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June 2009 Newsletter

All Aboard for the Train Walk!

harc Train Walk with Thomas and Friends on
Sunday 21st June 2009 - Southfield School,
Hatfield



Come and join us in a family sponsored walk to raise money to support our activities for people with autism in Hertfordshire.

One lap around Southfield School grounds is 500 metres - 3 laps add up to a mile. You decide what distance you will attempt and ask your family, friends and workmates to sponsor your walk. The terrain is mainly grass and does incorporate a slope. We want to raise as much money as possible as well as to have fun! You can dress up as a Thomas character if you wish. Helpers will be dressed as station staff. There will be 'Thomas' activities for children to complete and refreshments will also be available.

There is further information about how to join the Train Walk attached to the newsletter. Please send this to six friends or family members.

If you are not able to join us but would like to support our cause, we would be very grateful for donations via our JustGiving page at:
<http://www.justgiving.com/harc-trainwalk>

Please remember to choose the correct tax payer box, so that we can claim Gift Aid where possible. If you provide your name, we will be able to thank you personally in this newsletter!

We also need helpers - people to make cakes and biscuits for our cake stall. We need a few first aiders to be present. Also, we need people to serve on the refreshment stall and we need people to help with registration. Please contact the office if you can help.

Come aboard! Come and enjoy yourselves. Make new friends and help raise money for autism!

Ruth Clinton running for harc

Ruth Clinton is running in the St. Albans Half Marathon on 14th June and we are very pleased that she has chosen harc as her charity for sponsorship.

Donations are very welcome at:

<http://www.justgiving.com/ruthclinton1>

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of **harc** or the NAS

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Adult Autism Strategy

Father and son run for harc



Clive and Dec Goodhall will be running the ASICS British10k London Run on July 12th. This is Dec's first 10k and first fundraising event for harc so we hope you will encourage him by either sponsoring them or coming along to shout encouragement on the day. Some of you may have heard Dec speak at one of our support group meetings in the autumn. He has just turned 18 and is keen to support the work harc is doing for other people on the autistic spectrum. He is determined to complete the run in a faster time than his Dad. Clive is hoping that that the experience of his last run in 2008 will pay off and he can do the 10k in less than an hour again, but feels age and dodgy knees may come into play!

Clive and Dec are aiming to raise £750 for harc - they will join an anticipated 26,000 runners on a route where much of the course is the same as the 2012 London Olympic Marathon, taking entrants past many of the world renowned historic landmarks of the capital city.

Please support them and harc by visiting their Just Giving page:
http://www.justgiving.com/clive_and_dec and/or by coming along on the day. Details of the run can be found at:
<http://www.thebritish10klondon.co.uk/>

On April 29th the government launched their consultation of the Adult Autism Strategy. As part of this consultation six people were invited to attend Whitehall and interview Phil Hope, Care Services Minister. Laurence, Peter and I were pleased to have been invited to go along and ask questions.

We prepared the questions in advance with the help of the Campaigns Team at the NAS. On Monday 27th April we went along to Whitehall, Department of Health, to ask our questions. The session was filmed and is available on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nTKsvRGH8A>

It was an interesting event and gave us an opportunity to see how ordinary people can maybe make a difference. The Department of Health in Whitehall is an impressive building, Peter was particularly impressed to see Hilary Benn, MP, narrowly avoiding being run over as he crossed the road in front of us, busy on his mobile.

Phil Hope was well briefed and appeared to be interested and to understand where we were coming from. It is, of course, always difficult to know when speaking with politicians but I did have the impression that he was genuinely interested.

There is now a twenty week consultation period that will give you an opportunity to tell the government what is important and why. The consultation document is a long one as it includes a lot of information about what the Government proposes to do. It is vitally important that we have our say now that their ears are open.

The success of the Autism Bill has led the Government to consider putting some teeth behind their strategy, something we have argued for some time.

If you think we could do better with the consultation if we worked collectively let us know and we will endeavour to put a meeting together to facilitate this. You worked so hard with the Autism Bill we now need that same level of effort for this consultation. Together we can make a difference.

