

AUTISM GM

NEWSLETTER

Greater Manchester Consortium to develop local services for people with autism
www.autismgm.org.uk

AUTUMN/WINTER 2006 EDITION



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Hello and welcome to the Autumn/Winter edition of the Autism GM newsletter,

Firstly, apologies for the lateness of this edition. Wendy Naylor, our Information Officer, left in May for a new job and our new recruit – John Davies - has only just started. This edition is therefore a bit of a hotch-potch of news and information that we hope is useful.

We also have our first contribution from Ben Stone, a young man with Asperger Syndrome, who has agreed to write for us on a freelance basis.

Remember that we are always on the look out for volunteers to review new books or videos, and that we are keen to hear about examples of good practice as recommended by parents or users of services.

Wishing you all a happy and safe festive season.

Debbie Waters and Mari Saeki
Project Officers

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The National Autistic Society (NAS) has welcomed the Government's response to the Education and Skills Select Committee's report on special educational needs (SEN), published 11 October. We are delighted that the Government has taken on board some of the demands of our *make school make sense* campaign, but more still needs to be done to fully meet children's needs.

The Government has responded to the *make school make sense* campaign call for all special education needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) to be qualified teachers who receive training in autism. The NAS is pleased that the Government will introduce an accreditation system for all SENCOs to give them the skills and confidence they need to support pupils with autism, and we hope to work with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to help deliver this commitment.

The Government again reiterated its pledge to end the confusion surrounding its policy on inclusion by committing itself to providing a range of educational provision for children with SEN. However, the NAS is concerned that the challenge of implementing this policy on the ground will not be met by local authorities. The NAS strongly recommends that measures are put in place under the Educations and Inspections Bill to ensure that every local authority understands and meets this requirement.

In response to the *make school make sense campaign*, the Government also announced that it will fund and distribute autism resource packs for all teaching staff. This is crucial, as the NAS believes that the current lack of teacher training in autism contributes directly to the high levels of exclusion of children with autism. Recent research has shown that as many as 1 in 100 children has autism, the majority of whom will be in mainstream schools, so it is vital that all teaching staff are aware of their needs.

**For more information about the campaign visit the NAS website
www.autism.org.uk/msms**

Services for disabled children aren't good

A cross-party group of MPs has found serious inequalities in services for disabled children. The group has highlighted an urgent need to increase funding levels to keep pace with the changing population of disabled children in the UK, and in October they published a report calling the Government to act and provide additional resources.

9 in 10 submissions to the panel of MPs described current funding levels as poor. Evidence submitted to the MPs at a series of parliamentary hearings in July showed that many families with disabled children are battling to access even basic levels of support. Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green,

Children's Commissioner for England, described the situation of families with disabled children as a "national scandal".

The hearings process was supported by a consortium of charities working with disabled children and their families - including Mencap, Contact a Family, the Council for Disabled Children, and the Special Education Consortium - and by Children Now magazine.

The Rt Hon Tom Clarke MP, speaking as chair of the cross-party panel, said: "The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review must take full account of the high levels of unmet need we have uncovered. Further funding must be forthcoming to ensure that all disabled children get the support they need and deserve."

This article was first published by MENCAP in October 2006.



To mark Anti-Bullying Week 2006, The National Autistic Society has published a new report **"B is for bullied: experiences of children with autism and their families."** It details the experiences of bullying, as told by children with autism and their families.

We are calling on the Government and local authorities to reduce bullying by implementing the demands of our [make school make sense](http://www.autism.org.uk/campaign) education campaign and by ensuring that bullying on the grounds of disability is dealt with as seriously as bullying on any other grounds. This week we are giving evidence to the Education and Skills Select Committee's inquiry into bullying to bring to their attention the particular challenges faced by children with autism who are bullied at school. With the right support all children with autism can succeed at school.

Take action now to stop bullying

[Read the bullying report](#)

[Find out more about anti-bullying week, which this year has the theme of 'Bystanders'](#)

[Support the make school make sense campaign](#)

[Access information about bullying and autism for yourself or your local school](#)

If you are concerned about bullying or any other autism-related issue, contact our Autism Helpline on 0845 070 4004. For more information visit:
www.autism.org.uk/helpline

NAS Information Sheets

The following Information Sheets have been recently produced or updated.

