



# UK Young Autism Project

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## Programme Information

Thank you for inquiring about our programme. We have compiled this information packet about our programme in order to help answer questions you may have. We hope this information is helpful. The following topics are addressed:

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## **Our Intervention Approach**

### **About UK Young Autism Project**

UK Young Autism Project is a division of UK Behaviour Analysis and Research Group C.I.C. and is a research based centre that specialises in teaching young children with autism, other pervasive developmental disorders and related developmental disorders. The centre is directed by Catherine Gale and Diane Hayward. The intervention programme was developed by Dr O. Ivar Lovaas and is based on extensive clinical experience and more than 40 years of scientific research conducted in the Psychology Department at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). The programme is comprehensive and aimed at enhancing intellectual, academic, social and emotional behaviours of young children, so that they take better advantage of the educational and social opportunities available in their communities and require less professional attention as they grow older.

UK Young Autism Project has conducted an outcome study as part of the UCLA Multi-Site Young Autism Project (which is directed by Dr Lovaas and Dr Tristram Smith):

Hayward, D., Eikeseth, S., Gale, C., & Morgan, S. (2009). Assessing Progress during Treatment for Young Children with Autism Receiving Intensive Behavioural Interventions. *Autism*, 13 (6), 613 – 633.

The study compared progress after one year of treatment for 44 children receiving our services. Between intake and follow up, participants improved significantly on IQ, visual-spatial IQ, language comprehension, expressive language, social skills, motor skills and adaptive behaviour. Mean IQ for this group of children increased 16 points after one year of treatment. Our findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating benefits of ABA treatment for children with autism.

UK Young Autism Project has also contributed longer term outcome data on several children, to the full UCLA Multi-Site Young Autism Project outcome study. We are also conducting research into receptive language training, eating and drinking interventions, reduction of self-stimulatory behaviours and many more aspects of our treatment.

Professor Svein Eikeseth PhD is the clinical and research director of the UK Young Autism Project. Professor Eikeseth directs two replication sites in Europe. He gained his PhD in 1991, in developmental and child psychology, at the University of Kansas. Later experience was acquired as a post-doctoral fellow at the UCLA Young Autism Project, under the supervision of Dr Lovaas. On returning to Norway he received clinical training at the University of Oslo and is a certified clinical psychologist. He



has published research on autism and applied behaviour analysis internationally, in peer reviewed journals. He is also a professor at Akerhus College in Norway.

Diane Hayward is a Director, based in central London. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, as well as being certified by the National Nursery Examination Board (NNEB) and holding the NNEB Diploma in Post Qualifying Studies (DPQS). Experience of using the techniques of Applied Behaviour Analysis includes a site director's internship at UCLA, under the supervision of Dr Lovaas, as well as directing the UK based replication site, together with Professor Eikeseth. Diane has completed the majority of modules of a Master of Science degree in Behaviour Analysis.

Catherine Gale is a Director, based in Birmingham. Broad experience in ABA includes extensive consultant's training, experience, research, teaching and management on the UCLA Multi-Site Young Autism Project, at the UK replication site. Catherine holds a Master of Science Degree in Behaviour Analysis and is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA). She also holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons.) Degree in Speech and Language Pathology and Therapeutics.

The project has nine additional programme consultants, based in and around London, Birmingham, Nottingham and Bristol. All our consultants have Bachelor or Master's degrees in a related field, such as psychology or education. Several consultants have Master's degrees in Applied Behaviour Analysis and are Board Certified Behaviour Analysts. All of our consultants have extensive hands on experience with many children with autism, undertaking ABA programmes. Consultants also undertake a series of classes and reviews over several years, to reach this level.

### Basic assumptions guiding the intervention

It is assumed that children with autism fail to understand what well-meaning adults have been able to communicate successfully to their typically developing children. As a consequence, such children have encountered continuous failure in learning situations and understandably react to such frustrations with tantrums and other attempts to escape or avoid future failures. Every effort is therefore made to construct a teaching situation so as to maximise the child's success and minimise failure. This is accomplished by simplifying requests, prompting the child to make the correct response and providing abundant reinforcement for socially appropriate behaviours. At the same time, failures are minimised. Ensuring the child's motivation to participate in the learning process is a key element in behavioural interventions. Aversive interventions are not used by UK Young Autism Project.