Ann Griffin

Imagine Thinking Differently

Imagine Thinking Differently is a project being jointly run by Carers in Hertfordshire and harc. The project's aim is to look at the services available to adults with Asperger syndrome and High Functioning Autism in Hertfordshire. We have used an 'appreciative inquiry' approach and worked with New Economic Foundation (NEF), this involves getting people to tell their stories and to particularly focus on the positive aspects of AS/HFA and services available. At times this was difficult as many people only had negative experiences. However, when we asked questions such as "what would have made a difference to you?" or "how could that have been done better?" we received a lot of very positive examples. We spoke to over 250 people throughout Hertfordshire, including people with AS/HFA, their parents/carers, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, Connexions workers, Work Solutions, Community Learning Disability nurses and staff in an FE College working with people with AS/HFA.

In October we had our stakeholder day. This brought a large number of people together who would not normally meet. The idea was to put propositions before them (called provocative propositions) and ask them to tell us whether these things exist, if they do, whether they work, if they don't, are they viable? People who attended also made a commitment to help to take some of these ideas forward.

Following the day the steering group have continued to work on an action plan/outcome. The key issue coming out of the project is around communication of information. It is key

for those with autism, for parents/carers and for those providing services. We also recognised at this stage that this is true across the age range, from cradle to grave, information is the key. We have identified the need for four posts, one for each quadrant of the county. We are calling them Information Liaison Workers. See the flow chart further on. The idea is that information is a two way flow, in and out. We also foresee that where a referral is made by this worker that they will check to ensure the referral has worked.

We believe that these posts are a really clear step forward in providing appropriate services for people with autism and their families. We believe it will help to ensure information is shared by all who need it. We estimate the total cost for these four posts is £172 000. In the scheme of things not a huge amount of money.

What we would ask you to do now is to contact your County Councillor and ask them to put pressure on the Council's Adult Care Services, Primary Care Trust and Children, Schools & Families to provide the funding for these posts. At our last support group meeting the dissemination of information was a theme that came up throughout the evening.

We also identified during the course of the project the need for Autism Champions. This is a voluntary role within someone's everyday role. For instance, you may be a receptionist at a Children's Clinic and have an interest in autism. With training and mentoring you could be the person advising paediatricians on who to make a referral to, or you could be the person, who following a diagnosis, spends some time with the family to explain where they can go for help and support and give information that will help deal with diagnosis. The Champion can be a Teaching Assistant who could then be attached to a SENCO Cluster (this is the meeting that takes place between SENCOs) who can offer really good advice and strategies on how to support children with autism.

Local Authorities have a remit on volunteering set by the Government and this could be beneficial to them in meeting this outcome. You probably already know someone who undertakes this role on an informal basis but how much better if they receive training and mentoring on a regular basis to ensure they keep up to date with services and strategies.

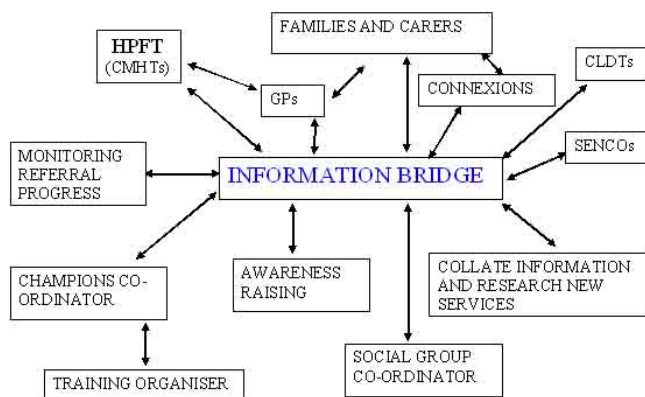
We know this is not the whole answer but it is a start that should make a huge difference. Please help us to make this a reality by contacting your County Councillor. You might also want to contact your MP. Remember, we could contact all the County Councillors but the only one who may listen to us is our County Councillor because we have the power to vote her in or out.

If you want more information or to talk this through with me, please email think.differently@harc-online.org.uk. If you include your telephone number and query I will respond to you as soon as I can.

