Why Use a Support Dog?

Approximately 25% of UK households own a dog

(Statista, 2019).

88% of dog owners say that they feel their companion enhances their lives

.(Statista, 2019).

93% of dog owners state that owning their companion makes them happy

(Statista, 2019).

Support dog-based activities enhance the quality of life for autistic children through educational, recreational and therapeutic means

(O'Haire, 2017; Kelly & Cozzolino, 2015; Nordgren & Engström, 2012).

There is surportive evidence proving that support animals have encouraged children with mutism to vocally communicate

(Nimer and Lundahl, 2007;Sams, *et.al.* 2006; Levinson, 1969).

(Anderson, 2020)

All support dogs are fully trained and qualified through Support Dogs UK (2020). The trained dogs welfare has been accommodated throughout the training and allocating process. Support dog owners are protected through the Equality Act (2010).

(Support Dogs UK, 2020)

An Assistance Dogs UK (2015) booklet with personalised information about the training organisation and the support dog is supplied to the client/caregiver, showing proof of IGDF or ADI accredited organisational training.

(Assistence Dogs UK, 2015).

(IGDF, 2021) (NCC, 2021) (Canine Partners, 2021)

Autism Support Dogs

(Support Dogs, 2020)

For the use of practitioners in support of enabling autistic children to communicate through a therapy dog

Note to Practitioner:

- Please ensure that the child's parent or guardian is kept up to date with progress and has proper induction training.
- It is important to check whether the child has fears of dogs or allergies before introducing the support dog.
- The support dog must be up to date with flea treatments and immunisations.
- Religious awareness must also be adhered to, as not all cultures allow dogs to be used as companions.
- Not just any dog can be used as support, always get in touch with professional accredited bodies. Details are stated in this leaflet.

(Angelsense, 2021)

There are numerous benefits from animal-assisted activities that can enhance the quality of life of children with autism. Support dogs can be taken into the home and school environments to provide comfort and therapeutic benefits such as, combatting loneliness, aiding confidence and creating a strong sense of companionship.

(Pet Partners, 2020; O'Haire, 2017; Kelly & Cozzolino, 2015; Nordgren & Engström, 2012)

(Abqtodo, 2021)

(Perfect Pawtions, 2020)

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Support Dogs UK

Open Monday to Friday
8.30am – 4.30pm

Phone: 0114 261 7800

Website: www.supportdogs.org.uk

Address:
21 Jessops Riverside,
Brightside Lane,
Sheffield,
S9 2RX.

This leaflet is available in Welsh, Large Font, Non-colour or Braille format. Please do not hesitate to request any of the above alternative copies.

Rationale

The purpose of this leaflet is to provide a simple source of information on the chosen communication tool of 'Support Dogs' for practitioners, including sign-posting as to where to access and obtain Support Dogs from. This focuses on the demographic of children with Autism and enables the practitioner to decide whether a Support Dog would be suitable for their client.

Dogs have coexisted with humans for many years and have been extensively bred to do so (Riemer, 2017; Parker *et al*., 2010; Turner, 2007; Topál *et al*., 2005). They serve many purposes and have their own roles in humanity's cohabited lives such as, protection, becoming companions, hunting and herding (McCune *et al*., 2014; Dotson & Hyatt, 2008; Turner, 2007; Morey, 1994). Consistently through the years humans have adapted anthropomorphic behaviour; Epley *et al.* (2007) states that anthropomorphism 'instils real or imagined behaviour of nonhuman agents with humanlike characteristics, motivations, intentions or emotions'. Fine & Eisen (2016) advocate that anthropomorphic behaviour may explain more about human needs and the connection animals can make with humanity.

