



Partnership News

Summer 2003



The newsletter for parents & carers of children with special educational needs

New Volunteers Ready to Support Parents



Nine new volunteer Independent Parental Supporters have successfully completed a five and a half day training course and are keen to join our existing team of volunteers in supporting parents. **Congratulations to them and a heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers for their hard work this year.**

Since 2000, our volunteers have supported 407 parents. They ensure parents have the information they need, assist with form-filling, writing letters and reports, helping parents prepare for meetings, offer support through statutory assessment and statementing and much more.

Recently the demand for our volunteers has out-stripped supply, especially in the Great Yarmouth and Thetford areas. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, we are holding a training course in September and October.

The course is free and accredited by the Open College Network. All travel expenses are refunded. Some knowledge or interest in special educational needs is desirable and although the course is enjoyable, it is quite intensive.

Please ring us on 01603 281044 for an informal chat and we will send further written information.

**Contact us for
information and
support**



Tel: 01603 281044

**Parent Partnership
Boardman House
Redwell Street
Norwich
NR2 4SL**



email:

parent.partnership@norfolk.gov.uk

website:

www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk

**Please let us know
if you would like
large print copies
or if translations
would be useful.**

The Norfolk Parent Partnership Management Group



Norfolk Parent Partnership is an LEA funded initiative, working with the voluntary sector and other professionals to support parents & carers of children with special educational needs.

Spring Newsletter

Egg Competition



We had a fantastic response to our competition and really enjoyed receiving all the entries. They were brilliant with all sorts of interesting ideas about what was in the egg. We were surprised (and a bit scared!) by a dinosaur, a dragon, a witch, a pop group, a snake and a monster.

Thank you to everybody who sent us a picture. Special thanks to a Support Assistant (you'll know who you are!) who also sent in a great picture!

We asked our trainee volunteer Independent Parental Supporters to judge the competition. It was a very difficult decision for them but after a lot of thought, they chose the following winners:

Kirsty George aged 8 from Herman First School;

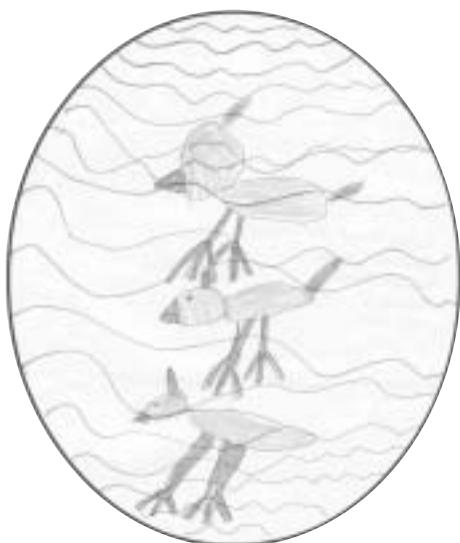
Robyn Morley aged 5 from Northrepps Primary School;

Matthew Jack aged 8 from Colman First School;

Michaela Louise Farr aged 11 from Tilney St Lawrence Community Primary School

Congratulations to the winners who will each receive a postal order and certificate in the post. Look on our website for the winning entries at:

www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk



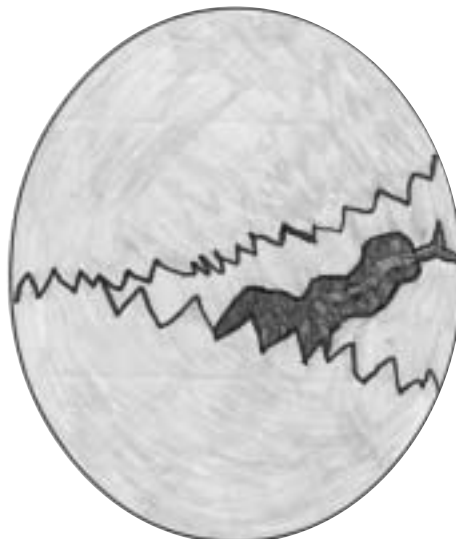
Robyn



Kirsty



Matthew



Machaela

== Cheeky Monkeys ADHD Support Group ==

"Cheeky Monkeys" is a family support group for children with special needs, including Autism, Asperger, Dyspraxia and speech and language delay.

