

For more info contact: Sophie on (020) 8886 3846

For info or feedback for the newsletter please contact Kathryn on (01992) 632072



# Newsletter

## Spring Term 2011!

Welcome to your Spring Newsletter!

It seems like only a few months ago since we welcomed 2010 – where has a whole year gone?! Hoping that you have all settled into a new school term, with all the challenges that this change brings to our children and families. I cannot believe half term is upon us already.

During the winter months we have been busy behind the scenes setting some new dates for your diaries, please read on! Firstly, and most importantly, is our **AGM on Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup>** where we welcome Steve Monnery, the NAS Parent Telephone Support Services Manager as our speaker.

Please do come along if you can. Elections will be held for Branch Officer and Treasurer and our programme for 2011 will be presented.

Our coffee mornings continue this term, so if you haven't had the opportunity to go to date, read further in this newsletter for more details.

Following the success of the Florence Hayes adventure playground sessions we are delighted to be able to announce more sessions this year! See details further in this newsletter, and on the enclosed flyer.

Our range of books and other materials will be available at branch meetings to members for information about local support services and other resources. Books are available for loan for a month at a time. We are currently exploring venues for a new home for the library outside of branch meetings and hope to bring you more information soon. Recommendations and suggestions for new titles for our library are always welcome.

You may remember some time ago we asked you whether you preferred to get your newsletter by hard copy or electronic mail. Well, we are currently working on some changes! Read further on for details.

As always, please do let us know what else you would like in **your** newsletter, from news coverage through to the activities we plan, let us know what you think. If you have information that you think would be helpful for other members then please do contact us so that we can include it in future mailings. We are always happy to publicise local events and organisations that support people on the autistic spectrum and their families. We are also keen to include stories and reports in the newsletter so please do let us know if there is something you think we should be covering.

**If you have any feedback or information for the newsletter, please speak to me, Kathryn Kazmanli on (01992) 632072.**

We have a full programme of talks and activities again for this Spring term.

**There is revised calendar of events with this newsletter so stick it on your fridge door now!**

Your autism charity

## ***This Term's Programme***

### **Coffee Mornings**

Our weekly coffee morning at the Galliard Children's centre continues at Galliard School, hosted by Sian Warner, Learning Support Teacher and a parent of a young adult on the spectrum. This is a great way to share ideas, experiences and understanding. We are currently planning speakers for some of these meetings, but some will be free to allow time to chat. So if daytime meetings are more suitable for you, then this is a great opportunity to come along, and hear from some of our local professionals and other guest speakers. If you can attend both, even better!

Please note this meeting is for parents/carers only – it is not intended for children.

This coffee morning runs every Tuesday morning during term time from 9.30am to 11.30am in:

The Community Room, Galliard Children's Centre,  
Galliard Road, Edmonton, London, N9 7PE

**For more information call Joyce on: 020 8443 0092**

There is an additional coffee morning at the Prince of Wales Primary School. This is another opportunity to meet parents and carers of autistic children, share information and make new friends..

**For more information call: Karen Rees on: 01992 762840**

This coffee morning runs every Friday morning during term time from 9.30am to 11.30am at:

**The Prince of Wales Primary School, Salisbury Rd  
(Off Ordnance Rd) Enfield**

### **AGM and Branch Meeting**

This term we have one evening branch meeting with a speaker and this meeting will also be our AGM. The meeting will be held on **Thursday 10th March** at

Cedar House. Please come to this important meeting as we will be holding elections for our Branch Officer, Deputy Branch officer and Treasurer. There will be a review of our activity in 2010, and looking forward to 2011 – your contribution is warmly welcomed! Further details of this meeting can be found on the enclosed AGM notification.

This meeting will also kick off our speaker programme for the year and we are starting with a topic that we know that a lot of our members are interested in **'How to choose a secondary school for your child'**. We will be joined by Steve Monnery, the NAS Parent Telephone Support Services Manager, who will be providing us with practical advice about important things like what provision you should be looking for, what to look for when you visit school and questions to ask the staff at the schools you visit. We hope that this will be a really helpful evening that will give provide lots of useful advice.

***7.30 pm – 9.30 pm at: Cedar House, Gater Drive,  
Chase Side Crescent, Enfield EN2 0JA***

If you are currently thinking about secondary schools for your child you might like to check out the Autism Education trust web site as they have a very helpful guide to secondary transfer with checklists of provision and questions to ask school. You can find this at: <http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/Resources/Transition%20toolkit.aspx>

### ***Branch News***

#### **ENAS Has a New Treasurer!**

Following our call for volunteers in our last mailing, we now have a new treasurer. A very warm welcome to Rajiv Gunesh and many thanks to him for taking over the important role of looking after our money. Thanks again also go to Maria who stood down as our Treasurer in 2010 and to Joyce who looked after our finances in the interim. Rajiv has been co-opted on the ENAS Committee, pending formal election at the AGM.

