

CHILDREN'S NEURODEVELOPMENTAL NEWSLETTER

Referral numbers received in
November 2023.

ADHD – 243

ASD – 197

DCD – 39

Total – 470

DECEMBER 2023

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas for the Neurodevelopmental team. Hope you are all looking forward to some time off over the festive period. We touched on some of the Christmas challenges that neurodiverse people might have in our November newsletter. We thought it would be helpful to share a few resources that you might want to share with your families and young people.

Gifts and surprises

Sharing gifts can be exciting and fun for many people. For some of our neurodiverse young people, they may find this very overwhelming. Opening a gift can put a lot of pressure on the person who is receiving. It can lead to lots of worries thoughts such as “How am I supposed to react?” “What if I don’t like the gift?” Some preparation before the day is always helpful. Role play can give an opportunity for the individual to practice how they might respond.

Sometimes the thought of opening all the gifts and not knowing what they are getting can cause anxieties. It is ok to make any special alterations to how you celebrate Christmas to ensure your neurodiverse person feels comfortable. For some people, having pictures of what all the gifts are in advance help. Others like to show them the gift before they wrap them up. That way they can join in with the festivities without the extra worries.

The National Autistic Society have some great hints and tips to support families to prepare for Christmas. Follow the link below for more ideas.

[Tips \(autism.org.uk\)](https://www.autism.org.uk)

Sensory Needs

Christmas often comes with lots of sensory stimulation. Bright, flashing lights, new smells, crowded areas. This can be really hard for neurodiverse people. It is always a good idea to plan ahead to support there needs. Is there somewhere they are able to go to relax and reduce that sensory input? If you are going out, plan some quite time within the day to allow for some calming





activities. The sensory intergration education website has a Christmas sensory survival toolkit that is available to download. See the link below.

[Christmas Sensory Survival Kit \(sensoryintegrationeducation.com\)](https://sensoryintegrationeducation.com)

Emotional Regulation

For young people who struggle with emotional regulation, festivities can sometimes lead to frustrations. This article written by Understood, talks about why this can sometimes happen and how to manage.

[Tantrums over gifts: Why they happen and what to do \(understood.org\)](https://understood.org)

Other hints and tips

The autistic girls network shares some additional ideas about how to manage over Christmas and other large social events. Do not forget that girls' traits are often missed. This can lead people to believe that they are coping better than they are.

[An Autistic Friendly Christmas - Autistic Girls Network](https://autisticgirls.org.uk)

Christmas can be hard.

Do not forget that Christmas is not a happy time for everyone. For those who are struggling, the following services are available for support.

CAMHS - [Requesting help from CAMHS :: Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust \(my.mind.org.uk\)](https://my.mind.org.uk)

Young minds - [What to Do if You Find Christmas Difficult | Blog | YoungMinds](https://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Kooth.com - [Home - Kooth](https://www.kooth.com)

Papyrus [Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention | Prevention of Young Suicide \(papyrus-uk.org\)](https://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Samaritans [Samaritans | Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy | Here to listen](https://www.samaritans.org)

Thank you for all your support in 2023. We look forward to working with you all in 2024. Thank you for all the support you are putting in place for our Neurodiverse young people.