



Conference

Better Beginnings

Supporting parents of young children with autism to focus on early social communication skills with their child through play

Tuesday 31st October 2017

9.00am - 4.30pm

The Ridgeway Centre, Milton Keynes

Puzzle Centre is delighted to host this conference, which will bring together researchers and practitioners to discuss good practice in early intervention and support for children with autism and their families.

Main Speakers:



Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP

Educational Outreach Specialist, Marcus Autism Center, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia

Social connections as the Fuel for Brain Development and Learning.

Setting priorities with the SCERTS model.



Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, Gina Davies Autism Centre

Inspiring attention and communication in young children with autism spectrum conditions.

How an understanding of autism and its impact on communication and attention can lead to innovative and joyful intervention that delivers highly effective therapy.



Paul Isaacs

Better Beginnings

His own personal journey with autism, his upbringing and what helped him as a child, teenager and adult.



Dr. Vicky Slonims, Senior Consultant Speech and Language Therapist, Newcomen Centre. Honorary Senior Lecturer, Kings College London.

Latest research findings from the PACT (Parent mediated social communication therapy for young children with autism) study and what it means to practitioners.

Chair of Conference:



Anna Kennedy OBE, Ambassador of Puzzle Centre

Anna re-mortgaged her own house so she could set up a school for autistic children after her two autistic sons were turned away from mainstream education. She has now expanded support for those with autism to include two schools, a college, a respite home and a website with over 63,000 international followers.

'When I was told by the authorities that Patrick (now 23) and Angelo (now 20) were the only children in our area with autism, I felt completely isolated and alone. It was only when I bumped into another parent one day and recognised the symptoms in her child, that I realised I wasn't alone. Together, we started a support group in my home.'

Fees:

£120 per delegate

Group Bookings of 3 or more delegates **£100** per person

Parent Bookings available at £60

How to book:

Please go to www.bookitbee.com, and search Puzzle Centre. Payment made at time of booking. If your company or employer require an invoice, please contact mandylawer@puzzlecentre.org.uk (terms and conditions apply)

Who is it for?

suitable for teachers, speech and language or occupational therapists, learning support assistants, clinical or educational psychologists, social workers, practitioners working in early years and primary school settings and parents.

Key Topics

-  Up to date research and knowledge about early support for autism
-  Examples of effective working practices
-  Creative and practical ideas
-  Opportunities for networking and discussions with practitioners from around the UK

Speakers profiles

Dr. Vicky Slonims

Vicky is a senior consultant speech and language therapist at the Newcomen Centre (children's neurosciences centre) and honorary senior lecturer at King's College London.

She works in the service for children with complex needs including learning difficulties, communication disorders and autism spectrum disorder.

Vicky is currently serving on the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guideline Development Group on learning disability and behaviour that challenges (2014-2015). She previously served on the NICE Guideline Development Group on interventions for autism in 2011-2013.

She is a member of the scientific and academic groups of the Pan London Autism Schools Network and on the steering group for the [James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership](#), funded by Autistica.

Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP

Emily is the Director of Communication Crossroads, Inc., a private practice specializing in the provision of professional development workshops. She is also the Director of the Educational Outreach Program at the Marcus Autism Center, an academic affiliate with Emory University and an NIH Autism Center of Excellence. She is a speech-language pathologist specializing in autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and related social learning disabilities. As a former adjunct faculty member and lecturer at Yale University, she has served as a member of their Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic. She recently participated as a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Ad Hoc Committee on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), a committee charged with developing guidelines related to the role of speech-language pathologists in the diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of ASD. She is a co-author of SCERTS, a criterion referenced assessment tool and framework for social and emotional development. She lectures internationally and provides consultation to educational programs developing programs for social and emotional learning and engagement in the classroom setting.

Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist: Dip RCSLT, HPC reg; RSA specific learning difficulties; Advanced Certificate in Education: Pupils with autism.

Gina is a qualified Speech and Language Therapist who turned her passion for communication development into practical and joyful intervention strategies for parents and professionals dealing with autism. She has worked with hundreds of autistic children in schools, nurseries and residential settings, and directly with parents, carers and families.

As well as being an accomplished conference speaker and highly acclaimed practitioner in autism, Gina has established parent groups, social skills groups, language and communication services. She has set up and run programmes in specialist and mainstream schools, working closely within the educational framework. Gina lives in Surrey and remains very much hands-on with children, parents and professionals, traveling extensively in the UK and internationally.

Paul Isaacs

Paul is a seasoned speaker on the autism spectrum and has been speaking on the topic for over 6 years. He is the author of 5 books on the subject and has taken part in other books, blogs and videos also. As an adult diagnosed with 'High Functioning Autism', he had Classic/Kanner's autism as a infant and didn't gain functional speech until he was 7 or 8 years old. He will be talking not only about his autism journey but his mental health journey and the impact that had on him in his younger years. Through the help of Autism Oxford, Kathy Erangey and Dr Mike Layton helped him through tough times and have given him the confidence to speak about autism and give his in depth knowledge of his autism and how it makes him relate to the world around him.