

# AUTUMN NEWSLETTER





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# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO:

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our Newsletter. As you will see below, we have offered some suggestions of great places to visit and experience or things to do as the ever-unpredictable weather begins to change. Autumn is very much a season of change and as many of you will have experienced, change can be challenging for many of us, including those who have sensory processing issues. I am delighted in this edition that we have an article written by Carly Steel about Sensory Overload and some really useful tips and strategies how to help. We hope you find this external expert input to be of value and would love to hear feedback on the article itself and if there are any other subjects you would like to see featured in future editions.

It's only a few weeks since we finished the Summer activities program, and this was of course my first experience of an ADHD Solutions Summer. I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed it and got to meet so many amazing children and young people across so many different venues. If you had told me a year ago, I would be doing paintball, a Lagoon Wipeout session, a walk up Kinder Scout and camping out at Willesley as a big part of my next job I doubt I would have believed you. A personal highlight for me was the trip to the seaside where we got to take a coachful of families to Chapel St Leonards and luckily the weather was good all day. As well as having fun on the activities it was also great to meet so many parents and carers and listen to all the positive feedback on the services we offer.

For October half term we will be offering 2 more activities so please keep an eye out for them as both the things we have planned sound exciting to me. Even more exciting you will see in this newsletter that we are having a Halloween Party at the centre on the 27th of October. This will be free for any of our members and families to access so hope to see as many of you there as possible. It promises to be a great event and I can't wait to see what the halls look like all decorated and lit up.

My final message this month is a huge thank you to the team who work here tirelessly to support all of you reading this and many others with all things ADHD. It's been a pleasure to get to know this passionate group of people and see exactly what they do to deliver our wide range of services. ADHD Solutions simply wouldn't exist if it wasn't for them and their efforts, so I hope you join me in thanking for them for all that they do.

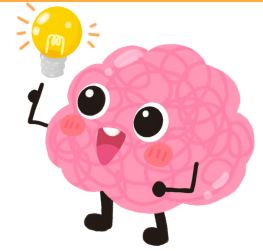
Next time I write one of these it will be nearly Christmas.....

**Jamie Higgins**  
CEO



# Sensory Overload and Neurodiversity: A Guide for Parents

*By Carly Steel*

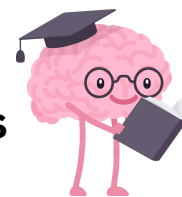


## Introduction

Parenthood is a rewarding journey, filled with love and fun moments. However, it is not an easy one and when raising neurodiverse children it can present unique challenges. Sensory overload is one such challenge. Here I am going to explore what sensory overload is, how it affects neurodiverse children, and offer strategies for parents to support their children.

## Understanding Sensory Overload

Sensory overload occurs when an individual's sensory system becomes overwhelmed by too much sensory input. This can happen in various environments and situations, such as crowded places, bright lights, loud noises, or even during times of heightened emotions. For neurodiverse children, who may have sensory sensitivities or differences in processing sensory information, the experience of sensory overload can be more intense and frequent. At this time of year, particularly as we approach bonfire night and Christmas the environment itself can present more challenges.



## Neurodiversity: Celebrating Differences

Before delving into strategies to manage sensory overload, it's important to understand what neurodiversity is. Neurodiversity is the idea that neurological differences, such as autism, ADHD, sensory processing disorders, and others, are natural variations of the human brain. It is important to not only accept these differences but celebrate someone's strengths and unique perspective. That said, we want to avoid trivialising someone's experience and recognise that a neurodivergent child will face different challenges.





# Recognising the Signs of Sensory Overload

What might it look like when your child becomes overloaded with sensory information? As parents it is really important to recognise these signs as a young child is unlikely to be able to understand or express how they are feeling. They may also find it difficult to understand why they are feeling that way and what they can do to feel better. Here are some signs to look out for:

- **Withdrawal:** The child may withdraw from the environment or social interactions to reduce sensory input. If they are unable to remove themselves from the situation they may place their hands over their ears, put their hood up, look away, close their eyes, prefer to be in a corner with their back against the wall or near an exit.
- **Irritability or Anxiety:** Increased irritability, restlessness, or mood swings can be indicators of sensory overload. The child may show signs of anxiety such as shaking, sweating and poor concentration.
- **Distraction:** They may try to distract themselves from the input by focusing on one thing or blocking out sensory input. This could include counting, humming, tapping, picking their skin, playing with their hair and even self-harm.
- **Sensory-Seeking Behaviours:** Some children may engage in repetitive behaviors or seek out sensory input, like rocking, flapping their hands, jumping off objects and lying down on the floor.
- **Communication Difficulties:** Difficulty in expressing themselves or understanding others. They may struggle to follow instructions and reply to your questions.



