

THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

St. Nicholas Academy for Autism Trust
Charity Registration Number 1104306
Edition No. 5
July 2006

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 Buissenet, 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>

CONTENTS

Page 1: Wendy Lawson Testimonial/Stop Press!

Page 2: Welcome to *The ASC Good Practice Guide* (includes information on the Guide and how to contribute information or to subscribe to the Guide).

Page 3: Recommended ASC Reading and Resources

Page 5: Children's and Youth Services

Page 7: Specialist Schools for Pupils aged 4-16

Page 8: Specialist Further Education

Page 9: Learning, Employment and Social Support for Adults

Page 10: Conferences, Lecturers, Seminars and Sessions

WELCOME TO THE ASC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Welcome to the fifth 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.

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!

RECOMMENDED ASC READING AND RESOURCES

AUTISM HUB

In 2006, ASC parent Kevin Leitch launched Autism Hub. The Hub's stated purpose is to: take "the best in autism-related blogging (discussion) and pull it all together in one easy-to-access interface."

About autistic spectrum conditions, the Hub states: "We seek no fundamental alteration to this state of being but we do seek to intervene sometimes should the situation require it."

According to the Hub, its bloggers are "disseminating truth, respect, positivity, objectivity and tolerance."

For further information on the Hub, please contact admin@autism-hub.co.uk or visit <http://www.autism-hub.co.uk>

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Kevin Leitch for creating the Hub.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE- REPORT ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Stephanie Moriarty for contributing this information.

Publication of the Committee's Third Report- Special Educational Needs

The Education and Skills Committee publishes its report on Special Educational Needs on Thursday 6 July 2006 at 00.01 (one minute past midnight on Thursday morning). (Third Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2005–06, HC 478).

Embargoed copies of the Report will be available for collection by Government departments, press and witnesses at 10.30 am on Tuesday 4 July from the reception desk, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. These should be requested in advance from the Committee Secretary, Miss Susan Ramsay (ramsays@parliament.uk).

Media enquiries: Please contact the Committee's Media Officer, Luke Robinson, on 020 7219 5693 (robinsonl@parliament.uk)

The report can also be ordered from The Stationery Office (tel: 0845 702 3474) or from the Parliamentary Bookshop (020 7219 3890), or can be viewed on the following website from 00.01 am on Thursday 6 July:

<http://www.parliament.uk/edskills/>

GETTING IT-

Using Information Technology to Empower People with Communication Difficulties

Authors Dinah Murray and Ann Aspinall

Jessica Kingsley Publishers, £12.99
Paperback, ISBN-10: 1-84310-375-3. ISBN-13: 9781843103752
192pp, 2006

The ASC Good Practice Guide extends its gratitude to Getting It co-author Dinah Murray for contributing the following information regarding this excellent resource:

“Getting IT has been written to show carers how easy and fruitful it can be to introduce those you care for to the joys of information technology. It's also written as a story about three (imagined/ composite) individuals with communication issues - one is AS, one does not speak, one has short-term memory loss. The story is about their discoveries and adventures, and those of the people who care for them - that part is not technical at-all, it is about people's lives. It shows how people's capacity to choose, to relate, and to contribute can all be enhanced if they have access to the sort of communication and information technology that is commonplace in 21st century society.

The book starts with the argument that introducing information technology and its benefits to people with communication issues is essential if government policies around e.g. inclusion are to be implemented effectively. The book finishes with wide ranging relevant practical advice about hardware, about software, and about useful websites. MS PowerPoint is favoured as an extremely easy to use and versatile program.

Since the book was written the Independent Living Bill has come into being, which provides rights to communication support and equipment among other things, and has specific recommendations concerning autism. Once the Independent Living Bill becomes law, care workers will be legally obliged to know how to make it work. This book is designed to help them be ready for that day.”

IMMERSIVE EDUCATION-KAR2OUCHE

Based in Oxford, Immersive Education is a specialist, multi-award winning ICT supplier to the education market. Its software is run in over 6,000 schools internationally, as well as in homes.

In October 2001, Immersiv e Education launched Kar2ouche storyboarding and role-play software. Subsequently, West Kent's Communication Interaction and Inclusion Services' own work in training staff on mainstream inclusion issues for students with social communication difficulties resulted in the Services' identification of the need for storyboarding and role-play software adapted and differentiated to meet the needs of these students. This led to a collaboration between Immersive Education and Kent Education Authority.

