

Dear Friends

As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so plus other information that may be of interest. We are hoping to sell more tickets for our Introduction to Autism course next month otherwise we may have to cancel this but we are pleased to report we have now sold out our Tony Attwood conference in May.

Introduction to Autism parent/carer seminar – last chance to book

As previously announced, this *Introduction to Autism* parent seminar is on **Thursday 6 April** at Fleming Park Bowling Club, Kornwestheim Way, Eastleigh, SO50 9NL from 9.30am to 2.30pm.

The training day was organised following requests from members, so we were hoping for a good response, however, we currently only have 7 tickets booked and we need 20 to make this event viable. We will soon have to make a decision as to whether to cancel this if bookings do not pick up – so please help spread the word.

The seminar is primarily aimed at parents of children/young people (up to about 18 years) who have relatively recently received a diagnosis and want a general overview of autism. However, the day may also be useful for anyone who wants to look at the bigger picture or maybe fill in gaps in their knowledge. The seminar will be interactive and cover:

- What is autism
- Sensory issues
- Strengths
- Things to be aware of
- Transition in education
- Diagnosis and post-diagnosis
- Benefits
- Autism Act and Hampshire Autism Partnership Board
- Support and contacts

The cost is £20 per person. Refreshments and a light lunch are included.

Tickets can be booked using our online booking system at:

<https://nassouthants.yapsody.com/event/index/63322/introduction-to-autism>

Please note: booking will close on Monday 27 March.

Payment can be made by credit card, debit card or PayPal account. To do either of these, please select the Pay by PayPal option (please note it is not necessary to join PayPal if paying by credit or debit card).

To ensure you get a place and that we can run this event, please book ASAP to avoid disappointment.

Special Needs Information Day 2017, Yateley

Don't forget that this popular event, organised by Support4SEND and Parent Voice, is taking place **this Saturday 25 March 2017**, 10.00am to 3.00pm, at Yateley School, School Lane, Yateley, GU46 6NW. This free event is for parents and carers of children with special needs, young people, and those involved in supporting them. You can drop in and browse displays on a variety of topics related to special needs. We will be present with our autism information stand.

There will also be the following free bookable workshops and talks held throughout the day:

- Autism awareness
- Outcomes and EHC plans
- Introduction to PECS and the Pyramid Approach to Education
- Dyslexia – advice for parents and carers
- Dyslexia – clearer sounds for easier spelling
- Resilience
- How to parent the anxious teenager
- Supporting children with sensory processing difficulties
- Wills, Trusts and Powers of Attorney

There will also be a keynote speech from **Alex Kelly** on developing social and friendship skills.

Information on how to book places on the above sessions is available at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/specialneeds/support4send/sen-informationday-2015.htm>.

There will be free parking on site, and if you bring children along there will be face painting and craft activities with Caterpillar Crafts, and they can practise their circus skills with Mr Giant. There will also be food and refreshments available to purchase. To find out more, contact 01962 845870 or email enquiries.support4send@hants.gov.uk.

Family Youth Club

Our next Youth Club takes place on **Saturday 1 April** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. Children accompanied by their families are welcome.

Our usual facilities will be available and we hope the children and young people will enjoy the activities we have on offer.

PLEASE NOTE: Parents must be responsible for their children during the duration of the youth club and must remain in the same room as their child at all times – thank you.

£1.50 per child. Entry is via the children's garden at the rear of the church, next to the car park. Full details, including a map, can be found at www.shantsnas.org.uk/Home/Family%20Youth%20Club

LEGO club



Our next club is also on **Saturday 1 April** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church.

This is for children with autism from ages 8 to 13. The club is currently full but for more information and to express interest in your child joining the waiting list, complete the form at www.shantsnas.org.uk/home/lego

PLEASE NOTE: We have been advised that, unfortunately, this type of therapy is not successful with children who have an ADHD or PDA diagnosis.

