Halton SEND
Parent Carer's Forum
Your voice counts

HSPCF WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

13th November 2026

Welcome back! Here are this week's updates from Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum.

1 PARENT CARER FORUM UPDATES

Thank You – Yesterdays Coffee Morning and Follow up Zoom

A big thank you to everyone who joined us at today's coffee morning, especially with the last-minute change of venue. We'd also like to thank Kelly Carey and David Wilcoxson from Halton Borough Council for coming along, answering parent questions and sharing a number of SEND updates.

There was some positive news around the SEND team now being fully staffed, alongside progress with the Experts at Hand model with most of the specialist posts now recruited to. Halton's SEND Reform Plan and SEND Improvement Plan have also now been published on the Local Offer, and families can view them here: https://localoffer.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-education-docs

An update was also given on the Runcorn school closure consultation. The recommendation report has now been released and will be considered by Halton's Executive Board on 19th November. It's important to note that the report contains a recommendation only and is not the final decision.

If you couldn't make the session today, Michaela Bridge from Halton Borough Council will be joining us for a follow-up Zoom next week on Thursday 19th November at 8pm.
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81241928801?pwd=JrAdiPhGRi7Ntgpito8PO7wnafwdSZ.1

Parent Carer Coffee Morning – 19th Nov 9.30-11.30

Our next coffee morning will be on Thursday 19th November, 9.30–11.30am at the Bridgewater Park Hub. There'll be no guest speaker this week, so it's a chance for parent carers to come along for a brew, have a chat, meet other families and catch up with the forum team in a relaxed and informal space. Children are very welcome, and families can also make use of the sensory room at the hub during the session.

There's no need to book - just come along.

You are not alone – we're here for you

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HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATES

2 HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATES

SEND Short Breaks Christmas Family Event

A reminder that Halton's Short Breaks Christmas Family Event is taking place at Halton Leisure Centre, Widnes. Families can enjoy bowling, a bouncy castle, games and a visit from Santa. The event is for families accessing SEND Short Breaks and families attending SEND Little Stars groups.

Wednesday 16th December, 3.30–5.30pm
Halton Leisure Centre, Widnes

Booking is essential: 0151 511 6560
AimingHigh.forDisabledChildren@halton.gov.uk

Christmas HAF – Coming Soon

Halton's Holiday Activity and Food programme will be running again over the Christmas school holidays, offering eligible children and young people access to free activities and food during the break.

The Winter providers have now been selected and we've already seen some starting to share that they'll be taking part. We'll share the full activity programme and booking information once it becomes available to us.

Transition Carers Forum

Halton's Transition Team is starting a new monthly online Carers Forum for parents and family members of young people moving towards adulthood. Planning for transition can begin from age 14 and the sessions will give families the chance to learn more about the Transition Team, referrals, assessments, legal frameworks and the support available in Halton.

The forum will take place on the first Tuesday of every month at 4.30pm via Microsoft Teams, starting in December. To request a link email: transition.team@halton.gov.uk

Halton Borough Council SEND Newsletter – Issue 9

The latest edition of is now available. The newsletter brings together updates, information and developments from SEND services across Halton and is a useful way for families to keep up to date with what's happening locally.

Read Issue 9 here:
HBC Parent SEND Newsletter

You are not alone – we're here for you

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NHS / ICB UPDATES

Welcome back! Here are this week's key updates from NHS and ICB partners.

3 NHS / ICB UPDATES

HeadzUp Halton – Mental health drop-in support

HeadzUp Halton is a free drop-in service for children and young people up to 18 along with their parents and carers, who would like advice or support around emotional wellbeing and mental health. Following the recent tragic deaths of two young people in Halton, the Mental Health Support Team has also shared a letter with information about grief, bereavement and where families can access further support. The full letter is included at the end of this week's newsletter.

