewhere in England and all weekends and bank holidays

First Bus Safe Journey

Useful to show to bus driver

You can cut out and create the right messages for you to use
<https://www.firstgroup.com/bus-accessibility>

Blue Badge

Worth arguing if you have behavioural issues that make you unsafe near roads

Read www.autism.org.uk/bluebadge before you do anything else

Contact Bristol City Council for application
parkingpermits@bristol.gov.uk
0117 922 2600.

You will be arguing that you have considerable difficulty with walking either due to mobility or behavioural difficulties .

Accessible toilet scheme

National Key Scheme – opens locked accessible toilets – Disability shop Cabot Circus ground floor (do not need DLA or PIP to get this; about £5) OR cheaper online but may not work?

<https://radar.org.uk/shop/radar-key>

CEA (cinema) card

If you get PIP or DLA ...you can get the Cinema card £6.50/year means a support person gets in free to cinema with you (or you get in free as carer for a friend with autism !)

<https://www.ceacard.co.uk>

Pink Card

Bristol City Council Register of Disabled Children - Pink Card

Voluntary scheme officially ends at 18. May work at places like:

- Bristol Zoo
- We the Curious
- Slimbridge
- Puxton Park
- The Aquarium
- Avon Valley Farm Park
- Various pools /gyms around the city

You can try using it nationally for days out eg exhibitions, museums etc

Police Safe Places

An individual can call (or ask someone else to call on their behalf) the 24 hour dedicated Safe Places number if they find themselves in a crisis situation, such as if they are lost, feel scared or upset, and don't know what to do, or if they have been a victim of crime

<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/safeplaces>

NAS Autism Alert Card

Can be handed to someone if person with autism too stressed to talk

Has information about autism in this card

Costs £2.50 plus p&p

Warm Home Discount

This is a £130 rebate on your electricity bill for those receiving income related benefits. Each utility company has different rules so contact the Centre for Sustainable Energy in Bristol on 0800 082 2234 or 0117 934 1400

The Centre for Sustainable Energy can help (CSE) can give more in-depth information and advice as well as home visits. They may also be able to help with benefits and entitlements.

www.cse.org.uk

Disability benefits

Two benefits your loved one may be able to claim at the same time

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

(To cover additional costs of having a disability)

Employment and Support Allowance / Job Seeker's Allowance

(To financially support those who are unable to work)

If the person with autism wants to think about claiming PIP and/or ESA get advice from Bristol Autism Spectrum Service as we have staff who can help complete forms. Book an appointment on 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

Or if you prefer contact Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service (WRAMAS) on 0117 352 1888 welfarerights@Bristol.gov.uk

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

A benefit you can apply for if you need support with daily living and physical mobility issues (or are actually house bound)

www.autism.org.uk/pip

The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service has produced a Guide to PIP which you can download:

<http://www.awp.nhs.uk/media/825665/guide-to-pip-20-april-2017.pdf>

Personal independence payment is made up of two parts:

Mobility – planning and following a journey & moving around (£22 and £58)

Daily Living – personal care, engaging socially, communication, making financial decisions etc (£55.65 and £83)

8 points for the standard rate and 12 points for the enhanced rate

Usually the DWP require you to have a Face to face assessment as well as filling in the form/questionnaire. There are some exceptions eg if an assessment will cause mental health problems for the person involved.

Get NAS information - www.autism.org.uk/pip "*PIP – the points based criteria*"

Personal Independence Payment criteria:

- Preparing a cooked main meal for yourself
- Taking medication
- Eating
- Communicating with other people
- Engaging with other people
- Getting out of bed in the morning
- Going to bed at night
- Washing and personal care
- Getting dressed/undressed
- Getting out of your home into the community.

Areas to score points?

If you require verbal prompts for many daily living tasks you may be eligible to receive PIP

For example, Eating/drinking, washing, dressing, presentation

Also, if you cannot prepare a cooked main meal for yourself you may score points towards getting PIP

Cooking a main meal includes chopping up fresh food - veg, meat and use pans, knives, timings, check food cooked etc

Employment Support Allowance

A benefit you can apply if you are unlikely to be able to work for a long time, or not able to work at all

If you are unemployed but looking for work and cannot claim Employment Support Allowance (ESA) you can claim Jobseekers allowance (JSA) instead

Can often claim ESA whilst studying if you meet the criteria of having 'limited capability for work' and low income.