### What and how we teach

In brief, the intervention is based on shaping behaviour through reinforcement of successive approximations, prompting and fading procedures, and use of positive reinforcers that are functional (i.e. serve the intent of increasing behaviour). Examples of such reinforcers are small bites of food, play with a favourite toy, look at a favourite book, and social rewards such as verbal praise, tickles, hugs and 'rough and tumble'. As intervention progresses, food and other primary reinforcers are increasingly replaced, whenever possible, by more everyday social reinforcers. The intervention is structured so that positive, appropriate behaviours such as play, language and socialisation, are maximised through prompting and positive reinforcement. Excessive inappropriate behaviours are reduced through redirection and alternate, more socially acceptable forms of behaviour are taught. Functional analysis is used to monitor and assess inappropriate behaviours.

Teaching is conducted in a systematic manner, breaking down each task into manageable components, using task analysis. The curriculum is entirely comprehensive, addressing all skill areas in deficit, including speech and language, play, social and self help skills. Pre-requisites are taught within each programme and skills are developed logically, ensuring successful learning. Discrimination learning plays a dominant part in all programmes.

The intervention progresses very gradually from teaching the beginnings of self-help and elementary receptive language skills, to teaching non-verbal and verbal imitation skills and establishing the beginnings of appropriate toy play. Once the child has mastered basic tasks, the second stage of the intervention emphasises the teaching of expressive and early abstract language and interactive play with peers. In more advanced stages of the intervention the child is taught both at home and at school and learns (1) early academic tasks such as beginning reading, writing, and numeracy, (2) socialisation skills, (3) cause-effect relationships, (4) to learn by observing other children learn and so on. Skills are systematically generalised throughout the programme.

### Who implements the intervention at UK Young Autism Project?

For up to 20 children, who live within a manageable travel distance from our London and Birmingham offices, a centre based intensive programme is provided, which is our core provision and a centre of excellence. For these children, the majority of teaching is done in the child's home, by a team of staff from UK Young Autism Project and the child's parents and/or an additional tutor. The tutors have successfully completed a seminar on the theory of Applied Behaviour Analysis, as a technique for teaching young children with autism. In addition, they have undergone an apprenticeship training of approximately sixty hours practical training. The tutors are supervised by a senior tutor, a graduate whose previous teaching experience has shown him or her to be exceptionally talented. The senior tutor assists in the



recruitment and training of tutors, as well as the smooth operation of their assigned client's intervention. The child's progress is monitored each week in a meeting with the child, parents, teaching team, the programme consultant and frequently a director too. The consultant directs the programming and analyses behavioural interventions, with the assistance of the senior tutor. Parents are an important part of the team, conducting some intervention themselves and playing a key role in maintaining consistency in teaching and record keeping. Furthermore, parents adopt the responsibility of extending the intervention to the child's everyday environment and routine.

Because we are a small research group, we can only accept a limited number of children into our core provision, who must meet specific location criteria. However, we also provide outreach services to those families who live further away, or cannot be accepted into the centre based intensive programme for other reasons. Outreach services comprise workshops run by one of our programme consultants, in which the child's programme is supervised.

Children can transition between our two services during the course of the programme, providing spaces are available.

#### How the child's day is structured

The child is taught in a one-to-one situation for 7 hours per day, usually 5 days per week (amounting to 35 hours per week plus an additional 5 hours per week provided by the parents. In total 40 hours per week one-to-one teaching). We make the intensity of our programme manageable for the child by dividing the day into sessions. A session lasts about 3½ hours, during which we include many play activities and extended breaks when we go outside, play a game or have a snack, using the opportunity to generalise new skills. Typically, we work on a specific task using discrete trial teaching for 2-5 minutes and then have a play short break during which facilitates acquisition of new skills and generalisation of mastered skills, using natural environment teaching and incidental teaching (1-2 minutes).

