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Newsletter

Welcome to the April/May issue of Surrey News

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Please note – there is no Branch talk in April.



Happy World Autism Awareness Week! If you are in Woking or Walton, please do support the fundraiser activities listed on p6.

There are so many different events and activities going on at present that we have experimented with a new calendar layout so that you have all our meetings and events, plus those organised locally by other organisations, in one place in the centre of the newsletter that you can print off (or pull out if you are looking at a printed version). Events run by other groups or organisations are shown in BLUE and you will need to contact organisers direct for details or booking for these events. Let me know if this new format suits you or if there's anything else you would like to see.

Thanks go to our new committee member Jill Goulding for wrestling this calendar into shape. Many people will know Jill who is a speech and language therapist working in both a special and a mainstream school, as well as mum of a young man with ASD.

Emma

Emma Whitfield
Chair (volunteer)

NAS Surrey Branch
Tel: 07423 435 413 (answerphone)
General Email: info@nassurreybranch.org
Web site: www.nassurreybranch.org
Twitter: @NASSurreyBranch
Donations: www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch

NAS Surrey Branch Contacts

Chair:

Emma Whitfield 07423 435413
emma@mugsy.org

Treasurer:

Haywood Drake 01483 457646
bobdrake357@btinternet.com

Deputy Chair / Adults:

Sara Truman 01483 822630
nas@mugsy.org

Branch Membership:

Nancy Rowell 01252 514708
membership@mugsy.org

Events:

Sarah Mead 01483 454245
sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk
Emma Searle 07816 127630.
ephillpotts@gmail.com
Jill Goulding 07905 364931
Jill.goulding@gmail.com

Branch libraries:

West: Haywood Drake 01483 457646
bobdrake357@btinternet.com
East: Jenny Lawson 01342 314801
jenny.lawson73@gmail.com

North Surrey

Eileen Bruce 01932 225379
evbruce@hotmail.co.uk

South East Surrey:

Helen Trenaman 01737 360069
trenamans@talktalk.net

Parents of Girls' Group

Rachel Pearson 01483 727378
racheldpearson@gmail.com

Fundraising

Sarah Mason 07973 379131
slmason78@gmail.com

Fathers' Group:

Martin Trenaman 01737 360069
trenamans@talktalk.net

Parents of Adults' Group

Hilary Dyce 01276 66032
hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Other Useful Contacts

Unless clearly stated, organisations are not endorsed by NAS Surrey Branch or the NAS.

NAS web site: www.autism.org.uk

NAS Helpline: Tel: 0808 800 4104 (10am – 4pm), or email autismhelpline@nas.org.uk (replies within 14 working days)

NAS Parent-to-Parent line 0808 800 4106

NAS national membership: 020 7903 3563
Email membership@nas.org.uk

Education Support

NAS Education Rights: 0808 800 4102

SSIASS Parent Support: 01737 737300

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

SOS!SEN charity to support statementing, tel: 020 8538 3731, Web: www.sossen.org.uk

Family Support & Representation

NAS Family Support worker Surrey

Tessa Emery Tessa.emery@nas.org.uk

Tel: 01483 521 744 M: 07436 261 163 |

Portage – support for children with additional needs under 3.5 years 0300 200 1004

Family Voice Surrey parent representation
www.familyvoicesurrey.org

Local parent programmes

Early Bird (parents of under 5s) / **Cygnets**

(parents of children aged 5 – 18). Vicky

Jones training@linden-bridge.surrey.sch.uk

Tel: 07747 595 155

Redhill CAMHS group for parents of children with ASDs, tel: 01737-287002

Activities for children and young people

NAS Resource Centre, Godalming Tel:

