

# Life skills activity book

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Helping you build independence step by step

## Section 1: Knowing yourself

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### Activity 1: Discovering who I am



Write 10 words about yourself.

- |         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 1. .... | 6. ....  |
| 2. .... | 7. ....  |
| 3. .... | 8. ....  |
| 4. .... | 9. ....  |
| 5. .... | 10. .... |

Circle your favourite three.

## Activity 2: Strengths and challenges

Write three strengths and challenges in the table below.

| Strengths | Challenges |
|-----------|------------|
|           |            |
|           |            |
|           |            |

Choose one challenge to work on and improve.

## Activity 3: My goal



Write a goal

.....

Write the first step

.....

When will you do this first step?

.....

## Section 2: Communication skills

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### Activity 5: Speaking clearly

Practise asking for help. What could you say?

Record your ideas here:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Find someone to practice asking for help with.

**Here is an example you can try:**

**Step 1: Get someone's attention**

👉 "Excuse me ..."

**Step 2: Ask for help**

👉 "Can you help me, please?"

**Step 3: Say what you need**

**Step 4: Say thank you**

👉 "Thank you for helping me."

## Section 3: Thinking skills

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### Activity 8: Making choices



Think of a problem you have.

List the possible solutions to this problem:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....

What might be the outcome of these solutions?

.....

.....

.....

Which solution is best?

.....

.....

.....

## Section 4: Wellbeing

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### Activity: “My community map”

- Draw or list places in your local area, for example:
  - Shop
  - GP
  - Café
  - Leisure centre
- Plan how to get to one place using a bus timetable or route map

### Activity: “Try something new”

- Visit a new place, for example:
  - Library
  - Community group
  - Volunteering session
- Reflect afterwards:
  - What went well?
  - What was difficult?

## Communication and social skills

### Activity: “Plan B thinking”

- Pick a journey or activity
- Ask:
  - What if it doesn't go to plan?
  - What is your back-up plan?

# Money skills

## Activity: “Weekly budget”

- Give a simple budget (for example, £30)
- Plan spending:
  - Food
  - Travel
  - Fun

## Activity: “Real receipt challenge”

- Look at a real receipt
- Work out:
  - Total cost
  - What was spent
  - What could be saved

 Budgeting practice helps you become **independent and avoid financial problems**.

## Activity: “Cooking together”

- Choose a simple meal from the [Easy Read recipes on Through the Maze](https://through-the-maze.org.uk/easyread-recipes/) ([through-the-maze.org.uk/easyread-recipes/](https://through-the-maze.org.uk/easyread-recipes/))
- Plan ingredients
- Follow the recipe step by step

# Wellbeing and emotional skills

Workbooks emphasise **mental health and coping strategies**.

## Activity: “Brain dump”

- Write or draw your worries
- Talk about them with someone you trust

## Activity: “Calm strategies”

- Breathing exercises
- Quiet space
- Talking to someone

More activities to try: [Calm zone at Childline](https://childline.org.uk/toolbox/calmzone) (**childline.org.uk/toolbox/calmzone**).

# Where can I go to meet people and have fun?

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There are a wide range of local groups, activities and informal learning opportunities that help children, young people and adults develop independence, confidence and everyday life skills. These include social groups, youth clubs, creative activities, and community learning courses.

## Connect to Support Hampshire

 [Connect to Support Hampshire](https://connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk) – [connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk](https://connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk)  
(select 'Community directory', then 'Education' and 'Learning opportunities')

- Large directory of:
  - Community groups
  - Activities
  - Support services

## Community directories

 [ABLEize Hampshire groups](https://ableize.com) – [ableize.com](https://ableize.com) (select 'Local groups', then 'Hampshire')

- Lists:
  - Social clubs
  - Sports groups

- Disability activity organisations

These are **informal learning opportunities**.

## **Blue Apple Theatre (Winchester and New Forest area)**

- Performing arts for people with learning disabilities
- Develops:
  - Communication
  - Confidence
  - Social interaction

Visit [Blue Apple Theatre](http://blueappletheatre.com/current-groups) ([blueappletheatre.com/current-groups](http://blueappletheatre.com/current-groups)).