Runcorn: Tuesdays, 2.30–4.30pm – Brookvale Children's Centre
Widnes: Thursdays, 2.30–4.30pm – Warrington Road Children's Centre.

Our thoughts are with the families, friends and everyone affected at this incredibly difficult time.

Knowing Me Profiling Tool – Parent Update

The Knowing Me profiling tool is continuing to roll out across Cheshire and Merseyside, with around 1,600 professionals now trained. A new Microsoft Forms version has also been introduced to make the profiling process easier for families and professionals to complete together. For parents and carers whose child or young person will be completing the tool, **ADDvanced Solutions** is also offering awareness sessions to help explain what the profiling tool is, how it works and what to expect. Find out More Here

Soluna by Kooth

Soluna is a free, safe and anonymous mental health app and online platform for children and young people.

Parents and carers can also use the temporary demo area to see what the platform looks like and how it works before their child uses it. Parent/carer demo: https://demo-web.solunaapp.com/
Website: solunaapp.com

Stay connected

Look out for our weekly newsletters, coffee mornings, Zooms and events for more information, support and opportunities for parent carers across Halton.

You are not alone – we're here for you

info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk | www.haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk | HaltonSENDCarersforum

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board

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OTHER UPDATES

Any events/ service suggestions please share with us
info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk

Free Introduction to Illustration Course

Halton Adult Learning is running a free Introduction to Illustration course starting in January at Kingsway Learning Centre. The course is suitable for beginners and will cover character design, create storybook illustrations and developing creative skills in a friendly and supportive environment. Those who successfully complete the course can work towards an NCFE Level 2 Award in Creative Craft. Places are limited.

Starts: Monday 4th January 2027 - 9.30am–3pm
Venue: Kingsway Learning Centre

To book: 0151 511 7788 adult.learning@halton.gov.uk

Winter money help for families

SEND Parents Help has published a useful winter money guide covering support that some families may be able to access, including the Warm Home Discount, WaterSure, help with NHS travel costs, vehicle tax exemption and VAT relief on adapted vehicles. Read the guide: sendparentshelp.com/blog/winter-money-help

Now & Next – visual support app

Little Regulated Life has created a visual support app for autistic and ADHD children, with Now & Next, First & Then, visual timers, routines, star charts and calming tools. It works on phones, tablets and computers and is free to start with no account needed.

Find out more: https://littleregulatedlife.com

The Autism Wellbeing Podcast -

One of our own forum members is involved in the Autism Wellbeing Podcast, which shares real experiences and perspectives from autistic people and others with lived experience. Recent conversations explore topics such as friendships, relationships, growing up and making sense of the past, making it a useful listen for parent carers and anyone wanting to better understand different autistic experiences.

Available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Buzzsprout. See the poster for more details.

Kidz to Adultz North – 3rd December

Kidz to Adultz North returns to Exhibition Centre Liverpool on Thursday 3rd December, 9.30am–4pm.

This is a free event for disabled children and young people, families, carers and professionals, bringing together 100+ exhibitors showcasing specialist equipment, assistive technology, products and services. Families can also speak directly with specialists and organisations, try equipment and attend free seminars throughout the day.

Tickets are free and can be booked in advance.

Kidz to Adultz North - Free Event Organised by

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HALTON SEND

Important Information

Halton SEND Carer's Forum
Your Voice Counts

PARENT CARER ADVICE / SUPPORT

1 Halton Send Parent Carer's Forum

A voice to inform families with children with additional needs of the services in our local area which may be beneficial to your child.

www.haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk

2 ADDvanced Solutions

An open access offer that supports the emotional health and wellbeing of neurodivergent children and young people, their families and the professionals that work with them.

www.addvancedsolutions.co.uk

3 Halton Carer's Centre

Halton Carers' Centre is a network partner of the Carers Trust. We work to reach unpaid young & adult carers and develop services for them across the borough.

