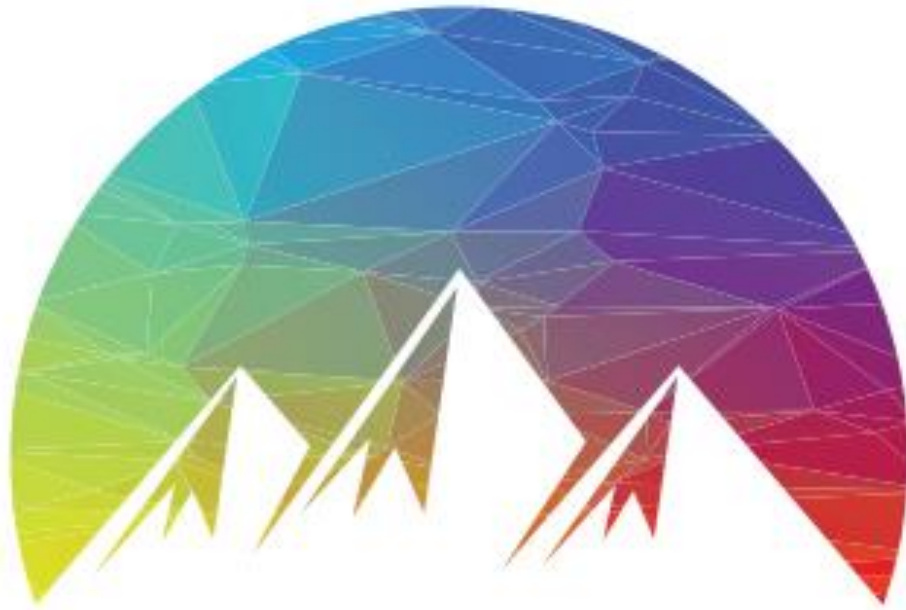


# Toolkit



**KILLARNEY**

**AUTISM FRIENDLY TOWN**

Supporting organisations  
to become autism  
friendly.

# Autism Friendly Killarney-Toolkit



## Introduction:

Thank you for your support in helping Killarney become an Autism Friendly Town.

To support Killarney in becoming Autism Friendly we have developed a **Toolkit** to help guide you and your business or organisation on this journey.

We wish to engage with local businesses and organisations to develop and sustain inclusive practices that ensure autistic individuals have full access to goods and services in Killarney, and that their lived experience is one of support and inclusion across all aspects of daily life.

In agreeing to become a champion, this toolkit along with planned training for your staff and teams will help everyone to recognise and understand autism. It will also help you look at practical strategies which will help to include the autism community.

This is a new undertaking for everybody in Killarney. We are all learning, and this is how we will grow **TOGETHER** as a community.

## What is Autism?

*“Autism is a lifelong, developmental difference which relates to how a person communicates and interacts with others and how they experience the world around them.”*

Autism is part of the broader neurodiversity family which encompasses people with differences or disabilities such as ADHD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia, Epilepsy, Tourette’s Syndrome and Dyscalculia.

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## What is an Autism-Friendly Community?

- ❖ A community which makes a commitment to implement measures to improve accessibility for and promote acceptance of autistic people.

## Pathway to making Killarney an Autism friendly Community.

- ❖ A project led by a committee with representatives from the local community and Autistic advocates.
- ❖ Partnering with AsIAM, an autistic led charity which advocates for the autistic community and passionately believes in making goods and services accessible to autistic people.
- ❖ 3-year plan to measurably improve the experience of living in or visiting Killarney for autistic people.
- ❖ A required number of Autism-Friendly Champions (*that is you!*)
- ❖ Campaigns to educate the wider public about autism acceptance and accessibility.

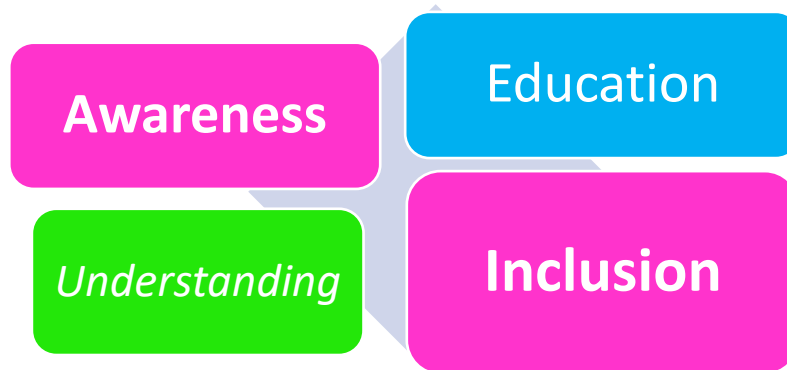


## Question & Answers

### What is the Killarney Autism Friendly Committee?

A committee of volunteers set up to support autistic people in Killarney. It is our goal to ensure autistic individuals have full access to goods and services in Killarney, and that their lived experience is one of support and inclusion across all aspects of daily life.

## What are we trying to achieve?



## How can AslAm help?

AslAm produces a wide variety of online and in-person autism training modules, including bespoke modules for several businesses and organisations and public bodies nationwide which can be tailored to suit an organisation's size, needs and the industry they do business in.

