

December 2015



South Hampshire Branch

Dear Friends

Please see below for our final news update of the year. This edition includes advice for surviving Christmas and some requests for help with research. We will be taking a short break (to recharge our batteries!) over Christmas, so may we take this opportunity of wishing you a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you to any of our activities in the New Year.

Family Youth Club

Our final club of the year is **this Saturday, 5 December** 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 our volunteer play facilitators will be present to help the children and young people 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

Please note: there will be no Youth Club in January – we start back again on **Saturday 6 February**.

LEGO club



We meet again **this Saturday, 5 December** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church.

We have now extended the age-range from 8 to 13. Applications received for additional places are now being assessed. To express an interest in your child joining the waiting list for the club, please complete the form on our website 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.

Please note: there will be no LEGO Club in January – we start back again on **Saturday 6 February**.

Support Group Meeting

We are taking a short break over the Christmas period, so our next support group meeting is on **Monday 18 January** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

There will be plenty of time at our meeting to have a chat and to browse our Resource Library, comprising over 300 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.

Our Southampton social groups

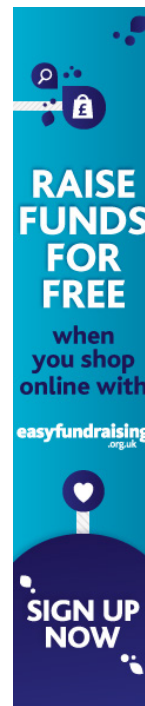
Both our Children's social group and Adults' social group are continuing to meet at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. All dates for the New Year will soon be posted on our website.

For more details of both of these social groups, email aspsq.shants@gmail.com or contact Sue on 023 8043 2612 or Tracey on 07532 282301. New members are always welcome to attend.

Surviving Christmas

Christmas can be an exciting and fun time, but people with autism may be confused or distressed by all the new activity. With the help of readers of Your Autism Magazine, The National Autistic Society has compiled a list of tips that may help you through the festive period at www.autism.org.uk/christmas.

Autism resources are also available from The Autism Network at <http://network.autism.org.uk/knowledge/insight-opinion/preparing-christmas-autism-resources>. These include a link to three videos from the NAS: *Autism and keeping Christmas fun* at <https://youtu.be/Rq1fNXtBI84>.



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Relaxed Performances over Christmas and the New Year

There are a number of relaxed performances taking place in the area:

- The Haymarket, Anvil Arts, Basingstoke, *The Snow Dragon* on **Thursday 10 December** at 1:00pm. Tel: 01256 844244, Email: 01256 844244, Web: www.anvilarts.org.uk/whats-on/the-snow-dragon-relaxed-performance.
- Lighthouse, Poole, *Otto and the Robin* (**Monday 14 December**, 1.45pm) and *Peter Pan – The Magical Christmas Adventure* (**Tuesday 15 December**, 1.30pm). Tickets are £5 and £9 respectively and carers go free. Ticket office: 01202 28 00 00.
- Anvil Arts, Basingstoke, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, **Wednesday 23 December** at 2.00pm. Box Office: 01256 844244, Email: box.office@anvilarts.org.uk, Web: www.anvilarts.org.uk/whats-on/jack-and-the-beanstalk.
- The Mayflower Theatre, Southampton, pantomime, *Aladdin*, on **Tuesday 29 December** at 1.30pm. Tickets are £9.00. Box Office: 023 8071 1811.
- Chichester Festival Theatre, *A Christmas Carol* on **Tuesday 29 December** 2015 at 2.00pm. Tel: Access team on 01243 812927, Email: access@cft.org.uk, Web: <https://www.cft.org.uk/whats-on/event/relaxed-performance>.
- The Mayflower Theatre, Southampton, *The Snowman* on **Saturday 16 January** 2016 at 11.00am. Tel: 02380 711811, Web: https://www.mayflower.org.uk/Whats_on/TheSnowman2016.
- The Mayflower Theatre, Southampton, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* on **Sunday 14 February** at 5.00pm. Tel: 02380 711811, Web: https://www.mayflower.org.uk/Whats_on/ChittyChittyBangBang2016

