




MAY 2026


Listen 4 Change Newsletter




 www.listen4change.uk

 listen4change@outlook.com

 [Facebook group](#)

 [Listen4Change, St Helens Parent Carer Forum | Saint Helens | Facebook](#)

 [@listen4change_shelenspcf](#)


JOIN US FOR A COFFEE & CHAT – YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Each month, Listen 4 Change hosts daytime and evening coffee events for parent carers of children and young people (aged 0–25) with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

A relaxed space to connect with other parent carers, share experiences, and talk openly about local services.

Your feedback is shared with local services to help shape better support.

Whether you want to influence change or simply chat—we'd love to see you.

 Drop in and say hello:
Wonderland Community Centre cic
Canal St, Saint Helens WA10 3JQ



MAY 2026

Listen 4 Change Events

Friday 8th May- Coffee morning 10am-12pm.

A Department for Work and Pensions Advisor will be joining us to answer your questions around DWP benefits, including Universal Credit, DLA, PIP and asking for a work capability assessment.

Tuesday 19th May- Coffee evening 6:30–8pm.

Will be attended by Advanced Solutions to discuss their offer for families, children and young people.

Friday 12th June- Coffee morning 10am-12pm.

Our guest speaker is a Learning Disabilities & Autism Specialist Practitioner and Senior Mental Health Practitioner from Mersey Care's St Helens Mental Health Support Team (MHST).

Tuesday 23rd June - Coffee evening 6:30–8pm.

Come and meet other parent carers in a relaxed and friendly setting for a drink and a chat, and help shape better SEND services. Your feedback is shared with service leads.

Friday 10th July- Coffee morning 10am-12pm.

Come and meet other parent carers in a relaxed and friendly setting for a drink and a chat, and help shape better SEND services. Your feedback is shared with service leads.

All events are all held at Wonderland Community Centre St Helens WA10 3JQ

MAY 2026

Listen 4 Change: What We've Been Up To in March & April

- We attended the Preparing for Adulthood Steering Group meeting to input into St Helens priorities and action plan for 2026/27, to discuss plans on developing the Supported Internship programme and the progress on supporting young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training).
- We are part of a Cheshire & Merseyside regional Parent Carer Needs Assessment (PCNA) project, attending two workshops to input into redesigning an assessment template, a parent information pack, parent carer training to raise awareness of what life is like for a parent carer and the experience of having a PCNA and a new app that aims to give parent carers tailored information, local support options, a community forum, and a triage function for those who may not need a full assessment.
- We met with Senior Leads from Mersey Care to discuss feedback from parent carers regarding accessing children's mental health services, the emotional impact on families and recommendations for how to improve the mental health service offer.
- As a member of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF), we attended a meeting with the DfE Director of SEND & Alternative Provision to discuss and ask questions around the Schools White Paper, Government consultation and what the SEND reforms will mean for families. These sessions gave us the opportunity to ask questions about the proposed reforms, share views and concerns being raised by St Helens parent carers and to input into the NNPCF's national consultation response to reflect what parent carers are experiencing across the country.
- We attended the Autism in Schools steering group meeting to discuss the development of the Neurodiversity Zone on the SEND Information Hub and the information that should be included here, including a FAQ section and links to resources with useful strategies. L4C provided feedback on the importance of schools working in partnership with parent carers to develop trust and the need for training to schools on sensory difficulties.

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Listen 4 Change: What We've Been Up To in March & April

- We attended the local area SEND Partnership Board meeting with executive leads from education, health and social care services to raise areas of concern that parent carers have shared with us recently and to provide parents carers views and lived experience on developments within children and young people's mental health services, the EHCP quality assurance process, social care input into EHCPs, the Neurodevelopmental Pathway Transformation Plan, developments to SEND Home-School/College Transport, the increase in requests for needs assessments and the wait times for completion of an EHCP and to learn more about the outreach offer from Mill Green Special School to support mainstream settings.
- After two years of our involvement in this project, we were pleased to attend the launch of St Helens SEND-friendly library in Haydock . We hope the library will provide a welcoming and accessible space for parent carers and their children and young people. Details of library activities and events across St Helens are here: [Events Calendar Apr 2026 | St Helens Library Service](#)
- As a member of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF), we met with the DfE and other PCFs to discuss the requirement for local areas to prepare SEND Reform Plans for submission to the Secretary of State for Education for evaluation and approval. Plans are expected to set out what actions local areas will take to pivot their SEND systems towards early intervention and to strengthen mainstream inclusion ahead of proposed legislative changes for a reformed SEND system. We have since met with local area partners to discuss the preparation of the St Helens local SEND Reform Plan.
- We attended the Neurodevelopmental (ND) Change Steering Group meeting to discuss the Neurodiversity Pathway Transformation plan, including updates on the roll out of the Neurodiversity Profiling Tool as well as an overview of the 2025/26 performance regarding referrals and wait times for assessment and diagnosis. The Pilot Phase of the Knowing Me Profile Tool in St Helens is currently being rolled out until end of August 2026 with training being offered to 8 early years/nursery settings, 20 primary schools, 1 secondary school and 2 special schools.