Support Group Meeting

Our March meeting is also our Annual General Meeting and will take place a week later than usual due to Easter. The meeting is on **Monday, 24 April** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

The meeting will commence with a short AGM and we hope to have an interesting guest speaker – more news on this to follow.

There will be plenty of time at our meeting to have a chat and to browse our Resource Library, comprising over 350 books, videos and DVDs on many aspects of autism and Asperger syndrome.

If you have any books due back or overdue, please don't forget to bring them along.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to our Tony Attwood conference, there will be no Support group meeting in May – we resume our usual monthly meetings on Monday 19 June.

Our Southampton social groups

Both our Children's and Adults' social groups are meeting regularly on alternate Tuesday evenings at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. All dates for the next few months can be found on our website.

At the children's group meeting on **Tuesday 28 March**, there will be a variety of activities provided by Crafty Bug Café. Hopefully, pizza-making will take place after Easter on **Tuesday 25 April**.

For more details, email nassouthampton@gmail.com or contact Sue (023 8043 2612) or Tracey (07532 282301).

Tony Attwood conference



We are pleased to announce that this seminar is now sold out. 400 delegates will be attending this event on **19 May**. Full details of the day will be sent to all tickets holders nearer the time and can be found on our website at www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA. Tony last visited us in 2011 (which was also a sell-out) and we are delighted to be able to welcome him to the UK again in 2017. His programme will cover many aspects of autism across all age groups.

We are also pleased to inform you that, in addition to stands from a number of local organisations, we will have three book stands present: [Jessica Kingsley Publishers](#) (the UK's largest publisher of books on autism), [The Curly Hair Project](#) and [Talkabout Books](#).

Autism and Mental Health consultation report published

In October and November 2016, our branch carried out a consultation about the way in which mental health affects children and adults with autism, and accessing services in Hampshire in the last 3 years. The consultation was funded and supported by Healthwatch Hampshire. The project was aimed at children, young people and adults with autism, their families/carers and professionals who work with them.

The branch worked in partnership with Hampshire Autism Voice (HAV) – the voluntary parent/carer/people-with-autism group on the Hampshire Autism Partnership Board (HAPB). Autism Hampshire was commissioned to facilitate focus groups and one-to-one interviews.

The consultation consisted of an online survey to which 146 people responded. At the same time, two focus groups for parents and carers took place: in total 36 people attended. There were seven 1:1 telephone interviews conducted with 6 adults with autism plus a parent of an adult who have accessed mental health services in Hampshire.

Once the online survey had closed, the initial results were discussed in a focus group with professionals to discuss their views. This group consisted of Mental Health professionals, Hampshire County Council and Healthwatch Hampshire representatives.

The report is now available and can be downloaded at www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/Newsarchive#060317_01.

We look forward to the recommendations being taken on board by autism and mental health organisations to ensure an improvement to services.

We are also currently preparing a short film in which some of those who took part in the consultation express their views on the autism and mental health.

Join Shop Raise

Collect FREE funds for us

any time you shop with

easyfundraising
feel good shopping

#MoreThanAGift

Sign up now



As part of the NAS' ongoing public understanding campaign, *Too Much Information*, they're gathering real stories from autistic people, their families and friends. Sharing these stories (in the media, on social media and in newsletters) helps them to show people the reality of life on the autism spectrum and improve public understanding of autism.

This year, they want to share examples of how family, friends, colleagues – or even strangers – can help to make life a little easier for autistic people by making small changes to the way they behave. For instance, a cashier at a shop recognising that a customer is feeling overwhelmed and giving them time and space.

If you, or someone you know, can tell the NAS about your experiences of people being understanding or offering support in everyday situations, they'd love to hear from you.

- Perhaps someone in the supermarket showed kindness and consideration when things were getting overwhelming in the queue?
- Maybe a friend helped you prepare for a day out by sending you the information you needed in advance, and keeping to plan?
- Or, could it be that a colleague changed their way of communicating with you to make it easier for you to process what they were saying?

