



Jigsaw

Welcome to our newsletter!

Fundraising

A big thank you to all the friends, family and colleagues of Grampian Autistic Society who attended our Fundraising Racenight at The Northern Hotel in September. A fun filled night was had by all. We raised over £1000 on the night. Many many thanks to everyone who donated raffle prizes and donations for the event, and to The Northern Hotel for the use of the Ballroom.



Just Giving!

Dawn Smith (parent) is raising money again this year through the JUST GIVING SITE. Dawn and her husband Steve asked family and friends to donate money to GAS last year rather than receive presents, they successfully raised £500. Dawn's father has also deposited some GAS collection tins at his local bar - The Redcliffe Hotel in Inverness, the collection tin is based behind a bar at the hotel and when customers say "get one yourself" to the bar staff they put it in the tin instead. So I would like to say a big THANK YOU to the kind owner Derek McLachlan and his Manager Elaine Pope along with staff Jill and Katie for their own going support and generosity.

Jason Matson husband of Ruella-Maria Matson (Children's Service Co-ordinator) is running ten 10k's across Grampian dressed as a banana to raise money for Jigsaw, donations can be made through Grampian Autistic Society's Just Giving site or by clicking on the link www.justgiving.com/100kbanana ..

VeGAS Grand Ball

On the 13th of November Grampian Autistic Society held the first Grand Ball at The Marcliff of Pitfodles. Over 120 guests arrived to a Champagne reception, enjoyed an excellent three course meal, entertainment from Elvis (all the way from Las Vegas) and 5th Avenue who kept the guests dancing into the wee small hours. With Roulette and Blackjack tables, Las Vegas Showgirls and a Nail biting Auction that had everyone on the edge of their seats, we raised over £20,000 for Grampian Autistic Society. A phenomenal amount I think you will agree!

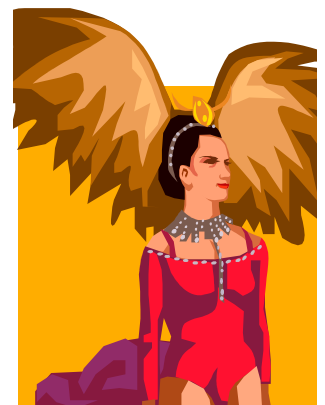
G.A.S would like to say a massive thank you to all who donated Auction and Raffle prizes. Also event Sponsors, friends, family and guests who turned out in their finest attire to make this a truly wonderful evening. But the biggest thanks goes out to Pat Kennedy and friends who took on a mammoth task and provided us with a night we will remember for years to come. Thank you!

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Help Wanted

Can you spare a few hours to help set up a small reference library at GAS? Please call our office administrator on 01224 277900 or e-mail admin.gas@classmail.co.uk if you are interested or know someone who may be able to help.



Aberdeen Playscheme!

The Jigsaw playschemes began holding parent and client review meetings for the first time, which are proving a great success. These meetings give parents/carers, clients and staff the opportunity to share information, build goals and tailor the playscheme for individual needs. The feedback from parents so far has been positive and we look forward to continuing to improve our services for all.

Aberdeen Jigsaw Centre were successful in their application to Aberdeen City Council 'Youth Grant Fund'. Group A were awarded £1015 and Group B £995. The children and young people helped make the application and requested the monies for Outings such as Cinema, Pirate Golf, Trips on the train to Stonehaven, Tubing, Macduff Aquarium Carnivals and a Bervie Chipper! The playscheme staff are looking for more funding opportunities to buy new toys and games and to promote sports and fitness.

Music 4 U



Music 4 U was set up to offer socially inclusive musical opportunities to young people from a wide variety of backgrounds and abilities including those from areas of financial deprivation, those with special needs or who are socially challenged, who may otherwise miss out on the chance to get involved in music. Music 4 U organises regular singing groups, school holiday workshops and has music activities for people with disabilities. Music 4 U became a charity in 2005.

(<http://www.grampiancaredata.gov>)

For more details please contact info@M4U.org.uk

Mhari Hay

We would like to share a heart warming letter that we received from one of our service users Mhairi Hay.

Mhairi wrote -

"Have you ever thought about being a volunteer because I have at Roxburgh house doing gardening with three very nice ladies. We meet on Thursday morning from 9.30 to 12pm. If its raining its cancelled. All volunteers are friends of Roxburgh house Aberdeen. The volunteer service manager is a very nice lady. She keeps us up to speed with what is going on in the garden. I volunteer so I can meet people. The problem is because of my Aspergers Syndrome sometimes I have a problem meeting people. I like small groups, I can not cope with big groups. The gardening helps me get out because I cant sit still. I would encourage you to be a volunteer. I am finding gardening helps me a lot and I enjoy it"

While people with autism share common characteristics - each person is unique with their own strengths and challenges

Benefits and tax credits

There are a number of benefits and tax credits that you may be entitled to. Some benefits can be paid because your child is disabled while others may be paid to you for other reasons. For example, you may be getting Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for your child and Carer's Allowance as their carer. You may also be able to claim Income Support and/or Child Tax Credit depending on your income.

Eligibility criteria

Each benefit and tax credit has its own set of eligibility criteria. This means you need to meet certain conditions to qualify.

- To claim contribution-based benefits you need to have paid national insurance contributions in the past.
- To claim means-tested benefits you must be on a low income, with savings of less than a certain amount.
- To claim tax credits you must either have children or be in work - and the amount will depend on the household income but not savings.

For non-means-tested benefits like Disability Living Allowance, the claimant will need to meet criteria not related to work, income or savings.

When to claim

When you know which benefit or tax credit to claim, telephone the appropriate office straight away. It is difficult to get awards backdated. Some benefits (for example DLA) can't be paid for a period before the date you claimed, no matter what the circumstances. Claim now, even if you are not sure you qualify, as you could miss out if you delay. The Contact a Family helpline, a local CAB or welfare rights unit can carry out a full benefits check for you.

How are benefits paid?

Some benefits are paid as tax credits by HM Revenue and Customs (referred to here as the Revenue). Different offices of the Department for Work and Pensions pay most other benefits. However, Housing and Council Tax Benefits are paid by your local authority. Benefits and tax credits are usually paid directly into a parent's bank account. Any benefits for your child - such as DLA and Child Benefit - will be paid to you as their parent. When your child reaches 16 they may be able to claim benefits in their own right.

Many thanks to "Contact a Family" for the information supplied

"If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter or have ideas of what you would like to see included, please let us know!"

Helpful links to websites:

www.autism-in-scotland.org.uk

www.nas.org.uk

www.autism.org.uk/scotland/cpga