We have a mobile toy library that calls every fortnight and they offer a wide range of toys for children with special needs. You can borrow some of the toys for a small fee and keep them for a fortnight.



We are a drop-in group that meets every Monday (except Bank Holidays) at 9.30-11.30am at St Francis Church Hall, Rider Haggard Road, Norwich.

On Wednesdays we have access to an after school club for children with special needs. We also have a Monday Club with a range of activities for children and siblings in the school holidays.

For more information or a chat, ring:

Yvonne 01603 486863

Sheena 01603 472899

Amanda 01603 700664

Website: www.cheekymonkeys.netfirms.com

Email: cheekymonkeys@postmaster.co.uk

Are you confused by terms like 'School Action', 'School Action Plus' and bewildered by SEN, SENCO & IEPs?

Would you like to learn more about special educational needs alongside other parents?

If you are interested in some informal group work with Parent Partnership and other parents to find out more about special educational needs, please fill in your details below and return the slip to us. If there is enough demand, we could offer these sessions in a number of different venues around the County. The sessions would run during a school day and would be free.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

Telephone/e-mail



**Return to: Norfolk Parent Partnership, Boardman House,
Redwell Street, Norwich NR2 4SL by 14th August 2003.**

Special Educational Needs Holiday Playscheme

CONTACT are organising a holiday playscheme in the Great Yarmouth area during August for children with special educational needs and their siblings aged 4-18 years old.

Ring **Belinda Crayston** on
01493 330930 for further details.



Books to Read

You might find the following books helpful. Those books marked with an * are available on loan from the Parent Partnership office.

“Geeks, Freaks and Asperger Syndrome” (A User Guide to Adolescence) by Luke Jackson published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers ISBN 1-84310-098-3

* “It can get Better... (A guide for parents)” by Paul Dickinson and Liz Hannah Published by The National Autistic Society.

* “Dyspraxia – The Hidden Handicap” by Dr Amanda Kirby

* “Practical Strategies for Living with Dyslexia” (for parents, teachers and other professionals) by Maria Chivers

* “Lets Discuss Dyslexia” (for young people) by Pete Sanders and Steve Myers

If you have found any other books useful, please let us know and a short review would be helpful as well.



Library Maze

Why not pop along to your local library this summer and join in our summer reading promotion. The Reading Maze is a national reading promotion aimed at children under 12 years.

Throughout the summer holidays children can enrol in the scheme at any Norfolk Library (including mobiles) – they will be given a Reading Maze Collectors folder and by reading their way through six books they can collect a series of stickers to decorate their folders and find their way out of the maze. If they manage to find their way out of the maze children will be

presented with a certificate, maze pencil and medal.

It's an exciting and fun way of supporting reading development through the summer and for families to enjoy books and stories together. Look out for further details in your local library about the summer promotion and also for any special events taking place in libraries.

Dorne Fraser
Senior Librarian
Young People's Services



Your Help Wanted

Mediators needed for ConSENsus

Since the beginning of 2002, Local Education Authorities have had a statutory duty to make arrangements for dispute resolution services when parents disagree with their LEA or a school about provision for children with special educational needs. These arrangements must include 'the appointment of independent persons.'

ConSEnSUS is a Mencap project, which has been providing a dispute resolution service in Essex since 2001, and is now working with other LEAs in the region, including Norfolk and Suffolk. It trains and supports mediators who work on a sessional basis as and when the need arises.

Mediation can be defined as 'a process in which an impartial third party helps disputing parties work out an agreement.' The disputants, not the mediator, decide the terms of the agreement. There are no 'fixed' qualifications for mediators, although the ability to listen and to be impartial is essential.

