

# NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the December 2025 issue of the newsletter  
Wishing all our subscribers a very merry Christmas



## NEUROBEARS

NeuroBears and NeuroBears Cubs are fun and informative courses about autistic experiences, developed with and for autistic young people who are beginning to explore and understand their autism. More information can be found on the NeuroBears website, [Pandas Online](https://pandasonline.co.uk/).

Both programmes explore themes such as sensory experiences, masking, communication preferences and autistic strengths. Each session involves watching short videos, with opportunities for discussion between children and their parents/carers. There is also a workbook used to note down what the children might have learnt about themselves.

We are offering the NeuroBears programs to children and young people aged 5-14 and their parents/carers. Taking part in the course is free of charge.

The programs will be facilitated by two trained and supervised MSc placement students. Contact us on [autism@reading.ac.uk](mailto:autism@reading.ac.uk) to find out more and to request a referral form.

**Centre for Autism**  
Wellbeing Hub Monthly Talks  
*Free online public event*



### Next monthly Talk:

**Date:** Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 7.00 – 8.30 pm  
on Teams

**Speaker:** Stephen Unwin

**Title:** Beautiful Lives: How We Got Learning Disabilities So Wrong

**Register:** [Please click here](#)

### *Future talk dates @ 7.00 – 8.30 p.m.*

**Date:** Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January, 7.00-8.30pm  
on Teams

**Speaker:** Mike Karasinski

**Title:** Why We Need a Space For NaDDs  
(Neuroaffirming Dudes 'n' Dads)

**Register:** [Please click here](#)

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



**Date:** Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026 , 4.00 – 6.00 p.m.  
Tea and coffee provided.

**Speaker:**

**Title:** Research and practice updates. Short talks will include developing a pain book and story massage.

**Venue:** School of Agriculture, Earley Gate, University of Reading. Satnav Postcode RG6 6ES

**Register:** [Please click here](#)

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**

## Family Wellbeing Course for Parents and Carers of Autistic Children

We have developed a 6-week programme designed for parents and carers of children who are autistic, or awaiting an autism diagnostic assessment. Using evidence-based approaches to thriving and a library of videos created by autistic children and young people, the course aims to deepen your understanding of your autistic child while also focusing on your own wellbeing as a parent/carer.

[More information about the course is available on our website.](#)

If you would like more information about this course or inquire about the dates of upcoming courses, please email us on [autism@reading.ac.uk](mailto:autism@reading.ac.uk)

## Our Latest Webinar Recording

Our most recent Webinar featured researcher Dr Keren MacLennan. Keren discussed the types of sensory challenges faced by neurodivergent people in day-to-day environments such as supermarkets and public transport and the impact that this can have.

Keren also discussed research into more positive sensory environments as described by autistic people, including live music experiences and green spaces, alongside what can be done to make these environments even more inclusive.

To watch Keren's talk and many of our past webinars, [please click here](#).



## RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

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

### Understanding the Relationship between Sleep, Sensory Processing, and Mental Health in Autistic Children and its Impact on Parents

We are investigating how sleep difficulties and sensory differences relate to emotional and behavioural wellbeing in autistic children, and how these factors affect parental mental health.

#### Who are we looking for:

- Parents of autistic children aged 2–15 years.

#### What will the study involve:

- Parents will complete a single anonymous online survey (approximately 45 minutes) covering their child's sleep, sensory experiences, emotional and behavioural wellbeing, and their own mental health and stress. All responses are confidential.
- Participants can enter a prize draw to win a £50 Amazon gift voucher.

**If you are interested, please contact:** Rhea Varghese ([r.varghese@reading.ac.uk](mailto:r.varghese@reading.ac.uk))

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](mailto:autism@reading.ac.uk)

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