Ann Griffin

Proposed Asperger / High Functioning Autism Specialist Post - Possible Responsibilities

(Response to Outcomes from Imagine ... Thinking Differently Stakeholder Day)



Proposed Asperger / High Functioning Autism Specialist Post - Possible Responsibilities

1. To provide first point of contact for anyone (family, service provider, member of the public or a statutory body) with a query relating to Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism, to be signposted to the appropriate source of information.
2. To build up expertise in knowing what services are provided by health, social care and the voluntary sector so that signposting is appropriate and timely.
3. To provide a referral process to HPFT where appropriate for families looking for a diagnosis or assessment.
4. To monitor referrals made and to ensure progress to an agreed conclusion
5. To raise awareness amongst SENCOs in secondary schools of the service provided and to provide a basic advice service for schools.
6. To liaise between families, service providers and service users where necessary.
7. To build up a circulation list for disseminating information about Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism amongst carers, health and social care providers, schools, colleges and other interested parties.
8. To co-ordinate membership and waiting lists for Asperger social groups around the county, and monitor provision to ensure consistency across the areas but not to have responsibility for content or funding.
9. To share information and co-ordinate training opportunities for families and service providers around the county
10. To co-ordinate 'Champions for Autism' around Hertfordshire and within different areas of

services. Separate description of 'Champions' role available

11. To co-ordinate (and facilitate?) a 6-monthly 'Asperger Working Forum' to share good practice and discuss problems.

12. To research good practice in other areas of the country and to share with service providers.

Carers Week

Are you a carer? How do you know you are?

A carer is defined as someone who cares for a family member, partner or friend because they are ill, frail or have a disability and do not receive payment for giving care. Carers can be any age and can care for anyone of any age.

So if you are the parent or spouse of someone with autism spectrum disorder it is quite likely that you are a carer. If you are the parent of a young child with ASD it is hard to realise this point, you are after all the parent of this child. Take a step back and see how your neighbour cares for their able child. Do they need the same level of care that your child does? Are they able to let their child out on their own to play or visit the shops? Does their child run indoors if someone passes your gate? Can they leave them alone with an older child to keep an eye on them?

If your child is getting the middle order care DLA and you do not work full time are you claiming and receiving Carer's Allowance? If not, you should consider doing so, apart from anything else, it credits your NI stamp that goes towards your pension contribution.

If you are the spouse of someone with ASD do you find that you are doing more for them than other spouses would? Do you always have to make the telephone calls, contact the school, juggle all the commitments? Then you are likely to be a carer. Does your spouse claim DLA? If not they probably should be. Apart from

anything else it is a mechanism for counting the number of adults with ASD in the county. Again, if they are receiving middle order care DLA then you can also claim Carer's Allowance subject to any hours you may work. You can find out more at

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/MoneyMatters/DG_10012522

If you have other children they may be considered young carers. They will have needs that we cannot always see because we are so busy with their siblings. Carers in Herts offer young carers the opportunity to attend events specifically for them. You can find out more by going to www.carersinherts.org.uk.

June 8th - 15th is Carers Week and the NAS is conducting a survey to find out the needs of people who care for those with autism. Please do take part in this survey

<http://www.autism.org.uk/nas/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=1522&a=19377> and have your say.

Carers Support Group for OCD

From Jo Willis (Carers in Herts) - may be appropriate for some carers:

This is to let you know of a new Carers Support Group starting for those caring for people with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. We are anticipating this commencing September 09 and the groups will run in Stevenage, likely to be daytime and evenings. Whilst this will be in Stevenage, carers are welcome from across the county.

Jenny Robinson and her colleague Brenda O'Rourke will be leading on this, and using the Stevenage MIND premises as their base for this work.

This is an exciting new project which we are funding from carers' grant.

Jenny's details are:

Jenny Robinson <Jenny@FeelLighter.co.uk>

Tel: 07769 639186

Autism Alert Cards

She has a web site: www.Feellighter.co.uk

From: Angela Cannon
Carers Development Manager
Adult Care Services 01438 844111

Parenting a Special Needs Teenager through Transition to Adult Services

Moving on to the world of adults can be a daunting prospect for teenager and parent alike. This eight session programme focuses on the welfare of the young person, including daily living skills and the implications for and emotional responses of all family members. It explores how children's needs change as they approach adulthood, how to keep young people safe but also let them grow up. Adjusting ambitions to meet realities are examined as well as exploring the options and opportunities that exist and how to manage any fears around these changes.

If any parent carers might be interested in the above course can you please let me know? This course will not be funded or organised by Carers in Hertfordshire but if there is enough interest it might be possible for one to be set up centrally say in Welwyn Garden City - normally the course runs for approximately 8 weeks in the evenings and it will be after the summer holidays but there is no indication of dates - this is just to identify if there is sufficient interest/need to run such a course. .