www.haltoncarers.co.uk

SIGNPOST FOR HALTON

1 Bridgewater

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Here you will find information about all of Halton's Health services

www.bridgewater.nhs.uk/halton/

2 Sendiass

If you need some advice, guidance or support on any issues that are affecting you or your child then we're here to help. We provide impartial and confidential information and support.

www.sendiasshalton.co.uk/

3 Family Hubs

A one stop digital platform for Halton residents to use to find services, events, support groups and advice

www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

1 MHST

www.merseycare.nhs.uk

Our Mental Health Support Team provides direct mental health support to 45 schools in Halton. We promote the early detection and prevention of mental health problems, strengthen links with mental health services, providing direct, ongoing support around mental health and wellbeing across the whole school.

2 KOOTH

www.kooth.com

Kooth is a free digital safe and anonymous platform for support for young people. They have wellbeing activities, journals, discussion boards, tips and a free Chat and messenger option for young people to talk to someone.

3 CAMHS

www.merseycare.nhs.uk

Headz Up Halton drop-in hub
An informal drop-in café where young people up to 18 years, parents and carers can drop by to speak with a mental health professional for assessment, advice and signposting to local services.
Tues- Brookvale / Thursday Warrington Rd

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WHAT'S ON NOVEMBER 2026

Events, support and opportunities for SEND families in Halton



5 NOV 9.30–11.30AM

PARENTS AND CARERS SUPPORT - COFFEE MORNING

Bridgewater Park, WA7 2LW
With Sheryl from Positive Futures
Come along for a brew, a chat and support from Sheryl. Ask questions and meet other parent carers.

12 NOV 9.30–11.30AM

PARENTS AND CARERS SUPPORT - COFFEE MORNING

Widnes Stadium, WA8 7DZ
With Kelly Carey, Halton Borough Council
Come along for a brew, a chat and support from Kelly. Ask questions and meet other parent carers.

19 NOV 9.30–11.30AM

PARENTS AND CARERS SUPPORT - COFFEE MORNING

Bridgewater Park, WA7 2LW
No guest
Come along for a brew, a chat and support from other parent carers.

20 NOV 5.00–7.00PM

HUMMINGBIRD

Arts and crafts session for families with SEND

Get creative, connect with other families and enjoy a relaxed, fun session together.

26 NOV 9.30–11.30AM

PARENTS AND CARERS SUPPORT - COFFEE MORNING

Bridgewater Park, WA7 2LW
Education to Employment
Come along for a brew, a chat and support from our guests. Ask questions and meet other parent carers.

19 NOV 8.00–9.00PM

ZOOM SESSION

With Michaela Bridge, HBC
Join us online for an update, ask questions and chat with other parent carers.

Meeting ID:
812 4192 8801
Passcode: 949576

28 NOV

SYNC CLUB

Monthly SEND Youth Needs Club
A safe and friendly space for young people with SEND to socialise, take part in activities and be themselves.

We are here to support you

- Peer to peer support and advice
- Share experiences and information
- Have your say and help shape services
- Friendly, welcoming and judgement free
- Everyone welcome!

Get Involved!

Everyone welcome!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk
info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk
Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum

contact
For families with disabled children

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Informing ♡ Empowering ♡ Engaging ♡

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COFFEE MORNING

Everyone welcome!

PARENT ADVICE, SUPPORT & CHECK-IN

Join us for a relaxed coffee morning with no guest speaker.
Come along for a brew, a chat and support from other parent carers.
Ask questions, share experiences and meet other parent carers.

MEET
other parent carers

SHARE
experiences and information

GET
support and advice

DATE
Thursday 19th November

TIME
9.30 – 11.30am

VENUE
Bridgewater Park
WA7 2LW

GUEST / SPEAKER
No guest

We look forward to seeing you!

GET IN TOUCH

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ZOOM SESSION

PARENT ADVICE, SUPPORT & CHECK-IN

Everyone welcome!

