

# Families with Autism

For families affected by Autistic Spectrum Disorders and/or similar Developmental Delays (diagnosed or not).

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## Happy holidays from our families to yours!

**Welcome to the Winter edition of FWA news.**

The holidays are a good time to **focus on some of the great achievements and small steps that your child and you as a family have made**, and brace yourselves for what next year may bring.

We all know that Christmas can be very stressful for many of us, with just the shopping and socializing.

### International Breakfast TV

11<sup>th</sup> Nov, Phoenix Secondary School celebrated International Day with an amazing Breakfast TV show, the idea of a former pupil Paul A, who is now at college.

I wasn't sure what to expect but it was almost overwhelming with the high energy performances from Paula, her team and young people who had learnt their lines and performances brilliantly. The entire show ran without a hitch. All the presenters were great. We had news and weather reports, adverts and Olympic-related scenes - as Elmo would say "colourful..."

The noise levels were loud even for me, but our kids coped admirably some with ear defenders; others with fingers in their ears, others just coped and enjoyed the show.

I really don't know how the staff and teaching assistants managed to stage manage it all – but it was a production well worth paying for.

**Well Done to Phoenix School Productions!**



Well, it is probably doubly stressful for our kids as they have to deal with the lack of structure, changed home environments, relatives popping in, and different foods on offer.

Whereas others will welcome the excitement and the jolly season – and probably drive us crazy with their antics and excess energy.

See Christmas Holiday Tips for more information.

*Have a lovely holiday  
Here's hoping we all have,  
and can find the patience &  
strength to cope with the  
Festive Season!*

### Hidden Helpers at School

*We haven't forgotten all the great Teaching Assistants, Support Workers, Dinner Ladies, Bus Drivers, Transport Assistants, and the Transport Service –*  
***if our kids trust you lot around them, so do we!***  
*Big Thanks for being there for our kids and us parents – through rain and shine, early mornings and late evenings.*

## Children Learn What They Live

*If children live with criticism,  
they learn to **condemn**.*

*If children live with hostility,  
they learn to **fight**.*

*If children live with pity, they  
learn to **feel sorry for  
themselves**.*

*If children live with ridicule,  
they learn to **feel shy**.*

*If children live with jealousy,  
they learn to **feel envy**.*

*If children live with criticism,  
they learn to **condemn**.*

*If children live with shame, they  
learn to **feel guilty**.*

*If children live with  
encouragement, they learn  
**confidence**.*

*If children live with tolerance,  
they learn **patience**.*

*If children live with praise, they  
learn **appreciation**.*

*If children live with acceptance,  
they learn to **love**.*

*If children live with approval,  
they learn to **like themselves**.*

*If children live with recognition,  
they learn it is good to **have a  
goal**.*

*If children live with sharing,  
they learn **generosity**.*

*If children live with honesty,  
they learn **truthfulness**.*

*If children live with fairness,  
they learn **justice**.*

*If children live with kindness  
and consideration, they learn  
**respect**.*

*If children live with security,  
they learn to **have faith in  
themselves and in those about  
them**.*

*If children live with friendliness,  
they learn **the world is a nice  
place in which to live**.*

© 1972 Dorothy Law Nolte;  
first pub. 1953

## Parents Chatback

### Thanks to Barry Manilow!

Jane thought she would never be able to communicate with her 5 yr old autistic son. But the 70's icon Barry Manilow held the key. As he goes down the slide he bursts into song "Her name was Lola, she was a showgirl..."

Passers-by stare in surprise, but I'm used to it. He'd started humming along to it in the car, and picked up the words. Then over the months, I started to use Barry Manilow's music to bond with Steven. I sing a song to him and he sings back. He's even starting to look me in the eye when I sing. His teacher has incorporated the music into his learning routines and as a reward if he carries out a reading task.

