



Ethnicity Training Network



Good Practice Showcase

Wednesday 14th November, Host Media Centre, Leeds 8

Workshop

Making services accessible for BME families affected by autism spectrum disorders

Presenter(s):

Prithvi Perepa, National Autistic Society

Background - why did you develop the work?

The National Autistic Society was aware that services related to autism were not being accessed by families from minority ethnic communities. The BME project was developed with the main idea to make services accessible for families from these communities.

What did you aim to achieve?

We wanted to raise awareness about autism spectrum disorders and existing services amongst different communities.

Raise awareness about the issues that these families face amongst professionals.

Adapt NAS services to meet the needs of the different communities, where required.

What did you actually do?

- We held information stalls at various community events.
- We organised or supported workshops and meetings aimed at specific communities.
- We have produced booklets about issues that families from BME communities face which were used to raise awareness of the professionals and organisations providing services.
- We deliver cultural awareness training to professionals working in the field.
- We have translated information about autism into various languages
- We have looked at making some changes to some of the services we are providing.
- We advertised the services that we already provide through various networks.

How did you measure the impact of your work?

It was difficult to measure the impact of a project such as this, but we have collected feedback forms from all our trainings. We also keep track of the number of people attending the various workshops we have organised.

What results or feedback have you had?

We have received very positive feedback for our training sessions. We have also received good feedback from families who have found information about autism on our website in their own languages.

Conclusions and recommendations – what have you learnt from doing this work? What lessons would you pass on to others?

We have learnt that we had to change some of the ideas and strategies that have been recommended as good practice guidelines. The key lesson we would like to pass on is to consult all the other research and good practice guidelines but to be flexible to changes the strategies when they don't work for one's particular situation.