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Listen 4 Change: What We've Been Up To in March & April

- We are working with the Children's Integrated Commissioning Team and NHS Commissioner to provide parent carer feedback and input into the ND Zone of the SEND Information Hub. All St Helens Neurodiversity Profile Tool related information and resources will be available on the [SEND Info Hub ND Zone](#). There is helpful information and resources on there already but more content and amendments will be made in the coming weeks.
- As a result of parent carers feedback on the difficulties in navigating and accessing the current Sleep Pathway, Listen 4 Change attended a multi-agency meeting to review the current pathway, to identify gaps and opportunities and agree areas for development to offer a clear, user-friendly Sleep Pathway that is easier for families, young people and professionals to understand.
- Two new parent carers joined our volunteer team and met with the SEND Team Assessment and Planning Manager to discuss parent carer representation on the local area Quality Assurance Panel that reviews and audits new and amended EHCPs on a termly basis to ensure they meet agreed quality standards.
- We met with the Director of Children's Services to discuss SEND developments and feedback that parent carers have shared with us recently.
- We attended a Cheshire & Merseyside regional meeting of Parent Carer Forum Leads with the NDP Programme Manager to hear updates on the evaluation of the new Profiling Tool and the development of weekly training sessions for parent carers and with the Change & Integration Programme Manager to discuss updates on the project to ensure consistency of Parent Carer Needs Assessments across the region and the development of training for professionals to better understand what life is like for parent carers.
- We held two parent carer coffee mornings welcoming an Occupational Therapy Specialist from Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust and the Library Outreach service to explain how the OT service can support with sensory processing difficulties, how St Helens libraries can support parent carers and children and young people with SEND and to answer parent carers questions and to listen to feedback.

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Listen 4 Change: What We've Been Up To in March & April

- We welcomed Merseycare's Paediatric Therapies service to a coffee evening to answer parent carers questions and to ask parent carers for input into a new project they are working on to revamp initial assessments and to develop a way in which to share the child's information with services to avoid parent carers having to repeat themselves at multiple appointments.
- We attended a Keeping in Touch meeting with senior leaders from education, health and social care and provided feedback/asked for updates on issues parent carers have shared with us around accessing a social care assessment and short breaks, the independent travel training offer, development of the Tics & Tourettes Pathway, clarity around accessing mental health services for those with an ND diagnosis or on the Pathway, accessing ADHD meds post-diagnosis and other key issues.
- We attended a webinar with the North West Association of Directors of Children's Services to discuss the SEND Reform Consultation which forms part of the wider reforms set out in the Government's Schools White paper to significantly change the SEND system. This webinar gave us the opportunity to contribute to the North West's collective response to the national consultation.
- We met with the multi-agency Quality Assurance Panel to discuss the QA analysis of EHCPs from the last term and key learnings and actions to be taken as a result of the audit.

Listen 4 Change would like to thank each and everyone of our 13 parent carer volunteers who attended the above meetings and events. Our volunteers kindly give up their time to ensure that the views and lived experiences of St Helens parent carers are represented and heard at the highest level so that services meet the needs of parent carers and children and young people with SEND.

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The Schools White Paper and SEND Reform consultation

On Monday 23rd February the government published its school's white paper "[Every Child Achieving and Thriving](#)". This paper sets out proposals to reform schools and the SEND system in England. An Easy read version is available here: [Every child achieving and thriving - GOV.UK](#)

Published alongside the white paper is a consultation document [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - GOV.UK](#) which sets out proposals to reform the SEND system. The consultation document asks 39 questions on key aspects of the proposed reforms. The questions are embedded throughout the document, and a complete list can be found in Appendix C Part B. There is an easy-read version and a version specifically for children and young people, as well as alternative formats such as a British Sign Language video, large print, and Braille.

The consultation about the proposed SEND Reforms closes on 18 May 2026.

