

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the December issue of the newsletter. The Centre for Autism team wish all our newsletter readers an enjoyable festive season and look forward to sharing more news with you through 2025.

Wellbeing Hub December talk - postponed

Unfortunately, due to illness the talk needed to be postponed on the 12th December. Apologies to anyone hoping to see Pete Wharmby speak about "Making an autistic living". We hope to organise a new date soon.



If you would like to view the recordings from any of the recorded Wellbeing Hub talks in 2024, you can access them via the Centre for Autism website – [Previous Monthly Talks](#).

All of our available monthly talk recordings are hosted on our [YouTube channel](#).

We have a busy calendar of talks being organised for 2025 so please do come along – we would love to see you! Details of upcoming talks and registration links can be found in each monthly newsletter and on the [University of Reading Events website](#).

Meet the researcher – Nick Thompson

I've been part of the Centre for Autism since 2015, when I first came to the UoR to undertake my PhD (I can't believe it's been almost 10 years).



My research explores how we understand and manage our own and others' emotions, and how these processes can be different in autistic and non-autistic individuals. Over the last 5 years, I've also helped lead the STREAM project, through which we've developed a tablet-based app for assessing neurodevelopment in low-resource settings (to date we've tested more than 4,000 children in India and Malawi using the app!). Alongside my research, I'm also a Lecturer in Child and Adolescent Mental Health at the University of Northampton. With the STREAM project set to finish in 2025, it may well be time for me to move on to pastures new, but I hope to keep in touch with my UoR and CFA colleagues for many years to come.

Centre for Autism 
Wellbeing Hub Monthly Talks
Free online public event

Centre for Autism 
Special Interest Group
Free in person event for professionals

Next monthly talk:

Date: Thursday 16th January, 7.00 – 8.30 p.m.

Speaker: Eliza Fricker – A Brighter Way Forward

Register: [CFA-Wellbeing-Hub-Jan25-talk](#)







ELIZA FRICKER is an author & illustrator, and an advocate & consultant for PDA, autism and learning. She has published several books, including A Different Kind of Parenting, the Sunday Times Bestselling title Can't Not Won't, and the acclaimed autobiographical Thumbsucker. illustrations & blog.

Future talk dates @ 7.00 – 8.30 p.m.

13th February 2025: Olive Kayongo – Our family's lived experience of autism.

Registration details will be available soon

Date: Thursday 27th February, 4.00 – 6.00 p.m.
Tea and coffee provided.

Speaker:  Thrive     

Title: Thrive and Utilising Gardens and Nature to Support the Health and Wellbeing of Autistic People

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

Register: [SIG Feb 2025 Registration](#)

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 register using the link

MSc TPCP Alumni – Kira Nurse



"Transitioning from my master's research placement at Centre for Autism Wellbeing Hub at Reading University to my PhD program at Cardiff University, was a significant step in my academic journey. My time at the Centre for Autism Wellbeing Hub deepened my understanding of neurodiversity and highlighted some of the daily challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals. The skills I gained in qualitative research and thematic analysis have been invaluable in my PhD work so far. As I move forward, I am eager to explore how digital environments can be both a space for empowerment and a potential area of vulnerability for neurodivergent youth. This transition feels like a natural progression, building on my previous experiences while addressing an urgent and under-researched issue. We are just now finishing up a series of internet safety workshops in secondary schools and are now turning our focus onto the retrospective experiences of neurodivergent adults online during the ages of 11-16."



To find out more and take part in Kira's research [click here](#)

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

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

Sensory Activity in Preschoolers (SNAP)

This study aims to further understand the processes involved in autistic children's engagement with the sensory environment and the relationship between this and their development.

We are looking for: Autistic children aged between 3 to 6 years.

What the study involves: Participation will involve completing online questionnaires and interviews. Your child will complete interactive game like tests while we measure their brain activity with non- invasive and pain free brain imaging device electroencephalography (EEG). The visit will take around 4-5 hours total, including breaks in between. You will receive a £50 amazon voucher and your child will be gifted with a sensory toy for their participation.

For more information click on [flyer](#)

If you are interested or have any questions, please contact: Zelal Gulbahce: z.gulbahce@reading.ac.uk or Dr Teresa Tavassoli: t.tavassoli@reading.ac.uk

Ethics conduct's end date is the 25/12/2025.

Implicit grammar learning in autism

In this study we will be looking at implicit grammar learning in autistic children and how this differs based on multilingualism and sex.

We are looking for: Autistic and non- autistic participants aged 8-14.

What the study involves: 10-15 minutes online demographic questionnaires, 15- 20 minutes on online serial reaction time task and online picture matching task.

If you are interested or have any questions, please contact: Anna Rajo: a.rajo@student.reading.ac.uk Abbie Hemming: abigail.hemming@student.reading.ac.uk or Doug Saddy: j.d.saddy@reading.ac.uk

For more information click on [flyer](#)

You will need access to a laptop or device with a keyboard to complete the task.

Link for the task: <https://research.sc/participant/login/dynamic/51240020-9908-4D16-A40B-84A08CE50DEC>

Ethics conduct's end date is the 31/12/2025.

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

Unsubscribe from the Centre for Autism newsletter at any time by sending an email with "Unsubscribe Newsletter" in the subject heading to autism@reading.ac.uk