

***Portage and Early Years Development Day***

***at***

***The Priory Rooms, Quaker Meeting House***

***40 Bull Street, Birmingham, B4 6AF***

***On***

***Friday 14th March 2025***

The National Portage Association (NPA) invites you to attend a Portage and Early Years Development Day.

Registration will start at **10.00am** and the day will finish at **4.30pm.**

**We do kindly ask to avoid disruption during the Keynote speaker presentation that you stay for the full presentation.**

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Full timetable to follow.

***Keynote Presentation***

**Developing and implementing and effective evaluation of Portage Service outcomes**

***Delivered by Joel Wilson***

About the Keynote speech

This seminar aims to disseminate up-to-date research conducted through the University of Manchester alongside Bradford Portage Service. Existing research highlights the positive impact practice-based interventions, such as Portage, can have in increasing parental self-efficacy (PSE). A correlation has also been established between high PSE and positive outcomes for parents and their preschool-aged children.

Following a preliminary study with Bradford Portage Service, it was established that existing methods of service evaluation did not capture PSE, or the relational/emotional support offered through Portage intervention. This research aimed to develop a system of evaluation that could measure these positive outcomes of Portage, further promoting the importance of maintaining this service within the local authority.

About Joel

Joel recently completed a doctorate in educational and child psychology and currently works as an educational psychologist for Westmorland and Furness Council, in Cumbria. Joel offers training and advice to education settings, helping them improve their practice in supporting children and young people between the ages of 0-25. As part of the training for this role, Joel conducted research with Bradford Portage Service, gaining an understanding of how Portage works to deliver emotional, practical, and social support for families in need.

Prior to this, Joel worked as a classroom teacher, supply teacher, and teaching assistant in mainstream and specialist settings across Cumbria and North Lancashire.

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***Seminar Choices***

*(You will have the opportunity to attend 2)*

***Seminar A***

**TacPac**

**Delivered by: Vanessa Gilbert**

About this Seminar

TACPAC is a sensory communication resource using touch and music.

This seminar will explain how TACPAC can enable children, of any age and stage of development, to develop ways of acting upon their environment and how TACPAC can help children learn that they can influence their environment through communication.

Through its regularity, consistency and predictability the specialist intervention of TACPAC is one medium, within an individual’s holistic provision, which aims to shape their intentional communication.

This fun seminar will explain the principles behind TACPAC and give delegates a opportunity to experience TACPAC activities.

About Vanessa

Vanessa is one of the three TACPAC trainers.

Vanessa has always had a passion for communication and language development. She has an expertise in how development of this can be affected and what we as practitioners can do to maximise every opportunity to facilitate profound and meaningful communication with our communication partners.

Vanessa has taught, led and advised in the Special Educational Needs sector for over 30 years. As well as her role as a TACPAC trainer Vanessa runs her own Special Educational Needs Consultancy and is a Team Teach tutor (A framework for Behaviour Management and De-escalation).

***Seminar B***

**The Sleep Charity - Understanding sleep for pre-school children with SEND**

**Delivered by: Helen Rutherford**

About this Seminar

Sleep is one of the most common problems parents of children with SEND report and to help move them forward we need to understand what might be causing them. Join me in exploring causes, physiology and research findings to help us choose strategies which make a difference.

About Helen

Helen Rutherford has been a Specialist Sleep Practitioner since 2016. Her professional practice has focused on working with children who have additional needs. Her experience now extends into a fourth decade. She has a breadth of experience including management and leadership roles. These have included 12 years as a Portage service manager, and a Family Liaison Officer on the staff of a special educational needs school in Worcestershire. In addition, she is an accredited ‘Signalong’ tutor.

She led on the NHS England funded, national award-winning project " Sleep Support for Children with Autism" and on the BBC Children in Need funded "Sleep Support for Children with ADHD".  Helen has a flexible and adaptable set of skills that can have her sharing her expertise with health, educational and social care professionals in one part of the working week and then devoting her time to parents, carers, children and young people in the other.