*Jane Conover, Closer May 2003*



### Nobody Survives Alone: The gift of community

This summer, my son has started kicking off in supermarkets and bigger stores, mainly when I am trying to pay. He's 12 yrs' old, and needs to know where our/his food and clothes come from. **But, I do avoid doing 'big shops' with him.**

I am pleased to say that some **people do care and will help out, if and when we give them the chance**. Once he started 'misbehaving'; people moved us to the start of queue; then the staff opened a till just for us, it didn't really help, but I paid. They helped get my bag and his stuff.

He then dragged me through the racks on our way out and pushed me against a wall, and onto the floor. A shop manager came to help, one lady said she was a psychologist suggested he needed calm and space, another said she worked with autistic children, and suggested he might be too hot. I **was asked if I needed an ambulance or the police, "no and no"**; and if **they could call anyone for me**. I couldn't remember my partner's mobile number, (those who know me –know I don't carry a mobile).

A guard came to help out, asking my son's name, **getting down to his level** spoke to him, the shop manager held my son in her lap sitting on the ground so he could calm down – **it worked briefly**. We made it out.

He hadn't finished, got me against a stone pillar now, and I sat down in the hope - we could sit it out. A bit of calm...

The only way I knew out of the square was through Debenhams, he was fine to start with, loving the escalators – **misreading the signs**, I looked a few seconds too long at a dress – **and he was kicking off**.

Suddenly, my knight in shining armour arrived – the guard, he said calmly to my son, using his name, "you'll have to stop this or you will have to leave". Of course, he didn't take a blind bit of notice, started chucking his things – to the ground floor. So he was bodily lifted/held and taken down the escalator, I rescued the items on the way out, but the guard took us, back to the square.

We started the 'sit & calm down' routine again. A minute later, **a hot dog seller brought my boy a fruit juice to calm down**. It did help, and he ran down an alleyway, on to the High Street, skipping happily along as if nothing had happened; then he bumped into my partner who was looking for us. **Typical!!!**

Tayo

## Safe & Sound

awaware.org

### family wandering emergency plan

Make sure your family has a plan in case of a wandering emergency. Before an emergency happens, sit down together and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supply kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event your child is missing.

AUTISM  
WANDERING  
AWARENESS  
ALERTS  
RESPONSE  
EDUCATION

AWARE  
COLLABORATION

#### critical information

**CHILD'S NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD'S TRANSMITTER TRACKING NUMBER (if applicable)** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD'S OFFICIAL DIAGNOSIS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD'S IDENTIFYING MARKS, MEDICATIONS & MEDICAL NEEDS** \_\_\_\_\_

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#### emergency steps:

- ALWAYS CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR LOVED ONE IS MISSING FROM YOUR HOME.**
- Clearly state your child's name.
- State that they have a cognitive impairment, provide the diagnosis, state they are endangered and have no sense of danger.
- Provide your child's radio frequency tracking number (if applicable).
- Provide your child's date of birth, height, weight, and any other unique identifiers such as eyeglasses and braces.
- Tell them when you noticed that your child was missing and what clothing he or she was wearing.
- Request an AMBER Alert be issued (if your child is a minor) or a Silver Alert be issued (if your child is an adult)
- Request that your child's name and identifying information be immediately entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Missing Person File.
- Search known areas your child would likely be, or attracted to. If you have an emergency point person assigned to contact neighbors, pick up your other children from school, watch your children, etc., alert them while searching known areas your child would likely be. *If you have other small children, never leave them unattended.*

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**TIP: create an emergency point person who can contact neighbors, fax your alert form to local law enforcement, and assist in making arrangements for your other children.** Should your child go missing make sure this contact has a cell phone, knows what your child is wearing, any identifying features, where your child was last seen, how long your child may have been gone, any medical needs or allergies your child may have, your child's likes and dislikes and main attractions. Ideally, the emergency contact will be a relative or close friend. Provide your emergency contact with a copy of this plan and ask them to keep it in a safe, accessible place.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Safety issues & suggestions** for parents of children & teens with ASD from the Internet is just **a guide to cover all bases when getting the Police involved & any other helpers.**

**Dial 999 - Ask for the Police – tell them a Vulnerable child or young adult is missing:**

Where? When? Where/What kind of places do they like to go? What they are wearing? Are they likely to cross the road? Are they affectionate towards strangers? Etc....

