

## 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Conference: Main Speakers

### MORNING

#### **Geoff Evans**

#### *Developing an effective approach to supporting children and young people with autism of concern*

With so many different and often confusing approaches to behaviours of concern, Geoff draws upon his experience and current research to discuss what an effective approach could look like. He suggests that such an approach puts the child and those around them at the centre of any assessment, planning and implementation. He briefly discusses a number of key areas that often need to be addressed, including health and wellbeing, sensory, self-regulation, meaningful activity and teaching compensatory skills. Geoff concludes with a look at current approaches.

### AFTERNOON

#### **Gina Davies**

#### *The joy of meaningful engagement and shared good times – keeping intervention practical, do-able and fun!*

It is easy to forget the importance of fun and fascination as SMART targets and measurable outcomes begin to add to the pressure. However, shared attention and involvement in meaningful activity that inspires the child's attention is possible and desirable. If we give ourselves licence to laugh and use activities that offer an irresistible invitation to learn, we can address important issues around wellbeing, as well as target communication and social interaction skills. In this talk, Gina will outline ways that this approach can be used with children on the autism spectrum.

## 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Conference: Workshops

On your booking form, please select ONE of these workshops.

**Gina Davies**

### *The Attention Autism Programme*

Gina will present an outline of the Attention Autism Programme. This is a 4-step programme that aims to develop attention, communication and independence skills in a way that is easy and enjoyable for the children to engage with. The Attention Autism Programme is now being used in hundreds of pre-school and school settings as an intervention that offers a practical way forward.

**Geoff Evans**

### *Developing the independence of children and young people with autism*

Geoff works on the premise that every child, no matter how autism impacts them, has the right to be as independent as possible. He argues that being independent, even in small ways, can contribute to the growth of self-esteem and wellbeing. Geoff looks at specific areas where independence can be encouraged, including social and life, personal and leisure skills. Participants will have the opportunity to look at basic assessment checklists and established approaches.

**Jan Hargrave**

### *Talking to young people with autism about sex and relationships*

Jan Hargrave, a nationally accredited PSHE trainer, has been working within the field of relationships and sex education for over 15 years, initially as the Public Health, Tackling Teen Pregnancy Team, before moving to Healthy Schools, where she took a special interest in improving relationship education for young people in Lincolnshire with special educational needs. Jan is also a trainer for the Family Planning Association Speakeasy Programme, a course for parents to assist them in talking to their children about relationships and sexual health.

Jan will be talking about the importance of talking to young people with autism about relationships and sex in a way that makes it more relevant, also highlighting a range of resources that they could use to accomplish this.

## Sian Hutchings

### *Autism, Education and Me*

Sian currently sits on the National Citizen Service local youth board in her area where she is passionate about seeing improvements made to the NCS Programme. She desires to continue making positive changes in the communities and inspire other NCS graduates to do the same.

Sian also represents patients, service users and carers participation at the School of Health and Social Care at the University of Lincoln, where she speaks to students shaping the future of health and social care together.

She was delighted to be awarded the Exceptional Creative Arts Rising Star Accolade in 2016 after her studies at Lincoln College where she studied a Level 2 Diploma in Photography course.

Since finishing the course, she has been studying a Digital Level 3 Diploma in Photography course with Open Study College, which she is enjoying very much; it is advancing her technical and creative skills as a distance learner. She is keen to expand any new creative opportunities on completion of the course, in education and/or employment.

## Andrew Whitehouse

### *Sssshh, I'm trying to think! Developing visual and sensory interventions for young people with autism and related conditions*

A fun, informative and effective workshop, aimed at both parents and professionals, to provide each delegate with a deeper knowledge and understanding of the needs of a range of learners and provide the skills necessary to create appropriate strategies.

Andrew Whitehouse provides therapy, training and interventions for a range of conditions, including autism. As well as running networking day courses across the UK for SEN, he provides short courses for Bishop Grosseteste University. Andrew also holds a number of other UK and international contracts. He is committed to moving young people forward.

Jude Seaward

*Looking at the functions of behaviours and why behaviours have a function*

Often practitioners look at the function of behaviour or look at triggers yet don't fully explain why it is important. They hand out forms (ABCs generally) and very little explanation is given about why and how to complete them. This session will look at the potential functions behind behaviours, how behaviours can be multifunctional, why it is important to get the right intervention for the right function and how to capture information that is informative. Often, we have behaviour issues due to lack of skills, but the focus is on the results of behaviour rather than with child, their skills and what they are struggling with. With many children on the spectrum, the cause and effect way of parenting is ineffective and can escalate behaviour further; rewards become pointless as the child is unable to understand why one behaviour is ok in one situation but not another. It is only when we look at these skill gaps and break down the components of the skills that we see and finally understand why, very often, children are unable to cope yet appear to have the skills at a surface level. Often these children have missing skills meaning that when pressure is placed on the child, their coping skills crumble.

Outcomes:

Those attending will be able to

- Understand the importance of assessing behaviour
- Identify the potential functions of behaviours
- Comprehend why these behaviours become more effective
- Categorise the types of interventions that are effective for each function
- Recognise where there is often a deficit of skills