

How we create an effective member magazine

Greg Cranness – Senior Marketing Officer (Membership)
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#charitywritecomms



Until everyone understands

What is *Your Autism Magazine*?



Until everyone understands

What is *Your Autism Magazine*?



Join us

The National
Autistic Society

Membership

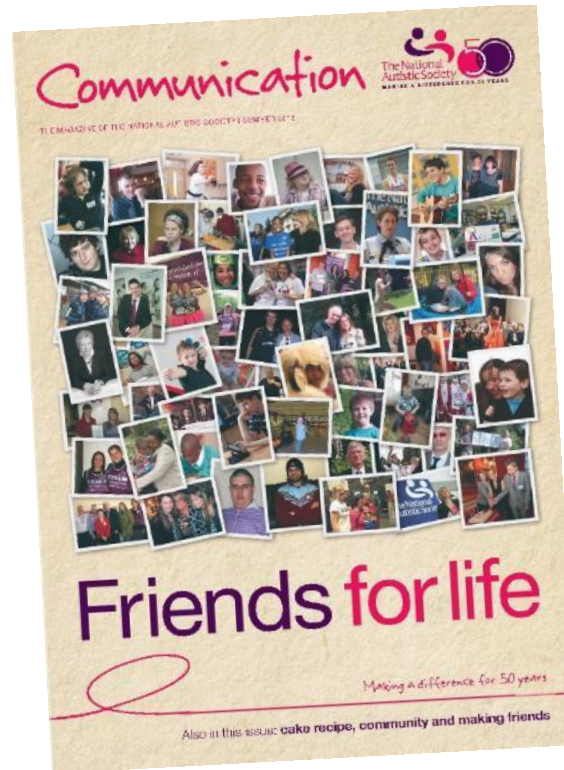
Membership means more
for people living with autism

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understands

Until everyone understands

How far we've come

2012



2016



Until everyone understands

How far we've come

‘It put the readers first, focusing on putting their needs at the forefront rather than the needs of the charity. But in doing so, it also met charity objectives.’

Judges of the MEMCOM Awards 2014
for Charity magazine of the year



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Putting it all together



grange
A Wyndeham Group company

james
pembroke
...



The National
Autistic Society


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Principles for a winning read!



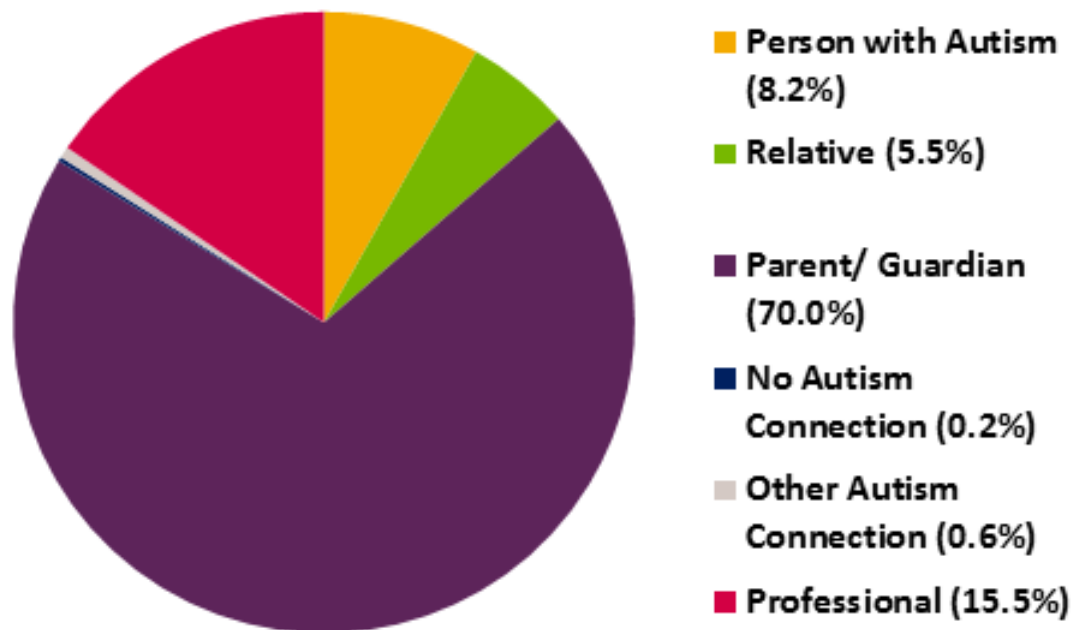
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Collaboration