As a result of this collaboration, in Kar2ouche launched its Social Communication title (in both PC and Mac versions) in June 2005. Suitable for students working at the level of KS1-3, this title contains numerous pre-made activities covering areas including how to cope with lunch and break times, how to handle disruption to the general classroom routine, and classroom behaviour. Teachers can also create their own bespoke storyboards, to meet the individual needs of students.

Characters are in the form of wooden stick figures, which can be posed or coloured and facial expressions added, to depict different moods, emotions and actions.

Students can create animations, posters, articles and storyboards. They can add sound, text, or images into frames, and record their own voices and type their own work into caption windows,

speech and thought bubbles.

To run the Social Communication title in a school, the school also needs to purchase the title Kar2ouche Composer (also available in PC and Mac versions). In the words of the Immersive Education website, Kar2ouche Composer is:

“a highly interactive multimedia authoring tool, which comes with its own set of resources, including backgrounds, props, texts, audio...to enable students to exchange and share information and then review, modify and evaluate work as it progresses.”

Immersive Education have also launched a “Home Version” of the Social Communication title, to be used for instance by parents and students in their own home. The home version does not require purchase of Kar2ouche Composer.

For further information on Kar2ouche and Immersive Education, please visit:

<http://www.immersiveeducation.com/uk>

Alternatively, contact:

Immersive Education
The Old Malthouse
19a Paradise Street
Oxford OX1 1LD
Tel (01865)811000
Fax (01865)793177

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Barnet LEA's ASC Leading Edge Group for bringing this information to the attention of Christine Haugh.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH SERVICES

BRENT OUTREACH AUTISM TEAM (BOAT)- BLUE SKY VISION PROJECT 2006 (BRENT, NW LONDON)

On the morning of 17th June, helium balloons were being filled, pudding paint and corn flour were being prepared, the tinkling of steel pan band practising and visual symbols were being attached to building around two Brent settings to host the Blue Sky Vision event.

This was the third year of an event now funded by the educational authority to celebrate and provide a fun filled afternoon and raise awareness and understanding of autistic spectrum disorders.

The event originated three years ago with BOAT (Brent Outreach Autism Team) to provide a party for the children and families they support. Its aim was to host an event with energy, inspiration and acceptance for ASD. This year the project grew to a new level with one party at Fawood Children's Centre and second party being held at Manor School, inviting children attending Manor, Woodfield and Hay Lane schools.

Each event is held in a safe environment and is designed to support the children through visual symbols, a programme of events, and an invitation they decorate and bring to the event. It is staffed by people who know the children and have an understanding of ASD. The event is celebrating ASD and providing the children with their passions, whether it is computers, shaving foam, fire engines, music, jumping or trains!!! Siblings are also invited to the parties to have a fun filled time.

The day also provides a wonderful opportunity for parents and carers to 'let go' of their children and be safe in the knowledge that they are calm and happy. This allows parents the time to have a massage, chat to other parents, speak to an adult with Aspergers, gain information from the National Autistic Society and for some parents, just to sit down!



Lots of happy children and families left each venue...even when they were covered in paint and shaving foam!!!

What seemed like a huge mountain to climb three years ago has now become an established and fun filled event which the families and those running the day are inspired to continue every summer! Recommend it to anyone to arrange!

If you would like to know more, feel free to contact the BOAT team on 0208 838 0513. The ASC Good Practice Guide extends its gratitude to BOAT's Clare Henshaw for contributing this information.

FLAIN- FAMILIES LIVING WITH AUTISM IN NEWHAM (EAST LONDON)

Flain is a parent-led charity, supported by Newham Carers' Network working in partnership with The Renewal Programme. Flain has been funded for three years by BBC Children in Need. The aim of Flain is to improve the lives of children and families in Newham who are affected by Autism. Flain does this by offering a number of services. Flain offers a home visiting service, autism appropriate activities and awareness training, and a telephone helpline (contact number (0208)498-0444, open 9am-11am on Mondays and on Wednesdays, and 2pm-4pm on Fridays). The charity also functions on a strategic level, identifying local needs and gaps in provision. For further information on Flain, please write to the charity at PO Box 37080, Stratford, London E15 4WW, call the Flain helpline (number listed above) or mobile number (0796)240-9104, or visit the Flain website, <http://www.flain.org.uk>
The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Ann Fischer, Flain's Family Support Worker, for providing 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. 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! **On 1st July, SNAAP members enjoyed an all-expenses paid outing to Chessington World of Adventures. During summer holidays, SNAAP will continue to run, on Friday mornings, 10am-1pm.**

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

SOCIAL GROUPS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWEST OF ENGLAND

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Helen Hydes, NAS Development Coordinator- Out of Schools Clubs in the South West, for this information:

The NAS are running weekly clubs in the South West of England for children and young people with Asperger Syndrome. The groups provide a structured youth club provision in this region.