#### How are parents involved in teaching?

Parental involvement is essential to an optimal programme. Parents are involved as an active team member, typically with the primary carer taking two sessions of teaching per week, for about 5-7 hours. This parent should also overlap with each tutor, and the senior tutor, for an hour each week to ensure consistency of approach across the team and parents. Some parents recruit an additional tutor to assist in their role.

Parents are in the unique position to be able to monitor consistency in technique and record-keeping across the whole team in partnership with the senior tutor. Furthermore, they are key players in the generalisation of mastered skills, making



each thing their child learns become more functional and helping to improve the quality of family life.

The primary carer is expected to attend all team meetings and contribute by demonstrating some of the programmes and giving and receiving feedback.

For secondary carers, parents who may spend more time at work or for other reasons are less involved in the everyday care of their child, they should spend a minimum of two hours per week overlapping with tutors to observe teaching in order to facilitate generalisation. If it is too difficult for secondary carers to become completely proficient in teaching, hand over of mastered skills is encouraged, as these items most urgently need to be generalised. Secondary carers are encouraged to attend team meetings as often as possible, but a minimum of once per month is required.

#### Introduction to the school environment

Typically younger children need a period of at least 6 – 12 months of one-to-one teaching in order to learn basic self-help, language and play skills before he or she can take advantage of a group or classroom situation. However, this can vary significantly for individual children. At this stage, some of the teaching procedures become less structured as the child progresses and are generalised to the child's school and everyday environment. Together with parents, we choose the school, mainstream or a school for children with special needs, based on the child's level of functioning. Tutors accompany the child to school, facilitate the transition to the classroom routines and encourage interaction with other children. School time is increased gradually over time from as little as 30 minutes a day initially, to potentially full time and eventually the tutors are faded out very systematically, if appropriate. School hours are included in the total 40 hours per week. Parents, teachers and centre staff maintain close supervision of the child's progress in school so that success can be maximised and integration planned accordingly.

#### How long do children require intensive teaching for?

For most younger children, the majority of one-to-one teaching takes about two years, during which time a phased entry into a nursery or school environment might begin. School integration is planned individually for each child and during this time tutors attend school with the child, in order to 'shadow' them, as they learn to adapt to the classroom routine. For optimal success at school, the shadowing must be guided by UK Young Autism Project staff and conducted by tutors who have received our recommended training and quality control. The majority of children still require a number of hours one-to-one teaching at home, as they begin the early years of school. Hence forty hours tuition is usually still scheduled and divided appropriately between home and school. Therefore, we anticipate that most children will require an intensive programme for a period exceeding two years.



Younger children's progress is evaluated and monitored throughout the pre-school phase and during the early school phase. If a child should require ongoing services, this will be provided and the curriculum will be adapted to focus on teaching long term independent skills in a comprehensive manner.

#### The potential benefits of the intervention

With early intervention, a sizeable minority of children with autism, other pervasive developmental disorders and related developmental disorders have been able to achieve normal educational and intellectual functioning by seven years of age. These children have been mainstreamed into regular classrooms and have advanced successfully through the school system without additional assistance. They show significant increases in intellectual functioning and perform within normal ranges on standardised tests of intelligence. They also appear indistinguishable from their peers in measures of social and emotional functioning. For those who do not achieve normal functioning, sizeable improvements in language and other important skills have been achieved, while inappropriate behaviours decreased.

Our best predictor of long-term treatment outcome is the child's responsiveness to the intervention during the early months. The children who learn relatively quickly during this time usually continue to progress at the same rate throughout the intervention.

#### About the children for whom we provide services

We currently provide services for children who display developmental delays in one or more of the following areas: cognitive performance, language development, social skills, self-help skills, and/or behavioural functioning. We do not have personnel qualified to teach children diagnosed with any additional major medical condition such as blindness, significant hearing loss, uncontrolled seizures, Rett's Disorder and/or severe delays in motor development.

Children must have a written diagnosis of autism or a related disorder, provided by an independent psychologist, psychiatrist or paediatrician.

We have three separate programmes to accommodate children of different age groups:

- Our first service is for pre-school children of 0 to rising 5. Children transition from this service at the beginning of the school term in which they will reach 5 years old.
- The second service is for primary school aged children of rising 5 years to rising 12. Children transition from this service at the beginning of the school year in which they will turn 12.