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Targeting your readers



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Parent/Guardian (70%)

FEATURE • HOME SCHOOLING



A GUIDE TO HOME SCHOOLING

Bullying: how to spot it and what to do



The three Shippey boys:
Mason, Owen and Callum

PARENT CAMPAIGNERS • FEATURE

Adding the passion

Kate and Peter Shippey have three autistic boys. Last year, they successfully campaigned for a sensory room at Sunderland FC so their eldest son, Mason, could enjoy going to matches along with everyone else. We asked them how they did it.

BY SUZANNE WESTBURY



We first heard the term autism when Mason, our eldest, was around about 18 months old – but we had no idea what it was. His other complex medical needs took over at that point, and autism only started coming up again when he was about five. When he got the diagnosis, we didn't think of 'label' as a negative. It helped us to look into it and understand him more.

With our second son, Owen, we realised that he was showing similar

your child. So now we use Makaton with the boys to help them focus and to show other people that we have a particular difficulty. When other people see you using Makaton, that's when their eyes drop and they stop going over their back.

Our advice for other parents would be to learn from your child. I find a lot of times with progression and development, you just need to let them do it at their own pace. Watch your child so you can start to learn what's bothering them, and to understand their

idea of a sensory room. The club asked us to do some research locally to see what'd be best for it. It took a lot of hard work and campaigning, gathering support and signatures and using social media. Eventually around a year later, they built the box inside one of the bars for three people plus their carers. The room has a bubble tube and padded seating, a PBS board, a television, and they're going to put in a football-based tactile wall this summer, hopefully.

We're now trying to get the idea into the premier league and beyond. It's

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Professional (15.5%)

Research in focus

Bringing you news of the latest research into living and working with autism

How should we describe autism?



Our research found that 15.5% of the autism spectrum preferred the words 'autism spectrum' and 'autism'.

When we talk about autism, there are a range of different words and terminologies we can use. The ones we prefer might depend on our context – whether that's a medical or research setting, at home with friends and family, or with peers.

The National Autistic Society has conducted a piece of unprecedented research to understand the way people describe autism in the UK today. Almost 1000 people responded. This huge and representative group included adults on the autism spectrum, their parents, families, carers and professionals working in autism in a clinical field. You may have participated yourself.

We discovered that a wide range of terms were used, and that people had a very different view about which one is best.

Looking at all of the responses together, people rated the term 'on the autism spectrum' the highest. When the responses from each group were looked at separately, we found that adults on the autism spectrum preferred the term 'on the autism spectrum' and 'autism', parents and carers of individuals on the spectrum preferred 'has autism' or 'autism', and professionals working in autism or a clinical field preferred 'on the autism spectrum'. Followed closely by 'person with autism' or 'person with Asperger's'.

Some traditional autism terms are hardly in use at all any more. Only a small minority of people reported using the terms 'Kanner's syndrome', 'Kanner's autism', 'autism', 'person with developmental disorder', 'classic autism' and 'high-functioning autism'.

At The National Autistic Society we do not now consider the status of people on the autism spectrum. Rather, we speak to us as a microphone through which the

voices of those whose lives are touched by autism are amplified.

What we have learnt from our research is that there are a variety of preferences about a choice to describe autism. We therefore believe it is reasonable to use different terms when communicating with different audience groups. When we communicate with a broad audience, we will avoid using the terms that were rated as 'deficient' or 'wrongly defined'. To many of our respondents, and we will ensure the focus on the autism spectrum is that we do not socially protect, but rather we communicate with a specific group, we will want to use the specific terms they prefer.

