

# THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

St. Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust  
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## WELCOME TO THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Welcome to the June 2007 Edition of *The ASC Good Practice Guide*, a free monthly resource for individuals with an autistic spectrum condition, professionals, and parents.

### Which organisation does this Guide come from?

The Guide is written under the banner of the St. Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust, a non-denominational North-London based ASC and special needs charity.

### Who writes and edits the Guide?

The Guide is written by Christine Haugh, and edited by Chris Mitchell.

*Christine Haugh's* two sons are diagnosed with autistic spectrum conditions. She works at Middlesex University as Disability Development Officer for Aimhigher London North Partnership, a DfES-funded organisation. Her duties include Project Management of the Partnership's activities for learners with special educational needs, including autistic spectrum conditions. Christine is currently completing her MEd Autism (Distance-Learning) at University of Birmingham. She is very honoured to have this year been formally appointed a Trustee of the Asperger Syndrome Foundation.

*Chris Mitchell* was diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome at University, at the age of twenty. For the first twenty years of his life, Chris felt that he was someone who didn't exist, trying to fit into a social environment he couldn't understand. However, once diagnosed, he found a reason for who he was and his self-confidence returned. Since his diagnosis, Chris has completed his MA (Hons) in Information and Library Management at the University of Northumbria. He has also become an advocate for Asperger Syndrome. Most recently, he has published the autobiography *Glass Half-Empty, Glass Half-Full*. Currently, he works as a clerical assistant with Durham County Council's Special Educational Needs Department. He also speaks about his experiences of Asperger Syndrome at various events and conferences throughout the UK, including the 2005 Aimhigher "Transition to University" Summerschool for students with autistic spectrum conditions, where Chris and Christine met, and at an annual lecture at the University of Northumbria. Additionally, Chris coordinates training workshops for professionals who work with ASC.

To enquire if Chris is available to become involved as a trainer or a speaker at your event, please visit his new website, at [www.chrismitchell.org.uk](http://www.chrismitchell.org.uk), or contact him at [ChrisMitchell@mitchell17.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:ChrisMitchell@mitchell17.wanadoo.co.uk)

***What is the purpose of the Guide?*** The purpose of this Guide is to provide practical support in the form of a one-stop-shop of information on existing good practice in the field of Autistic Spectrum Conditions, in relation especially to Transitions. "Transitions" is a broad term, encompassing phase transfer to nursery, primary, or secondary schools, as well as to further and higher education and even adult learning opportunities. "Transitions" also covers the area of transition between types of placement, for instance from specialist to mainstream, or from home education to school-based provision. Information provided in this guide will come from a range of reputable, identifiable sources, such as the DfES. Whenever possible, links to relevant websites will be included alongside the information provided. Always, the intention is to empower the audience by keeping them informed of existing good practice.

To ensure accuracy and relevance, prior to its publication, the Guide was read and feedback was contributed by a range of individuals including relevant education and health professionals from a number of different Boroughs, individuals with autistic spectrum conditions, and parents. Each issue of the Guide will continue to be "proof-read" in this way.

***How can you subscribe to the Guide?*** To receive the free monthly Guide, simply email [ahaughc@aol.com](mailto:ahaughc@aol.com) with the words "Subscribe to Guide" as the subject! If you would like the Guide posted rather than sent via email, simply include name and postal address in your email.

***How can you help this Guide?*** Any reader, whether a professional, an individual diagnosed with an autistic spectrum condition or a parent, who is aware of any existing best practice relating to autistic spectrum conditions and who would like to share this information with others, is welcomed to contribute an article to this Guide! Please email Christine on [ahaughc@aol.com](mailto:ahaughc@aol.com) if you would like to contribute an article. Also feel free to email if you wish to get involved with the Guide in another way, such as helping to reformat or distribute it! All help is greatly appreciated!