Maria Kiely

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Hertfordshire and Cambridge Constabularies, and Bedfordshire Police, together with Autism Anglia, have launched an Autism Alert Card. This is pink and credit-card sized, and can be shown by people with autism if they find themselves in a situation where they cannot easily explain about their condition. The card is aimed at the emergency services as well as health, schools and social services.

The card is free and can be obtained from Autism Anglia on **01206 577678** or by emailing familysupport@autism-anglia.org.uk, or visit www.autism-anglia.org.uk to download an application form. You will need to provide proof of diagnosis, such as a letter from a professional, medical report or assessment, or a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Woolgrove Autism Conference March 2009

As on previous occasions this conference provided some excellent speakers and it was obvious from comments from the audience that everyone learnt a lot. The main speaker in the morning was John Clements who gave an excellent insight into the behaviour of children and young people on the spectrum. His presentation was on the theme of 'come dancing' and explored ways in which we can guide our youngsters to perform to the best of their ability by leading, directing and educating. John covered the challenges faced by the child with ASD and explained how, by understanding these challenges, we can build positive working relationships. The audience was a mix of parents and professionals and John successfully addressed both groups at the same time helping each group understand the challenges faced by the other. There were many signs of recognition from the audience as John illustrated his talk with examples of young people he had worked with.

John's energy and sense of humour made the learning very entertaining, leaving me with the thought that it was a shame that more parents and professionals could not be there! The harc committee will explore the possibility of inviting John to speak to more parents if we can find a way of raising the necessary funding.

In the afternoon we heard from a professional who is also a parent, Melanie Peter, and a young man with Asperger Syndrome, Chris Mitchell. Melanie's presentation, 'That's my boy' gave the mixed audience an excellent insight into bringing up a child with autism whilst also being a professional, currently involved in initial teacher training in inclusion and SEN. Chris had a late diagnosis at the age of twenty and explained what it was like to grow up with AS but not knowing the cause of his difficulties. He gave a very positive example of an adult with AS making the most of his life and was able to give lots of examples of strategies which could be used during the school years.

For those who were not able to attend I can personally recommend two of John's books:

People with Autism Behaving Badly, ISBN 1843107651
Behavioural concerns and autistic spectrum disorders (co author), ISBN 185302742 1 (3 copies available in Hertfordshire libraries)

Jackie Goodhall

harc Support Group Meeting 29th April 2009

Ann Griffin introduced Mel Carr - Senior Regional Officer for the NAS - who described the function of the new Resource Centre. It is based in what was the Boxmoor House School in Box Lane, Boxmoor. Alison Carpenter is the Resource Centre Manager and Helen Hart the administrator. The centre opened on 23rd February 2009.

Mel explained that Alison is an experienced Community Learning Disability Nurse. Her new role is funded by the NAS for the first two years. Within this time, Alison must build up services and funding so that the centre becomes self sustaining. Alison's remit is broad in that it is to develop services across the age range and the county.

There are now two social groups for adults with Asperger syndrome/High Functioning Autism running in St Albans, co-ordinated by Alison and funded by Adult Care Services (HCC). Alison has also put an outreach programme in place for a young man just on the point of leaving school. Mel explained that as well as knowing what services are required they need to be matched to bids for funding. Mel requested that members let Alison know the kind of services they are looking for, or any opportunities that they think Alison could make a bid for.

Mel also said that she has met with the AAA Consortium (of which harc is a member) and is working with them currently.

Mel took a number of questions/points.

- Out & About - support those with SEN in mainstream activities (<http://www.oaa.co.uk/>)
- Jill Dowling - ESCO at Oaktree undertook a survey of parents on the type of groups/clubs they would like and is now trying to find funding for this
- DCSF published Primary & Secondary programme published in March aimed at increasing awareness
- Resource Centre should hold a database to help put people in same areas together
- CHIPS - befriending and playscheme - <http://www.chipseastherts.org.uk/>

Ann highlighted areas that harc have recently been involved in:

- A meeting with Transition Development Manager (see next article)

- Campaigning on the Autism Bill - 8 of the 11 Hertfordshire MPs voted in the House of Commons on 27th February
- A meeting with the joint commissioners to feedback on the Imagine Thinking Differently project. Ann explained the outcome of the project
- A meeting with the Minister of State for Care Services as part of the consultation on the Adult Autism Strategy
- Trampoline sessions being set up at the University of Hertfordshire (contact is Lynn Bhanja)
- Resource Pack for lecturers at University of Hertfordshire to support students with Asperger syndrome is being published during the next month or so
- Train Walk on 21st June 2009

