



parents autism workshops & support

If there is a child with autism in your family, or maybe autism concerns you from a personal or professional perspective, the PAWS project could well have a big impact.

PAWS has grown from the work of Dogs for the Disabled, an innovative charity that has developed the training of assistance dogs to work effectively with children with autism. In the course of this work, it's been observed that there is a special chemistry between the dog and the child, the dog having an incredible calming effect when a child with autism is angry, anxious or distressed. They can distract a child away from disruptive or dangerous behaviour and create a space for the parent or carer to take control of a situation. These observations have led us to believe that whilst for some there will always be a need for a fully trained assistance dog, a well trained family pet dog can also have a massively beneficial impact.

PAWS (Parents Autism Workshops and Support) has been set up under the wing of Dogs for the Disabled, with funding by The National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund, and a number of trusts and donors, to bring together the parents and carers of children with autism to share experiences and to explore the helping potential that a pet dog might have within their family. The project is supported by the National Autistic Society and Lincoln University who are undertaking research in this area to increase our knowledge of the relationship between dogs and humans.

The results are already encouraging; a child who refused to clean his teeth will now do so happily if the family dog has his teeth brushed at the same time; a young lad who had real problems with his school uniform now sets off to school happy and proud and appropriately dressed, providing the dog goes with them, wearing a school tie too!

Read more about the workshops overleaf to see if this project is right for you and your family.



"The day we brought Claude home from the breeder, was the day that Jude actually spoke directly to someone for the first time."

"Since attending the workshops, we have developed our training so that now he can gently touch his nose to my son's hand to help interrupt a tantrum."



"To be supported by experts, not only in choosing and raising a puppy, but also in training a family dog to fulfill its potential as a loyal and dependable companion, is a vital service to families like ours."



**Dogs for the
Disabled**

Registered Charity Number England & Wales: 1092960
Registered Charity Number Scotland: SCO39828



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About the Workshops

Workshops are designed to provide parents with the information and long-term support for sourcing, choosing, handling and training a pet dog specifically to benefit a child with autism and the family as a whole.

Parents will attend a series of three one day workshops. Through practical demonstrations, discussions, hands on learning and course handouts, the workshops will cover a variety of topics, from practical ways in which the dog can help the child's development, to selecting the right dog for the family.

Ongoing Support

Following the workshops, the PAWS team will offer ongoing support to families, through a variety of media, from telephone support to an online forum and family support network.

Eligibility

The PAWS Project is open to parents of children aged between 3-16 years, with a clinical diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

Workshops are open to those, nationwide, with and without pet dogs currently in the home. Families may be required to contribute information to the 3 year research project.

Public Access

Please note that the PAWS Project is a different service to the Autism Assistance Dog Service also offered by Dogs for the Disabled. Pet dogs will not be able to receive public access rights or full assistance dog status i.e. entry into shopping centres etc.

Costs

As we are a charity, a one off payment of £30 (taken at Workshop 1) is required. All workshops, refreshments, lunch, resources and PAWS membership aftercare support is all included in this fee.

Book your Place

Feel free to contact us either by telephone or email, whether just for a chat or to book your place.

PAWS@dogsforthedisabled.org

01295 759836

<http://paws.dogsforthedisabled.org>



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