# Strategies for Supporting Neurodiverse Children

## 1. Create a Sensory-Friendly Environment:

- Design safe spaces at home where sensory input can be controlled, such as dimming lights or using noise-cancelling headphones.
- Provide sensory tools like fidget toys, weighted blankets, or chewable jewellery to help regulate sensory input.

## 2. Establish Predictable Routines:

- Predictability can be comforting for neurodiverse children. Establish daily routines to reduce surprises and anxiety.
- Have a plan for events where sensory input will be high. Coming up with a plan together in advance will really help, as the child is unlikely to be able to think what they want or need during sensory overload.

## 3. Effective Communication:

- Use clear and concise language and visual supports to aid communication during sensory overload.

## 4. Encourage Self-Advocacy:

- Teach your child to recognise their own sensory triggers and develop strategies for self-regulation. This empowers them to communicate their needs effectively.

## 5. Sensory Breaks:

- Allow for regular breaks in overstimulating environments to recharge and regulate sensory input. This could include time alone, time with their interests or screen time during busy times.

## Conclusion

Sensory overload can feel overwhelming for the child and difficult to understand for parents. However, with patience, planning and the right strategies, parents can help their children with sensory processing differences. Remember, every child is different, and what works for one may not work for another. The key is to create a supportive and inclusive environment where they can thrive and be happy.

For more information and support, including parent and family digital training courses get in touch:

**Carly Steel**



<https://www.instagram.com/carlysteelofficial>

<https://urlgeni.us/facebook/carlysteelofficial>



# Summer Activities

Hi everyone,

I would just like to start off by saying a huge thank you to all the volunteers, staff and parents who helped support us with this year's summer activity program. It has been the biggest and busiest set of activities we have done for many years and was an absolute blast!

This year, we had the highest turn out for activities, with a great mix of old and new service users. We have pushed the boundaries for what activities we can and will deliver moving forward, and have hopefully given fantastic memories for all of our children who attended. We saw the return of several of our old service users, who have now supported us as volunteers and sessional workers.

We have taken your children to the tops of mountains, to the beautiful seaside, ice skating and even horse riding as just a small part of what we achieved this summer. Seeing your children make these memories and experiences is what the activities program is all about.

These activities would not be possible without the support from Children in Need, but also from the families that help our organisation through our membership program. We will always aim to deliver the best activities we can for your children, and appreciate everyone who helps us achieve that goal.

With much love and gratitude,  
Zak Copley



# Fun activities to do in Leicester and Leicestershire

- **Rhamni Finds Her Wings**

*Sat, 14 Oct, 11:00–16:00*

*Fox Books*

*St Martin's Square, 9 Silver Walk, Leicester*

*Rhamni Finds Her Wings Free activities for children this Autumn Half Term. Make UV print bookmarks with plants from the National Forest, as well as butterflies and moths.*



- **Half Term Railway Day**

*Tue, 17 & 24 Oct, 11:30–16:00*

*Abbey Pumping Station Museum, Corporation Rd, Leicester*

*Enjoy your half term holidays with a picnic and a railway ride at the Abbey Pumping Station Museum. Train rides cost 50p cash, to be paid at the train itself. Advance booking not required.*

- **Leicester Monsters**

*16 – 31 October*

*Various venues: Leicester*

*<https://bidleicester.co.uk/leicester-monsters/>*

*Look up, watch out! Leicester is being overtaken by a playful posse of giant glowing monsters who have invaded the city centre! Discover huge, glowing monsters reaching their claws over rooftops, tentacles bursting wildly through windows, and illuminated spooky sights that will leave you in awe. And the best part is, it's totally free! Prepare for an exciting escapade as you trace your way across the city centre, where you'll have the chance to encounter mischievous monsters at every turn.*



