Attending a Cygnet programme?

Under the Employment Act 2002 (parental leave), parents of disabled children are entitled to 18 weeks’ unpaid leave to care for their children. Parents must have worked for their employer for at least 100 days prior to taking leave and give 21 days’ notice of leave.

If you would like to attend a programme and are currently in employment, you may wish to talk through this legislation with your employer, to enable you to have time off to attend Cygnet.

For further information, please refer to the Working Families website: www.workingfamilies.org.uk or telephone 0800 013 0313

I would like to come, what do I do now?

To book a place on the Cygnet course, please contact the Neurodevelopmental Team on 01773 777 939

Peterborough Neurodevelopmental Team
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
Winchester Place
80 Thorpe Road
Peterborough
PE3 6AP

Out-of-hours service for CPFT service users

CPFT has an out-of-hours telephone service for service users and carers.
This is: 0800 052 22 52
Mondays to Fridays from 5pm to 8pm; Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays from 8am to 8pm.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides service users, their carers and families with help, information and support to resolve concerns quickly and efficiently around mental health issues.

To contact PALS: T 01223 726774 or freephone 0800 376 0775 (office hours)
A confidential e-mail service is also available at: pals@cpft.nhs.uk

Leaflet published November 2014
Leaflet review date: November 2015
What is the Cygnet programme?

Cygnet is a parenting support programme for parents and carers of children and young people ages 7-18 with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).

What are the aims of Cygnet?

• To empower parents/carers
• To increase understanding of the strengths and difficulties associated with ASD
• To increase parents’ confidence in understanding and managing their child’s behaviour

Where and when does the programme run?

The group is held at the City Care Centre in Thorpe Road, Peterborough. Sessions last approximately 2.5 hours each and run on a weekly basis for five weeks. Parents and carers are expected to attend all five sessions. If needed, a sixth week will be offered - however, attendance is optional.

Who runs the programme?

The Cygnet programme is run by local professionals who have experience and knowledge of ASDs.

Parents comments from previous courses

“Fantastic! Really enjoyable and helpful!“

“Our biggest problems are related to behaviour so understanding our son’s behaviour properly is a very big step!“

“This has given me the tools to help with my child’s communication“

“I can now identify my child’s sensory issues and have an idea of practical strategies“

“The support of other group members is really valuable“

“All aspects of the course were really helpful“

"It was really helpful to listen and learn from others, and to realise that we’re not on our own"

What does Cygnet cover?

Session 1: Autism and diagnosis
• Introduction to the group
• Background to the group
• Aims
• Content
• Introduction to ASDs
• What is it like to be autistic?
• Experience of the diagnosis

Session 2: Communication
• Why and how do we communicate?
• Communication in ASDs
• Strategies to aid communication
• Social stories - what they are, how to use them
• Comic strips - what they are, how to use them

Session 3: Sensory issues
• What are the senses?
• What do we use them for?
• Types of sensory issues in ASDs
• Associated behaviour
• Strategies to help

Session 4: Understanding behaviour
• Types and functions of all behaviour
• Behaviour and autism
• Underlying difficulties behind the behaviour (iceberg principle)

Session 5: Managing behaviour
• Using the information (iceberg principle)
• Analysing and managing behaviour (STAR analysis)
• Key strategies
• Management strategies

Session 6: Optional session if needed - topic decided by parents