01483 521743

SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk

interAKtive, Epsom-based charity for

children with ASDs and other communication difficulties 07876 762178,

www.interaktive.org.uk

Adult Services

Surrey Adult social svcs: 0300 200 1005

NAS Surrey Service Tel: 01483 861600,

email: surrey.service@nas.org.uk

Employment Support

Employability for people with disabilities including ASDs tel: 01483-806806, email:

employability@surreychoices.com

Benefits advice

Carers Support <https://www.carers.org/>

NAS Tips page – via www.autism.org.uk

Cerebra DLA guide: 0800 328 1159

About NAS Surrey Branch

The Surrey Branch of the NAS is a volunteer-run parent-to-parent support group for families in Surrey affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders. It's FREE to join (although a small donation is appreciated) and we have around 1,500 members. The branch holds regular meetings and organises social events, local coffee mornings and special interest groups, and represents parents in meetings with health, education and social services. We host an active Yahoo! online forum, and produce this newsletter every two months. To join, email emma@mugsy.org for a membership form.

If you are a member of the NAS at national level, you can nominate us as your branch by emailing supportercare@nas.org.uk which means we receive a percentage of your annual subscription.

We're part of **The National Autistic Society**, a national charity founded by parents in 1962 which runs a wide range of services such as schools, clubs and adult centres. It has over 20,000 members, 100 branches and works in partnership with more than 50 local autism societies. The NAS exists to champion the rights and interests of all people with autistic spectrum disorders and to ensure that they and their families receive quality services appropriate to their needs. **National Autistic Society, 393 City Rd, London EC1V 1NG** www.autism.org.uk. The National Autistic Society is a registered charity, number 269425. Company limited by guarantee number 1205298.

The views expressed in Surrey News are not necessarily those of the National Autistic Society, and reference to specific services or approaches to autism does not imply endorsement. All material is copyright Surrey NAS and cannot be reproduced without permission.

Women and girls with ASD info day – booking now open

We are holding an information day on women and girls with ASDs.

Date: Saturday 1st October

Time: 10.00am – 4.30pm

Venue: Leatherhead Leisure Centre

Speakers include:

Sarah Hendrickx, who many people may have seen on TV or heard on the radio talking about her experiences as a woman with Aspergers. She will be talking about how women and girls with autism can develop social and personal relationships, from childhood friendships to complex adult interactions.

Dr Louise Connor, Independent Chartered Consultant Clinical Psychologist, on diagnostic assessment for women & girls.

Other speakers at the event include **Bettina Stott**, manager of the NAS ASSIST service, on strategies and support for adult life, and **Sarah Wild**, Headteacher of Limpsfield Grange School, on educating girls with autism. We will also hear from other people who have autism, including **Marianne Scallon**, co-chair of Surrey's Autism Partnership Board. Lastly, there will be an open forum when those attending can ask questions on any topic that concerns them.

Parents/carers/people with autism: £30* (£25* if booked before 31st May)

Professionals (including care staff): £60* (£55* if booked before 31st May)
Prices include lunch and refreshments.
(Please contact us if you have difficulty paying).

For more information contact Sara Truman at conference@mugsy.org tel: 07989 315609. Places must be booked in advance. For booking details, please go to <http://www.nassurreybranch.org/women-and-girls.html>

Cygnets course in Guildford

We are hosting another two-day Cygnets seminar for parents of children with ASDs (with or without final diagnosis) aged 5 – 18. Topics covered include:

- Autism & diagnosis
- Communication
- Sensory issues
- Understanding behaviour
- Managing behaviour

Attendees select the topic of their choice for the final session.

Time: 9.30am – 2.30pm

Date: 5th & 6th July 2016

Venue: Guildford Institute

The course is once again being delivered by experienced SEND Education Consultant Elizabeth Waters

Booking essential. It is FREE to parents, but a refundable deposit of £10 per person is required to secure your place.

Comments from parents who attended the course in March included:

“It has been so useful in understanding aspects of autism that I wasn’t even aware of....picked up lots of good tips and advice on how to deal with different circumstances”.

“I have learnt about how I can help my child in so many ways. This course is so great and I am sure other parents would also get so much out of it”.

“This course has been really helpful Some of the topics that were discussed have really given me thoughts on how to deal with incidents my son has”.