We know there are many voices within the autism community and we try our best to reflect those. To find out more about how The National Autistic Society intends to implement the outcomes of this research, keep an eye on the new section of our website.

10 APRIL 2015

Epilepsy and autism

Epilepsy is a common, serious neurological condition in which there is a tendency to have recurrent seizures. In the UK, one in every 103 people has epilepsy and 87 people are diagnosed with it every day. We asked a



Why I support brain banking

BRAIN BANKING • VIEWPOINT

Dame Stephanie donated her son's brain for medical research



Parent Dame Stephanie Shirley, who is also an entrepreneur, philanthropist and founder of The Shirley Foundation, explains why she thinks donating the brains of autistic people for medical research is so important.

BY DAME STEPHANIE SHIRLEY

"WE KNOW THAT autism is brain-related and researchers know the importance of brain banks offering access to post-mortem brains. But

that my body cannot be used as I intend.

"An autism brain bank is being planned in Canada, but only the UK

recruitment can only be significantly improved by working with parent-led organisations.

"Psychological, cultural and practical

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60% join within the first year of getting
a formal autism diagnosis

Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is common in people with autism. If someone has ADHD, they have significant difficulties with things like poor attention, over-activity and impulsiveness. We asked experts from The South London and Maudsley Hospital to explain how ADHD can affect children and adults, and the options for treatment.

BY DR ANASTASIOS BALANOPoulos AND TEAM

ADHD CAN CAUSE difficulties at school, work or home – but it is treatable. If you have autism and think that you may also have ADHD, it is important to have an assessment with a specialist doctor who is familiar with both conditions. They will then be able to discuss your assessment and the treatment options.

What are the symptoms of ADHD?
There are three main types of ADHD:


- inattentive or 'daydreaming' (not listening, not focused)
- losing things
- being easily distracted
- being forgetful in daily activities

Hyperactivity includes things like:

- being fidgety, fidgeting or fidgeting in seat
- running and climbing inappropriately
- being disruptive and noisy
- being impulsive and not thinking
- being restless, restless in bed

diagnostic criteria:

- you do a lot of them
- they occur across your everyday life
- the symptoms are out of control



Spotlight on our day services



Getting musical at our day service in Cardiff

How the NAS can help you

Our support centres provide a place where autistic people can come for support, social interaction and to develop new skills. Our Services Marketing Officer, **Jessica Phillips**, explains what they can offer.

What are day services and who are they for?
Traditionally known as day services, our day opportunities provide tailored support outside the home for autistic adults aged over 18 to develop skills, connect with others in the local community and take part in activities that enrich their lives. What each person does and the support they receive depends on their needs.

First and foremost we run a regular market stall selling their hand-made, high quality items. The activities can vary depending on the service, but the key is flexibility – staff are creative and all resources available so that the people they support are able to accomplish the things they set out to do, as well as things they hadn't even imagined they could.

How are they funded? Do I have to pay to use them?
They are funded by your local authority, either directly or through personal budgets allocated to you. Find out more about benefits at www.autism.org.uk/benefits

Any great examples of how they've improved someone's life?
One autistic adult we support in our day services in Somerset, who also has epilepsy, helps to build planners

WHAT ARE DAY SERVICES?

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Targeting new audiences



How do I? prepare for old age

BE ALERT TO DETERIORATION IN PHYSICAL HEALTH

When it comes to health, there are several aspects of getting older which may be more problematic for an autistic adult with complex needs. Difficulty with communication might mean signs of common age-related illnesses are missed, for example when telling a doctor about pain. Some people may have very high pain thresholds which could result in something not being picked up until it's really serious. Regular and thorough health checks are therefore vital. Specific checks which take place as you get older – such as mammograms – can be hard to communicate, so use social stories and visual support to help explain them in advance. Work with the relevant professionals to make sure special allowances are in place. Changes to mobility might make a person's preferred

The first generation of people diagnosed with autism in childhood are now reaching middle age. We asked two of our expert service managers for advice on what parents and carers of adults who have autism and more complex needs should consider when helping to prepare someone for later life.