HBC UPDATE ZOOM

With Michaela Bridge, HBC

Join us online for an update, ask questions and chat with other parent carers.

MEET other parent carers

SHARE experiences and information

GET support and advice

DATE
Thursday
19th November 2026

TIME
8.00 – 9.00pm

ZOOM LINK
Meeting ID: 812 4192 8801
Passcode: 949576

GUEST / SPEAKER
Michaela Bridge
HBC

GET IN TOUCH

haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk
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SEND Short Breaks Christmas Family Event

Fun Games Activities For All the Family!



Wednesday 16th December

3:30 – 5:30pm

Halton Leisure Centre, Widnes

Meet Santa!

Fun for Everyonce!



Bowling



Bouncy Castle



Jenga



Connect 4

To book your place please call

0151 511 6560

or email

AimingHigh.forDisabledChildren@halton.gov.uk

Supported by:

FamilyHub – Together for all in Halton | Restore Technology | Halton Housing | Halton Borough Council

A Brighter Christmas Together

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Working together for a healthier, happier Halton

Transition Carers Forums



A chance for parent carers and family members to come together to share experiences, get information and ask questions about the Transition Team and the move to adulthood.



Starting in December



4:30pm



Taking place on Teams



For more details, please email:

transition.team@halton.gov.uk



Dear Parents and Carers, Pupils and Colleagues,

We were deeply saddened to hear the news of the unexpected death of two young people within your community. At this incredibly difficult time, we would like to extend our heartfelt condolences to everyone affected by this loss.

The loss of a young person can have a profound impact on everyone who knew them and on the wider school community. We recognise that many people may be experiencing a range of emotions, including sadness, shock, confusion, anger, or disbelief. There is no right or wrong way to feel, and everyone will respond differently in their own time.

The loss of a young person is a deeply sad and heart breaking event that will affect individuals, families, friends, staff, and the wider community. Even if the young person was not known to you their death may still have a significant emotional impact. The loss of someone from our school community can challenge our sense of safety, bring up memories of other losses, or create feelings of sadness, shock, or concern for those who were close to them. It is important to remember that these reactions are valid. Everyone is affected by loss in different ways, and it is okay to seek support regardless of how well you knew the young person.

We recognise that this news may bring a range of emotions, including sadness, shock, confusion, anger, guilt, or disbelief. These reactions are entirely natural, and there is no right or wrong way to feel or grieve. During this difficult time, we encourage everyone to be kind to themselves and to one another, and to seek support if they need it. We will continue to support our school community as we come together to process and respond to this loss.

We wanted to make contact to offer our support and to share some information and resources that may be helpful for anyone affected by this loss. We hope these resources provide safety, comfort, guidance, and reassurance during what is a very challenging period.

Immediate Support and Crisis Services

If any child, young person, or adult requires urgent emotional support, the following services are available:

CYPMHS Crisis Response Team: Call 111, choose option 2 for mental health support (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Halton CYPMHS: 01928 568 162 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Headz Up Halton

An informal drop-in café where young people up to 18 years, parents and carers can drop by to speak with a mental health professional for assessment, advice and signposting to local services.

- Tuesdays 2.30pm to 4.30pm at Brookvale Children's Centre Woodhatch Road, Runcorn, WA7 6BJ
- Thursdays 2.30pm to 4.30pm at Warrington Road Childrens' Centre, Widnes WA8 0BS

Adult Mental Health Crisis Line: 0800 051 1508 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Samaritans: 116 123 (24 hours a day)

Childline: 0800 1111

In an emergency, please call **999** or attend your nearest **Accident and Emergency Department**.

Merseycare Webinars and Workbooks

On the Merseycare website you can find a webinar on Grief at Workbooks and webinars for parents, teachers and others :: Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Childline

The **Childline** website has information about grief and bereavement, including advice on coping with loss and where to seek support. Some may find it helpful to explore these resources with a trusted adult.