- ◆ Christmas and Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- ◆ Lovaas
- ◆ Opportunities for a Career with the NAS
- ◆ The Use of Picture Symbols



www.nas.org.uk



Copies of these Information Sheets can be downloaded from The NAS website www.nas.org.uk

Or
you can ring
The Family Services Development
Project
Tel: 0161 998 4667

Conference Roundup

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health



**National Day Conference
9th November 2006**

Comprehensive CAMHS Provision: Services for Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities

The Public Service Agreement Targets have highlighted CAMHS for young people with learning disabilities as a key performance indicator. This means that commissioners of CAMHS Services will now be specifically measured in relation to their services for young people with learning disabilities.

These state that services should be provided by staff that have the necessary training and competencies to deal with children who have learning disabilities. Children and young people with learning disabilities should receive equal access to CAMHS, including:

- ◆ Mental health promotion and early intervention (including attention to parent support and information)
- ◆ Training and support to front line professionals in identifying potential mental health issues.
- ◆ Adequate resources in Tiers 2 and learning disability specialist CAMHS staff with the necessary competencies to address mental health difficulties in children and young people with learning disabilities or pervasive development disorders

- ◆ Access to Tier 4 services providing in-patient, day-patient and outreach units for children and adolescents with learning disabilities and severe and complex neuro-psychiatric symptomatology.

This target links in with Standard 8 from the National Service Framework for Children relating to disabled children and young people, and those with complex health needs, which pledges that:

“Children and young people who are disabled or who have complex health needs receive coordinated, high quality child and family-centred services which are based on assessed needs, which promote social inclusion and, where possible, which enable them and their families to live ordinary lives”

With these visions in mind, ACAMH decided to make their 50th anniversary national conference about the mental health needs of children and young people with learning disabilities.

What follows is a brief synopsis of the main speaker’s presentations:

Emily Simonoff from King’s College, London, started the day off with some statistics about mental health needs and children and adolescents with mental health difficulties. Unsurprisingly, those with autistic spectrum disorders were shown to be the group of young people with learning difficulties most likely by far to require CAMH services.

When the Special Needs and Autism Project looked at risk factor for mental disorders they found that those with a clear ‘autism’ diagnosis were only at slightly higher risk than an average SEN control group, but those with a more vague ‘pervasive developmental disorder’ diagnosis scored a huge 90% risk factor for mental disorder.

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Conference Roundup

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Partly this can be accounted for by the anxiety and isolation that the triad of impairments can so easily give rise to, but a study by Green et al (2005) about the mental health of young people in Britain also found that children with ASD were significantly more likely to have gone through two or more pre-determined 'stressful' life events. According to this study, children with ASD's parents were slightly more likely to have suffered a relationship breakdown and to have experienced major financial problems than the rest of the population. Parents of children with autism were found to be nearly twice as likely to have experienced mental health problems themselves. Most shockingly, children with ASD were seven times more likely to have changed school three or more times when compared with their neuro-typical peers.

Simonoff's conclusion was that all CAMHS clinicians working with learning disabilities needed to gain expertise with this group, and that systematic and comprehensive assessment are needed. She also argued how important it was for clinicians to identify and treat very common co-morbid conditions such as ADHD and obsessive compulsive disorder as these often respond well to evidence-based treatments.

Eric Emerson continued the statistical analysis, focusing specifically on health equity. In his presentation he made a powerful argument for greater investment in services that are accessible and useful to the poorest and most socially excluded groups, as these are currently over-represented and under-helped in the learning disability population. He pointed to research that has shown for instance that parent training for those with ADHD is most effective for the affluent, and has the poorest outcomes for the poorest families. Such initiatives therefore may increase health gain for some, but also increase health inequity when looking at the population as a whole. In line with the BMA and the Department of Health, Emerson argued that improving child and adolescent mental health cannot be detached from addressing and reducing child poverty and well-being more generally.

Jeremy Turk then spoke about the patchy and variable CAMHS support available in the London borough he works in. He highlighted the need for properly trained psychiatrists in each area (as stated in the Royal College of Psychiatry guidelines) and the need for more inpatient beds as there is currently a huge national shortage. Particularly pertinent to the issue of ASD was his assertion that there is a significant difference between a condition being incurable as opposed to untreatable.