Transition Meeting

At the end of March, Laurence and Ann Griffin attended a meeting with Catherine Evanson, HCC Children Schools and Families' Transition Development Officer and representatives from LINK, ACS, Connexions and the NAS, on the subject of transition services. It was highlighted that there is a lack of transition planning for young people with Aspergers and high-functioning autism, particularly those without a Statement. These young people are not picked up as there is no formal transition plan, so their future service needs are not identified. Even for those with a Statement, the transition plan needs to be revisited at 16 years because these young people are often behind their peers. Some young people who have not had services when young, or those with a late diagnosis, may miss out on transition planning, and will be late receiving adult services. Parents/carers are not given adequate information about transition and planning for future needs.

Catherine will look into creating a transition pathway for those young people without a Statement and will raise the matter of good and

timely information for parents and carers. We will keep you informed of progress in future meetings.

Waving Not Drowning

"Waving not drowning" is the newsletter for parents of disabled children who work or want to work produced by the organization 'Working Families'. Their winter 2009 newsletter is well worth a look. It gives information about a new free of charge book the organization has produced which is a guide for parents of disabled children returning to work. It also includes a number of very helpful articles including one to assist drawing up an advertisement for a personal assistant for your child. Check it out on their website www.workingfamilies.org.uk.

Laurence Griffin

Can milk help autism?

From Libby Buckler:

Not proven - just an interesting idea...
Some recent research suggests that one type of cow's milk can help with the effects of autism. See the story at <http://news.five.tv/news.php?news=936>

This suggests that switching to a certain type of milk produced by Guernsey cows, containing a form of protein called betacasein A2, may be beneficial. Most milk in Britain comes from cows producing betacasein A1 protein.

The number of Guernsey herds like this one on the UK mainland is tiny, making the A2 milk they produce very hard to get hold of.

Please note that "Channel Island" milk, while being an excellent product, is not entirely Guernsey milk and in some cases may not contain any Guernsey milk at all. Freezing pasteurised milk is possible if handled carefully.

Homogenised milk can be frozen without difficulty.

After much searching, unfortunately there is no pure Guernsey milk sold in any of the supermarkets at present, but this is being worked on. In the meanwhile, I have done some research and have found a company that deliver in Herts (Abel and Cole) as the demand has been so high, for only 99p delivery charge, they have recently started delivering in this area as from April 28th with much persuasion, so please do check them out. More details on deliveries at <http://www.abelandcole.co.uk/>

Press Release

Thursday 7th May 2009, London, UK

Gordon Brown to meet Autism Campaigner, Polly Tommey

Following an intensive media campaign during Autism Awareness Month in April, Polly Tommey, a mother from London with a son with autism has achieved her objective of arranging a face-to-face meeting with Gordon Brown. The meeting, to be held in Downing Street on Monday 15th June 2009, was confirmed by the Prime Minister's office yesterday after a series of prior meetings were attended by Polly with senior Downing Street advisers and Phil Hope, Minister for Care Services.

Her campaign through The Autism Trust charity was undertaken on behalf of the thousands of mothers of children with autism in the UK. To gain Mr Brown's attention, Polly arranged to have her name and telephone number plastered across poster sites as part of an intriguing series of messages throughout the country and appeared on television and radio programmes in response to the huge public interest generated.

Many parents of children with autism engaged by lobbying Downing Street directly with emails and telephone calls and the Prime Minister responded by writing to Polly specifically recognising her concerns and acknowledging that

"... people [with autism] often do not get the support they need and deserve" and stating that more needs to be done to provide this support.

Polly, accompanied by Oliver Jones, the Chairman of The Autism Trust, attended the initial meetings with Greg Beales, Mr Brown's special adviser on health, followed by a meeting with the Care Services Minister, Phil Hope and his team of autism experts and advisers.

It was clear from each of these meetings that Polly's message on the extent of the crisis being faced by so many families was being heard and that the need for better, longer term solutions for the children with autism today as they grow up requires a new approach due to the high numbers now affected.

Polly commented, "Mr Brown responded quickly and constructively to our initial campaign and his team have impressed us with the growing recognition of the importance of autism and the devastating impact the condition can have on people with autism and their families."