## **FEATURE ARTICLE: BY CHRIS MITCHELL**

### **MINDFULNESS AND THE UN-TAPPED ASPECTS OF THE ASPERGER'S SYNDROME MIND**

As a person with Asperger's Syndrome, I have experienced depression, high-level anxiety and obsessive-ness, all of which affect my state of mind, to the extent that I can lose my relationship with my immediate surroundings and forgetting who I am. For the past two years, I have been practicing Samatha meditation, which has made a difference, opening up the untapped abilities of my mind.

Growing up, I experienced and developed fixations on different subjects from astronomy and railways to football and cricket. Though having an interest in such subjects isn't un-normal, the scope of mind I had being Asperger's Syndrome would take me deeply into it, to the extent that I would become lost in it, losing awareness of my surroundings.

I have often been able to apply high levels of concentration where needed, but being able to balance it with mindfulness was often difficult. The ability of Samatha to help empty one's mind of the clutter that it is subject to through having to deal with difficult issues in daily life has helped me to notice regions of my mind to which I was previously unaware.

As said in the Dhammapada, the mind is 'fickle and flighty', like a monkey. It is up to the individual to control it effectively. The tools required to control the mind through meditation, including right effort and application, can also have beneficial effects to one's quality of life in terms of discipline and becoming more skilled socially. These are aspects of life that as a person diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome I have also had difficulties with.

The abilities of my mind I have begun to realise are those that I often experienced difficulty with relating to my Asperger's Syndrome, including flexibility of thought and being able to recognise reasoning for actions of others, as well as the roots of my own states of mind from anger to excitement. This, I feel has increased my awareness of myself to the extent that I can recognise the roots of low self-esteem I often experience. This enables me to deal with these issues better, helping my quality of life in terms of self-esteem.

With these abilities, I have begun to realise that many of the issues I have experienced regarding low self-esteem, including depression are related to hindrances, particularly doubt. When faced with uncertainty over my immediate future, in particular relating to where I may live or work, I can experience high-level anxiety, clouding my mind from thinking about how to handle it appropriately.

Through mindfulness developed through Samatha, I am able to recognise the sources of such feeling to the extent that they don't determine my immediate state of mind to the extent they used to, where I would become so angry and even twisted. Just being aware of such hindrances without thinking too much about them enables me to recognise the source of low self-esteem, without being attached.

As well as becoming more self-aware, mindfulness has also enabled me to become more aware of my immediate surrounds, as well as my relationships with others. I am able to recognise how to approach others in a more tactful way, enabling me to be more tolerant of others, including their views and opinions. With mindfulness, I am no longer closed to the worlds that other people live and work in and to their reasons for their speech and action.

Being diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, I really like being the way I am, particularly in regards to some of the characteristics and even abilities that the condition enables. I wouldn't accept a cure for my condition if it ever became available, or ever deny it, as this would distance me from truth. Development of mindfulness through meditation has enabled me to be a person with Asperger's Syndrome, while simultaneously helping me to become more aware and tolerant of my surroundings.- Chris Mitchell, June 2007

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/USEFUL READING

*The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks **Sue Oliver** for answering the following reader questions. Sue Oliver is a paediatric Occupational Therapist working for the health service with a number of children and young people who have autistic spectrum conditions. She was very kind to answer these questions so thoroughly! The Guide hopes readers will be able to benefit from her considerable expertise in this area. At the end of the questions, Sue has even contributed a "Useful Reading" list.*

**Question: What is Occupational Therapy?** *The following is adapted from an information leaflet which we have drawn up for our families, based on "A parent's guide to understanding Sensory Integration", by Sensory Integration International.*

*The service provided by NHS and Education funded OT services and the referral routes to OT will vary around the country. Parents should ask their GP, health visitor, paediatrician, teacher, school nurse or educational psychologist what is available; this information may be available via their local Primary Care Trust (PCT), NHS, or county council website. Some occupational therapists work for the county council and their remit is to look at equipment for home and housing adaptations; also local wheelchair services are usually staffed by either occupational therapists or physiotherapists.*

Occupational therapy is concerned with helping people of all ages to do the things they want and need to do in everyday life. For children and young people, this is playing/leisure and learning (including handwriting), as well as using cutlery, personal hygiene, getting dressed and other self-care skills.

