



Zone-Info!

The-Zone! newsletter, for families with additional needs

www.The-Zone.org.uk

Issue 5

June - September 2015

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(please leave a short
message and she will
get back to you.)

Teen Zone

Carol or Nikki
(as above)

[www.facebook.com/
TheZoneASD](http://www.facebook.com/TheZoneASD)

Twitter: #The-Zone!

AGM date set!

In order to hold a special needs friendly AGM we have hired the whole of Run-About, Laser-Run and Ignition on Saturday 26th September, 5.30 - 7.30pm. The plan is that the main focus of the session is fun for the children and at the same time we need parents/carers to read through our annual report and let us know if you're happy for us to continue running as we are. You will be given a feedback sheet to provide us with any comments or suggestions for ways we can improve what we do.



Money matters

We were successful with our application for HCC Short Breaks funding for 2015/16 but we know that we won't be so lucky again next year. Please take the time to look at the HPCN/Parent Voice survey on page 7.

We have been fortunate to receive a Hampshire County Councillor Grant from Mark Staplehurst, which we are using to fund the bouncy castle at each of our Fun Zone sessions over the Summer and more Teen events later in the year - so once again a huge thanks from our Zone families! One of our new Dads, Michael Jackson, with Starbucks in Sainsbury's in Water Lane is pedalling to raise funds for The-Zone! on Tuesday 23rd June! Please do go along and show your support on the day!

Facebook

We have a busy Facebook page that is for anyone who is interested in what we do. To sign-up to it simply go to www.facebook.com/TheZoneASD and click on the "Like" button.



If you are a parent of a child or young person on the autistic spectrum or with similar issues or additional needs, then you may join our closed Facebook group (only members within the group can see what you post) at www.facebook.com/groups/TheZone2014

All of our Zone-In and Zone-Out events are always listed in the group too, so it's well worth joining if you can.

www.the-zone.org.uk

Our website is kept up to date, so please do check it and the calendar to make sure events are running as planned before you attend.

Events!

Zone-In! is based within the grounds of Samuel Cody Specialist Sports College,
Ballantyne Road, Farnborough, GU14 8SS

Parents/carers remain responsible for their children at all of our sessions & events.

*** Please encourage your child to tidy away whatever they've played with or return it to the room it came from. ***

Zone-In! sessions

This is the name for all sessions we hold at The-Zone! We will have all of our indoor equipment; games consoles (XboxOne, PS4, PS3, Wii's, Xbox360, handheld games; PSPs, PSvita, DSIs, 3DSs) laptops, Ipads, Android tablets, arts, crafts and beads, Lego, Duplo, wooden train track and HappyLand sets. We have plenty of tea, coffee and juice available throughout the sessions.



Saturday Zone

One Saturday each month, 10am - 3pm. The cost is £3.50 per child/£10 per family and you are very welcome to bring along a packed lunch and stay for the whole session. We have the outdoor space whenever the weather allows!

Fun Zone

Just like our Saturday Zones, but on Wednesdays during half-terms and school holidays, 10am - 3pm. The cost will be £3.50 per child/£10 per family and you're are welcome to bring a packed lunch with you.



Make sure you take a look at the attached events flyer for dates of our Zone-In! and Zone-Out! activities over the Summer.

Booking your places at Zone-In! and Zone-Out! events

You are now able to book and pay for your event places via our website, www.The-Zone.org.uk (simply click on "Events" and the "Event bookings") and then you simply pay via Paypal. Alternatively, just use the attached booking form.



Hampshire
County Council

Hampshire funded activities!

Huge thanks to Hampshire Short Breaks funding as without their support we couldn't run these sessions!



Please remember our Zone Rules are available on our website - you are responsible for your children at all of our activities and you must supervise them at all times!

Gateway Cards

If your child lives in Hampshire or attends a Hampshire school and you haven't got a Hampshire Gateway Card please complete a form at www.hants.gov.uk/gatewaycard or ask us for a form at The-Zone! To view activities available across Hampshire to Gateway card holders, go to www.hampshiregateway.info Once you have your card, please let us know your Gateway card number.



Teen Zone!

Teen Zone-In!

These sessions are especially for those aged 11 years and over who want to come along and socialise with those who are a similar age. On one Friday each month, 6 - 9pm we will have all the Zone-In equipment! You may bring 12+ rated games but they must be approved by a committee member FIRST. The cost will be £2.50 per child. Parents need to stay at these sessions but it's a great opportunity to talk to others who understand life with a teen on the spectrum.