History shows within the 19th century there was an occurrence of animals being used as pets in some UK mental institutes (Glenk, 2017; Gordon, 2017; Beetz, 2012; O'Callaghan & Chandler, 2011). This was inspired through the work of John Locke (1699) who suggested that to encourage responsibility and 'affectionate feelings towards others' children need animals to be responsible for. An example of the companionship between humans and animals was apparent in Bethlem Hospital, as patients would share their distresses with dogs, while nobody was around to hear (Monfort, Montolio & Sancho-Pelluz, 2019; Allderidge, 1991; Connolly, 1847). Later in the 19th century, child psychologist Boris Levison (1969) coined the term 'Pet Therapy' as he accidentally discovered one of his non-verbal patients speaking to his dog within their therapy session. Levison had revealed the therapeutic benefits of using a dog as an implementor to ignite communication between therapists and their patients (Shim & Woo, 2020; Fine, 2016; Levinson,1984, 1969).

The effects of Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) were studied over the course of a year, by a psychiatric social worker within a United States psychiatric hospital in 1987 (Wilson, 1991; Kidd & Kidd, 1987; Netting *et al.,* 1987). A group who received AAT showed a 50% decrease in medication in comparison to the group that did not receive AAT. Eight suicide attempts where shown from the data of the ward with no AAT, the ward with AAT had none (Galt, 2007; Lee 1987). Animals can reduce the influence of psychosocial stress by attracting and holding human attention through attachment theory (Meehan et al., 2017; McCune *et al.,* 2014; O'Haire, *et al.,* 2015; Heinrichs, *et al.,* 2003). The images used in the leaflet show different autistic children being fully engaged and utilising there SD as different forms of comfort, friendship, sensory aid, as a listening aid and a reading partner. The image with the little girl whispering in her SD ear is a perfect example of how the SD can encourage mute children to talk (Brooks et al., 2018; Purewal et al., 2017; Bystrom & Persson, 2015; O'Haire, 2013). These images create a specific visual stimulus for the reader, to visualise the benefits of SD for autistic children rather than just natural reader assumption (O'Donohoe & Eilish, 2007; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Mitchell, 1994). The happiness the children show is a clear indicator of the comfort they feel with their SD, the images enable the reader to empathize and feel that SD are having a positive impact (Grecucci et al., 2019; Schlochtermeier et al., 2013; Nanda et al., 2012; Caramazza,1996). If the leaflet was to only contain text, the practitioner may not feel as engaged with the message that the leaflet is trying to portray (Lara-Rallo, 2009; Roecker, 2005; Mukherjee, 2002; Paller, 1995).

Support Dogs (2020) have been used as a tool for anxiety relief, improving physical wellbeing, to help tackle social isolation and enable confidence. Support Dogs (SD) make a difference for children with autism by keeping the child safe when out, including when crossing roads (Burgoyne *et al*., 2014). SD help teach children to learn how to take turns and share through playing games (Anderson & Olson, 2006). They reduce family stress and help overcome fears (Geist, 2011). SD also help autistic children with different sensory needs, due to the pressure of the SD head resting on an anxious child's lap; this has a calming effect (London *et al.,* 2020).

However, some possible implications must be considered. Some public establishments do not allow animals to enter although, the SD owner is protected under legislation (*Equality Act 2010*) which states that 'reasonable arrangements must be made to accommodate an assistance animal'. The SD must be vet checked, properly trained and de-flead as the animal must be safe around the child (SupportDogs, 2020). UK legislation (*Dangerous Dogs Act 1991*) indicates that dogs 'must be kept under proper control, and the responsibility of dogs around minors lies upon the head of the household'. Studies from around the world indicate that children are the most common victims to dog bites (Schalamon, 2006; Lakestani *et al*., 2005; Kahn *et al.*, 2003; Millot & Filiatre, 1986). Utilising an ill-trained dog could lead to snappy behaviour, frightening the child or causing injury (Murphy, 2018; Younggren *et al.*, 2016; Armstrong & Botzler, 2003). Both of which could create a traumatic effect on the child causing more problems rather than solving them (Anyfantakis et al., 2009; Peters *et al.*, 2004; Rossman et al., 1997; Gislason & Call, 1982).

Religious views also must be considered when allocating a SD to a family. Under Islam, dogs are not usually considered as pets and many Sunni and Shi'a Muslim jurists view them as ritually unclean (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017; Armstrong & Botzler, 2016; Kermerer, 2012; Khaled, 2004). This compared to Hinduism where dogs are considered sacred beings, which are celebrated and considered the guardians of heaven (Dahal, 2020; Ananthaswamy, 2013; Good, 2003; Sax, 1994).

