

in Gloucestershire

This **special** edition of Autism in Gloucestershire is about Coronavirus (COVID-19). This newsletter includes a range of information and guidance to support you at this time, whether you are an autistic person, a family member or carer. People with lived experience of autism have also shared their stories. We hope you find this newsletter useful.

Local Support Services

Community Autism Support & Advice (CASA), provided by the Independence Trust



CASA is offering support to all their clients via email, telephone and text at this time. They can also direct people to other appropriate services that can support them. Although there is currently no face-to-face contact, those already supported by CASA can choose their preferred method of contact. CASA can offer support with establishing new routines, ways to reduce anxiety and activities whilst social distancing. Their priority is to let people know that they have someone to talk to or who will contact them regularly to ensure they are safe and well.

CASA are also accepting new referrals (see acceptance criteria on the website). To make contact use the following contact details:

Email: anne.powell@connexus-group.co.uk

Telephone: 01452 317460

Text: 07812 067087

[Forwards Employment Service](#)

The **Forwards** Team are available via telephone or email. If your employment has been affected due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) they can support you with:



- Benefits
- Sourcing employment
- Guidance and advice
- Job coaching when you return to work

If you need their support, please contact Kirsten Smart, Assistant Manager.

Email: forwards@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Telephone: 07825 024692

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ForwardsGloucestershire/

[GEM \(Going the Extra Mile\)](#)



Sam is a **GEM** Navigator Developer. Sam is using creative solutions to support her customers who may feel isolated. Read more [here](#).

[Gloucestershire Carers Hub](#)

Gloucestershire Carers Hub is available to offer support to carers including information, advice and guidance by phone, website, email and social media.



A detailed message about the current service that is being offered is [here](#), including contact details. The Gloucestershire Carers **"What's On"** update for April 2020 is [here](#), offering free virtual coffee mornings and training opportunities.

Current opening hours:

- Monday, Wednesday and Friday, **9.00am to 5.00pm**
- Tuesday and Thursday, **8.00am to 8.00pm**

Gloucestershire Community Help Hub



Gloucestershire's councils and partners have created a **community help hub** to connect local people who need help, with others who can provide the support they need.

Gloucestershire County Council

Gloucestershire County Council has a wide range of information on the [website](#), including more information about **Adult Social Care Information, Advice and Support**.



Inclusion Gloucestershire



Staff at Inclusion Gloucestershire can offer telephone support to its members. They are also offering support on Facebook, which includes communications from MHELO (Mental Health Experience Led Opportunities).

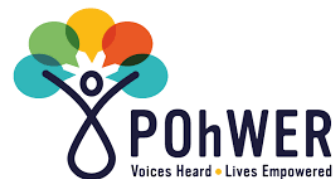
Email: info@inclusion-glos.org

Telephone: 01452 234003

Facebook: www.facebook.com/inclusionglos/

PoHWER advocacy

POhWER are continuing to support their Gloucestershire clients via telephone and email, so that vulnerable people still have their rights protected, effective safeguard measures are in place and that they are able to receive the independent advocacy they are entitled to.



Email: glosadvocacy@pohwer.net

Telephone: 0300 456 2370

Support from Gloucestershire Constabulary



PCSO Peter Timmins is a Special Point of Contact for autism with [Gloucestershire Constabulary](#). He is also Force Lead Coordinator for the county with the National Police Autism Association (NPAA).

The NPAA promotes and shares best practices for working with the autistic community and work alongside the Disabled Police Association.

Telephone: 01452 907290 or 01452 907288

Email: Peter.Timmins@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk

National Resources

The [National Autistic Society \(NAS\)](#) have produced some resources, which includes latest guidance and some handy top tips for coping with Coronavirus (COVID-19). Further information is [here](#).



NAS online discussion forum

The [Community](#) is the **NAS online discussion forum** for autistic people, their families and other wider networks. It is free to join and a great way to share support. There are posts and advice about Coronavirus (COVID-19), which are helpful and supportive.

AUTISTICA **Autistica** have further information about coping with the uncertainty of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Read more about this [here](#).

Children and Young People Services



The **Impact Team** have produced some top tips for parents and carers whilst some children are not school. These can be found [here](#).

Education and Skills Team

The **Education and Skills Team** have created a directory of over 100 resources for schools, parents/carers and young people to use whilst at home during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Further information can be found [here](#).

