

Research: Is 'PEGASUS' a good way to teach young people about their autism spectrum disorder?



PEGASUS is a psychoeducational programme aimed at improving the understanding, well-being and functioning of young people with an autism spectrum disorder and their families

We are looking for young people with a diagnosis of ASD and their parents to participate in our research

We are looking for children who:

1. Have received an ASD diagnosis from a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Clinical Psychologist or Paediatrician
2. Attend mainstream school
3. Are aware of their ASD diagnosis
4. Are aged between 9 and 14 years
5. Speak fluent English

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Clinicians believe and hope that giving a diagnosis of ASD will be helpful for the person and their family. However, it is acknowledged that for some young people, learning that they have an ASD can be confusing or worrying. As a result the Social Communication Disorders Team at Great Ormond Street Hospital have developed a programme called PEGASUS.

PEGASUS is designed to help young people and their parents learn more about ASD and what it means to them. The aim is to enable children to acquire a more balanced understanding of their unique strengths and difficulties and to enhance self-management strategies. We hope this programme will help to increase children's understanding of ASD and of their own strengths and difficulties. In turn, we hope this understanding will lead to increased self-esteem and well-being; improved individual and family functioning.

PEGASUS groups involves up to six young people with ASD getting together for some listening, chatting and playing. The group will be facilitated by Clinical Psychologists used to working with children with ASDs. While the young people are together, parents will attend parallel sessions also facilitated and structured by Clinical Psychologists. For children and parents there will be 6 weekly sessions each lasting 1.5 hours and these will take place at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London.

As PEGASUS is a new programme, we need to find out exactly how helpful it will be. In order to find out, we need to carry out a research project where we compare children and parents who participate in the PEGASUS groups with children and parents who do not participate. In this way, we will see if the PEGASUS groups make any difference. This means that children and their parents who get involved in the study will have a 50:50 chance of being invited to come to the PEGASUS groups.

Overall we hope this research will provide good evidence that PEGASUS is a beneficial resource for young people with an ASD diagnosis and their families so that it can be provided for more families in the future.

If you are interested or would like to find out more, please contact:

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