BY SUSANNE LARGOMME AND AMY THORNE

Getting older and the prospect of old age means preparing for major transition. It can be useful to think of this change as sets of micro-transitions and micro-transitions. The first category might include changes to housing provision or the death of supporting family members. The second might be more medical appointments or changes to activities due to a decline in health.



How to up your dating game

Unspoken rules, body language, guessing what others are thinking... Dating can be really hard if you're autistic. **Luke Jackson**, author of bestselling *Freaks, Geeks and Asperger syndrome*, shares his top tips for how to get started.

BY LUKE JACKSON



It's okay to mention if you're nervous when you're on a date

The world of dating and relationships is a scary place, especially when you first get feelings for someone. It can turn the most confident of people into something, insecure, nervous wreck. But there are some skills you can learn to make it easier.

First impressions
In the moment of honesty: I'm going to come out and say this straight – I'm not a great first impression.



How do I? survive starting university?

If you're considering applying to or taking up a place at university later this year, the unknowns can be really worrying. Will you make friends? Will the course be right? Should you disclose your diagnosis? We asked an autistic journalist who started his course in the autumn to provide some top tips for beginning student life.

BY NICHOLAS FEARN

In September 2015, I faced one of the biggest challenges of my life: starting university. I had been preparing for this major step in my life for years, but due to the fact I'm diagnosed with a form of autism, I was worried I wouldn't be accepted or make any friends. For some students at University




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Don't limit this to content!



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The value of 'look and feel'

FEATURE • MY STORY

My story Alex and the Marshalls

Ten-year-old actor Alex Marshall is the young star of our *Too Much Information* film to show the public what a meltdown feels like. At the time of going to press, it had been watched over 40 million times. We asked Alex, his parents Kathryn and Ben, and his little brother Sam, to tell us about real-life meltdowns, and why the public needs to understand more about autism.

Alex "After the day of filming, physically I felt a bit tired, but it was awesome. It was like winning the lottery every 10 million times. My dream is to become an actor. That's the thing I most want to do when I'm older. And now it feels like I am the actor, it's amazing. The fact that there were actual cameras people filming it, actual actors, and a director. It felt professional and real and at the end of every take you have this amazing feeling because you've put everything in, and you're so pleased, it doesn't matter if you've smiled too much, or how bad it was – all that matter is that you've acted a take."

I like making films too. It's a way it's like acting but different. It's a way to watch films and get to know people. It can be challenging because my last and last movie production didn't really turn out that well, lots of people didn't really want to do it anymore, even people who had already acted in scenes – and that was a bit of a challenge for continuity. I ended up filming production on it. I know this sounds really childish, but my favourite film is probably *Star Wars: Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*. I watched it when I was six. I liked it then, but I watched it again when I was nine or ten and it blew me away."

I understood the tragedy in it. I'm a Star Wars fan now. I have to watch all the films, all the episodes, I've got a lot of the comics and I read the books."

