

## 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 will contact you 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 – unfortunately we currently do not have 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. We will try to accommodate this wherever possible.

## 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'

'its 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:

Heaton School  
St James Rd, Stockport  
SK4 4RE  
0161 432 1931



## Secondary RIDING THE RAPIDS



Stockport NHS Foundation Trust &  
Stockport Council

## What is Secondary Riding The Rapids?

Riding the Rapids is a free course designed for parents and carers of young 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 and behaviours related to distress or 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 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 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**

- 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.

🧠 Understand behaviours

💛 Build confidence

📘 Learn practical strategies

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

## The Course

- Courses are facilitated by professionals from Stockport Family teams. This includes specialist nurses from the Children's Community Learning Disability Team, Portage workers, Speech and Language Therapists and Educational Psychologists.
- Courses are often co-run with other professionals who have been trained in Riding the Rapids including teachers, teaching assistants, family support workers, the Neurodevelopment Team and/or Children's Community Learning Disability team (CCLDT).

🧠 Supporting Your Teen Through Big Changes:

Adolescence can bring big emotions, growing independence and new challenges — like puberty, school stress, friendships and social anxiety.

**This course helps you:**

Understand your teen's changing needs  
Build strategies for managing anxiety, anger and behaviour  
Support healthy independence while staying connected.

### People who attend Early Years Riding the Rapids with us:

- Have a child who is on the pathway for an autism assessment, has an Autism Spectrum diagnosis, and/ or significant learning disabilities, (usually at specialist school) or complex physical disabilities.
- Are known to the Child Development Unit.
- 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 and try strategies between sessions.