

New Publications – AET Newsletter, August 2010

TITLE: Effects of cognitive behavioral therapy on daily living skills in children with high-functioning autism and concurrent anxiety disorders

AUTHOR: Drahota A. et al

SOURCE: Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 2010, May 28

CBT is a promising treatment for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and focuses, in part, on children's independence and self-help skills. In a study of 40 children, results provided preliminary evidence that CBT may yield increased independence and daily living skills among children with ASD.

TITLE: You need to know

AUTHOR: Madders T.

PUBLISHER: The National Autistic Society

A report from the campaign on mental health and children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) by The National Autistic Society (NAS) in 2010.

Download free of charge at: <http://www.autism.org.uk/26192>

TITLE: Mental health in children and young people with autism: a guide for parents and carers

AUTHOR: The National Autistic Society

This guide provides a brief overview of the sorts of mental health problems children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) may experience; information and advice on preventing and reducing mental health problems and promoting emotional wellbeing; and information on the different types of help and support available.

Download free of charge at: <http://www.autism.org.uk/26192>

TITLE: Social benefits of a tangible user interface for children with autistic spectrum conditions

AUTHOR: Farr W., Yuill N., Raffle H.

SOURCE: Autism, 2010, May 19

A study of Topobo, a computerised construction toy with programmable movement, to support social interaction in children with autism spectrum conditions (ASC). Groups of either typically developing children or those with ASC had group play sessions with Topobo and with LEGO and social interaction was observed.

TITLE: Tension, strain and anxiety: stress reduction techniques for people affected by autism spectrum disorders

AUTHOR: Angel D.

SOURCE: Autism Asperger's Digest, 2010, May-June, pp.42-45

This article presents practical techniques for managing stress in: children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), teens with an ASD, parents of children with an ASD, teachers of children with an ASD, and adults with an ASD.

TITLE: Guidance on responding to people with mental ill health or learning disabilities

AUTHOR: National Policing Improvement Agency

Sets out procedures for police officers dealing with people they come across who have mental health problems or a learning disability. Autism spectrum disorders are among the conditions included in this guidance.

Download from: <http://www.npia.police.uk/en/15863.htm>

TITLE: Child and adolescent mental health services: an operational handbook

AUTHOR: Richardson G. ed, Partridge I. ed, Barrett J. ed

PUBLISHER: Royal College of Psychiatrists

ISBN: 9781904671800

Explains in operational terms how child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) can best be delivered. The operation of each of the four tiers of service provision is described with specific examples at each tier.

TITLE: Supporting people with autism through adulthood

AUTHOR: National Audit Office

The DVD accompanies the National Audit Office report 'Supporting people with autism through adulthood', which examines services for adults with autism and their carers in England, including health and social care, education, benefits and employment support. This DVD contains films summarising the key information contained within the four sections of the report. It also includes an introductory film on 'What is autism?', and the recommendations and conclusions of the report.

TITLE: An investigation into behaviours which challenge at university: the impact of neurotypical expectations on autistic students

AUTHOR: Lawson J.

SOURCE: Good Autism Practice, 2010, Vol. 11(1), pp. 45-51

Students on the autism spectrum are expected to understand and function in university environments, which are set up to be understood by neurotypical students. The responses and behaviours of students with autism to academic and social demands are often misinterpreted and staff need to put in support that enables these students to engage in activities and to thrive in a university environment.

TITLE: Minimising the stress of the PhD viva for students with Asperger syndrome

AUTHOR: Martin N.

SOURCE: Good Autism Practice, 2010, Vol. 11(1), pp. 52-57

The author explores the issues for students with Asperger syndrome when dealing with their PhD viva and makes recommendations on how they might be supported. Viva examinations are stressful for all students and many of the strategies suggested could be of use to other students during this process.

TITLE: Which school? for special needs 2010/11

AUTHOR: Bosberry-Scott W. ed

PUBLISHER: John Catt Educational

This guide contains a comprehensive directory of independent and non-maintained schools in Britain that provide for children with sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and autism spectrum disorders. It contains editorials written by experts examining various aspects of providing education for those with special learning difficulties and an appendix of maintained schools.

TITLE: Effects of water exercise swimming program on aquatic skills and social behaviors in children with autism spectrum disorders

AUTHOR: Pan C.Y.

SOURCE: Autism, 2010, 14(1), pp. 9-28

The study investigates the effectiveness of a water exercise swimming program (WESP) on the aquatic skills and social behaviours of boys with autism. Two groups were tested

and in both cases, results indicate that the WESP improved aquatic skills in the participants, and holds potential for social improvements.