We look at a child or young persons' strengths and interests to help them improve their skills such as...

### *Attention Span and Alertness*

If a child or young person is not interested, fidgets constantly, or simply doesn't look at what they are doing, they can't learn effectively. We find out what motivates your child, what makes their body ready to learn (for example, what helps them to keep still, calm, and alert) and to pay attention and stay focussed.

### *Sensory Processing Skills*

A child or young person's body needs to be able to pick up, understand and use information from all their senses (vision, hearing, touch, smell, taste, movement and their body sense) in order to be able to behave appropriately wherever they are.

### *Fine Motor and Gross Motor Skills*

Many children have difficulty with fine motor skills, such as drawing, using scissors, buttoning and stringing beads. Their small hand muscles are still maturing and they may not have developed the strength, co-ordination and dexterity they need. We make suggestions to work on these and on some gross motor skills that use "larger" muscles, such as throwing and catching a ball and climbing. Many primary school staff have trained to run groups in school for children with co-ordination difficulties who do not have a physical disability. One example is the Jump Ahead programme, in East and West Sussex. We recommend that your child takes part in these groups at school before coming to see an independent Occupational Therapist.

### *Activities of Daily Living*

Children have lots of daily living skills to master and most love becoming independent with these tasks. We help children and young people to learn to eat using cutlery, drink from a cup, get dressed and undressed, take a shower or bath, use the toilet and manage grooming and hygiene tasks appropriate for their age.

### *Visual Perceptual Skills*

From stacking blocks to doing puzzles, writing and understanding geometry, a child and young person must be able to see and understand differences and relationships between objects around them. We can help others to understand how difficulties with visual perception can affect a child or young person's learning and everyday skills and make suggestions to improve them.

### *Handwriting*

We are able to help children and young people who have handwriting issues by finding out why they are having difficulties and then trying strategies to help. These range from pen grips or sloping boards, exercises to develop hand muscles or improve sitting posture, to fun ways of learning all the elements of handwriting, such as letter formation, placement of letters on the line and spacing; we use a multi sensory approach. We may also advise on increasing speed of handwriting.

**Question: Is there any organisation listing independent Occupational Therapists?** The College of Occupational Therapists' website has this information, though sometimes the search facility is not very accurate geographically! Go to <http://www.cot.org.uk/> then select "How can an OT help me?" and then click the link <http://www.otip.co.uk/index.htm>. There is also general information on OT on that website.

**Question: What is Sensory Integration Therapy and Where Can I Find Out More About It?** Sensory Integration intervention has had mixed outcomes in research, some of which depended on the individual therapist providing the therapy. It is usually provided on a one to one basis, with equipment including suspended swings etc. When it has been successful, children have received therapy at least once per week for up to an hour, and usually over a number of weeks (2 years in some cases). It is therefore very labour intensive and with mixed outcomes (as the new ASD research website reports). With the demand for OT outstripping resources (a college of occupational therapy report a few years ago regarding waiting times for children with co-ordination difficulties - Doubly Disadvantaged - highlighted this) and an increasing number of children being identified as having autistic spectrum disorders, statutory services have looked at outcomes to make the best use of their resources and often work in

different ways with children and young people in order to see as many children as possible and reduce waiting times.

Although NHS and education funded services may not provide SI therapy, many of them continue to use the SI frame of reference during assessment and will consider SI processing issues when trying to understand behaviour, particularly in individuals with autistic spectrum disorder. Independent therapists often recommend and provide sensory integration therapy.

