

# NEW PATHWAYS

## Programme Overview

**New Pathways** is a 15 session programme for parents/carers of autistic children/teenagers. It includes 1 session for siblings.

**New Pathways** is an opportunity to develop your understanding of neurodivergence and explore what it really means to be autistic.

**New Pathways** is neuro-affirming. We recognise autism as a neurotype not a disorder and encourage autistic children to be their authentic autistic selves; to play and communicate as they feel comfortable, to learn in the ways which suit them, to understand and be supported with their sensory processing differences and to express their needs so they can be accommodated for.

**New Pathways** recognises that parents/carers of autistic children often need to learn new ways of parenting. New Pathways explores how we can adapt our parenting for our autistic children.

**New Pathways** is realistic in acknowledging the challenges which autistic children and their families can face, whilst also suggesting positive ways through them.

**New Pathways** combines autistic lived experience with professional experience.

*"A great resource that I would definitely recommend"*

*"I would have found this course really useful when my son was first diagnosed"*

*"I like the support provided to parents"    "really affirming"*

*"I particularly liked your neuro-affirming approach, and encouraging young people to embrace their true autistic selves"*

*"extremely helpful"    "validating"    "eye opening"    "reassuring"*

*"I really liked how well you have covered so many areas"    "I feel less isolated!"*

*"Really helpful to learn the affirming language to think about my child and use with others eg difference vs disorder and how to advocate for those differences"*

*"An invaluable addition to the resources we share with clients who receive a diagnosis"*

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## **New Pathways covers the following and more:**

- Valuing neurodiversity
- Sensory processing (including the vestibular, proprioceptive and interoceptive senses)
- Autistic communication (including the double empathy problem)
- Autistic ways of thinking, doing and learning (including executive functioning)
- The theory of monotropism
- Masking and the importance of encouraging children to be themselves
- Meltdowns and shutdowns
- Encouraging self-advocacy
- Reasonable adjustments and accommodations
- Supporting co-regulation and self-regulation (including the role of interoception in regulation and alexithymia).
- Parenting autistic children
- Understanding and valuing PDA
- Parenting PDA children
- Low demand parenting
- Supporting autistic children with school and education
- Co-occurring conditions (ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome and Tics, OCD, Dyspraxia and Apraxia, Dyslexia, ARFID, Trauma, Autistic Burnout)
- Addressing parent blame
- Supporting siblings
- Looking to adulthood (the importance of positive autistic identity)

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## Session Overview

Session 1: **Introduction** (10 minutes)

Session 2: **So your child is autistic. What now?** (9 minutes)

Session 3: **Autism and Neurodiversity** (14 minutes)

**3 sessions exploring the autism diagnostic criteria:**

Session 4: **Sensory Processing** (23 minutes)

Session 5: **Communication and Social Interaction** (24 minutes)

Session 6: **Thinking, Doing and Learning** (20 minutes)

Session 7: **Masking** (13 minutes)

Session 8: **Meltdowns and Shutdowns** (30 minutes)

Session 9: **Viewing things Differently, Doing things Differently: Parenting our autistic children** (57 minutes)

Session 10: **Viewing things Differently, Doing things Differently: Parenting our PDA children** (37 minutes)

Session 11: **Additional neurodivergence and co-occurring conditions** (49 minutes)

Session 12: **Supporting siblings** (13 minutes)

Session 13: **Should I tell my child about their autism diagnosis?** (7 minutes)

Session 14: **The View from the Other Side (addressing parent blame)** (53 minutes)

Session 15: **Looking to the Future** (19 minutes)

Session 16: **A Session for Siblings: an opportunity to learn about autism and neurodiversity and to better understand their autistic sibling** (31 minutes)

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**New Pathways** is available as a standalone programme or as part of a package of support.

The package consists of:

- **The New Pathways Programme:** 15 sessions for parents/carers and 1 session for siblings
- **The Your Pathway Programme:** 6 sessions and an accompanying activity pack for autistic children/teenagers. Your Pathway is a fun and neuro-affirming opportunity for children to explore their autistic identity with a trusted adult. It includes activities, games, and discussion (resources provided in activity pack).
- **Email or telephone support (1 hour):** Many parents/carers value talking to fellow parents/carers who are further on the journey. Others appreciate speaking to someone with professional experience and training. We can offer both, along with the reassurance that we are qualified counsellors and registered professionals (and therefore our practice is regulated).



## About Us

We are part of a neurodivergent family



Sarah is a registered social worker with over 20 years' experience.

She has a DipSW, BA Hons in Psychology (BPS accredited), a Diploma in Counselling and a Certificate in Youth and Children's Counselling.

She brings extensive experience of supporting autistic children and has worked with children and parents/carers in a range of settings.

Dave is a primary school teacher and tutor.

He has a BSC Hons, Diploma in Youth Counselling and QTS.

He brings extensive experience of working with autistic children.

He has taught in primary and secondary schools and worked in specialist and mainstream settings as well supporting home educated and EOTAS learners.

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