

## Mental Health & Wellbeing: Support for Our Families

At **Presfield High School and Specialist College**, we recognize that a child's emotional wellbeing is just as important as their physical health. We know that navigating mental health challenges can feel overwhelming, especially during a crisis. For our families of children with **Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)**, we understand that you may require specialist help for your children and other family members.

The links and helplines below are curated to provide you with immediate, professional support when you need it most. Whether you are looking for a listening ear, advice on managing a difficult night, or specialist guidance on neurodivergent-specific distress, these national services are here to help.

### How to use these resources:

- **For Immediate Risk:** Use the crisis text lines, 999 or 111 (Option 2) if you are worried about your child's safety.
- **For ASC-Specific Support:** Use the National Autistic Society or Ambitious about Autism links if your child is experiencing sensory overload or an autistic meltdown.
- **For You:** (parents and carers) Don't forget the Parent Helplines; taking care of your own mental health is the first step in supporting your child.

## Immediate Crisis Support

*If there is an immediate risk to life, call 999 or visit your nearest A&E.*

### NHS Mental Health "Option 2"

- **Service:** 24/7 urgent mental health support.
- **Action:** Call 111 and select **Option 2**.
- **Best for:** Immediate access to a mental health professional for crisis assessment and advice.

### YoungMinds Crisis Messenger

- **Service:** 24/7 text-based support for young people.
- **Action:** Text **YM** to **85258**.
- **Best for:** Children and teens who prefer texting over talking during a crisis.

## Shout 85258

- **Service:** A free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service.
- **Action:** Text **SHOUT** to **85258**.
- **Best for:** Anyone struggling to cope and in need of immediate mental health support.

## Specialist ASC & Neurodiversity Support

Children with ASC often experience "meltdowns" or "shutdowns" which differ from standard mental health crises. These organizations provide tailored advice.

### National Autistic Society (NAS)

- **Website:** [autism.org.uk](https://autism.org.uk)
- **Action:** Visit their **Urgent Help** page for specific guidance on managing autistic distress and sensory overload.
- **Best for:** Specialist advice on ASC-specific behaviors and navigating the education/care system.

### Caudwell Children

- **Helpline:** 0345 300 1348
- **Website:** [caudwellchildren.com](https://caudwellchildren.com)
- **Best for:** Practical support, workshops, and family services for neurodivergent children.

### Ambitious about Autism

- **Website:** [ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](https://ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)
- **Best for:** Resources on "Know Your Rights," education support, and mental health toolkits specifically for autistic young people.

# Helplines for Parents & Families

## YoungMinds Parents Helpline

- **Phone:** 0808 802 5544 (9:30 am – 4:00 pm, Mon-Fri)
- **Best for:** Parents worried about a child's mental health or behavior who need professional advice on the "next steps."

## Family Lives

- **Phone:** 0808 800 2222
- **Best for:** General parenting stress, family conflict, and emotional support for the whole family unit.

# Support for Children & Young People

## Childline

- **Phone:** 0800 1111 (24/7)
- **Web:** 1-2-1 Counselor Chat online at [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)
- **Best for:** Children under 19 to talk about anything (bullying, anxiety, abuse, or home life).

## The Mix

- **Phone:** 0808 808 4994
- **Best for:** Support for those under 25 on everything from mental health to money and relationships.

## Papyrus (HOPELINE247)

- **Phone:** 0800 068 4141 / Text: **07860 039967**
- **Best for:** Young people experiencing thoughts of suicide or those concerned about a young person.

## Mind

- **Phone** Support line: **0300 102 1234** .<https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- **Best for** advice, support and advocacy for anyone experiencing mental health problems.

