

Specialist Autism Family Support Service

By Sarah Clark, Specialist Family Support Worker

Our Family Support Service receives referrals via the Bromley Children Project. Your child does not have to have received a formal diagnosis of autism or social and communication difficulties to access our service.

We offer short-term intensive support to families and a clear action plan written in conjunction with the family to note key issues and goals, and timescales for resolution.



It's Carers Week from 10 June.

Here are our top tips for looking after your mental health when supporting a child or young person with additional needs.

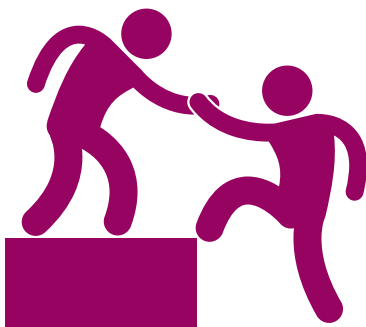
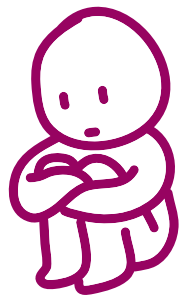
Give yourself time and acknowledge your feelings

Relief, guilt and grief are just a few of the feelings you may experience after receiving your child's diagnosis. Take time to acknowledge them: there is no right or wrong way to be feeling. If necessary, approach your GP to discuss how you feel and get some additional support.

Know that you are not alone

Having a child or young person with additional needs can be isolating. It's important to acknowledge you're not alone. Look at your [Local Offer](#) for support services and leisure activities available to you and your family. You may want to request a carer's assessment.

More information about this can be found on the [Carers UK website](#).



Stop catastrophising the future

When your child or young person receives a diagnosis, it's hard to imagine what the future will look like. Will they talk? Will they manage school? What happens when I'm no longer around to care for them? Although practical plans can be made, try not to imagine their future. They may surprise you!

Ask for help

This is the hardest thing to do by far, but it's OK to ask for help. Remember, we all need help from time to time.



Recognise your own triggers and needs

This will make you more aware of what support you need as a parent/carer and help you become more emotionally resilient. A balanced diet, sleep, exercise, time out (even if it's in another room for 10 minutes) or practising mindfulness can all positively impact your mental health.

Don't lose yourself

Caring for a child or young person with additional needs can mean it's easy to forget who you are. Remember you can have other interests and hobbies without feeling guilty.

Upcoming Carers' Pamper Day

Organised by M.A Centre. [Book free tickets here.](#)



Useful resources

- [Bromley Mencap Support Services](#)
- [NHS Guide: Carer's assessments](#)
- [Bromley Council's Local Offer](#)
- [Young Minds: Parents' guide to looking after yourself](#)
- [Mind: Looking after yourself](#)
- [Happiful: How to look after your own mental health as a parent of a child with additional needs](#)
- [Scope: Managing your stress when caring for a disabled child](#)
- [Contact: Listening Ear service for parent carers looking for emotional support](#)



Bromley Well Young Carers support young carers aged 4-19 to manage their caring relationships whilst still enjoying their childhood.

We have had a busy few months with visits to local schools, some fun activities, meeting new young carers and welcoming them to the service!



During the Easter holidays, young carers practised first aid with St John's Ambulance and learnt life-saving skills including CPR. They also had the opportunity to attend a cookery workshop with Naani Maa's Kitchen. The food looked delicious and we received some great feedback.

We have exciting events planned for the May half term from Tai Chi in the woods to a Journalism Workshop. Please check the BWYC app for details, phone 0208 466 0790 or email youngcarers@bromleywell.org.uk.

Find out more about our new staff members on page 26. You can read our [Spring newsletter here](#).