

# SPECTRUM

## AUTISM NEWSLETTER

### WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY EDITION



For World Autism Awareness Day the organisation invited people to raise awareness of autism across its services.

This newsletter celebrates the creative ways in which people raised the understanding of autism in their area.

A thank you also goes out to the other services who carried out autism knowledge quizzes with their staff teams.

### Rutherglen and Cambuslang SLS



Staff member John and Sarah were sponsored to **dye their hair electric blue** for World Autism Day.

There was also a Pet Zoo, a Great British Autism Bake off, a karaoke cabin and massage therapy.

### The First Good Autism Practice Group

On April 2nd, World Autism Awareness Day, **the first Good Autism Practice Group** was launched at head office in Steps. The decision was made to hold four sessions over the course of the year as a celebration of the diversity and individuality of the individuals that we support on the Autism Spectrum. The primary purpose of these sessions is to increase knowledge and to share good practice amongst our managers of autism services.

The first session covered **Sensory Differences and Autism Spectrum Disorders**. 20 Senior Support Workers, Team Managers and Area Managers attended to partake in the learning event and to share their experience of working with sensory differences in their own services. Tia Martin (Behaviour Support Advisor Autism) gave a general presentation on the ways in which sensory differences can affect individuals on the spectrum.

We would like to thank **Rona Dickie and Iona Howells** for presenting on their own experience and sharing their knowledge with the rest of the group.

**The next session will take place in June and will cover 'Transitions and the Autism Spectrum'.**



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## Dumfries Services

We held our first autism awareness day in the Urban Sanctuary on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April. We had a lecture from Dr Patricia Mactier (or Trisha to us) on the seven senses within the Autism Spectrum Condition. Trisha is an individual who is supported by The Richmond Fellowship Scotland and she volunteers her time at the project, mostly Saturdays running a craft group.

**Trisha gave a lecture that covered all the seven senses**, the five traditionally recognised, which are sound, sight, touch, smell and taste, and the two least known senses which are vestibular (movement) and proprioception (body, spatial awareness). The lecture lasted around two hours and was attended by individuals we support, staff, family and friends.

Although the room was small there were no seats left and people standing as far back into the corridor. Trisha did a fantastic presentation giving everyone the opportunity to give input and ask questions.

After Trisha's lecture we had a small break for tea and cakes, and then Hayley, a support worker with The Richmond Fellowship Scotland, gave an **interactive demonstration as to what it would be like to walk in the shoes of someone living with autism**. Hayley covered all the seven senses making each activity fun and informative, making us think what individuals with autism experience in their day to day living.

The feedback from the day has been very positive with people expressing that they had learnt something from the day and it had given them a better understanding of what it is like to live with autism.



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#### South Ayrshire

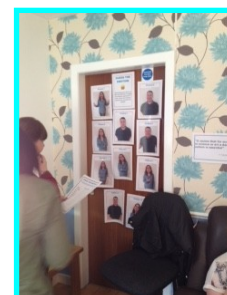
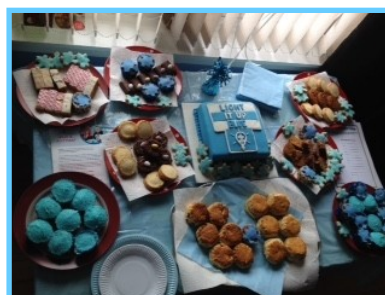
To mark World Autism Awareness Day the Ayr service arranged a **concert and raffle** in the local bowling club.

The music was provided by Mark Bennie's daughter Charlene. The concert raised £211 for TRFS autism specific services.

Special thanks to Mark, Charlene, Janine and Wendy for making the day possible.



#### Dunfermline Services



Dunfermline Services held a **coffee morning** to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day.

There was a great selection of home baking and a specially made autism jigsaw cake.

There was an autism emotion quiz to take part in while eating cake and everyone who attended the event wore blue.



#### The Keep On Moving Group



The Keep on Moving group put a Glasgow twist on the Frozen **musical** by performing their own version - Baltic.

A raffle also took place during the event.



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## Blackford Service

World Autism Day was celebrated by Blackford Service on 1st April. This was great success where supported individuals from across Renfrewshire, their families and staff members came along. On the day we had an **Interactive Room, Sensory Room and Communication Room**. We encouraged everyone to experience what it is like for someone with autism who has heightened sensory differences to participate in communication games using an ipad and learning about social stories.

In the Interactive Room everyone was encouraged to try out the taste table, the sound table, smell table and also the touch table. This was very successful and everyone seemed to enjoy the hands on experience and some got in a bit of a mess with the foam and gloop.

The biggest success of the day was the Sensory Room, which was full of homemade sensory items which were created by supported Individuals and staff from the Blackford Service. Everyone who entered the room spent a considerable amount of time relaxing and experiencing the calm and tranquillity of the room. It appeared that the ambience of the room rubbed off on everyone who entered as everyone relaxed on the beanbags on the floor, blowing bubbles and enjoying the silence. There was soft mood lighting and classical music playing in the background. The Sensory room experience was so successful that people were reluctant to leave at the end of the day.



The right choice for support

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### Wishaw Services

A fun time was had by all between the home baking stall, tombola, raffle, beat the goalie and lots of pampering.

**We raised £175** that will be donated to 'HOPE for Autism', a charity that makes a positive difference to the lives of people affected by Autism.

### North Regional Office

The North Regional office held an **open day** with autism quizzes and tests, interactive communication tools and home baking.

### North Ayrshire



The staff, supported individuals, their families and carers enjoyed **coffee and cake** at the North

Ayrshire Office for World Autism Day.

There was also a chance to take part in raffles and prize draws.

### Cherry Tree Court

**Cherry Tree Court Service Lights up for Autism**, for staff and people we support.

Events included wearing blue for autism and a blue disco in the evening.