There is a club in Bristol (Lockleaze) for 8-13 year olds. The South Gloucester group is for young people aged 12-16 and meets in Little Stoke on Thursdays, whilst the North Somerset group meets in Nailsea on Mondays.

There are two clubs based in Bath. The younger group is for 8-13 year olds and meets on Mondays, whilst the older group is for 14-19 year olds and meets on Wednesdays. These groups alternate between a youth group setting and activities within the community. Activities are led by choices made by the children and young people, and have included arts, crafts, computing, sport, and cookery. For further information, please contact Helen Hydes on Helen.Hydes@nas.org.uk

SPECIALIST SCHOOLS, FOR PUPILS AGED 4-16

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/centre which caters for students with autism/Asperger Syndrome. This Edition features The Wing Centre, based in Hampshire.

THE WING CENTRE (BOLDRE, NEAR LYMINGTON, HAMPSHIRE)

The Wing Centre offers places to 16-19 year olds with Asperger Syndrome and associated difficulties. Places are only offered to males, and placements are made on a 38-week residential basis. The Centre consists of 2 residential provisions in Dorset, along with the main site, which is located in the rural village of Boldre.

Originally part of The Hesley Group, in 2005 the Wing Centre's ownership transferred to Cambian Education Services.

The emphasis of the curriculum is on the skills required for independent adult life. Study at local further education Colleges is available. All students have both Individual Education Plans and Care Plans, regularly reviewed. Apart from the academic studies and evening/weekend activities arranged by care staff, students are provided with high levels of therapeutic support.

Parents, Social Services, Health Authorities and Education Authorities are all welcome to contact the Head regarding initial enquiries for referrals and/or visits to the Centre. However, applications can not proceed any further prior to an official request for a placement. An official request can be made by Social Services, the Education Authority, or from a solicitor prior to an SEN tribunal. Along with this request the potential applicant's paperwork needs to be sent, in order for the Wing Centre to make an initial assessment of the person's suitability for placement and compatibility with

existing Wing Centre students.
For more information on the Wing Centre, please contact:

Angela Nightingale, Head teacher
The Wing Centre
Vicar's Hill
Boldre
Lymington
Hampshire SO41 5QB
Tel: (01590)677986
Fax:(01590)613093
Alternatively, visit: <http://www.thewingcentre.org>

LEARNING, EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADULTS

ASPECT ACTION DAY

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Genevieve Edmonds, author of The Asperger Love Guide, for this information:

CALLING ALL ADULTS WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME...WE NEED YOUR HELP!

A small group of volunteers with an interest in pushing forward supportive services for adults with Asperger Syndrome (AS) organised an event entitled ASPECT Action Day (Asperger Syndrome People Each Contributing for Themselves) which was held in Manchester on 27 April, 2006.

One of the main objectives of the event was to highlight the issues faced by Asperger adults across the UK in getting appropriate, timely and helpful support. At the event a questionnaire was introduced which was prepared in order to collate responses from adults (rather than professionals or carers speaking on their behalf) across the UK with AS (diagnosed or not).

The responses from the questionnaire are required in order to put together a free report outlining in truly representative fashion what the needs of (adult) individuals with AS are. The report will be prepared by Luke Beardon, Senior Lecturer in Autism, Sheffield Hallam University and Genevieve Edmonds of 'Asperger Strategies & Solutions'.

The report will consist of responses to the questionnaire by adults with AS. Thus, it aims to be truly representative of what adults with AS actually require, as opposed to what other people think or assume. Every response will be included in the report, so this really is a genuine chance for all adults with AS to make their voices heard, should they wish to do so.

Once the report has been written it will be available on the internet for anyone to download. It is hoped that it will be used by individuals and organisations to drive forward the support needs agenda at all levels from local authority to government. The report will also be used to feed into the Working Party on Autism and Neurodiversity at the Disability Rights Commission (DRC).

Would you like to have your say in improving supportive services for Asperger adults?

READ ON! The more people who fill in the questionnaire, the better

We would like as large a number of respondents as possible, to get the best possible representative picture. Please pass on details to as many adults with AS as you can. We hope for this to be the world's biggest ever consultation process for Asperger Adults. Once completed, we hope that the report will be a beneficial tool for activating appropriate change.