“The contacts, links and resources are great. Being able to share stuff with other parents has helped me feel less isolated. Liz has answered specific questions for me which was great”.

Please complete the enclosed booking form and post with your deposit (cheque preferred) to Sarah Mead at the address on the form. For details contact Sarah at sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk with CYGNET in the subject line.

Seminar on helping your young person find employment

After positive feedback from the last two seminars, we are running another one-day session to help parents and carers support their young person with ASD to find work.

Time: 9.30am – 2.30pm

Date: Wednesday 29th June

Venue: Leatherhead Institute

The course is FREE to parents, although a refundable deposit of £10 per person is required to secure your place. It is designed for parents/carers of young people aged 16-25 with an ASD to help parents understand what they can - and can't - do to help their young person to prepare for the world of work and how best to support them to find employment. It aims to give parents practical advice and ideas and signpost them to potential areas of further support/funding.

Topics covered include:

- Routes into work and higher education
- Looking for work – the role that parents/carers can and can't play
- Declaring an ASD diagnosis to an employer?
- Reasonable adjustments in the workplace
- Available support

The course is delivered by AS Mentoring www.asmentoring.co.uk, a not-for-profit business working with people with ASDs or other potentially exclusionary conditions to help them find and retain work and to encourage employers to employ people on the spectrum. For more information about the seminar, contact Rachel Pearson rachel.pearson@asmentoring.co.uk

See also p12 for details of the ‘Employment Works for Autism’ programme offered by Surrey’s supported employment service EmployAbility.

Please complete enclosed booking form and post with deposit (cheque preferred) to Sarah Mead at the address on the form. For booking queries, email Sarah at sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk with EMPLOYMENT COURSE in the subject line.

Ice Skating at Guildford Spectrum 28th May

Booking is now open for our ice skating family event with interAKtive on **Saturday 28th May from 4.45 – 5.45pm**. The suggested donation is £4.50 per person.

It makes it easier for us if you are able to book and pay online using the link below, but if you prefer not to pay for things over the Internet, you can still book online and just choose to send a cheque.

We host the event with the language and communications group interAKtive. We take over the whole rink and have flashing lights and loud music turned off to make it more accessible for those with sensory issues. We have use of a back door directly into the rink so that families can avoid the hubbub of the main reception or for anyone who requires level access. This is our biggest branch get-together of the year with around 150 people, with whole families taking to the ice. For younger ones who are less confident, The Spectrum has pushalong penguins which help children gain confidence on the ice. Parents remain responsible for the children throughout and children should be accompanied on the ice by a responsible adult.

BOOKING ESSENTIAL please go to the events page on our web site www.nassurreybranch.org for details. If you have any problems with your booking on Eventbrite, please contact Sarah Mead sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk

NAS 'Too Much Information' campaign

This three-year campaign launched on 1st April and is designed to help improve peoples' understanding of autism. You can add your support to the campaign by putting your name on a 'map' of supporters <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/map.aspx> or watch the film which gives the perspective of a 10 year-old boy with autism <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/film.aspx>

Talk on 'Mindsight Surrey CAMHS' service

Dr Phil Ferreira-Lay is the Lead Consultant Child Psychiatrist for Surrey CAMHS. He will give us an overview and discuss the new enhanced CAMHS service – called 'Mindsight Surrey CAMHS' - that went live on 1st April.

Time: 7.45 for 8.00pm til around 9.30pm
Date: Weds 18th May
Venue: St Saviours, Woodbridge Road, Guildford GU1 4QD

He will also update us on ASD diagnosis and management options available within the service and will highlight how CAMHS and the NAS Resource Centre are working together.

NAS Children's and Youth Clubs update

There are now NAS after-school and youth clubs in Staines. NAS Children's Clubs and Youth Clubs in Surrey are run by NAS professionals from the NAS Resource Centre in Godalming and run throughout term-time.

Clubs cost £5 per session (£2.50 if on income support or for second siblings).

