



Symbol UK is offering 3 training days on communication and identity with teenagers and young adults who have Down syndrome in Kent, Spring 2016 presented by Leela Baksi, speech and language therapist

Communication for Life!

2 Day course for parents and professionals, Snodland, Kent ME6 5BQ

Day 1 Communication, DS and Adolescence: **Thursday 21st January** 2016 10am-4pm

Day 2 Communicating about emerging identity, relationships, puberty, and other issues in adolescence: **Wednesday 3rd February** 2016 10am-4pm

Venue: The Moyeuve Grand Suite, Council Offices, Waghorn Road, Snodland, Kent ME6 5BQ

Cost of attendance to include both days: £120.00 for the first person, plus £80.00 each for 2 additional people from the same family or institution.

If you live or work with someone who has Down syndrome who is moving towards puberty or grappling with issues of adolescence and adulthood and meeting communication challenges along the way, then this course is for you.

This course discusses the communication and identity at transition from childhood to adulthood. We look at what people with DS tell us about their lives and experiences drawing on published materials and other real life stories, and books that offer syndrome specific information on adolescence and adulthood. We focus on developing skills for the challenges of the teenage years and young adulthood, focusing on learning language and using visual supports to develop identity, and build success in communicating

This course is designed for a mixed audience of parents and family members, Personal Assistants and befrienders, school and college staff including teaching assistants and teachers, and other practitioners including speech and language therapists. There are opportunities to discuss issues and plans for individuals as worked examples.

As suggested by previous participants, we are running this course over two days to make more time to consider how to put ideas into practise, and so that participants can discuss any thoughts and issues that arise after day 1.

To book a place on the Communication for Life please send an email to:

barbara.flook@symboluk.co.uk. Alternatively, leave a message FAO Barbara Flook at Symbol UK 01622 859216. If you would like to host this course at a venue local to you, please contact Barbara to discuss possible dates and costs.

When booking places, please provide:

- Your name and contact details
- Names and roles of people applying for places, and the course you would like to attend: course title, dates and venue.
- Age(s) of young people who have Down Syndrome that you support
- Name and address for invoicing. We usually invoice shortly after the workshop takes place.

We will confirm by email that your place has been booked.



Running Communication and Identity Groups

with young people with Down syndrome

1 day course for co-workers, experienced support staff

and speech and language therapists

Monday 7th March 2016 8.45am to 3.45pm

Venue: Woodlands Farm, Paddlesworth Road, Snodland, Kent ME6 5DL

Cost of attendance: £85.00 for the first person, plus £40.00 each for 2 additional people from the same group or institution.

The third training day in this series presents a format and strategies for supporting learning (in particular, language and communication) and personal growth, in youth-club style sessions for young people who have Down syndrome.

Over many years we have been developing a model of communication-focused social groups for young people with Down syndrome aged 11 to early 20s. Following on from speech and language therapy groups for younger children, these sessions provide opportunities to:

- Meet up with friends and make new friends,
- Socialise and take part in fun activities with facilitation
- Talk about their lives and what's on their minds, and offer each other support
- Get support with speech and language skills, including clearer speech, alternative means of communication, vocabulary skills, and social skills and social language.
- Practice skills in making and maintaining relationships, assertion, and self expression.

The course aims to equip participants to run groups in this format. This course is for speech and language therapy support staff (assistants and co-workers) and speech and language therapists who are experienced in offering syndrome-specific speech and language therapy intervention to people with DS, and thinking about developing groups for teenagers and young adults or working with these already.

This course offers theoretical underpinnings to offering speech and language therapy intervention in a 'youth group' format, and then looks in detail at content and facilitation techniques using video footage and discussion. We will discuss:

- Co-production with young people: involving young people in planning and running groups - without using questionnaires and other tricky means of consultation
- Including everyone: working with groups with mixed ages, skills and interests.
- Topics for teenagers and young people: what we talk about and how we explore key areas
- Practical strategies you can use when running these groups



We also discuss promoting this style of service to families and other service providers. Young people involved in these services seem to have no reservations about this alternative model.

What you need to know before coming on this course

The course assumes participants are familiar with the profile of communication strengths and impairments and learning style associated with the syndrome, and syndrome specific recommendations concerning speech and language therapy intervention. Our course 'Communication for Life' can provide this, and we are offering this as a third training day following this course over 2 days.

Additional info for co-worker lead services

To get set up to start running groups shortly after the training, I suggest you identify:

- 4-6 or more young people who would like to attend the groups (we run groups for mixed ages and all abilities),
- ideally two people to run the groups who can attend the training (to provide mutual support, and cover if one member of staff becomes unavailable),
- parents or volunteers to organise the 'youth club' (sending out group dates and collecting payment, contact for new group members, booking venue, opening up and locking up if needed, tuck shop, maybe social time after group session).

Supervising speech and language therapists are welcome to attend the course but I think this is not essential. We suggest you discuss with the supervising therapist the idea of providing speech and language therapy for larger groups of young people who have Down syndrome that are mixed age, mixed ability, youth club style format. Supervising speech and language therapists will probably need to advise on fine tuning work on speech, vocabulary, alternative means of communication, social skills, and perhaps behaviours used for communication. If your supervising speech and language therapist would like more info, they could get in touch, and it would be useful if they can attend the course.

To book a place on the Running Communication and Identity Groups, please send an email to: barbara.flook@symboluk.co.uk.

Alternatively, leave a message FAO Barbara Flook at Symbol UK 01622 859216

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