

ABC NEWSLETTER

September/October 2003

www.abcleeds.org.uk

The Leeds & District ABC Support Group is a registered charity (no.1023066) and affiliated to the NAS. Contact us at Leeds ABC (Susan McDonagh), 25 Somerdale Walk, Bramley, Leeds LS13 4SF or tel:2579269 or [email:susan.mcdonagh@abcleeds.org.uk](mailto:susan.mcdonagh@abcleeds.org.uk) Views expressed by correspondents are their own and not necessarily those of the committee members or the editor. The ABC Support Group does not recommend any one approach to autism, just as no two people are the same, so their individual responses will differ.

CONTACT NUMBERS FOR LEEDS ABC

Vic (0113) 2822797 Susan (0113) 2579269 Ann (0113) 2601635 - daytime only Janis (01924) 298166
Susan C. (0113) 2770779 - after 8.00pm

DIARY DATES

Support group meetings continue at my address (above), I know it isn't easy for many of you to get here but at least you know where we are for you to contact us at that time and I'll make us available via the forum on the website. Dates for the next two meetings will be on Monday, **10th November** (please note the change of date from the 3rd) and **8th December** from 10.00am onwards.

Meeting with Representatives from Education Leeds at Grafton School, Craven Road, Woodhouse, Leeds LS6 2SN on Wednesday, 19th November 2003 from 6.30pm to 8.30pm.

As before the meeting is open to all those who have an interest in the education of children on the autistic spectrum in Leeds, this includes those with asperger syndrome. Those answering the questions will again be Paul Barker, SEN Development Officer for Leeds and Wendy Vart, Autism Coordinator for Leeds. This time it would be helpful if you could send your questions in beforehand so that they can be answered more fully on the night. Obviously more questions might arise from the answers given. If you could either post, phone or email your questions to me by the 12th November, I will pass them on and then ask them again on the night. I hope as many of you as possible can attend and if you can't, I will ask your questions for you.

LEEDS AUTISM NETWORK - "HOW TO WRITE SOCIAL STORIES"

Social Stories are a flexible tool which can be used to teach pupils with autism about expected behaviour in a wide variety of situations at school and in the home. Ros Huntley will lead a workshop which will give participants the confidence to write their own social stories. This will be available on **Thursday, 20th November at West Oaks School, Westwood Way, Boston Spa from 4.15-5.15pm.** Places will be limited, so book a place asap by ringing West Oaks on 01937 844772

STARS - SPECIALIST TEACHING AND RESPONSE SERVICE

If you have a child on the Autistic Spectrum (early years and primary school age) and you would like to access advice, support and help, either come to the STARS room at Grafton School (Craven Road, Woodhouse, Leeds LS6 2SN) or ring 0113 2930323 on Wednesdays - term time only - from 5th November 2003 where professionals and parents will be available.

NAS WORKSHOPS

Early Intervention - 22nd November - 1 to 3.30pm

Ramada Jarvis Leeds North hotel, Mill Green View, The Ring Road, Leeds LS14 5QF - 0113 2018718

Speaker: Wendy Vart - Autism Coordinator, Leeds

Entitlement to Education - 6th December - 1 to 3.30pm

Life Conference and Banqueting, Centre for life, Times Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4EP - 0191 2438216

Speaker: Steve Broach - The National Autistic Society

The workshops are open to anyone interested and are £5 per workshop for NAS members, £7.50 for both parent members and £20 for non NAS members. Refreshments and Information Packs with details about all the workshops will be available for you on the day. If you would like further info or would like to attend any of the workshops, please call Suzie at the Regional Development Team on **0161 9987860** or email: suzie.franklin@nas.org.uk and we will send you an application pack.

AUTISM CYMRU INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2004 - DEVELOPMENTS IN AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS: INFLUENCES FOR STRATEGY AND PRACTICE. 17TH - 19TH MAY 2004 - CITY HALL, CARDIFF.

This conference will bring together internationally renowned researchers, practitioners and individuals with ASD to share their insights and experiences in order to improve understanding and practice. Some of those giving their insight will be Tony Attwood, Rita Jordan, Digby Tantam, the Slater-Walkers, Christopher Gilberg and Joaquin Fuentes.

Costs (before 17th January 2004) are professional: £199, parent £125 and person with ASD: £110. There is a substantial rise after this date. If you are interested, log on to www.autismcymru.org or email: info@autismcymru.org or tel: 01970 625256

ASPERGER SYNDROME & HIGHER FUNCTIONING AUTISM - INSIGHTS FROM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE - Dr. TONY ATTWOOD 8th MAY 2004 9.30am-4.30pm THE CONFERENCE SUITE, COLLINGWOOD COLLEGE, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

For those of you that might want something closer to home! A one-day seminar by the world's leading authority on the diagnosis, assessment and support of individuals with Asperger Syndrome, focusing on the very latest developments and explore a range of practical interventions and strategies that can be translated to the school, home, college or work environment. These approaches are all designed to promote positive functioning and well-being while preventing social/emotional meltdown. As such it will be of immense benefit to professionals working in all disciplines aligned to ASD as well parents and individuals with ASD. Topics will include:

