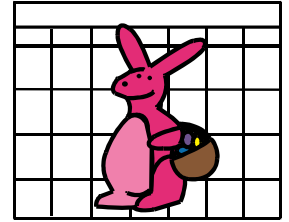


South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group (SMDSSG) April 2010

Website: www.dsmanchester.org.uk
Telephone: 07593 542 107
Email: contact@dsmanchester.org.uk



Group news

Weekday meetings

We are holding 2 weekday meetings in April:

Tuesday April 6 12.30-2:30 pm: Firwood Children's Centre, Kings Road Primary School, Warwick Court, Firwood M16 OGR

Tuesday April 13 10am-12noon: St Aidan's Centre, 238 Wythenshawe Rd., Northern Moor, M23 OPH. The centre is on the corner of Wytheshawe Rd and Northolt Rd - use the big door on the corner of these roads for access.

Come along for a chat, drink, browse our resources and do some singing and signing with your child(ren). **Children welcome but not essential!**



Easter Holiday Event



We have booked **Run of the Mill indoor play centre** (Pear Mill Ind Est Stockport Rd West, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2BP) for exclusive use of our group on **Thursday April 8 from 4.30-6.30 pm**. Cost £5 per family, including food. Please let us know ASAP if you would like to book a place: 07593 542 107, contact@dsmanchester.org.uk. If you haven't booked but would like to come, just turn up on the evening.

Chatterbox Club

Heaton Moor Evangelical church, Green Lane, Heaton Moor SK4 3LH.

April 24, May 15, June 26 Our monthly SALT sessions combined with play, a chance to meet other families, sing and sign and craft activities. **Teachers and TAs welcome** - the activities modelled in these sessions are suitable to be used in educational settings.

Even if your child is not enrolled for SALT sessions, your family is very welcome to come along for coffee, chat and sing and sign—just pop a donation in the box at the kitchen counter. Themes for April: What we do / verbs



Resources/Information



Early Years and SEN show 10am—5pm, with CPD seminar programme, Manchester central, **Friday 23 and Saturday 24 April 2010**. TES Education North, incorporating Early Years and Primary Teaching Manchester and Special Needs North: ideas, educational resources and CPD training for early years, primary and secondary educators. It's a great opportunity for you to see what's new, compare the latest resources and learn from the UK's leading experts at the comprehensive CPD seminar programme. For details, see www.teachingexhibitions.co.uk or call 020 3194 3097.

Living Made Easy For Children - Clear, practical advice on daily living equipment for young people <http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children-3130/>

Government grants for low-income families in England to buy laptops and internet connections **The Home Access scheme** will allow 270,000 low-income families with children in years three to nine to apply for grants to buy laptops and broadband internet connections from approved suppliers. Parents might be eligible for a grant if they are living with a child who is in years 3 to 9 at a state-maintained school in England, and who has not already had a computer from a Home Access Grant or similar programme, such as Computers for Pupils. To apply for a Home Access Grant, parents must also receive at least one of the following: Free school meals for their child Income based Jobseeker's Allowance Income support Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and an income of less than £16,040 Guaranteed Pension Credit (not Savings Credit) Income-based Employment Support Allowance Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 Carers and foster parents of looked after children in years 1 to 13 may also eligible for this grant. Take the quick eligibility test at: <http://www.homeaccess.org.uk/>

Funding News

Many thanks to Cath Callen who gave us a cheque for £250 from KPMG LLP, Claredon Road, Watford WD17 1DE

Events

April 17th 10am - 3pm - Spring Fair at Donkeys*

EST Donkey sanctuary Manchester, Green Fold Abbey Hey Manchester M18 8RJ. Tel 0161 301 4051 for more details.

CADS Saturday Club* - inclusive group offering dance & drama at the Common Room at the Seashell Trust, Cheadle, **every Saturday during term time**. Current sessions are as follows: 9:30-10:45am 4-7 year olds; 10:45-12:00pm 8-12 year olds; 12:00-1:00pm 13+ years old. Contact Gemma Castle at 0161 610-0124 or email cads@seashelltrust.org.uk to book.

Friendship club* For children with DS aged 5+, their siblings and families at the Seashell Trust on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Please contact Caroline at 0161 925-6153 if you would like to attend.

Arts Drop In* For Children aged 0-10 yrs who have disabilities and their families. Alexandra Park Play Centre 12 - 2pm. Sat , 24th April, 22nd May, 26th June, Sat 24th July CONTACT Lorna 07939998176 or Jess 07707297316 for more info.

* Please note: not run by the South Manchester Down Syndrome Support Group. For information only—we are not responsible for changes to date, time or venue. Please use the contact information supplied to confirm details and to ask any questions.

Other support groups around Greater Manchester

Tameside and Glossop Down's syndrome support group

Next meeting at Slide and Seek, Hyde 12th April 4-6pm £2 per child including food
Contact: Vicky on 07792827899 or email victoriamassey@hotmail.com.

