

THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

St. Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust
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WENDY LAWSON: A TESTIMONIAL FOR THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Wendy Lawson was diagnosed with an ASC when an adult. Married, separated and divorced, Wendy's younger son also has Asperger Syndrome. Classified as having significant intellectual impairment when she was a child, Wendy has nevertheless gone on to earn no less than five University qualifications. Wendy is a qualified Social Worker, Adult Educator and also a Psychologist. She is also a highly-accomplished poet and author of a number of ASC-related books. Wendy runs ASC training programmes to students, staff, and support groups throughout the UK and Australia, as well as lecturing on ASC. For further information on Wendy, her forthcoming UK tour dates and how to contact her to ask if she can run a training programme or give a talk for your own organization, please refer to the "Conferences" section of this Guide.

On *The ASC Good Practice Guide*, Wendy writes:

"What a terrific thing to be doing! One of the 'gaps' in good autism practice has been that lack of co-ordination of 'what's out there.' This 'guide' fills that gap. It also offers support through the journey and personal perspective found in readers' articles and other information."

Apart from being very proud of Wendy's praise, *The ASC Good Practice Guide* feels that it highlights a very important point: that the Guide is written not just ABOUT people with an ASC, and not just for parents or professionals, but also FOR people with an ASC. Wendy has also very kindly agreed to write some information for forthcoming Editions of the Guide, which is greatly appreciated.

STOP PRESS: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE NEWS!!!

The ASC Good Practice Guide is delighted to announce that the Asperger Syndrome Foundation has contacted us, and very kindly offered to post copies of the Guide on the AS Foundation website! The AS Foundation values the quality of information in *The ASC Good Practice Guide* and considers it to be a worthwhile publication for their website audience. *The ASC Good Practice Guide* would like to acknowledge the generosity of the Asperger Syndrome Foundation and extend its gratitude to all our new friends at the Charity.

The Asperger Syndrome Foundation is a small London-based Registered Charity. Prior to its establishment in 2002, the Charity's Founder and Chair, Beatrice Buissonet, successfully undertook the tremendous task of raising the funds necessary to sponsor the first accredited Post-Graduate Course in Asperger Syndrome in the UK.

The Asperger Syndrome Foundation sponsors and subsidises high-quality Training and Support Days aimed at professionals in Education and Mental Health, as well being aimed at parents. These Days are subsidized by the Asperger Syndrome Foundation in order to make them affordable to all. All speakers at the Training and Support Days are specialists in the field of Asperger Syndrome.

For more information on the Asperger Syndrome Foundation, contact:

info@aspergerfoundation.org.uk or visit <http://www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk>

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WELCOME TO THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Welcome to the fourth issue of the ASC Best Practice Guide, a new and 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. About the charity, one of its Trustees writes:

"Imagine a school for ASC children, that not only provides the best, bespoke environment to learn and play in, but also by its very existence assists in raising international awareness of ASC. This is the vision of The St Nicholas Academy. It is an integral part of our philosophy and vision that the building serves the needs of family, friends and all those who are affected and need information, counselling and encouragement.

The Saint Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust ("Nickys") is the Holding Trust that will own the land on which the school buildings/facilities will be built, as well as the buildings and facilities and all other assets. We are now securing land gifted to the Academy in North London and hope to be able to commence work constructing Nickys in the near future."

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 for a DfES-funded organisation called Aimhigher, where her duties include Project Management of Aimhigher London North's activities for learners with special educational needs, including autistic spectrum conditions.

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 contact him at ChrisMitchell@mitchell17.wanadoo.co.uk

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.

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.

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 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!

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH SERVICES

AUTISMBUCKS (HIGH WYCOMBE AND AYLESBURY, BUCKS)

Autismbucks is a registered charity (charity no.1110374), set up to help both parents and professionals gain a better understanding of ASC. It also offers practical assistance to families affected by ASC.

Autismbucks began by specializing in the Spectrum Youth Clubs for adolescents with Asperger Syndrome or High-Functioning Autism. The High Wycombe Club has been running extremely successfully since May 2002, and the Aylesbury Club has been doing likewise since October 2004. The Clubs provide a safe and comfortable environment for these youngsters who are often isolated elsewhere due to their difficulties.

The Clubs address difficulties through common interest and assisted activities. Consequently, there are a far greater number of activities on offer than at most other Youth Clubs. For instance, if a person is interested in trains, then Autismbucks would engage in activities and conversation, usually with two young people, using the electric model railway layout, which is mounted at waist height in a "village" setting. If a person is new and very withdrawn the Club may start by asking the person what they think would be a good item to add to the train setting, where it should be placed, etc., and then the item would be purchased and made available for the next Club session. This would help ensure the person felt valued as a member of the Club. With multi-player games such as Playstation, they are assisted not only to share but also to help others less proficient, thereby raising self-esteem. Good actions are always praised or rewarded, and any problems addressed or explained immediately. Consequently, there is always a great atmosphere as everyone knows they

are safe and also understood; everyone is relaxing and understanding of others.

