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# EarlyBird Parent Programme

ASD Workshop  
Keelman's Way School  
12<sup>th</sup> May 2015



# What is EarlyBird?

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- A parent programme devised by the National Autistic Society
- A parent programme for 4-6 families who have a preschool child with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder. There are two places for each family.
- During the sessions we look at three main subject areas with parents:
  - Understanding their child's autism
  - Developing interactions and communication with their child
  - Managing their child's behaviour



# The Programme

Week 1 – understanding autism, sensory sensitivities

Week 2 – making sense of the world, communication differences

Week 3 – useful learning techniques, people games

Week 4 – supporting communication, visual supports

Week 5 – hyperlexia, play routines and the 5Ps

Week 6 – Problem solving tools, understanding behaviour

Week 7 – repetitive behaviours, fears and phobias and temper tantrums and aggression.

Week 8 – sleep, eating and toileting/hygiene



# Who runs EarlyBird in South Tyneside?

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South Tyneside currently has two licensed trainers that deliver EarlyBird:

- Maria Wilson – Educational Psychologist
- Nicola Reed – Preschool Nursery Nurse

We are based at:

The STAR Centre, Victoria Industrial Estate, Victoria Road West, Hebburn, Tyne & Wear, NE31 1UB.

tel. 0191 4246030



# What does the programme entail?

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- It is a 12 week programme which is designed to be delivered during an academic term. The programme consists of:
  - Eight group sessions for the parents which each last for 2 ½ hours.
  - Four home visits with the parents and the child. Video feedback is used during the home visits and also form the basis for some of the group sessions.
  - Parent handbook – all families receive a comprehensive parent handbook which covers all areas of learning discussed during the group sessions.



# Video feedback

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During the home visits very short videos are taken of a parent interacting with their child. The clips are of:

- Pre programme home visit – the video is used to introduce the child to the group.
- Home Visit A – the video is used to demonstrate the parent and child interacting together with no other props: two-way shared attention.
- Home Visit B – the video is used to demonstrate the parent and child interacting together with a prop: three-way shared attention.
- Home Visit C – the video is used to demonstrate an area of development that the parent is proud of.



# The commitment required

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- The EarlyBird programme requires a high level of commitment. Parents attending the programme need to be able to:
  - Attend each group session
  - Accommodate four home visits
  - Be willing to be videoed and allow the videos to be shared during the group sessions.
  - Submit weekly evaluations, a post programme evaluation form and a three month follow up evaluation form.
  - Attend a three month follow up group session to discuss how things have moved forward.



# Quotes from parents who have attended EarlyBird

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*“Once a child is diagnosed you’re pretty much left to cope and I think attending a group with other similar parents is so useful and gives you moral support as well as valuable information and answers. Group sessions are excellent. Parent book is something I will always be able to refer to. Home visits were important but I didn’t really find item useful – more frustrating – but still necessary!” TS13PPQ*

*“...a great place to meet other parents and carers who have children with autism and it helps make you feel that you are not alone and it’s not just you going through it.” YS13PPQ*



## More quotes....

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*What would you tell them [other families]? “All the course content is very positive and you learn how to help your child rather than focussing on all the things that are currently problems. You feel like you can go home and tackle some of the behaviours. Well worth attending.” RS13FQ*

*“It’s good to meet other parents with children with autism”  
TA14PPQ*

*“...it’s a must! It really helps to understand it a lot more”*

*“Group sessions are fab for meeting parents in the same situation as you and learning different techniques that they have tried.”*

*“home visits are good if you have any questions to ask and home videos are good for looking at yourself from the outside looking in.” AS14PPQ*



# How do I apply for an EarlyBird place?

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Complete an application form when you know that you are able to attend the programme and commit.

When we have four or more completed application forms we are able to plan to run the programme in the following term