Use something distinctive like a yellow Autism strap or badge; write your contact details written on the back.

If your child/teen won't wear the strap, link it around their bag or backpack, or put it inside a bag or jacket pocket.

Use a Medical Alert bracelet or tag.

Think about getting an 'I Love Someone with Autism' or 'Asperger's badge'.

Put NAS information cards in their bag, coat/jackets or/hats with your contact details in the back.



### If Your Child Goes Missing/Wanders Off

- Use the suggested plan or similar to ensure you cover all bases when getting the Police involved and any other helpers.
- **Try not to panic.**
- They are **unlikely to go far, and may stay or go to familiar places.**
- **Try shops you wouldn't normally let them go in, or those they particularly like.**
- List the main places your child may likely go within the area, as well as the more dangerous areas nearby. If they are **into trains, tubes, and buses let the Police know, so they can contact the Transport network** to look out for your child/young person.

**REMEMBER: They have done it before - so don't feel your child will be impossible to find; even on the Tube or buses...**

*Autism Aware Education*

## Autism Night before Christmas

Twas the Night Before Christmas  
And all through the house  
The creatures were stirring  
Yes, even the mouse

We tried melatonin  
And gave a hot bath  
But the holiday jitters  
They always distract

The children were finally  
All nestled in bed  
When nightmares of terror  
Ran through my OWN head

Did I get the right gift  
The right color  
And style  
Would there be a tantrum  
Or even, maybe, a smile?

Our relatives come  
But they don't understand  
The pleasure he gets  
Just from flapping his hands.

"He needs discipline," they say  
"Just a well-needed smack,  
You must learn to parent..."  
And on goes the attack

We smile and nod  
Because we know deep inside  
The argument is moot  
Let them all take a side

We know what it's like  
To live with the spectrum  
The struggles and triumphs  
Achievements, regressions...

But what they don't know  
And what they don't see  
Is the joy that we feel  
Over simplicity

He said "hello"  
He ate something green!  
He told his first lie!  
He did not cause a scene!

He peed on the potty  
Who cares if he's ten,  
He stopped saying the same thing  
Again and again!

Others don't realize  
Just how we can cope  
How we bravely hang on  
At the end of our rope

But what they don't see  
Is the joy we can't hide  
When our children with autism  
Make the tiniest stride

We may look at others  
Without the problems we face  
With jealousy, hatred  
Or even distaste,

But what they don't know  
Nor sometimes do we  
Is that children with autism  
Bring simplicity.

We don't get excited  
Over expensive things  
We jump for joy  
With the progress work brings

Children with autism  
Try hard every day  
That they make us proud  
More than words can say.

They work even harder  
Than you or I  
To achieve something small  
To reach a star in the sky

So to those who don't get it  
Or can't get a clue  
Take a walk in my shoes  
And I'll assure you

That even 10 minutes  
Into the walk  
You'll look at me  
With respect, even shock.

You will realize  
What it is I go through  
And the next time you judge  
I can assure you

That you won't say a thing  
You'll be quiet and learn,  
Like the years that I did  
When the tables were turned.....

Cindy Waelterm

**A Siblings Support Tool Kit  
is available from**

[www.autismspeaks.org/sites/  
default/files/a\\_siblings\\_guide  
to\\_autism.pdf](http://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/a_siblings_guide_to_autism.pdf)

### Siblings Say

***"I've learned to accept my  
brother's autism  
and want to help"***

***"Being the brother or sister  
of someone with autism  
is not always easy"***

***"My brother is in his own  
world"***

***"We are all different"***

***"My special sister has been  
a source of inspiration"***



### Expressive Arts

The programme at Phoenix includes three subject areas— Drama, Art and Music aiming to encourage self-expression, develop self-awareness, and improve their self-esteem.

The International Breakfast TV, and a Rock Band are just two of the major projects the kids have worked on.