Both Clubs have a “quiet corner” where difficulties can be discussed. Generally, the Clubs are very busy with around 25 young people attending any one session. This level of activity also makes the Clubs feel like any other Youth Club- this appeals to our members.

The Spectrum Clubs can also act as a “neutral” zone between home and school, where concerns can be addressed in a fully supportive and knowledgeable environment. Holiday activities are also organized where members visit places such as adventure parks, and the entire family can enjoy a day out without conflict or worry.

Autismbucks are heavily reliant on the goodwill and continued commitment of their volunteers, and also donations from various organizations and from parents. Parents are also able to share their own experiences with others at the Clubs, which can make them feel less alone and help them meet others who share the same kind of problems that surround social, behavioural and educational issues.

Autismbucks hope to raise enough funds to pay for services that can be difficult for parents to access, such as respite care and Occupational Therapy, music and drama sessions at the Spectrum Clubs, and also for holiday activities.

To become involved with Autismbucks, either to help raise funds or to volunteer at one of the Spectrum Clubs, please get in touch by calling (01494)711391, or email ann@autismbucks.co.uk

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Autismbuck's Ann Barrett for contributing this information.

-THE BRIDGE- (RICHMOND, SW LONDON)

-the bridge- aims to work in partnership with professionals across all disciplines to find innovative solutions to overcome shortages in service provision and to identify best practice that can be adopted in Richmond. In doing this, -the bridge- hopes to create better opportunities in education, training, and remedial support for the children.

A parent-led charity, -the bridge- works the benefit of children and families where there is a social communication disorder such as ASC or ADHD. The majority of the children helped by -the bridge- are in mainstream schools and yet their social communication difficulties can pose serious problems relating to their behaviour, social communication skills, and ability to be educated. -the bridge- aims to offer opportunities for its members' children to develop the skills they need to integrate more fully into society.

-the bridge- currently offer the following:

- **Talking Group**-for children aged 4+, these are weekly social skills workshops run by two experienced group leaders. The Workshops also enjoy regular input from a Speech and Language Therapist. Parents also meet regularly while their children are at Talking Group
- **Talking Group Drama**- a natural progression from Talking Group, Drama is run by an experienced educational drama teacher, plus an assistant. In Drama, children aged 6-13 use basic drama structures such as role-play, movement and tableaux to develop and extend the skills acquired in Talking Group
- **Sport**- run by specialist coaches with direction from an experienced Occupational Therapist and Speech and Language Therapist, the Sport programme enables children to develop motor skills and join in team games in a safe and supportive environment
- **Activate**- a new Social Skills Group that uses Sensory Integration techniques alongside Speech Therapy. The active play promotes social skills, language development, and enables the children to be more at ease in their environment
- **Inform**- Discussion Evenings and Speaker Events for parents and professionals, where experts in various fields provide information, advice and guidance.
- **Liaise**- currently -the bridge- is working with the Project for Children with Special Needs in Richmond and Richmond NAS as well as specialists in the health, education, and social service departments of the LEA.

For further information, please contact:

Sam Silver,
Development Officer, -the bridge-
29 St. Leonard's Road

East Sheen, London SW14 7LY
(0208)392-9946, 11am-2pm Mondays to Fridays, term-time
Email: enquiries@thebridgecharity.org.uk

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Sam Silver for providing this information.

BROMLEY AUTISTIC TRUST (BROMLEY, KENT)

Bromley Autistic Trust (BAT) provides information, advice and support to individuals with ASC and their families across all ages and abilities. The Trust functions primarily within the London Borough of Bromley, although some of our services, including training and domiciliary support, are available to all.

The Trust runs a Family Support Service, which provides advice and support for parents of children who have been diagnosed with an ASC. Family Support Workers provide home visits to discuss management strategies, appropriate services/educational opportunities, and to support parents. The service includes social clubs for children and adolescents with ASC. They also provide training sessions on ASC and related issues for families/carers and professionals.

For more information on Bromley Autistic Trust's Family Services/Training, please contact:

Julia Pithouse, Family Services Manager

Bromley Autistic Trust
129 Southlands Road
Bromley, Kent BR2 9QT
(0208)464-2897

Email: Julia@bromleyautistictrust.co.uk

Website: www.bromleyautistictrust.co.uk

Alternatively, contact Resource Centre Volunteer Delia Barton on (0208)464-2897.

