

WHO WE ARE

We are a user led not for profit organisation. We envisage a social environment where young autistic people and their families feel welcomed and secure within the local community. Where young people would be able to gain valuable social skills and work experience opportunities. We aim to provide a service that will be used, supported and enjoyed by the community as a whole.

We see express as...

- a community cafe/hub in the heart of the community with an autism friendly, accessible environment to include quiet areas and sensory areas
- raising autism awareness and providing a social space, drop in advice service and support for families to strengthen their support network
- providing volunteer opportunities
- a real work environment to provide transferable work skills for young autistic people (current statistics show only 15% of adults on the Autism spectrum are employed - National Autistic Society)
- offering work opportunities for carers
- a place to promote self-esteem amongst young people on the autistic spectrum and to give them a sense of value and belonging within their community
- a positive experience for families in their own community
- an opportunity for young autistic people to express themselves
- a function area to facilitate meetings, talks, workshops, events, training and information services



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**Our VISION is to create a HUB
in the HEART of the COMMUNITY
SUPPORTING AUTISTIC PEOPLE
and their families...**

... a place for EVERYONE

SUPPORT AT EXPRESS

Parent Support

Parents come to us at various stages of diagnosis including pre, newly diagnosed or with experience to share. We run a number of different parent support groups for Mums, Dads and all carers. We cover different age groups and different issues over different times and days in the week. A chance to connect with other parents of children with autism and share thoughts, challenges and ideas.

- We run telephone/email support and drop in one to one support at our offices in Tolworth.
- We offer pre & post diagnosis support on a one to one basis at our offices in Tolworth.

DLA/EHCP Support

In addition we run an EHCP and DLA support service by appointment only. These are very specific 1:1 support time to help parent/carers through the process. Our volunteers are IPSEA SEND Advisor trained.

Work Experience/Volunteer Opportunities

We offer work experience and volunteer opportunities.

Workshops/Conference

We run regular workshops and an annual conference for families and professionals.

Makaton@Express

Accredited Makaton courses.

Counselling Services

Counselling can offer a safe space where you can talk through all of your difficulties and anxieties. A counsellor is trained to listen and support you in a non-judgemental way, creating a safe space for you to express your feelings, whatever they may be. By talking, worries and difficulties can often seem clearer and easier to manage.

Career's Guidance Service

We offer a careers guidance service for young autistic adults with a careers transition coach providing support and guidance around areas such as: Career Planning, CV Writing, LinkedIn, Market Research and Interview Skills.

GROUPS AT EXPRESS

Express Yourself is a Therapy group which provides a space for children on the autistic spectrum to interact and connect with others in a fun, supportive environment. The group aims to meet the specific and unique social and emotional needs of children on the autism spectrum using creative tools such as drama, puppetry, art, music and storytelling.

SIBS@Express is a Sibling Support group for children who have an autistic brother or sister to come together, make new friends and have a space to share feelings.

Girls Group is a weekly meet up and social opportunity for girls on the autism spectrum.

Buds@Express is a small structured parent/carer and child group for autistic pre-schoolers including those who may not yet have a diagnosis. The group is for up to 4 children (aged 3-4) who will be starting school in the following Sept. Activities are based on the highly-regarded Attention Autism programme and focus on attention, communication and play development through clear structure, engaging activities and a dash of pizzazz!

Drama@Express is for young people on the autistic spectrum from ages 8+ and would be a perfect follow up to a previous therapy group or to attend where therapy is not suitable at this time.

Individual play and arts therapy sessions are for children who need one-to-one support to explore their feelings in a safe space and are available as short or long-term interventions.

Autism Centre of Excellence

... working to create a hub in the heart of the community, supporting autistic people and their families, a place for everyone...