Philippa Russell gave a presentation about 'What families want from CAMHS' from a voluntary sector perspective. Echoing Eric Emerson's earlier points, Dr Russell flagged up the level of disabled children living in poverty (up to 55%) and the fact that only 4% of these receive support from social services. She argued that families need a menu of support that includes childcare, short breaks, accessible play and leisure facilities and transport. In general highest levels of satisfaction tend to go to specialist services and she felt that this would also be the case for CAMH services. Specialist CAMHS could have an important advocacy role in enabling children to have access to a wider range of services.

In conclusion Philippa Russell cited research by the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York that looked at 'what works for families with disabled children' and these were:

- ◆ Availability of accessible and accurate information
- ◆ A 'key worker' role
- ◆ Recognition of the emotional and social context of assessment and diagnosis
- ◆ Commitment to maximum supported inclusion
- ◆ Practical advice on behaviour management, medication etc
- ◆ Recognition that some children have very complex needs
- ◆ A 'whole family approach'

Chris Oliver spoke about the 30- 40% of

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Conference Roundup

(Continued from page 5)

young people with severe learning difficulties who also present with 'significant behaviour disorders', focusing particularly on self-injury. Professor Oliver has a special interest in Cornelia de Lange syndrome and has found that often self-injury can later be explained by the presence of gastric problems – especially reflux. He recommended conducting very detailed behaviour monitoring to see if the pattern of self-injury followed any relation to e.g. attention or other environmental factors and, if not, to put concerted effort into establishing whether there may be physiological explanations underlying the behaviour.

Paul Gringras continued the medical emphasis with an overview of psychopharmacological interventions now on offer. He explained that there is a tendency to become over focused on medication while ignoring other behaviour reinforcers and, like

Professor Oliver, advocated multimodal medical and behavioural assessment and treatment. He pointed out that any psychoactive medication can worsen as well as improve symptoms and that long term data on effectiveness is extremely poor.

Dr Gringras also demonstrated the DENEM™ system which is an online multimedia suite of questionnaires and test games for children and their carers. It aims to provide accurate measures of change across a wide range of symptoms, side-effects, psychological functions and quality of life. At the moment this is still being trialled but looks potentially very interesting.

Debbie Waters
Project Officer



Anxiety and Autism – an Autism friendly cognitive approach by Ben Stone

As a life long member of 'Club Autism', anxiety has played a major part of my life: so, with the help of the National Autistic Society in Manchester I decided to head to the annual Anxiety Disorders Conference which was being held in Manchester this year.

There were a range of lectures and workshops that delegates could choose from and the day began with an opening lecture from Victoria Wright who said that she had come to realize "*It's not important what others think of me*". If only the rest of us could accept her sentiment, many of our anxieties would be exorcized.

The most memorable workshop I attended was one that looked at anxiety management for people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders,

which was principally presented by Martin Anson, a clinical psychologist at the Maudsley Centre for Behavioural Disorders, based in South London. Topics covered included social anxieties for people with ASDs, reassurance seeking, rigidity of thinking, and problems with decision making.

A suggested solution was a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy approach, including intermediate arousal therapy, the Theory 'A' / Theory 'B' model, group intervention and the emotional thermometer. Without going into too much detail, this 'Attwood' style psycho-educational modified version of CBT is said to achieve better results than conventional CBT for people with ASDs.

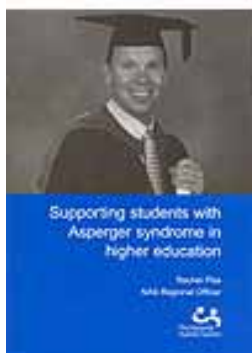
I believe that if this form of CBT, which is available at The Maudsley Centre in South London, was made more widely available, many of us with an ASD could learn to deal with some of our anxieties and live better lives.

The Anxiety Disorders Conference was principally organized by The National Phobics Society.

