

Helping your child with behavioural and or mental health concerns - Advice and guidance to parents
Crown Medical Centre, Venture Way, Taunton TA2 8QY

Managing a child with behavioural and or mental health concerns is stressful, and we want to help you access the right help in the best way.

STEP 1: SELF HELP

STEP 2 (If needed): BOOK A PHONE CALL WITH GP

STEP 1- SELF HELP

Seek advice from your preschool/school/college. They often have links to local parenting groups and family support workers. Schools have access to school nurses and counsellors and links with mental health workers to the child and adolescent mental health services. Concerns at school can be raised with these health care professionals who in turn can seek out resources and advice for your child without coming via the GP surgery. For behaviour related to learning difficulties/needs please talk with your teacher and special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) at school

For preschool GET SET and associated children's centres have good resources on a wide range of issues including managing behavioural difficulties.

www.getsetsomerset.org.uk or email getset-taunton@somerset.gov.uk

Get Set services now work with children, young people and their families from 0-19 years or up to 25 if there is a special educational need.

For children up to the age of 5 you can seek help and advice from your Health Visitor – Tel: 03003230115

For help with a wide range of health and mental wellbeing issues and links to lots of useful websites look at the Somerset council website and follow links to mental health toolkit

www.somersethealthinschool.co.uk

The Children and Young People's Therapy Service has an advice line open to parents every morning from 9 – 12.00 apart from Fridays. Tel no is 03030333002. As a service they work with children and young people presenting with functional difficulties linked to their physical development, self-help skills, and speech and language difficulties.

For more information and advice sheets to support children's development, please visit their website;

<https://www.somersetft.nhs.uk/children-and-young-peoples-therapy-service/>

For advice and guidance on a number of mental health issues in young people go to www.youngminds.org.uk

Self-harm

Self-harm is a way of dealing with very difficult feelings that build up inside the child or young person and which they find hard to express or deal with in any other way. It can take a number of forms but most commonly presents as cutting or burning, bruising, taking an overdose of tablets, hair pulling or picking skin. It is common in young people. In the first place you should seek help through your school counselling services or school nurse. The local mental health services will only accept referrals where the child has significant underlying mental health issues, or the harm is severe or risky. Talk to your school about counselling or access to the school nurse.

If your child has presented with self-harm or self-injury which presents an actual or possible risk to life they should be transferred to accident and emergency immediately

Understanding what is happening in your child's thinking is key to helping a parent understand and help their child find a pathway to managing their emotions in healthier way

Useful resources for both you and your child are available at the following websites: www.youngminds.org.uk or www.nshn.co.uk (national self-harm network) or www.selfharm.co.uk

www.nhs.uk

For information managing children's behaviour issues from toddlers to teenagers...just use the search engine and you will get to the relevant page

For specific concerns about attention deficit hyperactivity and autistic disorders see appendix and look at NHS choices or patient.co.uk or youngminds.org.uk which all give useful information and links

At the back of this leaflet are listed websites and numbers including those specifically designed for young people.

If your child's behaviour involves concerns about their safety from others or you have concerns that your child is at risk from or has been or is being sexually, physically or emotionally abused or emotionally or physically neglected you can contact the children's safeguarding team yourself or ask for help from a carer/teacher/health care professional.

Safeguarding concerns: contact Somerset direct 0845 345 9122

STEP 2- BOOK A PHONE CALL WITH GP

If you still have concerns about your child, please book a telephone call to speak with a GP. It is best to discuss with the GP first by phone so a decision can be made about the best way to see you and or your child alone or together. An initial phone call helps make any follow up face to face consultation a lot more constructive for all parties.

Following this phone call the GP may feel a direct referral to another health care professional is best before follow up again by phone or face to face. They may arrange a hearing test, occupational therapy assessment or get advice from the child and adolescent mental health services. They may ask you to gather further written information from your preschool or school before seeing you to review.

The GP may wish you to complete a concern form (see appendix) to send in prior to arranging to meet face to face

STEP 3- HELP US MAKE A REFERRAL TO SPECIALIST SERVICES

Following discussion with GP by phone please send in concern form in appendix and any other written reports from school or college for the GP to collate and send to CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services)

For information about CAMHS look at:

www.sompar.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-and-young-people/children-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/

CAMHS accept referrals based on the level of **need**, **severity** and **risk** of the problem to your child

They will take into account

1. The bigger picture of what is going on in your child's life now and what has gone on in the past
2. Family history of mental health problems
3. How long the problems have been going on for
4. What things have been done to help so far and any school counsellors/other professionals involved

Emergency assessments can by requested with CAMHS for a child with

1. symptoms of severe depression with current suicidal thoughts, intention or history of suicide attempts
2. concerns about psychosis

Psychosis is a symptom of a serious mental illness. A person experiencing psychosis loses touch with what is accepted as reality, they may feel paranoid, hallucinate, hear voices or have delusions. It is associated with severe stress or depression, with a family history of serious mental illness and can be triggered by drug and/or alcohol use.