December's Autism Friendly Screenings

- *The Good Dinosaur* (2D) at selected Cineworld cinemas on **Sunday 6 December** at 11.00am.
- *The Good Dinosaur* (2D) at Showcase cinemas on **Sunday 13 December** at 10.00am.
- *The Peanuts Movie* (2D) at selected ODEON* cinemas on **Sunday 27 December** at 11:30am.
- *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (PG) on **Monday 28 December** at 6.00pm. This is at nine selected cinemas taking part in the ODEON* trial screenings for older audiences.
- *Frozen* (2D) at selected Vue cinemas on **Sunday 27 December** at 10.00am.

Magical Winter Inclusion Weekends, Avon Tyrrell

Enjoy a magical family adventure weekend at Avon Tyrrell on **Friday 4–Sunday 6 December** or **Friday 11–Sunday 13 December**. These inclusion weekends offer families with a child that has a disability an affordable opportunity to go away and spend time together, try an exciting range of fully accessible adventure activities and make new friends. The cost for Gateway Card holders is £55 per person and includes: Two nights' full board accommodation, high quality catering including roast dinner, outdoor adventure activity programme, hot chocolate and marshmallows and breakfast with Santa. Every family will have their own room but not all are en-suite. A range of specialist equipment is available to support you but it is recommended that you discuss your requirements with Avon Tyrrell to ensure that they can cater for your specific requirements. For more information, contact the Guest Services team.

Contact: Avon Tyrrell, UK Youth Outdoor Activity Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE, Tel: Guest Services team on 01425 672347, Email: <https://www.avontyrrell.org.uk/index.html>.

Consultation on the SEND Inspection Framework

On 12 October, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission launched a public consultation on proposals for inspecting local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who are disabled and have special educational needs. The full consultation (and a young people's consultation) is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-area-send-consultation>. It closes on **4 January 2016** at 11:30pm. Independent inspection, combined with local and national accountability measures, will show how the SEN and disability system is performing; which parts are working well and less well; and whether outcomes are improving for children and young people. You can find out more about SEN and disability accountability by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-supporting-local-and-national-accountability>.

Research Study: Exploring the lived experiences and perceptions of education for siblings of individuals with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

- Are you a sibling of a child or young person with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)?
- Are you aged between 16 and 25 years old?

Kirsty Underwood, a Trainee Educational Psychologist at University of Southampton is doing a research project about the educational experiences of siblings of young people with ASC. The research will involve taking part in an interview, lasting around 60 minutes. She is interested to hear from typically developing siblings, who are aged 16-25 and have a brother or sister diagnosed with ASC. They must also have lived in the same household as their brother or sister (either currently or previously when growing up). If there is more than one sibling who fits this criteria in a family, both are welcome to participate in the study. Depending on the volume of responses, not all those who express interest may be asked to participate in this study. However those who are selected, and interviewed will receive a £20 Amazon voucher to thank them for their time and participation in the research. It is hoped that findings from this research will help to identify the best way to support families and schools with young people with ASC.

If you are interested, wish to find out more and/or are willing to participate in the project, please contact the researcher at ku1q13@soton.ac.uk for more information. If you are aged 16 or 17 (under 18) but would like to participate, please ask your parents to contact the researcher. Start/End dates of research: October 2015–March 2016.

Research Study: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and repetitive behaviours

Sam Chegwin, from the University of Hull, is looking for help with a self-funded PhD study looking at OCD and repetitive behaviours in autism. Please visit <https://hull.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/cart-and-free-will-survey-asd> to complete a questionnaire on Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and repetitive behaviours. There is an approximate 1 in 100 chance of winning a £50 cash prize (entry into the prize draw will follow accurate completion of the study). Further details can be found on the site.