Children's Clubs (5 -13 year olds)

Godalming - Tuesdays 5.15 – 7.15pm
Reigate - Thursdays 6.00 - 8.00pm
Staines – Tuesdays 5.00 – 7.00 pm
Walton - Thursdays 4.30 - 6.30pm
Woking – Fridays 4.30 - 6.30pm

Youth clubs (13 - 19 year olds)

Ash - Thursday 7.00 - 9:00pm
Epsom - Tuesday 6.00 - 8.00pm
Guildford - Friday 7.00 -9:00pm
Reigate - Monday 7.00 - 9.00pm
Staines - Monday 6.30 – 8.30pm

To check availability or request a place, contact Helen Dunkley at the NAS Resource Centre: Tel: 01483 521 743 SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk

NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR APRIL – JUNE 2016

NAS Surrey Branch (NASSB) support groups, talks and activities are a great place to meet other parents and seek support - please contact the relevant parent volunteer for details.

The events shown in BLUE are not organised by us – please contact the organisers direct.

APRIL

Weds 6th 7.30pm NASSB Parents of adults group, Weybridge

Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 Hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Wed 6th 1.00 – 4.00pm, The Cromwell Community Centre, St John's Drive, Walton-on-Thames, Onesie Wednesday Funday fundraiser in aid of NAS Surrey Branch. Minion-themed bouncy castle, Easter egg hunt, egg & spoon races, mini football matches, arts and crafts, cake sale, raffle. Contact Hayley Willoughby hwilloughby1987@virginmedia.com.

Sat 9th 10am - 12 noon Autism Awareness support group and fundraiser in aid of NAS Surrey Branch. St Mark's Church, Westfield Road, Woking GU22 9NG. Volunteer Sarah Mason will explain what the branch does and there will be a chance to share stories and experiences. Donations appreciated. Contact Tracey Pusey traceypusey@yahoo.com.

Thurs 14th 9.30am – 4.00pm Anxiety management training to help young people Runnymede Borough Council, Station Road, Addlestone, KT15 2AH. This is not ASD specific. Contact Suzanne Stronge Suzanne.Stronge@runnymede.gov.uk 01932 425869.

Fri 15th 9.30am - 1.30pm Family Voice Surrey Co-production workshop, St Joseph's Scout Hut, Redhill. Workshop covering personal budgets and person-centred planning. For details email: contact@familyvoicesurrey.org

Mon 18th Bell Farm School, Hersham Rd, Hersham, Walton-on-Thames KT12 5NB, Understanding Anxiety in children CAHMS Parent Carer Workshop. Contact Elmbridge Carers Support - Anne Hubble 0203 757 7234 ahubble@carersupportelbridge.org.uk

Tues 19th SSIASS SEND conference for parents, carers, children and young people, Nutfield Lodge, Nutfield Road, Redhill RH1 4ED. Includes talks on SEND issues and surgeries with advisors. See www.sendadvice.surrey.org.uk

Tues 19th 10.00am – 12.00noon NASSB Support Group, Ewhurst

Contact Lucy Tosh 07968 212043 lucy@lucytosh.co.uk

Thurs 21st 10.00am – 12.00noon NASSB Support Group, Redhill

Contact Helen Ruffhead h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com 01737 212 043.

Thurs 21st 7.30pm NASSB Parents of Adults Group, Reigate

Contact Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 01483 822 630.

Fri 22nd 10.00am – 12.00noon NASSB Support Group, Guildford

Contact Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 01483 822 630.

Fri 22nd 8.00pm NASSB Dad's group, Abinger

Contact Martin Trenaman on trenamans@talktalk.net 01737 360069.