MELTDOWNS AND WHAT THEY FEEL LIKE

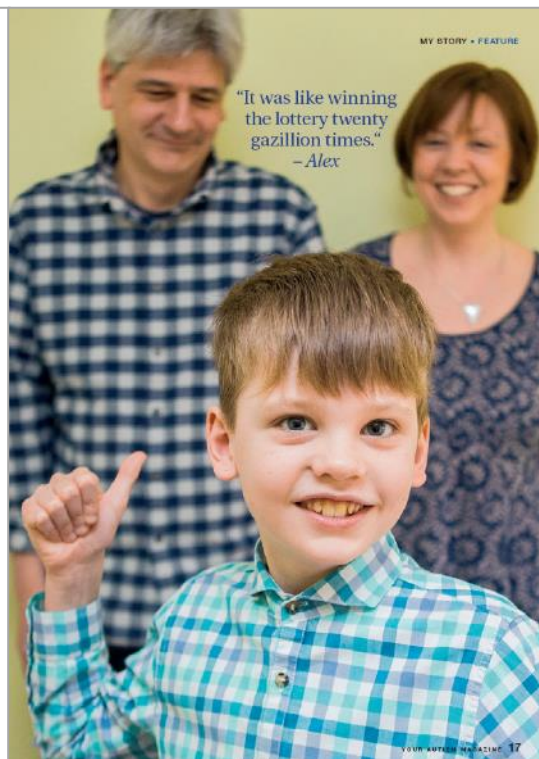
There are times when I need a lot of room. Sometimes this entire lounge may not be big enough. Sometimes someone breathing past me or your room drops to the barest minimum. It can be as bad as someone pushing past you. I don't fully know why I find it hard but I think it's an invasion of space and physical contact when I'm not expecting it and really don't want it. Sometimes it's not things that people do intentionally. I have this thing about babies making noise, I don't know why. I just don't like it. That can prove tricky because it can mean I don't want to do something that's planned, because the noise would mean it wouldn't be perfect. When I've been upset and I was going to do something, for me, being upset will have already ruined it. And then I'll get upset because I've missed my chance. And then I get more upset. So the reason I put me out, if I go ahead and do the thing I was going to do anyway, a lot of my effort largely has to be spent on keeping me from being upset. That's why I'll want to wait till I've calmed down. I don't want

to do something that I really enjoy to calm down, because a lot of that thing will then be wasted on stopping me being upset, and I'll progress in the chapter of the book, so in the level of the game that I like, but I won't get the full experience."

So instead, I get a comic and flick through it. I have different rules about comics as I do about lots of other things. Once you've read them as much as I have, they are familiar. Marvel is my favourite. There is some absolutely mind-blowing Marvel. Some are average. The thing with comics is sometimes I can find them boring sometimes I find them amazing."

ADVICE FOR LIFE

My advice for other people is that if you're upset, it's okay to storm off really angrily, but the important thing with that is the 'off' part. You need to remove yourself from the situation, and if there's anything you've got that you can read when you're upset to calm you down like I have my comics, you can do that. And it's okay to be in your room for two and a half hours doing your computer. I'd advise you not to come down off you're fully calm and fully ready to face the day again. If it takes three hours, that's fine. I'd also advise that if you have ideas for how people can help you to share them. Like making sure you →



"It was like winning the lottery twenty gazillion times."
– Alex

MY STORY • FEATURE

FEATURE • MY STORY

→ have the ability to stay in at play times. You don't have to do it all the time, but to have the option is good."

Kathryn and Ben:
K – Before Alex was diagnosed, things were really difficult at home and at school for a while.

B – Alex would have meltdowns. I remember sometimes there would be two and a half hours of real frustration. We used to have to sit outside his bedroom door and hold the door shut because he was so upset. On holiday once the transfer coach was overloaded with people. Alex just went into complete meltdown – from the coach to opening up for check in, it was dreadful.

K – I had to look Ben and myself in the camera's eye once because we needed to get away. It was definitely challenging. Aside from that, there was the lack of understanding. I remember going on holiday with my sister and her girls and wondering why Alex wasn't joining in so much, and looking him to be part of the children's group without really understanding that actually, he didn't want to be – and seeing now that, actually, that was fine!

EMBRACING THE DIAGNOSIS

K – Once Alex got the diagnosis, we took the decision that we wanted to embrace it. So quite quickly afterwards we talked to Alex about it. It probably didn't really sink in that much initially. And a probably wasn't until we got some support from the autism support unit who went into school to talk to them a bit more about it that it did start to sink in. It's been something that we've constantly talked about – we wanted it to be something that was them. And I think that's what has made it positive. When people know more, then when you get more understanding and support, it probably was a relief when we actually got the diagnosis. It helped us understand why Alex was behaving the way he was and to be able to explain it to other people.



Sam (bottom right) says, "I think it's great that Alex is doing TMI as he is being really positive and it will help people understand more about autism."

It, the more understanding we're getting.