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Jo Walsh, the Trust's Adult Services Manager, for this information. Details on the Trust's Adult Services can be found in this Edition's "Adult Services" Section.

COUNTY DURHAM AUTISTIC SUPPORT GROUP (DURHAM, NE ENGLAND)

CDASG, the County Durham Autistic Support Group (registered charity no.1071758), has been established for a decade and has 270 members at present. 71% of the members are families, and the remaining 29% are either professionals or individuals who themselves have a diagnosis of autism or Asperger Syndrome.

CDASG run a telephone helpline, publish a monthly newsletter for members, and run activities for families with autistic spectrum conditions. Activities include trips, pool parties, soft play evenings and rock climbing. These activities as well as the three support group meetings each month give parents, children with ASC and their siblings an opportunity to meet up, talk, and enjoy activities they would find problematic if attempted in isolation

CDASG also run three conferences a year and even provide training for anyone wanting to know more about autistic spectrum conditions. CDASG aim to provide help, support and advice to all interested parties and the group has been proactive in policy development within Durham, the NE of England, as well as nationally.

The ASC Good Practice Guide would like to thank CDASG Coordinator, Helen Geldard, for providing this information. Helen welcomes further queries and can be contacted as follows:

Helen Geldard RGN.RM.MA. Education Studies and Autism

Co-ordinator of CDASG

PO Box 35

Spennymoor, Co. Durham

DL16 7WY

Tel/fax: (01388)819880

Email: cdasg@aol.com

DISABILITY CHALLENGERS (SURREY)

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Disability Challengers' Jonathan Dobson for contributing this information.

Disability Challengers is a Guildford-based charity (charity no.1095134) which provides play and leisure for disabled children and young people, their friends and family. They do this all year round at their play centre in Guildford and at schemes across Surrey and Bracknell.

Disability Challengers have spent 25 years working across Surrey, and are dedicated to cost effective and imaginative partnership working- for instance, in the past year alone. the charity has worked in partnership with Surrey County Council, Guildford Borough Council, and Bracknell Forest Borough Council, in order to bid for sites for be used to create new play schemes and develop community-based projects.

Different schemes run on Saturdays, Sundays, after school and during holidays, in Bagshot, Dorking, Farnham, Guildford, Leatherhead, and Oxted. Play Schemes are for children aged 4-12. Challengers Youth Schemes are for young people aged 13-18. All of both the Play and the Youth Schemes have places for persons who need one-to-one support and who have complex impairments.

For further information or to book places at a Disability Challengers Play or Youth Scheme, call the charity directly on (01483)230-939, between 9:30am-5pm. Or, email Disability Challengers on information@disability-challengers.org or visit www.disability-challengers.org

PARENTS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN TOGETHER (LONDON BOROUGHS OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM, HAVERING AND REDBRIDGE)

PACT, Parents of Autistic Children Together, was established in October 1995 and was subsequently registered as a charity (charity no.1067928) in February 1998. To date, PACT has a membership of approximately 150 families, all who have at least one child with ASC. PACT is the **only** ASC-specialized voluntary sector provider working in this area of outer London, its services covering the London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

Currently, services and activities provided by PACT can be divided into those for children/young people and those for parents/carers. Children and youth people (ASC children and siblings) are offered a fully-integrated activity programme including Youth Clubs, drama , football, soft play and also swimming sessions, as well as outings and residential outdoor pursuits, all of which focus on improving self-esteem and self-confidence. Parents/carers can access a number of services ranging from general support and information about ASC to advocacy, information and advice offered on issues such as education, health and benefits. PACT collates and distributes a quarterly newsletter to its members and also to over 70 health and education professionals. PACT is also working in partnership with its Local Education Authority, developing a project to help young children with speech and communication disorders.

For further information, please telephone PACT on (0208)220-0090, email them on info-pact-uk@btconnect.com or visit their website, www.pact-uk.co.uk

Thanks to PACTS' Chris Gillbanks for contributing this information to *The ASC Good Practice Guide*.

RESOURCES FOR AUTISM (NORTH LONDON)

The ASC Good Practice Guide extends its warm thanks to Ann Woodward, Director of North London-based ASC charity Resources for Autism, for contributing the following information:

Summer Play Scheme

Resources for Autism **will** be running a play scheme during the summer holidays this year. Last year, over 20 children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions attended the summer play scheme, which ran during three weeks of the summer holiday. Activities included swimming, park visits, and a trip to Legoland.

Places on the holiday play scheme are offered on a first-come-first-served basis, and always book up very quickly, so it would help Resources for Autism if interested individuals could make contact as soon as possible.