TITLE: Reasonable adjustments for individuals on the autism spectrum

AUTHOR: Grandin T.

SOURCE: Autism Asperger's Digest, 2010, May-June, pp.20-21

This article discusses what constitute reasonable adjustments for people with an autism spectrum disorder when studying in higher education. The author warns against developing a 'handicapped mentality' and requesting only specific and achievable adjustments to assist during studying and testing.

TITLE: A little extra help: accommodations and modifications for the student with ASD

AUTHOR: Freschi D.

SOURCE: Autism Asperger's Digest, 2010, May-June, pp.28-31

A discussion of adjustments within schools to accommodate the needs of children and young people with autism spectrum disorders, including descriptions of curriculum or teaching modifications, along with case studies when changes were introduced.

TITLE: Social and academic inclusion through accommodations and modifications to curriculum: part two

AUTHOR: Shore S.

SOURCE: Autism File, 2009, 33, pp. 30-31

The article discusses how pupils with autism spectrum disorders can be included by adapting and modifying the teaching curriculum, covering how to respond to difficulties, how to encourage participation, how to provide alternate activity, and how to substitute the curriculum.

TITLE: Sharing good practice in autism education

AUTHOR: Critchley S.J.

SOURCE: Autism File, 2009, 33, pp.70-72

Describes the work and mission of the AET, with an overview of the first piece of research they commissioned by the University of Birmingham's Autism Centre for Education and Research. It looks at the challenges families face in accessing appropriate education and support and highlights the AET's resources for sharing good practice and toolkits.

TITLE: Bringing social skills training into the digital age

AUTHOR: Guercio J. M.

SOURCE: Autism File, 2009, 33, pp. 106-109

Discusses the use of computer software for social skills training with people with autism, building on and utilising the exceptional skills many people with autism have, in particular spatial skills. Also discusses the use of visual activity schedules and applied behaviour analysis.

TITLE: Interactive visual timetable for home and school use

AUTHOR: Black B., UK Education Consortium

PUBLISHER: Down's Syndrome Association

A CD-ROM of an interactive visual timetable for home and school use

TITLE: The savant syndrome: an extraordinary condition. A synopsis: past, present, future

AUTHOR: Treffert D. A.

SOURCE: In Happé F. and Frith U. (2010) Autism and talent. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-12

Savant syndrome is a rare, but extraordinary, condition in which persons with serious mental health disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD), have some 'island of genius' which stands in marked, incongruous contrast to overall disabilities. This paper presents a brief review of the phenomenology of savant skills, the history of the concept and implications for education and future research.

TITLE: The SCERTS model: implementation and evaluation in a primary special school

AUTHOR: O'Neill J. et al

SOURCE: Good Autism Practice, 2010, Vol. 11 (1), pp. 7-15

The paper evaluates the implementation of the SCERTS model with four pupils on the autism spectrum within a primary special school. SCERTS encompasses many of the key principles of good practice and can be seen as a way of working with children that alters the culture of the school and adult style, rather than as a single intervention.

TITLE: From exclusion to inclusion: planning for successful reintegration into a special school

AUTHOR: Payne A.A.

SOURCE: Good Autism Practice, 2010, Vol. 11 (1), pp. 16 - 22

Many pupils on the autism spectrum are excluded from both mainstream and special schools as a result of their challenging behaviour. This paper gives an account of how staff at a school for children with moderate learning difficulties worked successfully with the parents of an eleven year old boy to gradually introduce him to school, following exclusion from another special school and a short period at a pupil referral unit.

TITLE: Assessing musical skills in autistic children who are not savants

AUTHOR: Heaton P.

SOURCE: In Happé F. and Frith U. (2010) Autism and talent. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 151-159

Until recently little was researched about the musical skills and potential of individuals with autism who are not savants. Recent studies investigating music perception, cognition and learning in musically untrained children with autism have revealed a pattern of abilities that are either enhanced or spared. For example, increased sensitivity to musical pitch and timbre is frequently observed. Data from empirical studies show that many children with autism possess musical potential that can and should be developed.

TITLE: Autism and epilepsy: historical perspective

AUTHOR: Tuchman R., Cuccaro M., Alessandri M.

