

Highlights

- Our own autism-friendly cinema event 2 Jan BOOK NOW!
- £1,500 raised for Youth Club for 9-12 year olds: The A Team
- Aspirations Programme for adults with AS has begun
- Toddler group for parents whose children have special needs
- The Next Open meeting is 15 January
- Next Meeting of the Parents of teens and adults
- Diary dates for 2003
- Youth Club for teens
- New toddler group for parents whose children have special needs
- The autism-friendly Mindreading CD/DVD is out now , for everyone (from children with autism to all adults interested in emotions and how we show them) interested in brushing up their is out now. Buy yours at Cambridge Learning in Barton at Burwash Farm.

Autism-friendly family cinema event

Cambridge Arts Picture House at 10.30am on Thursday 2nd January 2003. This is an autism-friendly private showing for Umbrella members and their families and friends.

The film will be Disney s Lilo & Stitch (animated, 89mins, suitable for all with a some laughs for adults, too)

Synopsis: A mild sci-fi tale of a young girl's encounter with the galaxy s most wanted extraterrestrial. Lilo is a lonely Hawaiian girl who adopts a small ugly dog , whom she names Stitch. Stitch would be the perfect pet if he wasn't a genetic experiment that escaped from an alien planet and crash-landed on earth. It's about friendship and finding your place ---even if you come from two different worlds.

This is a ticket only event and limited to a maximum of 100. The tickets offered to Umbrella members FREE on a first-come-first-served basis.(Grateful thanks to the Cambridge RAG for donating the funds for this event --- if you gave to the RAG students, thank you!)

Anyone wanting to apply for tickets (up to max of 6 per family) should send a note indicating the number of tickets you are applying for plus a S.A.E (to cut down on our postage costs) to:

Umbrella Cinema Event
Sharon Clarke
40 Cox's End
Over
Cambridge
CB4 5TZ

The Umbrella Christmas Holiday Family Party

This annual fun and friendly event (complete with autism-friendly clown and bouncy castle) will be on Sunday, 5 January from 3-5pm at Ida Darwin in Fulbourn. This is a bring-and-share event and you need to book in advance with Karen (Tel. 01223-413032), who can give full details of the venue. Everyone welcome --- an event not to be missed!

Big, jazzy boost for the A Team!

An amazing £1,500 has been raised for our Youth Club for 9-12 year olds with Asperger Syndrome (AS).

The Club is called "The A Team" and we expect it to launch early in the new year at Romsey Mill in Cambridge. It will be staffed by a qualified youth leader together with a team of Cambridge University students/staff volunteers. This will be a "chill out" after-school, twilight club, for fun and meeting others. It'll feature Play Stations and fun electronic and other games --- plus other people who enjoy these too! For more information about the group or joining, ring Karen (01223-413032).

The Jazz fund-raising event was really great. It was donated to Umbrella by the Jeff Dempsey's Jazz Band, Jazzamber, with the venue donated by the Red Lodge Hotel in Whittlesford (following storm damage at the Duxford Lodge Hotel) and the buffet donated by the Duxford Lodge Hotel. As well as great music and excellent food there was a fun auction and an astonishing £1,500 was raised. Thank

you to everyone who made this wonderful event possible including everyone who came and participated in the auction. Very special thanks to Karen Hosking and Sally Bray, who efficiently organised and co-ordinated the event and navigated us through a roller coaster of events in the course of making it all happen! Thanks also Karen for the idea and lots of work on turning it into a reality. Thank you to parents who have already expressed an interest in join the A Team committee.

Youth Club welcomes teenagers with ASD's

Jacqui Radford, Umbrella Treasurer, as alerted us to a Youth Club for teenagers with a disability run by the Cambridge City Council which has space for new members. There's already at least one Umbrella member with AS who attends. Until Christmas it meets every Sat pm 2.30 to 4.30 in the Meadows Community Centre. After Christmas it will move to Thursdays from 5-7pm. Contact Sheona Alexander (01223-508145) for more details.

New special needs parent-toddler drop-in

A new parent and toddler drop-in for parents of children with special needs has been started at the Centre at St Pauls (Hills Road, Cambridge). It meets Tuesdays from 12:30-2, with a light lunch provided. Contact Andrew Entecott (01223-576899) for details.

The Aspirations Programme for adults (aged 16+) with AS

This innovative programme has begun, made possible by our partners, local educational disability charity Turning the Red Lights Green. Aspirations is a specially designed full time learning programme for 16-20's and 21's and up with AS or similar conditions. It includes people skills, life skills, a special individual project, computer skills and getting to know the AS internet community, skills for work and supported employment --- plus making friends with other people with AS. There are still some places available. Don't hesitate to talk with Aspirations Co-ordinator, Susan Owen, on 01638- 508430 if you know someone with AS who might benefit from the programme. The people on it are really enjoying themselves ---and all of them hesitated at first (changes & AS are a challenging mix and lots of

patience is required). Susan is happy to have people come and check out whether it might be right for them.

The Aspirations Social Club

This unique club for adults with AS is going from strength to strength. Members attend one evening a month for an evening of chilling out, being with like-minded members, low-key games, music and a bring-and-share tea. We've just had a pizza-making party and it was great fun for all. It is a small group and we like to balance the numbers of men and women in the group. Another women with AS would be especially welcome to contact us about joining now. Anyone wanting to be contacted if a vacancy arises should contact rww20@cam.ac.uk or leave a message with contact details on 01223-368203.

Autism Emergencies: what to do?

This was the topic of the most recent Umbrella Open Meeting at it was attended by professionals from a number of different services as well as parents of both children and adults. The next newsletter will include details of recommendations arising from that meeting. Anyone wanting details of the full meeting can receive the meeting notes by email (rww20@cam.ac.uk).

News of the Saturday Sunshine Club for 4-11 year olds

We are delighted that Crossroads, the carer's charity, have decided to take on the longer term steering, fundraising and management of the Saturday Play scheme for children aged 4-11 with an ASD. Anna Bainbridge is their new Children's Services Manager. The Club is very successful and much appreciated by families. We believe it is unique in the UK. Although Umbrella have partnered and supported the setting up of this wonderful initiative, we have Crossroads, the carer's charity, to thank for so ably responding to the needs of both families and children with ASD. Fund raising for the club is being handled by Crossroads but they, in turn, are looking to support from Umbrella members. For more information about the Club ring Anna Bainbridge at Crossroads (01353-652138) .

Diary dates for 2003

Umbrella Open Meetings (members and non-members welcome) at Hilltop Carers Centre, Primrose Street (Off Victoria Road) in Cambridge. Parking at the end of Green Street or nearby streets. 7.30-9pm with networking from 9-9.30.

Weds Jan 15th
Monday Mar 11th
Thursday May 15th
Tuesday July 1st
Thurs October 2nd
November TO BE ARRANGED
Weds Dec 3rd

Meetings for Parents of older teens and adults (venue and times same as Open Meetings) are Tuesdays, generally the last Tuesday of the month. For details ring Phyl Lewery (01223-709827).

28 Jan
25 Feb
25 Mar
29 Apr
27 May
24 June
July and August: TO BE CONFIRMED
28 Sept
25 Nov
16 Dec

Do contact us if you have items of news for Umbrella members or comments/questions about items in this edition of Umbrella eNews