Sat 23rd Brooklands College Transition Information Morning 10.00am – 1.00pm. We have a stand. Contact Sarah Webster Brooklands College sarah.webster@brooklands.ac.uk

Wed 27th 10.00am – 12noon NASSB Support Group, Godalming

Contact NAS Family Support Worker Tessa Emery Tessa.emery@nas.org.uk

MAY

Wed 4th East Horsley 9.30am – 3.00pm Physical Intervention training for Parents with No Fear Ltd. £85.00 per person. Contact: Laura Kerbey Positive Autism Training and Support www.positiveautismsupportandtraining.co.uk/

Weds 4th, 8.00pm NASSB pub meet, Oatlands Chaser, Oatlands Drive, Weybridge
Contact Emma Whitfield emma@mugsy.org

Thurs 5th, 7.30 pm NASSB Parents of Adults Group, Farnham
Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 Hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Fri 6th 2.00 – 3.15pm NASSB Support Group, Hinchley Wood Primary School.
Contact Juliette Sturge juliettesturge@gmail.com

Weds 11th 10.00am NASSB Support Group, Wyevale Garden Centre, Egley Road, Woking. Contact Sarah Norris sarah4ian@ntlworld.com

Thurs 12th May 9.30am - 2.30pm Family Voice Surrey Annual Event, Leatherhead Leisure Centre contact@familyvoicesurrey.org

Friday 13th 9.15 – 11.15am NASSB Support Group, St Anne's School, Chertsey.
Contact emma@mugsy.org

TBC 9.15 – 11.15am NASSB Support Group, Frensham.
Contact Christine Malik christinemalik@btinternet.com / Bonnie Noyce jbnoyce@yahoo.com

Tues 17th 10.00am - 12noon NASSB Support Group, Ewhurst
Contact Lucy Tosh 07968 212043 lucy@lucytosh.co.uk

TALK Weds 18th 7.45 for 8.00pm, St Saviour's, Woodbridge Road, Guildford GU1 4QD
Dr Phil Ferreira-Lay, Lead Consultant Child Psychiatrist for Surrey CAMHS will give an overview of the new CAMHS service that goes live from April 1st 2016. He will also update us on ASD diagnosis and management options available within the service. Contact Emma Whitfield emma@mugsy.org

Thurs 19th 10.00am – 12noon NASSB Support Group, Redhill
Contact Helen Ruffhead h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com 01737 212 043

Fri 20th 10.00am – 12noon NASSB Support Group, Guildford
Contact Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 01483 822 630

Saturday 28th 4.45 – 5.45pm NASSB and interAKtive Ice Skating social event for the whole family, Spectrum Leisure Centre, Guildford. BOOKING ESSENTIAL. Contact sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk for a booking form.

JUNE

Wed 1st 7.30pm NASSB Parents of Adults Group, Camberley
Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 Hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

TALK Weds 15th 7.45 for 8.00pm, PNL Centre, St Joseph's, Ladbrooke Road, Redhill RH1 1LF Speech & Language Therapist Jill Goulding & Occupational Therapist Jo Davis on sleeping, eating, and toileting. Contact Emma Whitfield emma@mugsy.org

Findings from Survey for Joint Autism Strategy

Thank you to the 238 parents who overcame 'survey fatigue' and completed the survey we ran in Feb/Mar with Family Voice Surrey. The findings have been passed to Surrey County Council and are being used to inform the new strategy which is due out next year. They have also had detailed feedback from the focus groups, such as the one we hosted in March. We asked about people's experiences of the autism 'journey' from diagnosis through to accessing health, education, mental health and social services.

EHCPs

56% of those who replied had a statement or Education Health & Care Plan for their child/young person, over 13% were in the process of applying and 30% had no plan or statement.

Diagnosis

Almost 95% of respondents have a child/children with a diagnosis of an ASD, 2.5% are in the process and 3% don't have one. We asked about other 'co-morbid' conditions in addition to autism and almost 58% of people said their child or young person had one or more, with issues including learning difficulties, ADHD/ADD, speech and language disorders, sensory processing disorder, hypermobility, Dyspraxia and/or Dyslexia. Rare chromosomal disorders, depression and anxiety, digestive issues and epilepsy were all mentioned.

Family make-up

Around 5% have children with an ASD in nursery, 44% in primary, 35% in secondary; 9% are aged 16 – 18 and 7% have young people aged 19+. 25.66% have just one person with ASD/ suspected ASD in the immediate family, 23% have two, 7% have three and 4% have four on the spectrum.

