Children and Young People’s Autism Service (south Staffordshire)

Welcome to the weekly update about the Children and Young People’s Autism Service in south Staffordshire.

**Workshops**

Our first Sleep workshop took place on 14 February at Rugeley Community Centre. A total of 14 families were booked onto the course; however only four families attended on the day. These workshops are an ideal opportunity to meet the team and offer a 1:1 question and answer session should parents require specific advice or support. We would kindly ask that families inform the team if they no longer require their places to enable other families to access the support as places are limited.

The next Sleep workshop is being held on **Thursday 27 February** from 9.30am-12.30pm at Glascote Library, 80 Caledonian, Glascote, Tamworth, B77 2ED. The workshop is for parents only and provides advice around sleep hygiene, sleep management and strategies. It is led by a Registered Learning Disability Nurse, who is a qualified sleep counsellor for children with additional needs, has completed training with the Children’s Sleep Charity in Scotland and also completed an MSc in Behavioural Sleep Medicine, which included specialist populations and children.

Our next Introduction to Autism workshop will be taking place on **Tuesday 3 March** from 9.30am-12.30pm at East Staffs Children’s Centre, 248-257 Waterloo Street, Burton-on-Trent, DE14 2NJ.

This course offers an excellent opportunity for parents and families to understand their child’s diagnosis – whether for families with a recent diagnosis or those looking to refresh their knowledge and meet with other families. We take pride in this introduction group as it offers a unique opportunity for parents to discuss their experiences, share strategies and chat about different stages of their child’s development.

Our Understanding sensory processing in children with autism – parent/carer workshop will cover basic theory of sensory processing and help with identifying sensory behaviours in children with autism, thinking about strategies parents can use and developing understanding to help improve functioning in activities of everyday life. It takes place on **Thursday 19 March** from 10am-12.30pm at East Staffs Children Centre, Waterloo Street, Burton-on-Trent, DE14 2NJ.

A further ‘Me, Myself and Autism’ workshop will take place in Glascote Library, 80 Caledonian, Glascote, Tamworth, B77 2ED. This will be a two-session workshop focusing on understanding autism for the child, the difficulties that may affect them and advice and support around how to manage these issues. NB: A parent or carer must attend with the
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child. There will be an opportunity for parents to speak to the team following the workshop to answer any questions around upcoming workshops and specific advice for their child. Session dates are:

- **Tuesday 21 April** 1pm-3pm
- **Tuesday 28 April** 1pm-3pm

To book a place on any of our workshops please contact the team by email at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk or telephone 0300 303 0691.

**Workshop survey**
Our survey is seeking views on what workshops you would like the service to provide, and the most appropriate times for these workshops to take place. Please [click on this link](#) should you wish to complete the survey; thank you.

**Recruitment**
Welcome to Jaha Pinney *(pictured)* who has started with the team as an Assistant Psychologist. Jaha previously worked at Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust within their pre-school autism service. She brings a great deal of knowledge to support the team with assessments and interventions and will be working with her fellow Assistant Psychologists to develop new workshops to support families across south Staffordshire.

**Recruitment panels**
Parents interested in becoming part of interview panels for future recruitment posts within the service are very welcome to express an interest and can do so by emailing Louise Crompton at involvement@mpft.nhs.uk or calling 01785 221377.

**Referrals**
As a reminder, any professional, including education and health can make an autism referral for a child or young person where they have concerns around the child’s social communication, interaction and rigidity of thought and behaviour. Specific examples of how these issues manifest are required in order to process the referral. You are welcome to supply additional verifying information from school where a professional other than from a school is making the referral, which the referrer can attach to their referral. Any professional is welcome to contact the service should they wish to discuss a potential referral by calling 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday) or emailing cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.

Assessments and interventions
Families whose children are now receiving a full or working diagnosis report will be offered the option of a follow-up appointment to discuss the report and any questions or concerns families may have. Families whose child has a diagnosis continue to have 'open access' to the autism service and the process remains the same as with the previous provider, wherein a self-referral is required for a new episode of care or support for intervention.

For those in receipt of a diagnosis, or working diagnosis a self-referral form is available on request by emailing the team at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk. Completion of this form enables families to provide information in their own words around the presenting needs of their child and informs the team of the most appropriate support required.

Finally this week, we were really pleased to meet with the Trust’s Children’s Community Speech and Language service to explore further opportunities for joint working. We continue to work closely with other children’s services to share learning and best practice.

Contacting the service
- Telephone: 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday; excluding Bank Holidays)
- Email: cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk

More information about the service can be found via MPFT’s website at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service. The service web page features:

- Referral information (NB: Referrals into the service can only be made by a professional who has met with the child and family)
- Frequently asked questions that provide more information both to current and new users of the service
- Information should urgent help be required
- Contact details for a number of other useful services and organisations
- Workshop information
- Previous weekly updates.

If you need urgent help between the hours of 9am-5pm from Monday to Friday, you can contact the Single Point of Access directly on 0300 303 0691, or call First Response (social care and health) on 0800 1313 126.

If you need urgent help out of hours (evenings, weekends or bank holidays) please contact:

- NHS 111, who have access to on-call mental health professionals; or the
- First Response Emergency Duty Team on 0345 604 2886
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- In the event of a medical emergency please go straight to A&E.

Should a parent/carer have a specific question relating to the care of their child, we ask that they email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.

The Trust’s Customer Services Team is also available for advice and support and provides information on NHS and social care services. They can be contacted by:

- Email: palsandexperience@mpft.nhs.uk
- Telephone: 01785 783026
- A website form is also available by clicking here