The following organisations also offer valuable support, guidance, and resources for children, young people, families, and school staff:

Child Bereavement UK

Provides a wide range of resources, advice, and videos for children, families, and professionals, including:

- Support following a sudden death

- Remembering someone who has died
- Returning to school after a bereavement
- Guidance for teachers supporting bereaved pupils
- Supporting a bereaved young person

https://www.childbereavementuk.org

Butterflies Bereavement Service

Offers counselling and emotional support following bereavement.

https://listening-ear.co.uk/butterflies/

Support from Halton MHST

We would also like to remind you that Halton **Mental Health Support Team (MHST)** is here to support your school during this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to contact your school's Senior Mental Health Lead, if you would like to consider a referral for your young person. .

Our aim is to work alongside you to support the wellbeing of your school community and help create a safe space for people to process and express their feelings.

Please remember that support is available, and no one needs to manage this difficult time alone.

With our sincere condolences and best wishes,

Halton MHST

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NHS
Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

HeadzUp Halton

A young people's mental health drop in

The Mersey Care Children and Young People's Mental Health Team is providing a young people's drop in. It is informal and for children and young people aged 17 and under and their families or carers.

The hubs are in the community and are supported by mental health staff from the children and young people's mental health team who can provide support and advice.





Drop by to see us:

Every **Tuesday** from **2.30pm to 4.30pm** at **Brookvale Childrens Centre, Woodhatch Road, WA7 6BJ**

Every **Thursday** from **2.30pm to 4.30pm** at **Warrington Road Childrens Centre, Widnes, WA8 0BS**

If you have any questions about these sessions you can call us on **01928 568 162** (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).

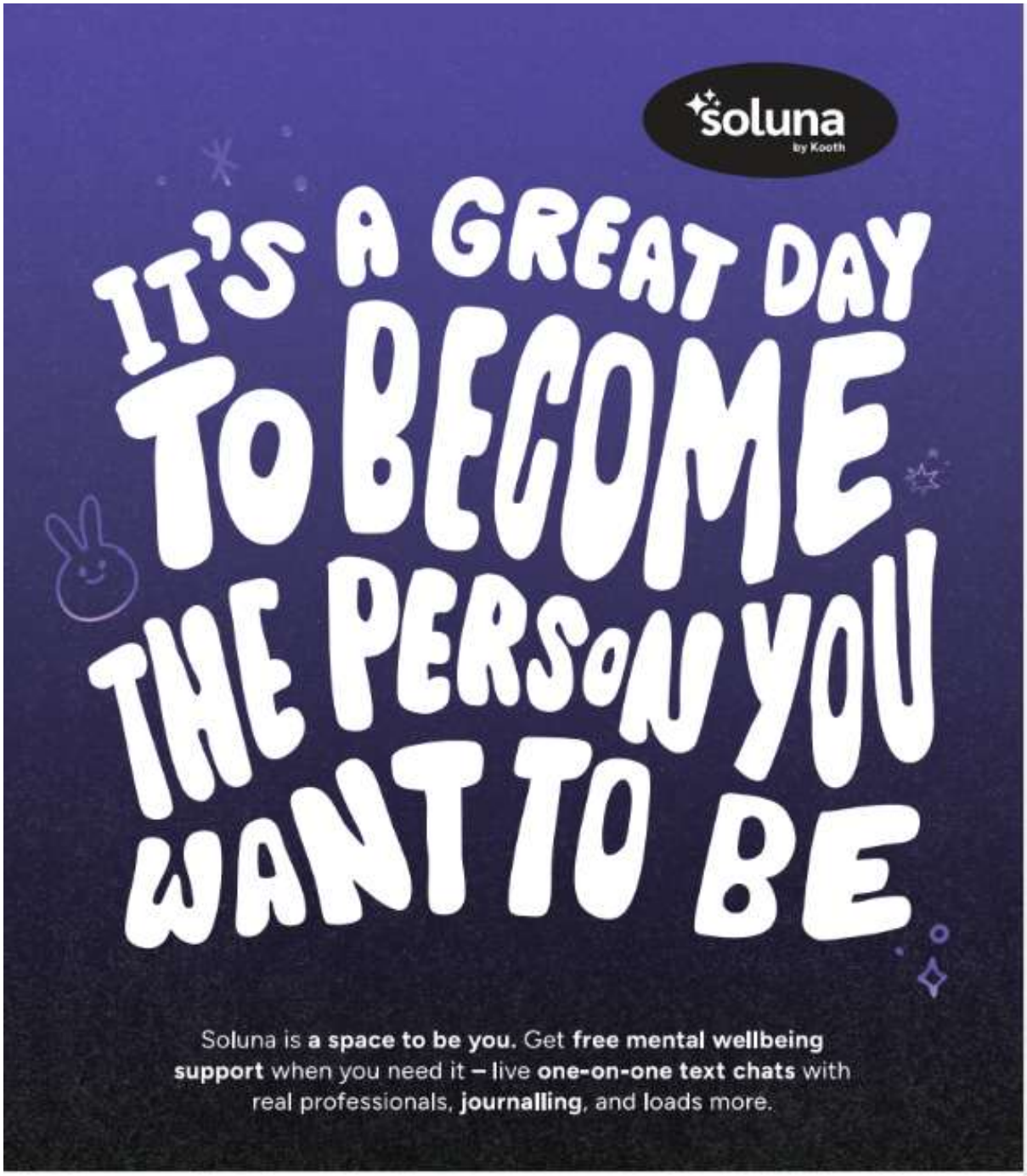
This is not a CRISIS service. You can contact the crisis team on **01744 415 640**, 24 hours a day seven days a week.