For more information visit <https://asiam.ie/>

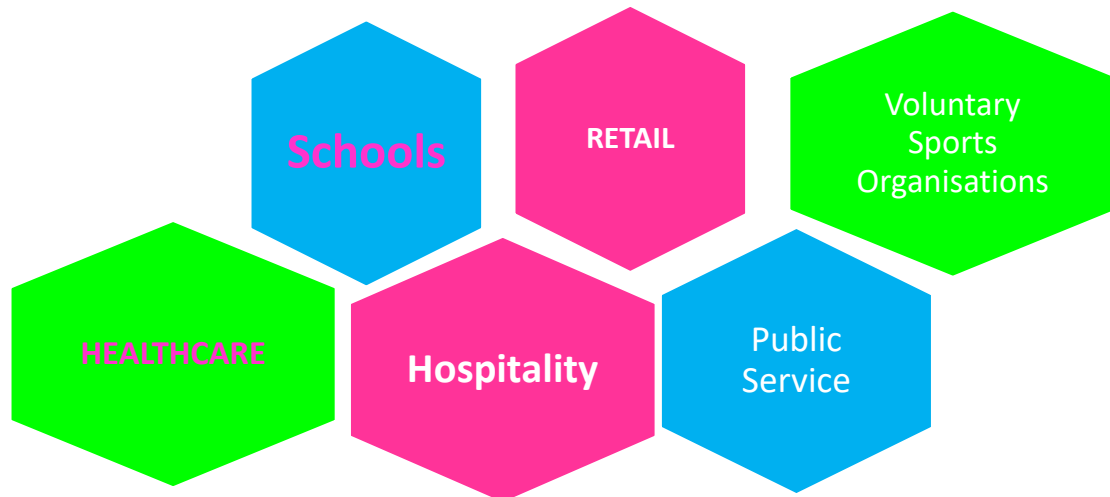
## What is a Champion?

A champion is a business or organisation committed to becoming autism friendly by upholding standards and implementing practical measures.

## What are the benefits of becoming a Champion?

3.3% of the population live with autism. Becoming an autism friendly business or organisation shows autistic people and their families that you value their custom. Your business or organisation will be listed as autism friendly on the Killarney.ie website; clearly visible for those living in or visiting Killarney town.

## What community sectors can get involved?



## So, how can you begin?

The Killarney Autism Friendly Committee, working in partnership with AsIAM is here to support you on your journey to becoming an Autism Champion.

There is only one Essential commitment we ask of you and your staff to begin with, which is to attend training sessions facilitated by AsIAM Ireland and Killarney Autism Friendly Committee.

Beyond this the following list of recommended potential accommodations we ask you to consider. (You may be already providing some of these accommodations)



## Steps to Take

**Please remember**– It is **NOT** necessary to implement all the recommendations outlined. We ask that you start with actions that are possible in the short term, and progress to the more complex accommodations, if possible, over a longer period.

## The 3 mandatory commitments we ask you to implement:

- ❖ Visual Guides
- ❖ Sensory area or Sensory Boxes
- ❖ Admission of assistance dogs to your premises

## Additional Recommendations:

- ❖ Autism friendly shopping hours. Small changes like reducing lighting or music could make an experience better for some autistic people.
- ❖ A quiet space
- ❖ Priority queuing to avoid waiting
- ❖ Appropriate signage

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- ❖ Provision of video/imagery of the service on your website or social media. This can explain social situations to autistic people and help them prepare for unfamiliar life situations.
- ❖ Updating your website or social media with autism friendly information. This allows to set expectations and to communicate what to expect clearly, in advance.

**Visual guides** and **videos** provide a vital support for autistic people, particularly when going somewhere new and unexpected. These resources take a person through what to expect, provide a heads up of any stressors and let the person know the supports that are available. Making this information available in advance can help to reduce anxiety and provide support.

## Example of a Visual Guide





I know what I might see and do at a parade.



I will have fun with my family and friends

It can get loud at a parade. I can wear my headphones or cover my ears if it gets too loud.



There will be people marching down the road. There will also be floats. They might honk the horn or make other noises when they drive by.

There will be an area outside the Aras Padraig if I don't want to stand in the crowds.



Wherever I am standing, I will see Santa when he passes on his float.



There will be a lot of people standing and sitting along the road.



We will need to wait for the parade to start. I can play with something I bring from home while I wait.



## Autism-friendly shopping hours

Every Wednesday 9-11am



To improve the shopping experience for our customers and their families, we have made our stores more autism-friendly by making some small changes.

- No music
- No TV
- Assistance dogs welcome
- Priority appointments
- Priority seating (store permitting)
- Relaxation box available\*

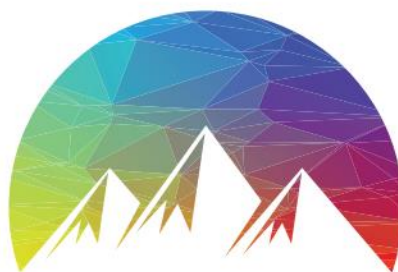
Designed by AS I AM IE

Together we can 

\* Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, customers cannot use the relaxation box when visiting our stores.



## Thank you for your commitment to becoming a champion for Killarney!



### **KILLARNEY** **AUTISM FRIENDLY TOWN**

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