

EARLYBIRD PROGRAMME – GENERAL INFORMATION

The National Autistic Society (NAS) EarlyBird programme is for families of a pre-school child with a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder.

Two parents or carers from each family may attend the three month programme.

The EarlyBird programme works with between six and eight families at a time and encourages parents to share ideas and experiences whilst problem solving together.

Eligibility:

Age: From 1 to 4 years

Aimed at: Parent/Carer of child

Gender: All genders

What are the aims of the programme?

- To empower families
- To help establish good practice in these very important early years of development

The NAS EarlyBird programme consists of eight two and a half hour group training sessions and two optional home visits to support on-going work with their child at home.



Home Visits

There are two weeks allocated for optional home visits, video calls or telephone calls.

These are carried out by your local EarlyBird facilitators. A time is agreed when parents/carers and ideally your child are at home. Home visits usually last for approximately one hour and are informal.

These visits/calls provide an opportunity where we can discuss the course, answer your questions and personalise the course content. We will help you to evaluate how you are working with your child and how to develop future activities. This is a positive and valuable part of the course.

Group Sessions

There will be eight group sessions at a local venue either within Thanet or Canterbury.

Drinks and biscuits will be provided.

Please note: Group sessions are for parents/carers only, unfortunately child care facilities are not available.

During the sessions we will look at three main subject areas:

- Understanding your child's autism
- Structuring interactions in which communication can develop
- Understanding and supporting your child's behaviour

The sessions will include teaching, small group work, discussion and a chance to share ideas.

An EarlyBird parent book will be provided on the first session and is used throughout the programme. At the end of each session you will be given some 'homework'. This may be to read a section of the parent book or to plan and develop a short activity.

Evaluations

To help us to evaluate the EarlyBird programme, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire to tell us what you feel about each group session, each home visit and about the NAS EarlyBird programme as a whole.

What Next?

We have a self referral system. Parents can use the form linked below to refer to EarlyBird or contact us on the details given for further information.

Your East Kent EarlyBird Team is:

Alison Pickering, Paula Wakefield, Sarah Walker,
Alison Goodsell, Katie Scarlett

Forms should be returned to:

Children's Therapies Team

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