If you have a child with an autistic spectrum condition, aged 8 or above, and would be interested in receiving information about a summer play scheme, please contact Resources for Autism's Play Coordinator, Catherine Ely, on (0208)458-3259.

SIGNAL (LEWISHAM, SE LONDON)

Signal is a long established group for parents of children and young people on the autistic spectrum.

It is a voluntary charity based in Lewisham, SE London, and run by parents. The group holds monthly evening meetings with guest speakers; the speakers this year have included Professor Patricia Howlin and Dr. Gillian Baird. Signal also runs coffee mornings, produces a bi-monthly newsletter and has an extensive library from which parents can borrow books, videos, and DVDs. Signal arrange family outings, a Book Club, a Siblings Group, weekly Trampolining sessions for ASC children and their siblings, and are in the process of setting up a 16+ group. For a number of years, Signal also has run a very successful Social Skills/Dramatherapy Group, for children aged 7 up to 14/15. In this group, through the use of structured activities, experienced facilitators work with small groups of children to develop and extend the children's self-awareness, awareness of others and group participation. Acceptance on the course is subject to assessment by the facilitators. Finally, Signal operates on a strategic basis: they work in partnership with other local organisations and representatives from Education, Health, and Social Services, in order to affect a positive change in provision for all persons in Lewisham with an ASC and their families. For further information or to join Signal, please contact Jacqui Cook on (0208)857-9282. Thanks to Signal's Lisa Mace and also its Chair, Sally Fricker, for contributing this information.

"SNAAP" CLUB- FINCHLEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL/ST. NICHOLAS ACADEMY FOR AUTISM TRUST (BARNET, N. LONDON)

"SNAAP" is an after-school club for families affected by an autistic spectrum condition. Funded by Barnet Council, the Club offers members the opportunity to socialise, develop computer and now also art skills, in a friendly environment where the entire family is welcome.

Every Wednesday term-time from 3:30pm-6pm, "SNAAP" meets at Finchley Catholic High School, Woodside Lane, Finchley, N12. There is parking available in the school car park. The Club is free of charge and run by Finchley Catholic High School with the **St. Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust**, and is open to **ANYONE** in Barnet with an autistic spectrum condition, all abilities and ages welcome.

Parents/siblings/carers and friends are also welcome, and snacks are provided (but anyone with special dietary requirements is invited to bring their own refreshments). The Club has a number of trained, established helpers for its members- students and staff from Finchley Catholic High School and St. Michaels RC Grammar School. Members can receive guidance on how to use the computer and the internet; they can also play games, do homework, create Personal Passports and more. Art Workshops are offered at the Club, at no cost, in an adjacent studio!

For more details or to reserve a place, contact the Club's Project Officer, Christine, on (0798)404-9077.

On 1st July a grand total of 53 SNAAP members are enjoying an all expenses-paid day out at Chessington World of Adventures! Places on this outing are fully booked but further days out are being arranged.

SNAAP would also like to thank Mortgage Express, who in May very kindly donated the funds for the organisation to be able to purchase a digital camera, colour printer, and associated equipment/accessories.

TRAINING PROVIDERS FOR TEACHERS, LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS, PARENT/CARERS

WWW.ONLINEINSET.NET (BASED IN HOVE- BUT AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE)

In 1999, the Government commissioned 11 Regional SEN Partnerships to identify regional priorities and develop and extend inclusive practice. The South Central Regional Partnership, (SCRIP) identified that many of the Local Education Authorities in its region provide a considerable amount of training for staff who work with pupils who have special educational needs. However, it was also identified that staff who work directly with pupils, such as class teachers and learning support assistants, have practical difficulties in leaving the classroom to access training courses. Therefore, SCRIP developed an online training package for these staff. For the past five years, SCRIP has commissioned experts in their fields to write short training courses. These courses include the following: "Understanding ASD"; "Understanding Speech, Language and Communication Needs"; and "Understanding and Managing Behaviour". Each course is led by a course tutor, whom OnlineInset can arrange tutor training for. Existing OnlineInset tutors include

SEN Advisors, SENCos, Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, and Specialist Teachers. Courses run every term.

Each student is given a course password and can access the materials through school and home online computer. The costs of professional development are significantly decreased by online learning, whereas the numbers of potential participants significantly widens.

The course on "Understanding ASD" is suitable for those persons working with children in mainstream classrooms across all Key Stages. *Parents comprised a small number of the students who have previously accessed this course.*

The course has four main sections:

- Understanding Autistic Spectrum
- Assessment for Learning
- Interventions
- Case Studies

The course has interactive elements and built-in evaluation tools. On-line tutors can monitor progress and set up on-line forums and discussion groups. Students who complete the course receive a Certificate of Online Completion.