## **Autism Hampshire – Serendipity Groups**

- Community groups for autistic adults across Hampshire
- Focus on:
  - Social connection
  - Confidence
  - Independence

Visit [Community hubs and peer support by Autism Hampshire](http://autismhampshire.org.uk) – [autismhampshire.org.uk](http://autismhampshire.org.uk) (select ‘How we can help’, then ‘How we can help adults’ and ‘Community hubs and peer support’).

## **Youth Clubs (county-wide)**

 [Hampshire youth clubs](http://hampshire-pcc.gov.uk) – [hampshire-pcc.gov.uk](http://hampshire-pcc.gov.uk) (search ‘Youth clubs’).

 [Hampshire Youth Access](http://hampshireyouthaccess.org.uk) – [hampshireyouthaccess.org.uk](http://hampshireyouthaccess.org.uk).

- Provide:
  - Safe places to socialise
  - Activities and peer interaction

## Informal adult social groups (non-SEND specific)

- Example: Curious Monkeys (Southampton)
- Activities:
  - Sports
  - Walks
  - Social events
- Benefits:
  - Building independence
  - Real-life social experiences

Visit [Curious Monkeys Southampton Social Group](https://curiousmonkey.uk) (**curiousmonkey.uk**).

## Community learning

- Courses in:
  - Life skills
  - Budgeting
  - Cooking
  - Digital skills

Visit [Events in libraries](https://hants.gov.uk) – **hants.gov.uk** (search 'Events in libraries').



# Speaking up about your needs

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## A guide for young people with SEND

- Speaking up (self-advocacy) means:
  - Saying what you need
  - Explaining what helps you
  - Asking for support

As you are getting older you may start to go to doctor's appointments on your own or speak to other professionals like the housing officer at your local council. When you meet these people, it is helpful if you can tell them about your needs and how they can best help you.

 You know yourself best, so it's important people listen to you.



## Step 1: Know yourself

Before you talk to someone, think about:

### ☒ What are your needs?

- I find it hard to understand long information
- I need extra time
- I get anxious in busy places

### ☒ What helps you?

- Easy read information
- A quiet room
- Someone to explain things slowly

 It is helpful to explain how your needs affect you and what support you need.

## **Step 2: Get ready**

It can help to plan before you speak to someone.

### **✓ Write it down**

- What do I want to say?
- What do I want to happen?

### **✓ Take it with you**

- Notes
- Phone
- “All About Me” page

### **✓ Practise**

- Say it to a parent or friend
- Try it out loud

 Preparing before appointments can help you feel more confident and not forget important things.

## **Step 3: What to say (simple script)**

You can use sentences like:

### **About your needs**

- “I need you to explain things in a simple way.”
- “I need more time to understand.”
- “I find it hard when there is too much noise.”

### **Asking for help**

- “Can you help me with this?”
- “Can you write that down for me?”

- “Can you say that again more slowly?”

## **? Asking questions**

- “What does that mean?”
- “What happens next?”
- “What are my choices?”

 You have the right to ask questions until you understand.

## **🧘 If you feel nervous**

That is normal.

Try:

- Taking a deep breath
- Asking for a break
- Taking someone with you
- Using your notes

 Staying calm and prepared can help you feel more confident.

## **🔒 Remember**

✓ You have the right to:

- Be listened to
- Be treated fairly
- Get support

✓ Speaking up:

- Builds confidence
- Helps you get the right support
- Helps people understand you

## My communication page

My needs:

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What helps me:

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---

Things I find difficult:

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---

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What I want to happen:

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# Staying safe from scams

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## A guide for young people with SEND

### What is a scam?

A **scam** is when someone tries to trick you to:

- Give them money
- Share your personal details

They might pretend to be helpful or offer something exciting, but they are lying.

 Anyone can be scammed. It is **not your fault**.

### Common types of scams

Scams can happen in lots of ways:

#### Online

- Fake websites
- Social media messages
- Gaming offers (“free coins”)

#### Messages

- Emails or texts asking for details
- Links to fake websites (phishing)

#### Phone calls

- Someone saying they are your bank, the police or HMRC

#### Real life

- Someone asking for money at your door

- Fake housing adverts

👉 Scammers often pretend to be someone you trust (like your bank or the government).