Their website address is:
www.phobics-society.org.uk
Helpline Tel No: is 0870 122 2325
(Monday – Friday, 9:15am – 9:00pm)



SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY



Supporting students with Asperger syndrome in higher education NAS Code 603

September 2006 marked the beginning of a new initiative from Prospects Manchester, working in conjunction with the Disability Support Office of Manchester University.

Every Friday throughout the academic year, a member of Prospects staff is based in the office working with students on the Autistic spectrum, in both individual support sessions and informal group sessions. Additionally, Autism/Asperger awareness training is being given to University staff – not just the academics! - who may come into contact with students on the spectrum.

Ideas for the future include liaising closely with the University's career services and also the New Intake Registration Staff, in order to ease and support students in these transitional stages.

At present this initiative is funded until July 2007 and only covers Manchester University. But watch this space.....

For further information visit

www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/disability

*Article written by Norman Darwen
Prospects Employment Consultant
Tel: 0161 998 0577*

**Copies of the above NAS
Publication can be obtained from:**

**Central Books Ltd
Tel: 0845 458 9911
Email: nas@centralbooks.com**

**Or
Order online at
www.autism.org.uk/pubs**



ASPERGER SYNDROME FOUNDATION WEBSITE

www:aspergerfoundation.org.uk

The Asperger's Syndrome Foundation is a small Registered Charity based in London. The Asperger's Syndrome Foundation is committed to promoting awareness and understanding of Asperger's Syndrome. The Foundation aims to promote high quality support and services, and to enable people with Asperger's syndrome to develop into members of the community who are respected for their contribution and recognised for their unique differences.

This website has lots of interesting information on Asperger's syndrome, including the ASD Good Practice Guide which is published by St Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust and is exclusively available to download from the above website. For more information on the Asperger Syndrome Foundation email info@aspergerfoundation.org.uk

POLICY UPDATE

NEW GOVERNMENT REPORT ABOUT ADULTS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS

“The current position whereby some people with an ASD ‘fall through’ local services—in particular between mental health and learning disability services, is unacceptable and contrary to the intention of government policy”

We're pleased to let you know that the Department of Health has just issued "Better services for people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder: a note clarifying current government policy and describing good practice". This is the first time that such a document has been produced by the Government specifically for adults with an ASD and it is intended to clear up much of the confusion that surrounds the difficulties adults with an ASD face in receiving services.

This is not guidance, but clarifies how existing policy relates to people with an ASD (the position on access to learning disability services as set out in Valuing People is unchanged). The report states that:

'Existing Government Policy makes the following clear in relation to services and support for people with an ASD:

The current position whereby some people with an ASD 'fall through' local services – in particular between mental health and learning disability services, is unacceptable and

contrary to the intention of government policy

Proper individual assessments, based on eligibility criteria as set down in 'Fair Access to Care' are the starting point for people getting the services they need. This should be supported by the use of person centred approaches.

The services required to meet identified needs are best provided by local services that have the right skills and trained staff to provide what an individual requires. This 'most competent' approach is better than deciding that either mental health, learning disability or physical disability services should provide all ASD related services as a matter of principle.

Services and supports should focus on supporting each person's inclusion in society on their own terms, rather than being based on assumptions relating to a diagnostic label

New approaches to funding and support such as direct payments and individual budgets should be made available to people with ASD

in the same way as everyone else

Service provision should be determined and driven by a clear contractual framework and service specification with regard to ASD from PCTs and Local Authorities

This whole approach should be underpinned by effective planning partnerships, including not only the relevant service sectors but also local representatives of people with an ASD and their families.'

The full document is available from the Department of Health website. Use the search facility and key in the title of the report "Better services for people with ASD".



www.dh.gov.uk

NEW GUIDANCE FOR DIRECTORS OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

The new guidance for the Directors of Adult Social Services should help to address the difficulty of people with an ASD falling between the gap of mental health and learning disability, as it requires the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) to make it clear which team or manager should be assessing and meeting the eligible needs of a range of client groups- and ASD is specifically mentioned as one of the client groups.

Here's the detail of what the guidance says. There are two pieces of guidance, one statutory and one best practice, but they link in....