SOURCE: Brain Development, 2010, May 24

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and epilepsy co-occur in approximately 30% of individuals with either condition. While there is no single unifying ASD-epilepsy phenotype, understanding potential commonalities in subgroups of children with an ASD-epilepsy phenotype will help explain the physiology of both ASD and epilepsy. A key concept that has emerged is the strong association between intellectual disability and a higher prevalence of epilepsy in individuals with ASD. An emerging consensus is that shared developmental genetic, molecular and pathophysiological mechanisms exist

and account for the common co-occurrence of ASD and epilepsy.

TITLE: Assessment of feeding problems in children with autism spectrum disorders

AUTHOR: Seiverling L., Williams K., Sturmey P.

SOURCE: Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities, 2010, Jun 01

Feeding problems are common among children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs), but the assessment of feeding behaviour in this population has received little attention. Currently, two of the most promising psychometric assessments of feeding problems in children and adolescents with ASD are the Brief Autism Mealtime Behavior Inventory (BAMBI) and the Parent Mealtime Action Scale (PMAS). The paper assesses these two studies.

TITLE: AS from an AS perspective

AUTHOR: Beadle D.

SOURCE: Autism File, 2009, 33, p. 11

A personal account by a young adult with Asperger syndrome, the author shares his experience of diagnosis and his experience of how he found out he had Asperger syndrome, and stresses the importance of finding a positive way to tell a child about their diagnosis.

TITLE: Autism 299.00: breaking the code. Paradigm shift: mental or medical

AUTHOR: Martin V., Hintz S.

SOURCE: Autism File, 2009, 33, pp. 34-38

The authors, both nurses and parents of children with autism spectrum disorders, give their views on medical treatment and diagnostic criteria. In particular they discuss whether autism should be viewed as a developmental, mental or medical disorder.

TITLE: Special educational needs in England, January 2010

AUTHOR: Department for Education

This bulletin summarises the information available on special educational needs in schools in England. Statistics on children in schools who have autism spectrum disorder listed as their primary need at School Action Plus or Statement level are included in table 11 in this document.

Available to download from <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000939/SFR19-2010.pdf>

TITLE: Inclusive provision options for pupils on the autistic spectrum

AUTHOR: Frederickson N., Jones A.P., Lang J.

SOURCE: Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 2010, 10(2), pp. 63-73

This study was designed to investigate characteristics of the provision available to pupils with ASD in mainstream schools with and without a specialist ASD resource base.

Findings confirmed that the features of mainstream placements identified as important by parents of children with ASD were more likely to be found in schools with ASD resource bases. However, it was found that comparable provision could be made across settings given appropriate staff training.

TITLE: Responses to bullying and use of social support among pupils with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) in mainstream schools: a qualitative study

AUTHOR: Humphrey N., Synes W.

SOURCE: Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 2010, 10(2), pp. 82-90

Increasing numbers of pupils with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are attending mainstream schools, but face a number of barriers such as bullying that may prevent them from making the most of their education. This study aims to identify the role social support plays in determining pupils' response to bullying and to identify barriers to using social support when bullying occurs.

TITLE: Discourse comprehension intervention for high-functioning students with autism spectrum disorders: preliminary findings from a school-based study

AUTHOR: Åsberg J., Sandberg A.D.

SOURCE: Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 2010, 10(2), pp. 91-98

A study of a group of high-functioning Swedish students with ASD (aged 10–15 years) who took part in a naturalistic classroom-based intervention to support comprehension of connected narrative discourse. Post-intervention test results, following 4 weeks of training, indicated specific and significant improvements in discourse comprehension.

TITLE: Examining pre-service teachers' attitudes towards children with autism in the USA

AUTHOR: Park M., Chitiyo M., Choi Y.S.

SOURCE: Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 2010, 10(2), pp. 107-114

This study examines pre-service teachers' attitudes towards children with autism and found that pre-service teachers had positive attitudes towards children with autism. Their attitudes were found to be influenced by their gender, academic major and different types of exposure to children with autism.

TITLE: An investigation into an interaction programme for children on the autism spectrum: outcomes for children, perceptions of schools and a model for training

AUTHOR: Jones K., Howley M.

SOURCE: Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 2010, 10(2), pp. 115-123

The objective of this study was to investigate a system of training designed by a Local Education Authority support service to promote interactive skill building with children on the autism spectrum. The study focused on outcomes for children, perceptions of schools regarding impact of the training programme and key features of the system of delivering training. Findings indicate a number of positive outcomes for children and shows this holistic package of support could serve as a model for other types of interventions with children with a range of needs.

