

As if marking 10 years of PECS in the UK didn't give us enough reason to open the bubbly in 2008, 2009 is shaping up to be another wonderful year. Read on for an update on what's new and exciting at Pyramid UK, including our new consultant Gary Dadd and a visit from Andy Bondy. It's a good feeling to look ahead at the year, and see a full calendar of training dates that will have us visiting most parts of the UK and Ireland.
Best wishes from everyone at Pyramid UK

MBE award for Pyramid UK Director



Sue Baker, Pyramid UK's Clinical Director, was awarded an MBE in the 2009 New Year Honour List for services to Children and Young People. Sue introduced PECS to the UK in 1998, and her work supporting PECS has given an estimated 100,000 people with communication difficulties a meaningful way to communicate. Sue said, "The news came as a complete surprise to me and I feel proud and honoured to have over a decade of work with young people recognised and valued." What a fabulous start to the New Year and an excellent opportunity to celebrate the important and life-changing effects of communication. Congratulations, Sue.

Language of Emotions Talk in Manchester

Andy Bondy, co-developer of PECS, is returning to the UK with his talk on emotions, a highlight of last year's 10-year celebrations. This talk explores how to help people with autism acquire and develop language around emotions. You will leave feeling inspired, with a good understanding of the theory as well as practical tips to develop effective lessons. This workshop is appropriate for family members and professionals. Dr Bondy will also present PECS Basic Training in Manchester in September, and in Birmingham in November. Book early as places are limited: www.pecsevents.co.uk, t: 01273 609555



2009 UK Workshops with Dr Andy Bondy

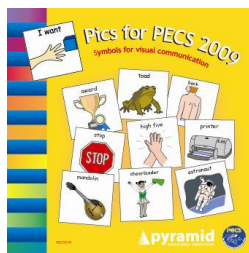
PECS Basic Training, 9 & 10 September, Novotel Manchester Centre

Language of Emotions, 11 September, Novotel Manchester Centre

PECS Basic Training, 19 & 20 November, Menzies Strathallan, Birmingham

Advanced PECS: Review & Problem Solving, 23 November, Menzies Strathallan, Birmingham

New resource: Pics for PECS 2009



The newly updated Pics for PECS CD is now available! The 2009 edition contains our entire collection of over 2200 PECS images, including 200 additions, such as:

'ballerina', 'Wellington boots', 'goldfish', 'potato salad', 'tortellini', 'kazoo', 'I don't understand', 'swimming goggles', 'musical chairs', and 'worried'. A reference list with thumbnails of all images makes picture selection easy. Images are in jpeg format and can be used with Macs or PCs running on any operating system. Visit us online to view a list of all words:

www.pecs.org.uk/shop.



New consultant for Pyramid UK



We're thrilled to welcome our new consultant, Gary Dadd, who is based in Cambridge. He brings a wealth of PECS experience from working in a SLD (Severe Learning Difficulties)/ PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) school in London where he was in charge of literacy and communication, and taught across the 11-16 range. He was subsequently the literacy coordinator in South Cambridgeshire's area special school, where he taught a primary class and then introduced PECS to the secondary department teaching students with more severe learning difficulties.

Tips from the PECS Forum

groups.yahoo.com/group/pyramid-pecs/

Recently, forum discussion has focused on prompting and what type of prompts to use when teaching certain skills. One suggestion was to remember that the level of ‘intrusiveness’ of a prompt may have more to do with the way we introduce/teach and subsequently fade the prompt, than the actual form the prompt takes. Also, that physically prompting from behind a student can be especially useful when teaching a skill you want to be independently and spontaneously initiated, like Phase 1 of PECS.

Attention all eBay Sellers



Help the National Autistic Society (NAS) raise funds, by selling your goods on eBay and donating a portion of the proceeds. You can donate between 10 and 100% of your sale to the NAS through the

eBay for Charity initiative. Your support will go even further as eBay will match your donation. More info on how to participate:

<http://www.nas.org.uk/nas/jsp/polopoly.jspd=230&a=13927>

Challenging behaviour — make a difference

When you learn to identify why difficult behaviours are happening, you can design and implement the most effective behaviour intervention plans. This year Pyramid UK is hosting three workshops, appropriate for professionals as well as parents. You will learn how to observe and understand behaviour, and how to implement behaviour strategies—what works and what doesn’t. Don’t miss these rare workshops!

Manchester, 18 March

Bristol, 24 June

London, 4 November



PECS support for families

There are still places available for the PECS Intensive Programme, held during school holidays at our clinic in Brighton for children under eight. Contact us for more information:
t: 01273 609 555, e: pyramid@pecs.org.uk.

*Info on partial funding for families is available from the Pyramid Educational Trust: www.pyramideducationaltrust.org
Email: info@pyramideducationaltrust.org*

International update



Finland update from Louise Malkin, Pyramid Consultant

Half an inch of snow might be enough to grind London to a halt, but in Finland it’s par for the course. In January, I presented a Basic PECS Workshop for a 30 strong crowd in Vaasa, on Finland’s west coast. Eager participants arrived in snow boots and thermals, and had to scrape ice from their cars at both the beginning and end of the day, but this didn’t dampen their enthusiasm. I had a fantastic experience, even taking the advice of my wonderful host Ulla-Stina to walk on the snow covered beach and admire the frozen sea before returning home. ~LM



Slovenia: Julia Biere is presenting the Guide to Managing Challenging Behaviour in February. This is a return visit for Julia—she presented the Basic PECS Workshop for this client in 2006.

Upcoming: We look forward to travelling to Switzerland in March for PECS training and consultancy support for an organisation we’ve worked with for a couple years. Following on from three successful workshops in the Netherlands in 2007 and 2008, we’re going back to Katwijk aan Zee to provide training in April.

Workshop and training dates

Our new training catalogue is now available, announcing our PECS and Pyramid Approach workshop dates to the end of December 2009. New locations include Dundee and Bournemouth. You can always find info about our courses online at www.pecsevents.co.uk. Book early as some courses fill up!