# Girls on the Autism Spectrum: The Big Shout!

## Call to Action

This call to action was originally developed as part of the NAHT’s national conference on autism in girls, held 27 January 2017 in London, UK.

### Diagnosis
- Training for professionals and families to recognise and refer girls with suspected autism or related conditions
- Revision of existing diagnostic tools to include girls with autism
- Addressing diagnostic delays for girls with autism
- A more joined up approach to screening, diagnosis and post-diagnostic pathways for girls

### Education and Training
- Autism and girls-specific training for all educators and families
- More joined up working between all services and families
- Understanding and addressing the complete needs of girls (holistic vs academic achievement)

### Research
- In depth research on exclusion and/or school refusal and its impact for girls with autism
- An emphasis on personalised good outcomes for autistic girls
- Investigating links between autism and secondary mental health issues (e.g. eating disorders, self-harm)
- Linking neuroscience with school-based research to learn from the reality of autistic girls’ educational experience

### Mental Health
- Addressing the vulnerability of autistic girls (e.g. personalised Sex and Relationship Education, offending/radicalisation issues, pressure to ‘fit in’ with peers, pregnancy in autistic girls/teenage mothers)
- Training on autistic girls’ mental health issues and strategies for professionals and families
- Seeing beyond the presentation of mental health to the autism that may underlie it (and vice versa)

### Parents and Carers
- High quality post-diagnostic guidance and support for parents/guardians and young people
- Support for parents/guardians in parenting autistic girls
- Valuing parents’/guardians’ and young people’s expertise

### Post-School Transition and Employment
- Transition from children’s to adult services
- Awareness raising among employers about the strengths of autistic girls
- Greater opportunities for supported employment and job coaching

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