The Sensory Integration network UK and Ireland website has information <http://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/> which some readers might find useful. Sensory Integration is a theory of how we take in, interpret, process and respond to the information we receive from our senses to enable us to develop all the skills we need to become independent, concentrate, learn and interact appropriately with others and our environment. It is also an intervention to address any difficulties with sensory integration. However, if individuals have sensory processing issues, as do many individuals with autistic spectrum disorders, particularly Asperger syndrome, these may be addressed in other ways such as looking at "sensory diets" or alertness levels, which is not Sensory Integration as such.

### **Useful Reading**

**There are a growing number of books available now. These are some which have come to our notice:**

*Asperger Syndrome and Sensory Issues - practical solutions for making sense of the world.* Myles, Cook, Miller, Rinner, Robbins. ISBN 0-9672514-8-6

*1001 great ideas for teaching and raising children with autism spectrum disorders.* Ellen Notbolm and Veronica Zysk. ISBN 1-932565-19-1

*The Sensory Sensitive Child – practical solutions for out-of-bounds behavior* Karen A. Smith & Karen R. Gouze ISBN 0 – 06-052717-X

*Raising a Sensory Smart Child- the definitive handbook to helping your child with sensory integration issues.* Lindsey Biel and Nancy Peske. ISBN 0-14-303488-X

*The Out-of-Sync Child - recognizing and coping with Sensory Integration Dysfunction.* Carol Stock Kranowitz. ISBN 0-399-52386-3

*The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun - Activities for kids with sensory integration dysfunction.* Carol Stock Kranowitz ISBN 0-399-52843-1

*The Highly Sensitive Child – helping our children thrive when the world overwhelms them.* Elaine N.Aron ISBN 0-00-716393-2

*101 Activities for Kids in Tight Spaces.* Carol Stock Kranowitz ISBN 0-312-13420-7

*Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight – what to do if you are sensory defensive in an overstimulating world.* Sharon Heller ISBN 0-06-093292-9

## GOOD PRACTICE IN UNIVERSITIES

### UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS: TRANSITIONAL LEARNING CONTRACTS

*The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Harriet Cannon, Disability Coordinator at University of Leeds, for the following information:

Adapted from a model used at Sheffield Hallam University, University of Leeds has begun the use of Transitional Learning Contracts (TLCs), for students with disabilities- in particular, Asperger Syndrome and Autism.

When a student with disabilities joins the University, and that student has disclosed that they have a disability or condition for which they require additional support, the Disability's Coordinator's office sends a TLC to the Head of the Department the student is based at.

A memo that is sent out along with the TLC explains the aims and status of the TLC. The memo states:

"The aim of this contract is to identify those areas of support so that the department can plan in advance for the student's arrival, and put in place the recommendations made. This will ease the student's transition to university and help academic staff understand the kind of support needed.

The contract is a generic document, based on the likely requirements for someone with a named disability or condition. Not all students with the named disability or condition will require all of the adjustments listed, but it is good practice to ensure that the recommendations made are in place, to be reviewed at a later date. The document is not legally binding but does serve as a guide to best practice. It is intended to assist all parties to provide the student with a smooth transition during the first few weeks of their time at the University.

In signing the document, the student, the department and Disability Services agree that they have understood the recommendations made and will work to implement them. The document can be reviewed at any stage, and will, in due course, be replaced by a student-specific, full Profile and Learning Contract once the student has completed their Assessment of Need (a formal assessment procedure carried out via Disability Services to secure funding through the student's Local Authority)."

*The ASC Good Practice Guide* strongly recommends and applauds the use of TLCs as best practice in supporting ASC students at University, during the period in between their enrolment at University and receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). TLCs can help ensure that the students' support requirements are acknowledged and met more effectively in this interim period.

## CONFERENCES, LECTURES, SEMINARS AND SESSIONS

### THE ASPERGER SYNDROME FOUNDATION SEMINAR SERIES PRESENTS PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR DIFFICULT MOMENTS: "RELATIONSHIPS AND ASPERGER SYNDROME"

**Presented by Sarah Hendrickx and Keith Newton**

Sarah Hendrickx and Keith Newton are co-authors of *Aspergers Syndrome: A Love Story* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, June 2007). Keith has Asperger's Syndrome (self-diagnosed). Sarah is his partner and also a Training Consultant in AS ([www.asperger-training.com](http://www.asperger-training.com))

**AIMED AT:** Individuals and couples involved in a relationship where either partner has AS and professionals working in adult support and counselling.