A good overview on studying and claiming ESA - <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/employment-and-support-allowance-and-studying>

Check with welfarerights@Bristol.gov.uk if in doubt

ESA approx. £100-£120. (JSA £70/week)

Employment and Support Allowance - Work Capability Assessment

The 'Work capability assessment' includes:

- completing the ESA1 (initial claim form)
- completing the ESA50 questionnaire
- possibly having a medical face to face assessment

Get information and support in completing the assessment forms /questionnaires
welfarerights@Bristol.gov.uk

We recommend you download the Bristol Autism Spectrum Service *Guide to Employment and Support Allowance*:

<http://www.awp.nhs.uk/media/801524/guide-to-esa-20-april-2017.pdf>

There is also more info if required at:
www.autism.org.uk/esa

You can only do a task in ESA or PIP if you can do it...

Reliably - you are able to complete the activity to an acceptable standard

In a timely fashion - you are able to complete it in less than twice as long as the maximum time taken by a person without impairment

Repeatedly - you are able to complete it as often as the activity requires

Safely - you are able to complete it without putting yourself or others at undue risk of harm

Outcomes of the ESA Work Capability Assessment

After 13 weeks there will be one of three outcomes

1. You are entitled to ESA and are put in a support group (no interviews)
2. You are entitled to ESA and are put in a work related activity group (have to attend interviews and possibly do work related activity)
3. You are said to be fit for work and therefore you should claim Jobseekers Allowance instead (regular eg weekly or fortnightly interviews)

Premiums

If you get both PIP and ESA (income related) you may be entitled to a severe or enhanced disability premium

Check with welfarerights@Bristol.gov.uk or other local welfare rights

Claiming Child Tax Credit/Child Benefit... or ESA after 16

When the person is 16 onwards if they stay at school, sixth form, college or other approved training you may have a choice to claim Child Benefit /Child Tax Credit or the person can claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

If you are not getting Child Tax Credit it may be worth your loved one claiming ESA in their own right (as parental income is not counted for ESA claims)

Bear in mind also that if you get income based ESA it may affect your entitlement to loans/grants at university

Talk to Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service 0117 352 1888 email welfarerights@Bristol.gov.uk

Child Benefit after 16

Ends initially September after child turns 16, it can continue up to 20 years old if they continue in full time (more than 12 hours) non-advanced education (which means up to A level equivalent/level three)

Both Child Benefit and Tax Credits offices need to be told when if child is staying in education in the September after their 16th birthday

Tell the Child Benefit office the course and level start and end date, name of college or school and that the course is more than 12hours/week and that the person is not working for an employer, and confirm that you and the person live in same household

Universal credit (UC) ...what you need to know

A new benefit being introduced across UK (at present often only for single people without dependants or disabilities)

If you are on ESA, DLA or PIP now you probably won't be able to claim UC in Bristol ... but maybe in 2019 you will... things changing all the time! Talk to your Jobcentre if in any doubt

The idea of Universal Credit is: *'Making it financially more worthwhile to be in work'* (sliding scale so you lose UC more gradually than other income based benefits)

Gives you one lump sum to replace your income from... income based ESA/JSA, income support, housing benefit, tax credits

Paid monthly in arrears (won't get paid for about 4-5 weeks when first claim)

Apply online www.gov.uk

More information is available at:
www.autism.org.uk/universalcredit

Appointee?