The content of the leaflet aims to provide a practitioner with the appropriate guidance for allocating an autistic child a SD. This leaflet would be suitable for health care professionals of many fields and would benefit being available in hospital and G.P surgery staff rooms. They could even be provided at request with demonstrations and attendance of the SD themselves.

References

Abqtodo (2021) *Support dogs in schools* [Online]. Available at: https://www.abqtodo.com/addmievent/read-to-the-dogs/ (Accessed: January 2021).

Allderidge, P. H. (1991) 'A cat, surpassing in beauty, and other therapeutic animals', *Psychiatric Bulletin*, 15, pp. 759-762.

Ananthaswamy, A. (2013) 'World's oldest temple built to worship the dog star', *New Scientist*, *219*(2930), pp. 14.

Anderson, D. (2020) *Willow The Dog* [Online] Available at: https://www.supportdogs.org.uk/blog/willow-the-wonder-dog-makes-normal-life-possible-for-youngster-sam (Accessed: 30 December 2020).

Anderson, K., & Olson, M. (2006) 'The value of a dog in a classroom of children with severe emotional disorders', *Anthrozoös*, *19*(1), pp. 35-49.

Angelsense (2021) *Breeds for autism* [Online]. Available at: https://www.angelsense.com/blog/best-dog-breeds-for-autism/ (Accessed: 15 January 2021).

Anyfantakis, D., Botzakis, E., Mplevrakis, E., Symvoulakis, E., & Arbiros, I. (2009) 'Selective mutism due to a dog bite trauma in a 4-year-old girl: a case report', *Journal Of Medical Case Reports*, *3*(1).

Armstrong, S., & Botzler, R. (2003) *The animal ethics reader*, 11st. ed. Routledge.

Armstrong, S., & Botzler, R. (2016) *The animal ethics reader*, 3rd edn., Routledge.

Assistance Dogs UK (2020) *Law | ADUK*. Available at: https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/law/ (Accessed: 30 December 2020).

Beetz, A., Uvnäs-Moberg, K., Julius, H., & Kotrschal, K. (2012) 'Psychosocial and Psychophysiological Effects of Human-Animal Interactions: The Possible Role of Oxytocin', *Frontiers In Psychology*, 3.

Brooks, H., Rushton, K., Lovell, K., Bee, P., Walker, L., Grant, L., & Rogers, A. (2018) 'The power of support from companion animals for people living with mental health problems: a systematic review and narrative synthesis of the evidence', *BMC Psychiatry*, 18(1).

Burgoyne, L., Dowling, L., Fitzgerald, A., Connolly, M., P Browne, J., & Perry, I. (2014) 'Parents' perspectives on the value of assistance dogs for children with autism spectrum disorder: a cross-sectional study', *BMJ Open*, *4*(6),

Bystrom KM, Persson CA. (2015) 'The meaning of companion animals for children and adolescents with autism: the parents' perspective', Anthrozoös. 28(2), pp. 263–275.

Canine Partners (2021) *Registered Assistance Dogs Logo* [Online]. Available at: https://caninepartners.org.uk/our-organisation/ (Accessed: 20 January 2021).

Caramazza A (1996) 'Pictures, words and the brain', *Nature*, 383(6597), pp. 216–217.

Connoly, J. (1847) *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane.* Reprinted with an introduction by R. Hunter and I. Macalpine (1968). London: Dawsons, p. 52.

Dahal, B. (2020) 'Dialectics of Sacrificing and Worshiping Animals in Hindu Festivals of Nepal', *Advances In Anthropology*, 10(02), pp. 97-124.

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, c. 65. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/65/section/6 (Accessed: 24 January 2021).

Dotson, M., & Hyatt, E. (2008) 'Understanding dog–human companionship', *Journal Of Business Research*, *61*(5), pp. 457-466.

Epley, N., Waytz, A., & Cacioppo, J. T. (2007) 'On seeing human: a three-factor theory of anthropomorphism', *Psychological review*, 114(4), pp. 864.