In the statutory guidance it says:

(under Accountability) Para 15: "Local authorities shall take steps to ensure that the DASS delivers the local authority's responsibilities for assessing, planning and commissioning adult social care and wellbeing services to meet the needs of all adults with social care needs in the authority's area (including the specific needs of carers, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people living in rural communities). This responsibility shall include ensuring that services comply with statutory requirements, including requirements in respect of carers and equality and anti-discrimination legislation. The local authority shall ensure that the DASS is

responsible for the efficiency, effectiveness and value for money of the services provided or commissioned by the local authority. The local authority's responsibilities, to be delivered by the DASS extend to residents receiving services out of the council area".

Para 16: "Local authorities shall ensure that the DASS draws up clear lines of responsibility, within his or her staff team for managing the needs of all adult client groups".

"Further details of responsibilities that local authorities are recommended to include within the DASS's remit in respect of drawing up clear lines of accountability are set out in more detail at paragraphs 15 to 19 of the accompanying Best Practice Guidance on the Role of the Director of Adult Social Services." and:

(under Professional Leadership) : Para 19 "Local authorities shall make the DASS responsible for undertaking a strategic needs assessment for adults and families with actual or potential social care needs across the local authority area. The process will involve responsibility and authority for assessing the needs of all client groups, the range of services required and the balance between different services to be provided by the local authority, now and in the future. Among other things,

the DASS shall be enabled by the Local Authority to use the results of this exercise to improve the council's performance in strategic commissioning and market development.

In the Best practice guidance it says:

"The DASS should take an active role in ensuring that there are robust arrangements for supervising contracts, where services have been outsourced, and in monitoring those services in respect of quality standards and timely delivery. The DASS should ensure that all people with social care needs are assessed by the local authority, that all people who meet eligibility criteria are provided with suitable services and that there is appropriate provision of low-level and preventative services. The DASS should also ensure that targeted case-finding takes place to identify people at risk from social exclusion, who are often among the least likely to approach social services themselves".

17. The DASS should ensure that amongst those of his/her staff, who are responsible for assessing and meeting the needs of people with a range of long-term conditions and disabilities in their area, there is clarity about the remit of each individual.

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This is to ensure that individuals do not fall between services. The DASS should ensure that a named manager is responsible for assessing and (where appropriate) meeting the needs of individuals from the client groups listed at Annex A, in addition to other groups that he or she considers to be at risk of falling between services. It is also important to recognise that service users are individuals and that services should be provided on the basis of individual need, rather than on the basis of assumptions about the general needs of clients with specific conditions or disabilities.

18. In the case of low-incidence conditions and disabilities there may not always be capacity to meet these needs locally and the DASS should ensure that his or her staff work with neighbouring local authorities and relevant specialist national service providers to meet such specialist, low-incidence need.

Annex A:

The DASS should ensure that it is clear which team, or manager, within his or her staff, has responsibility for assessing and meeting the eligible needs of a range of named client groups. A list of groups of individuals who are likely to be users of social care services, and who should be included is given below (NB this list is not exhaustive and may be added to in future). In addition, clear arrangements should be in place for other client groups, particularly where

the DASS believes that there is the risk of an individual falling between services.

(list includes)People with autism spectrum disorder;

The best practice guidance also says:

(para 32): "It is the Government's intention to

promote a shift towards more pro-active services. In implementing this cultural shift, the DASS should ensure that there is an appropriate balance between low-level and preventative services and services designed to meet the needs of people at the higher needs end of the care spectrum and that this is reflected in the organisation's values".

**Debbie Waters
Project Officer**



The full document is available from the Department of Health website. Use the search facility and key in the title "Guidance for Directors of Adult Social Services".

www.dh.gov.uk

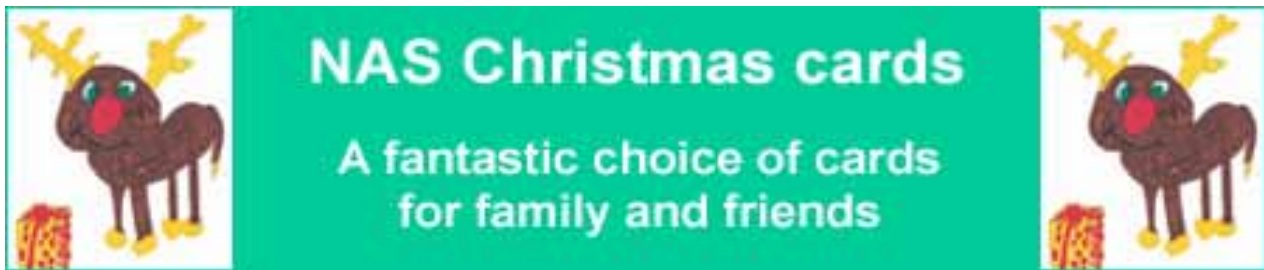
contact a family
for families with disabled children