Where can I complete the questionnaire?

It can be completed online at www.aspectaction.org.uk, from where you can also download a hard copy if you prefer to do it by hand. Alternatively, if you do not have internet access, you can request a copy by writing to: ASPECT, Suite 2 York House, Vicarage Lane, Bowden, Altrincham WA14 3BA.

Please return hard copies to the above address, or fax to 0870 479 6469. (national rate from BT line. Other networks may vary)

Deadline for submitting completed questionnaires - 31st August 2006

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.

SOCIAL GROUPS FOR ADULTS IN THE SOUTHWEST OF ENGLAND

Three different social groups for adults aged 16+ with Asperger Syndrome or High-Functioning Autism are being run by the NAS in the SW of England. The groups are run in Bristol, Yeovil, and Gloucester. The groups meet once a month to go out, socialise, and have fun. Activities may include going to the cinema, the pub for a drink, or bowling. The groups are suitable for individuals who do not require additional support. Efi Chatzopoulou is the NAS Social Programmes Manager for the SW of England, and is the person who organises, sets up and runs the groups. For more information on the groups please visit <http://www.nas.org.uk/socialprogrammes>. Many thanks to Efi for contributing this information to *The ASC Good Practice Guide*.

SUNDERLAND ADULT SOCIAL GROUP (TYNE AND WEAR)

The National Autistic Society has started a social group for adults with AS and high functioning autism who live in the Tyne and Wear area. The group meets once a month, for two hours, in Sunderland.

NAS social groups have been running all over the country since September 2004, thanks to funding from Vodafone and the Department of Health. They are open to people with Asperger syndrome or those actively seeking a diagnosis who are over the age of 16 and would like to socialise and meet other people with the disability.

For further details, please contact Linda Kennedy, Social Programmes Manager (North), on (0191) 2263610. Meetings for the rest of this year are as follows:-

July 26th, Aug 23rd, Sept 27th, Oct 25th, Nov 29th and Dec 21st, on which day the Group is going for a Christmas meal. *The ASC Good Practice Guide* warmly thanks Linda Kennedy from the NAS, for contributing this information

CONFERENCES, LECTURES, SEMINARS AND SESSIONS

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

Autscape is a residential conference organized for and managed by individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions. People who attend Autscape 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 Autscape was held in 2005 and was so successful that planning is currently underway for Autscape 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 Autscape mailing list, email autscape-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Further information on Autscape is available on www.autscape.org and individual queries can be addressed to autscape@paradox.freemove.co.uk

Thanks to Autscape for providing this information.

NADO CONFERENCE: ASPERGER'S SYNDROME AND HIGH-FUNCTIONING AUTISM AFFECTING TEENAGERS AND ADULTS

NADO Ltd. Is the National Association of Disability Officers, the professional organisation for disability and support staff in further and higher education.

In association with NADO, the Adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder Assessment and Diagnosis Service for Swindon (AASDADSS), present a one-day conference on Asperger's Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism Affecting Teenagers and Adults. The Conference will include professional, parent/carer and service user speakers.

DATE: Tuesday 21st September 2006

WHERE: University of Bath in Swindon

COSTS: (including lunch and refreshments) £60 for parents/carers/service users; £85 for professionals

For further information, please contact:

Beverley Fraser

NATO Ltd.

Moulton Park Business Centre

Redhouse Road

Moulton Park

Northampton, NN3 6AQ

(01604)497933

admin@nado.org.uk

TECHNOLOGY FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD- A ONE DAY CONFERENCE (COVENTRY)

The ASC Good Practice Guide warmly thanks Andree Woodcock, organizer of the conference, for this information.

"Technology for Children with ASD" is a one-day conference on engaging children with autism through technology and multimedia. This AHRC supported event is hoped to bring together

researchers working on digital or multimedia technology for children and others with ASD. The target audience is those who work with children as well as fellow researchers. The papers will be published (at least) on a DVD.

WHERE: Coventry University Technocentre

WHEN: 6th October 2006

COST: Free of charge

CALL FOR PAPERS: if interested in presenting a paper please send in a title and a one paragraph abstract by July 20th.

For further information on participating or attending, please contact:

Andre Woodcock

Senior Research Fellow

The Design Institute

Coventry School of Art and Design

Tel: (02476)887832

July, 2006

End of Fifth Edition