People who develop psychosis usually have their first episode in their teens or early 20s

Professionals concerned that a young person may be experiencing a psychosis can contact the **Somerset Team for Early intervention Psychosis. STEP team**

Appendix

1. Concerns about Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder

ADHD is a condition in which children find it very difficult to focus their attention or control their behaviour. They often act on impulse without thinking. All children behave in this way sometimes but with ADHD this behaviour is persistent, happens in every setting the child is in and starts usually when the child is a toddler and always before the age of six or seven.

The diagnosis is based usually based upon a persistence of 3 main issues:

INATTENTION, IMPULSIVENESS AND HYPERACTIVITY

There may be other reasons a child acts in this way. The child may be anxious or there may be problems at home or school

Children aged 0-11 are referred to the Paediatric Team (children's specialist) at Musgrove Park Hospital

Young people aged 11-18 are referred to CAMHS for assessment

2. Concerns about autistic spectrum disorder

The main features of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are problems with

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION.

Signs of ASD in pre-school children

Spoken language

delayed speech development (for example, speaking less than 50 different words by the age of two), or not speaking at all, frequent repetition of set words and phrases, speech that sounds very monotonous or flat, preferring to communicate using single words, despite being able to speak in sentences

Responding to others

not responding to their name being called, despite having normal hearing, rejecting cuddles initiated by a parent or carer (although they may initiate cuddles themselves), reacting unusually negatively when asked to do something by someone else

Interacting with others

not being aware of other people's personal space, or being unusually intolerant of people entering their own personal space, little interest in interacting with other people, including children of a similar age
not enjoying situations that most children of their age like, such as birthday parties, preferring to play alone, rather than asking others to play with them
rarely using gestures or facial expressions when communicating, avoiding eye contact

Behaviour

Having repetitive movements, such as flapping their hands, rocking back and forth, or flicking their fingers
Playing with toys in a repetitive and unimaginative way, such as lining blocks up in order of size or colour, rather than using them to build something
Preferring to have a familiar routine and getting very upset if there are changes to this routine
Having a strong like or dislike of certain foods based on the texture or colour of the food as much as the taste, unusual sensory interests – for example, children with ASD may sniff toys, objects or people inappropriately

Signs and symptoms of ASD in school-age children**Spoken language**

Preferring to avoid using spoken language, speech that sounds very monotonous or flat, speaking in pre-learned phrases, rather than putting together individual words to form new sentences, seeming to talk "at" people, rather than sharing a two-way conversation

Responding to others

Taking people's speech literally and being unable to understand sarcasm, metaphors or figures of speech
Reacting unusually negatively when asked to do something by someone else