West Pennine Down's syndrome support group meet last Friday of each month at

Stanley Road Children's Centre, Chadderton, Oldham. Website: www.dswestpennine.co.uk

Email: dswestpennine@hotmail.co.uk General Enquiries: 07842555725

New Parent Support: 07842534819

North Manchester Coffee Mornings

Contact Sheila on email she.swarb@tesco.net mobile: 07729179201 for details.

Bolton Smiley Faces Contact Judith Smethhurst 01204 382954

Cheshire Down's syndrome support group www.cheshiredownssyndrome.com

Down's Syndrome Family & Carer's Group, Lancaster

contact: Liz Fawcett e-mail: lizfawcett@hotmail.co.uk

Stubborn isas stubborn does by Carol Johnson Chaos Consultation, Canada

It is interesting, to me, how many people talk about their child's stubborn behavior as if it was part and parcel with having Down syndrome. It isn't. There are many people who are stubborn who do not have Down syndrome. In fact, in some situations being stubborn is seen as a positive trait. I have heard people say that the reason they came out as winners in a situation was because "I was stubborn and no one was going to push me around" "They thought I would cave in, but I was too stubborn to give up easily"

So, what is this stubborn behavior that we see with students who have Down syndrome and how could we think about it? I see stubborn behavior as a direct result of lacking the skills and/or language to negotiate a position. Often, we will take a stance on something we care about and, right or wrong, stick to that stance until we understand or agree with another's view. A student with Down syndrome will continue to do things in a specific way because it is safe, it is known and it has worked in the past. When we try to change their behavior, when we try to introduce new things, we threaten their "safe place."

Some of us are open to change and will accept change far better than others, this is the same with students with Down syndrome. Some of us are able to argue our side of the issue, some of us can be persuasive and bring people to our view and not have to change - the other person changes. Students with Down syndrome cannot do this as well. He/she lacks the language, the cognitive flexibility needed in verbal discourse and the larger world view to win many verbal arguments. So...he/she looks stubborn.

Think about it. If you were in a situation where you did not understand what was going on around you and people were trying to get you to do something you were unsure of, what would you do? You would resist, you would stay doing what you know, you would be seen as stubborn. What if you did not have the language skills to share your views, what if the other party did not understand you or did not care about what you had to say? Then, you were punished or censured because you were seen as stubborn. How would this affect your level of cooperation the next time? How would you respond to these people who "made you do something you did not understand nor even agree with?" You may become even more stubborn or resistive. And, they, in turn would see this as "non compliance" or as a "problem." They would respond in a way that assumes that your stubbornness is something that exists on its own; apart from you having a different view of the same situation or apart from you being unable to communicate your point of view successfully.

How can we change the pattern? By letting go of the myth of stubbornness and seeing stubborn behavior as resistance. Resistance to something new, resistance to something that is not understood, resistance to having others being in control, resistance to someone they may not trust or understand. The only way to help anyone become less resistant is to help them to feel safe enough to try something new or different.

When a child is young, s/he will not respond very well to changes; s/he will withdraw. As s/he grows older, s/he will use the strategies that have worked in the past withdrawing, not looking, pouting, sitting, throwing herself down (stubborn looking behaviors). The more stubborn a student looks, the more useful this behavior has been in the past; using this repertoire of strategies has allowed the student to remain in his/her safe place.

Adults are part of the problem. We have taught the child what s/he needs to do so we will stop pushing or so we will leave them as they want to be. Then, sometimes, we become angry. As we become angry, the child resists further as s/he does not understand what is happening and is often upset with the situation as well. How many of us respond to anger if we are nervous about a situation? How many of us would become less "stubborn" if someone demands that we do something that we are not sure about?

When faced with a student who appears to be stubborn, think about the following:

1. Although this makes sense to you, it must not make sense to this student. How can you help the student gain a better understanding of what it is you are wanting? Remember, saying that it is "good" for them is not helpful. Can you show, act out, the positive outcome of the request? Can they try it in small steps? Can you find a way to make it clearer, less threatening? What kind of language are you using?
2. Is there a way to help the student use other means to say "no", "wait", "this is scary", "you want me to do what?" other than the behavior that is being seen? Until a student has some way of communicating with others, the resistance will look like stubborn behavior. If you were in a situation where you did not understand what was going on around you and people were trying to get you to do something you were unsure of, what would you do? You would resist, you would stay doing what you know, you would be seen as stubborn.
3. Follow the old adage "Win them over with honey" any human being will respond to positives over coercion. Always enter a new situation using something that the student likes from other situations, go from what the student already knows and build on it. Pair a new experience with something that is already successful and liked by the student. Use play, songs, games etc. to help a student deal with new experiences. Watching another student have a success may not work as some students do not learn from watching others as they may not understand that they too could have that success.
4. You need to have a trusting relationship with anyone before they will try something new just because you told them to do it. Some students take a long time to reach that level of trust. You cannot be the "punisher" and build a trusting relationship with a student. You cannot coerce some behaviors and reinforce others; this inconsistency will stress a student; the student may never feel safe enough with you to let go of those behaviors that help him/her to feel safe.
5. When you feel yourself becoming angry, stop, laugh, walk, relax, count, etc. Release the tension in the situation and then try again maybe in a different way. Sometimes a student will come around just because you have calmed down and re-entered the relationship in a way that is not threatening to the student.