Carers Assessment

37% had not had a carers' assessment and almost 46% of people said they were not aware of it. 42% of people had

received services as a result of a carer's assessment, but 27% had had no response following an assessment. 26% of people felt that they should have had services, whilst 69% said they did not know if they should have received any.

Short Breaks and Respite

Only 12% of those who responded said their child/young person was receiving short breaks and 82% of people were not satisfied with the short breaks on offer.

Social Support

15% of people have a social worker and comments suggested that this support is valuable to families.

Health Services

The most commonly received services are from a paediatrician, followed by speech and language. Very few receive support from a community nurse.

Education

Just over half of those who replied had their child/children in mainstream education with 7% in mainstream with a unit or similar provision. 26% are in LA-maintained special schools and 11% in private specialist schools. Interestingly, none of the respondents were home-educating their children, although 2% are using Access to Education or Education Otherwise. 33% are struggling or have struggled with attending school.

46% of people felt that their young person's school or college is effective in teaching and supporting those with ASDs. Typical comments included 'they try their best' and 'varies greatly, sometimes excellent sometimes abysmal'.

65% over-16s are in full-time education, 6% in apprenticeships, 3% in part-time employment, 3% in full-time employment and 23% of people chose 'other' including residential placements, attending day services or 'nothing'.

We will continue to report on progress from meetings both in the newsletter and on the news pages on our web site.

Surrey SEND 2020 Plan

The Joint Autism Strategy is just one part of a complete overhaul of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services in Surrey designed to improve how services are delivered. It is being 'co-produced' by Family Voice Surrey, working with Surrey County Council and service providers.

In March, Liz Mills from Surrey County Council wrote to all parents to explain what is going to change – you can read the whole letter here:

http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/79566/SEND-2020-improving-services-letter-to-parents-and-carers.pdf

She started by saying, "To those parents and carers who have experienced difficulties and frustrations with SEND services, then please let me begin with an apology. We are committed to putting things right, but will only be able to achieve that by working with you and our partners. Our starting point is what families have told us about SEND services in Surrey through different surveys and channels. We are working closely with the local parent and carer forum, Family Voice Surrey, and other groups to ensure we understand families' needs and can involve them in planning new and better services".

Although SEND 2020 is a five-year programme, Surrey plans to make improvements as soon as it can agree and design new services and ways of working with parents, carers and partners. You can write to Liz Mills direct at send2020@surreycc.gov.uk if you have any queries or want to give your views on SEND issues in Surrey.

To request a copy of the Plan, email contact@familyvoicesurrey.org with 'SEND2020 Development Plan' in the subject line or go to the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SEND2020>

Autism Friendly Cinema Screenings for WAAW

Cinemas around the UK are offering additional autism friendly screenings during World Autism Awareness Week (2nd – 8th April). Around 900 cinemas have signed up - for details go to <http://www.yourlocalcinema.com/AFS.html> and click on the name of the film you would like to see in the right hand panel.

Dads' Group Meetings

After a bit of a break, the next meeting of the Dads' group is on 22nd April at a member's home in Abinger. The next meeting will be a summer pub outing. If you would like to join the dedicated fathers' group email list, find out about future meetings or are a Dad who might be interested in hosting a meeting yourself, please contact Martin Trenaman trenamans@talktalk.net

Weighted blankets for loan

NAS Surrey Branch has two weighted blankets and two lap pads available for loan for people who would like to see if these would be helpful for their children. We have one set in West Surrey and one in East Surrey.

The blankets are 2.5kg, which the College of Occupational Therapists suggest is suitable for children over 25kg (about 3 Stone 9lb). We also have lap pads for use at school, watching TV, whilst eating etc: the 1kg pad is suitable for a child of average build up to 8yrs and the 1.5kg pad would suit children of around 8- 13yrs.

If you would like to borrow them, please contact Emma at emma@mugsy.org to arrange collection from the family that currently has them on loan.

