

Winter 2008

## PARENT SUPPORT GROUP UPDATE



As some may know, the Lambeth Capital Community Foundation funded LAG to run a local parent support group until this March at Little Starz Children's Centre in West Norwood. Originally intended to be a parent support group for Lambeth parents and carers of pre-school children with suspected or diagnosed social communication disorders, the need for the group to be extended to parents of school-age children quickly became apparent - so we did! The group meets weekly, in term-time, and offers:

- A chance for parents and carers to meet and share experiences
- Fun, educational toys and activities - including a sensory room
- Access to a specialist lending library (books and toys)
- Information and expert advice
- Crèche facility for preschoolers (booking essential)
- Free refreshments.

**When:** 10-11.30am Fridays  
(NB: term-time only)

**Where:** Little Starz Children's Centre,  
18 Benton's Lane, off Gipsy  
Road, London SE27 9UD

**Trains:** Gipsy Hill, West Norwood

**Buses:** 3,196,468,322,68  
Free parking nearby

Since the first session on 28 September last year, the group has been growing steadily. The book library is proving very popular, with families borrowing items including biographies, advice manuals, children's books and DVDs. A new toy library is up-and-running - parents can borrow sensory, cause and effect and educational toys and games.

The group has had a range of visits from professionals including a Community Nutritionist, a number of local Community Health Visitors, an *Early Years Alliance* Educational Psychologist and a *Parents for Inclusion* project manager. Parents have benefited from talking with these professionals in an informal setting. We are looking forward to more such visits.

Finally, a huge 'thank you' to all the staff at Little Starz for their kindness and professionalism in supporting this project and of course for running the crèche!

### Autism-friendly screenings

#### THE PRINCES' QUEST (U)

11am, Tuesday 19 February

RITZY PICTURE HOUSE  
Brixton Oval, SW2 1JG



**Bookings 08708 505 703**

*Tickets for all screenings are £2.50 per person (No concessions or free carers' tickets)*

For more info, contact Alice Warren 020  
7326 2611 or [alice.w@picturehouses.co.uk](mailto:alice.w@picturehouses.co.uk)

To find out more and/or book a place, please email  
[lambethautismgroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lambethautismgroup@yahoo.co.uk) or Call Isabelle on 07785 264932

LAMBETH AUTISM GROUP is a voluntary organisation offering support, information, guidance & news about Autism in Lambeth



Are you interested in Drama, Music and Dance?

Would you like to meet other young people and get involved in performing and creating your own theatre shows?

Brixton Shed is an inclusive theatre and performing arts organisation. Established in September 2004 by Chickenshed, Brixton Shed is now part of an ever-growing number of independent 'Sheds' working by the Chickenshed inclusive creative method. The organisation works to provide all children and young people from 7-18 yrs in Lambeth with opportunities to participate in a range of performing arts activities. Our aim is to increase participation, promote personal and social development and nurture young talent, particularly amongst young people who are often excluded or struggling to engage with 'mainstream' arts activities. The workshops are run inclusively with emphasis on cultivating young people's own creativity and working together.

Brixton Shed meets every Monday night during term-time in Brixton. Children's Theatre (ages 7-11) runs from 6-7pm and Youth Theatre (ages 12-18) runs from 7.30-8.45pm. The cost is £20 for the term.

To find out more or to book a place, please email: [brixtonshed@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:brixtonshed@hotmail.co.uk)  
ring 07758 642233 or Visit: [www.brixtonshed.co.uk](http://www.brixtonshed.co.uk)

Brixton Community Base (formerly St Vincent's Community Centre), Talma Road, London SW2 1AS

## Parents for Inclusion

*Parents for Inclusion is a network of parents of disabled children and children with 'special needs'. We are parents working so all our children can learn to make friends and have a voice in ordinary school and throughout life. All our children belong together!*