- The third service is for secondary school aged children of rising 12 to 19 years. Young adults transition from this service at the end of the school year in which they turned 19.

In addition, UK Young Autism Project provides services for young adults with autism or related disorders. We also provided behavioural consultations to families and schools for specific behavioural or learning difficulties in children and young adults who do not have a diagnosis of autism.

### **Centre Based (Core) Services**

#### What is provided?

Each child in our centre-based programme has a team of staff provided by UK Young Autism Project. The team comprises a consultant, a senior tutor and two to five tutors.

Thirty-five hours of one-to-one tuition is conducted by the UK Young Autism Project team plus 5 hours conducted by the child's parents and/or additional tutor. Initially this tuition is conducted in the child's home. Once pre-requisite skills have been taught, we begin to incorporate some of the teaching hours into the child's community and at school.

Each tutor works with the child for a minimum of seven hours per week. Ongoing training is provided through regular contact with the senior tutor and in team meetings.

The senior tutor works with the child directly for seven hours per week. This usually includes one regular teaching session and one training session where the senior tutor overlaps with a tutor or parent, in order to provide feedback and support, as well as model clinical skills. Occasionally some of this time can be taken for up-keeping the child's logbook, conducting functional analysis or preparing task analysis.

In addition to clinical work, the senior tutor is given a small amount of administration time each week to write a monthly summary of the child's progress. The senior tutor is also responsible for ensuring each tutor follows our required training procedures and submits a video tape to the UCLA Multi-Site Young Autism Project for quality control purposes.

Team meetings are conducted weekly, for two hours. They are typically run jointly by the consultant and senior tutor. Parents and tutors also play an active role in team meetings and everyone works together with the child, assessing programmes and



behavioural interventions, as well as monitoring teaching technique. Team meetings are currently held in client's homes, at a fixed time each week.

From time to time, the consultant will also visit during typical teaching sessions or observe while the child attends school, or another community activity. The consultant also carries out other tasks during the week, such as: pre-meetings with the senior tutor when required before a team meeting; case meetings with the directors; writing reports; editing monthly summaries; providing practical and theoretical training to the senior tutor, as well as appraisals; programme planning and assessing behavioural interventions.

If the consultant is not also a director, regular visits during team meetings, from a director, will also be provided. If the consultant is a director, peer supervision will be provided periodically from another director.

From time to time, a consultant or senior tutor will not be available due to annual holiday, sick leave or training.

UK Young Autism Project does not provide services from 5pm on 23 December until 9am 2 January, each end of year, or Easter Saturday until Easter Monday, each spring.

### Recruitment of staff

We employ all tutors working on our centre based programme. The most likely candidates are undergraduate students, especially psychology or education majors, who are often interested in this type of experience. Also, students are usually flexible in scheduling hours. We also employ a number of full time graduates, or people with other related qualifications. Tutors are provided with full training in the UCLA model.

UK Young Autism Project checks all references very thoroughly. CRB checks are also obtained on all employees.

Tutor training and quality control meets the UCLA Multi-Site Young Autism Project protocol.

### What is the cost of an intensive programme?

The cost of the intensive programme:

- Clients serviced by the London Office - £45,000 per annum
- Clients serviced by the Birmingham Office £43,000 per annum
- Car parking charges, congestion charges and toll roads and bridges are charged at actual cost, in addition to the above fees.



Fees are due in monthly installments and the monthly fee is due on or before the first day of each month of treatment.

## **Workshop Based (Outreach) Services**

### What are Workshops?

Workshops are designed to help families set up intervention programmes of their own, based on Dr. Lovaas's UCLA model. A consultant will be assigned to your child's case and he or she will travel to your home and, during a three day workshop, teach you how to begin your child's treatment. The workshop will include instructions about the teaching procedures, what to teach, when to teach, how to keep records, how to supervise your staff, and how to analyse problems in your child's learning. The majority of the time will be spent working directly with your child. Initially the consultant will model teaching procedures for you and your staff working directly with your child. Then they will help you practice these procedures, with your child through role-play. After completion of the workshop, the consultant will be available for phone consultations and follow-up visits to help insure your child's continued progress.

