

GROWING UP WITH AUTISM

Information Sheet

Growing up with Autism (Brereton and Tonge, 2005) is a 20 week evidence based education and skills training programme for parents/caregivers of adolescents aged 11-16 years of age who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Growing up with Autism has been delivered in main centres since October 2013 by IDEA Services and is fully funded by Ministry of Health.

Why do this course?

- ✓ To meet with other families who have adolescent children with autism to share experiences
- ✓ To learn more about the developmental stages of adolescence and the changes it brings in physical, cognitive and social/personality development in the young person
- ✓ To learn more about understanding and managing social, emotional and behavioural problems that adolescents with autism may be experiencing
- ✓ To find out about evidence based interventions
- ✓ To learn about wider support services
- ✓ To increase awareness of how to support the development of functional skills in a range of areas such as: communication, self-management and social interaction

The programme

Growing up with Autism works with up to two members from a family for 20 weeks and over that time families will attend 10 group and 10 individual sessions as follows:

Module One – Introduction

Group Session: Outline and goals of the programme; ASD symptom; Changes from childhood to adolescence

Individual session: Your adolescent's development and changes in ASD symptoms

Module Two – Adolescence: What is this Developmental Stage?

Group Session: Changes in cognition (thinking) and learning; Parental concerns

Individual session: Your adolescents stage of cognition and implications for you

Module Three – Physical and Sexual Development

Group Session: A changing body; Looking and feeling different

Individual session: What's happening for your child?

Module Four – Managing Sexual Development

Group Session: Personal hygiene; Modesty and masturbation

Individual session: How is your adolescent managing these issues?

Module Five – The Social World of Adolescents with ASD

Group Session: Exploring 'who I am'; increasing social skills

Individual session: Social problems you and your adolescent

Module Six – Adjusting and Well Being

Group Session: Understanding and managing emotional and behavioural problems

Individual session: Practical session to choose relevant goals for you and your adolescent

Module Seven – Communication

Group Session: Verbal; Non-verbal

Individual session: Implications for you and your adolescent

Module Eight – School

Group Session: Transition to secondary; Managing the school environment and school work; talking to teachers

Individual session: Implications for you and your adolescent and practical ideas

Module Nine – Family Life

Group Session: Family and sibling responsibilities to the adolescent with autism

Individual session: Issues in your family

Module Ten– Programme Review

Group Session: Programme review

Individual session: Programme review

How it is delivered

Growing up with Autism is a 20 week programme consisting of 10 fortnightly group sessions and 10 fortnightly individual sessions (optional) on alternating weeks. Each group requires minimum of five families registered to proceed:

Group Sessions: Are pre scheduled for the same day and time each fortnight and are at a pre determined location.

Individual Sessions: Will be arranged with the facilitator at the start of the programme and can be at more flexible times to suit family's individual needs.

Who delivers Growing up with Autism?

The programme is run by Community Specialist Services, part of IDEA Services. Our team of facilitators are all very skilled and experienced specialist workers who have experience in supporting young children with autism and their families. **See our website for further details about who our facilitators are.*

Accessing the programme

Where is the programme available?

IDEA Services have been delivering the programme in main centres and some smaller towns throughout New Zealand since October 2013. Groups in smaller centres maybe considered depending on demand. Submit a referral form specifying your preferred location or contact the referral coordinator on **0800 273 7587** to find out where groups are being scheduled.

Who can participate?

Up to two parents/caregivers per family where there is an adolescent aged 11-16 with a formal diagnosis of autism.

How do I refer to this service?

Registrations can be made by families directly or through a health professional on behalf of a family, with their permission in the following ways:

- **Online:** To complete the **online registration** go to the 'Registration Tab' on our website (*see below*)
- **Website:** www.ihc.org.nz/our-services/autism-programmes/growing-up-with-autism-course/
- **Phone:** 0800 273 7587
- **Form:** From our website print and complete the '**Registration Form**' and send back via email GUWA@idea.org.nz OR
Post: ASD Programme Coordinator, P.O Box 4155, Wellington 6140