NEW INFORMATION TO HELP FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN TO MANAGE DEBT

According to research by charity, Contact A Family, families with disabled children are more likely to be in debt than other families, because it costs up to three times more to raise a child with a disability and average incomes for this group are almost one quarter below the UK mean.

It is to help families in this situation that, thanks to funding from Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs, the charity has produced two new fact sheets, one targeted at families in England and Wales and one for families in Northern Ireland. These fact sheets, entitled "**Dealing with Debt—for families with Disabled Children**" compliment the charity's information for families in Scotland, produced last year.

For copies of "**Dealing with Debt—for Families with Disabled Children**" fact sheets
Telephone: Contact A Family's helpline 0808 808 3555
Or Email: helpline@cafamily.org.uk




The National Autistic Society has launched its colourful 2006 Christmas card collection. Please support us and help to spread seasonal goodwill by choosing from our exciting range of both traditional and contemporary designs.

Choose from our selection of seasonal greetings cards, including designs such as our competition-winning 'Rudolph's brother Ross' and Thomas the Tank Engine. To request a Christmas catalogue, please email christmas.catalogue@nas.org.uk



- ◆ Postage and packing charges for Christmas cards are a flat rate of £3.45.
- ◆ Orders can be placed by **telephone**. Please contact the Almanac Gallery on 020 7751 0090. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.
- ◆ To request a Christmas catalogue, please email christmas.catalogue@nas.org.uk.
- ◆ To order online visit www.autism.org.uk
- ◆ Please allow 14 days for delivery.
- ◆ To ensure delivery in time for Christmas, please order no later than **Friday 9 December**.



POSITIVE ASPECTS

Positive Aspects is a free new bi-monthly email bulletin, which is for anybody who has an interest in any disability, mental health issue and/or illness who live anywhere in England*. It is packed full of useful items, law, events, holidays, benefits, requests what's on, true stories, other interesting articles, useful websites and computer tips, putting people in touch and much more. It also comes with a separate 'diary dates' attachment and to keep you up to date with what's happening in your area, regular **Positive Aspects 'Newsflash'** articles are sent out regularly.

Positive Aspects website will be going live in 2007!

To subscribe, please send an email to trudy.1@ntlworld.com with subscribe and the county you live in, in the message/text of the email.



On **Friday December 8th** Carers UK is holding their annual **Carers Rights Day** to raise awareness of the needs of carers, increase take up of benefits and to make sure carers know their rights. This particular Carers Day will focus on the problems faced by older carers when claiming benefits and the complexity of the system.

Older carers facts

- ◆ 1 in 8 people aged over 60 is a carer.
- ◆ Of these 47% of carers are male and 53% are female
- ◆ One in three of these care for 50 hours a week or more
- ◆ One in five carers aged 60 or over report that their health is 'not good'

Events to mark the day will be taking place across the country. Hundreds of local organisations are due to take part in support of carers, including hospitals, GP surgeries, local authorities, carers' organisations, local charities for the elderly and community partnerships.

Carers UK are working with the Department of Work and Pensions to help increase carers' take-up of benefits. For further information on Carers Rights Day visit



<http://www.carersuk.org/Newsandcampaigns/CarersRightsDay>



Work and care report finds barriers persist for parents

The findings of a major new research report into the difficulties of combining paid work and care for disabled children is being unveiled at the A New Deal for Parent Carers? conference on Friday November 24.

The report, **Caring for Sick or Disabled Children: Parents' experiences of combining work and care**, is the culmination of a four year study commissioned by Carers UK and Contact a Family, and looks in detail at parents' experiences, attitudes and aspirations around work. Unsurprisingly, many parents of disabled children want to work, partly for their own reasons – for their own identity as adults, and for social and intellectual opportunities – but also to help with the family finances, particularly as raising a disabled child costs up to three times more than bringing up other children.

