

Rule 1. Respect one another's personal space

- a. Some people don't like it when other people touch them.
- b. If you want to touch someone, ask for permission first.
- c. If someone tells you 'no', don't touch them.
- d. Some people don't like it when other people stand close to them.
- e. If someone asks you for some space, take a step back from them and respect their request.

Rule 2. Communicate directly and clearly

- a. Some people find it hard to 'read between the lines' and understand what people are trying to tell them.
- b. If you want to ask someone a question, be careful to be specific about what you mean.
- c. If you can't understand what someone is trying to say to you, ask them to say it differently.
- d. If you still can't understand what they are trying to say, ask someone else for help.
- e. If people are struggling to understand you, ask someone for help.

Rule 3. Be mindful of others' needs

- a. Everyone is different, and everyone has different needs.
- b. Some people can't speak out loud. Some people repeat words.
- c. Everyone is allowed to communicate in the way that feels best to them.
- d. Some people may make noises or movements that they cannot control. If you find this overwhelming, it is important for you to step away.
- e. People aren't doing anything wrong for having things that they cannot control, and you aren't doing anything wrong by needing to step away.
- f. If someone needs to step away from you, do not follow them. They are allowed space.

Rule 4. Step back or ask for help when overwhelmed/upset

- a. Sometimes, people might get upset. People might disagree with each other, or things might get too loud or unpredictable.
- b. If you feel overwhelmed or upset, we have a quiet space that you can use.
- c. If someone is already in the quiet space, ask for permission before joining them.
- d. If you can't work out what to do when you're upset, please ask for help.
- e. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please consider seeking help from a more appropriate service. We are a community group that cannot provide care.

Please remember:

- i. The Committee are volunteers. We can help with small upsets, but cannot help with a mental health crisis.
- ii. If you are in a crisis, we may be able to signpost you to other services.

- iii. If we are worried for your safety, we may need to contact someone to help to keep you safe.

Rule 5. Treat others with kindness

- a. We all want to have a good time around other people.
- b. Do not behave aggressively, violently or abusively to anyone.
- c. This includes things like:
 - i. Shouting or yelling in anger
 - ii. Hitting or throwing things
 - iii. Touching without permission
 - iv. Following someone when they are trying to walk away from you
 - v. Insulting, Mocking, Staring, etc.
- d. Before you speak, try to think about how your words might impact other people.
- e. If you're not sure if something is okay to say, you can ask someone for help first.

Rule 6. Respect other people's identities

- a. People have different names and pronouns (like 'he', 'she' or 'they').
- b. Even if you don't understand why, it is still important to respect their identity.
- c. Everyone thinks differently. It is okay to politely ask someone why they think something, but do not insult them for it.
- d. If someone does not want to answer your question, that's okay too.
- e. Do not insult anyone's gender identity, sexuality, race, religion, age, disability, etc

Rule 7. Respect other people's privacy

- a. Don't tell other people about someone's private business or secrets.
- b. If you are worried someone might be unsafe, it is okay to tell a volunteer.
- c. If someone asks you to keep a secret that makes you feel bad or worried, you can talk to a volunteer.

Rule 8. Respect other people's 'no'

- a. If someone tells you 'no', don't try to change their mind.
- b. If you don't want to do something, you can say 'no'.

Rule 9. Dog/Pet policy

After much consideration, the Committee has come to the consensus that **we cannot allow dogs or other pets to attend the hub.**

Please consider that this hub is set up for local persons with Autism and/or Neurodiversity. Any unexpected noises, animals, pet fur or dander can adversely affect members of our community. Therefore, this decision has been made for the wellbeing of the majority of our members.

There is, of course, an exception for Service Animals in keeping with UK Law, who remain welcome with their humans in attendance.

Rule 10. Follow Committee Member instructions

- a. Volunteers are here to help you.
- b. Sometimes, volunteers may need you to do something to keep yourself safe.
- c. You can ask why we are asking you to do something, but please don't argue or shout.
- d. If you are concerned about something that you have been asked to do, you can speak with another volunteer.
- e. Part of this rule also means that under no circumstances are you to misrepresent or lie about what a Committee Member has said to you. Not all of us can be present at every hub session, and we rely on honest communication and teamwork. To ensure the longevity of the NPT Autism Hub, this rule must be respected.

General Rules

- a. No Crimes on the premises, please. This includes but is not limited to;
 - i. Stealing
 - ii. Smoking
 - iii. Vaping
 - iv. Illegal Substances
 - v. Alcohol consumption
- b. Please also dispose of your own rubbish
- c. Please wash your own dishes
- d. Please make sure you leave the toilets clean and acceptable for the next user.

Remember: Be kind. Ask for permission. Respect other people. Ask for help if you need it.