**Mainstream & Aspergers' kids – try  
Half-Moon Theatre**, Whitehorse Rd.  
**Arts for All**, Tab Centre, Godfreys  
Place, London E2. ☎0207 729 7111  
admin@artsforall.co.uk

**Create**, 379 Salisbury House,  
London Wall, EC2. ☎020 7374 8485  
[www.createarts.org.uk](http://www.createarts.org.uk)

### Autism Awareness Day 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr 2012.

There will be a week of planned events. Things are still in the planning stages, and more information will be publicised closer to the date.

Better awareness and understanding is a big part to autism; being accepted in our community.

**Adult Services** have set up a Health-based Teams' Steering Group to develop **better services / diagnostic pathway for the Autistic population** including adults who have a **late Aspergers' diagnosis**; in response to the **New Autism Bill**.

### Goodbyes & Hellos

#### David Dobson is leaving.

We wish him a great future at his new school, though we will all miss him here at Phoenix.

**Simone M-B** has started work at Contact a Family, London as a Special Education Needs Adviser.

**Delyth B** works with the NAS Parents Helpline, specialising in Education Rights.

## Christmas Holiday Tips

The Christmas holidays can be very stressful to our children; their everyday routine has gone and been replaced with new sounds and smells, Christmas tree and decorations, visitors and busy crowds everywhere.

- ❖ Try to glide into the festive season - **prepare your child** using schedules; 'Now and Next', 'First and Then' boards; Social Stories, books and/or Calendars.
- ❖ Allow your child to join in preparations e.g. present wrapping and **give them lots of encouragement and praise**.
- ❖ Try not to alter regular bed time routines too much or you will have trouble returning to it when school time comes around.
- ❖ Do not try to do anything too big.
- ❖ Be prepared for surprises & delays
- ❖ Remember what can trigger a tantrum e.g. unexpected noises, new people
- ❖ Have some **'time out' strategies** (have a quiet place, room or corner!)

## V&A (Toy) Museum of Childhood

The V&A Museum of Childhood has new toys, books, displays and installations (Magic and Fairytales). The **music and acrobatic displays** add to the appeal for adults.

We had a chance to try out the **new ear defenders**, from the **Making SENSE backpack** (from Reception). It was a great success – as my son only had 2 minor kick-offs from the noise and hubbub of the museum.

***REMEMBER**  
this is a time to be  
enjoyed by the whole  
family, each in their  
own way.*

Lorraine & Anne

## Top Tantrums & Calming Down

Supermarket rage	Shop alone or at less busy times. Avoid going when tired or hungry. Go in for one or two favourite items only. Have fun – play 'I spy' etc.
TV Tantrums	Avoid TV before meals/bedtime. Have fun without TV. Review your own TV habits
Refusing Meals	Sit and eat with them. Get them involved in preparing food. <b>Use praise.</b>
Car seat chaos	Loosen straps when they get out. Give them a special car toy/item or play music - only when strapped in. Make sure all other passengers wear seatbelts.
No to school/nursery	Leave your home in plenty of time. <b>Talk to the staff and tackle it together.</b>
Refusing to go to bed	Spend time in the bedroom having fun during the day. Reduce daytime naps. Do at least one physical activity with them a day.
Refusing to share toys	Before other kids arrive, put any favourite toys away. Don't expect your child to share. If they do share, <b>praise</b> your child for sharing.
Refusing to leave	Give a 10 min. warning. Leave time to make a game of clearing up. Try to get them excited about what's next. <b>Use "First...Then" cards</b>
Refusing to get dressed	Let them help to get dressed – choosing what's next. Give them a limited choice. <b>Praise each positive action by your child. Use Social Stories.</b>

### Commit to Calming Down

Dos	Don'ts
<b>Watch out for the warning signs</b> (before a full-blown tantrum) & (try to) deal with them	<b>Don't take anything they say or do personally.</b> It's about them learning to be independent - <b>it not about you!</b>
Breathe deeply as you count to 10. <b>Try to Feel calmer</b> as you focus on every breath	Don't see a child being deliberately difficult or bad - <b>they are just frustrated – try to see the child you love</b>
Decide in advance what you are going to do - (have a plan) for tantrums	Don't let them control you. <b>Pace Yourself. You are the adult so act your age – not theirs</b> (with our luck behaving like them - will only encourage them – as they'll think it's a game)!