If you'd like to tell them about your experiences, please email tmi@nas.org.uk.

Parent Forum – Alex Kelly Ltd

Following the success of her first parent seminar, speech therapist, Alex Kelly, is running a programme of seminars at Speaking Space, Fleming House, Alma Road, Romsey, SO51 SEP from 7.00 to 9.00pm during the year.

All the dates and topics can be found at <http://alexkelly.biz/2017/03/15/parent-forums-2017>. Entry is a £5.00 contribution at the door towards the costs and cake! If you are interested email office@alexkelly.biz or phone on 023 8098 7134.

Support for partners

As mentioned previously, we have a number of members whose partners are on the autistic spectrum (both diagnosed and undiagnosed). A number of you have expressed an interest in getting together on an informal basis to discuss issues around living with a partner with autism? We are currently investigating this possibility and will let you know as soon as we have something arranged. If you are interested and have not already contacted us, please get in touch.

Anxiety and Sensory Integration

New Forest Parent Social Support is running a meeting focusing on Anxiety and Sensory Integration. It is scheduled for **Thursday 27 April** from 7.00 to 9.00pm at Milford on Sea Library, Village Hall, Park Road, Milford on Sea, Hampshire, SO41 OQU. If you are interested, please contact Lynne Franklyn at office.sjtealconsultancy@gmail.com

Autism-friendly haircuts

For some children and adults with autism, having a haircut can be a difficult sensory experience. Sizzor Sisters, at 324 Hinkler Rd, Southampton SO19 6DF, is holding an ASD/SEN Evening on **Thursday 30 March** from 4.00 to 7.00pm. Following their successful launch night their next session will cater for children and adults. Feel free to either walk in or call their Salon on 023 8044 4458 to register an interest or make an appointment. They will have their sensory bottles, balloons and bubbles for use if needed as well as sensory reducing clippers.

Alice's Tea Party

FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY! For children/young people with SEND (ages 0-18) and their siblings. A half-day session to include interactive, multi-sensory walkabout performance and lunchtime games, craft activities and sensory tent (on-site parking, hoist and changing facilities, secure venue). At Shepherd's Down School, Compton on Tuesday 11 April (12.45 to 3.15pm) and Wednesday 12 April (11.15am to 1.45pm or 12.45 to 3.15pm. £4 per person. To book a place, please contact Head2Head Theatre, Tel/Fax: 01372 278021, Mobile: 07519 747 290, Email: h2hoffice@gmail.com. Full details at www.head2headtheatre.co.uk/family-holiday-activities/february-2017.

Saintsability Inclusive Community Sessions

Engaging activities for young people and adults with disabilities and/or additional needs – all ages and abilities welcome. Open Access Football Sessions are being held on Mondays, 10-11am, at River Park Leisure Centre, Winchester, for all abilities aged 16+. They are FREE to attend. For more information email mpink@saintsfc.co.uk or call 023 8071 1923.

Online support for autistic women and girls

The Right Click for Women and Girls programme offers online support to autistic women and girls, their families and the professionals who support them. In an article by Dr Catriona Stewart PhD, Autism Advisor at Scottish Autism, and Charlene Tait, Director of Autism Practice and Research at Scottish Autism, they discuss this free online programme which is supported by the Scottish Government. Read the article at <http://network.autism.org.uk/good-practice/case-studies/online-support-autistic-women-and-girls>.

Peer mentoring and autism in school

Ryan Bradley is a Research Fellow at the Autism Centre for Education and Research (ACER), University of Birmingham. In this interview, Ryan discusses the inclusion of autistic students in mainstream schools and the benefits and limitations of peer mentoring. View the interview at <http://network.autism.org.uk/knowledge/insight-opinion/peer-mentoring-and-autism-school-interview-ryan-bradley>.