## **ENAS Branch Officer Elected as NAS Trustee**

More news about our committee members ... Sophie, our current Branch Officer, has served on the NAS Council since 2007. She has now been elected by Council to serve as a Trustee of the NAS nationally for a three-year term. Sophie says 'it is a great honour to be elected as a Trustee. I am looking forward to working as part of the board and helping steer the NAS through the next few challenging years.' If you think that there are things that the NAS should be doing then do please contact Sophie and let her know.

## **Branch Activities**

### **For Families and Children**

#### **Florence Hayes...New Dates!**

Following the enormous success of the Florence Hayes adventure playground session, we are delighted to be able to offer nine new dates! We will be running sessions every 3rd Sunday starting on 8th May. The opening times are the same as last year, 10am-1pm. See flyer enclosed with this newsletter for more details.

We had lots of lovely feedback from parents and children alike at last year's sessions. Just some comments that were captured in our sign-in book from parents:

*"What an amazing place and opportunity for children and parents to come together".*

*"Its fantastic morning of activities for my son and I know he's 100% safe".*

And a few words from some of the children who went when asked what they thought of it:

*"GREAT!!" "I LOVED IT!" "BRILLIANT!" "EXCELLENT!" What are the dates for this year?"*

Best of all was this one...

*"I think it was good, can we go today? (then got up and put shoes and coat on)!"*

Think that says it all!

**For more details about sessions please contact:  
Anna Leech on 020 8360 7384**

## **Film Evening – David's Mother**

As a follow on from the successful children's film afternoon at Christmas, we are holding a film evening for adults this time. Majella, ENAS committee member has kindly offered to be host. There will be drinks and nibbles in a relaxed informal setting.

We will be showing the film 'David's Mother'. This film sensitively explores a mother's relationship with her autistic son and how the mother's unintentional smothering care has son's capacity for change and development. Starring Kirstie Alley as the mother. One parent describes the film as 'gripping stuff and extremely relevant and worth watching again for the discrete if essential lessons it teaches'.

Arrive at 7.30pm for 8pm start.

Please contact **Majella on (020) 8350 0671** if you intend to come along, so we can get an idea of numbers.

## **Update on Recent Branch Activities**

### **Christmas Film Afternoon**

Thank you to all who came along to the film showing of Polar Express at St Marks in December. It was a truly magical experience for children and adults alike. This is what Emma, mum of Tom, thought of the experience...



The Polar Express...

Taking my son Tom to see Polar Express organised by the ENAS had seemed like a very good idea in the planning. As the day of the show drew nearer I became a bit anxious. I'd never been to St. Mark's before, so didn't know what the parking would be like in the area. I began to fret about how Tom would be with the other children. I needn't have worried. Parking was easy, Tom had a great time ...and so did I.

St. Mark's hall was looking lovely, full of festive cheer, and there was a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere from the volunteer organisers. Tea, coffee and soft drinks were available for everyone. Popcorn (sweet and salt), luxury chocolate biscuits had been laid on. There were some seats set out towards the back of the hall, but most of the children (and adults) chose to sit on the floor at the front snuggling into cushions, duvets and blankets that they had brought with them.

The children, Tom included, seemed to really enjoy watching the film in the company of other children. Most of them had seen it before but it didn't seem to lessen their enjoyment. Observations were spoken from the dark, plenty of squeals of excitement heard and when a child became restless and needed to let off a little steam there was room to move about and not disturb others. A truly magical afternoon and for me it is when Christmas began.

Many thanks to St Marks for letting us use their hall!

Following the success of the children's film, the next one we are planning is for adults – so we get a turn too! See separate article in this newsletter.

## Looking Forward to Next Term...

We are planning to bring back Jenny Coffey, specialist teacher for autism and Aspergers Syndrome, independent consultant and trainer. Jenny came to our evening branch meeting last February and spoke to us about Sex and Relationships. We are planning to hold a longer workshop on this important subject. Date and

more details to follow. We are also arranging for Lizanne Du Plessis, Occupational Therapist, to come to the branch in May to talk to us about sensory integration. More details with dates to follow in the next newsletter.

## Our Children's Cards - On Sale Now!

At the craft session we ran back in October '09 the children created a beautiful simple team design around



a 'seasons' theme, all their own work. We have now printed this design onto cards, and it will be available to buy at the AGM. The cards are in small packs at a cost of £3 for 6, so just

50p per card, incredible value! The cards are blank so are great for any occasion, but the real benefit is they advertise Enfield branch whenever you send them, as they have ENAS details on the reverse. So get yours at the AGM, they will be on the table near to the hand made cards.

## Activities in our area

### Gateway Seekers Swimming Club

#### Gateway Seekers Swimming Club

Gateway Seekers Swimming Club continues every two weeks on Sundays from 2pm - 4pm for a fun swim session, open to all people with learning disabilities, adults, children and members of their family. A fee of £1.00 per person is collected at poolside.

Next date is Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March continuing, alternate weeks.