TITLE: Cycling for students with ASD: self-regulation promotes sustained physical activity

AUTHOR: Todd T., Reid G., Butler-Kisber L.

SOURCE: Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 2010, Vol. 27(3), pp. 226-241

Individuals with autism often lack motivation to engage in sustained physical activity. This study investigated the effect of a self-regulation strategy, which included self-monitoring, goal setting, and self-reinforcement, with regard to cycling among teenagers with autism. The results suggest that self-regulation interventions can promote sustained participation in physical activity for adolescents with severe autism.

TITLE: Social skills training for children for children on the autism spectrum: current research and integration.

AUTHOR: Baker J.

SOURCE: Autism Advocate, 2010, 58 (1), pp 8 - 13

Provides an overview of the evidence base for approaches to social skills teaching for

pupils with autism, broadly dividing approaches into three categories: behavioural, cognitive behavioural and relationship based. Summarises the key components of effective social skills training as assessment, motivation, initial skill acquisition, generalization and peers sensitivity training. Concludes that there is no one method that works for all pupils all the time, but that many approaches can be effective.

TITLE: Inclusive child - care centres: an opportunity for social skills development for young children with autism

AUTHOR: Wright P, Siegel B., Jackson L

SOURCE: Autism Advocate, 2010 58 (1), pp. 14 - 18

Discusses early years setting and the important role they can play in identifying toddlers with autism, and supporting them in their development particularly social. Written from an American perspective.

TITLE: Learning Spring school incorporating social skills learning into the curriculum

AUTHOR: Farber S. et al

SOURCE: Autism Advocate, 2010, 58 (1) pp. 19 - 22

Staff at the Learning Spring School in New York discuss the approaches they use within their curriculum to teach social skills. In particular the authors discuss their use of RDI (relationship development intervention) and multi-sensory teaching.

TITLE: The use of video modeling via a video iPod and a system of least prompts to improve transitional behaviors for students with autism spectrum disorders in the general education classroom

AUTHOR: Cihak D. et al

SOURCE: Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 2010, Vol. 12(2), pp. 103-115

This study evaluated the effectiveness of video modeling delivered via a handheld device (video iPod) and the use of the system of least prompts to assist primary school age students with transitioning between locations and activities within the school. The data indicate that all participants began transitioning more independently after the intervention was introduced and that their performance decreased with withdrawal of intervention.

TITLE: The Friend Program: teaching and supporting social skills at school

AUTHOR: Dollin S. S, Vincent L., Ober - Reynolds S.

SOURCE: Autism Advocate, 2010, 58 (1), pp 24 - 29

Discusses the FRIEND Program, a program which supports the development of social and interpersonal skills for school-aged children. The program has three components: the Peer Sensitivity Curriculum, the Playground Program, and the Lunch Program. The latter two are designed specially to support children at breaktimes.

TITLE: School transitions in the elementary grades

AUTHOR: Autism Society

SOURCE: Autism Advocate, 2009, 57(4) , pp. 13-16

Offers advice to parents on preparing their child with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the school they will be attending for transition. Covers both the transition from pre-school to school, as well as transitions between years. Written from an American perspective but most tips are relevant to a British audience.

TITLE: Autism spectrum disorder diagnostic assessments: improvements since publication of the National Autism Plan for Children

AUTHOR: Palmer E. et al

SOURCE: Archives of Disease in Childhood, 2010, Jun 3. [Epub ahead of print]

The paper assesses change in clinical diagnostic practice for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) following the recommendations of the National Autism Plan for Children (NAP-C 2003). It concludes that since 2001, there has been an improvement in diagnostic services for children with ASD, however, inequalities remain.

TITLE: Child Behavior Checklist scores for school-aged children with autism: preliminary evidence of patterns suggesting the need for referral

AUTHOR: Mazefsky C. A. et al

SOURCE: Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment, 2010, Jul 11 [Epub ahead of print]

The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) is a widely used questionnaire to assess behavioral and emotional problems. It is often used as a diagnostic screener, but autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are not included in the CBCL for school-aged children. This study investigated patterns of CBCL scores in children with high-functioning ASD.

TITLE: A sensory diet happens 24/7

AUTHOR: Biel L.

SOURCE: Autism Asperger's Digest, 2010, March-April, pp.48-49

First part of a two-part article on how to build sensory stimulation into daily routines for children with sensory processing challenges. Includes a list of twenty easy-to-do sensory diet activities for children.

TITLE: A sensory diet happens 24/7: part two

AUTHOR: Biel L.