She is a mother of four free-spirited children, who is looking for answers on how to win the continuous battle against the advances of a garden that is way too large. To relax, she can be found paddleboarding along the River Severn and on most Saturdays a parkrun starts her weekend off very nicely. All of that once she has put down the essential huge mug of tea, of course.

***Seminar C***

**What is Gestalt Language Processing?**

**Delivered by: Gill Clarke**

About this Seminar

This workshop will be a practical introduction to Gestalt Language Processing (GLP). It will cover how GLPs develop language and how we can support children identified as GLPs through effective and neuro-affirming strategies.

About Gill

Gill is a speech and language therapist with over 30 years’ experience. She worked in the NHS in York for 28 years but stepped into independent practice in 2022, and recently joined the team at Elklan as a Professional Advisor. Parents, carers and pre-school/school staff hold the key to unlocking children’s communication potential. Gill’s focus is therefore to empower key adults in their life to support them by developing their knowledge and confidence in how to support speech and language development through sharing her knowledge and experience with them, as well as direct work with children. In addition, Gill is an associate practitioner for CAYP psychology and part of their York autism diagnostic team.

**Seminar D**

**Supporting neurodiversity in the workplace and beyond**

**Delivered by: Juliet Davies**

About this Seminar

Being a Portage Practitioner provides us with a privileged position of working with children and their families. Whilst we focus on the small steps to success for young children with SEND this session will turn the focus towards the neurodivergent differences for many parents/carers, friends, colleagues or maybe ourselves.

Using a strength-based approach we will explore the benefits of working alongside and with neurodivergent people and how best to implement supportive strategies through a person centred approach.

This session includes a mixture of input, group exercises and discussion and the use of a video.

About Juliet

Juliet’s professional heritage is firmly embedded in early years and SEND, including becoming an experienced Portage service manager and practitioner and Children’s Centre Coordinator for SEND.

In her role as a Corporate Equalities Officer Juliet delivers training on all aspects of equality and neurodiversity and advises on compliance with legal duties.

She has a wealth of professional and personal qualifications, knowledge and experience of neurodivergence and often provides support and advice across the Local Authority. She works with both with leaders and managers and on an individual basis with colleagues.

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***The Venue***

**The Priory Rooms**

**Quaker Meeting House**

**40 Bull Street**

**Birmingham**

**B4 6AF**

<https://www.theprioryrooms.co.uk/find-us/>

***Fees***

The cost of the day is **£140+VAT** for members including lunch and refreshments.

Non-members are also welcome, at a cost of **£185+VAT**

We are also pleased to be able to offer Virtual bookings for the Keynote speaker only for those who are unable to attend on the day at a price of **£25+VAT**

***Bookings***

A Booking Form with seminar choices form for each person wishing to attend should be completed and returned by email to:

**conference@portage.org.uk**

or post to

National Portage Association, Kings Court, 17 School Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 8JG

Bookings should be submitted by **Friday 22ND December 2023**

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**Invoices will be raised following receipt of booking forms and sent to the address given. See terms and conditions of booking below.**

***NPA terms and conditions of booking:***

* **Full payment of the fee should be received within 30 days of the invoice.**
* **Second invoices issued to a different name and/or address will be subject to a charge of £5 per invoice.**
* **If a place is cancelled 30 days prior to the date of conference, a fee of £50 will be deducted from monies returned.**
* **In the event of a place being cancelled less than 30 days before the event, there will be no refund and the full cost of the place will be charged.**
* **If the whole event has to be cancelled, all monies paid will be refunded.**
* **By completing and returning a Booking Form, applicants agree to the terms and conditions stated here.**

***We look forward to welcoming you to the day!***

***National Portage Association***

***Registered Office: Kings Court, 17 School Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 8JG***

***0121 244 1807***