

# ASD Monitoring & Support Group

Autism information from East Sussex  
[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/autism](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/autism)

It does not seem possible, but this is the 6<sup>th</sup> annual newsletter of the East Sussex ASD Monitoring & Support Groups. At the time of writing, we have 928 families registered with the groups. This newsletter is sent to each family along with the new training programme and it is sent to each new family that registers through the course of the year.

## SPECTRUM has changed!

Many of you will have accessed Spectrum, the service which supports children and young people with ASD to experience community activities and clubs. Spectrum is now able to offer:

- guidance for travelling (catching a bus, train or walking to school)
- skills to manage everyday activities (meeting people, getting a haircut, personal safety, stranger danger)
- preparation work for health visits (hospital, doctors, dentist)
- support with skills to access social events (restaurants and shopping)
- general life skills (applying for jobs, CVs, work experience)
- guidance for family outings (preparation, behaviour management, trip planning)

Spectrum can offer direct support for a maximum of 10 sessions to young people aged 0 – 19 years, living in East Sussex. Advice and training is also available for an activity or service provider.

Families can refer direct to Spectrum by phone: 01424 724700 or 01323 466030 or by email: [spectrum@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:spectrum@eastsussex.gov.uk)

## 2014 ASD Activity Day

Blacklands Farm outdoor activity centre was the venue for our annual ASD activity day. On a boiling hot, sunny Saturday in May, thirty-six



children aged 9-11 years, spent the day challenging themselves in a variety of ways including abseiling, crate stacking, bungee trampolining and blindfolded team

building (night line).

The young people also faced the challenges of working together cooperatively, with children they had not met before, in new and unfamiliar surroundings, in order to complete a range of tasks.



The children's verdict?

- 'fantastic'
- 'brilliant'
- 'epic'
- 'magnificent'
- 'FUN!!'
- 'I made a friend'

## The Autism Education Trust

<http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk>

This organisation is sponsored by the Department for Education.

Past newsletters have highlighted **Kids Zone** (for primary pupils) and **The Den** (for adolescents). These are websites written specifically for young people with autism.

The trust is now piloting resources for parents. The first two publications are:

- Working together with your child's school
- A parents and carers guide to finding a school for your child with autism. This contains useful checklists and suggested questions to ask.



## World Autism Day 2014

Bexhill High School ASD special facility for young people with ASD is called The Aspie.

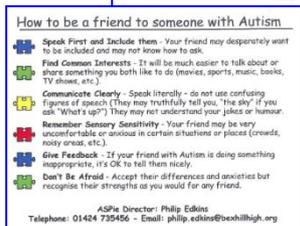
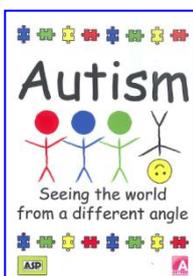
Each year they celebrate World Autism day to raise awareness and understanding of ASD.

This year each of the 1000 pupils in the school attended a special assembly

with a short drama written by one of the Aspie students about his experiences of autism. This was performed by the school drama club.

Each young person in the school received a goody bag with the slogan 'be a friend to autism'

containing a pen, pencil, ruler and a postcard to take home. This was written by the Year 7 students with top tips on how to be a friend to someone with autism.



Each topic has an introduction with basic information, videos of parents' experiences, transcripts of the videos and open nets to provide a forum for discussion.

## Have you seen?



These books are written by Kay Al-Ghani, a specialist teacher working for an Inclusion Support Service in East Sussex.

The books deal with issues affecting many children with ASD; anger, anxiety and disappointment. They are easy to read, and give children an understanding of the problem and ways to overcome it. The books are illustrated by Kay's son, Haitham, who has autism.

## the parent.net

<http://www.theparent.net/>



A new, free, social networking site for parents from Online Inset, the training programmes already used by East Sussex for staff and parent training.

The site is designed for individual parents to use, and the nets provide a forum to meet other parents to share experiences.

The topics covered include:

- Behaviour** (including obsessive behaviours)
- Life skills** (personal hygiene, making choices)
- Outside support** (public reaction, the future)
- Family** (sleep, routines, siblings)
- Sensory** (what can a parent do?)
- Social relationships** (social stories™)
- Parents' own life** (parental burnout)

Each topic has an introduction with basic information, videos of parents' experiences, transcripts of the videos and open nets to provide a forum for discussion.

**Heather Sharp (ASD Coordinator)**  
**ASD Monitoring & Support Groups**  
[autism@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:autism@eastsussex.gov.uk)