



e-newsletter: April 2010

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Thank you for your continued support,

Sarah-Jane Critchley
AET Project Head

Tell a friend...

Is there someone you think would be interested to hear about the AET? Please forward this newsletter to them and ask them to send us their details so we can keep them up to date.

1. Autism Education Trust News

AET supplement in The Guardian to be published on 18 May

Look out for the special supplement sponsored by the AET to be published in EducationGuardian on Tuesday 18th May. We are producing it following the positive feedback from the supplement we sponsored last year. This time the subject will be transition, an important area in the education of children and young people on the autism spectrum and the theme of the recent AET conferences and roadshows.

AET welcomes the adult autism strategy

The Government has published the first ever autism strategy for England, entitled "Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives". The Autism Education Trust welcomes these new measures aimed at tackling the isolation, ignorance and inequality routinely experienced by the over 300,000 adults with autism in England.

Announced by Care Services Minister, Phil Hope at the beginning of March, the three-year strategy is expected to drive a dramatic improvement in the quality of health, social care and other public services for people with autism. Key actions in the strategy include: improving training of frontline professionals in autism; setting up specialist local autism teams; better planning and commissioning of services, with more involvement from people with autism and their parents/carers; improving access to diagnosis and post-diagnostic support; and setting up leadership structures for delivery at national, regional and local levels.

As part of the Autism Act, the strategy will be accompanied by legal guidance to be published by December 2010. For further information, see the attached NAS Q&As on the strategy or view the full strategy document at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_113405.pdf

New AET resources to help teachers

The AET is publishing two new online resources for teachers supporting children and young people on the autism spectrum.

The first is a short and straightforward guide for teachers called 'Do you have a child with autism in your class?' The guide gives practical steps and advice for teachers when trying to plan strategies to understand and manage behaviour and plan effective learning and is available to download now from the AET website,

The second is a more detailed resource aimed at bringing together all the relevant information a teacher supporting a child or young person with autism might need. It will be an invaluable tool for teachers, support staff and other professionals working with pupils with autism. It will feature over 70 autism-specific tools and resources and will simplify some of the terminology surrounding autism. This resource will be available to download soon - keep an eye on our website for details.

Personal perspective: Helen's film

A new film giving a personal insight into the school life of a young person with autism is now available to view on the AET website. Helen Wood, a member of the AET Youth Council, is on the autism spectrum and uses communication aids. She and her support team have made a film to show what she likes and dislikes at school and the successes and challenges that she faces every day. The film can be seen at:

<http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/sitecore/content/AET/Global/News/Helens%20film.aspx>

AET website re-launch: 17 May 2010

The new AET website is scheduled to go live on 17 May 2010. The new site will offer easier navigation and will feature The Den, a new area designed specifically for teenagers on the autism spectrum.

Keep visiting www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk to find out more.

The AET welcomes new Project Manager

The AET has appointed Pankaj Joshi to the role of Project Manager. Pankaj has a strong background in the field of individual and organisational development and has managed learning and development projects in the private and public sector, both in the UK and Europe. He has direct family experience of special educational needs and is committed to improving the lives of children and young people with autism.

Pankaj can be reached on pankaj.joshi@nas.org.uk or by calling 07827 283494.

2. Other SEN / education news

Ed Balls and Diana Johnson launch SEN action plan

The Government has announced plans to implement all of the recommendations in Brian Lamb's landmark review on special educational needs, published in December 2009. Children's Secretary Ed Balls and Schools Minister Diana Johnson launched the action plan at the end of February 2010. It is hoped the plan will help create a higher skilled workforce able to respond to children's needs, more accessible information and advice for parents, and stronger accountability and redress when children do not get the support they need.

New elements within the plan include additional funds for the Training Development Agency (TDA) to develop SEN training for teachers, legal training for school governors and a review of educational psychology services.

See: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0047 for full details.

Separately, more support has been pledged for trainee teachers who work with severely disabled children. Teach First and the TDA will offer additional training to new teachers to work with disabled children in special and mainstream schools. See: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0057 for full details.

