



**RESEARCH AUTISM**

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

The Research Autism/Lorna Wing series  
of conferences and seminars presents

## Seeing the light – or ticking the box?

**Current developments in thinking around the concept of autism:  
classification; screening; diagnosis  
and implications for research and intervention**

**A national conference**



### **Date and time**

**Tuesday 2nd November 2010 – 8.30 am to 4.30 pm**

### **Venue**

**Church House Conference Centre, Deans Yard, Westminster, London SW1P 3NZ**

Conference bookings: Sarah Chivers  
email: [events@researchautism.net](mailto:events@researchautism.net) Tel. 0117 974 8401

Media enquiries: Atia Islam Talukder  
email: [press@researchautism.net](mailto:press@researchautism.net) Tel. 07976 704 025

## Aims

*"We still do not know what autism is, or to be more precise what the 'autisms' are"*

*'There are very few positive published trials in autism, for behavioural interventions, traditional pharmacotherapy, or complementary/alternative therapies. Is this due to non efficacious treatments, lack of sensitive outcome measures, or heterogeneity of autism - or perhaps all three?'*

Lancet June 2010

At a time when the classification systems relating to autism are under review, the conference will debate the true 'nature' of autism or 'the autisms' and what this means for research, diagnosis, intervention and entitlement to services and support.

### The conference will explore

- Proposed changes to autism classification systems
- The latest developments in neuroscience
- Screening and diagnostic practices
- The efficacy of treatment approaches
- The impact of sensory differences

### This conference is for

- Clinicians and researchers
- Health and social care professionals
- Staff in independent and voluntary sectors
- Individuals with ASC
- Families and carers of individuals with ASC
- Journalists and other media representatives
- Government representatives.

# Programme

- 08.30 Registration and coffee**
- 09.30 Welcome from Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, lead of the Bercow Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs.**
- 09.40 Introduction of Chair**  
*Richard Mills, Research Director, Research Autism*
- 09.45 Chair's opening. An overview of the topic and the day**  
*Dr Lorna Wing, Consultant Psychiatrist, National Autistic Society, Founding Trustee, Research Autism*
- 10.00 Can we use biology to diagnose autism?**  
Current developments in neuroscience  
*Dr Christine Ecker, Department of Forensic and Neurodevelopmental Science, Institute of Psychiatry, London*
- 10.30 Why do some treatments seem to work with some children but not others?**  
*Professor Patricia Howlin, Institute of Psychiatry, Joint Chair of Scientific & Advisory Committee, Research Autism*
- 11.00 Break**
- 11.30 Autism in adults**  
The pro's and con's  
*Professor Digby Tantam, University of Sheffield*
- 12.00 Diagnosis and treatment of adults**  
Do we have the tools - or the means?  
*Professor Terry Brugha, University of Leicester, Scientific & Advisory Committee and Research Autism*
- 12.30 Lunch**
- 13.30 What's in a name?**  
Current developments in the revision of classification systems – and implications for research, practice and eligibility for support,  
*Professor Ann LeCouteur, University of Newcastle, Scientific & Advisory Committee, Research Autism*
- 14.30 How useful is early screening?**  
Evaluation of the Q Chat Project,  
*Dr Carrie Allison & Dr Greg Pascoe, University of Cambridge*
- 15.00 Break**
- 15.30 Concepts of autism**  
Professor Simon Baron Cohen, Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge & Adviser to Research Autism
- 16.00 Is autism a sensory disorder?**  
How common are sensory differences and how important? A systematic study of the sensory profile of children with autism and implications for their education and treatment,  
*Dr Michael McCreadie, Deputy Principal, Daldorck House School, The National Autistic Society, Scotland*
- 16.30 Chairs closing remarks and close of conference**  
*Dr Lorna Wing*

## Autism

The term autistic spectrum conditions (ASC) is used to describe a range of complex neurodevelopmental conditions present from birth or early life. The characteristics of ASC vary considerably but essentially affect instinctive social behaviour and communication. Although individuals may have many strengths, as a consequence of lack of recognition and support they may experience severe stress, bullying, isolation and a failure to achieve academic qualifications and other potential. ASC's are now widely recognised in boys but much less in girls. The causes of autism are not known. Genetic factors are important. There are a host of treatments and other interventions but very few have been systematically evaluated. Over half a million children and adults in the UK are known to have autistic spectrum conditions.

## Research Autism

Research Autism's sole focus is on interventions in autism. We were established as an independent charity with the support of the National Autistic Society to address concerns of its members about the dearth of high quality scientific research in this area. Working with individuals with ASC and with Cambridge University as our research sponsor, we have the active support of eminent figures from the world of autism; they give their time for free. Our web-based information service, through which we disseminate research findings, attracts over 25,000 visitors a month.

## Research projects

Research Autism is committed to a programme of research that is important to the autism community that will improve quality of life and support social inclusion.

## Booking Conditions

Every effort will be made to adhere to the programme as advertised. However the organisers reserve the right to make changes due to unforeseen circumstances. We regret there can be no refunds due to such changes.

No refunds can be made in the event of a delegate's cancellation or circumstances of events beyond Research Autism's control such as disruption of transport or acts of terrorism. Should a delegate be unable to attend, they may nominate another delegate in their place subject to permission from [events@researchautism.net](mailto:events@researchautism.net).

Cover photo with thanks to Luke Jackson ©



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Research Autism, Church House, Church Road, Filton, Bristol BS34 7BD

Tel: 020 8292 8900 Email: [info@researchautism.net](mailto:info@researchautism.net)

Website [www.researchautism.net](http://www.researchautism.net)

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