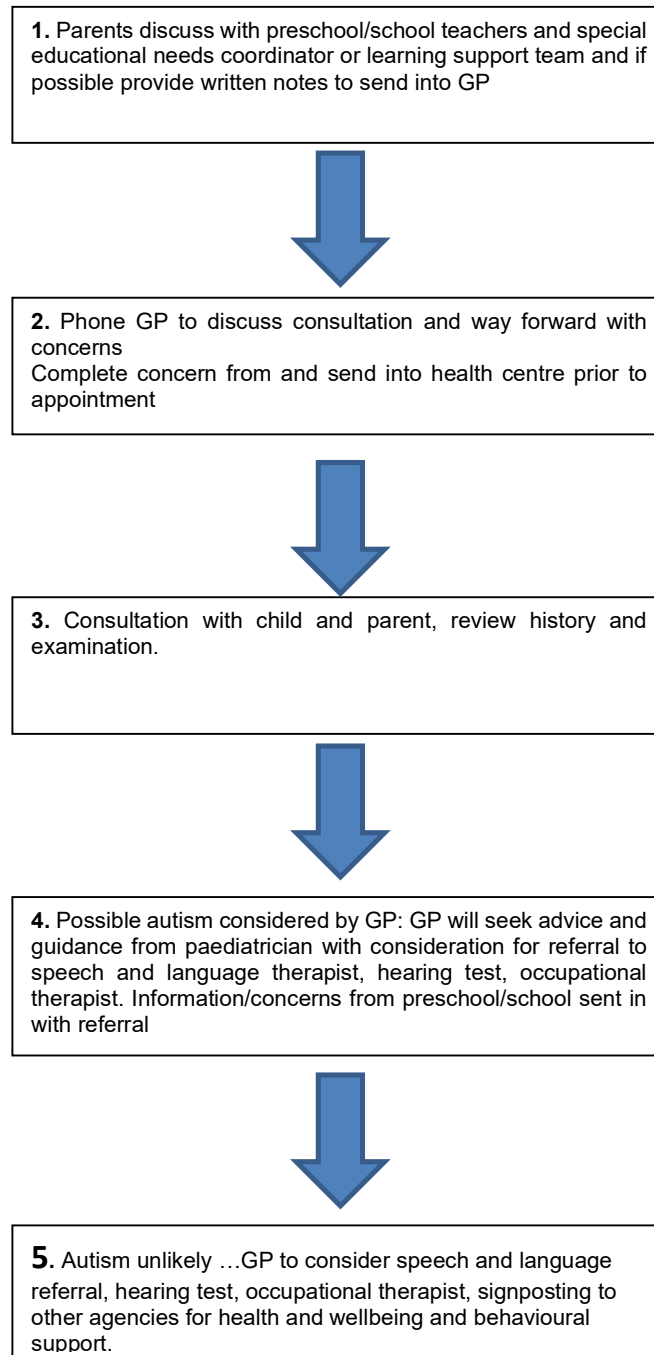
Interacting with others

not being aware of other people's personal space, or being unusually intolerant of people entering their own personal space, little interest in interacting with other people, including children of a similar age, or having few close friends, despite attempts to form friendships
Not understanding how people normally interact socially, such as greeting people or wishing them farewell
Being unable to adapt the tone and content of their speech to different social situations – for example, speaking very formally at a party and then speaking to total strangers in a familiar way
Not enjoying situations and activities that most children of their age enjoy
Rarely using gestures or facial expressions when communicating, avoiding eye contact

Behaviour

Repetitive movements, such as flapping their hands, rocking back and forth, or flicking their fingers
Playing in a repetitive and unimaginative way, often preferring to play with objects rather than people
Developing a highly specific interest in a particular subject or activity
Preferring to have a familiar routine and getting very upset if there are changes to their normal routine
Having a strong like or dislike of certain foods based on the texture or colour of the food as much as the taste, unusual sensory interests – for example, children with ASD may sniff toys, objects or people inappropriately

Pathway to potential diagnosis



Appendix:
3.Resources: Numbers and Websites

Resource Name	Contact number	Email address / Website	Information
Somerset parent carer forum	01458 259384 07543 680365	Email: Help@SomersetParentCarerForum.org.uk	A parent led website giving help, advice and support for parents with children with disability or additional needs
Barnados Mandala project	07584 347291		For help with prolonged or abnormal reactions to grief
Somerset consultation service	0800 587 9900		For difficulties in with adopted children
2BU Somerset		www.2bu-somerset.co.uk	Offers a range of youth support services to young people in Somerset who are coming to terms with their sexual or gender identity
ADFAM	020 7553 7640	www.adfam.org.uk	Offers information, support groups and advice for families affected by drugs and alcohol
Beat	Youth line: 0845 634 7650 Adult line: 0845 634 1414	www.b-eat.co.uk	Information, support and advice around eating disorders
The Bridge	0117 342 6999	www.turntothebridge.org	Local sexual assault support service for men, women and young people
Charlie Waller Memorial Trust		www.cwmt.org.uk	Free mental health resources and training
Childline	0800 1111	www.ChildLine.org.uk	Free and confidential helpline for children & young adults in the UK
Gamcare	0808 8020 133	www.gamcare.org.uk	Provides confidential counselling advice, information and support for anyone affected by a gambling problem
iHop		www.i-hop.org.uk	i-HOP is a one-stop information and advice service to support all professionals in working with children and families of offenders, bringing together useful information in one place.
Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Services (SIDAS)	0800 6949999	Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (somersetssurvivors.org.uk)	
24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247		
Mental Health Foundation		www.mentalhealth.org.uk	The Mental Health Foundation have published a guide for youth workers which is designed to help embed effective mental wellbeing improvement practices
Mindfull online counselling		www.mindfull.org	

National self-harm network		www.nshn.co.uk	
PAPYRUS (Parents Association for the Prevention of Young Suicide)	0870 170 4000	www.papyrus-uk.org	
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222 (24 hours)	www.parentlineplus.org.uk	Provides a wide range of information, support and advice to parents, including email support through the website
Rethink	020 8974 6814	www.rethink.org	Information, advice and support to people affected by serious mental health problems
Royal College of Psychiatrists		www.rcpsych.ac.uk/expertadvice/treatmentwellbeing.aspx	Treatments and Wellbeing index: readable, user friendly and evidence-based information about mental health treatments.
Safe use of the Internet		www.netaware.org	
The Safe Network		www.safenetwork.org.uk	Provides information and resources to help keep children safe
The Samaritans	08457 909090	www.samaritans.org.uk	Available 24 hours a day to listen to people in distress and to provide emotional support
The Somerset Team for Early Psychosis (STEPS Team)	01823 368350		For patients aged 14-35 years.
Somerset Parent Carer Forum		www.somersetpcf.org.uk	
Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support		www.sarsas.org.uk / www.survivorpathway.org.uk	
Somerset & Wessex Eating Disorders Association		www.sweda.org	
Talk to Frank	0800 776 600	www.talktofrank.com	Provides free and confidential information and advice about drugs
Young Minds	0800 018 2138	www.youngminds.org.uk	
Websites for young people			
Rise Above		www.riseabove.org.uk	Advice and guidance on sex and relationships, acne, parents, growing up, pressures of school and much more
The Site.org	0808 808 4994	www.thesite.org	Covering topics on sex, your body, drink, drugs, school, work, money, travel, lifestyle
RU OK?		www.ru-ok.org.uk	self-help exercises to look at how and why you think the way you do and coping with common mental health issues