Social stories and wordless books

If you use **social stories** with your children, you may be interested in this social story, [My Story About Pandemics and the Coronavirus](#) by Carol Gray. The **wordless book** [Beating the Virus](#) has been produced by Beyond Words. If you prefer a narrated version, with a fun rap section on hand washing, click [here](#).

Frequently Asked Questions - Schools

Gloucestershire County Council has a **Frequently Asked Questions** section about school closures at this time. Further information can be found [here](#). If you cannot find the answer to your question, there is a dedicated phone line and email address for all school related enquiries. This can include questions relating to Free School Meals.

Email: COVIDSchoolenquiries@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01452 426015

TiC+ (Teens in Crisis)

TiC+ counsellors will be providing young people with counselling support by phone, online text chat or video chat. The contact details are [here](#).



Parents can continue to receive online text chat support from the [TiC+ Parent Support and Advice Line](#).

School Nurse



School Nurse drop-in's are currently unavailable. However, the texting service **ChatHealth** is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 4.30pm for 11 to 19 year olds who may want to discuss a health issue, worry or concern with a School Nurse.

In addition, there is information and guidance for students [here](#).

Text: 07507 333351

The **National Autistic Society** has produced some helpful tips and links to online resources for families.
Coronavirus: Top tips for families



The **NHS England South West Personalised Care Team** has also compiled a range of helpful Coronavirus (COVID-19) resources [here](#) for children and young people.

Future Me want your content!

Future Me is currently looking for people aged between 16-25 who are interested in creating content for their social media channels. A great way of passing the time whilst we are in lockdown. Lui Gazzard explains more about this on the Future Me Facebook page [here](#). To get in touch with Future Me, direct message via one of their social media channels or send an [email](#) for more information.



Social media pages: @futuremeglos on Instagram

@futuremeglos on Twitter

@futuremeglos on TikTok

Autism & COVID-19 - lived experience stories



Sammy from Inclusion Gloucestershire shares her thoughts and feelings about Coronavirus (COVID-19) in a virtual interview [here](#).

Andrew, co-chair of the ASC Partnership Board, shares his self-care routine [here](#). How he keeps himself physically and mentally well during these unusual times.



Purple Ella shares her five top tips to help autistic people cope with Coronavirus (COVID-19) and our new ways of living [here](#).

Mental Health Support

Community Advice, Links & Mental Health Support Service (CALMHS), provided by the Independence Trust

Individuals can still contact **CALMHS** for support. Key workers and the peer team are available by telephone. CALMHS are accepting new referrals.



Telephone: 01452 317460

Mental Health Experience Led Opportunities (MHELO)



MHELO is an independent support network running across Gloucestershire for people who have (or have had) mental health difficulties of any kind or duration. MHELO are continuing to make contact with individuals by phone that have accessed face-to-face support previously.

Email: info@inclusion-glos.org

Telephone: 01452 234003

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mhelogloucestershire/>

The Cavern, Kingfisher Treasure Seekers

The **Cavern** is offering support and advice via telephone, from 6.00pm to 11.00pm or via livechat available on the website.



Email: info@kftseekers.org.uk

Telephone: 01452 307201

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/thecaverngloucester>

Other Resources (click the logos for more)



Access to Work Mental Health Support Service



Ten tips to help if you are worried about Coronavirus, provided by Every Mind Matters (NHS)



SAMARITANS

shout
for support in a crisis



let's end mental health
discrimination

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Useful Links



COVID-19: Business Support Packages



HM Government

NHS

NHS 111



Public Health
England

[Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK](#)

NHS

Gloucestershire
Clinical Commissioning Group

Easy read links

EasyRead.info

[Information about Coronavirus](#)



[Five Ways to Wellbeing](#)



[Information about Coronavirus](#)



[Washing Hands](#)



[Information about Coronavirus](#)



[The Purple All Stars handwashing rap](#)

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS WEEK - 30 March to 5 April 2020

Due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) we have made the decision to focus on Autism Awareness at a later date in 2020, with the new name Gloucestershire Autism Awareness Week. More details will follow about this.

Have you been forwarded this newsletter from someone else?



If you want to receive the Autism in Gloucestershire newsletter directly to your email address click [here](#) and you will be able to **sign up** to receive these updates.

Do you have something that you would like to **share**? Please email rebecca.parra@gloucestershire.gov.uk
