



## Autism Support Information at 14.

Parent/Caregiver/Whānau Information on Community Supports When Your Teen is 14.

Dear Parents and/or Caregivers, Families and Whānau,

Parenting an Autistic teenager certainly can have its challenges and many families experience a need to update their information and supports when their teenager is around 14 years old. Parents have indicated they most need information on navigating the resources and supports, on puberty, managing at high school, and on social support for the whole family. We have provided some websites that you can **click on the picture to take you to the website.**

### NAVIGATING THE RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS:

finding your way through the autism supports and information can be daunting. The below links may help you to find what you need, or to find someone to help you.

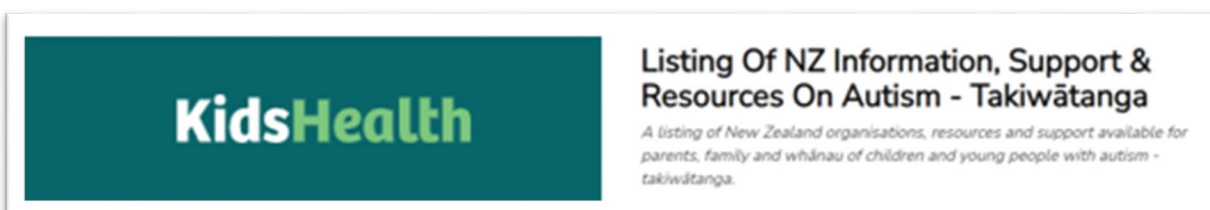
**Autism NZ:** have resources on navigating the diagnosis process, education resources and can be rung for individualised information and support.



**Altogether Autism:** can provide personalised information packages for you. This website also contains many articles that are relevant to Autistic teenagers.



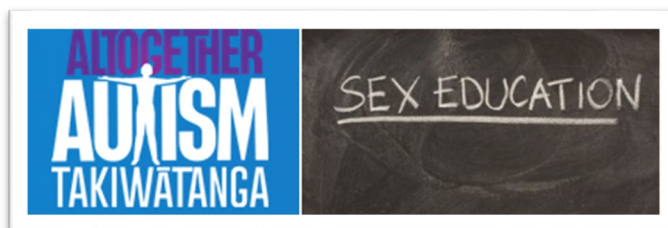
**KidsHealth:** this is a NZ website that contains links to health and education support information for parents and caregivers. The link below is to the KidsHealth Autism “landing page” which has a lot of information including a list of information, supports and resources. You can also get information on other conditions such as Anxiety and ADHD, as well as other childhood conditions and illnesses using the Topics A-Z area on the top toolbar.



## PUBERTY:

some families will need more information on how to manage puberty, sex education and gender identity issues. There is excellent information on the following Australian “Raising Children” website, although not all services described on this site will be available in NZ.

Altogether Autism has a good range of resources grouped together under “Sex Education”.



**Teen Life:** Explore runs an excellent course (either in person or by remote delivery) for parents of Autistic children and teens aged 10-15 years, called Teen Life. This includes

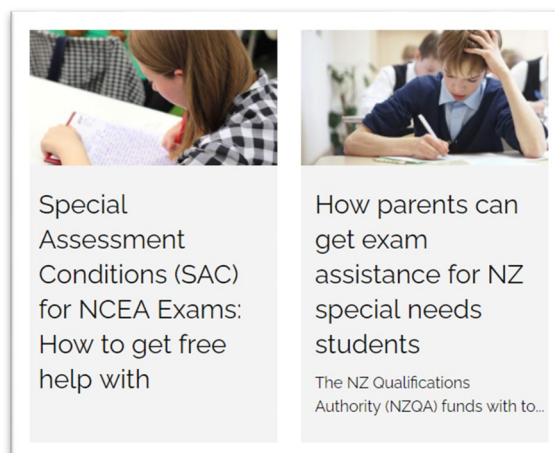
sessions on autism in teenagers, self-esteem, stress and anxiety, puberty and planning for the future. There is a waitlist so register early as this is only available until 15 years old!

### Teen Life

The Teen Life programme aims to empower parents and supporting professionals to understand more about how autism is experienced by autistic teenagers.

## LEARNING SUPPORT:

These links give some useful information and advice from the Ministry of Education on secondary school learning support, and from Altogether Autism on exam assistance for NCEA.