- Exploring the theoretical bases of Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism
- Diagnosis and assessment issues
- Adapting the school curriculum to accommodate unusual cognitive styles and learning profiles
- Negotiating the difficult terrain of puberty and sexuality
- Promoting friendships and addressing bullying
- Developing and maintaining self-esteem
- Identifying and treating mood disorders including anxiety, depression and anger
- Issues affecting success in further education and employment

The cost of the seminar is £117.50 for professionals and £70.50 for parents of a young person with ASD. This includes lunch, refreshments and a seminar pack. For further info or to book a place, visit www.heghog.org or email: heg.hog@virgin.net or tel: 01433 631036

FAMILY FUND

The Family Fund exists to help families in the UK who have a child with special needs. They can help families whose gross income is £23,000 or less and where savings do not exceed £8,000. Some of the ways they can help is to provide grants for holidays, appliances, clothing and bedding and are open to

suggestions from the family. It may be of interest to you. Visit their website, www.familyfund.org.uk or tel:01223 842914

AFTER 16 - WHAT NEXT?

A new website, www.after16.org.uk, has been launched to support teenagers and young people in the UK who have a special need and are preparing to leave school. Produced by the Family Fund and funded by the DfES, the website will also be useful for parents, carers and professional workers supporting young people over 16. The site has sections on work, housing, money, the law, transport, health etc. and gives advice on situations that young people typically face such as job interviews, finding housing or a residential home, managing money and getting benefits.

VIRTUAL REALITY FOR THOSE WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME

A 3 year research project at the University of Nottingham has resulted in the development of virtual reality technology to help young people with Asperger Syndrome. For more information from the University of Nottingham, ring 0115 951 5151 or log onto www.nottingham.ac.uk

POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ASPERGER SYNDROME

The NAS and Sheffield University have launched the PGC in Asperger Syndrome. Aimed at professionals working in the field of autistic spectrum conditions, the certificate is split into two course modules. Module one offers an introduction to Asperger Syndrome and its associated difficulties, developing social behaviour and skills and sensory and perceptual issues. Module two is a work-based independent study unit. Module one costs £350 and module two costs £375. Contact the NAS training and consultancy department, tel: 0115 9113363, email: training@nas.org

CONNEXIONS IN ENGLAND

This is a new advice and guidance service for all young people aged 13-19. Connexions has been established to support young people in schools, colleges and post-16 education, work-based learning, employment and those not in education, training or employment. If a young person has a disability or learning difficulty, they may continue to use the Connexions Service up until the age of 25. There are 47 Connexions Partnerships and your local service will be in the phone book or on the internet at: www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships

COPING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN YOUR AUTISTIC CHILD

by CAROLINE MACKWORTH-PRAED, A MUM

I found this article quite by accident on the cbeebies website! It's a 6 page article that's very easy to read and has a fair amount of practical advice. If you are unable to access it, send me a stamp addressed envelope and I'll print it off for you:

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/special_needs/articles/autistic/mothercaroline/printable.html

ACCESS TO SOCIAL CARE SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS: GUIDANCE NOTES AND TEMPLATE LETTER

This document is designed to help adults with autistic spectrum conditions and their carers living in England and Wales. The fact sheet **Community Care: A Guide for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and their Carers** is available from the Autism Helpline on 0870 6008585 or can be printed off at www.nas.org.uk/pubs/faqs/docs/cc.pdf. The two template letters are entitled: A letter to use if your Local Authority has refused to assess your needs and A letter to use if your Local Authority has refused to provide services. They're worth hanging on to. Again if you are unable to access these documents, send me a stamp addressed envelope and I'll print them off for you.

AUTISM AWARENESS WEEK - 17TH to 24TH MAY 2004

I know this seems a long time away but we're making plans for this week already. To raise awareness of Autism, our group and to raise funds we intend to have a sponsored walk for our young people and

their families around Stanningley Park on Saturday, 1st May 2004. This will be followed up by a large fundraising event, during the day, at The Rock Pub in Bramley where we will have about 14 different stalls offering cakes, crafts, bric-a-brac, tombola, books, nearly new, food and children's activities etc. We are already starting to contact firms and organisations to ask for donations as prizes for the raffle we intend to run. Put the dates in your diaries now and if you work for a firm that might donate a prize to our raffle, please ask for us and get in touch with me. Please start thinking about what you might be able to offer for that day and if it can't be yourself, then maybe you could start collecting items that would be of use to us. **Thank you.**

SUCCESSFUL LIVING 5 - DANIEL WHITE

NATURE DREW

Do you have a moment to stare at nature's beauty?
Have you stared at the leaves so green and flowers pink?
To me this is worth a day-dream, a moment to think
Do you have a moment to stare at nature's beauty?
Have you ever stood on top of a hill, looked below and seen nature still?
To me this is worth a view to see the beauty nature drew

HOW BEAUTIFUL NATURE DOES SURROUND

Flowers that open wide
Such beauty they have inside
Trees that stand so tall
They have no need to build up a wall
Grass that carpets our feet
It will not charge those who choose to seat
Lots of good to be found
How beautiful nature does surround

Thank you Daniel.

Don't forget our website, it's there for your benefit, **use it!** www.abcleeds.org.uk

**Take note, "If you think being small means you can't make a difference,
then you've never spent the night with a mosquito."**