NAS Family Support Worker

NAS Family Support Worker is now Tessa Emery who has returned from maternity leave. You can contact her at tessa.emery@nas.org.uk.

Volunteer Treasurer Needed for Family Voice Surrey

Surrey's parent participation group Family Voice Surrey is looking for a new volunteer treasurer to sit on the steering committee. The treasurer should be a parent/carer and have some finance experience.

The treasurer will oversee the financial affairs of Family Voice Surrey, ensuring they are legal, constitutional and within accepted accounting practice. In addition, as a member of Family Voice Surrey's steering committee, you will be responsible for ensuring the organisation is run effectively.

You should:

- Be a parent/carer
- Have knowledge and experience of current fundraising finance practice relevant to voluntary and community organisations
- Have an understanding of bookkeeping and financial management
- Have good financial analysis skills
- Be able to communicate clearly

More details can be found on their website <http://www.familyvoicesurrey.org/#/news/ctr9> Please Contact Sue Lea with any queries sue.l@familyvoicesurrey.org

Challengers Pre-School

SEN and disability playscheme providers Challengers has launched a pre-school at its Farnham Playcentre offering half-day or full-day places for children with additional needs. For further Info Contact FarnhamPre-School@disability-challengers.org or tel: 01483 230 939

Half the spaces are reserved for disabled children and there are spaces at every session for children with complex impairments.

Funding for two year-olds is available via the Government Free Early Education for Two year olds (FEET) scheme for up to 15 hours a week for eligible families.

New Surrey CAMHS Service

CAMHS has been re-commissioned and re-branded in Surrey from 1st April. According to the press release, *"A new partnership model of care, called Mindsight Surrey CAMHS and led by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, will deliver a wider range of support to more children and young people with the aim of reaching them before they become seriously unwell through early intervention and prevention services.*

"Surrey's NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups – which plan and buy local services – and Surrey County Council have invested an extra £2.3 million to improve the services. Greater resources were identified following a period of extensive public engagement undertaken between July 2014 – October 2014. The increased funding has allowed the Trust to provide new treatment pathways designed to enable children and young people to access services at an earlier stage and extend its reach to vulnerable groups such as those young people who are leaving care or who have suffered sexual trauma".

There is now a single point of contact for referrals to CAMHS operating from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and Saturday mornings on 0300 222 5755 **Our Speaker in Guildford on 18th May will be Dr. Phil Ferreira-Lay who will explain more about the new service – see p8.**

Freemantles PDA conference

Freemantles School is hosting a one-day conference on Pathological Demand Avoidance for parents and professionals in Woking on 20th June. Speakers are Phil Christie and Ruth Fidler, both of whom have extensive experience of working with children and young people who have PDA in clinical, research and educational contexts. For details and to book <http://www.freemantles.surrey.sch.uk/T raining/conference-20-6-16-pda/> Early booking discount ends 18th April.

Slides from SEND Teaching School Conference in March

For those who couldn't make it to the SEND Teaching School (Linden Bridge) conference in March, you can view the presentations here <http://www.sendteachingschool.co.uk/springautismconference/>

Presentations were on the Surrey Joint Autism Strategy, including the upcoming changes to CAMHS, SLT and OT; the importance of visual supports, by Rose Fletcher, Speech & Language Therapist and OT Madri Morley, plus sexual development and young people with LDs by psychotherapist James Hawkins.

Wonder.land relaxed performance

The new show 'wonder.land' at the National Theatre is running a relaxed performance for people over 10 years old with autism at 7pm on Thursday 21 April.

Combining live theatre and digital technology, the show is loosely based on Alice in Wonderland, but the blurb says, "*wonder.land is a musical like no other: Aly is struggling with all the pressures of being a teenager: family, school, friends and her own insecurities. Then she discovers wonder.land – a mysterious online world where, perhaps, she can create a whole new life. The web becomes her looking-glass – but will Aly see who she really is?*"

The theatre warns that the storyline features challenging and current issues of teenage life, including slang, explicit language and scenes of bullying and teasing. Tickets for the relaxed performance are £5. To book, contact the Relaxed Performance booking line on 020 7452 3961, or email the Box Office at boxoffice@nationaltheatre.org.uk (no online bookings).