NHS
Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Need urgent help for a mental health crisis?

Call **NHS 111** and select the mental health option





Soluna is the free, safe, mental health app and website – made for you.

Scan the QR code to download or visit **SolunaByKooth.com**

Download on the App Store | SolunaByKooth.com | GET IT ON Google Play

FREE

INTRODUCTION TO ILLUSTRATION COURSE

Achieve an award in
Level 2 in Creative Crafts



Come and discover your creative side in our friendly introduction to illustration course.

No experience needed, just bring yourself and imagination.

4th January 2027
9.30-3.00pm
Each Monday for 12 Weeks.



COURSE HIGHLIGHTS:

- Learn character design
- Create your very own Story Book illustrations
- Learn in a supportive environment

To book your free place call

0151 511 7788

or email

advlt.learning@halton.gov.uk

YOUR ILLUSTRATION JOURNEY STARTS HERE.



NOW LIVE!

The Autism Wellbeing Podcast

THE AUTISM WELLBEING
Podcast

WITH EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE FROM THE AUTISM WELLBEING PROJECT CIC

The Autism Wellbeing Podcast is now LIVE!

Tired of podcasts that don't sound like real life?
Welcome to The Autism Wellbeing Podcast - where real people sit on the sofa and talk honestly about life, autism, relationships, work, mess-ups, wins, and everything in between.

Listen On Spotify

Listen on Apple Podcasts

Listen on buzzsprout

North

Kidz to Adultz.

Thursday 3rd December 2026 | 9:30am-4:00pm
Exhibition Centre, Liverpool Experience Campus,
Kings Dock, L3 4FP



25 Years!

For this year's exhibition, we're celebrating connection, inclusion and opportunity for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, and the people who support them.

FREE entry

As part of our charitable mission our exhibitions are **free admission**

100+ exhibitors | Fun zone
FREE CPD seminars | Accessible facilities

kidzexhibitions.co.uk

FREE prize draw!

As part of our 25th anniversary celebrations, visitors will have the chance to win...

- 4 Tickets to the Cinderella Panto
- 4 Tickets to the Liverpool Indoor Funfair at Christmas