

## How do I get on to a course?

There are a number of ways to apply for a place on a Riding the Rapids course.

- We take referrals from other professionals involved with your child
- Self-referrals from parents and carers

Before the course, we meet with all parents/carers to check that Riding the Rapids is the right intervention for you, and to answer any questions you may have.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Do you have a crèche, or can I bring my small child to the sessions?**

**No** – we do not have the funding to run a crèche, and we find people can concentrate more easily when there are only adults in the room!

**Can I bring my partner/ mum etc to the course?**

**Places are currently limited**—Please ask if you would like to bring your partner/relative,

## What parents have said about RTR

*Riding the Rapids was a lifeline because at the time I was very, at extremely low point and I was close to breakdown and everything, because I'd just got to a point where I just couldn't handle him anymore and I felt like I was just on me own with it. And obviously I got there and everyone's in the same boat and it was just, it really brought me up out the depths.*

Have really enjoyed being in the group, everyone supporting each other, you're not on your own'

'It's been brilliant – so much taught in such a fun way'

'(I am)..realising how far he has come and how much calmer I am

'I have learnt so much – I will miss it'

Contact us for more information about Riding the Rapids

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M23 9XD

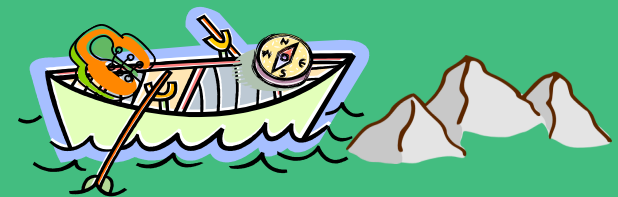
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**NHS**

**Manchester University**  
NHS Foundation Trust

**RIDING  
THE  
RAPIDS**®



Specialist Community Service—Learning Disabilities and Autism

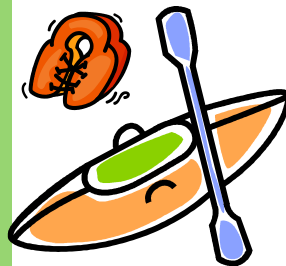
Manchester CAMHS

## What is Riding The Rapids?

Riding the Rapids is a free course designed for parents and carers of children who are autistic, on the pathway for autism assessment or who have significant learning disabilities or other complex disabilities. The course aims to help parents to understand and support their child's well-being, and reduce stress, distress and distress-related behaviours, or other behaviours of concern.

Research shows that parents and carers who attend Riding the Rapids can:

- ✿ Develop effective strategies to support their children
- ✿ Increase their coping skills and confidence, reducing stress



**The Boat Metaphor used during sessions**

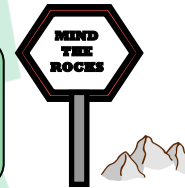
Riding the Rapids was developed here in Manchester by the Specialist Community Service—Learning Disabilities and Autism. It has been researched by the Social Policy and Research Unit at the University of York.

## The Course

Each weekly session covers a different aspect of supporting autistic children/ children and young people with a learning disability.

Parents and carers start the course by deciding on a target they would like to understand and focus on, to improve their child's quality of life, and then putting together a plan to tackle it using a variety of strategies.

**The course takes place for 2 hours a week for 10 weeks**



**Most courses run in the morning**

Courses for parents/ carers of secondary aged children also includes a session on puberty.

Parents and carers develop strategies through discussion, direct teaching, practising ideas and watching videos of young people and other parents talking about their experiences. Parents and carers put strategies into place between sessions.

**There is a follow up meeting a few months after the course has finished**

## The Course

Courses are facilitated by professionals from the Specialist Community Service—Learning Disabilities and Autism. The service is made up of Clinical Psychologists, Nurses and Speech and Language Therapists with specialist training and experience.

Courses are often co-run with other professionals who have been trained in Riding the Rapids, including teachers, teaching assistants, specialist resource workers and school nurses.

There are two separate courses: one for parents/ carers of primary-aged (reception to year 6) children and one for parents/ carers of secondary aged teenagers (school years 7-11).

People who attend Riding the Rapids with our team:

- Have a child with an Autism Spectrum diagnosis, and/ or significant learning disabilities, (usually at specialist school) or complex physical disabilities AND want support with their child's well-being/ behaviours of concern
- Live with, or have very frequent contact with their child
- Are able to commit to a ten week course,