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will come and visit to see your son or daughter when they are about 16 to assess whether or not they can manage their own benefits

If your loved one is able to manage their benefit money they can have the money paid direct to them

If they will struggle to manage their money you can request that DWP make you your loved one's Appointee

You are an Appointee if you receive and manage your son or daughter's money on their behalf

Local organisations to help with benefits

Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service 0117 352 1888 email welfarerights@Bristol.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau
www.bristolcab.org.uk
03444 111 444

Bristol Autism Spectrum Service 01275 796 204
Email – awp.bass@nhs.net

www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

<http://acfa.org.uk/>

<https://www.ablc.org.uk/> Avon and Bristol Law Centre

Wills and Trusts

Discretionary Trusts are a sometimes a good option (but get advice) - trustees decide on payments to the beneficiaries

Discretionary Trusts mean that the assets are not taken into account for welfare benefit purposes or if the local authority is means testing your loved one for support (though they can class any actual payments as income)

If you use a Discretionary Trust, then use a "letter of wishes" as private guidance on how the money should be used, but don't state "this money is really for my son with autism"

Regular income/payments to just one person may be seen contested by a local authority as meaning that the Trust belongs to that one individual but this can be managed.

You should state within the Trust Deed or Will the potential beneficiaries of the Trust (and anyone to exclude)

If you set up a Discretionary Trust you need to name more than one beneficiary

Trustees can also be potential beneficiaries

Mencap run seminars on 'Planning for the Future'
<https://www.mencap.org.uk/willsandtrusts>

Next one in Bristol is July 2018

They also have list of local solicitors who are experienced in setting up wills and trusts

Also, use word of mouth recommendation

Ask for idea of costs upfront

Use a solicitor who is a member of The Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners
Find your local branch for legal advice and will writing services.
Tel: 020 7340 0500
Email: step@step.org
Website: www.step.org/search/members (enter Estate planning/UK/Bristol)

Employment

There is a higher than average rate of unemployment amongst people with autism, including Asperger syndrome

Many people are able to work but don't get given the right support or opportunities

If someone cannot work it is important they get on the right benefit

The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service has a dedicated employment worker so book an appointment 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

Employment – what type of job?

Jobs that *tend* to work best (there are always exceptions!):

- are routine, follow 'rules' and have clear structure
- avoid too many people skills
- have understanding, educated-about-autism employers
- provide reasonable adjustments as necessary

...Part time employment often suits people with autism

Should you tell an employer you have autism?

Under The Equality Act 2010 employers cannot ask about your disability directly during the recruitment process, except in a few circumstances (but can check you have the skills to do the job)

You need to weigh up the pros and cons of telling an employer (also consider *when* to tell an employer) it is a personal decision

Some reasons to tell an employer – it is being honest, you are protected under the Equality Act and there are distinct advantages to having autism in some jobs

One reason you might decide to not tell an employer – it might put the employer off if they do not understand about autism

Employment - The Equality Act 2010

Employers have to make reasonable adjustment/allowances for employees and those applying for jobs

Adjustments can be at interview stage or once someone has a job. For example:

- Allowing a friend to attend interview with you
- Getting the interview questions in written form
- Having someone speak to other employees about autism
- Altering the job role slightly to accommodate your disability

Employment – what is usually required in the workplace

1. Clear and positive explanation of autism to other employees and practical training on how to assist the employee
2. Clear job role, responsibilities and work tasks
3. Work place etiquette explained
4. Job coach or support worker (Access to Work)

Apply for an Access to Work grant

You may be able to get some money to fund equipment, staff training or a support person if you are having problems in the workplace such that you could lose your job (or without that support you could not start a new job).

You must be 16 or older and employed (including self employed). You cannot get Access to Work money for voluntary jobs

You may not qualify if you receive income support or ESA

Contact Jobcentre adviser about how Access to Work can help you or look online to make an application

For more information on Access to Work <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work> or call 0345 604 3349 Weekdays, 9am to 5pm (you can apply online)

5. Clear lines of management and support
6. Regular supervision meetings to monitor work and training needs
7. Pro-active approach to dealing with bullying/teasing
8. Quiet place to have a break, if required

Employment – top tips

If you are working but want help with explaining the diagnosis to employer/other employees talk to the Bristol Autism Spectrum Service 01275 796 204 or email awp.bass@nhs.net

Make a business case – sell your skills and abilities

Be pro-active – write letters to Business Disability Forum members eg local authorities, bigger chains

Look out for 2 Tick employers logo on job adverts

Talk to local charities, and offer services under ‘permitted work’ if you are receiving ESA

Permitted work rules: if you work under 16 hours a week and get ESA you can earn up to £116 approximately without this affecting your benefit but get advice