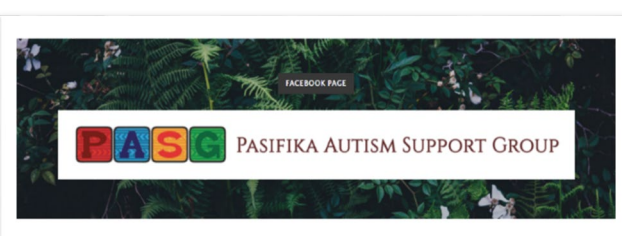


## SUPPORT FOR YOU:

parenting an Autistic teenager can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging. Non-religious counselling is available from Presbyterian Support or Methodist Mission. Support is also available from Parent to Parent and Autism NZ (links below), or you can also see your GP who may be able to refer you for further support if you find that your mental health is suffering.



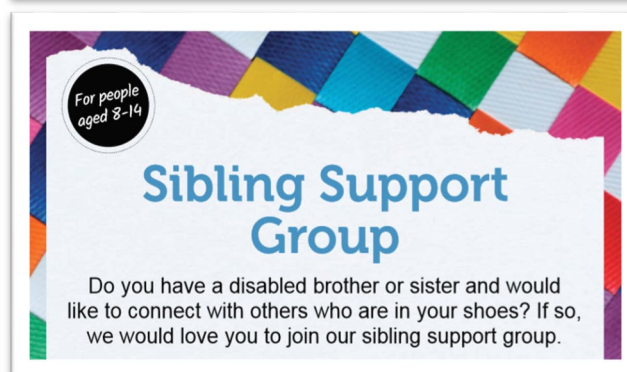
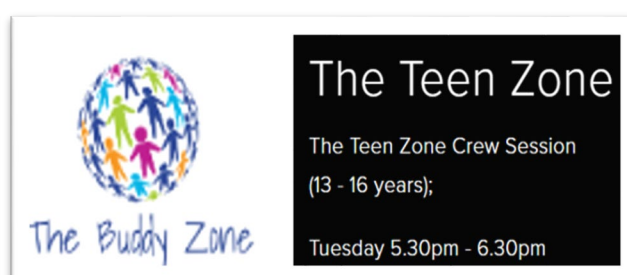
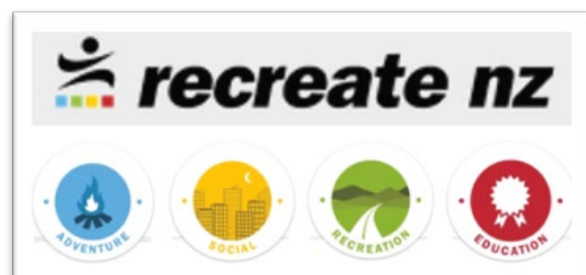
### Free non-religious counselling:



## Parent support:

## SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR AUTISTIC TEENAGERS AND THEIR SIBLINGS:

Below are links to some examples of social support groups and activities for Autistic teenagers and their siblings. There are many more, please refer to the information folder that the Autism Coordinator has given you.



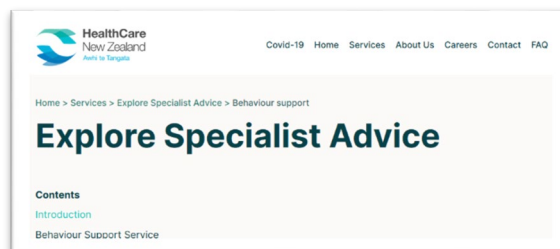


## USEFUL LINKS:

**LifeLinks:** is the needs assessment service coordinator (NASC) which helps with respite care and carer support. If your situation has changed, please discuss with LifeLinks.



**Explore Behaviour Support:** around puberty and teen years can be a time when behaviour can change or become more challenging. Behaviour support is available through Explore. There is an 0800 number on the website that you can ring for urgent help.



The Explore website also has a new section on preparing your child / young person for the COVID vaccination.

## Preparing for the COVID-19 Vaccination

Getting a COVID-19/Mate Korona vaccine is an important step you can take to protect yourself, your Kaumātua and your whānau/family from the effects of the virus. However, some people are nervous about getting a vaccination, and they need to be supported through it.

We hope that linking you in with information relevant to your teenager's age will help you to develop and strengthen your support network.

Kind regards,

Christchurch Hospital  
Neurodevelopmental Team

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