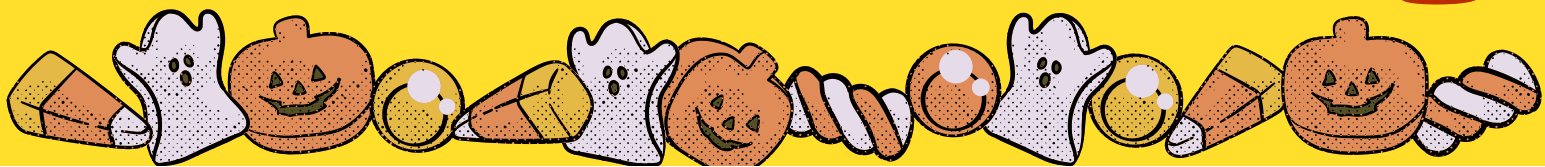
- **Family Scream Park- Twinlakes**

*From 7th October- 5th November.*

*Twinlakes Park Melton Spinney Road, Melton Mowbray*

*[www.twinlakespark.co.uk/events/family-scream-park/](http://www.twinlakespark.co.uk/events/family-scream-park/)*

*A spooky day out at Twinlakes will deliver Halloween fun with pumpkins, broomsticks, monsters, fancy dress and more. See website for booking and ticket prices.*







# **HALLOWEEN FARM**

**COME AND JOIN US IN A MORE RELAXED ENVIRONMENT ON OUR SENSORY DAY. WITH REDUCED CAPACITY, LOWER LEVELS OF SOUND, LIGHTING AND SPECIAL EFFECTS. WE'RE OFFERING THE HALLOWEEN FARM EXPERIENCE WHICH IS INCLUSIVE TO ALL. OUR SENSORY DAY WILL BE ADAPTED TO CATER FOR A VARIETY OF NEEDS TO ENABLE EVERYONE TO ACCESS THE ATTRACTIONS.**

**ON FRIDAY 13TH OCTOBER WE WILL BE OPEN FROM 9AM -7PM TO CATER FOR THOSE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS OR THOSE WHO WANT TO VISIT OUR EVENT AT A QUIETER TIME.**

**ACCESSIBLE TOILETS AND CARER TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE, PLEASE FOLLOW THE LINK IN OUR FAQs FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

## **CATTOWS FARM**

**NORMANTON LANE, HEATHER, LEICESTERSHIRE LE67 2TD**

**[WWW.THEHALLOWEENFARM.CO.UK](http://WWW.THEHALLOWEENFARM.CO.UK)**

# Autumn Activities

## Here are some fun ideas:

- Make a pinecone bird feeder.



- Go on a nature scavenger hunt in the garden or the local park and collect acorns, pinecones.

- Collect colourful leaves and press them into an album or choose some of your favourite leaves and put them under white paper and colour over it with crayons which will create colourful pictures.



- Take a bike ride.

- Help craft your kid's Halloween costume.

- Eat toffee/ candy apples or make your own.

- Carve your own pumpkins.



- Bake ginger bread biscuits together.





# Support Groups

Every month we host support groups for parents/carers all around Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland, where you can come gain support and advice, meet other parents & carers with ADHD, share experiences, stories, or just have a chat. **Term-time only.**

## Loughborough

**2ND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH**  
10AM TO 12PM  
TESCO COMMUNITY ROOM  
PARK ROAD, LOUGHBOROUGH  
LE11 2EX

10TH OCTOBER  
14TH NOVEMBER  
12TH DECEMBER

## Wigston

**3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH**  
10AM-12PM  
RECORD OFFICE  
LONG STREET  
WIGSTON MAGNA  
LE18 2AH

21ST NOVEMBER  
19TH DECEMBER

## Rutland

**2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH**  
11.15AM - 12:45PM  
LORD NELSON PUB  
OAKHAM  
LE15 6DT

11TH OCTOBER  
8TH NOVEMBER  
13TH DECEMBER

## Leicester City

**3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH**  
10AM - 12PM  
ST GABRIEL'S COMMUNITY CENTRE  
LEICESTER  
LE4 7GH

15TH NOVEMBER  
20TH DECEMBER

## Coalville

**LAST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH**  
9:30AM - 11:30AM  
AGAR NOOK COMMUNITY CENTRE  
COALVILLE  
LE67 4TN

28TH SEPTEMBER  
26TH OCTOBER  
30TH NOVEMBER

**NO NEED TO BOOK, YOU CAN JUST COME ALONG ON THE DAY**





JOIN US IF YOU DARE FOR

# ★ Halloween FAMILY PARTY



FRIDAY 27th OCTOBER.