"However more needs to be done and a real understanding of the scale of the challenge of autism remains to be grasped as does the vital importance of working with both existing and new organisations and charities in the sector. This is what I will be explaining in detail to Mr Brown when we meet next month."

Gary McKinnon

Gary McKinnon is the young man accused of hacking into US Defence Systems (he was looking for information on UFO's). He was diagnosed last summer, after Gary's defence team was contacted by an 'Aspie' who had seen him on television and thought he looked like he was one too.

Gary will struggle to survive in the American judicial system which is even more backward than ours on matters autism. He could face a life sentence in USA. The latest legal battle, and perhaps last chance in Gary's case is

approaching, and to help us stop his extradition we will present a petition to 10 Downing Street. Please could you add your name to the petition at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/mckinnon09/> and help to show the Prime Minister the huge level of support that Gary has. Signing the petition will only take a minute - please add your name today, and ask your friends to do the same. The deadline to sign up is 15th June.

Thanks very much for your ongoing support for Gary. Together we can ensure that Asperger syndrome is taken seriously as a real and lifelong disability.

NAS Update

Autism Bill

The Government has, for the first time, declared its support for what could be England's first Autism Bill. The National Autistic Society (NAS) celebrated the move as a vital development for people with autism as Care Services Minister Phil Hope committed to enshrining in law a raft of new measures, via the Autism Bill, which could drive a dramatic improvement in local authority and NHS services for people with the condition.

On **13th May**, MPs voted yes to the Government's proposed blueprint and time scales to improve support and in a major development the Care Services Minister gave the forthcoming national adult autism strategy extra force by adding it to the Autism Bill. The Bill now awaits its third reading, scheduled for **19th June**, and with the support of the Government is likely to pass to the House of Lords.

Phil Hope MP, Minister for Care Services, had intended to reiterate the Government's recent commitments during the Second Reading of Cheryl Gillan's Autism Bill. However, the Minister was not able to complete his speech as a vote on the Bill was called. You can read the full speech at <http://www.autism.org.uk/nas/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=2152&a=19135>

Racecourse Bike Ride

Date: 12 July 2009

Entry fee: £30

Minimum sponsorship: £150

This summer the NAS are pioneering a brand new cycling event and you're invited! The Racecourse Bike Ride is a fun and challenging one-day sponsored cycle ride and it's the perfect way to get fit and raise some much-needed funds for the NAS. Exclusive to the NAS, the Racecourse Bike Ride starts and finishes at Epsom Downs Racecourse. There are two fantastic routes to choose from. The first is a 50-mile loop across the beautiful North Downs, through quiet country roads and Surrey villages down to Cranleigh, before climbing the infamous White Downs on the way back to Epsom Downs Racecourse.

The second route is a 100-mile figure of eight which carries on from the 50-mile route, across the South Downs into West Sussex, taking in incredible views, and on to Goodwood Racecourse. You'll then return to Cranleigh via Petworth, on to White Downs and finish at Epsom Downs Racecourse.

All routes will be fully signposted, with refreshment stops, and there will be roving mechanics and medics in a van (just in case). We'll also be with you every step of the way from the moment you register to the ride itself, helping you to get fit and raise your sponsorship money. So go on, saddle up for autism and join our team!

For more information about this fantastic cycling challenge, contact:

Tel: 08450 509 001

Email: events@nas.org.uk (make sure you let us know which event you're interested in)

Or complete the form at <http://www.autism.org.uk/events/form>

Employment Training Courses

Prospects, the NAS's employment service, is running three employment training courses in May, August and November about communication skills, personal management skills, and dealing with anxiety at work. These are open to adults with autism or Asperger

syndrome who are already in employment. All the courses last for one day.

The courses take place on these dates:

- communication skills at work: 7 May, 6 August or 5 November
- dealing with anxiety in the workplace: 14 May, 13 August or 12 November
- personal management skills for the workplace: 21 May, 20 August or 19 November.

Each course costs £135 plus VAT, including lunch and a certificate, and takes place in Ladbroke Grove, London. Full details at:

<http://www.autism.org.uk/employmenttraining>

Information for Professionals

The National Strategies Inclusion Development Programme

The National Strategies Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) on supporting children on the autism spectrum is now live. There are two versions:

Early Years Foundation Stage IDP:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies/node/168117

Primary and Secondary IDP:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies/node/165037

There is a simple URL to the IDP content on the National Strategies area of the Standards site: <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/idp>

It is intended, as it says, to

- **improve outcomes** for pupils on the autism spectrum
- **increase knowledge** about the autism spectrum among professionals working with these pupils
- **share good practice** so that professionals in mainstream schools can make adjustments to their policies, systems and curriculum that will

enable more young people on the autism spectrum to benefit from a mainstream education.