## ▶ **Warning signs (red flags)**

Look out for these:

### **1. They rush you**

- “Do it now!”
- “You only have 24 hours!”

👉 Scammers use pressure to stop you thinking.

### **2. It sounds too good to be true**

- Free money
- Cheap housing
- Easy job with lots of money

👉 If it feels too good, it probably isn't real.

### **3. You weren't expecting it**

- A random call, text, or message

👉 Be careful with unexpected contact.

### **4. They ask for personal details**

- Passwords
- Bank details
- PIN numbers

👉 Real organisations do not ask for this suddenly.

## 5. They make you feel worried or scared

- “You owe money!”
- “You will be arrested!”

 Real services do not try to scare you into paying.

## Simple safety rules

### Stop – Think – Check

- **Stop** – don’t rush
- **Think** – could it be fake?
- **Check** – ask someone you trust

 Taking time before acting can keep you safe.

### Keep your details safe

Do NOT share:

- Passwords
- Bank details
- Codes sent to your phone

 Scammers try to steal this information.

### Be careful with links

- Don’t click on links in messages
- Go to official websites yourself

 Links may take you to fake websites.

### Ask someone you trust

If you are unsure:

- Parent or carer

- Support worker
- Teacher

👉 Talking to someone helps you stay safe.

## What to do if something feels wrong

### ☒ Do this straight away:

- Stop talking to the person
- Do NOT send money
- Tell someone you trust

### ☒ If you shared details:

- Tell your bank
- Ask someone to help you

👉 Acting quickly can protect you and your money.

## Remember

- ✓ Scammers are very clever
- ✓ Anyone can be tricked
- ✓ You are **not** in trouble
- ✓ Asking for help is the right thing to do

## My safety plan

People I can ask for help:

.....

.....

.....

Things I will **never** share:

.....

.....

.....

What I will do if I feel unsure:

.....

.....

.....

# Managing worry about responsibilities and fear of failure

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## A guide for young people with SEND

### **First – you’re not alone**

Lots of young people feel worried about getting things wrong. Anxiety often makes us think things like:

- “I won’t cope”
- “I’ll mess this up”
- “Something will go wrong”

But anxiety is not always telling us the truth.

## What can help us try new things and manage anxiety?

### **1. Break things into small steps**

Big responsibilities can feel scary.

Try:

- “Just do the first step”
- Break tasks into smaller jobs

 Breaking problems into smaller parts can make them easier to manage (CBT approach).

### **2. Build up slowly (not all at once)**

- Start with something easy
- Then try something slightly harder

 This is sometimes called an “anxiety ladder”.

### 3. Change unhelpful thoughts

Your thoughts matter.

Instead of:

- “I’ll fail”. Try:
  - “I’ll try my best”
  - “I can learn from this”

👉 Changing negative thinking can improve confidence and reduce anxiety.

### 4. Accept mistakes (they are part of learning)

- Nobody gets everything right
- Mistakes help you get better

👉 Learning from mistakes builds confidence over time.

### 5. Take one responsibility at a time

If everything feels too much:

- Pick one thing to focus on
- Do not try to fix everything at once

### 6. Calm your body

When anxiety rises:

- Take slow breaths
- Use grounding (look around, notice things)
- Move your body (walk, stretch)

👉 Techniques like breathing and grounding can help manage anxiety symptoms.

## Building confidence

Confidence grows when you:

- Try new things (even if it's scary)
- Celebrate small wins
- Focus on your strengths

 Confidence means believing you can try, not that you'll never feel nervous.

## Helpful phrases young people can use

- “Can you break that down for me?”
- “I need a bit more time”
- “I feel worried about getting this wrong”
- “Can someone help me get started?”

## Key messages

- ✓ You don't have to be perfect
- ✓ You don't have to do everything at once
- ✓ It's okay to feel unsure
- ✓ You can learn, step by step

## My confidence plan

Something I am worried about:

.....

.....

.....

One small step I can try:

.....

.....

.....

Who can help me:

.....

.....

.....

Something I did well:

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.....

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