



Spring 2009

"Valuing People Now" word search

R	J	R	T	S	A	M	E	Q	K	S	P
E	A	P	I	W	Y	S	M	O	H	L	E
S	B	M	C	H	O	I	C	E	S	G	O
P	I	D	B	T	U	R	Y	P	Y	E	P
O	U	X	V	O	L	T	E	K	U	J	L
N	S	F	A	M	I	L	I	E	S	Z	E
S	C	N	C	N	A	N	Y	O	X	F	T
I	K	A	G	V	Q	A	V	H	R	R	N
B	W	I	R	C	H	A	N	C	E	S	O
I	D	Z	M	E	Y	W	G	P	S	X	W
L	Y	S	D	F	R	E	H	O	P	E	S
I	L	E	J	Z	I	S	C	R	E	I	A
T	N	K	O	B	P	U	M	F	C	L	J
I	H	S	T	H	G	I	R	G	T	G	H
E	F	A	D	C	E	B	C	A	I	E	I
S	U	E	V	E	R	Y	O	N	E	D	T

Can you find the following words?

Choices

Chances

Same

Respect

Rights

Responsibilities

Everyone

Hopes

Dignity

People

Carers

Families

**Speakeasy Advocacy**

Giving a voice and support to people with a learning disability,  
autistic spectrum disorders and/or Asperger's syndrome

Registered charity number: 1108304





## Speakeasy Advocacy News



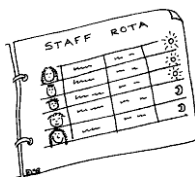
### Funding news



**Internet Explorers** have been awarded some money by Hampshire County Council for new equipment in the internet café, including a flat screen television and flat screen computer monitors. They have also been given some money to produce a guide to help people start up their own group.



**Wicked and Wacky** have been given a grant by the Learning Disability Partnership Board to produce a guide to Basingstoke. The guide will help people find out about places to see and activities to try in their local community.



### New member of staff

Jen Sharpe started with us in January as the new Advocacy Co-ordinator for Autism. She will be working with Internet Explorers, and supporting children with autism and their families. Jen will also be working closely with the Basingstoke branch of the National Autistic Society, which provides lots of support for families affected by autism. Read more about Jen on page 7 of this newsletter.



## Valuing People Now - making it happen for everyone

The government has just launched its new strategy for people with a learning disability for the next 3 years.



**Hampshire**  
County Council

It tells local authorities like Hampshire County Council how they should run their services and what they should do to support people with a learning disability.



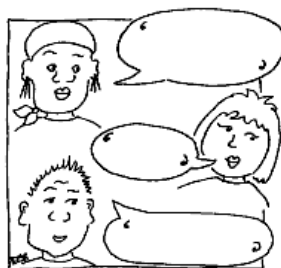
It says they should include everyone, as some people miss out, like those with lots of needs, people from different backgrounds and cultures, people with autism or people who are or have been in prison.



It also tells people with a learning disability and autism what they can expect from their lives, including things like

- planning for and getting the life you want
- better health care
- more housing choices and options
- ordinary lives including work, education and relationships
- the right support, information and advocacy

**We have some copies in the office if you would like to find out more**



## Self advocacy groups

**Self advocacy = speaking up for yourself**



### Internet Explorers

The group have 1 new member, and 1 place to fill as another member only comes in the school holidays. The group are about to celebrate their 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a trip to KFC. Now the weather is a bit better they play football out in the car park. A few members are turning 16 this year, so are starting to think about what they will do when they leave the group next year.



### Wicked and Wacky



The group have a new project called "A guide to Basingstoke" where they will record information about places to go and people to see in Basingstoke. They will produce information that other people with a learning disability can use. They have already completed one visit and were amazed at how difficult it was to access the place!



The group are planning a workshop 'Our health matters' for a self advocacy day being held in Eastleigh in April. They will be running the workshop and getting views from people taking part about how things are now, and what can be changed to make things better.



## Happy Club

The group continue to follow their agenda with a mixture of evenings in the group room and activities in the community. These include trying new places to eat in the town centre, and members running their own evenings with games or a quiz. Members are learning the skills needed to run their own group, like being organised and what to do if there is a problem. They are also recognising their abilities to do things for themselves, with occasional support from Jackie.



## Virtual Friends

The group continues to grow and now have 11 members who attend regularly. They enjoy taking part in activities at Speakeasy and out in the local community with the cinema and bowling being particular favourites.



Updating the group rules recently was quite a challenge as the group wanted to recognise people's individual personalities and work within those to produce appropriate rules for their group.



## Friday Network

Friday Network continues to be a busy place to meet with between 35 and 45 people attending every week. The Person Centred Planning group runs in the morning where people have been working on a health plan for themselves.



The self advocacy session follows at 11am and often

guest speakers are invited. Recently there have been speakers from the library, a gardening project, the Primary Care Trust, Job Centre Plus and someone to talk about racism and care. A communication group and 1:1 advocacy is on offer in the afternoon as well as the opportunity to have a 'job' within the Network.



## Wednesday Network



This group of 8 people from Basingstoke day services continue to meet at the Roger Morris Centre in Eastrop.



The group have been working on a health action plan. They have been thinking about how they look after their bodies and how they cope with their emotions.



The group also planned their Christmas party, and had a local fish and chip van come to deliver their lunch! Most of the group hadn't planned a party before, and they are looking forward to the next one. They also enjoy doing other new things, like going to the shop, doing their work, helping out at the group and talking about themselves.



The group will soon be creating an exhibition for the Willis Museum that will be displayed in the summer for the public to view.

**Get in touch if you want to know more about the groups**

## Life with Asperger's syndrome

"I always hate having to introduce myself! My name is Jennifer Sharpe and I am the new Advocacy co-ordinator for children and young people with autism. I actually started in January but my first few months have gone so fast that I still like to consider myself as new! My mum actually saw the advert for this job in the paper and encouraged me to apply. I have experience working with children with autism and Attention Deficit Disorder as during school and university I worked for Mencap, the Berkshire Autistic Society and West Berkshire Council. Autism was something I learnt a lot about during my Psychology degree but it has also affected me on a personal level as a member of my family has Asperger's Syndrome.

The best thing about my job is that I am doing something important that makes a difference to people's lives. This also makes the job quite daunting as you are sometimes dealing with people who are upset, angry, confused or frustrated. At first it isn't always obvious how you can help but by listening and asking the right questions you can start to identify the issues and help people find solutions to their problems.

As well as helping families I also run our self advocacy group Internet Explorers. I must admit I wasn't expecting to enjoy this part of the job but it is actually one of the best bits! It is great to see the boys socialising and enjoying themselves and proves that a lot of the stereotypes people have about autism are untrue. In the next few weeks the boys are going paint balling and to KFC to celebrate Internet Explorers' 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

I have got quite passionate about advocacy and didn't really appreciate its importance until I started working with families. Some of the people I help to speak out have been treated poorly by people that should be helping them. But when an advocate gets involved it can make these people realise they were not doing enough to help. I also underestimated how much people value someone to listen to their problems and views without judging or criticising.

So that is a bit about me and I hope that whilst working for Speakeasy I can help many families in Basingstoke get the support, help and services they are entitled to."

# How to get in touch:



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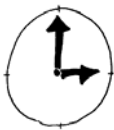
Web site: [www.speakeasyadvocacy.org.uk](http://www.speakeasyadvocacy.org.uk)



## Coffee Morning Dates for 2009



Saturday 2 May  
6 June  
4 July  
1 August  
5 September  
3 October  
7 November  
5 December



10.00 am - 1 pm



17 New Road, Basingstoke