

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the February issue of the newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading the updates.

Wellbeing Hub February talk

On the 8th February, we were delighted to welcome Andy Smith, founder of Spectrum Gaming, to talk about creating hope through autistic community.



Andy shared his story and the 185 attendees who joined the meeting, actively contributed to the live chat, resonating with Andy's lived experience.

A recording of Andy's talk is available here: <https://vimeo.com/913249888>

He also shared details of the following resources:



[Epic Autism Resources](#)



[Autism Understood](#)



I have been passionate about autism since my gap year working in a school for autistic children in my home county of Dorset. Since then, I've worked as a clinician and an academic in a variety of settings. My PhD (University of Reading) looked at the way autistic children and their siblings play together. I qualified as a clinical psychologist in Glasgow in 1995 before moving back to Reading to work at the University as a lecturer and in Berkshire CAMHS, supporting autistic children's mental health and conducting diagnostic assessments. My guiding principle as a researcher and clinician is to put autistic voices at the heart of everything we do, so I am thrilled to be part of the new Wellbeing Hub.



Date: Thursday 7th March, 7.00 – 8.30 p.m.

Speaker: Sarah-Jane Critchley – Autistic Joy from Why to Wow!

Register: <http://tinyurl.com/CfA-Wellbeing-Hub-Mar-talk>

Sarah-Jane is a keynote speaker, consultant, coach and author. As Programme Manager of the Autism Education Trust for over 10 years, she developed training, standards and competencies that reached over 300,000 people. She and her family are all autistic.

Future talk dates @ 7.00 – 8.30 p.m.

April 2024: No talk is scheduled

16th May 2024: Nic King - Young autistic people and the importance of self-understanding.

Registration details will be available soon

Date: Wednesday 21st February, 4.00 – 6.00 p.m. Tea and coffee provided.

Speaker: Dr Mairi Evans Director; Children, Family and All-Age Services BHFT

Title: Developing a neurodiversity strategy to change practice narratives and to promote neuro-inclusivity

Venue: School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences, Earley Gate, University of Reading. Satnav Postcode RG6 7BE

<http://tinyurl.com/SIG-21st-Feb-2024>

An opportunity for professionals who work with autistic children and young people to come together **in-person to network** with other local practitioners and hear topical talks from a range of experts.

If you are a professional interested in attending this session, please email cfaevents@reading.ac.uk

The next SIG event is scheduled for Thursday 6th June. Details will be in the March newsletter.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Being Me – Video Project

We are looking for autistic children aged 9 - 18 years to take part in a filmed interview telling us what is important to them about their lives. Children will be fully supported through the process and will be paid for their time. Filming will take place on **Thursday 4th April at the University of Reading**.

The project is currently being reviewed by the University of Reading Ethics Committee.

If think your child might be interested, please email autism@reading.ac.uk so we can send an you information sheet as soon as approval has been granted.

The following studies have been granted ethical approval by the University of Reading's Research Ethics Committee

Development of a support programme for parents and carers of recently diagnosed autistic children: now recruiting!

We are looking for parents and carers of recently diagnosed autistic children (within the last 12 months) to help us create a new neurodiversity-affirming parent support programme. Please email jo.billington@reading.ac.uk for more information.

Speech Processing in Autism

Who are we looking for: Autistic adults aged 16-40, right-handed, native English speaker.

What will the study involve: 1. Behavioural tests and questionnaires (~3 hours); 2. Sentence comprehension during EEG (brain wave) recording (~3 hours). You will be paid £10 per hour plus travel expenses.

If you are interested, please: complete [the registration form](#) or contact caasd@reading.ac.uk

Investigating sensory experiences in public spaces

Researchers at the University of Reading are inviting participants to take part in a research study focusing on sensory experiences in both autistic and non-autistic individuals within various public spaces. This study aims to contribute valuable insights to the challenges faced by individuals, especially those with autism, in navigating public environments.

Who are we looking for: English speaking, UK resident, Autistic adults aged 18 and above. Also looking for participants without neurodivergent conditions, mental illnesses or learning difficulties.

What will the study involve: Complete a 30-minute questionnaire relating to sensory experiences in specific public spaces, and rating any difficulties encountered. There is a prize draw to win a £25 Amazon voucher for participation

If you have any questions, please contact the researchers:

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If you have any feedback for the newsletter including anything you would like to hear about then please get in touch autism@reading.ac.uk

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