

No best approach to education for all children with autism

Posted on Friday 11th December 2009

There is no one best approach that can be used in educating all children and young people with autism, according to a report by researchers from the University of Birmingham's Autism Centre for Education and Research (ACER) and St. Patrick's College Dublin, published today by the Republic of Ireland's National Council for Special Education (NCSE).

The report is an international evaluation of strategies employed in educating children and young people with autism, based on using a set of rigorous guidelines to evaluate the latest studies from around the world, published between 2002 and 2008. It also includes data from policy and best practice guidelines from the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Dr Sarah Parsons, from the University of Birmingham says: "Practice has outpaced research. Although experts agree that a range of special and mainstream provision is important for children with autism, there is no clear evidence from research to help families and practitioners decide which kind of school will be best for their child."

The report reveals major gaps in the research base for interventions commonly used when working with children on the autism spectrum. There is a particular lack of research regarding good provision for secondary students and those in post-compulsory education.

"Researchers need to address these gaps in the future and ACER has plans to develop research bids which focus on some of the key areas highlighted in the report," Dr. Parsons stresses. "There is a growing consensus from expert opinion as to what constitutes effective practice, and several sets of guidance have been produced by different working groups in education and health which are very helpful, to parents and others, but these need to be complemented with evidence from robust research studies."

The evidence base for good practice in transition between settings and stages of schooling needs strengthening, the report also reveals.

The new report will be relevant to practitioners, policymakers and families worldwide. It will be available on the NCSE Web site (<http://www.ncse.ie>) from today.

Ends

- The Autism Centre for Education and Research (ACER) at the University of Birmingham specialises in research and teaching, with a focus on education and care for children and adults on the autism spectrum.
- The NCSE assists the Irish government in developing and implementing policy on special educational needs.

For further information, contact:

Anietie Isong, International Press Officer, University of Birmingham. Telephone: +44 (0)1214147863 / Mobile: +44 (0)7768 924156. E-mail: a.isong@bham.ac.uk

[Privacy](#) | [Legal](#) | [Cookies and cookie policy](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Site map](#) | [Website feedback](#) | [Charitable information](#)

© University of Birmingham 2015