Living with autism: Disney films helped me speak again

This is a fascinating video about a film that was shortlisted for an Oscar about a young man with autism. You can watch it at www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-38219561

Reminders:

Free fundraising packs for World Autism Awareness Week from The National Autistic Society

Getting involved with World Autism Awareness Week next year will change lives. Help NAS to raise money and awareness so that as many people as possible learn about the reality of living with autism. Register online at <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/world-autism-awareness-week.aspx> to get a free fundraising pack to give you lots of ideas for how to get involved in your community, at work or at school. We will quiz, bake, walk, collect... Until everyone understands. Join us!

Partyman World of Play SEN sessions

Partyman World of Play (formerly Gambado), Unit L10, Swan Leisure Centre, Eastleigh, SO50 5SF is a children's soft play centre that focuses on great customer care and making children smile. The venue has a café, slides, ball cannon areas, climbers, rockers, and not to mention a designated toddler and baby area. They offer complimentary morning and evening sessions dedicated to children and young adults with special needs where they close the entire venue just for you.

Morning sessions will be held from 9.00 to 10.00am on Sundays: 26 March, 30 April, 21 May, 25 June, 30 July, 27 August, 24 September, 29 October, 26 November and 17 December.

Evening sessions will be held from 6.00 to 8.00pm on Wednesdays: 5 April, 3 May, 7 June, 5 July, 2 August, 6 September, 4 October, 1 November, 6 December.

For more information or to book, call Jessica on 02380 018336 or email jessica.campbell@partyman.co.uk.

Minecraft and Meltdowns Fun Fridays

Relax with your friends and family over coffee and meet members of Aspergers Adventures–Minecraft and Meltdowns. Plus, from Dobble to Warhammer, the expert Games Masters from Board in the City will help you rediscover how fun board games can be. Only £1 each to access the huge games library. Barista style coffee; WIFI; Meeecraft demos; Homemade food and drinks; Gluten-free and vegan options; Quiet room; Be yourself! At Board in the City, 38–40 Onslow Road, Southampton, SO14 0JG from 6.00 to 8.00pm on **31 March, 14 April (4-8pm), 28 April and 12 May**.

Visiting the Hampshire Countryside and Exploring the New Forest by Bus booklets

We still have a few of these booklets left which will be available to our next support group meeting. These are designed for families and teachers of children with autism and can also be downloaded free from <http://autismandnature.org.uk/>

Dimensions autism-friendly cinema screenings

Dimensions work with ODEON, Cineworld, Vue and Showcase to host Autism Friendly Screenings at over 250 cinemas nationwide. See what autism-friendly cinema screenings are coming to a cinema near you at <https://www.dimensions-uk.org/families/autism-friendly-environments/autism-friendly-screenings/>

Hampshire Local Autism Directory

The Local Autism Directory (LAD) is funded by Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth (SHIP), 8 CCGs and Adult Services, Hampshire County Council. Information within it covers children and adults. Visit the LAD at <http://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/local-autism-directory/directory/>

First Steps to Autism Information – local guides

Autism Hampshire's set of useful local guides for Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth for people when they first want to know more about autism and the local support services available. Available from the Hampshire Local Autism Directory at <https://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/local-autism-directory/directory/#stepbystepguides>

Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Services (HSPSS)

The Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Service (HSPSS) has been commissioned by the Children and Maternity Collaborative of the five Hampshire CCGs. The service provides parenting programmes across Hampshire both in a group setting and individually in family homes for parents/carers who have children aged 5-17 that are:

- diagnosed with an autistic spectrum condition (ASC)
- diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- displaying troubling or challenging behaviours associated with mild-moderate conduct disorder
- teenagers displaying anti-social behaviour including child-to-parent violence.

Please either email hampshire.parenting@barnardos.org.uk or call 01489 799178 to find out more.