The tuck shop is back! We have a selection of cans, chocolate and sweets; the plan is that the pricing will be as simple as possible to make it easy for all our teens.

Teens @ Fun Zones and Saturday Zones

At each of our Fun and Saturday Zone sessions, there will now be a room for the teens too! This means the teens can still play their games etc. without the younger members around them.

Teen Zone-Out!

These events need to be almost completely self-funding activities (but there is some funding on its way!) To start 2015 the way we intend to continue, we have booked the following events for Teen Zone-Out fun but please do let us know if you have any other ideas for activities we should try - anything to get our teens to leave the house and even socialise!

As always, if cost is an issue please talk to Nikki and we will try to help, but make no promises.

Teen Zone-In!

Friday 19th June, 6 - 9pm
Friday 17th July, 6 - 9pm
Friday 25th September, 6 - 9pm

We'll be there, with all our usual equipment including some additional games that are 12+ rated. We'll have the tuck shop again (but food and drink need to be consumed in the main communal area).
Come and join us!

June Teen Zone-Out!

Aerobility

Friday 26th June 2015
6 - 8pm

at Aerobility, Blackbushe Airport.
Places are £10 per teen and are limited.

This is currently **fully booked**
but get in touch if you're interested
as we can repeat it!

July Teen Zone-Out! Sugar rush at Creams!

Friday 31st July 2015
12pm
at Creams in Park Street, Camberley
(outside of The Atrium)
We're heading to Creams for a sugar rush!
No need to book, just turn up and join us
and pay for whatever you eat.

Find the The-Zone teens group on FB
www.facebook.com/groups/TheZoneTeens/

If we manage to organise any additional Teen Zone-Out! events for over the Summer, they will be posted in the FB group, so it really is worth joining to keep up to date!



Useful info!

Afasic

Afasic supports parents and represents children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). You can ring the helpline on 0300 666 9410 during their opening hours:

9.15am - 2.30pm - Monday and Tuesday & 10.30am - 2.30pm - Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. If you cannot get in touch during these hours, you can send an email using the online enquiry form via their website www.afasic.org.uk



Fledglings

Fledglings is a national charity which aims to assist parents and carers of disabled children, or those with additional needs of any kind, by identifying, sourcing and supplying practical, affordable products to address every day issues. It really is well worth taking a look to see what they have.



Autism Friendly Screenings

More cinemas are now running these special screenings including Odeon (Basingstoke), Cineworld (Aldershot) & Vue (Farnborough):

- Cineworld at 11am on the 1st Sunday of the month.
- ODEON at 11.30am on the last Sunday of every month.
- Vue at 10am on the last Sunday of the month.

The lights will stay on low, the volume is lowered, there are no trailers at the beginning of the film, you can take your own food & drinks and you're able to move around if you need to.

There's more information and downloadable social stories available at: www.dimensions-uk.org or you can talk to staff at your local participating cinema.

To sign-up for the Dimensions Autism friendly newsletter, go to www.dimensions-uk.org/support-services/autism-care/autism-friendly-screenings/#News



Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card

This national card that is awarded to the child/person (aged 8 years or older) with a disability, that entitles them to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. To be able to apply, the cardholder must have proof of one of the following criteria:

- Be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance
- Be in receipt of Personal Independence Payment
- Be a registered blind person

You will need to complete a form (this can be done online at the CEA website or you can print a copy out and post it to them), you will also need a passport sized photo and a proof of entitlement document. The card costs £6 and is valid for 1 year.

For more info or to apply for a card, go to www.ceacard.co.uk or call 023 9224 8545.



Shoe laces!

If shoe laces are a problem but velcro is not an option, try looking at these alternatives -

Greeper laces are designed to replace ordinary laces and never come undone again!

They are easily tightened or loosened without loose ends to be tripped over. Go to www.greeper.com they are £7.50 per pair.

Self tying shoe laces are simply coiled elastic laces that do not require tying. Available from various places including www.ggfootcare.co.uk for £3 a pair plus minimal p&p costs.