This e-learning course - part of the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) - will support teachers in meeting the needs of pupils on the autism spectrum. The course is designed for teachers and teaching assistants, trainers and initial teacher training (ITT) providers, headteachers and leadership teams, support workers, and student teachers in training. You may select a route through the learning according to role: as facilitator; for personal CPD; or for use with pupils. The content is divided into eight key areas:

1. What is the autism spectrum?
2. Social and emotional understanding
3. Communication and language
4. Flexibility of thought and behaviour
5. Sensory perception and responses
6. Know the pupil
7. Curriculum priorities and inclusive practice
8. Sources of support

Conference: Mental Health and Adults with ASC

Pavilion are running a conference called 'Mental health and adults with autistic spectrum conditions' on Wednesday 17th June 2009 in London.

The conference will explore the mental health needs of adults with ASC, views of people using services, national strategy for adults with ASC, presentation of mental health problems in people with ASC, psychological interventions and training staff to support adults with ASC.

You will leave with fresh ideas about how to incorporate effective services and how to tackle mental health issues for people with autism.

To book please contact Pavilion on 0844 880 5061, email info@pavpub.com or see <http://www.pavpub.com/pavpub/conferences/showfull.asp?Conference=841>

Carers in Herts Parent Carer Action Group

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 7th July from 10.30 - 2 p.m.** at **CAMPUS WEST, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, AL8 6BX.**

This is the same format as the last meeting in April: 10.30 - 12.00 - Come and Give your Views on working with different professionals - Carmel Byers, Senior Lecturer in Social Work from the University of Herts, wishes to hear your views on working with professionals in a range of settings, social care, health, education etc. These views will be collated and included in a section of a book titled "Interprofessional and inter-agency practice in the human services - learning to work together". Carmel hopes that you would give your views, relating your experiences of working with professionals and contributing to the messages for good practice in the hope that this book may be used to train professionals such as social workers etc. in the future.

This will be followed by lunch at 12.00 and then experience a "taster" of the Learning to Change" personal development course run by Carers in Herts. If you are thinking of making a change - maybe returning to study or getting back into work or just simply feeling better about yourself, this taster will give you an insight into how to manage and achieve it.

(reproduced from **Carewaves**, Summer 2009)

Hertfordshire Learning Disability Carers Forum

If you would like to have some influence on improvements to services, please come along.

The next meeting will be on:

Wednesday, 17 June 2009

10am to 12.30pm, followed by lunch

Birchwood Leisure Centre, Hatfield, AL10 8TJ

harc Support Group Meeting

Our next Support Group Meeting is at Southfield School on 3rd June 7.30 - 9.30 pm

and is aimed at carers of people with autism. See the attached flyer.

Carers and Learning

The Self Matters programme is designed specifically for carers. It will enable you to re-establish how best to care for yourself so you can continue to support those you care for. Investing time now will allow you to develop strategies to take more control, feel less stressed and have the energy to face daily challenges. An inspirational and enjoyable experience that can change your future.

**Monday 14 - Friday 18 September 2009
(five day course, 9.30am-4.15pm)**

All Saints Pastoral Centre, London Colney

Assertiveness Workshop

This one day course is about gaining self awareness, expressing all feelings in a positive way (including anger, stress, and anxiety) and exploring ways of developing self confidence.

**August 2009, date TBC, 10am-3pm, Welwyn,
Buffet Lunch included**

If you'd like to book a place or need more information on either of the above including transport, please contact Suzy Smith, Carers & Learning Officer, Tel 01462-456660 or email: east.team@carersinherts.org

(reproduced from **Carewaves**, Summer 2009)

And Finally...

We hope that you find these newsletters useful and are always looking at ways to improve. We would be very interested to hear your views about our content, and in particular would like to hear from you if you have a story to tell. For example, has your child recently made a transition which went well, e.g. from early years to primary, mainstream to special, have you been on a family holiday which went well or has your child achieved something special? You may have heard of an event or course which would help our members, or perhaps want to respond to a published article.

Please let us have your thoughts and your stories, by emailing to:

newsletter@harc-online.org.uk