All Local Education Authorities within the SCRIP region have unlimited free access to the courses; Local Education Authorities based outside of the region are able to make an annual subscription which allows them to use all OnlineInset's training courses in any setting. This subscription includes training places for five tutors. The Local Education Authorities, in turn, can charge schools to access this training. Each participating authority will be allowed to participate in the commissioning of new modules.

These local authorities have subscribed to the project so far: Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough, Reading, West Berkshire, Bracknell Forest, Portsmouth, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Surrey, East Sussex, Brighton and Hove, Kent and Spring Hallow School in Ealing. Other authorities are considering subscribing to this project in the next academic year. School licenses are also available where a local authority has not yet subscribed.

Further information is available from:

Jacqui Webber-Grant (Online Training Project Officer)
(0781)754-5221

Email: training@onlineinset.net

Website: www.onlineinset.net

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Jacqui Webber-Gant for contributing this information.

SPECIALIST SCHOOLS, FOR PUPILS AGED 4-16

CHRYSALIS SCHOOL FOR AUTISM (HERTFORDSHIRE)

Officially opened on Monday 5th December 2005, Chrysalis (registered charity number 1101424) is a special independent school for persons with autistic spectrum conditions aged 4-11. Chrysalis is a school dedicated to Applied Behavioural Analysis, ABA, and was founded by 2 Hertfordshire parents who themselves had previously been running home-based ABA programmes. It is the first ABA school to open in Hertfordshire.

Chrysalis has a Head Teacher, a team of Tutors, a Board of Trustees and an advisory body.

Five pupils are currently enrolled at Chrysalis and the school welcomes applications both from further pupils as well as from ABA tutors. Volunteer support is also kindly appreciated. For further information on the school please contact the Head Office on (01438)714408, visit www.chrysalisschool.org, or email info@chrysalisschool.org

SPRINGHALLOW SCHOOL (EALING, W. LONDON)

Springhallow School is an Ealing LEA maintained day community special school. Its students are between the ages of 4-16/17, and have ASC and learning difficulties. The School has a Family Worker, an Occupational Therapist and a Speech Therapist working on site.

Springhallow's staff are trained in Applied Behavioural Analysis, ABA, and work with cluster of local

schools to identify how this approach may be effectively transferred to other settings. Springhallow has access to a number of mainstream schools within the London Borough of Ealing, in order to run integration/inclusion programmes for Springhallow's pupils. Further, pupils from these mainstream schools are able to come in to Springhallow to access the special school's expertise and relevant programmes.

Ealing LEA deals with the admissions process for the school, so any admissions queries need to be made directly to the LEA's Special Educational Needs Department, the telephone number for which is (0208)825-5533.

Springhallow School is currently applying for Specialist School Academy status, which is a bit like the Specialist College status many secondary schools have. If Springhallow is successful in its application, it will mean that the government will fund the school to extend its Outreach programme. This will provide local schools, parents and professionals alike with opportunities for ASC training at Springhallow. It will also enable Springhallow to enhance its provision so that more students would be able to access its resources, be given support by its staff and be supported within the school on a part-time basis.

To enable Springhallow to place the bid, they need to raise £20,000 through sponsorship and donations. This is a very large amount to raise for such a small school. Any support in helping to raise the funds would be greatly appreciated.

The School can be contacted as follows:

Springhallow School
Compton Close, off Cavendish Avenue
Ealing, London W13 0JG
(0208)998-2700
Email: admin@springhallow.ealing.sch.uk
Website: <http://www.springhallow.ealing.sch.uk>

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Springhallow School's Headteacher Jayne Jardine for providing this information.

SPECIALIST FURTHER EDUCATION

THE ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL SPECIALIST COLLEGES- NATSPEC (LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE)

The Association of National Specialist Colleges, NATSPEC, supports specialist independent colleges providing further education and training, to meet the inclusive learning needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A number of the colleges cater for or specialise in students who have ASC.

NATSPEC acts as a national voice for specialist colleges and other providers on matters of policy and practice. It ensures the strategic roles of these institutions are fully deployed and developed within the learning and skills sector.

NATSPEC's website includes a directory of and information on specialist colleges.

For more information on NATSPEC, contact:

Kevin O'Brien
Chief Executive, NATSPEC
39 Sanders Road
Quorn
Loughborough
Leicestershire, LE12 8JN
(01509)554-357
kevin.obrien43@ntlworld.com
Or, visit NATSPEC's website, www.natspec.org.uk

Each Edition of the Guide will provide information on a different NATSPEC college which caters for students with autism/Asperger Syndrome. The first college to be featured is Farleigh Further Education College. Details on Farleigh can be found directly below.