Swimming for £1

During the Summer holidays and October half-term swimming is available for just £1 at Farnborough Leisure Centre and Aldershot indoor pools (not the Lido). Available within the "All Welcome" and "Family Fun Sessions" up to 4pm weekdays and 6pm weekends. Registration is required (one off fee of £2 per child). The form must be completed and taken into the centre by a parent/ guardian (18+). For more info and to download a form, go to www.placesforpeopleleisure.org (The scheme only runs in Hampshire school holidays)



Community Access Project

The Community Access Project maybe able to help you if you are an adult (18 - 65yrs), live in the Aldershot, Farnborough or Fleet area and are experiencing mental distress.

Contact with the project is not time limited and remember that once help is no longer needed, you are very welcome to contact them again at any time should you need to.

If you have no professional support or are a carer for somebody in this position, please go to the website below. The project is funded by Broadhurst Welcome Home Community Trust.

For more information, go to www.rvs.org.uk/community_access-project.htm

Alternatively, email broadhurstcap@hotmail.co.uk or call 07894 606244.

BROADHURST

Your local mental health charity



NAS North Hampshire Branch

The NAS Basingstoke Branch has now become the NAS North Hampshire Branch, following on from recent their AGM. They are expanding to cover the areas of Hampshire not currently covered by the South Hampshire Branch and the Alton & Bordon Branch (they are not operating strict boundaries between branches and people are welcome to be members of multiple branches). For more information, go to www.nasbb.org.uk where you can complete a registration form.



Radar Keys for disabled toilets

The National Key Scheme offers independent access by disabled people to around 7,000 locked public toilets around the UK. If your child has a disability, you are entitled to use these toilets or if your older child is still in nappies or doesn't get much notice that they need the toilet and cannot wait in a queue.

They are available free of charge from your local council offices (you may need to complete a form with all your details) if you have a diagnosis letter to show your child is entitled, or you can purchase one from The-Zone! for just £2.50 (this is great if you need a second key for another carer). Just ask us at any of The-Zone! sessions. For more information about the scheme, go to www.radar.org.uk



Short Breaks & playschemes

Disability Challengers

Our nearest play and youth schemes are based at their centres in Farnham and are great fun for those aged 4yrs+. Challengers also run family fun Sundays at the playcentre, for families to go and play, the cost is £4 per child and siblings are welcome.



On the last Saturday of each month Challengers host a fun swim session at Guildford Spectrum, the suggested donation is £2 per swimmer.

For more info, go to www.disability-challengers.org for details of everything Challengers do.

Great Opportunities! Club

GO! Club is open to those with mild to moderate learning difficulties and disabilities, along with their siblings. These sessions are to provide parents/carers with some respite time. The cost is £5 per person at each session.

The Fleet club for those aged 8 - 18 years and the Fleet Mini's is for 3 - 8 years. Both clubs are held upstairs (there is a lift!) at Hart Leisure Centre, 2.30pm - 4.30pm, every other Saturday during term-time.

The Aldershot club for those aged 5 - 18 yrs, at Connaught Leisure Centre on Thursday's 4 - 6pm.

The Basingstoke club is for those aged 8 - 18 years and the Basingstoke Mini's is for 3 - 7 years.

Both are held at the Everest Community Academy on alternate Saturday's, 2 - 4pm.

For more info, go to www.greatopportunities.org.uk or call 01256 636288.



Parent Action Group for special play

PAG is a local charity for families with disabled children in the Rushmoor and surrounding area, working to create more and better play opportunities, including the provision of dance, drama and music workshops.

MADD Drama Club: an experienced drama tutor will engage children and young people in drama games and productions. For ages 5 - 18yrs. On Tuesdays 5.30 - 6.30pm at Princes Hall, Aldershot.

MADD Dance Club: a dance tutor, in an informal environment, on Thursday's 5.30 - 7pm at WestEnd Centre, Aldershot.

For more info about their MADD Music sessions which are held at the Rock & Pop Foundation and Mini MADD sessions, get in touch with them.

Contact Ann Evans for more details on events, on 01252 837112 or info@pagforspecialplay.co.uk



Parkside

Parkside in Aldershot run several different clubs and schemes funded by Hampshire Short Breaks, so if your child has a Gateway Card do look into them if you feel they might be suitable.

Saturday Scene for those aged 6 - 11yrs on alternate Saturdays, 10am - 12.30pm.

Summer Playscheme runs for 5 weeks of the Summer holidays, for those aged 6 - 19yrs.

After School Club on Mondays from 3.30pm to 7pm.

Our Space for young people aged 12 - 16 years, fortnightly on a Saturday, 9.30am until 12.30pm.

