



**transform
autism
education**

The Transform Autism Education project

Findings, impacts and plans ahead

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Inclusion

*'an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while **respecting diversity** and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination.'*

UNESCO (2006, p.3)

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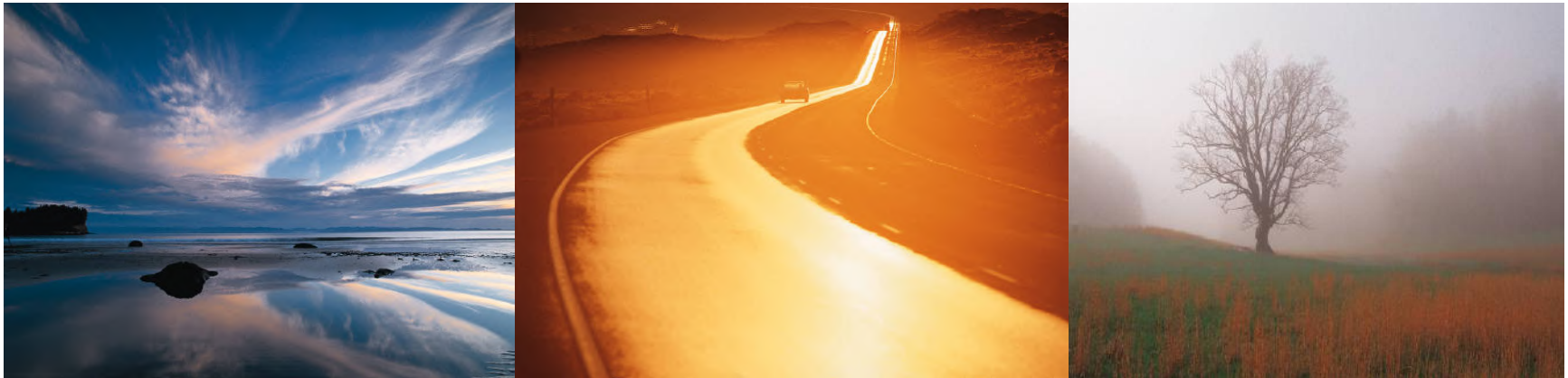
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A Community of practice: Travelling through a 'landscape of practices'



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A Community of Practice

We are a community of practice with a shared identity and a passion for making a difference in autism education

We took on the challenge of researching inclusion for pupils with autism in the three countries and developing professional development materials for school staff so that we could make a difference.

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Our aims

To improve the educational knowledge, understanding and practices of teachers and other school staff who work with children with autism.

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Starting point

We built on the collaborative approach, materials and model developed by the Autism Education Trust. Their programme has now been delivered to 140,000 education staff in England. The AET have been a really generous partner sharing, collaborating and guiding the TAE project.

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What have we done?

- 'State of the Art' Report completed on good autism practice in the regions of Lombardia and Athens.
- Three levels of training materials have been adapted and translated for their local contexts.
- Pilot training and main training has been undertaken.
- Guidelines are being developed for schools and other educational establishments for practitioners (skills and competencies needed) and the organisation (what makes a good school for pupils with autism?)
- Our website: transformautismeducation.org

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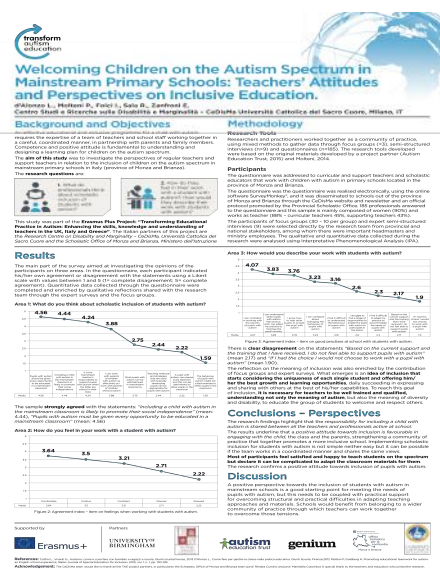
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Findings



Our posters at the entrance hall room give more detail about our findings from the first phase of the project: the 'State of the art' research phase.



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‘Transform Autism Education’ as a social intervention



Transform Autism Education as a social intervention, offering professional development for school staff, grounded in the research phase.

‘What is the meaningful individual, community, organizational and societal change arising from the project?’

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TRAINING UNTIL NOW (2016-2017)

LEVEL	1	2	3 - SCHOOL DIRECTORS	3- MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS
PEOPLE	1350	182	43	40
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS TRAINED		138		
TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE TRAINED		1615		

16 TEACHERS HAVE BECOME
TRAINERS

And we continue...