Research Study: How young people with autism think and feel about their emotions

Cara Roberts-Collins, a trainee Clinical Psychologist at the University of Bath, is looking to contact parents of young people aged 11-18 with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum (including Asperger's) to take part in her research. Her research is looking at how young people with autism think and feel about their emotions. Taking part would involve your child completing a short questionnaire, taking about 5 minutes. Your child's answers will be compared to a group of young people with autism who have attended cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). She wants to see if taking part in CBT makes any difference to their emotional awareness. The research is based in Bath and travel costs are not available, however she can post the questionnaire to you. If you would like to take part or have any questions please contact her at crc33@bath.ac.uk or telephone 07478 942153.

Developing Experience-led Information about Self Harm

Self injury Support (www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk) are a UK-wide self harm support organisation that offers support around self harm through a helpline, text service and online information. Over the years they've realised that there are lots of different issues related to self harm such as trauma, hearing voices, having a learning difficulty and many other areas that people want to talk about where there is very little information out there. They want to change this and want to develop information that is by and for people with personal experience of different issues – they'd like to gather your views and experiences. Their survey can be completed online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SHExperiences>.

Reminders:

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/>

The Eastleigh Social Group

Part of the Serendipity Social Groups Project run by Autism Hampshire, the Eastleigh social group is for people 18 or older who have High Functioning Autism or Asperger's. They meet at the Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre fortnightly on Friday afternoons from 1.30-3.30pm. For more information contact: Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre, 111 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9DS, Tel: 023 8063 3951, Email: Jamie.pratt@autismhampshire.org.uk

New Science Museum 'Early Birds' and 'Night Owls' Events

The Science Museum in London presents 'Early Birds', an experience for families with members who have an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). The next 'Early Birds' is on **12 December 2015** when the Museum will be open from 8.30am for families to come along and enjoy the Museum free of the general public. Please visit www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/visitmuseum/Plan_your_visit/events/other/early_birds_event.aspx for booking information.

NAS T-shirts

A number of you who attended our 10th Anniversary events expressed an interest in purchasing NAS 'I'm having an amazing day for autism' T-shirts (as modelled by our committee). These can be ordered through us at £3.50 each. Sizes are (in inches) XXL (44) XL (42) L (40) M (38) S (36) and Children's 3-5, 5-6 and 7-8.

Schools' Autism Awareness Week

The first ever Schools' Autism Awareness Week will take place from 14-18 March 2016. Hosted by the NAS, this week has been conceived as part of the run up to World Autism Awareness Week (2-8 April 2016). They are calling to all schools to join them and help spread autism awareness. Schools who sign up will receive a bumper pack including lesson plans to help children learn more about autism in a fun and interactive way. Contact your local schools to let them know – [full details are at available here](#).

My World, National Autistic Society

The NAS is offering 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/Working-with/Education/teacher-form.aspx.

Friends of in touch

Friends of in touch is a registered charity, in Eastleigh, that supports emotionally and socially vulnerable children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions, and behaviours associated with them. 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 their self-confidence, self-esteem and their coping skills.

There are currently vacancies in their Junior (9 to 13) and Senior (13 to 21) Youth Groups. They 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). For more details visit www.friendsofintouch.org.uk. Anyone interested should contact Chris@friendsofintouch.org.uk or call 07474 539539. Please do not just turn up at the youth centre without having contacted Chris.

Autism Alert App

The Autism Alert App, from Autism Hampshire, enables people with autism to share information about their autism and support their autism. It can be used by young people and adults who live in Hampshire (including Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight). It functions on a smartphone and you can also have an Alert Card. It can be used to explain your condition to the emergency services, any professional, family member or friends who you choose to share it with. Contact Community Access team on 02380 633951 or email communityaccess@autismhampshire.org.uk for an application form. For further details visit <http://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/assets/files/Outreach/Project/Insert%20-%20Community%20Access%20Helpful%20Apps%20&%20Smart%20Phone%20Loans.pdf>.

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 have purchased over 40 new books which will be added to the library shortly, bringing the total number of books, videos, DVDs and games to around 350 items. 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 £1200.**

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.



As always, for full details of all our meetings, other dates, news items and information, please visit our [website](#).

Regards

David & Rachel Carter

The National Autistic Society, South Hampshire Branch
Email: shants@nas.org.uk | Website: www.shantsnas.org.uk
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*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.*