The government has asked for views - this gives families, charities and professionals the opportunity to respond and influence what happens next. You can respond to the consultation online. Alternatively, you may submit your response by email or by post. Details on how to do this can be found here: [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

There are several key documents that provide additional context and supporting information for the consultation proposals. These documents are located here: [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - GOV.UK](#)

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The Schools White Paper and SEND Reform consultation

The Department for Education (DfE) has published a series of summary guides outlining the key proposals and reforms set out in the schools white paper and the SEND consultation. These documents are designed to provide clear, accessible guidance to help parents, carers and professionals better understand what is being proposed and what it could mean for children and young people with SEND. [Every child achieving and thriving and SEND consultation supporting information - GOV.UK](#)

It is important to note that the publication of the Schools White Paper does not change existing SEND law. Your child's legal rights remain in place and the current legal framework continues to apply.

These reforms have significant implications for children and young people with SEND, their families and the professionals that support them. We strongly encourage you to take the time to read the proposals, attend consultation events, understand what is being proposed and respond to the consultation - your lived experience is critical in shaping legal policy that will work for children and young people with SEND.

Dingley's Promise - Early Years SEND Reform Parent Engagement Event

As early years SEND specialists, Dingley's Promise is hosting a series of face-to-face engagement events for parents of children with SEND under 8 years of age. These sessions will explore the key proposals in the Schools White Paper, break down the SEND national consultation questions, and provide families with the opportunity to share their experiences and have their voices heard.

You can view the dates for all of the upcoming events and find registration links on the website: <https://dingley.org.uk/send-reform-engagement-events/>

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Family Fund

Family Fund offer support to families in the UK raising a child or young person with additional needs. As part of this offer, we provide free virtual workshops to help with digital skills, digital confidence, boosting finances and enabling children and young people to express themselves creatively.

Here's what's available:

Completing an online grant search / Checking your benefits online / Make it work for you (iPads) / Supporting your young person into adulthood & Finding grants as a parent/ carer

For children and young people during the school holidays, we have four different creative digital workshops - all with a seasonal theme!

Find out more and sign up through the Family Fund website. You can also join our Discover Digital closed Facebook group.

To find out more about what Family Fund offer or to enquire about delivery to an established group of parents and carers, please contact us at digitalskills@familyfund.org.uk.

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Send Parents Help

Send Parents Help (Please note the below information has been shared directly from Send Parents Help)

Send Parents Help have built a free AI tool for SEND parents in England.

SEND Parents Help (sendparentshelp.com) is a free AI assistant that covers DLA, EHCPs, Blue Badges, school transport, Carer's Allowance and more than 100 other topics. It's built on a curated knowledge base drawn from official government guidance and trusted charities like IPSEA - not the open internet. And when it doesn't know something, it says so rather than guessing.

It's completely free, no sign-up, nothing commercial behind it, and private by design.

<https://sendparentshelp.com>

Autism Central

Autism Central is the National Peer Education Programme for families and support networks of autistic people of all ages in England. The programme is delivered by Anna Freud and commissioned by NHS England. They offer families education, coaching, and connection through resources, one-to-one peer support, and community events.

Learn more here: [Autism Central - England's Peer Education Programme](#).
[Autism Central](#)

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Autism Understood

The Greater Manchester team have developed a young person's guide to autism. They have kindly given their permission for us to signpost our young people in Cheshire and Merseyside to this resource. Learn more here:

[Autism Understood](#)

Process for accessing ADHD meds post-diagnosis

Listen 4 Change are aware that some families have experienced difficulties in accessing medication for their young person post-ADHD diagnosis. Mersey and West Lancashire NHS, who manage the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD in St Helens via the Developmental Paediatric service, have confirmed that patients for whom medication is deemed appropriate to manage their ADHD but chose not to access it at the time of diagnosis are placed on a Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU) list for six months. Whilst on PIFU, patients are able to directly contact the service to request a follow-up appointment. At the end of the six months, patients are discharged to the care of their GP.

If the young person later decides they would like to trial medication, a re-referral letter from their GP is required - this is not a full referral as a diagnosis has already been made. Once the referral is received and accepted, the Developmental Paediatric service aims to see the patient within three months.

Mersey and West Lancashire NHS are exploring the need to develop a more robust and streamlined referral form / process for medication referrals to communicate to professionals and carers. The SEND Information Hub can be referred to for updates on the service: [St Helens Family Information Directory](#), [Developmental Paediatric Service](#)

MAY 2026



ADDvanced Solutions
Community Network
Supporting you to find the answers

ADDvancedSolutions

Find out more about the support available to parents, carers and families of neurodivergent children and young people this term.