ADVICE FOR OTHER PARENTS' POST-DIAGNOSIS

K – Reach out and get as much advice as possible. We looked at all the information on the website from The National Autistic Society which

really helped. We also asked the local branch. What's great about that is that, during that time when you're so alone and so desperate, you can get advice from other parents using the branch's Facebook page. But also people share tips about what's worked for them and places they've been to which are sometimes, so you can get lots of different ideas about what to do. We also went to an anger management session – and again just meeting other parents and knowing that although everyone is different, there are other people in your situation.

B – If you're ever going anywhere on a day out, send them an email or call them in advance to see what provision they can offer you. We've been to places like Blackpool Pleasure Beach where we got to jump every queue. It's also about considering things and realising there may be a reason why something you think is bad is happening, and trying work out a solution. Having a diagnosis really helped us to think about things in a different way. If it doesn't work, try something else but there will always be a solution. I think.

K – You don't suddenly crack it – it's constantly a learning curve, and reaching out to different resources is really important. →

Share your story

→ See Alex in the *Too Much Information* film and join the campaign at www.autism.org.uk/tmi.

→ Would you like to share your story? Email yourautismmagazine@nass.org.uk or write to Your Autism Magazine, The National Autistic Society, 390 City Road, London EC1Y 1NG, and we may feature you in a future issue.

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YOUR Autism MAGAZINE

www.autism.org.uk

VOL 50 - NO 2 • SUMMER 2016

Bonus
content online!
Find out more
inside

AUTISM AND EMPATHY

Why the
stereotype is
all wrong

TOM MORGAN
The rugby and
Undateables star
on growing up
undiagnosed

LEAVING
HOME
WHAT IS
POSITIVE
RISK?
I'M A...
CIRCUS
STAR

Changing the game

One family's efforts to
get a sensory room at
Sunderland FC

Why we're speaking out

Meet the Marshalls, stars
of our new campaign

The National
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YOUR Autism MAGAZINE

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VOL 49 - NO 4 • WINTER 2015

Bonus
content online!
Find out more
inside

GRAFFITI ARTIST STIK

how having
learning
difficulties
inspires
his art

ALSO IN
THIS ISSUE:
YOUR VIEWS
ON LANGUAGE
AUTISM AND
EPILEPSY
HOW HORSES
HELP ANXIETY

*Have you
heard of sport
stacking?*
Meet a world-
record holder!

LOUD
HANDS ARE
BETTER
THAN QUIET
HANDS

Stimming and
why it matters

"My life is just different"

James' story of late diagnosis

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MAGAZINE

VOL 48 • NO 3 • AUTUMN 2014

IT TAKES TWO

Finding love for Joe and James

'Think Autism' in reality

Norman Lamb MP answers your questions

ROUTES TO EMPLOYMENT

How work schemes can change lives

Temple Grandin, autism superstar

On bullying, special interests and success

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
WHAT IS PREVERBALISM?
I'M A RACING DRIVER!
HOW TO MANAGE A TRANSITION

YOUR Autism

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MAGAZINE

VOL 49 • NO 2 • SUMMER 2015

HOW WILL THE CARE ACT AFFECT ME?

Our expert on the key changes

"I learn because I'm alive"

Exploring new ideas and skills in adulthood

AUTISM-FRIENDLY SPACES

How good design can change lives



Sara and David's extraordinary family

Living with autism and cerebral palsy





Engaging your readers

Readers to the rescue!

DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM OUR READERS CAN SOLVE? GET IN TOUCH AND BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING WITH AUTISM.

For expert advice and information on money management issues, contact our Autism Welfare team. 0800 800 4104

Money management is a tricky skill

There is a guide to managing money written by people with autism on our website. This includes information on budgeting – including planner templates for you to download, advice on choosing and using bank accounts, saving, insurance, borrowing and debt, and your rights around money management. Go to www.autism.org.uk/managingmoney. If you want to talk to other parents or autistic adults about managing money, you can use our Parent to Parent service (0800 800 4104), go online to our community (community.autism.org.uk) and create a new discussion, or post on Facebook (www.facebook.com/YourAutismMagazine) or Twitter (@autism).

Help me next!