Employment – voluntary work

If cannot find paid employment consider getting involved with voluntary work for a charity/non-profit

You can volunteer and still claim JSA or ESA so long as you are available for work or attending any work related group activity /interviews

You must tell the Jobcentreplus adviser if you are doing voluntary work

Some voluntary organisations contacts

www.voscur.org

www.csv.org.uk and see what opportunities there are in Bristol area.

www.do-it.org.uk

www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/befriending-and-volunteering

Also target local charities for voluntary jobs:

www.charityjob.co.uk/volunteer-jobs/?location=bristol

Useful work contacts for courses and programmes to help you get work ready or into work

Mental Health Matters

<http://www.mentalhealthmatters.com/service/bristol-employment/>

Telephone: 0117 923 2741 (Monday – Friday 9am until 5pm)

Email: enquiries.bmhemployment@richmondfellowship.org.uk

www.findajobcoach.co.uk

BOSS Employment 07522 350 651

Sixteen Co-operative Ltd - Keith Bates 0779 6053847 info@sixteencoop.co.uk

Project Search 0117 90 37450 project.search@bristol.gov.uk

Learndirect www.learndirect.com 0117 929 7744 help with finding work if aged 19 and older and in receipt of benefits

Enquiries.bristol@learndirect-centres.co.uk

Remploy www.remploy.co.uk 0300 456 8027 (operate Workchoice programme in Bristol)

Pluss www.pluss.org.uk (operate Workchoice programme in Bristol)

Mencap Pathway www.mencap.org.uk/pathway 0117 965 5623 You need to be referred by a professional

Shaw Trust www.shaw-trust.org.uk

Tomorrow's People 0117 924 6815 Help with finding work if you are on ESA

My Way 2 Employment (charity) 0117 965 5133

Third Sector solutions 0117 941 5318

Aspire Community Enterprise (for homeless and ex-homeless people) 0117 954 0861

Filwood Hope, Knowle West 0117 963 4566 Getting back into work (Tuesday all day session)

Jigsaw – a catering course for people with a learning disability
www.cityofbristol.ac.uk/courses/details/jigsaw-0001

Whole baked café 0117 908 2266
Must be referred by Care Direct /social worker. Catering experience

YMCA Training 0117 935 1344

CSV Avon 0117 908 2266

Prince's Trust 0117 929 2300

If you are interested in environmental and green issues the following organisations may be of interest:

Conservation Volunteers www.tcv.org.uk 01302 388 883 -UK conservation projects and Green gyms

Windmill Hill City Farm www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk

Avon Wildlife Trust www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk

National Trust www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Bristol Friends of the Earth www.bristolfoe.org.uk

Bristol Trust Conservation Volunteers www.tcv.org.uk

Avon Valley Railway
Volunteers sometimes wanted
0117 932 5538
info@avonvalleyrailway.org

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens www.farmgarden.org.uk
Outset
Helping you to start a new business in Bristol
0800 032 2903
info@outsetbristol.co.uk
www.outsetbristol.co.uk

Education contacts

It is often possible to get funding to do a college course if you are working towards a level 3 qualification (equivalent to A levels).

If you want more information on college/university see the Bristol Autism Spectrum Service Guide:

<http://www.awp.nhs.uk/media/813929/guide-to-college-and-university.pdf>

Or contact direct Bristol Autism Spectrum Service 01275 796 204 awp.bass@nhs.net

Bristol.autism.hotline@Bristol.gov.uk

Is useful email address for any education enquiries in Bristol for up to 25 year olds

If you want advice about the person 's education options and the school or college are unable to provide it, you may wish to email the council direct sen@bristol.gov.uk

For independent advice on education up to 25 years of age contact either of these two organisations:

Supportive Parents 0117 989 7724

<http://www.supportiveparents.org.uk/>

And Kids - <https://www.kids.org.uk/bristol-independent-support>

: 0117 947 6111

Email: IS.southwest@kids.org.uk

Also, use the National Autistic Society Education rights service 0808 800 4102 (for up to 25 year olds)

<http://www.autism.org.uk/advocacy>