Equality Act 2010, c. 15, Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/part/12/chapter/1 (Accessed: 24 January 2021).

Fine, A. (2016) 'Standing the test of time: Reflecting on the relevance today of Levinson's Pet-Oriented Child Psychotherapy', *Clinical Child Psychology And Psychiatry*, *22*(1), pp. 9-15.

Fine, A. H., & Eisen, C. (2016) *Afternoons with puppy: Inspirations from a therapist and his therapy animals,* 2nd ed. West Lafayette. IN: Purdue University Press.

Galt, A. (2007) '*ANIMALS AS THERAPY IN MENTAL HEALTH'* [Ebook]. NHS Scotland. Available at: https://www.tsh.scot.nhs.uk/Person%20Centred/Docs/Animals%20as%20Therapy%20booklet%20-%20Aug%2007.pdf.

Geist, T. (2011) 'Conceptual Framework for Animal Assisted Therapy', *Child And Adolescent Social Work Journal*, *28*(3), pp. 243-256.

Gislason, I., & Call, J. (1982) 'Dog Bite in Infancy: Trauma and Personality Development', *Journal Of The American Academy Of Child Psychiatry*, *21*(2), pp. 203-207.

Glenk L M (2017) 'Current perspectives on therapy dog welfare in animal-assisted interventions', *Animals*, 7(2), pp. 7.

Good, A. (2003) 'Cogealing divinity: time, worship and kinship in South Indian Hinduism', *Journal Of The Royal Anthropological Institute*, *6*(2), pp. 273-292.

Gordon, R. (2017) 'From Pests to Pets: Social and Cultural Perceptions of Animals in Post-medieval Urban Centres in England (AD1500 – 1900)', *Papers From The Institute Of Archaeology*, 27(1).

Grecucci, A., Sulpizio, S., Tommasello, E., Vespignani, F., & Job, R. (2019) 'Seeing emotions, reading emotions: Behavioral and ERPs evidence of the regulation of pictures and words', *PLOS ONE*, *14*(5).

Heinrichs, M., Baumgartner, T., Kirschbaum, C., & Ehlert, U. (2003) 'Social support and oxytocin interact to suppress cortisol and subjective responses to psychosocial stress', *Biological psychiatry*, *54*(12), pp. 1389-1398.

IGDF (2020) *International Guide Dog Federation Home Page*. Available at: https://www.igdf.org.uk/ (Accessed: 30 December 2020).

IGDF (2021) *International Guide Dog Federation Logo* [Online]. Available at: https://www.igdfseminar2020.com/about-us/ (Accessed: 20 January 2021).

Kahn A, Bauche P, Lamoureux J. (2003) 'Dog Bites Research Team. Child victims of dog bites treated in emergency departments: a prospective survey', *Eur J Pediatr*, 162, pp. 254 –258.

Kelly, M. A., & Cozzolino, C. A. (2015) 'Helping at-risk youth overcome trauma and substance abuse through animal-assisted therapy', *Contemporary Justice Review*, *18*(4), pp. 421-434.

Kemmerer, L., (2012) *Animals and World Religions,* Oxford University Press: Giles.

Khaled A.E. Fadl (2004) *Dogs in the Islamic Tradition and Nature*, Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature, New York: Continuum International, forthcoming 2004.

Kidd, A., & Kidd, R. (1987) 'Seeking a Theory of the Human/Companion Animal Bond', *Anthrozoös*, *1*(3), pp. 140-145.

Kress, G. and Van Leeuwen, T. (1996) *Reading Images; The Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge

Lakestani, N., Waran, N., & Phillip, C. (2005) 'Dog bites in Children', *EJACP*, *15*(2), pp. 133-135.

Lara-Rallo, C. (2009) 'Pictures Worth a Thousand Words: Metaphorical Images of Textual Interdependence', *Nordic Journal Of English Studies*, *8*(2), pp. 91.

Levinson, B, M. (1969) *Pet-oriented child psychotherapy,* Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Levinson, B. (1969) 'Factor Scales in Evaluation of Intellectual Deficit', *Psychological Reports*, 25(3), pp. 898-898.

