



Summer 2006



Congratulations to Internet Explorers
seen here celebrating their 1st
anniversary with a party in May

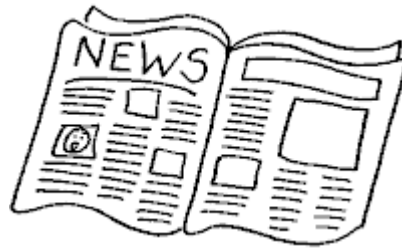
Speakeasy Advocacy

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



Giving a Voice

Registered charity number: 1108304



Speakeasy Advocacy News



Health team survey

We have finished our survey of people who have been seen by the health team. We will be presenting the results to the team in Basingstoke and their colleagues in Hampshire over the next few weeks.



New project with a local care provider

Our trustees have voted in favour of working with Loddon Alliance on a 2 year project that will support people with a learning disability to get involved in the running of their organisation. 2 people will be paid to take part in meetings, and will be supported to do this by an advocacy worker.



Lottery funding

We have been writing our application for more lottery money. If we get the funding, we will do the things you have told us you want, like run a job club and train more volunteer advocates. We probably won't find out if we have been given the money until the end of this year.

HOT G OSSIP

is now available...



...on the internet at
www.speakeasyadvocacy.org.uk (and click on
the link to "Hot Gossip")



...by email directly to your computer
(so please email us at
speakeasy.advocacy@btconnect.com if we
don't already have your email address)

These changes mean it will be:

- easier for you to send Hot Gossip to friends and colleagues
- cheaper for us to produce
- better for the environment as we will use less paper



Self advocacy groups

Self advocacy = speaking up for yourself



Wicked and Wacky have finished projects looking at how they behave, and are now putting together group rules based on all their work.



Happy Club have a busy programme planned for the next 6 months, including an evening in July to raise funds for a school in the Gambia.



Virtual Friends are meeting every 2 weeks in the group room, and have some new members who have started to come along. Some of the group go to the pub afterwards, and some also meet up in the pub every other week.



Internet Explorers had a party to celebrate their 1st anniversary, with lots of food and drink. Everyone brought a friend, brother or sister with them, and played pass the parcel and the "name your partner" game.

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



**Coffee mornings could be just what
you need to.....**



make new friends



try a new evening activity after hearing about it
from someone else



learn more about money, by helping run the shop

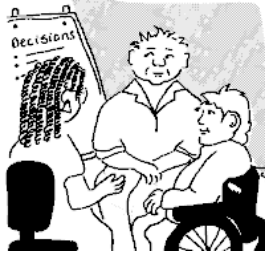


learn to do things for yourself like cleaning,
tidying up, and making drinks so you can live more
independently

**These are the experiences of people
who come along!**



The next coffee morning is on Saturday 1 July
from 10 am - 1pm



Getting ready for your 1st person centred planning meeting



Invitations

- set a date for your first meeting
- write a letter or make a phone call to invite your circle of support to the meeting
- tell people this is a meeting about you taking control of your life



The meeting place

- pick somewhere you feel comfortable, like your house, the advocacy project, or even the pub!
- think about how you will get the room ready, and what drinks or snacks you will provide



Deciding what you want to say

- think about the changes you want to make in your life, and decide what you want to tell people at the 1st meeting
- make some notes or a tape recording to help you remember

We can help you get your plan started - get in touch if you want a plan or if you want to know more

Life with Asperger's Syndrome

Matthew is a trustee at Speakeasy Advocacy, and founder member of Virtual Friends and Happy Club.

"In this article, I will continue to look at emotions, and what it is like for someone with Asperger's syndrome (AS) to deal with emotional situations.

Helplessness – emotions can lead us to literally feel drained and often we won't know what to do in a situation. Every situation will be different, so it is impossible to constantly be ready with a plan or an answer. People with AS are often very in tune with what is happening on a global scale and may want to improve the world and the way we live, either environmentally, bringing peace to the world or ecologically, plus numerous other ways as well. You can be left feeling helpless because the world is in such a mess, but there are things that can be done on a small scale and small things often branch outwards.

Patience – something I haven't got enough of! When dealing with other people's emotions it is good if you are patient. I am sure that one of the most important attributes to have if you are married is to be patient with your spouse. We can't expect other people to do things exactly the way we want them to do it all the time, as this is unrealistic. None of us are superhuman. People get tired, suffer physical and mental symptoms, have different viewpoints and make mistakes.

Blame – we live in what is commonly called a "blame culture" where no one wants to take responsibility for his or her actions and always need someone else to put the blame on. Unfortunately blame is one of the major causes in a relationship breakdown and people with AS are not immune to this. We can get the raw end of the deal sometimes because we do not always act or conform to what is expected and so therefore the other party will use that as bait for blame. "He never looks at me" or "he never tells me he loves me" and this will end with "that is why our relationship is breaking down because of him and his ways". What you need to do in this situation is to evaluate what is going on. Do you love this person with AS for who they are? Sometimes it is hard for the other person to accept that we deal with emotions in a different way, and won't always conform to what is expected of us. Relationships need to be constantly evaluated, without blame being put on either side, and try to see what each of you needs to do to make the relationship work.

Concern – most people feel concern for friends, family and those we are close to. Sometimes we can over emphasise our concern and end up making a nuisance of ourselves and sometimes we can try and take on the other person's problems as well. Neither of these solutions are healthy, the best thing to do is to be willing to listen as and when you are needed, but think about how much help you will be before jumping in with both feet. Often listening is the best thing you can do!"

(This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in the Happy Club monthly version of Hot Gossip)

How to get in touch:



01256 332795 (you can leave a message)



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Dates for your diary in 2006



Annual General meeting

Wednesday 9 August 6pm - 8pm



Trustees meeting:

Wednesday 8 November 2006 at 5.30pm