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# Autism Awareness Month

## 自閉症關顧月

SUMMER ISSUE 2016

Feature – Autism Awareness Month

### World Autism Awareness Day

In 2007, the United Nations has declared April 2nd as the [World Autism Awareness Day](#) to highlight the need to improve the quality of life of persons with ASD, which in turn helps them lead meaningful lives. To echo the call of the United Nations, leading ASD advocacy organisations worldwide hosted a variety of activities around the date. The theme in 2016 is "Autism and the 2030 Agenda: Inclusion and Neurodiversity".

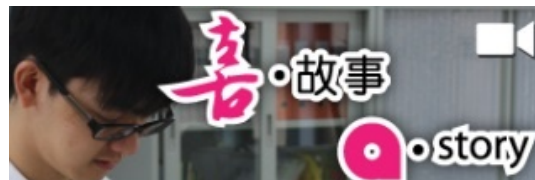
On April 2, landmarks and iconic buildings in the world, i.e. Sydney Opera House, Tokyo Tower, Niagara Falls and Empire State Building etc. turned their lights blue. People were encouraged to wear blue and decorate their places in blue as a gesture of support. These emerging campaigns aim to promote the awareness of ASD among the general public.

### Autism Awareness Month

In response to the World Autism Awareness Day, JC A-Connect launched the Autism Awareness Month in April, aimed to unite service providers and caregivers from different sectors, to raise public awareness and understanding on ASD, and eventually to strengthen school, family and community support to enhance social harmony and inclusion.

Throughout the month, six NGO partners organised activities, including parent support groups, art workshops, learning classes etc., for students with ASD and their families across the territory. Publicity was also made in mass media and other on-line platforms, in order to promote a positive image of ASD.

[a-story - Kit Fung](#)



## Event Highlights

### Quiet Book DIY by Caritas-Hong Kong Date: April 6-20, 2016

The group helped parents to produce their child's own tailor-made Quiet Book. It provided an opportunity for the participating parents to exchange their ideas and ultimately design and create a unique and amazing book for their children.



### 假日鬆一 ZONE by Heep Hong Society Date: April 3, 2016

15 families joined together, enjoyed a relaxing time and had a lot of fun in this programme. The making of Serradura and kaleidoscope brought much fun and engaged interactions and sharing among these families.



### Sharing with Love and Care by SAHK Date: January-April, 2016

This was an appreciation campaign to express love and care to families with persons with autism. The general public and students (peers of ASD students) were invited to write down some encouraging words and express their blessings on greeting cards for the students with ASD and their parents.



## School Support

The school support component aims to strengthen specialized support for students with ASD in mainstream schools in Hong Kong.

Currently, 311 schools have joined this project, including 204 primary and 107 secondary schools. Other than training groups for students with ASD, supporting programmes for teachers, parents and peers have also been conducted. Recruitment for new schools to join the Programme starting from 2016/17 school year will end in June 2016.

The School Support Team consisting of educational psychologists from HKU and EDB has been working closely with NGO professional teams to promote good practices through:

- ongoing consultations on programme planning;
- on-site observations of training; and
- regular meetings or seminars.

### Activity

#### Teacher Training Course - Seminar

Date: December 7, 2015 and January 15, 2016

The seminars attended by about 700 school personnel, gave an overview of the needs of students with ASD as well as ways to enhance support strategies.

Videos: [click here](#)





## Family Support

The family support component aims to investigate the existing social service support for the families with members on the autism spectrum.

### Family Support Programme Evaluations

The HKU research team continues to evaluate current family support programmes provided by the three collaborating NGOs, Caritas-HK, Heep Hong Society, and SAHK. The range of services are diverse, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Emotion Understanding, Positive Parenting skills, Yoga Relaxation, Quiet Book DIY etc. A standardized questionnaire and focus group are used to evaluate the programmes' effectiveness and gather parents' feedback.

Yoga relaxation group for parents to enjoy some self-care time



### Family Support Service Framework

#### **Family Needs Questionnaire**

The needs of Chinese families with members on the autism spectrum were not adequately studied and reported. The team adapted and developed a localized Family Needs Questionnaire to collect parents' self-report needs. Results will help to formulate a family support framework to guide future services development. Parents of individuals with autism are encouraged to visit the following website (<https://goo.gl/XtNlcX>) to fill out the 10-minute survey to express their needs.

#### **Interviews with Stakeholders**

The team has been conducting interviews with different stakeholders, including parents, government officials, paediatricians, teachers and professionals in private practice etc. to gain perspectives on current and future support services.



Interviews with staff of TWGHs Tsui Tsin Tong School

## Public Education

The public education component aims to promote better understanding of ASD in the community, to empower professionals, peers and caregivers with evidence-based knowledge and skills; and to emphasize the positive dimension of ASD.

### Media Coverage

#### **The Way We Are (同途有心人), Commercial Radio Hong Kong**

Date: April 3, 2016



[Read More](#)

Date: April 10, 2016



[Read More](#)

## Newspaper Article, AM730

Date: April 1, 2016  
Subject: 認識及支援有自閉兒的家庭

[Read More](#)



## FORTHCOMING

### June 2016

#### Teacher Training Course - Workshop

These workshops provide training on positive strategies for preventing and managing meltdowns and out-of-control behaviours.

Date	Time	Venue	Remarks
June 10, 2016		The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU	
June 24, 2016		Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, Education Bureau	
June 28, 2016		Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, Education Bureau	

### July 2016

#### Hong Kong ASD Conference 2016: Supporting Learning and Development

##### [Registration](#)

#### Conference

Date: July 8, 2016  
Time: 9:00am - 5:30pm  
Venue: Hall II, Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre, Centennial Campus, HKU

#### Post-Conference Workshops

Date: July 9, 2016  
Time: 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Venue: Social Sciences Function Room, 11/F, Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU

Website: [www.socsc.hku.hk/JCA-Connect/hkasd2016](http://www.socsc.hku.hk/JCA-Connect/hkasd2016)

### August 2016

#### NGO Professional Sharing Seminar

This seminar provides a platform for the six designated NGO partners to share best practices in the area of ASD services and support.

Date: August 22, 2016  
Venue: HKU

##### [Events organized by NGOs](#)

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