But the report also found that parents with disabled

children face many barriers to work including inadequate support services, a scenario that is familiar to supporters of the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign; and a 'benefits trap' meaning that work is often not financially viable.

Contact a Family Chief Executive **Francine Bates**, who will address the conference, said; "For those of us who work with families with disabled children on a daily basis, the findings of this report are depressingly familiar. Many parents desperately want to work, to support themselves and their families – and to do their bit for society; but services just aren't organised to help them. I hope policymakers will take the report's recommendations on board, so that parent carers get a better deal in future."

Chief amongst the recommendations are better access for disabled children to after school and holiday care; a review of benefits for parent carers and the need for local economic development and social inclusion policies to take account of the needs of parent carers.

A hard copy of the report is available to download from **www.carersuk.org**

FREE SMOKE ALARM SERVICE FROM THE GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service carries out **FREE** Home Fire Risk Assessment to households by referral. They do a room-by-room safety check of the property giving safety advice and fit free 10-year battery smoke alarms, where necessary. When this has been done the occupiers will be given escape advice relevant to their property and circumstances.

You can complete your referral form online at www.manchesterfire.gov.uk

OR

Tel: 0800 555 815

OR

Contact your local Fire Service

Employment Publications by MENCAP

A range of guides are now available from MENCAP dealing with employment for people with learning difficulties.

To view and download these guides online please visit their website www.mencap.org.uk Alternatively you can obtain printed copies by ringing the MENCAP Learning Disability Helpline



Phone: 0808 808 1111

Email: help@mencap.org.uk

Fax: 020 7608 3254

Minicom: 0808 808 8181

ASD and life memory research



Researchers at Goldsmiths College, London, are looking for adults (aged 18 years or over) with a formal diagnosis of high functioning autism (HFA) or Asperger syndrome (AS) to take part in a research project assessing sensory processing and autobiographical memory (memory of events from your life). Research into

autobiographical memory in HFA/AS is important as a greater understanding of autobiographical memory processing in this group may provide an insight into the social difficulties experienced by those with HFA/AS. It may also provide an insight into the impact of unusual sensory responses (e.g. heightened sensitivity to sensory stimuli), which is widely reported in this group.

For more information about this project please e-mail:
Laura Crane
(L.Crane@gold.ac.uk)

Or write to:
Laura Crane
Department of Psychology
Goldsmiths College
(University of London)
New Cross
London
SE14 6NW.

Autism Data



www.autism.org.uk/autismdata

Autism Data is the ideal research tool for anyone researching autism and Asperger syndrome. It is, as far as we are aware, the only database of published material on autism open for all to access on the web. It lists over 17,000 published research papers, books, articles, videos and other materials. The contents include bibliographic records of all the items in The National Autistic Society Information Centre Library, together with the details of research articles on autism published in journals which are not part of our holdings. Every entry has an abstract and has been assigned keywords to help with searching.

Searching Autism Data

Go to www.autism.org.uk/autismdata where you will be given advice on how to find your particular piece of information.

www.autism.org.uk/researchinprogress is a database of current research projects all over the world.

If you have any difficulty using Autism Data online, you can request a literature search from the NAS Information Centre.

NAS Information Centre

Opening hours: Monday - Friday,
10.00am - 4.00pm
Tel: +44 (0)845 070 4004
Fax: +44 (0)20 7833 9666
Email: info@nas.org.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN THE REGION

NAS Conference

**Issues & Opportunities for people with
Asperger Syndrome**

**Tuesday 5th December 2006
The Vermont Hotel
Newcastle**

The one day conference will aim to explore all the issues and opportunities that children and adults with AS experience and will be offering suggestions as to how best to ensure outcomes for these people are positive. Examples of good practice and strategies for success will be aired and discussed. The conference speakers will provide an insight into their own experiences either as an individual living with AS or as a professional working in education or adult setting.

Delegate Cost

Professor £99 plus VAT (£116.33)
Parents/Carers/Individuals with an ASD £60
plus VAT (£70.50)

NAS Members who are Parents/Carers/
Individuals with an AD qualify for a reduced
fee of £47 plus VAT (£55.23) per delegate.

