

## Toolkit for Professionals

Please see below a selection of resources that can help you to understand, support and care for autistic individuals you support in a professional capacity who may be experiencing suicidal ideation.

### Having the Conversation

Although it can seem daunting to speak openly about suicide, it is important to give people a chance to speak in an open and judgement-free environment. We can create this positive environment by avoiding the use of stigmatising language such as 'commit suicide' which implies that suicide is a crime. We can also provide a non-judgemental listening ear. Whilst it may be tempting to respond emotionally (for example by saying 'thank goodness!' if someone says they are not experiencing suicidal ideation), we should avoid comments which imply that suicide is shameful as this may stop people opening up in future. Moreover, asking someone openly about suicide does not increase the risk of someone attempting suicide- it actually lowers the risk.

### Self Care

Supporting individuals who are experiencing suicidal ideation can also be draining for the professionals involved, and can affect your own mental health. You cannot support people effectively if you are not looking after yourself so make sure self-care is a priority. Set aside time for hobbies, make sure you have plenty of sleep and spend time with family friends. Working with people experiencing mental health difficulties can be extremely challenging, so remember to seek support for yourself if you need it. You can access mental health support for yourself through the NHS and can often access private mental health support through your employer.

### Trust your instincts.

If you suspect someone is in immediate danger please call 999 and follow the safeguarding policies in your organisation.

### Resources

The Here to Help 'resources', which include but are not limited to, website, information sheets, and in person workshops are intended to provide general information only. The 'resources' provided by 'Here to Help' do not replace, or supersede, professional and/or medical advice. Users should take professional advice before taking action which contradicts previous medical guidance. So far as permissible by law, SJOG does not accept any liability related to individual's use or interpretation of the 'resources' provided.

Whilst we have selected some resources from other organisations which we believe will be helpful, we accept no liability for the content of these resources.'

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**Website title:** Crisis Tools

**Website Description:** Crisis is a free platform including guides, courses and e-learning co-produced by young people and mental health professionals. It is useful for anyone who supports young people with their mental health.

**Website Link:** [Register - Crisis Tools](#)

**App title:** Molehill Mountain

**App Descriptions:** Molehill Mountain was produced by top researchers in collaboration with autistic individuals and is designed to help support autistic individuals manage their anxiety.

Google Play link: [Molehill Mountain - Apps on Google Play](#)

Apple Store link: [Molehill Mountain on the App Store \(apple.com\)](#)

**Website title:** Alumnia

**Website Description:** Alumnia provide a free 7 week course ran by trained counsellors to provide support for self-harm for young people aged 10-17

**Website Link:** [Alumina | Selfharm](#). Free online 7 week course

**Website title:** Suicide & Co

**Website Description:** Suicide and Co provide 12 sessions of free counselling to anyone 18+ who has been bereaved by suicide in England or Wales.

**Website Link:** [Suicide&Co | Support after Suicide Bereavement \(squarespace.com\)](#)

**Resource title:** Papyrus Coping Strategies

**Resource Description:** This document provides a range of strategies that may help individuals you support during a mental health crisis.

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**Resource Link:** [Coping Strategies \(papyrus-uk.org\)](https://www.papyrus-uk.org)

**Website title:** Adapted Safety Plan

**Website Description:** This page gives the findings of Newcastle University's study on the effectiveness of safety plans and provides a copy of the Adapted Safety Plan you can use at home.

**Website Link:** [Home \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)

**Website title:** Coping strategies from Mind

**Website Description:** These are some coping strategies recommended by the national mental health charity, Mind.

**Website Link:** [What can I do to help myself cope - Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk)

**Website title:** Worksheet resources for autistic adults

**Website Description:** This website contains resources for autistic adults and the people who support them. Please note that this website is American so there may be things which are not applicable in the UK.

**Website Link:** [AASPIRE Healthcare Toolkit for Autistic Adults \(autismandhealth.org\)](https://www.autismandhealth.org)

**Website title:** Autistic mental health champions

**Website Description:** This website showcases the stories of autistic individuals who have experienced mental health challenges and what supported them through difficult times.

**Website Link:** [Mental Health in Autism - Champion Videos \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)

**Website title:** Autism and Suicide Awareness Training- Zero Suicide Awareness

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**Website Description:** This one-hour training module is a good overview of autism and suicidality.

**Website Link:** [Autism and Suicide Awareness Training :: Zero Suicide Alliance](#)

**Resource title:** Mental Health Literacy Guide for Autistic Guide

**Resource Description:** This guide provides an explanation of mental health concerns for autistic adults and the people who support them. Please note that this website is Canadian so there may be things which are not applicable in the UK.

**Resource Link:** [Mental Health Literacy Guide for Autism \(yorku.ca\)](#)

**Website title:** Autism and mental health- Mind

**Website Description:** This website provides information about autism and mental health by the national mental health charity, Mind.

**Website Link:** [Autism and mental health - Mind](#)

**Website title:** Tees Valley Sleep Service

**Website Description:** Providing resources and consultations for parents within the Tees Valley to support their children with sleep. As sleep contributes to poorer mental health outcomes, this is an useful service to signpost to.

**Website Link:** [Tees Valley Sleep Service - Helping the Tees Valley get to sleep better](#)

**Website Title:** Autistic Girls Network

**Website Description:** A website providing support and guidance for autistic women and girls

**Website Link:** [Welcome to the | Autistic Girls Network](#)

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**Website Title:** Adapting eating disorder support for autistic people

**Website Description:** Advice for professionals on how to adapt eating disorder support for autistic individuals

Website link: [Adapting support for autistic people with eating disorders \(autism.org.uk\)](https://autism.org.uk)

**Webinar Title:** Influencing Suicide Prevention Policy in Partnership with Autistic People

**Webinar Description:** Autistica Webinar: originally from 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 featuring Dr. Sarah Cassidy.

**Webinar link:** [Webinar: Influencing Suicide Prevention Policy in Partnership with Autistic People \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

**Webinar Title:** Do we need to think differently about suicide prevention for autistic people?

**Webinar Description:** Autistica Webinar: originally from 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 featuring Dr. Rachel Moseley and Dr. Mirabel Pelton

**Webinar link:** [Webinar: Do we need to think differently about suicide prevention for autistic people? \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

**Webinar Title:** Warning Signs of Suicide for Autistic People

**Webinar Description:** Webinar on warning signs of suicide for autistic people, featuring Dr. Lisa Morgan and colleagues.

Webinar link: [Suicide Research Symposium 2022: Warning Signs of Suicide for Autistic People \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

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