



Would You Like to Take Part in Research About Anxiety in Autism and Asperger Syndrome?

Katy Hopkins is carrying out a study at the University of Reading about anxiety in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). If you think you might be interested in taking part, please read the information below. If you have any questions or would like more information, Katy will be happy to hear from you.

A bit about the people involved in running the study

Katy Hopkins is a PhD student. She is supervised by Dr Fiona Knott (f.j.knott@reading.ac.uk), who is a clinical psychologist specialising in ASD and Dr Lucy Willetts (l.e.willetts@reading.ac.uk), who is a clinical psychologist specialising in child anxiety. Both Dr Knott and Dr Willetts are involved in work for the health service as well as at the university. Everyone involved in this study has undergone a criminal record bureau (CRB) check and has been approved to work with children.

Why is this study being done?

Children with ASD often find some activities or situations hard to cope with. They might struggle with change or meeting new people or they might not like being wrong or losing. For many children with ASD, these kinds of worries can become a serious problem, perhaps leading to refusal to go to certain places or events, to insist on strict routines or to have tantrums when faced with situations they fear. All of this can make family life very stressful. When children are worried, parents use many strategies to help to cope, but no one really knows what is most helpful to children with ASD. We are interested in seeing how children with ASD cope with mild amounts of anxiety with the support of their mothers, so that we can find out what is most helpful for them in coping with stress and anxiety. Parenting a child with ASD can be very stressful and many parents find themselves becoming anxious as well, and we are interested in finding out more about this. In future, this may help us to develop new treatments to help children with ASD and their families.

What does the study involve?

The study uses questionnaires, interviews and joint activities, to look at anxiety and parenting techniques over two sessions. One session will take place at your home and the other at the University of Reading although we are happy to change these arrangements to suit you.

Who can take part?

Katy would like to hear from you if you have a child with ASD who has fluent language and is aged between 7 and 13, whether or not they are anxious. If you think you might like to take part, or would just like to know more about the research, please contact Katy to find out more on 0118 378 7549 / 07825215189 or by email at k.hopkins@pgr.reading.ac.uk.