**DATE:** Monday 29th October 2007, 10am-3:30pm, registration from 9:30am

**VENUE:** RIBA LONDON, 66 Portland Place, London W1B 1AD

**COST: £25 professionals, £15 parent/carers, free for individuals with Asperger Syndrome** (please make cheques payable to the "Asperger Syndrome Foundation")  
Sandwich lunches and refreshments are included in the cost.

Please email [seminars@aspergerfoundation.org.uk](mailto:seminars@aspergerfoundation.org.uk) OR download a booking form from the Asperger Syndrome Foundation website [www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk](http://www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk). This form needs to be returned to the Asperger Syndrome Foundation along with cheque payment, to reserve a place at the Seminar. The Foundation's address is:

Asperger Syndrome Foundation  
The Kensington Charity Centre  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Charles House  
375 Kensington High Street  
London W14 8QH

*The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Asperger Syndrome Foundation's Founder, Beatrice Buisseret, for contributing this information.

#### **AUTSCAPE: CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

Many thanks to Autscope's organiser Yo Dunn for contributing the information on this fantastic and very successful annual event.

#### **Autscope 2007: Accessing Our Worlds Tues-Fri, 7-10 August 2007**

Proposal submissions now being accepted. Please see this webpage for more information:  
<http://www.autscope.org/proposals/>

If you have any problems or questions, e-mail: [autscope@paradox.freemove.co.uk](mailto:autscope@paradox.freemove.co.uk), and your email will be replied to by Yo Dunn, organiser of Autscope.

#### ***What we are looking for:***

We are now accepting proposals for seminars and workshops to be presented at Autscope 2007. Proposals for poster presentations, leisure group leaders, videos, leaders for structured or semi-structured evening discussions, and other ideas will be sought in the near future. Only major workshops are eligible for the presenters' subsidy; a small rebate of £10 will be offered to other types of presentations.

*Theme:* The theme for this year's Autscope is Accessing Our Worlds. Presentations which conform to the theme will be given priority. In general, we are looking for positive ways of living with autism and navigating an alien world.

*Audience:* Although we welcome non-autistic professionals and family members, the aim of this event is primarily for autistic people, not about us! Workshops geared towards parents and professionals may be accepted, but must be positive in their support for autistic people and their right to be different.

*Examples:* For some examples of what has been presented at Autscope in the past, see last year's programme. We are also likely to enjoy similar workshops to those that have been presented at Autreat, in the USA, which has a much longer history.

#### ***Non-Verbal Workshops***

Although many of the autistic people who are attracted to an event such as Autscope are highly verbal, others may have difficulty with an event so centred around language. However, we want to welcome and fully include all kinds of autistic people, including less 'wordy' ones.

We are also seeking workshops which are not primarily focused on the spoken word. (Presenters may still use speech, it is just not the main content of this type of workshop.) Some examples would be: dance, relaxation, music or art. These should have an autistic focus and conform to the theme, if possible, as with any other workshop. We expect much more of a non-verbal workshop than a leisure session (which does not qualify for free attendance). Some of the differences are: structure, preparation (from the presenter), relevance to autism and the event's theme, and duration.

***A few notes of caution:***

*Cures:* Workshops about curing or preventing autism are likely not to go over well at all and are best avoided altogether, unless it is from an advocacy standpoint.

*Problems:* The problems of non-autistics coping with autistic people could inadvertently reinforce negative attitudes.

*Personal Experience:* We all have personal experience of autism. If your presentation is primarily based on your personal experience, think carefully about its relevance here; the story needs to be one which can help attendees to find new understanding of their own situation. Please let us know what you're hoping those present will gain from your presentation.