We are planning a training course in the autumn, which will teach mediation skills and give an introduction to Special Educational Needs law and procedure. Anyone interested should contact:

**Ros Redelsperger on 01379 388621,
or email:
rosalind.redelsperger@mencap.org.uk**



**ASK have just celebrated 25 years of
supporting families of children & young
people with special needs.**

ASK run a helpline for parents on Wednesday mornings between 10am and 1pm.

ASK are currently updating thier handbook for parents. This contains contact details and information on the following:

Health; under 5s; Education; Social Services; Benefits and finance; Information and Advice; Children's Act; Disability Discrimination Act; Changes to Legislation; Human Rights Act; Holidays and Travel; Play Leisure and Voluntary Organisations.

ASK always appreciate new volunteers, so if you are interested, please give then a ring.

The ASK Service can be contacted at:

The Saffron Room
Charing Cross Centre
17-19 St. John Maddermarket, Norwich
NR2 1DN
Tel: 01603 761333

Spring Newsletter Questionnaire

Thank you to those people who took the time and trouble to fill in the questionnaire in last term's newsletter.

These were returned by parents who thought the newsletter was mostly interesting and the language was about right. One parent said, "It reminds me there are other parents/families out there who have children with special needs." So don't feel you are alone. If you have not received one of our information packs with leaflets giving contact numbers, help with jargon and other useful tips and advice please contact us for a copy.



If you have anything you wish to share with other parents that has helped you with your child, let us know and we will try and include it in forthcoming issues.

Information is available on special needs and books are available for loan, again just give us a ring.

If you have any specific issues you would like to be discussed or know of any activities or local support groups for families of children with special needs, do let us know.

Tel: 01603 281044
Parent Partnership, Redwell Street,
Norwich. NR2 4SL

Special Needs Norfolk Conference and Exhibition

Tuesday 7th October 2003 9am-5pm



This Norfolk Psychological Service event, is now in its 8th year, and continues to be a highly informative and popular day. Last year over 1200 delegates attended and 96 exhibitors. This year 100 exhibitors will display an extensive range of high quality resources, from early years to adult.

Many of Norfolk's professional support services and voluntary organisations will have stands.

These groups will be able to offer you useful information and specific professional advice.

Recognising the value of the arts for everyone, the organisers are delighted to welcome many of Norfolk's artists in education. There will be opportunities to find out about painting, craft making, designing puppets, sculpture, creative projects, story-telling, drama, music and dance, not forgetting linking science activities to magic tricks and circus stunts!

Venue: Norwich Sports Village,
Drayton High Road, Norwich.

***For further information contact:
Irene Hoare 01603 458191
(Term time only please)***



“Do you have a child with a disability?”

Do you need...

Information
Friendly support
Contact with other parents who understand
News
Ideas?

Find-A-Link may be able to help. Find-A-Link is a support and information service organised and run by a group of parents of children with special needs.

Find-A-Link's trained parent volunteers offer understanding support to the parents of children with disabilities, either face to face or through a friendly chat on the phone.

They can give information on the relevant local groups and services and put you in touch with other families of children with special needs, as well as a free bi-monthly newsletter “FIND News”.

Contact Joy on **01603 414109** or email: norfolknorwich.scope@virgin.net

Notice Board

Parent Information Packs

Since the last newsletter, we have produced a new ***Parent Information Pack***. The pack contains 13 booklets so that parents can select information as and when they need it. Examples of booklet titles include; ‘***Finding out about a school***’, ‘***Working together to help your child***’ and ‘***Statutory Assessment & Statements***’.

The packs were sent to all schools, governors, and libraries. If you would like a pack, please contact us on **01603 281044**. For those of you who have already seen the pack, we would be grateful for your comments. ***Please complete the feedback form enclosed with the pack and let us know what you think.***

AUTISM & ASPERGERS FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

A support group for parents and carers is starting in the Dereham area in September.

For further details please contact: Jan Eastwood - **01603 811264** and leave a message for Carron or Teresa.



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