



Websites for further information
on transition

Autism Education Trust

Report on the outcomes for
people on the autism spectrum

<http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/Resources/Outcomes.aspx>

National Autistic Society

<http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/transition-to-adulthood.aspx>

Further information on this study

If you would like to read a more
detailed report of this study,
please email Catherine Carroll
below who will be happy to
forward the report. -
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Emotional and behavioural problems in children and young people with ASD in specialist autism schools?

Dear Parent and Carer

PLASN is a network of schools from across London that all specialise in autism and our school is a member of this group. It offers schools like ours the opportunity, for example, to share knowledge and experiences in order to help ensure the best outcomes for our students.

PLASN members recently supported a study that looked at the transition of a group of young adults up to the age of 25 who had all attended PLASN schools.

This report summarises the findings of the study which we hope you will find interesting.

What we were trying to find out?

Parents and teachers of pupil took part in a survey to find out:

- i. The levels of emotional and behavioural problems reported by parents and teachers of pupils attending PLASN schools.
- ii. How far did age, gender and verbal ability affected whether a pupil was reported as having a difficulty
- iii. How many parents had used mental health services for their child in the last six months.

How did we do it?

- A questionnaire called The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was completed by parents and teachers for each pupil.
- The parent questionnaire included some additional questions concerned with whether they had accessed mental health services for their child recently.

Who was involved in the study?

- Questionnaires were completed on 615 pupils
- Ages ranged from 4-19 with an average age of 11
- Gender: 78% were male
- Ethnic background: 40% were white, 33% were Black, 17.5% were Asian and 12% were of other ethnic backgrounds.

What did we find out?

- Levels of emotional and behavioural problems were 3-4 times higher than the general population
- Agreement between teachers and parents was low
- Levels were similar across the primary and secondary ages groups, although teachers reported significantly higher levels of hyperactivity in the younger age group
- Pupils with lower verbal ability were reported as having significantly higher levels of emotional and behavioural problems
- There were no differences in levels between males and females
- 14.3% of parents currently accessed mental health services for their child and 18.2 had used services in the last six months.

Implications for staff and parents

- The higher levels of emotional and behavioural problems is something we are familiar with and the low level of agreement between parents and teachers is a common finding in research. However, this does highlight the importance of parents and staff communicating on this subject and exploring if and why there might be differences in emotional and behavioural problems at home and school.
- The SDQ (available free online) is increasingly being used in educational and clinical settings as a quick, very cheap and effective screening tool to identify if a child is at risk of higher levels of emotional and behavioural problems. It does not replace a full clinical assessment, but the fact that teachers and parents can complete the report makes it an assessment that can be easily used, in a home and school setting with a child.