*Suitability:* Every workshop, no matter who it is targeted towards, should be suitable for autistic people to attend without feeling objectified or put down.

***What do we expect from you?***

*Attendance:* If you submit a proposal, we do expect you to be there! Please be prepared to attend Autscope and give your presentation on the day and time scheduled. You will be joining our retreat on an equal basis. If you cannot attend for the whole 3 days we will do our best to fit the schedule around your needs. Travel is the responsibility of each individual presenter. We cannot subsidise travel or off-site expenses for anyone. If your proposal is accepted, we will send you a formal letter of invitation if this will help you to secure your own funding.

*Discussion groups:* Presenters may be expected to run an evening discussion group on their topic, for those who would like to explore the issue further. Volunteer leaders may be available for presenters who need assistance with this.

*An article:* Please send copies of any handouts or other material and an article for inclusion in the programme. These will be required well in advance of the Autscope event.

*Recording:* Please allow us to video or otherwise record your presentation. These records may be made available to others by Autscope.

If you submit a proposal we will assume you are happy with these expectations. If you have any questions or objections, please let us know so we can discuss it.

***What can you expect from us?***

*Free attendance:* Presenters will have free full-board accommodation for the duration of Autscope. Only one place can be subsidised for each presentation. We cannot subsidise any other attendees, including carers or assistants for presenters.

*Attendance:* Whenever you are not presenting you can enjoy the event, including other workshops and the setting, just as any other participant.

*Involvement:* One thing you can expect by joining us is the opportunity to shape an emerging self-advocacy event and autistic community. There will be opportunities at the event to get involved in the future of Autscope.

**[PYRAMID PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS, LONDON AND EDINBURGH](#)**

*The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Alison Zahynacz, Conference Coordinator, for contributing the following information:

Pyramid Educational Consultants are offering two separate workshops, as follows:

**What:** Pyramid Approach to Asperger Syndrome Workshop

**When/Where:**

**02 July, Edinburgh,** University of Edinburgh, 18 Holyrood Park Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5AY

**03 July, London,** The London Voluntary Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA

**Who should attend:** This workshop will be of interest to educators – both in mainstream and special education settings – as well as anyone involved in special education planning.

This practical workshop includes a brief review of Asperger Syndrome, examining typically defined educational strengths and needs. Proactive strategies in the areas of communication, social skills and self-management will be addressed. Topics include how to tailor lesson design, teaching strategies, error correction, reinforcement strategies, and behaviour management strategies to the needs of these students. Participants will leave ready to apply these strategies and principles to the programmes of their students with Asperger Syndrome. The workshop consists of a combination of lecture and small group activities.

Applications and more information on future events can be found online at [www.pecs.org.uk](http://www.pecs.org.uk) or by calling 01273 609 555

Pyramid Educational Consultants UK Ltd  
Registered Office - Pavilion House, 6/7 Old Steine, Brighton BN1 1EJ  
Registered In England No 3658330

**UNDERSTANDING DYSPRAXIA: HELPING THOSE AFFECTED TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL- The ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE LEARNING ALLIANCE**

**Time** 9:00 – 16.30  
**Date** Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007  
**Venue** The New Armouries, The Banqueting Suite  
H.M. Tower of London, London, EC3N 4AB  
**Event is for:** Health Professionals, education professionals, parents

Charitable organisation, The Learning Alliance ([www.learning-alliance.org](http://www.learning-alliance.org)) will be holding its annual conference to raise funds for the Dyspraxia Foundation during Dyspraxia Awareness Week (Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September – Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007).

A feast of high-profile, special guests will provide anyone working or living with children with dyspraxia with a practical, enlightening and thought-provoking workshop based in the prestigious Banqueting Suite of the inspirational Tower of London.

A wonderful dyspraxia/family themed raffle will be drawn with fabulous goodies worth over £1000 on offer for just 150 guests to win.

Dyspraxia books, helpful gadgets and gizmos will also be on sale in addition to relevant information stands to present valuable networking opportunities for all.