SOURCE: Autism Asperger's Digest, 2010, May-June, pp.18-19

Second of a two-part article on building sensory activities into the daily routine of children with sensory processing difficulties. Gives advice for a morning routine, what to do every 2-3 hours throughout the school day, after school activities, and a bedtime routine.

TITLE: Addressing the feeding and dietary issues of children on the autism spectrum by running a 'Food is Fun' week

AUTHOR: Gill J., Gleeson M.

SOURCE: Good Autism Practice, 2010, Vol. 11(1), pp. 36-44

Two speech and language therapists describe the work they did with eight children to extend the range of foods they tolerated or ate and to encourage them to eat independently. They ran a 'Food is Fun' week at the children's school including play and sensory activities involving food.

TITLE: Predicting progress in Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) use by children with autism

AUTHOR: Pasco G., Tohill C.

SOURCE: International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders, Jun 2010

The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is a widely used communication intervention for non-verbal children with autism spectrum disorder. The paper aims to explore the utility of using children's developmental age to predict the subsequent degree of progress using PECS.

TITLE: Autism and intensive interaction: using body language to reach children on the autistic spectrum

AUTHOR: Caldwell P., Hoghton M., Mytton P.

PUBLISHER: Jessica Kingsley

A training film on DVD in which Phoebe Caldwell explains how she uses intensive interaction to engage with children with autism. She demonstrates how, by using the child's body language and sounds to create a means of communication they recognise, a conversation can be developed. Comes with an accompanying booklet. Duration: 65 min.

TITLE: Inclusion in play: a case study of a child with autism in an inclusive nursery

AUTHOR: Theodorou F., Nind M.

SOURCE: Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 2010, 10(2), pp. 99-106

This paper discusses the play interaction of a young child with autism and the strategies adopted by teachers to facilitate her inclusion in and through play. Data is taken from a case study in an inclusive nursery in the South of England.

TITLE: Relationship Development Intervention (RDI): getting to the heart of the child

AUTHOR: Augustine C.

SOURCE: Autism File, 33, pp 94-97

Provides an overview of Relationship Development Intervention (RDI), a developmental model of therapy based on typical child development, which aims to empower parents to take the active role of guide to their children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The core areas of RDI, are discussed in turn: experience sharing; dynamic analysis; flexible and creative problem solving; and episodic memory and self-awareness.

TITLE: Language and autism: applied behavior analysis, evidence, and practice

AUTHOR: Fitzer A. ed., Sturmey P. ed.

PUBLISHER: Pro-Ed

ISBN: 9781416403760

This edited volume provides the reader with a concise overview of applied behavioral interventions for language in people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

TITLE: Using matched groups to explore child behavior problems and maternal well-being in children with Down syndrome and autism

AUTHOR: Griffith G.M. et al

SOURCE: Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 2010, Vol. 40(5), pp. 610-619

Mothers of children with Down syndrome, autism, and mixed aetiology intellectual disabilities completed measures of their child's adaptive and problem behaviours, their own parenting stress, and positive perceptions of their child. Children with autism were rated as having more problem behaviours and lower levels of social competence than children with Down syndrome and mixed aetiology intellectual disabilities. Mothers of children with autism scored lower on positive perceptions of their child, and higher on stress than the other two groups.

TITLE: Maternal cortisol levels and behavior problems in adolescents and adults with ASD

AUTHOR: Seltzer M. M. et al

SOURCE: Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 2010, Vol. 40(4), pp. 457-469

Cortisol levels in mothers of adolescents and adults with ASD were compared with a group of mothers of similarly-aged unaffected children. The mothers of adolescents and adults with ASD were found to have significantly lower levels of cortisol throughout the day.

TITLE: The effects of an abolishing operation intervention component on play skills, challenging behavior, and stereotypy

AUTHOR: Lang R. et al

SOURCE: Behavior Modification, 2010, Vol. 34(4), pp. 267-289

The purpose of this study was to reduce stereotypy and challenging behaviour during play by adding an abolishing operation component (AOC) to the intervention strategy. The data provided support for the inclusion of an AOC in interventions aimed at increasing the play skills of children with ASD who present with stereotypy.

TITLE: Making sense-ory out of behavior

AUTHOR: Delaney T.

SOURCE: Autism Asperger's Digest, 2010, May-June, pp.32-36

The author examines the responses of children with autism to situations which they find difficult. The 'fight or flight' response is discussed, as well as reasons behind behaviours and strategies to manage them.