Briefing on autism published by SCIE

A briefing on autism has been published by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). The guidance, compiled by a team from the National Autistic Society, outlines how to make personalisation work for people with autism and their families, looking at a person-centred way of planning service provision.

The briefing can be found on the SCIE website at:

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ata glance/ata glance21.asp>

Government promises early intervention support for vulnerable children

The Government's new report on early intervention brings with it ring-fenced funding to support vulnerable children at an early age. This grant includes money for services for children with disabilities. This will be a step towards further integration in services for children and young people and aims to support a shift to more early intervention and prevention.

For further details, see: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0076

Download full the report at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/pnattach/20100076/1.pdf>

Charities join forces to improve young people's mental health

In response to concern about the high level of mental and emotional distress experienced by children and young people living in the UK, a coalition of charities has launched plans to protect and improve the mental health of those up to the age of 25.

The Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition, which includes the Mental Health Foundation, Action for Children and YoungMinds, was launched at an event held at the House of Lords on 29 March.

One in ten children aged five to 16 have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem, including depression, anxiety or psychosis, and nearly 80,000 children and young people have severe depression, according to the coalition.

The coalition said it would aim to influence policy and practice on a range of issues and in the first year would focus on four key areas: The Early Years, Building Emotional Resilience, Reaching Adulthood and Seldom Heard Voices.

The Early Years stream will focus on equipping parents with the knowledge and tools to improve their children's mental wellbeing, while Building Emotional Resilience aims to help children develop resilience to meet the challenges of growing up.

Reaching Adulthood will ensure adequate provision of care for those entering adulthood and Seldom Heard Voices aims to make sure minority groups are able to access good quality support from services.

Sarah Brennan, chair of the coalition, who is also the chief executive at YoungMinds, said: "The launch of the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition represents the opportunity to bring together a range of high profile organisations to lobby and campaign for much-needed improvements in the provision of mental health services, and for greater recognition of the vital importance of children's wellbeing and

good mental health. I am delighted to be chairing the coalition and for YoungMinds to be taking part in the potential influencing power of this partnership."

The coalition's core members are Action for Children, Children England, Family Action, the Mental Health Foundation, Mind, the National Children's Bureau, Place2Be, Right Here, Rethink, The Prince's Trust, YoungMinds, Young Scotland in Mind, Youth Access, Youth Action and YouthNet.

For further comment and to find out more about the launch of the coalition and young people's mental health visit <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/ym-newsroom/press-releases/press-releases-2010/mar/children-and-young-people2019s-mental-health-coalition-launches-at-the-house-of-lords>.

Tim Loughton to take part in live online Q&A about autism

Tim Loughton, Conservative Shadow Minister for Children and Young People, will take part in a live online Q&A on Talk about Autism (<http://www.talkaboutautism.org.uk/>) from 8.00 PM - 9.00 PM GMT on Wednesday 28 April 2010.

Tim is looking forward to hearing your views and experiences, and answering your questions about the Conservative Party's policies and their vision of education for children and young people with autism and other special educational needs and disabilities.

If you can't make the chat on Wednesday 28 April, but want to submit questions to Tim you can do so on the talk about autism forum.

<<http://www.treehouse.org.uk/forums/general-discussion/events/2969>>

This is the third in a series of live online Q&As with politicians from each major political party hosted by TreeHouse. Previous online Q&As have been held with Labour education Minister Diana Johnson <<http://www.treehouse.org.uk/talk-autism/events/dianajohnson-30.03.10>> and Annette Brooke <<http://www.treehouse.org.uk/talk-autism/events/annettebrooke-30.03.10>> , the Liberal Democrats' spokesperson for Children Schools and Families.

For more information and to read the TreeHouse 2010 Parliamentary Briefing visit www.treehouse.org.uk

3. New Resources

Involving Parents in Transition DVD

'Getting Involved' is a new DVD designed to help parents and carers get involved in their children's learning, particularly around key times of transition, such as when a child is moving from primary school to secondary school. Created by National Strategies, copies of the DVD are free to schools.