Some of the best people are just stubborn enough to hang in there when many others have given up on a child. So, join them. Be stubborn about a child's ability to learn and help him or her to feel safe enough to venture into new territory with you by his or her side.

First published in the Newsletter of the Canadian Down Syndrome Society - Spring 1998.

From Contact A Family:



New local powers to investigate complaints about SEN

Following recommendations from the Lamb Inquiry, the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) has given the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) new powers to investigate complaints from parents unhappy with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support for their child. Anyone contacting the DCSF with complaints about their child's SEN will now be advised to contact their LGO. The remit of the LGO has been extended to consider complaints about the internal management of schools in respect of SEN. It also allows the LGO to investigate all parents complaints about provision for children with SEN. Other changes the secretary of state for children, schools and families has announced in response to the Lamb Inquiry include:

- A new national SEN helpline to provide independent advice to parents.
- Funding for the Anti-Bullying Alliance to tackle disability-related bullying in schools.
- Improved guidance for schools on excluding children with SEN.
- Ofsted to report on the progress of children with SEN in schools.
- New guidelines on the provision of professional and expert witnesses to the First-Tier Tribunal (SEN and Disability),
- Changes to the exceptional funding scheme for legal aid for tribunal hearings in March 2010.

Srabani Sen, chief executive of Contact a Family, said: "We welcome the new arrangements for the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) to handle complaints about Special Educational Needs services and provision. This is a much more family-friendly process than the previous tribunal system and makes it much harder for a local authority not to act on the Ombudsman decision. "We believe this, along with the other recommendations made in the Lamb Inquiry, will improve parental confidence in the special educational needs system and we urge the government to move quickly to implement those other recommendations."

Make every disabled child matter in the coming election

Talk, write to and phone your local parliamentary candidates and ask them to sign up to prioritise disabled children and their families if they're elected. Contact a Family is a founder member of the Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) campaign. We're urging all election candidates to sign a pledge committing them to:

- Meet with disabled children, young people and their families to discuss key issues of concern to them
- Raise these issues of concern and promote rights and resources for disabled children, young people and families in Parliament
- Visit local services for disabled children and their families on a regular basis
- Support measures to transform services for disabled children and their families, such as the Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) programme in England
- Find out how funding is being used in my constituency to improve services for disabled children, young people and their families

More information and toolkit at: <http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/home.aspx>

Dates for your diary

Weekday meeting	April 6
Run of the Mill	April 8
Coffee morning	April 13
CADS Saturday club	Saturdays
Spring Fair at the donkeys	April 17
Chatterbox Club	April 24

The views and items on this newsletter are not necessarily those of the South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group. Mention does not necessarily mean recommendation or support.

***South Manchester Down's
Syndrome Support Group
April 2010***



Feel free to display inclusion messages (from the Bradford Down's syndrome training and support service) on a notice board in any relevant venue: school, out of school venue or health based service venue to spread our message.

Inclusion Message 3

Inclusion is not a fixed state, one can never say "that's it, we have done everything, this child is fully included". Inclusion is a progressive process, a journey that follows the life of each child. Small goals are needed that build towards a vision for each child; a vision of where you want your child to be, for example, to be able to walk to the shops, to be able to read, to be able to find their way around school. The challenge is then to plan the stages of the journey, modifying, identifying and removing barriers where necessary. Barriers can be equipment based, curriculum based or just come down to attitude. If the vision is realistic then the journey can happen.

Inclusion is something that must be at the centre of an organisation's/ school's planning and thinking; not an addition or something on the fringe addressed as a separate issue. Inclusion should not be just a policy but at the very core of every establishment since, to work effectively, everyone must be aware and involved to some extent.

THE LAYERS OF INCLUSION

Children do not have to have a disability to experience exclusion. As you read through the following 3 "layers" think about how this could apply to any child in a class or group setting. In fact, I am sure we can all relate to situations from our own experiences in group settings.

Layer 1: the first layer of inclusion is PRESENCE. To be able to be included you must be there. However just "being there" is not enough for inclusion.

Layer 2: the second layer of inclusion is PARTICIPATION. You must be there and be taking part in the activities. This brings belonging and makes the child feel part of the class/ group. However there is still a further layer.

Layer 3: The third layer of inclusion is PROGRESS. If the child is also learning and achieving, then this is full inclusion.

The 3 Ps, Presence, Participation and Progress.

These three layers can be so easy for some children to achieve and yet for others they may present a real challenge to all involved. However, if the three layers of inclusion, the 3 Ps, are at the heart of a school/organisation then all adults and children will benefit.