



# Supporting carers and families

**Helen has a seven year old son called Lewis.** Lewis was always a very lively boy who loved climbing and running and being loud! When Lewis started school he did not find it easy to sit down and do his work and began biting other children. At first, Lewis was considered badly behaved. Helen was called into school many times to talk about strategies but despite her best efforts to implement the schools advice, there was no improvement. Helen felt the teachers thought she was not doing her best.

Helen was aware of parents in the school avoiding her and knew Lewis wasn't invited to other children's birthday parties. Her family also struggled to include her and Lewis, as he was often very boisterous with his cousins at family gatherings. Helen began to spend most of her time alone with Lewis and slowly began to be tearful everyday and avoid going out the house. She was exhausted and had no idea what she should do and felt no one understood how hard she was trying.

Eventually, a new teacher at Lewis' school asked Helen if she had heard of autism. She told Helen about Berkshire Autistic Society and suggested she phone them. Helen was invited into the BAS office by the BAS Family support worker to tell her about Lewis and together they worked out a plan of action for Helen to take away. Eventually, Lewis was given a diagnosis of autism and ADHD.



During this period, Helen attended BAS education sessions which helped her understand many of Lewis' behaviours. Staff from the school and members of her family also attended some sessions. Lewis now has support in the classroom.

Helen now attends the BAS Parent Support Group and takes Lewis to the subsidized trampolining sessions that BAS run and other outings they organise.

Through BAS, Helen has overcome her isolation and found new support. Lewis now has an opportunity to have fun with other children that he hasn't had for a long time AND he has the opportunity to have fun with his Mum. Most importantly, Helen knows she has the support there when she needs it.