For details, see: <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/197230>

Tool to give disabled young people a say in their healthcare

Health professionals working with children with disabilities can now access specialised support via a new resource pack launched by the Children's Society. The initiative, My

Health My Choice, aims to involve young people with disabilities in the provision of their own healthcare.

The resource pack contains the views and experiences of young people on their healthcare, while also directly outlining what they want and need from health professionals. This is part of the Children's Society's Disability Advocacy Project, a three-year pilot scheme working to protect the rights of young people and improve their health treatments.

To find out more information or request a copy of the pack, contact the Disability Advocacy Project on 0207 613 2886 or Disability-Advocacy-Project@childrenssociety.org.uk.

Resource pack to help improve social skills

Socialeyes is a new resource pack from the National Autistic Society designed with and for people on the autism spectrum. It is primarily suitable for individuals with Asperger syndrome as a new and innovative way to help support them to become more confident in social situations.

The *Socialeyes* resource pack includes two DVDs containing useful social scenario clips modelled by professional actors, and clips of people on the autism spectrum talking about their successes and challenges around social skills. The DVDs are all given structure by a Presenter who takes the viewer step-by-step through the module.

As well as the DVDs there is a CD Rom containing Facilitator guidance, assessment forms, session plans, learner resources, and everything required to facilitate *Socialeyes* sessions.

Socialeyes also offers Facilitator training on how to use the resources most effectively and how to plan and set up your *Socialeyes* sessions. The cost of a place on the 2 day training course is £315 (plus VAT) which includes the *Socialeyes* pack. (Pack costs £89.95 (rrp) when bought separately.)

For further information on how to purchase the *Socialeyes* pack or accompanying Facilitator training course places please visit: www.autism.org.uk/socialeyes or email: Socialeyes.team@nas.org.uk

4. Events

NASEN Live 2010

26 & 27 May – Reebok Stadium, Bolton

Come along to the AET stand at NASEN Live, the leading SEN show aimed at meeting the professional development needs of all those working within the special educational field. There will be a wide range of relevant resource and service suppliers at the show focused on supporting young people who are encountering difficulties in accessing education. Sarah-Jane Critchley will also be leading a seminar session on 'Making it Easier: Inspiration, Resources and Networking on Autism from the AET' FREE to enter.

For further details, see: <http://www.nasen.org.uk/nasen-live-2010/>

EQUALS Summer Conference: 'Assessment for Learning for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities'

25th June 2010 – University of Westminster, London

The conference will discuss the theory and practice of using assessment to help develop and improve provision within the classroom and beyond. In addition to various keynote speakers, there will be 10 practical workshop sessions in the afternoon relating to the topic of Assessment for Learning.

EQUALS is a charity committed to improving the lives of children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities through supporting high quality education.

To book a place visit www.equals.co.uk

Sutherland House Children's Services: 'Pupil Voice - Enabling Children and Young People across the Autism Spectrum to be Heard'

26 May 2010 - Park Hall Autism Resource Centre, Nottingham

There is an increased emphasis across children's services on encouraging children and young people to participate in decision-making and planning for their futures, referred to as 'Pupil Voice'. The event gives an overview of current initiatives, practical examples and case studies, as well as a range of review systems.

Delegate fees: Professionals - £120, Parents - £60

For further details and to book a place, see: www.sutherlandhouse.org.uk or email diagnostic-centre@sutherlandhouse.org.uk

5. New Publications

Please see attached a full list of recent autism related publications, which you may find of interest.

6. Have Your Say

We are always keen to hear your thoughts and suggestions for the AET. Please visit the AET website and fill in the online form to tell us about your experiences of autism education. We want to hear from parents, young people with autism and professionals working in the autism education field.

Visit [Have Your Say](#) on the AET website.

7. Further information

We hope you would like to continue receiving the AET e-newsletter. However, if you do not wish to receive these updates in future please email info@autismeducationtrust.org.uk with the word 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. If you have received this newsletter via a third party and would like to be added to the regular mailing list please email the above address to subscribe.

For any further information and feedback please contact us at Autism Education Trust
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393 City Road
London
EC1V 1NG
020 7923 5754

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk