LEARNING AND WORKBOOKS ENGLAND

Autism and Everyday Support Workbook

Free download · My SEND Friend Shop

A free practical workbook and companion to the six-module My SEND Friend pilot course. Use the activities to organise ideas, ask useful questions, and prepare one manageable support change.

The course and this workbook are general family awareness learning. They are not an accredited qualification, an assessment, a clinical treatment programme, or legal advice. They do not diagnose a person. You can also use the workbook on its own. Reflection is private and optional.

Who this is for

Families and supporters who want a calm, strengths-first place to think about everyday support for an autistic person, or for someone whose preferences they can include appropriately, whether or not there is a formal diagnosis.

What is inside

- How to use the workbook
- Twelve fillable activities following the course lessons
- Worked fictional examples
- A review checklist and sources

Please read this first

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. It does not guarantee an assessment, plan, adjustment, payment or any other outcome. Check current official guidance (for example GOV.UK) and get individual advice from SENDIASS, IPSEA or a suitably qualified adviser when you need it.

Make it work for you

Read a little, try an example, and choose one next step. You can type into the fields or print the pages. There is no requirement to upload your answers or disclose a family history.

You can use Riley, the fictional child in the course, or another invented situation. If you use a real situation, leave out names, addresses, school names and health identifiers. Include the person's preferences through an appropriate conversation.

Downloading this blank workbook does not send your answers to My SEND Friend or Meg. Save a completed copy in a suitable private place. Fields have limited space; use separate private notes for longer answers. Some browser previews do not reliably save form entries — use a PDF reader that supports forms, then save a copy.

Pages that follow include twelve activities, aligned with the teaching lessons in the pilot course. The reflection activities are optional and are not graded. If you are taking the course and want the free certificate, complete the required lessons and the knowledge check as explained on the course pages. Take the time you need.

Know when to get help
These pages do not diagnose a person or replace individual professional advice. Use appropriate health, education or urgent support when needed. Help Me Now on mysendfriend.co.uk links to support routes.

One thing I would like to feel better prepared for

1. Your starting point

Lesson: start with the person. Use yourself, a fictional example, or someone whose preferences you can include appropriately. Record two interests or strengths, one activity that matters, and one question you need to ask. Leave names and identifying information out.

Interests and strengths

What matters to the person

One question to ask

2. Observation and assumption

Lesson: notice without jumping to a conclusion. Choose one ordinary situation. Write what happened, what the person said or communicated, what you are wondering, and a respectful question to ask next.

What I observed

What the person communicated

What I am wondering

A question or next step

3. Communication preferences

Lesson: make room for different ways to communicate. Record how information could be offered, how the person could answer, and how they could ask for a pause. If you do not know, record a question rather than inventing a preference.

How to offer information

Ways to respond

How to request a pause

What we still need to ask

4. Make an instruction accessible

Lesson: turn an instruction into useful information. Write an everyday instruction. Identify any hidden steps. Rewrite the next step in a format the person can use, and plan how to check understanding respectfully.

Original instruction

Hidden steps or missing information

A clearer next step

How we will check it helps

5. A sensory situation map

Lesson: explore the sensory experience. Map a single activity: arriving, waiting, taking part and leaving. Record one reported experience, what is already comfortable, and one question about possible access changes.

Situation and stages

What the person reports

What is comfortable or helpful

A question about access

6. One adjustment to discuss

Lesson: choose and review an adjustment. Describe the barrier, the proposed change, the person responsible, trial arrangements, and how the person can say whether it helps. You can use the Reasonable Adjustments packs in this shop later if you want to prepare a fuller request.

Barrier and proposed change

Who will arrange it, and when

How to ask for a change or stop

What we will review

7. A change plan

Lesson: prepare for change without promising certainty. Choose one ordinary change. Record what is known, what the person wants to ask, how uncertainty will be explained, and a manageable fallback arrangement.