Levinson, B. (1984) 'Human/companion animal therapy', *Journal Of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 14(2), pp. 131-144.

Locke, J. (1699) *Some thoughts concerning education. Reprinted with an introduction by F.W. Garforth (1964).* London: Heinemann.

London, M., Mackenzie, L., Lovarini, M., Dickson, C., & Alvarez-Campos, A. (2020) 'Animal Assisted Therapy for Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Parent perspectives', *Journal Of Autism And Developmental Disorders*, *50*(12), pp. 4492-4503.

McCune, S., Kruger, K., Griffin, J., Esposito, L., Freund, L., Hurley, K., & Bures, R. (2014) 'Evolution of research into the mutual benefits of human–animal interaction', *Animal Frontiers*, *4*(3), pp. 49-58.

McCune, S., Kruger, K., Griffin, J., Esposito, L., Freund, L., Hurley, K., & Bures, R. (2014) 'Evolution of research into the mutual benefits of human–animal interaction', *Animal Frontiers*, 4(3), pp. 49-58.

Meehan, M., Massavelli, B., & Pachana, N. (2017) 'Using Attachment Theory and Social Support Theory to Examine and Measure Pets as Sources of Social Support and Attachment Figures', *Anthrozoös*, *30*(2), pp. 273-289.

Millot J., Filiatre J. (1986) 'The behavioural sequences in the communication system between the child and his pet dog', *App Anim Beh Sci*, 16, pp. 383-390.

Mitchell, W.J.T. (1994) *Picture Theory.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Monfort Montolio, M., & Sancho-Pelluz, J. (2019) 'Animal-Assisted Therapy in the Residential Treatment of Dual Pathology', *International Journal Of Environmental Research And Public Health*, 17(1), pp. 120.

Morey, D.F. (1994) 'The early evolution of the domestic dog', *Scientific American Nesbitt*, 82, pp. 336-347.

Mukherjee, A. (2002) 'Pictures in words or words in pictures? New insights from Indian print advertising research', *International Journal Of Advertising*, *21*(1), pp. 67-86.

Murphy, T. (2018) '*Safeguarding Children from Dangerous Dogs Guidance',* [Ebook], Sulfolk Safeguarding Children Board, Available at: https://www.suffolksp.org.uk/assets/Working-with-Children-Adults/Policies-CYP/Dangerous-Dogs/2018-10-02-Dangerous-Dogs-Guidance-v1.pdf.

Nanda, U., Zhu, X., & Jansen, B. (2012) 'Image and Emotion: From Outcomes to Brain Behavior', *HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal*, *5*(4), pp. 40-59.

NCC (2021) *Support Dogs Logo* [Online]. Available at: https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/SEND/local-offer/independent-living/3334-support-dogs (Accessed: 20 January 2021).

Netting, F., Wilson, C., & New, J. (1987) 'The Human-Animal Bond: Implications for Practice', *Social Work*, *32*(1), pp. 60-64.

Nimer J, Lundahl B (2007) 'Animal-assisted therapy: a metaanalysis', *Anthrozoos,* 20 (3), pp. 225–38

Nordgren, L., & Engström, G. (2012) 'Effects of animal-assisted therapy on behavioral and/or psychological symptoms in dementia: A case report', *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease & Other Dementias, 27*(8), pp. 625-632.

O'Donohoe, Eilish (2007) 'Between Image and Text: Tensions in the art of Hans Haacke and Jenny Holzer', *Working Papers on Design 2,* (2).

O'Haire, M. E. (2017) 'Research on animal-assisted intervention and autism spectrum disorder, 2012–2015', *Applied Developmental Science,* 21(3), pp. 200-216.

O'Callaghan, D., & Chandler, C. (2011) 'An Exploratory Study of Animal-Assisted Interventions Utilized by Mental Health Professionals', *Journal Of Creativity In Mental Health,* 6(2), pp. 90-104.

O'Haire ME. (2013) 'Animal-assisted intervention for autism spectrum disorder: a systematic literature review', *J Autism Dev Disord,* 43(7), pp. 1606–1622.