6PM - 8PM

SUBSCRIBING MEMBERS ONLY  
FREE

Family event - all ages welcome  
Booking is required via our website  
[www.adhdsolutions.org](http://www.adhdsolutions.org) or email  
[activities@adhdsolutions.org](mailto:activities@adhdsolutions.org)



ADHD Solutions, St Gabriel's  
Community Centre, Leicester,  
LE4 7GH



SPOOKY TREATS, DISCO, DRINKS & GAMES  
COSTUMES ENCOURAGED





# FUNDRAISING

## WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT US



SHOP ONLINE & RAISE DONATIONS FOR FREE



[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/adhdsolutions/](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/adhdsolutions/)

We're registered with easyfundraising, which means you can help us for FREE. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online. It's easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us. We have so far raised **£778.87**.

We have a clothing bank in our car park at St Gabriel's and receive 50p per kilogram for donated items. That's £10 for about a suitcase full! To date we have raised more than £2000! We are collecting: *clean clothing, paired shoes, bed linen and blankets, belts & handbags.*

\*Please note that spoiled clothing, quilts and pillows cannot be included.

### DONATE YOUR CLOTHES



### DONATIONS



Donations are very welcome. You can also make donations via Paypal and local giving page. To find out more visit our website [www.adhdsolutions.org](http://www.adhdsolutions.org) by clicking on About Us > fundraising.

If you have any ideas to help us raise much needed funds then please contact us via [info@adhdsolutions.org](mailto:info@adhdsolutions.org) and we will be happy to advertise your event. It does not need to be a large event because every little really does help and funds raised will support our families.

### FUNDRAISING



# Turn your online shopping into everyday magic for

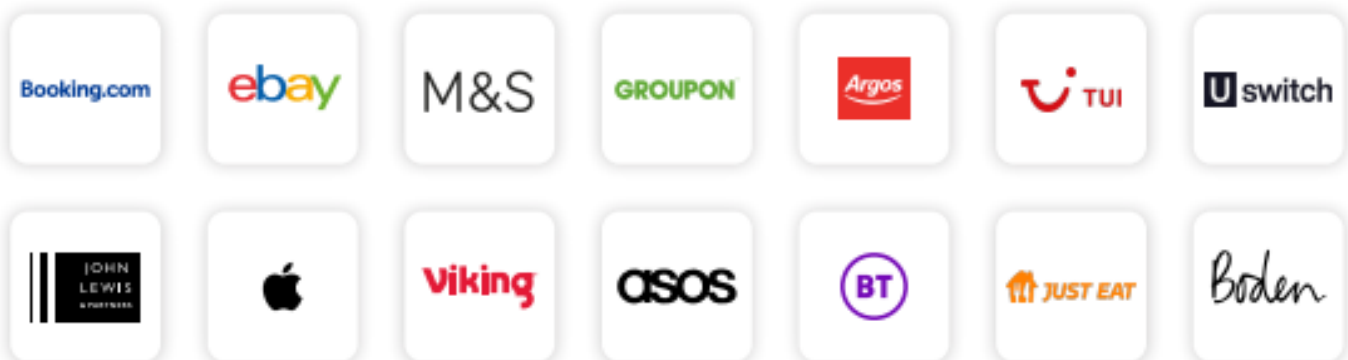
## ADHD Solutions CIC

### with easyfundraising

You shop, brands donate to us.  
It won't cost you any extra!

#### How to sign up

- 1 Visit the link below or scan the QR code  
[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause)
- 2 Search for us
- 3 Your favourite brands donate whenever you spend with them





A FAMILY FRIENDLY FUNDRAISING EVENT

# HALLOWEEN Fair

SATURDAY 28TH OCTOBER  
AT BIRSTALL SCOUT HALL

2pm to  
4pm

Birstall Road (Next to Gunn's Gym). Parking at Sibson Road car park, LE4 4DX.

STALLS, CRAFTS,  
HOT AND COLD DRINKS,  
CAKES AND TREATS,  
DRESSING UP BOX,  
TOMBOLA, RAFFLE ETC.  
ALL WELCOME!



**This event is in aid of ADHD Solutions**

ADHD Solutions is a Leicester based organisation set up to provide information, help, support and activities for children, young people, and adults with ADHD - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder - their families and anyone who supports them or works with them. Thanks for your support.