When I go to see my GP, they don't take my autism into account. This makes me really anxious and means I forget to bring up half the things I made the appointment for in the first place. Can anyone help?

Autistic adult

Post your problems or answers on Facebook (www.facebook.com/YourAutismMagazine) or email YourAutismMag@nas.org.uk or write to: Your Autism Magazine, The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG. By writing to us with either a problem or an answer, you give consent for your content to be published. We reserve the right to edit submissions.

Editorial note: Gellie is a family banking tool which consists of a prepaid debit card with parental controls. More information is available at www.gellie.co.uk.

Editorial note: The Nationwide FlexiCard account is a basic account for young people aged 16-17. There is an option for a cash card only, which allows the account holder to withdraw cash but not make card payments in shops or online. Find out more at www.nationwide.co.uk/teenage. Other high-street banks offer similar products.

YOUR AUTISM MAGAZINE 13

Giveaways

→ To win a copy of **Artistic Autistic Colouring Book: Precision colouring for the creative obsessive** by Peter Myers, email YourAutismMag@nas.org.uk with your name by 16 September 2016. The winner will be announced in the next issue.



SEND US YOUR SOLUTIONS

for this issue's problem for the **chance to win** a copy of



Sex, Drugs & Asperger Syndrome by Luke Jackson, as featured in February's issue.

→ Share your story

- Do you think you could do what David does? Find out about becoming a support worker at www.autism.org.uk/jobs
- Would you like to share your story about any aspect of living or working with autism? Please email YourAutismMag@nas.org.uk or write to **Your Autism Magazine**, The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG, and we may feature you in a future issue.

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Your Autism Magazine Facebook page



The screenshot shows the Facebook page for 'Your Autism Magazine'. The page header includes the name 'Your Autism Magazine' and a search bar. Below the header, there are navigation tabs: 'Page', 'Messages', 'Notifications', 'Insights', 'Publishing Tools', 'Settings', and 'Help'. The main content area features a large group photo of people, likely the magazine's team or contributors. To the left of the main photo is a smaller image of the magazine cover, which features a woman's face and the text 'YOUR Autism MAGAZINE'. Below the group photo, there is a post from 'Your Autism Magazine' dated September 15. The post text reads: 'Social media has revolutionised the way that people interact with one another. Facebook, with a staggering 1.65 billion users (more than the population of China), is one example of how it has taken the world by storm. For many autistic people, social media has also helped them find new ways to interact and communicate. Avinash Patel, Social Media Manager at our charity, argues as a text-based and visual form of communication, social media lends itself naturally to the autism... See More'. Below this text is a photo of a man in a green shirt sitting at a desk with a laptop. To the right of the main photo, there is another post from 'Your Autism Magazine' dated October 5. The post text reads: 'In November's Your Autism Magazine, you can read our exclusive interview with international Opera Singer, Sophia Grech, about her late diagnosis and the challenges she's overcome to become a professional singer. Become a member and read the full story in November's edition. Click here: <http://bit.ly/MembershipNAS>. Since training at the Royal College of Music, Sophia has sung for royalty, delivered masterclasses at leading universities and even had an invitation to perform a c... See More'. Below this text is a photo of a woman in a red dress performing on stage with an orchestra.

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Engage with other organisations

INTERVIEW • KELLY HUNTER

All the world's a stage

Kelly Hunter is an award-winning actor, director and educator. A performer for over 30 years with acclaimed theatre companies such as the RSC and Vesturport, she has been creating drama games for children with autism to improve their communication skills since 2002. This year she directed a production of *The Tempest* for children with autism as part of a longitudinal research study into the

BY ELEANOR WHEELER



2 SPECTRUM SPLASHTIME, BRIDGEND BRANCH

On Sunday
afternoons,

this relaxed pool session is for autistic children and siblings. With water games and floats, there are also lessons available from a parent coach.

Find out more at bit.ly/2aeXy3v



3 AUTISM KIDZ CLUB, RENFREWSHIRE BRANCH

Every other
Saturday at 11am-

1pm in Paisley, this group offers arts, crafts, sporting activities, games, baking, toys and other interests. It's a good social opportunity for children and their parents too.