## Words of Wisdom

Forget the Past – Let it go

Live the present –

The power of now

Create the future –

Thoughts can become things

Trish



## Parent Tips for Surviving – Access Services for your Child

- Have a list of your priority needs
- Be clear – this is for your child!
- Don't play the victim – be assertive! Not aggressive – being polite helps!
- Don't just sit back and hope: –  
**Find out what is actually available?**  
How long are the waiting lists?
- Use the Parent's Advice Centre, Carer's Centre, the school or your SENCO **get extra support.**
- Call the duty Social Worker or book an appointment with the school one, and **talk about your child's needs**
- **Trust your instincts**
- Don't just accept sympathy from professionals or those in charge – help them work with you
- Keep open a 2-way line of communication
- **Be realistic about what you can achieve**

## Supporting Parents

After diagnosis, some parents will need counselling and emotional support to handle the effect autism will have on their family. While the CDT offers follow-up sessions; written information and refer parents/families to voluntary organisations & groups that can help and support them.

There is lots of reading material on Autism and Aspergers - of course - books and the internet – probably far too much, some contradictory and others just overwhelming for many parents.



Still, the diagnosis is just the start of a mainly uphill lifetime journey. So many parents and families will continue to need counselling and emotional support at times of crisis – like changing school, new members of the family, and even being rejected by family members and friends who don't understand.

Mayarun

### Tips for New & Older Families

**Learn** about autism & how it may affect your family.

**Find strategies** & resources for raising a child/person with autism.

**Find support** so you don't feel alone or isolated. Reduce the negative impact of the diagnosis on your family.

**Promote a positive future** for your child and family.

*Autism Speaks*

## Parent Support Group Highlights

### Makaton – Speak Less

#### Communicate More!

Meriel Green ran this lively and interactive session. Not as many parents (about 10) as usual, but this made the session more interesting.

Everyone had an opportunity to speak and have their particular child's communication needs looked at. Luckily, Meriel had had first-hand knowledge of all the kids' whose parents were present. She was able to say, what our kids were able to do and what worked well with them.

I had only come along for the company, as I have been to previous sessions over the years. But, found that this particular one – built on some of my basic knowledge and expanded on how I could use it now my boy is older for longer sentences & specific uses.

**Makaton training reminds us to use shorter sentences – not to overload the kids with words and stay consistent!**

*A parent*

Other PASG sessions this term were showing **Autism Awareness Video clips** and **Preparing Children for Christmas Holiday**.

### Phoenix School Annual Conference

20<sup>th</sup> Oct, the conference theme was **“A Different Perspective on Autism”** held with 12 workshops and seminars

Delegates were able to **attend 2 workshops** which were interactive and informative. The speakers: Dr. Mitzi Waltz, Jenny Ronayne, John Simpson and Louise Coigley were stimulating and inspiring.

The day was a well-attended success, with over 200 people (professionals plus parents).

### Real – DITO and Disability Coalition

**3<sup>rd</sup> Dec** was the launch of Real merger of Disability Coalition and DITO, both are user-led organisations. The day appropriately coincided with **World Disability Day**.

Music, poetry, a play worker and food was available. As well as stalls with information of **what REAL provides**: - training opportunities; independent advocacy for people with disabilities, support with children, and direct payments amongst other services. ☎ 0207 980 2200.

*Seema*

## @ Mainstream

Tower Hamlets schools work with the Phoenix Outreach Team, Parents Advice Centre and Tower Project, to give adequate support levels for children/young people, & make sure their teaching staff have had recent specialist Autism training.

You should have a **SENCO** who should be able to help your child out at school and you accessing services and resources.

It can take time to find the right school and support for your child and family.