They also offer other services for families, go to their website for more info,

www.parksidealdershot.co.uk/Childrens-Services.html or give them a call on 01252 313103.



Hampshire Parent Carer Network and Parent Voice:

HPCN & Parent Voice recently sent out this call to action, below is a snippet of the info, for the full details, go to www.hpcn.org.uk

Many of you will recall the situation last year when Hampshire County Council consulted on cuts to the Short Breaks for Disabled Children Budget, reducing it by almost £2 million. Earlier this year, it was announced that the cuts to the Short Breaks service would not be made in 2015/16 and that funding would be found to sustain the budget as a "one-off".

We have also been informed that a further Short Breaks consultation is likely to be launched in September 2015. We have shown that your voice does make a difference and we therefore make this appeal for a further Call to Action. Please take the time to complete the Spending Review consultation which can be found here www.hants.gov.uk/spendingreviewsurvey. It is vital that families with disabled children participate in this consultation so that our views are heard. You can complete the survey online or you can ask for a printed copy to be sent to you.

We appreciate that your time is precious. Please be aware that it is not compulsory to answer all questions within the consultation, but the following are particularly important:

- The question about County Council Services, asking you to choose the most important 5 services
 - The question about raising Council Tax
 - The question about using reserves (County Council savings) to support services
 - The question about Children's Services which asks you to rank potential ways of saving money from this budget
 - The question entitled Budget Priorities - Summing Up which asks again about use of reserves and increased Council Tax to reduce the amount of savings needed from departmental budget
 - You are given the opportunity to comment on any impact of the proposed cuts
 - You are asked for general comments on how the County Council should prioritise the budget
- It would appear that the survey allows more than one response per IP address, so please encourage other members of your household to complete the survey.

It is clear that the level of cuts proposed would impact on the whole range of services delivered, from specialist schemes to individual support and the Buddy Service. There is also a very real possibility of a new eligibility criteria to access short breaks which will mean only the few can access. There are proposed cuts in many service areas so it is important that our voices are heard above the rest. Please take the time to complete this Spending Review survey as soon as you can, and encourage friends and family to do so as well. We will keep you informed of any future developments.



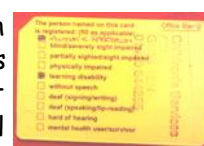
Centre Act

A fun, friendly drama club for children aged 9 to 14 years with learning difficulties, including AS. Tuesday's 18.15 to 19.30 at The Yateley Centre, School Lane, Yateley, GU46 6NW.



Hampshire yellow cards

A yellow card is sent to you when you register your child as disabled with Hampshire County Council. It gives a very brief description of your child's special needs and some places accept it as proof of disability/entitlement to get a carers pass at events or attractions. To obtain a free card for your child, call 0845 603 5620.



Sensory Issues

Does your child seek out sensory stimulation or do they prefer to avoid it as much as they possibly can? Here are some ideas of things that just might help them with their daily life...

Fidget toys

These are a great tactile way to keep fingers busy and help reduce stress. They can be really useful on long car journeys or in school assemblies when a child is required to sit still for longer than usual. If throwing things is an issue, attach a spiral or retractable keyring to the toy and to an item of your child's clothing.



Lap pads and weighted blankets

Weighted blankets and lap pads apply an even weight and deep pressure that some of our children need and positively enjoy. The weight and pressure can help them to slow down and "chill out" which in turn can lead to better concentration, better sleeping habits and less stress and fewer tantrums. Blankets come in a range of weights and the weight chosen should depend on the body weight of the child or adult who will be using the blanket. (The general method of choosing a weight is to take 10% of the user's body weight and add a further pound in weight.)



Other weighted items

These include weighted shoulder pads/scarves which are great to put on your child's shoulders to calm them. A weighted back pack on a child's back may help centre them, alternatively giving a child a few heavy books to carry from A to B as part of a task may also work. Weighted vests can be bought or try using a "fishing vest" or gilet with pockets that you can add weights to. A weighted belt is another idea that might help your child stay centred.

Most weighted items are available from the same sites as the weighted blankets, but if you go to an online search engine and type in the item you are looking for, you will find several links. Prices

Cushions:

Air filled - an inflatable cushion that mimics movement and shape - very similar to sitting on a giant ball. These can be used for balance training in standing, kneeling or seated positions - especially to give improved sensory feedback when used as a seat cushion for children struggling with concentration or fidgeting.