Paller, K. (1995) 'If a picture is worth a thousand words, how many pictures is a word worth?', *Behavioral And Brain Sciences, 18*(2), pp. 367-368.

Parker, H., Shearin, A., & Ostrander, E. (2010) 'Man's Best Friend Becomes Biology's Best in Show: Genome Analyses in the Domestic Dog', *Annual Review Of Genetics,* 44(1), pp. 309-336.

Perfect Pawtions (2020) *Contact Us* [Online] Available at: https://perfectpawtions.com/ (Accessed 30 December 2020).

Pet Partners (2020) *The Importance of Standards.* Available at: https://petpartners.org/standards/ (Accessed: 4 January 2021).

Peters V, Sottiaux M, Appelboom J, Kahn A. (2004) 'Posttraumatic stress disorder after dog bites in children', *J Pediatr,* 144, pp. 121–122.

Purewal, R., Christley, R., Kordas, K., Joinson, C., Meints, K., Gee, N., & Westgarth, C. (2017) 'Companion Animals and Child/Adolescent Development: A Systematic Review of the Evidence', *International Journal Of Environmental Research And Public Health, 14*(3), pp. 234.

Riemer, S. (2017) 'Social dog — emotional dog?', *Animal Sentience, 2*(14).

Roecker, N. (2005) 'Pictures worth a thousand words', *Nursing, 35*(10), pp. 8.

Rossman BR, Bingham RD, Emde RN. (1997) 'Symptomatology and adaptive functioning for children exposed to normative stressors, dog attack, and parental violence', *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 36, pp. 1089–1097.

Sams, M., Fortney, E. and Willenbring, S. (2006) 'Occupational Therapy Incorporating Animals for Children With Autism: A Pilot Investigation', *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 60(3), pp. 268-274.

Sax, B. (1994) 'Animals in Religion', *Society & Animals, 2*(2), pp. 167-174.

Schalamon, J. (2006) 'Analysis of Dog Bites in Children Who Are Younger Than 17 Years', *PEDIATRICS, 117*(3).

Schlochtermeier, L., Kuchinke, L., Pehrs, C., Urton, K., Kappelhoff, H., & Jacobs, A. (2013) 'Emotional Picture and Word Processing: An fMRI Study on Effects of Stimulus Complexity', *Plos ONE, 8*(2).

Schoenfeld-Tacher, R., Hellyer, P., Cheung, L., & Kogan, L. (2017) 'Public Perceptions of Service Dogs, Emotional Support Dogs, and Therapy Dogs', *International Journal Of Environmental Research And Public Health, 14*(6), pp. 642.

Shim, H., & Woo, J. (2020) 'The Effects of Animal Assisted Play Therapy on Anxiety in a Child with Harm Avoidance: Focused on the Dynamics Between a Child and a Therapy Dog', *Journal Of Emotional & Behavioral Disorders, 36*(2),pp. 353-378.

Statista (2019) *Leading pets owned by households in the United Kingdom (UK) 2018/19.* Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/308218/leading-ten-pets-ranked-by-household-ownership-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/ (Accessed: 30 December 2020).

Support Dogs (2020) *Autism Support Dog* [Online] Available at: https://www.charitychoice.co.uk/support-dogs (Accessed: 29 December 2020).

Support Dogs UK (2020) *Support Dogs*. Available at: https://www.supportdogs.org.uk/ (Accessed: 30 December 2020).

Topál, J., Gácsi, M., Miklósi, Á., Virányi, Z., Kubinyi, E., & Csányi, V. (2005) 'Attachment to humans: a comparative study on hand-reared wolves and differently socialized dog puppies', *Animal Behaviour*, 70(6), pp.1367-1375.

Turner, W. G. (2007) 'The experiences of offenders in a prison canine program', *Federal Probation,* 71(1), pp. 38-43.

Wilson, C. (1991) 'The Pet as an Anxiolytic Intervention. *The Journal Of Nervous And Mental Disease*', *179*(8), pp. 482-489.

Younggren, J., Boisvert, J., & Boness, C. (2016) 'Examining emotional support animals and role conflicts in professional psychology', *Professional Psychology: Research And Practice*, *47*(4), pp. 255-260.