### Contact

Phoenix Outreach Team or Parents Advice Centre and/or  
Lucy McKenzie, Inclusion Officer ☎ 07825 061 263 for information,  
advice and support; or things you worry about that are not being dealt  
with by your child's school

## A Child's Introduction

My neighbour's daughter,  
Eoife, said to her friend when  
introducing my son.

*"This is Olu! He has strong  
autism - which is why he  
doesn't speak."*

And off they all went to play,  
Olu to do his thing on the  
swing chair and the girls on the  
trampoline.

*Tayo & Trish*

## Contact Us

Run by volunteer parents.  
All and any contributions are much welcome, no  
matter how little!!!  
We will put them to good use.

**Next issue - Spring**  
**Get your voice heard!!!**

*HAPPY HOLIDAYS!*



Email to: [fwautism@btinternet.com](mailto:fwautism@btinternet.com)



Post to The Editorial Team  
Families with Autism News  
c/o Phoenix School  
49 Bow Road, E3  
[www.familieswithautism.org.uk](http://www.familieswithautism.org.uk)

### Disclaimer

Parent contributors are not trained professionals.  
They will and can only give advice based on their own  
first-hand parenting experience, relevant books;  
knowledge gained from Earlybird courses & other  
parent support groups/resources.  
Information from professionals is clearly stated.

## Useful Websites and Blogs

**Autism Speaks** Official Blog: - although US-based have relevant topics. Topic of the Week, parents' comments will be of interest. Useful and interesting comments from parents on a large variety of topics. Has an archive of older comments. <http://blog.autismspeaks.org/2011/05/09/safety-and-autism/>

**PACSEN** has a new website with online advice for special kids, links to other local groups that support parents of children with special needs. [www.pacsen.org.uk](http://www.pacsen.org.uk) email [hello@pacsen.org.uk](mailto:hello@pacsen.org.uk)

**Netbuddy** - practical tips from parents, carers and professionals. Find help with brushing teeth, bed-wetting, social skills, respite care, sensory issues, challenging behaviour ... more at [www.netbuddy.org.uk](http://www.netbuddy.org.uk)

**Behaviour Disorders Services**, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust will accept GP and private referrals of adults and children across the UK for assessment/diagnosis of Autism and Aspergers' Syndrome. ☎0208 3228 4183 [www.national.slam.nhs.uk](http://www.national.slam.nhs.uk)

**Autzine** - a new magazine and website for young people with Autism. It provides information support and chat site. Anyone can send in an article. Written by two young people living with Aspergers' and ADHD, and supported by Autism Support Service ASDat, Suffolk New College and Suffolk Mind. [www.autzine.suffolk.ac.uk](http://www.autzine.suffolk.ac.uk)

**Map Squad/Bubble Club** - a self-run learning disability organisation, which arranges social activities - a regular Nightclub in the East End; and other regular day events. For latest venues check [bubbleclub@mapsquad.org](mailto:bubbleclub@mapsquad.org) ☎0207 247 3030 [www.facebook.co.uk/bubbleclubEast](http://www.facebook.co.uk/bubbleclubEast) ☎07961 873 676

**I CAN** works to support the development of speech, language and communication skills in all children with a special focus on children with speech, language and communication needs. [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)



World Autism  
Awareness Day

# Support Network in Tower Hamlets

## Families With Autism

### Drop in

All parents can meet in a friendly environment to discuss topical stuff, or just relax over a hot drink.

Brady Centre, Hanbury St Whitechapel, E1

Thursdays 11am-1pm (term-time only)

26<sup>th</sup> Jan, 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb, 8<sup>th</sup> Mar



## Phoenix Parents' Support Group

(PASG) open to **all interested & affected parents** in Tower Hamlets.

Small crèche available, book in advance.