News for Adults

Surrey Hubs Autism Awareness Events

Two of the Surrey Hubs are running events for people on the spectrum and their friends and families during Autism Awareness week

The sessions are running on:
Thursday 7th April at The Hub Epsom, 131 High Street, Epsom 10.00am - 3.00pm

Friday 8th April at The Hub Dorking, The Point, Lyons Court, Dorking 10.00am-3.00pm

If you are on the Spectrum you could come in and speak to one of the friendly volunteers in the hub about support to find employment, volunteering opportunities, support with daily living or anything else you may wish to find out about. They would also be pleased to talk to carers who might want to find out about local support groups for you and your family. Tea, coffee, biscuits and a friendly welcome provided!

There are also hubs in Addlestone, Camberley, Godalming, Guildford, Redhill, Staines, Tandridge, Walton and Woking. The Surrey Hubs promote peoples independence through providing information, access to advice and signposting to services for disabled people, older people, carers and families, as well as providing volunteering opportunities. Further details can be found on the website at www.thesurreyhubs.org.uk

The hubs are run by Surrey Coalition of Disabled People; Surrey Disabled People's Partnership (SDPP); Surrey Independent Living Council (SILC) and Action for Carers Surrey.

If you would like any more information please do not hesitate to get in contact with Jo Mather Tel: 07805 081204 or email J.Mather@surreyilc.org.uk

Autism commission on health

The Westminster Commission on Autism is a new body set up to involve politicians, people with autism, families, autism charities and others in inquiries on specific issues related to autism. It is separate from the All Party Parliamentary Group on Autism, and is funded by the National Children's Centre, but it is concerned with autism across the lifespan, not just children. The first inquiry is about access to healthcare. This could include difficulties with appointment systems, communicating with healthcare staff, lack of awareness of autism amongst healthcare staff, lack of appropriate provision for mental health, or other things. Anyone who has any comments they would like to make about access to healthcare for themselves or their son/daughter with autism can pass on their views via an online form here: <https://westminsterautismcommission.wordpress.com/> Those who cannot use a computer can make an appointment for a telephone conversation by ringing 0300 800 8801. The deadline is 2nd May 2016.

Employment survey

Many autistic people want to work, but face huge barriers to working because of a lack of support and the attitudes of employers. The NAS wants this to change and will be campaigning about it later in the year. To do this, they need up to date information on the experiences of autistic people, so have prepared an online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/JJH9STF> Please fill in this survey and help shape what the NAS campaigns for. It doesn't matter if you don't work now or have never worked, as it asks about your experiences looking for work as well as being in work. You can fill it in as long as you are autistic and aged 16 or over. If you are a parent or carer of an autistic person, you can fill it in for them. The survey will be open until the end of April.

Employment Works for Autism

Applications are still being accepted for places on the 'Employment Works for Autism' project. The project supports people on the autistic spectrum in Surrey who want to work but are not eligible for help from other supported employment schemes. It is run by Surrey Choices EmployAbility, with support from other organisations, including the NAS Surrey Branch, and funded by JobCentrePlus.

During their time on the project, participants get individual coaching to help them build the skills they need to get into work, and supported work experience placements are then found to suit their interests and abilities. Generally people have the opportunity to do 2 different part-time work experience placements, to expand their skills further, and towards the end of their time on the project they have access to a specialist job club to help them apply for permanent jobs.

Applicants should:

- live in the Surrey County Council area
- be claiming either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- not be in employment or education
- not be involved in any other work related funded projects e.g. J2E, Work Programme

For an application form, or more information, contact Surrey Choices EmployAbility Tel: 01483 806806 or employability@surreychoices.com

Please see details about our **Information day for Women and Girls with ASDs** on p3 as this is relevant for both adults and parents of children on the spectrum.