Tel: 0115 911 3362
Email: conference@nas.org.uk

ACTION FOR ASD

Social Stories Workshop
**Action for ASD have arranged a workshop
which has been produced by Carol Gray's
Social Stories Team and is presented by
Eileen Arnold**

**Wednesday 31st January 2007
Northbridge House
Elm St Business Park
Burnley**

Eileen Arnold is a former Specialist Speech & Language Therapist in ASD. She has extensive practise of using Social Stories™ in a wide range of settings and has worked closely with Carol Gray. She is co-author with Marie Howley of Revealing The Hidden Social Code published by Jessica Kingsley. She

currently lectures on autism related topics and is consultant to Northamptonshire Society for Autism.

Delegate Cost:

Parent Members £40
Non Parent Member £50
Professional Member £90
Professional Non Member £100

Contact: Action for ASD
Tel: 01282 714218
Email: info@actionasd.org.uk

THE TOGETHER TRUST INSCAPE CENTRE

D.A.R.T.S.:
**An approach to managing behaviour in
children with ASD**

**Wednesday 24th January 2007
9.15 am—4.00pm**

This approach aims to enable professionals and parents to understand and address behaviour problems in children and young people with any type of autistic spectrum disorder including Asperger's syndrome. DARTS provides individual solutions which are appropriate to the specific needs of the child, their family and setting. Throughout the day case studies will be used to illustrate the approach.

This course is suitable for any professionals or parents who live or work with children and young people with ASD.

Delegate Cost

(includes refreshments and lunch)

Professionals £70
Parents (£35) (limited number of places
available)

Contact:

**The Inscape Centre, Schools Hill,
Cheadle SK8 1JE
Tel: 0161 283 4761
Email: inca@togethertrust.org**

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS IN GREATER MANCHESTER

BOLTON

Bolton Autism Action Group

Tel: 01204 371768
Contact: Dave Scowcroft
Email: davidscow@aol.com

BURY

Bury Autism Parent Society

Tel: 761 0132
Contacts: Joanne and Tony Moran
Email: mail@baps-online.com
Website: www.baps-online.co.uk

MANCHESTER

The Winnicott Centre Parent Support Group

Tel: 248 9494
Contact: Alison Hunter

OLDHAM

OSCA

Tel: 07913672175
Contact: Cathy Williams, Jackie Calow or Maria Aspin
Email: osca@bigfoot.com
Website: www.bigfoot.com/~OSCA

ASPACE (Asperger's support for Parents/Carers)

Tel: 01706 847455
Valerie Foster, Chair
Pam Butler, Secretary
Tel: 01706 847455

ROCHDALE

RAGS

Tel: 01706 374525
Contact: Margaret

Rochdale Parents of Autism, Asperger's Liaison Society

(This group doesn't meet formerly but Hazel and Deirdre are happy to provide telephone support to other Rochdale parents).
Tel: 07904 193 725 (Hazel)
Tel: 07752293076 (Deirdre)

SALFORD

ADD Action Project

Tel: 790 1455
Contact: Carol Weston
Email: info@addfocus.co.uk

STOCKPORT

Living with Autism

Tel: 1061 283 4761

TAMESIDE

TASCA

Tel: 366 5705
Contact: Victoria Penketh

Tameside Asperger's syndrome Support Group

Tel: 303 4902
Contact: Julie Srymgeour

TRAFFORD

Families with Autism Support in Trafford (FAST)

Tel: 912 3150
Contact: Geraldine, Mandy or Nicky

WIGAN

SPECTRUM

Tel: 01942 513053
Contact: Janet Sumner, Secretary

Embrace Wigan & Leigh

Tel: 01942 513053
Contact: Caroline Tomlinson
Email: c.tomlinson@embracewiganandleigh.org.uk

GREATER MANCHESTER

Asperger's Syndrome Parent Support Group

Contact: ASGMA Information Officer
Tel: 0161 866 8583
Email: information@asgma.org.uk

This group is supported by the Autistic Society Greater Manchester Area (ASGMA) and is open to all parents living in the region.