**Spring Dates 2011 Wed 10.30 – 12.00**

- 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 11.30 – What to do when tantrums happen – Chris Barson  
8<sup>th</sup> Feb – Speaker with Autism  
14<sup>th</sup> Mar – Diet, Nutrition & your child's health – Gillian Loughran  
25<sup>th</sup> Apr -- 1<sup>st</sup> Summer session TBA

## Asperger's Parents Group

**1<sup>st</sup> Tues each month 1-3pm**

Montefiore Centre, Hanbury St,  
close to the Brady Arts Centre E1

## Friends Of Phoenix

(Phoenix parents only) **Weds 10.30 -12pm**

**Spring 2012 Dates**

25<sup>th</sup> Jan, 29<sup>th</sup> Feb, 28<sup>th</sup> Mar,

30<sup>th</sup> May, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 4<sup>th</sup> July

Where parents can meet, relax, make resources, plan days to autistic-friendly places in London; and support each other and the school.

## Rich Mix Cinema

### Autism Friendly Viewings

Sundays at 1.00pm **all tickets £1.50**

- 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan Lion King (U)  
19<sup>th</sup> Feb Rio (U)  
18<sup>th</sup> Mar Kung Fu Panda 2 (PG)  
15<sup>th</sup> Apr Hugo (U)

## Useful Contacts

### *We Signpost, you Contact!*

**Phoenix Outreach Team:** Phoenix School, Bow E3;

☎ 0208 980 4740

**Mile End Leisure Centre:** Free sessions on Weds 6-8 pm for kids/young adults with Learning difficulties. Siblings are welcome to the sports hall activities.

Contact: Marianne Sharpe, ☎ 0798 481 5760

**The Carers Centre:** 21 Brayford Square, off Commercial Rd E1. Supports families with adults on Autistic spectrum and other disabilities.

☎ 0207 790 1765 [www.carerscentretowerhamlets.org.uk](http://www.carerscentretowerhamlets.org.uk)

**Contact a Family:** for families with disabled children. Have many useful leaflets and advice. Interpreting service.

Free ☎ Helpline: 0808 808 3555, Mon – Fri 10 – 4pm,

Mon 5.30 – 7.30pm [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

**Parents Advice Centre (PAC):** 30 Greatorex Street, E1, Whitechapel. ☎ 0207 364 6489.

Has a Mixed SEN parents Drop-in every Thursday 10-12.

Educational Psychologist advice 1st Tuesday (monthly).

Welfare/Benefits advice & some help with Disability Living Allowance forms.

**Tower Project:** 45-55 Whitehorse Road, E1.

☎ 0207 790 9085. Provides a range of services including day services for 18+, job opportunities, after-school clubs, holiday schemes and advocacy + advice services.

**Barnados/Sparkle Services,** Gladstone Place, 1Ewart Place, Roman Rd, E3.

Run several services: - a Saturday Activity Service for older autistic children & teens – called "Aut and About", Siblings and parent/carers, and Sparkle for under 5's. Also run a befriending service. Call Kim Barclay, ☎ 0208 981 4924

**The Map Squad:** A group organised by adults with learning disabilities. Montefiore Centre, Hanbury St. They also run the Bubble Club – a nightclub for adults, held in East London. Reserve tickets on ☎ 0207 247 3030

**Spouses/Partners Support Group:** Contact [info@whydoesmypartner.co.uk](mailto:info@whydoesmypartner.co.uk)

**National Autistic Society.** Autism Helpline ☎ 0845 070 4004 10-4pm. Access to Language Line interpreters.

**Tower Hamlets Autism Support.** Montefiore Centre, Hanbury St, close to the Brady Arts Centre E1. Runs Asperger's Parents group; **Family Support Worker** ☎0207 377 8407 email: [thamsupport@nas.org.uk](mailto:thamsupport@nas.org.uk)

**APASENTH Asian Parents Special Educational Needs in Tower Hamlets.** Carmine Wharf, 30 Copenhagen Place, E14 Near Lidl. ☎ 0207 001 2266 x 117

**London Buddhist Centre – Breathing Space** – relaxation & stress reduction drop-in for carers. 11.30-12.45 Tuesdays'. They also run weekend retreats for carers. 51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green E2, Junction Globe Rd.

**MindBuilders** – Floortime parent training/support group term-time. Weds 12.00 -1.00 at the Montefiore Centre, Hanbury St. Contact: Sibylle Janert ☎ 077726 726729