My World, National Autistic Society

The NAS offers a FREE autism classroom resource pack and fortnightly resource emails for teachers who sign up to *My World*. Please pass this information on to all teachers you know. For a video with more information, please visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv66Q-MUxqc and sign up at www.autism.org.uk/myworld

Friends of In Touch

This registered charity in Eastleigh, funded by the BIG Lottery, supports children and young people with autism. The aim is to enable anxious or socially-vulnerable children and young people to feel more engaged with mainstream education and social activity by helping them develop self-confidence, self-esteem and coping skills. Lots of fun activities include cooking, arts and crafts, bushcraft, games, construction toys for the Junior group (9 to 13) and cookery, pamper evenings, film nights, quizzes, bowling, book club, sports, meals out and BBQs for the Senior group (13 to 21).

There are currently vacancies in both groups which meet at Y-Zone Youth Centre, Fair Oak on Tuesdays during term time (Juniors 4.30 to 6.00pm and Seniors 6.30 to 8.30pm). Holiday groups are also planned. For full details visit www.friendsofintouch.org.uk. Anyone interested should contact info@friendsofintouch.org.uk or call 07474 539539 prior to attending the groups.

Our Resource Library



Our library is available to members at our support group meetings and a small selection is available at our family youth club. Members can join the library for a one-off donation of £5. We now have around 350 books, videos, DVDs and games. Up to 3 items may be borrowed for a maximum loan of 2 months. We do ask that items are returned promptly to enable others to borrow them.

Calling all coffee drinkers!

Do you, your friends or colleagues use Tassimo coffee machines?
If so, you can help us raise funds.

Tassimo wants to save TDISCs and outer flow wrap packaging from going to landfill. For the total weight of the TDISCs and outer foil packaging we collect, we get TerraCycle points which are converted into cash for us. **To date we have raised over £2000.**

Please bring along your TDISCs and outer flow wrap packaging (they do not have to be cleaned) to any of our meetings/activities. Even better, get all your friends involved too.

Also, if you have a link with a local supermarket or place where a collection bin could be situated, please let us know.



Help us boost our fundraising

A great way to raise money for us for free – shopping online through *easyfundraising*.

Whenever you buy anything online (presents, groceries, clothes, books, train tickets, hotel rooms, etc.) you can raise a free donation for our Branch. Over 2,700 retailers have registered with the site, including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco who donate a percentage of what you spend to us to say thank you for shopping with them.

1. Sign up – go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas and click on the button to sign up.
2. Shop – from the *easyfundraising* website, search for the retailer you'd like to shop with and click through to the retailer to make your purchase. This tells the retailer you came from *easyfundraising*. The price is exactly the same as if you'd visited the retailer directly.
3. Get a donation – after you've made your purchase, the retailer will give you a cash reward that *easyfundraising* turn into a donation for our Branch

Please be assured that using the *easyfundraising* website will not cost you a penny. There are no catches or hidden charges and we benefit from any donations you make once registered.

Thank you for your support.

Stationery BOOKS, DVDs & GAMES HOLIDAYS
CLOTHES HOME APPLIANCES INSURANCE GIFTS
BROADBAND & UTILITIES SCHOOL STUFF MOBILES
TRAVEL ELECTRONICS BUSINESS SUPPLIES GROCERIES

What do you buy online?

Whatever you buy online, you can raise free donations for us by simply buying through **easyfundraising**

Start raising free donations now!

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas

WITH OVER 2,700 RETAILERS TO CHOOSE FROM

amazon.co.uk John Lewis Viking TESCO Asda M.S. and others

As always, for full details of all our meetings, other dates, news items and information, please visit our [website](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk).

Regards

David & Rachel Carter

The National Autistic Society, South Hampshire Branch
Email: shants@nas.org.uk | Website: www.shantsnas.org.uk
Registered as a Charity. No. 269425

You will have received this news update because we have your contact details on our list. Should you no longer wish to receive information, please let us know and we will remove you from the list. Thank you.