Click below to view our What's On Guide for the areas that we work across. We have weekly drop-in groups for parents/carers in each of the areas, as well as online and face-to-face learning programmes and opportunities.

Our free professionals training opportunities can be found on the final page of each area's newsletters.

Summer Term 2026



St Helens IASS

St Helens IASS is an Independent Advice and Support Service which offer free, impartial advice and support for families of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The website explains what help is available, how you can make a self referral, and details of upcoming SEND drop in sessions.

St Helens IASS – Information, Advice and Support Service

You may find this helpful if you would like advice, information, or support around your child's SEND journey.

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Project CECiLiA Newsletter - Issue 2

CECiLiA newsletter covers:

- What our research about Care (Education) and Treatment Reviews (C(E)TR) is achieving, why that matters, and how you can sign up for our study
- How our recruitment across Trusts and organisations is going
- How we're sharing best practice about project recruitment
- Why people with lived experience recommend taking part in our study, &
- Details about our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions – and how you can sign up.

[Click here](#) to read

Accessibility at Polling Stations

Whole Council elections are taking place across St Helens borough on Thursday 7 May from 7am - 10pm.

St Helens Council are committed to ensuring that the accessibility needs of electors going to a polling station are considered and offer a range of support and accessible equipment for voters to enable them to vote independently or with assistance. If you would like to make a request before election day for any additional support or reasonable adjustments not listed, please email elections@sthelens.gov.uk or call 01744 676464 to see if we can help.

The YouTube link [is here](#)

Autism Learning Programme - Tweens and Teens

For parents/carers of 11-18 year olds



ADDvanced Solutions
Community Network
Supporting you to find the answers



Wednesdays 3rd, 10th and 17th June

9:30am - 2:45pm - Face-to-face in St Helens, WA10

Come along, meet other parents/carers in similar situations and learn more about autism

This Autism Learning Programme has been designed to support and empower parents and carers to understand how autism is experienced by young people aged 11-18 and to provide guidance and strategies to enable you to meet your own young person's needs, specific to their age.

Call us on 01744 582172 or email
info@advancedsolutions.co.uk to book.

Autism Learning Programme - Preschool and Primary
For parents/carers of 3-10 year olds



ADDvanced Solutions
Community Network
Supporting you to find the answers



Fridays 8th, 15th and 22nd May

9:30am - 2:45pm - Face-to-face in St Helens, WA10

Come along, meet other parents/carers in similar situations and learn more about autism

This Autism Learning Programme has been designed to support and empower parents and carers to understand how autism is experienced by children up to around age 10 and to provide guidance and strategies to enable you to meet your own child's individual needs around:

- Exploring Autism, diagnosis and presentations
- Unique thought processes
- Sensory Processing Difficulties
- Communication, social interaction and relationships
- Eating and sleeping difficulties
- Anxiety, stress and understanding behaviours
- Meltdowns and shutdowns
- Building independence skills

Call us on 01744 582172 or email
info@advancedsolutions.co.uk to book.



JOIN OUR COFFEE MORNING

Are you a Parent Carer of a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND) aged 0–25 in St Helens?

A Department for Work and Pensions Advisor will be joining us to answer your questions around DWP benefits, including Universal Credit, DLA, PIP and asking for a work capability assessment.



**Friday
8th May
10-12pm**

**Wonderland
Community
Centre
WA10 3JQ**

**FREE
PARKING**

CONTACT US ➤

Email
listen4change@outlook.com

Website:
listen4change.uk



CHAT &
CHILL OVER
A BREW

JOIN OUR COFFEE EVENING

Are you a Parent Carer of a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND) aged 0–25 in St Helens?

ADDvanced Solutions will be attending to share their support offer for families, children and young people. The ADDvanced Solutions Community Network is an open access service supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of neurodivergent children, young people, their families.



Tuesday
19th May
6:30-8pm

Wonderland
Community
Centre
WA10 3JQ

FREE
PARKING

Drive up to
the
barrier

CONTACT US ▶

Email
listen4change@outlook.com

Website:
listen4change.uk



CHAT &
CHILL OVER
A BREW

JOIN OUR COFFEE MORNING

For parent carers of child/young person with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability aged 0-25 in St Helens

Our guest speaker is a **Learning Disabilities & Autism Specialist Practitioner and Senior Mental Health Practitioner** from Mersey Care's St Helens Mental Health Support Team (MHST)

Come along to learn about what **MHST** do, how they adapt their offer to support SEND families and to share your feedback on what works well and how the service can be improved.