Attendance to this one-day conference is by reservation only and a donation of £35 per person for parents and £45 for professionals will be required. Dyspraxia Foundation members are entitled to a 10% discount. Lunch & refreshments will be provided. Raffle tickets available on the day for £1 each.

For further information including guest-speaker profiles or to download a reservation form or map please visit [www.learning-alliance.org](http://www.learning-alliance.org) or contact Kate Evans at Equazen (Event Sponsor): Tel: 0207 243 7110 or email: [kate.evans@equazen.com](mailto:kate.evans@equazen.com)

**All ticket and raffle sales will be donated to the Dyspraxia Foundation**

#### **WENDY LAWSON- UK BOOKINGS IN 2007**

*The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Wendy Lawson for sharing her 2007 tour dates with our readers. Wendy's range of presentations and audiences- from a talk with parents to training for County Council staff- is amazing! The list below does not include Wendy's Singapore, Australian, or other international tour dates, although details are available upon request.

##### **Autumn**

- October 15th (Cornwall) Contact: Judy Shoten [jshorten@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:jshorten@cornwall.gov.uk)
- October 19th (Middlesbrough) Anna Wood [themainproject@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:themainproject@hotmail.co.uk)

#### **RESEARCH REQUESTS**

##### **AUTISM RESEARCH CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE: STUDY ON ADULTS WITH AUTISM/ASPERGER'S SYNDROME**

Liliana Ruta, a researcher at the Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge, along with Erin Ingudomnukul (the coordinator of the project) are currently recruiting adults (18-30 years of age) with Asperger Syndrome or High-Functioning Autism for a major study. For further information on the study/copies of flyers promoting the study, please contact:

Liliana Ruta  
University of Cambridge  
Douglas House  
18b Trumpington Road  
Cambridge  
CB2 8AH

*The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Resources for Autism for passing this information on.

##### **DIPEX LIVING WITH AUTISM PROJECT- UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

The DIPEX Living with Autism project is funded by The Wellcome Trust and is based at DIPEX, a research unit within the Department of Primary Health Care, University of Oxford.

[www.dipex.org](http://www.dipex.org) is a website that presents people's experiences of health and illness in a text, audio and video form. The aim is for the website to be a resource for people experiencing particular health issues, health and education professionals who may work with them, and a teaching resource for health/education professionals.

The Living with Autism project will involve interviews with:

people with autism or Asperger syndrome over the age of 16 parents or carers of people (including children under the age of 16) with autism or Asperger

syndrome.

Clips from the interviews will be presented on the website to provide a comprehensive picture of people's experiences of living with autism or Asperger syndrome.

If you would like further details of the project, please contact Sara Ryan on 01865 289374, email [sara.ryan@dphpc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sara.ryan@dphpc.ox.ac.uk)

#### **INFANT SIBLINGS STUDY, THE BABYLAB AT BIRKBECK, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**

The Babylab at Birkbeck, University of London, has launched the first study in the UK looking at infant siblings of children with autism. Using newly developed techniques for studying brain and behaviour in infants, the team is investigating whether there are any differences in development between infants who have brothers or sisters with autism and those who do not. It is hoped that this will help identify the early signs of the disorder, allowing for earlier and more effective intervention aimed at improving the quality of life of children with autism.

If you have a baby aged 0-12 months who has an older sibling diagnosed with autism and wish to take part in the "Baby Sibs Project", please contact us for more information.

Dr. Mayada Elsabbagh or Ms. Holly Garwood  
The Babylab, Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development  
FREEPOST RRGX-ARGH-SESR  
Henry Wellcome Building, Birkbeck College  
Malet Street  
London WC1E 7HX  
Tel: 020 7079 0754  
Email: [asd@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:asd@bbk.ac.uk) or visit: [www.cbcd.bbk.ac.uk](http://www.cbcd.bbk.ac.uk)

*The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks The Babylab for contributing this information.*

**30<sup>th</sup> June 2007**  
**End of June Edition**