FARLEIGH FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGE (FROME, SOMERSET)

Farleigh Further Education College, FFEC, is an independent further education college specialist in Asperger Syndrome. Established in 2000, FFEC is registered with the Learning and Skills Council and is a full NATSPEC member. It is a member of the Priory Group.

Students have a diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome and are between 16-20 years of age. Most will have had Statements of Special Educational Need, and all have ambitions to live in mainstream communities as independent adults. With the help of support staff, students develop and extend self-help skills in one of four different residences. In addition to the support staff, FFEC has its own Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Art Therapist and a Counsellor. They are involved in the assessment of students and the development of individual programmes, which can include both one-to-one and small group therapy input.

Most of the FFEC students attend local mainstream Wiltshire College, supported by the FFEC. Students can elect to study A-levels at Wiltshire College. Students maintain close contact with Connexions advisors and those who wish to attend a University are provided with a range of practical information, advice and guidance, including careful transition planning.

For those interested in attending FFEC, the College Admission Procedure sets out that initial contact is expected to be made via the student/family or a Connexions Advisor. The FFEC sends the student a Prospectus and the student's paperwork must be sent to and arrive at the FFEC no later than 15th October on the year prior to intended entry. Students who the FFEC considers it might be able to meet their needs the FFEC will invite to an Admissions Day. These Days are held in the Autumn Term of the year prior to entry. There are usually 6 Admission Days/academic year, with 6-8 students and parents attending on each Day. By the end of Autumn Term, all Admission Day students will have been informed as to whether they have been offered a place, have been refused a place, or are on the waiting list. FFEC is generally oversubscribed so a waiting list exists, where students are prioritized in terms of need. Once students have been offered a place, they attend an Enrolment Day, after which the FFEC's Head of Education applies for funding. Once funding is agreed, the placement at FFEC is confirmed. Students will be invited to a New Students Day in the summer holiday prior to September entry, in order to decrease anxiety.

For further information on FFEC, please contact:

Farleigh Further Education College

North Parade

Frome, Somerset BA11 2AB

(01373)475-470

Email: farleighfurthereducationcollege@priorygroup.com

Or, visit the Priory Group's website: www.priorygroup.com

The ASC Good Practice Guide offers its warm thanks to Andrew Chiffers, Principal of FFEC, for providing this information.

LEARNING, EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADULTS

BROMLEY AUTISTIC TRUST, ADULT SERVICES (KENT)

Bromley Autistic Trust's Adult Services comprise a small Day Service (16 places), 3 Registered Residential Care Homes, 5 Supported Living Flats, and an Independent Lifestyles (Domiciliary Support) Service, all of which cater specifically for the needs of adults with ASC. This side of the service is likely to expand in the near future. There is a support group for the parents of adults with ASC, which provides information and advice as well as social contact. There is also a Youth Club and a Luncheon Club for adults who themselves have an ASC. This branch of the Trust also provides training and consultancy on ASC and associated issues for parents and family carers, care staff and other relevant professionals.

Courses include:

- An introduction to Autism and Asperger Syndrome
- Practical Approaches to working with ASC
- Asperger Syndrome and the Autistic Spectrum

- Sex and Sexuality for people with an ASC
- Autism and Challenging Behaviour
- Loss and Bereavement
- Autism and Sensory Perception

Courses can be tailor-made to meet individual or organizational need. Half days, full days, or more intensive courses with follow-up workshops are available. The Trust can also provide a consultancy service.

In addition, Bromley Autistic Trust also run a Preparation for Employment Course called “Success for All”, in partnership with Advantage Unlimited.

To find out more about the Trust’s Adult Services and Training, please contact Adult Services Manager Jo Walsh on jowalsh@bromleyautistictrust.co.uk or visit www.bromleyautistictrust.co.uk
The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Jo Walsh for providing this information.

THE CONTACT GROUP (BAKER STREET, CENTRAL LONDON)

The Contact Group is a very successful social group for adults with Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism. The Group has been running for over two years and welcomes new members. The Group offers members a chance to meet up and have a chat, drink, and even a meal out in a relaxed social setting. Individuals are very welcome to bring someone to help support them, if they wish to do so.

WHEN DOES THE CONTACT GROUP MEET? Every 2nd Wednesday of the month

WHAT TIME DOES THE CONTACT GROUP MEET? From 6:30pm onwards

WHERE DOES THE CONTACT GROUP MEET? The Metropolitan Bar, above Baker Street Underground Station, Central London

HOW CAN YOU FIND THE CONTACT GROUP IN THE METROPOLITAN BAR? The Group has a sign with “CONTACT GROUP” written on it, at their tables.