**Friday 12th
June
10am-12pm**

**Wonderland
Community
Centre
WA10 3JQ**

**FREE
PARKING**

CONTACT US 

Email
listen4change@outlook.com

Website:
listen4change.uk

Neurodevelopment pathway drop ins

Come along to one of our drop in sessions in St Helens.

Our team will answer questions you have about the neurodevelopment pathway process.

You don't need to be using our service, you can drop in if you have any questions to ask about this. We look forward to meeting you.



Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Tuesdays at Parr Children's Centre and Central Link Family Hub

See details and times below

13 January at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

10 March at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

12 May at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

27 January at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

24 March at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

26 May at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

10 February at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

14 April at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

9 June at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

24 February at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

28 April at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

23 June at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

We work with children and young people with complex neurodevelopmental difficulties, who need an assessment to gain a better understanding of their needs.

Parr Children's Centre, Ashtons Green Drive, St Helens, WA9 2AP
Central Link Family Hub, Westfield Street, (off Peter Street), St Helens, WA10 1QF

If you need more information you can contact us on or email: mcn-tr.sthelensneuropathway@nhs.net

01744 415 608



Respect



RYPs 
Respect Young People's Service

Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA)

“Recognise and Respond in Merseyside (Ask and Act)”

Course length: 3.5 hours - Online via Teams

This course is aimed at multi- agency practitioners across the Merseyside. The session will provide an overview of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse, supporting participants to begin to understand the complexities of CAPVA, who it affects and why this may be happening in some families.

This session will enable participants to:

- Develop an understanding of the dynamics and causal factors of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA)
- Recognise how CAPVA may present, identifying indicators and risks associated with it.
- Explore the impact of CAPVA on parents, young people who harm and other family members.
- Enable practitioners to respond to CAPVA with increased confidence.

To book your place please select a date (ctrl click) and complete the form

[25th June 2026: 9.30- 1pm](#)

[22nd July 2026 12.30 pm- 4pm](#)

[27th August 9.30-1pm](#)

[12th October 2026 9.30-1pm](#)

[6th November 2026 9.30-1pm](#)

[10th December 2026 12.30-4pm](#)

Twilight sessions

[10th September 3.30-6.30pm](#)

[17th September 2026 3.30 -6.30pm](#)

This is an issue, we are seeing more and more so this was very valuable training.

Fantastic trainers. Knowledgeable, approachable and supportive. Also great to connect with other agencies in the area

Excellent, very informative, Brilliant training and signposting

If you would like more information, please email us at: respectypstraining@respect.org.uk

VAI Second floor 200a Pentonville Road London N19JP
e: info@respect.uk.net / w: www.respect.uk.net
Company number: 7582438 / Charity number: 1141636

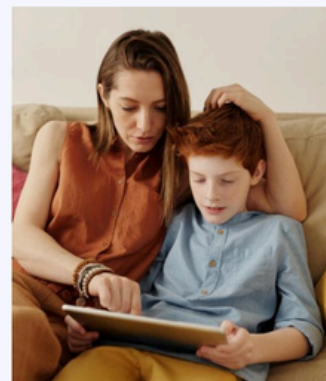


SMART Lab

Social-emotional and Mental health
Assessment, Research, & Treatment
<https://blogs/ubc.ca/smartlab>

SEEKING PARTICIPANTS FOR A SURVEY-BASED STUDY !

Help us Learn About Autistic Teens' Mental Health



Study Title

- Autism Across Generations: Exploring the Mental Health, Camouflaging, and Lived Experiences of Autistic Adolescents with Autistic Parents.

Purpose?

- Better understand the impact of parental characteristics on the mental health and masking of autistic teens.

Who can participate?

- Parent-child pairs: Parent/guardians and their autistic teens/youth, ages 13 to 21, living in Canada, USA, England, or Australia.

What's involved?

- Parent and teens will complete an online survey.
- The parent survey will take 10 minutes to complete, and the teen survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete.

Compensation?

- Get a chance to win one of 10 \$50CAD e-gift cards

Interested? Scan the
QR code or enter
the link below to
see if you are
eligible:



https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4V20HTRZw8HJTfM

For more information, contact Melissa Lazo (Co-Investigator) at melilazo@student.ubc.ca or Dr. Thomas Schanding (Principal Investigator) at thomas.schanding@ubc.ca

Ethics ID# H25-01356