The Value Creation Framework



Participant perspectives are essential pieces of data
We embraces and triangulate diverse voices through
the creation of “Value Creation Stories’, a genre that
enables individuals and communities to define the
issues that are important to them and to pursue
those issues in a way that is most meaningful to
them.

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Voices of the community

We have collected stories generated by members of our community and five key themes have emerged. We believe these key themes are crucial aspects of inclusion.

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Value Creation

Themes

- Social learning: thinking differently about autism
- Autistic participation and meaningful engagement
- The power of collaborating and sharing good autism practice in education
- Doing things differently in schools
- Developing collaborative models for sustainability

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Social learning: thinking differently about autism



‘Autism need not be considered a tragedy’

It changed the way I understood autism, the way I understood intervention and mostly it changed my expectations of people with autism. The positive approach makes sense when supporting individuals and families. Respecting the child, respecting autism, listening to the child’s opinion, understanding and interpreting children’s behaviours in order to find solutions in difficulties in the classroom. We analyzed behaviours, we tried interventions and we found solutions to problems, making teachers feel confident in supporting children with autism and children in classes less stressed and happier.

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Autistic participation and meaningful engagement



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Autistic participation and meaningful engagement

- Feeling valued
- Having shared interests
- The value of insider knowledge
- Greater participation and learning of the team
- Including autistic people in decisions that affect them
- How much better our insight, understandings and support becomes when we work with and involve people with autism

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The power of collaborating and sharing our practices

A UK outreach teacher took two Greek people to a school, including Kaiti who is autistic. This strengthened the teacher's appreciation of the importance of providing a network of peer support, cultivating friendship groups and opportunities to develop social interaction skills in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for the children and young people with autism in their school. It also highlighted the importance of fostering a culture within their settings where the young person is able to recognize their own strengths and what they can offer to others in order to build self-esteem and support their own wellbeing by developing resilience.

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The power of collaborating and sharing our practices

*I think we sometimes take for granted the services that are available to Children and Young People with autism in Birmingham, and the high expectations and aspirations we have. Having the visitors come and visit my school, and having the opportunity to talk to them gave me **a mirror to my own practice**, it gave me an insight into how other countries are trying to take frameworks for good autism practice on board and it made me think very carefully about what was really important in what we do and how best to highlight this to visitors.*

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Doing things differently in schools

The changing practice of the teacher

I learnt how to behave differently with the child with autism and above all not to upset him with my own behaviour. An example of this is that I created a visual social story according to the aim that I set for him. For example, the child always wanted to be first on every activity. So I developed a visual system for him in order to explain to him that it is ok if he does not go first on every activity. I also used some colour cards to inform him about the activity schedule. The green card informs him that it is the beginning of the lesson, the yellow card informs him when there are only two minutes left until the end of the lesson and the white card informs him that we have reached the end of the lesson.

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Doing things differently in schools

A changing reality for the child

The child yes, he is now more successful, he doesn't argue as he used to, he collaborates with the teacher and his peers, he listens to the instructions and he has reduced his meltdowns. He manages to communicate with his peers and he has now become good friends with them and he is much more capable of facing any social and learning challenges than he was before.

The next step: getting the child's perspective.

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Developing collaborative models for sustainability.

*If you give someone a fish, you feed them for the day.
If you teach them how to fish you feed them for a lifetime.
If instead you work with them to create an Institute of advanced fisheries, they could feed their whole village and manage their local lake far better than you ever could.*

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Developing collaborative models for sustainability.



'Our team can be better than the desperation of this country' Greek team member



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Developing collaborative models of sustainability



- We want to stress the importance of collaborative partnership models in developing training for school staff.
- There is such value in autistic people, families, researchers and practitioners working together to co-create new knowledge.
- We need to develop international perspectives on inclusive practice for pupils with autism.
- The importance of making a difference through giving pupils and staff agency.

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ALSO...

Visit the Transform Autism Education website:

www.transformautismeducation.org

Read and follow the TAE BLOG

<https://transformautismeducation.wordpress.com>

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ENHANCING SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF TEACHERS



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ

ΠΡΟΩΘΩΝΤΑΣ ΤΗΝ
ΚΑΛΗ ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΗ
ΣΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΙΣΜΟ
MORE



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TRANSFORMING
AUTISM EDUCATION
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3 year research and development project



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Acknowledgement

Thank you to all members of the research and development teams, and to the community of autism researchers, practitioners, families and individuals with autism

Karen Guldberg

K.K.Guldberg@bham.ac.uk

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Disclaimer



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