Wedges - if your child does not keep still when writing, then a wedge cushion might help. It may also help if your child tips the chair onto the front legs.



Ear defenders

If noise is an issue for your child then try a set of ear defenders. Although they won't block out all of the noise, they will reduce it and hopefully that will enable your child to cope with noisy situations.

You can also look into noise reduction headphones and whilst a good set aren't cheap, we have heard wonderful reviews about them really helping and being worth the money!



For the chewers...

If you have a "chewer", be it their sleeves, fingers, random bits of tissue, paper or anything else they take a liking to, then it may be worth trying to find an alternative...



Chewigem - make all sorts of items from pendants, toggle tags, bangles; all designed to be chewed! Take a look at www.chewigem.co.uk

ChewyTubes - tubes and P's & Q's designed to cope with lots of chewing: www.chewytubes.com

Chew'lery - a necklace and bracelet that's made to be chomped upon, available from various websites, including www.specialdirect.com

Auto retract keyrings - these are a great way of keeping fidget toys or chew toys easily accessible but out of the way when they're not needed. These are available on Ebay for a reasonable cost.

Pens - give a young child a huge variety of pens and pencils, all sorts of shapes, sizes, textures etc. and let them discover which they find the easiest to handle. It's also useful to practice writing with their finger on a tray in different substances; sand, shaving foam etc.

Pencils - again, try a variety of types but we really like the triangular ones with grips by Faber-Castell, which can be found online and in Rymans too.

Pen/pencil grips - These are placed on a pen or pencil to position the hand in the correct position. Again, there are a wide variety of types available, so it's just a question of finding the one that helps your child the most.



Sloped writing board - A simple writing slope enables children to work and write at a better angle - stopping the child having to lean forward. Alternatively try using an A4 lever arch file as that won't stand out as being "different".

**Suppliers** (not all exclusively for special needs children)

| | |
|--|---|
| www.ebay.co.uk | auction site, full of all sorts of items, new and used. |
| www.hawkin.com | Hawkin's Bazaar is full of useful bits and pieces, take a look. |
| www.noveltywarehouse.co.uk | great for sensory/fidget toys. |
| www.rompa.com | special needs toys and equipment. |
| www.sensetoys.co.uk | educational toys and games for special needs children. |
| www.specialdirect.com | brilliant products for children with special needs. |
| www.specialneedstoys.co.uk | fun, innovative and often unique products. |
| www.weighted-blankets.co.uk | weighted blankets to help ground/calm children. |
| www.weight2goblankets.co.uk | weighted blankets and lap pads. |

Sensory Occupational Therapists

For advice specific to your child's needs, please seek professional advice from a sensory OT. Accessing an NHS sensory OT is usually a challenge but if you're looking for an independent OT who specialises in sensory issues. COTSS-IP stands for *College of Occupational Therapy Specialist Section for Independent Practice*.

For more info go to www.cotss-ip.org.uk or call 0845 129 7699.





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We're on the web:

www.The-Zone.org.uk

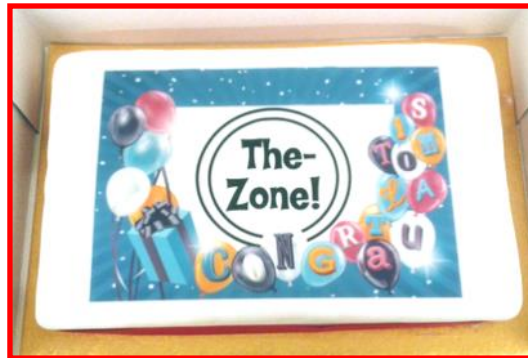
Make sure you let us know if you move or change your e-mail address.

If you don't, we can't get this newsletter to you!

Our 1st year anniversary!

On Wednesday the 8th April 2015 at our Fun Zoone session, we celebrated that we have been running as The-Zone! for a whole year! We had all of our usual equipment inside and out, as well as a big bouncy castle, a huge jungle run obstacle course, inflatable pool and of course a delicious birthday cake!

Huge thanks to everyone who came along to help us mark the occasion - we're looking forward to another busy year and to a great 2nd year celebration!



This is the newsletter of The-Zone! a local charity (charity no. 1156806) for special needs families in North East Hampshire. Views expressed in this newsletter are for information only and reference to specific services or approaches to autism does not imply endorsement.

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