The Contact Group is an **independent** group facilitated by Samantha Lawrie, who also works as a Project Coordinator for an NAS Adult Day Service in London. Samantha can be contacted on either (0799)079-0194 or samantha.lawrie@nas.org.uk, with any queries regarding the group. *The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Samantha for providing this information.

CONFERENCES, LECTURES, SEMINARS AND SESSIONS

ANNUAL SUNDERLAND AUTISM CONFERENCE, “EVERY CHILD WITH AUTISM MATTERS”

WHEN: 9th June, all day

WHERE: Sunderland Marriott Hotel

WHAT IS THE CONFERENCE’S THEME? “Every Child with Autism Matters” is this year’s theme. It is a very topical and important focus, and parents are strongly urged to try and attend. There are many initiatives which will be up and running by the time the conference is held, which will impact on all ASC children. There are also the questions on post-11 provision and issues with social care for children with Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism, both of which will be addressed at the Conference. This day will give parents the opportunity for their voice to be heard collectively.

COST: £10 for parents

FOR MORE INFORMATION/TO BOOK A PLACE: contact Carol Stephenson at the Stannington Centre, Sunderland, on (0191)553-2202

COUNTY DURHAM AUTISTIC SUPPORT GROUP (CDASG) SUMMER CONFERENCE

WHEN: Saturday 17th June

WHERE: County Hall, Durham

SPEAKERS INCLUDE: Paul Shattock will be giving an update on his research into biological factors in Autism; Madeleine Portwood (Educational Psychologist, Durham County Council) will be focusing on the use of Omega3 Oil in relation to Autism; Chris Mitchell will share his experiences

living with Asperger Syndrome; Ian Geldard will share his experiences of growing up with a brother diagnosed with Autism.

COST: £20 members, £30 parent non-members, £45 professional non-members

FOR MORE INFORMATION/TO BOOK A PLACE: Make cheques payable to "CDASG" and send to County Durham Autistic Society, PO Box 35, Spennymoor, DL16 7WY, or call CDASG on (01388)819880. Places need to be booked by Friday 9th June.

HARINGEY DISABILITY AWARENESS WEEK, SUPPORTED BY HARINGEY COUNCIL, HARINGEY PCT, AND THE BARNET, ENFIELD AND HARINGEY MENTAL HEALTH NHS TRUST

WHEN: 21st-23rd June, 10am-3pm daily

WHERE: Broadwater Farm Community Centre, Adams Road, Tottenham, London, N17 6HE

WHAT IS HAPPENING? Workshops, refreshments, and information stands. Stands include those run by CONEL, Welfare to Work, the Markfield Centre, and Mencap.

WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF THE EVENT? The aims include the following: enabling parent/carers to find out the range of services available within Haringey and neighbouring Boroughs and how to access the services; establishing a framework for disability services, and promoting positive interaction between service providers working within the Borough of Haringey. If you think you have a local service that might be of interest please contact the organizer, Ian Khan, on

lan.Khan@haringey.gov.uk

The ASC Good Practice Guide would like to thank Southgate College's Learning Support Manager, Jane Hessami, for contributing this information.

ASD-UK PRESENT A TALK BY PATRICIA HOWLIN: "LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THEORY AND INTERVENTION"

ASD-UK is the Association for the Study of Developmental Disorders.

Patricia Howlin is a Professor of Clinical Psychology at St. George's, University of London, who has been involved in research and clinical work with people with autistic spectrum conditions and their families for many years. Author of numerous publications in the field of autism and developmental disorders, Professor Howlin has been an invited lecturer in many countries across the world.

WHEN: 28th June, 10am-12 noon

WHERE: City University, Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0HB. (nearest tube station- Angel)

COST: £45 per delegate (cheques made payable to "ASD-UK" Please sent payment or invoice to PO BOX 51399, London N1 7WN).

For more information on Patricia Howlin's talk, contact Yasmin on (0208)363-9834/(0797)313-8595, or visit www.asd-uk.org

Thanks to Matty Chalk from ASD-UK for contributing this information.

CENTRE 404 FAMILY SUPPORT- FOR ISLINGTON RESIDENTS

Centre 404 Family Support offers **free** sessions for Islington-resident parents of children with a special need. Please note that parents resident outside of Islington, professionals and others are also welcome to contact Centre 404 regarding these sessions! To book a place, contact (0207)445-8005 or (0207)697-1325. Sessions available include:

Brain Gym, led by Kay McCarroll.

Fridays 9th and 16th June, 10:30am-2pm

Used in numerous schools, Brain Gym consists of basic movements which can help improve the memory, learning, and behaviour of children, whatever their age or ability. These sessions teach Brain Gym movements.

