

Northumberland SEND Support Services



Regional Winner
Yorkshire and the Humber
National Training Awards 2008



National Training Awards
UK Winner 2010

INFORMATION

Cygnet is a parenting support programme for parents and carers of children/young people aged 5 - 16 within Northumberland who have a diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

The package of training has been developed by Barnardo's. They looked at what was being done in existing parent training groups, examining research findings, a pilot training group and from consultations with parents/carers and professionals in Bradford and Airedale.

From this, a six session parent training package has been developed for parents/carers whose children have been diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Current sessions are:

Module 1: Autism and Diagnosis

- Introduction to the group
- Background to the group
- Aims
- Content
- Introduction to ASCs
- What is it like to have an Autistic Spectrum Condition
- Experience of the diagnosis

Module 2: Communication

- Why and how do we communicate
- Communication in ASCs
- Strategies to aid communication
- Social Stories – what they are, how to use them
- Comic Strips – what they are, how to use them

Module 3: Sensory Issues

- What are the senses?
- What do we use them for?
- Types of sensory issues seen in ASCs
- Associated behaviour
- Strategies to help

Module 4: Understanding Behaviour

- Types and functions of all behaviour
- Behaviour and Autism
- Underlying difficulties behind the behaviour (Iceberg principle)

Module 5: Managing Behaviour

- Using the information (Iceberg principle)
- Analyzing and Managing behaviour (STAR analysis)
- Key strategies
- Management strategies

Module 6: Choice decided by parents/carers e.g.

- Looking to the future
- Issues in adolescence/puberty
- Contacts
- Siblings
- Sleeping
- Going over previous work

Why Might I be interested in coming to a Cygnet Group?

Parents have a lot of involvement with professionals up to and around the time of diagnosis, however they can feel that there is little available to them after diagnosis – at a time when they have a lot of questions about their child and what can help them. There may also be a group of parents or carers who for a variety of reasons may not have been able to or wanted to access advice or information locally relevant to their child. Children's needs also change over time so information and advice received when a child was younger

may need to be updated to be relevant for the child/young person today. If you have therefore attended Early Bird or Early Bird Plus programmes you may still wish to attend Cygnet.

Attending the Cygnet group gives parents and carers an opportunity to better understand Autistic Spectrum Disorders. It offers practical strategies that you can implement at home, gives you a chance to meet with others in a similar position and hear about their experiences.

The training is presented quite informally. The materials are flexible and can be altered to suit the needs of particular groups of parents and carers.

Parents comments from previous courses

- *“Fantastic! Really enjoyable and helpful!”*
- *“Our biggest problems are related to behaviour so understanding our son’s behaviour properly is a very big step!”*
- *“This has given me the tools to help with my child’s communication.”*
- *“I can now identifying my child’s sensory issues and have an idea of practical strategies.”*
- *“The support of other group members is really valuable.”*

Where and when is the group running?

The group is going to be held at:

Hexham Hub, South Park, Northumberland National Park, Hexham. NE46 1BS.

Sessions last approximately 2.5 hours each and run on a weekly basis. The dates are outlined below:

Date	Session	Time	Date	Session	Time
05/01/17	1	9.30 am -12 noon	26/01/17	4	9.30 am -12 noon
12/01/17	2	9.30 am -12 noon	02/02/17	5	9.30 am -12 noon
19/01/17	3	9.30 am -12 noon	09/02/17	6	9.30 am -12 noon

If parents accept a place in the group they are expected to attend the majority of the six sessions.

NB: *Childcare is not available*

Do I have to attend all Sessions?

If possible, yes. You will gain a lot more from coming to the group if you come to all the sessions. This is because each session builds on the one before. Please do not accept a place in the group if you are only able to attend one or two sessions – you will not benefit from coming and may take the place of someone else who is able to come to all the sessions.

I would like to come, what do I do now?

Either a professional working with you can make a referral with your consent or a referral can be made direct by parents or carers. Your child needs to be aged 5 - 16 and have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Just complete a Cygnet Group Enrolment Form and return it to the ASD & Behaviour Service at the address below. You will receive confirmation of your place through the post.

For further information please contact:

Allison Black
Admin Assistant
ASD & Behaviour Service
South View
Ashington
Northumberland
NE63 0SF
01670 624802