What will change, and what is known

Questions that matter to the person

What is uncertain, and when we will update

A fallback, and a contact role

8. An expectation and genuine choices

Lesson: make choices real and expectations manageable. Write the purpose of a task, the demands it creates, what is genuinely flexible, and two acceptable options to discuss. Note any safety requirement that needs suitable individual planning.

Task and its purpose

Demands and missing support

What is flexible, and what is not

Genuine choices to discuss

9. Support preferences

Lesson: support a difficult moment calmly. Prepare questions for a calm conversation, not a plan imposed during distress. Record what the person says helps, what information relevant adults need, and where individual or urgent advice is needed. Do not record medical identifiers.

What the person says helps

What relevant adults need to know

How privacy and dignity will be respected

Questions requiring individual advice

10. A respectful review

Lesson: allow recovery and learn respectfully. Use a fictional example or an ordinary situation that is suitable to reflect on. Record the person's account, the surroundings and adult response, what helped, and one question for a later conversation. Do not use this as an incident investigation or clinical assessment.

The person's account, or what we still need to ask

Context and adult response

What helped and what did not

One question or action for later

11. A meeting or message plan

Lesson: prepare a useful conversation with others. Prepare a short agenda: the person's priority, a factual example, one request or question, and how you will agree a follow-up. Use a pseudonym in the workbook if that is enough.

The person's priority and views

A factual example, and support already tried

A clear request or question

Who will follow up, and when

12. One change and a review

Lesson: try one change and review what matters. Bring your notes together. Describe the person's goal, one agreed change, responsibilities, a suitable review point, and what will count as useful evidence. Your activity can remain private.

The person's goal, and one change

Who will arrange it, and the review point

How the person can say what helps

Continue, adapt, stop, or seek advice because

Three examples to compare

These are fictional examples, not answers you must copy. They show how to make a note specific while keeping uncertainty visible. Riley is a fictional child.

Observation and assumption

Observed: Riley stood back at the doorway. Reported: “I couldn’t hear which door.” Wondering: whether directions were lost in the noise. Next step: ask whether a clear sign or a quieter explanation would help.

One adjustment to discuss

Barrier: a noisy waiting room. Proposal: an agreed quiet waiting option. A named person will explain when the room is ready and share the welcome information. Review after two visits with Riley, including whether they felt included.

One change and a review

Goal: join the art session comfortably and understand the start. Change: quiet waiting plus an agreed welcome message. Review after two visits with Riley. Keep the parts Riley finds helpful; adapt the joining information and seek further advice if needed.

A useful review asks: what does the person say, what do we observe, and what still needs asking? An action plan can be adapted or stopped. It is not a professional assessment.

One question I want to take into a conversation

Before you use your plan

- [ ] Have I included what matters to the person?
- [ ] Have I separated observations, reports and assumptions?
- [ ] Is the proposed change specific, safe to discuss, and genuinely agreed?
- [ ] Does someone know who will arrange it, and when we will review it?
- [ ] Have I kept private information out of unnecessary sharing?
- [ ] Is there a question that needs individual professional advice?

Background sources, checked 23 November 2026: NHS, “What is autism?” and “Supporting an autistic child”; National Autistic Society pages on autism and communication, and on sensory processing; NHS Inform on supporting an autistic person. Source organisations have not endorsed or accredited the course or this workbook. Pilot edition: feedback is welcome through the website contact page.

Useful next steps and sources

Use what helped in this pack and leave the rest. You can come back to it when you need to. Live tools on mysendfriend.co.uk remain free, including Help Me Now, the SEND Letter Builder, the Reasonable Adjustments Builder, the DLA and PIP Claim Planners, and the free resources hub. Saving work to My SEND Plan is optional.

Where to check official or independent information

Guidance and benefit rules can change. Check the current official position, and get individual advice when you need it.

- NHS: What is autism? https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/what-is-autism/
- National Autistic Society: autism and communication, and sensory processing
- NHS: supporting an autistic child, and help and support
- NHS Inform: supporting an autistic person
- The My SEND Friend six-module pilot course on mysendfriend.co.uk, if you are taking it

A reminder about this free pack

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