To find out more, email NASRenfrewshireBranch@nas.org.uk.

→ We'd like to hear about your experiences of diagnosis.

- How long were you waiting?
- Where were you signposted to for help afterwards?
- What advice would you give to others going through a diagnosis at the moment?

Email your answer to

YourAutismMag@nas.org.uk by

16 September 2016 and you'll be entered into a free draw to win some Something Special and Woolly and Tig goodies,


donated by



*Read full terms and conditions at www.autism.org.uk

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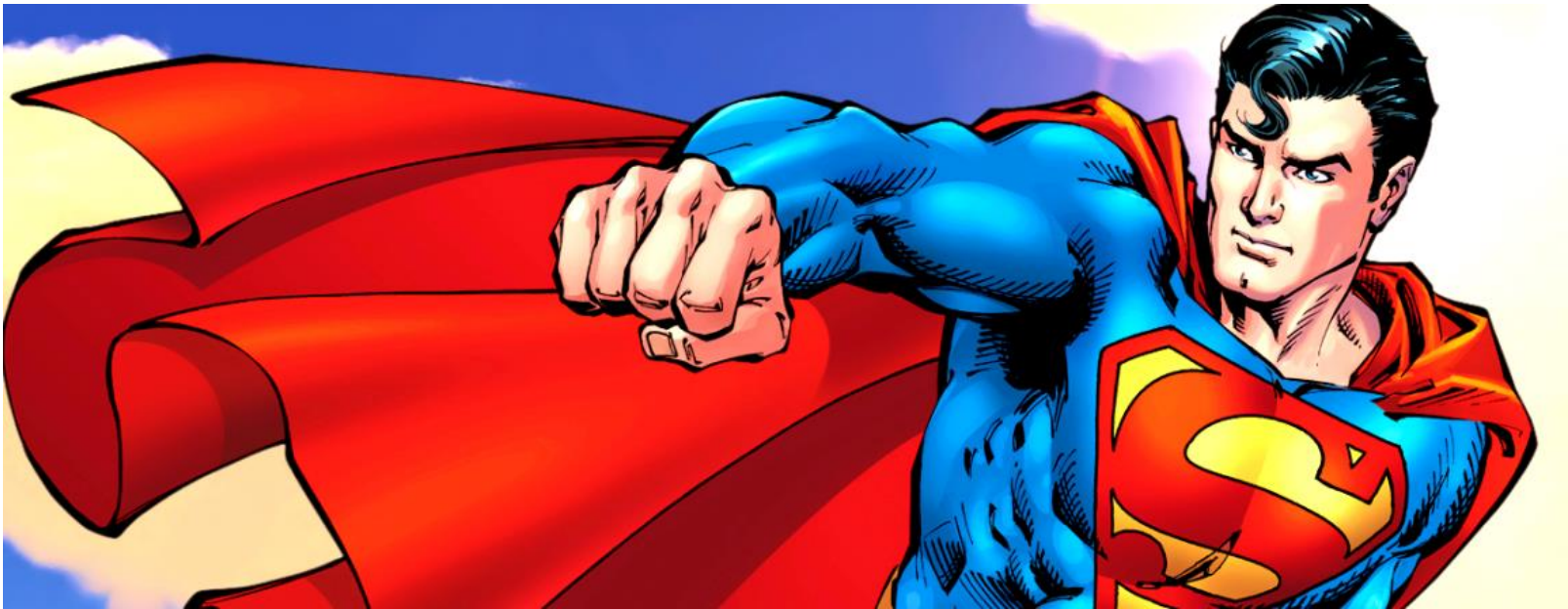
Five top tips



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Five top tips

1. Aim high and use your charity status



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Five top tips

2. Make it everyone's magazine



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Five top tips

3. Use your digital offering intelligently



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Five top tips

4. Don't be ruled by the \$\$\$



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Five top tips

5. Splash your celebrities!



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Any questions?

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eleanor.wheeler@nas.org.uk



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