

The Autistic and OK programme has been developed by Ambitious about Autism in collaboration with Zurich UK and the Z Zurich Foundation.



We are Ambitious about Autism

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity standing with autistic children and young people.

We believe every autistic child and young person has the right to be themselves and realise their ambitions.

We started as one school and have become a movement for change. We champion rights, campaign for change and create opportunities.

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Autistic and OK



Download the free Autistic and OK toolkit and start your school's journey today.

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The programme

Everyone should be able to feel OK at school, but we know this isn't the case for many autistic pupils.

Four in five autistic young people have experienced mental health issues, yet only **10 percent** feel comfortable reporting this to professionals.



We created the Autistic and OK programme to empower autistic pupils to take control of their own mental health and wellbeing, understand themselves and feel OK.

Our comprehensive, free toolkit enables secondary schools to run a peer-led programme for autistic pupils, alongside additional resources to build a whole-school community of autism understanding and acceptance.

“I felt like I belonged in the group. I felt a part of it because it was run by people who are like me.”

Year 8 autistic pupil



By taking part in the Autistic and OK programme you will:

- ➔ Equip autistic pupils with the tools and techniques to manage their own mental health and wellbeing.
- ➔ Help prevent autistic pupils in secondary schools from reaching crisis point with their mental health.
- ➔ Build knowledge, awareness and acceptance of autism and mental health in your school community.

Find out more about the programme.
ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/autistic-and-OK



Led by autistic young people

- Autistic pupils in years 10 to 13 will facilitate peer-led sessions for younger autistic pupils on the topics of anxiety, depression, OCD and bullying, with support from school staff.
- Our resources have been developed alongside autistic young people aged 16-25.
- Sessions will provide knowledge and ways to support mental health and wellbeing, specifically tailored to the needs of autistic pupils.

“I liked that I could speak with an older autistic student, instead of an adult. She really gets it because she has autism too.”

Year 8 autistic pupil

“I saw myself in the students, it was reassuring and something I wish I had during secondary school.”

Sixth Form autistic pupil

Approved by experts

We consulted and collaborated with experts to develop this informed intervention, ready for schools to deliver with confidence. Our programme has been developed alongside:

- A clinical psychologist
- A SENCo consultant
- A training consultant

“It was nice to know that we’d have adults who were there to help us if we needed any help. It was also nice to know that we wouldn’t have to rely on our own information and we would have help sheets to guide us through the session.”

Sixth Form autistic pupil

“I learned about depression and some ways that I can help myself with this. We talked about masking as well.”

Year 7 autistic pupil



Tried and tested in secondary schools

→ We piloted the programme in **19 schools** across seven regions in England.

→ **67%** of autistic pupils felt able to spot signs of poor mental health and to implement their learning from the programme to support their mental wellbeing.

→ **93%** of pupil Peer Facilitators felt they had developed important skills and experience through the programme.

→ **69%** believed that their peers, caregivers, and whole school community better understood and accepted autism.



“I would definitely recommend getting involved. It has been really powerful seeing the facilitators take a lead role and being really committed to the programme and building relationships with younger students and finding a community within our school community.”

School programme lead

“The whole toolkit is really easy to use. The assemblies were brilliant, and great conversation starters for staff and students around our knowledge, understanding and acceptance of autism.”

School programme lead

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