**For more details contact: Anne & Roger Plowman on 020 8360 9453 or Joyce Baker on: 020 8443 0092**

**Albany Pool, 505 Hertford Road, Enfield EN3**

## **News from Friends and Supporters**

### **Acorn Theatre Company**

Acorn's next show is 'Return to the Forbidden Planet' from 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> June. This is a musical based on the play The Tempest. Please continue to support their shows, they support many local charities. Acorn are at the Intimate Theatre, Green lanes, Palmers Green, London N18 4DH. Box Office: 020 8807 1810  
See [www.acorntheatre.com](http://www.acorntheatre.com) for further details.

### **PAWS – Parents Autism Workshops & Support**

PAWS is a charity that has grown from 'Dogs for the Disabled' and develop the training of assistance dogs to work with children with autism. They are offering our members the opportunity of workshops. Please see the leaflets enclosed for further details.

### **Representing Our Members - Enfield Autism Steering Groups**

One of our main aims as a local branch of the NAS is to represent the needs of people on the autistic spectrum and their parents and carers to policy makers in the Local Authority. We aim to act as a catalyst, prompting policy and decision makers to improve the services for our families, children and young people in Enfield. With the change of administration in the Council and the Autism Act being implemented there are some changes in our activities.

The work of Education Steering Group has been taken over by the new Early Intervention Thematic Group. Feeding into this group will be results of the Audit of Autism Provision in Enfield that the specialist EPs Claire Lokke and Sally Maidens carried out last year. Many of you will have spoken with Claire and Sally either at one of branch meetings or at one of the coffee mornings. There is now a working group reviewing their report and developing in action plan. We are part of that working group.

The Adult Autism Steering Group continues to meet, focusing on the needs of adults in Enfield on the autistic spectrum. Following on from the consultation events we helped facilitate, we are now working with the Local Authority and the local NHS to develop a training programme for their staff to raise the awareness of the autism and the needs of adults of the spectrum.

### **How We Communicate With You**

Building on the excellent work started by Maria Nicolaou, I am currently in the process of converting our mailing list from a paper version to email for those of you who have expressed a preference for this. This is well worth doing because it will save the Branch money in postage (funds we can then use elsewhere) and time (no more evenings labelling, stamping and stuffing envelopes). To check the information we have is up to date, we thought we would give our system a dummy run for the next mail-out and see how successful (or unsuccessful) our email-shot is at reaching our membership. If you would like to receive our information via email rather than in the post, and have not received an electronic version by Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> February, please would you contact me on: [enasmembers-manager@simplelists.com](mailto:enasmembers-manager@simplelists.com) and I will either add you to the database, or amend your details. Many thanks.

Emma Kemball-Cook  
Membership Administrator  
(020) 8368 3839

### **Call for volunteers**

We are currently looking for more people to help run our programme of activities. We are particularly interested in someone who would like to look after our publicity - developing local information leaflets, coordinating our mailings etc. If this, or getting involved in some other way, interests you then please call Sophie on (020) 8886 3846. We are run entirely by volunteers and so if you would like to help out then we would love to hear from you!



## ***Celebrating Our Children's Achievements***

If you have any stories about your children, whatever age, that you would like to share, please contact us, we would love to hear about them. Please contact me, Kathryn Kazmanli on 01992 632072.

## ***Fundraising Thanks***

### **Donations**

People continue to be very generous with their time and talents and money for our branch. Thanks this term go to:

**Laundry Maid Easy** - for donating towards the food at our Christmas branch meeting.

**Highlands Village Pre-school, Winchmore Hill, N21** for donating £30 for a second hand toy castle!

If you have old toys or other items that you are thinking of giving away, please consider asking for a donation to our good cause! The more funds we have the more we can do. Cheques made payable to 'the National Autistic Society Enfield Branch'. Many thanks from all at Enfield NAS.

## ***Helpline Reminders***

**NAS Autism Help Line:** friendly, professional advice and open to anyone, not just NAS members. Tel (0845) 0704004 Mon to Fri 10am to 4pm.

**NAS Education Advice Line:** for advice on special educational needs provision and entitlements for families whose children have autism or Aspergers Syndrome and NAS Tribunal Support Scheme. Tel (0845) 0704002

**Parent to Parent Line:** Would it help to talk to someone who really understands what it is like living with autism? Freephone (0800) 9520520

## ***NAS & Local Branch Membership***

We are a local branch of the NAS, the UK's leading charity for people with ASD. Members get the quarterly magazine - Communication - and a range of other benefits including: free subscription to Autism Update, a bi-monthly email bulletin of the latest articles and publications, discounted registration to Child Safe, 10% discount on all books in the NAS publications catalogue, 20% discount on NAS conferences and events, access to low cost personal liability insurance, discount to subscription to Autism Journal, a Parent Guide and Aspergers United – the only publication of its kind produced by and for adults with Aspergers syndrome. If you haven't yet officially joined, perhaps you might look into it? Find out more at the NAS Website: [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk) (020) 7903 3563.

You are a member of the Enfield Branch of the NAS (ENAS) if you are on our mailing list. Membership of our local Branch is free to all individuals with ASD, parents, carers, and professionals. We encourage membership of the national organisation of NAS as this strengthens the NAS voice and provides income to the Branch. So, when you join or renew with the NAS please say that you are members of the Enfield Branch.