### Recruitment of staff

As an optimal programme requires 40 hours per week of teaching, you will need to recruit a team of at least two tutors who will help implement the intervention. Although it is preferable that you do some of the teaching yourself it is not advisable to take on the full number of hours without a staff to help you. We recommend that each tutor work 7- 21 hours per week, enough to become comfortable with your child's intervention while not spending so much time that the child becomes dependent on one tutor. Furthermore, it is important to avoid "burn out" in tutors.

The most likely candidates are undergraduate students, especially psychology or education majors, who are often interested in this type of experience. Also, students are usually flexible in scheduling hours. Many families have recruited by posting flyers in the departments of Psychology and Education in local universities and colleges, or by contacting a professor who may be interested in making an announcement in class, about your child's programme. Career and placement centres located on campus may post your ad as well. UK Young Autism Project would be delighted to put you in touch with other families in your area who may have tutors with extra hours to spare. Community notice boards and local papers are also good places to advertise. The services of unpaid volunteers are sometimes possible.

An applicant does not need to have special credentials or previous experience to be a good tutor. We believe that all the procedures we employ can be mastered by most persons. Dependability is an important characteristic to look for in an applicant.



You can have wonderful tutors, but if they are not dependable, your child will lose valuable time that is difficult to make up. Open-mindedness is another important characteristic. A person with set ideas about how to teach your child may want to spend more time disputing how and what to teach, rather than actually teaching.

UK Young Autism Project highly recommends that you check all references very thoroughly, making sure you actually get to speak to referees. CRB checks should also be obtained and we may be able to help you do this.

#### What follow up services are offered?

Regular follow up workshops are essential in order to re-evaluate your child's programme, design new goals, discuss and rectify problems and provide ongoing training for you and your staff. Follow ups can be scheduled directly with your consultant. In addition to follow up workshops, you can receive additional advice through e-mail, telephone and video consultations, arranged individually with your consultant.

#### What are the costs of a workshop?

We recommend three days for your initial workshop and a minimum of one day every 6 weeks for follow ups. If you live locally, or close to other UK Young Autism Project clients, it may be possible to schedule ½ day follow ups every 3 weeks, or similar. If you live abroad, or at a very long distance within the UK, you will need two-day follow up workshops every twelve weeks.

Fee for workshop consultant is £82.20 per hour.

Services include:

- Workshops with report
- Additional reports
- School visits
- Preparation and attendance at tribunals\*
- Preparation and attendance at annual reviews and other meetings at school, the LEA or similar
- Video assessment of treatment

\*Tribunal costs:

One hour preparation time will be charged for all tribunal attendances. Attendance at a tribunal for below or up to 3 hours (beginning from the time the staff member is required to arrive at the tribunal location) will be charged at a flat rate of 3 hours. Additional hours will be charged at the hourly rate.

Telephone consultation:



You may contact your Consultant during office hours for short queries. Phone calls out of office hours will only be dealt with in the case of a clinical emergency. If your Consultant is not available then you can leave a message and they will contact you the next time they have time in the office.

If you would like a long discussion of clinical issues with your Consultant then this should be arranged by appointment and will then be charged at £82.20 per hour.

#### E-mail consultation:

Short email queries will be dealt with by your Consultant during office hours as and when they are available. If you require longer consultations via email then an appointment should be made and an amount of time agreed for the Consultant to spend on a reply. This will be charged at £82.20 per hour of the Consultant's time.

#### Accommodation Expenses:

- Hotels of 3 star rating or higher must be booked and paid for by client.
- For each night spent away from home, £30.00 is charged for additional expenses, such as meals if not provided at the hotel.

#### Travel Expenses:

- Travel by car is charged at 34 pence per mile, from the consultant's home to the client and return.
- Public transport is charged at the actual cost.
- Flights, taxis, parking and car hire are charged at actual cost.
- Car parking charges, congestion charges and toll roads and bridges are charged at actual cost in addition to the mileage.
- Travel time for foreign clients is charged at a total of 6 hours at £82.20 per hour, for the return journey, to Europe and the Middle East.

