

Autumn conferences

Our conference 'Autism – Untangling the Wires' will be held in London on Saturday & Sunday 10th & 11th October 2009. Keynote speaker Sally Slater sets the scene at this training event, which is a blend of seminar and workshop and is suitable for anyone who supports either children or adults who have Autism. Delegates will go away with positive and workable ideas that can be put into practice immediately.

Sally will also introduce our conference 'Profound & Multiple Learning Disability' to be held in Blackpool on Saturday and Sunday 7th & 8th November 2009. Again a mixture of seminar and workshop sessions, this two-day event will provide delegates with the knowledge and confidence to communicate with and to provide meaningful activities for adults or children who have PMLD. Delegates will acquire practical ideas and techniques as well as a real enthusiasm about what CAN be done.

There are discounts available if bookings are made via our website www.concept-training.co.uk (Autism event course code Z93; PMLD event course code Z94) and for block bookings.

For details email info@concept-training.co.uk

What can I do with...? PLASTIC BOTTLES

Collect a wide range of plastic bottles in different sizes and colours. Choose the right sort – tough guys may need a sturdy fabric conditioner bottle, gentler people can use flimsier drink bottles. Make sure they are completely clean and soak the labels off. If you are going to fill them with dry materials, leave them in an airing cupboard for several days to make sure they are completely dry.

To stick on the caps, Bostik or UHU are okay for some plastics, but will dissolve others. Polystyrene cement (sold for model making) is usually all right. You can make caps even more secure with PVC tape after the glue has dried.

1. Bottle fillings:

- Sequins in a small bottle
- Dried peas, lentils, lengths of spaghetti (never use dried beans if there is the slightest danger of people getting at the contents, as some types can cause a nasty stomach upset if swallowed raw)
- Water, glitter and glycerine, which is available from chemists or cake-decorating shops and makes the water thicker and holds the glitter in suspension better
- Coloured water and metallic buttons – try blue water and silver buttons, red water and gilt buttons
- Water and floating fluorescent table tennis balls (from sports shops) in a wide-necked bottle or plastic sweet jar
- Silver sand and coloured glitter.

2. Make a sound matching game. Put the same filling eg, sand, lentils, dried peas, bells, marbles, in pairs of bottles in a collection of identical opaque bottles.

3. Take two 1-litre bottles and a 3cm length of clear plastic tubing (available from wine-making and aquarium shops) of a diameter that will just fit over the bottles' necks. Put water, food colouring and washing up liquid in one bottle and, keeping it upright, glue the ends of the tubing over the necks of the bottles to create, once the glue is dry, a visually stimulating object that encourages large movements as the water is tipped from one bottle to the other.



Have a ball: this month's prize

Enter this month's free prize draw and you could win a mirror ball. Just send us an email at fionalane@concept-training.co.uk with Mirror Ball in the subject line. The closing date for entries is Monday 1 June.



Concept goes to Pakistan

Colin Troy is set to go to Pakistan for a week at the end of May to work with a group of teachers from the Beaconhouse School System. Beaconhouse runs mainstream schools but has little experience of coping with children who have special needs and its plan is that the group trained by Colin will go on to be Special Educational Needs Coordinators at its schools and will pass on their knowledge to others.

Beaconhouse asked us to put together a special 30-hour course for twenty-five key staff who have just completed a postgraduate certificate in professional development.

This has been a great project for Concept Training and we are very excited about it. The programme will be run over five days and includes: An Introduction to Special Needs and Inclusion, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Sensory Difficulties) Managing Challenging Behaviour, ADHD and Attachment Disorders, and the role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

This isn't the first training trip abroad for Colin, who has previously worked for the UN Development fund. He has trained in Kuwait and Romania, and is due to work in Milan in June.



Youngest participant

We gave Katie an attendance certificate at one of our workshops in Llandrindod Wells. She tried out the projection tent and absolutely loved it.

Working with the Priory Group

Concept Training are proud to be working alongside the Priory Group. Priory Education Services is the leading independent provider of specialist education for children and young people from age four upwards with: Asperger's Syndrome (7-19), Autistic Spectrum Disorders (4-19), Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) (8-19) and specific learning difficulties (Dyslexia) (11-18).

Janet Cowie, Group Learning & Development Manager, Priory Group, says: "We have commissioned Concept Training to deliver workforce development training to our Education Services Division since 2006. The Division consists of 14 Residential Schools who care for children with Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Dyslexia and SEBD.

"The service we receive has always been professional and personalised to meet our needs. Concept Training are now one of our preferred training providers."

"Their training sessions are well planned and delivered by experts with in-depth knowledge of the content. Delivery is face to face, using a variety of methods including role play, activities, discussion, Q&A."

"At the start of our relationship we purchased their published training programmes delivered by their trainers and have built our relationship since then. In 2008 we were so impressed with the delivery of the content we have commissioned some bespoke training using Concept."

"The quality of delivery is excellent. We would commission Concept again and have no hesitation in recommending them as a training provider."

Practical points

Some quick tips to show Concept's practical hands-on approach to multi-sensory training, suitable even when budgets are minimal:

- Did you know that tonic water glows under UV light or that you can paint nails with UV highlighter pens and they glow under UV light too?
- You can download free sound effects for theme work in the multi-sensory room. Try www.freesfx.co.uk or www.audionetworkplc.com/sound-effects
- Snip some holes in bubble wrap and feed fibre optics through for a great surface to roll or lay on or feed them through black fur fabric for a magic carpet.
- A mosquito net from Ikea makes a fantastic projection net.
- Use a mirror ball or spa pool light inside a portable washing basket for a great effect.

Have you any ideas for using everyday objects for multi-sensory activities? Let us know and we will publish the best ones in our next newsletter.

Climbing Kilimanjaro

We're backing Andy Shield in his bid to raise more than £3,000 for the Guardian Angels Appeal by climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. Andy works as an early years training team manager for City of York Council and every penny he raises will go towards equipment for the children's high-dependency unit at York Hospital. He says: "I've never done anything on this scale. I've climbed England's highest peak – Scafell Pike in the Lake District but Kilimanjaro is something else. Altitude is my biggest worry. It's a bit daunting."



If you would like to support Andy by donating money to Guardian Angels, email him at andy.shield@york.gov.uk