

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

Computers and autism – a blessing or a curse?



Date and time

Thursday 24 November 2011 8.30 am – 4.30 pm

Venue

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

Conference bookings: Sarah Chivers
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The conference will explore

- New developments in computer based technologies as they relate to autism
- Applications that benefit individuals with specific difficulties in communication, social skills and organisation
- How technologies fit with the potential strengths and opportunities for development in autism, and with deficits and potential problems
- Practical strategies and policies that promote benefit and reduce harm
- Case studies of individuals who have benefitted from these new technologies as well as those who have not
- Offending behaviours that may be related to the misuse of computers

This conference is for

- Clinicians and researchers
- Education professionals
- Health professionals
- Social care professionals
- Criminal justice professionals
- The police
- Legal professionals
- Clinicians and researchers
- The IT industry
- Individuals with autism
- Families and carers of individuals with autism
- Journalists and other media representatives
- Government representatives

Programme

- 08.30** **Registration and coffee**
- 09.15** **Morning session.**
The current state of the art. Panacea or Pandora's Box?
Welcome from Deepa Korea, Chief Executive of Research Autism and introduction of Chairs
- 09.30** **Chair's opening. An overview of the topic and the day**
Lorna Wing, Consultant Psychiatrist, National Autistic Society and Trustee of Research Autism, and Richard Mills, Research Director, Research Autism and Director of Research, National Autistic Society
- 09.45** **How computers can help the more severely affected individual with autism.**
Thoughts on new developments and applications
Dinah Murray, Head of Outreach
- 10.15** **Using Facebook as a tool of developing communication and social skills of young adults with ASD**
Janja Kranjc, Psychologist, Center for Autism Slovenia
- 10.45** **Break and networking**
- 11.10** **Does hand held technology improve independence? Helping young people with Asperger syndrome and high functioning autism navigate life's highways. The 'HANDS' project. An evaluation of multi site EU research collaboration**
Joseph Mintz, Principal Lecturer and UK HANDS Coordinator, London South Bank University, and Miklos Gyori, Associate Professor at ELTE University, Budapest, and lead research psychologist at Autism Foundation, Budapest; Cognitive Psychology lead for HANDS
- 11.45** **Translating theory into good practice; a whole school approach to the ethics, practicalities, advantages and pitfalls related to the use of computer technology in autism during and after school, and into adult life**
Jacqui Ashton Smith, Executive Head of Helen Allison & Robert Ogden Schools, The National Autistic Society
- 12.30** **Questions**
- 12.45** **Lunch and networking**
Afternoon session - Exploring risk and vulnerability
- 14.00** **How might computers contribute to offending behaviour in adults with autism? And what to do about it**
Case studies and discussion
David Murphy Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Broadmoor Hospital
- 14.45** **The internet: a comfortable place for communication for people on the autistic spectrum?**
Penny Benford, Research Fellow, the University of Nottingham
- 15.30** **Questions and plenary**
- 15.45** **Chair's concluding comments**
Lorna Wing and Richard Mills
- 16.00** **Networking**

The term autistic spectrum conditions (ASC) is used to describe a range of complex neurodevelopmental conditions present from birth or early life. The characteristics vary considerably but essentially affect instinctive social behaviour and communication.

Although individuals with ASC may have great strengths, they may also fail to achieve their academic and other potential and experience severe stress, bullying, and social isolation. The causes are not known although genetic factors are important in some forms of autism.

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 thought 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 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 the most eminent figures from the world of autism. Our web-based information service, through which we disseminate research findings, continues to attract thousands of visitors each month.

Research projects

Research Autism is committed to working with the whole autism community on a programme of research that will improve quality of life and will support wellbeing and social inclusion.

Please note

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.

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