Occasionally we can provide senior tutors and tutors for workshop cases. Fees are £190 for a senior tutor for a full day (£95 for a half day), and £12 per hour for a tutor for a minimum of 3.5 hours in any half day and maximum of 7 hours in one day. Travel expenses are also charged at 34p per mile. Car parking charges, congestion charges and toll roads and bridges are charged at actual cost in addition to the mileage.

### **Assessments**

We highly recommend that your child undertakes a battery of standardised assessments before intake.



As part of the initial workshop the Consultant will conduct the following interviews/observations with you and your child:

- Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales
- Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS)

In addition, UK YAP currently offers the following assessments at a cost of £250 plus travel expenses:

- Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)
- Reynell Developmental Language Scales III
- WPPSI - The Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence
- WISC – The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children

We provide the assessment results in a summary following the assessment. A written report can be provided at an additional cost of £100.

We are able to discuss the assessments further during our initial phone conversation with you. Please indicate on the application form if you are interested in having the assessments conducted before beginning the programme.

## **Contacting UK Young Autism Project**

### Who can answer questions?

If you have general questions, please contact our office on 020 3369 9630 and ask to speak to Diane, Catherine, or Julie.

### How to apply for our services

If you would like your child to join one of our programmes, please complete the enclosed application form and send it to UK Young Autism Project with copies of all documents requested. You will then receive an introductory telephone call (or e-mail if you live abroad) to discuss the intake procedure in more detail. If all of our places are fully booked, you will be placed on a waiting list.

## **Further Reading**

### References and resources

*Teaching manual written for parents and educators:*

Lovaas, O. I. Teaching Individuals with Developmental Delays (2003) Pro-Ed, 8700 Shoal Creek Blvd, Austin, TX 78757-6897  
00 44 800 897 3202



*Research articles:*

Cohen, H., Amarine-Dickens, M., & Smith, T. (2006). Early Intensive Behavioral Treatment: Replication of the UCLA Model in a Community Setting. *Developmental and Behavioral Paediatrics*, 27, 145-155.

Eikeseth, S., Hayward, D.W., Gale, C.M., Gitlesen, J.P., & Eldevik, S. (2009). Intensity of Supervision and Outcome for Preschool Aged Children Receiving Early and Intensive Behavioral Interventions: A Preliminary Study. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 3(1), 67 – 73.

Hayward, D., Eikeseth, S., Gale, C., & Morgan, S. (2009). Assessing Progress during Treatment for Young Children with Autism Receiving Intensive Behavioural Interventions. *Autism*, 13 (6), 613 – 633.

Hayward, D.W., Gale, C.M., & Eikeseth, S. (2009). Intensive Behavioral Intervention for Young Children with Autism: A Research-Based Service Model. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 3 (3), 571-580.

Howard, J. S., Sparkman, C. R., Cohen, H. G., Green, G., & Stanislaw, H. (2005). A comparison of intensive behavior analytic and eclectic treatment for young children with autism. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 26, 359-383.

Lovaas, O. I. (1987) Behavioural treatment and normal educational and intellectual functioning in young autistic children. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 55, 3-9

Lovaas, O. I., & Smith, T. (1989) A comprehensive behavioural theory of autistic children: Paradigm for research and treatment. *Journal of Behavioural Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 20, 17-29

McEachin, J. J., Smith, T., & Lovaas, O. I. (1993) Long-term outcome for children with autism who received early intensive behavioural treatment. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 97 (4), 359-372 (See also the commentaries on this study)

Sallows, G. O. & Graupner, T. D. (2005). Intensive behavioral treatment for children with autism: four-year outcome and predictors. *American Journal of Mental Retardation*, 110, 417-438.

*Parent accounts:*

Maurice, Catherine Let Me Hear Your Voice (1993) Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, New York



Johnson, Carol and Crowder, Julia Autism, From Tragedy to Triumph (1994)  
Branden Publishing Company, 17 Station Street, OX 843, Brookline Village, Boston  
MA 02147

Please note that ALL publications listed may include interventions or methodologies that UK Young Autism Project does not employ, such as aversive interventions. For our model, parents and tutors should follow guidelines demonstrated and discussed during supervision from our staff, as well as those detailed in team meeting and other clinical notes, compiled for each individual client.