*We can come and visit you at your home to help you:*

- *Get advice*
- *Talk safely about your concerns*
- *Value yourself and your child*
- *Take control of decisions*
- *Celebrate success and be positive*
- *Be clear about what you want*
- *Learn about your child's rights*
- *Find out about pre-schools, nurseries and schools*



Please call our home visiting team on: 020 7735 7735

## DIRECT PAYMENTS

If you are lucky enough to receive any sort of respite care service from Lambeth, you will have received a letter before Christmas announcing changes to the approved list of service providers. This change has also been accompanied by a push to encourage families to switch to direct payments. This means managing your own budget and employing and paying carers yourself. Sounds scary, but Lambeth has a contract with **Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL)** to provide support and advice to individuals and carers on direct payments. For more information, go to DASL's website <http://www.disabilitylambeth.org.uk/dasl/payments/>

On the plus side, direct payments mean putting more control in the hands of service users. On the minus side, the rates of pay being offered by Lambeth are about the lowest in London. If you have been refused respite support in the past, or have never tried, it is well worth having a go. Contact the Children with Disabilities Team at Hopton House to ask for an assessment of your child's needs and your needs as a carer.

## AUTISM SPEAKS

*The exact cause or causes of autism are at present unknown but there is increasing evidence that accelerating autism research could transform our understanding of autism and lead to more effective interventions and treatments. **Autism Speaks** is the only registered charity in the UK raising funds for biomedical research into the causes of autism spectrum disorders. To find out more please go to:*



[http://www.autismspeaks.org.uk/newsletter/Jan\\_08/newsletter.html](http://www.autismspeaks.org.uk/newsletter/Jan_08/newsletter.html)

## Story telling for Children with special needs:

### SENSATIONAL STORIES

**Brixton Library, Friday 15 February, 10am, 10.50am and 2pm**

*Master storyteller **Bernard Tagliavini** is bringing multi-sensory storytelling from the Bag Books range to Lambeth. Sessions are designed for parents and carers to bring their children. Children will be making the stories happen: helping Kofi to hold the coconut, squeaking the toys where CJ the library cat sleeps, making a mess with Robert and Jake and clipping Chris's hair until he is bald! All sorts of feely, noisy, smelly objects and materials will take children on sensory journeys through the stories.*

## Speech and Language Therapy Advice Clinic

- *Does your child have speech or language difficulties?*
- *Is your child school-aged (5-16)?*
- *Need some advice?*

Speech and Language therapy drop-in (no appointment necessary)

**first Wednesday of every month, 3-5pm**  
at the **Mary Sheridan Centre for Child Health**  
Wooden Spoon House, 5 Dugard Way, off  
Renfrew Rd, London SE11 4TH

Telephone advice also available:

**020 7414 1430**

## FOOTBALL

*Dulwich-based football organisation PELO has made a grant application to Children in Need with LAG's support to fund weekly football sessions and some holiday provision as well. The aim is to offer fun football training to 5 - 11 year olds with autism and Asperger's syndrome with activities differentiated according to children's abilities and needs. PELO has incorporated provision for autism awareness training for their coaches, and they have the offer of advice and help from a coach who already works with an ASD football club in Haringey.*



*Children in Need grant decisions are made at the end of March 2008 so let's hope they are successful!*

Pub quiz & ASD club closure piece - **Jacqui** to give dates and details???



## CHARLIE AND LOLA at the Polka

*The Polka Theatre's spring production will be Charlie and Lola. Following the success of the autism-friendly performance of We're Going on a Bear Hunt at this Wimbledon Children's theatre last summer, the Polka is scheduling an autism-friendly performance of Charlie & Lola. Suitable for 4 - 7 years, but older children will of course be very welcome too if Charlie & Lola is their thing! The performance is planned for 30 May in the morning and will be 75 mins long, including an interval. There will be a reduced capacity of up to 200 (from 300).*

**Tickets are £9.50, concessions are £7.50 and carer tickets are complimentary.**

<http://www.polkatheatre.com>