



Autism Friendly Libraries: Good Practice

Axminster Library

At Axminster Library (@AxLibrary) we have a weekly Lego Club in the library – every Saturday 12-1. We find it attracts boys who would not otherwise come into the library and one boy who has been coming for a couple of months now is on the autism spectrum and happens to be fantastic at Lego, especially with levers and pullies. Each week we set a team challenge so the children have to work together and that means the boy on the autism spectrum is part of the team. At times it is the team working around him but the end product is always a team effort.

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Coventry Libraries and Information Service

Coventry Libraries and Information Service are making some changes to a community library, testing out some of the latest thinking about what makes a public library ‘autism’ friendly. Inspiration came from the ASCEL conference, which encouraged Librarians to think about library spaces and look at how some small changes to the environment can make a big difference to some of the most vulnerable users, in this case children with autism and their families.

The library have ordered some books for children and parents, comfortable beanbags, sensory seat cushions and some I pads. The library will be remodelled to increase the space available within the children's library. At the moment we are forging new links with professionals in the city who lead on autism to get their advice about best practice which also is a great way of advertising what we are doing. We then hope to bring together children and families to look at the ideas and the space available and help us to create a space that meets their needs and also the needs of other people using the library. The plan will then be to create some activities e.g. code clubs, family time for families affected by autism to use the space and access information.

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Gateshead Libraries

Autism Information Hub

<http://www.gatesheadlibraries.com/information-services/health--wellbeing-resources/autism-information-hub>

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Leeds Library and Information Service

Autism Advice Sessions at Leeds Central Library

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Autism%20advice%20sessions%20at%20Central%20library%202015-16.pdf>

See also Across the Board: Boardmaker in Leeds Library and Information Service, Implementation report by Jason Tutin

<http://www.ascel.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/public/Across%20the%20Board%20implementation%20report.pdf>

Somerset Autism collection

The Somerset Autism Collection is a project funded by Department of Health and Somerset County Council (SCC) and delivered in partnership between SCC Children's and Adults' Social Care, Public Health, Somerset Libraries and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group.

<https://librariestaskforce.blog.gov.uk/2015/12/10/somerset-autism-collection/>

National Autistic Society

Check out the National Autistic Society's Autism Friendly Award accreditation

<http://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/autism-friendly-award.aspx>

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