AUTISM SPEAKS ANNUAL SPONSORED WALK, WINDSOR

Sunday 2nd July 2006 is the date of Autism Speaks' Second annual sponsored walk in The Great Park, Windsor. Please visit www.autismspeaks.org.uk for further information, details on how to register and also how to set up sponsorship.

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Autism Speaks' Project Administrator Lynn Hart for this information.

WENDY LAWSON: UK TOUR DATES AND AVAILABILITY

Wendy Lawson can offer a range of services to students, professionals, parents, and other individuals with ASC. She is experienced in speaking at Conferences and lectures, and can provide staff development training and workshops. Wendy even has designed and runs the highly-respected "Hope for the Future" Course, comprised of interactive workshops involving various practical activities designed to facilitate understanding of ASC.

The Surrey Branch of the National Autistic Society has a highly informative website, <http://www.mugsy.org> and this site hosts for Wendy's web page, which can be found at <http://www.mugsy.org/wendy/index.htm>. Wendy's web page contains information on Wendy, as well as some of the talks, interviews and further material she has given or written over the past few years. The web page also contains information on Wendy's tour dates. Wendy will be in the UK from the end of July through to Autumn 2006, and welcomes invitations from organizations interested in engaging her services. To do so, contact Bryan Craig at autism.centre@virgin.net Already during this period, Wendy will be speaking and running workshops in a variety of locations across the country, including Nottingham, Birmingham, Weston-Super-Mare, Burnham on Sea, Chepstow, Norwich, and Uckfield. Further details on Wendy's schedule and fees are available on her webpage.

AUTSCAPE 2006

Autescape is a residential conference organized for and managed by individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions. People who attend Autescape can listen to an impressive line-up of speakers, meet other individuals affected by autistic spectrum conditions, or just relax in a welcoming environment.

The first Autescape was held in 2005 and was so successful that planning is currently underway for Autescape 2006! Please note that individuals who do not have autistic spectrum conditions are also welcomed! Children are welcome and childcare is provided, but if children require a support level greater than 1:6 than parents will need to arrange their own support worker.

WHEN: 31 July- 4 August 2006

WHERE: Somerset

COST: @£250-£300 per person, which includes full-board accommodation.

To join the Autescape mailing list, email autescape-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Further information on Autescape is available on www.autescape.org and individual queries can be addressed to autescape@paradox.freereserve.co.uk

Thanks to Autescape for providing this information.

ASC RESEARCH: REQUESTS FOR PARTICIPANTS

GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Laura Crane is a postgraduate student in the Department of Psychology, at Goldsmiths College, University of London. She is currently working on a research project investigating memory functioning in adults with high-functioning autism and Asperger Syndrome. For details see:

<http://www.nas.org.uk/nas/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=714&a=9117>

Laura is looking for volunteers aged 18 years or over with a formal diagnosis of either high-functioning autism or Asperger Syndrome, that might be interested in participating in this project. Any interested persons are welcome to contact Laura directly at L.Crane@gold.ac.uk

REQUEST TO PROFESSIONALS FROM DPSYCH STUDENT AT CITY UNIVERSITY, LONDON

A Dpsych student at City University urgently requires psychologists/therapists who are currently working or have previously worked with people with Asperger Syndrome, to complete a short Questionnaire on their experiences. The Questionnaire genuinely takes only 15 minutes to complete, and everyone who participates will be entered into a prize draw to win a copy of Dermot Bowler's new book on ASC. To respond to this request, please email Matty Chalk at M.Chalk@city.ac.uk.

FINALLY- LEISURE FOR ALL AGES!

THE CINEMA EXHIBITORS' ASSOCIATION CARD (NATIONWIDE)

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card is a national card that can be used to verify that the holder is entitled for one free ticket, for a person (such as a parent/carer/sibling/friend) accompanying them to the cinema. The card is valid for three years from the date of issue and there is no limit to the amount of times it can be used.

Persons with autism and Asperger Syndrome are eligible to receive a card, *if* they receive either the Disability Living Allowance (any rate), Attendance Allowance, or hold a Disabled Person's Rail Card.

Application forms are available from cinemas across the UK supporting this Card. Applications can also be downloaded from the Cinema Exhibitors' Association website. Along with the form, a one-off £5 processing payment, passport sized photograph, and copies of Disability Living Allowance (or other applicable) Award proving entitlement to the Card must be posted. It takes a few weeks for the application form to be processed and the person eligible to receive their Card, but if persons apply now they should receive their Card prior to the summer holidays.

For further details, please contact:

The Card Network
The Technology Centre
Rossmore Business Park
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire, CH65 3EN
(0151)348-8020
Email: info@ceacard.co.uk

Or, visit the Cinema Exhibitor's Association Card website, <http://www.ceacard.co.uk>

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