



Sense – Ability

WEBINAR SERIES



SLIGO
COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE CHONTAE SHLIGIGH



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Library



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Foreword

I am very excited and honoured to be part of this innovative and important project which has been launched by Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon library services. I joined the team in January 2021 and will be working on an advisory capacity throughout the first year of the project. I have previously worked on the Toys, Technology and Training project which is run through Kildare library services and know only too well how much Sense-Ability will mean to Neurodiverse people, their families and their schools.

Dr. Dorothy Armstrong
MSC PhD Occupational Therapist



What is Sense-Ability?

Sense-Ability aims to offer positive library experiences for people with sensory or additional educational needs. It strives to develop sensory friendly, accessible library services for the people of Sligo, Leitrim and Roscommon. It aims to provide a welcome and sense of belonging to library users of all abilities, their families and caregivers. It has been specifically designed to support children and adults who are Neurodiverse e.g. people with ADHD, DCD/Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Intellectual disability and/or those on the autism spectrum. Through consultation with professionals, extensive staff training, a programme of events and the development of new and exciting spaces and services, Sense-Ability gives everyone the ability to use library services in an inclusive, safe, non-judgmental way.



Sense-Ability Webinar Series

The Sense-Ability collaborative project launches in May 2021 with a series of online seminars with expert speakers discussing topics in neurodiversity. We hope these webinars will provide information, support and networking opportunities for parents, teachers and healthcare professionals.

11th May,
7:30pm

Dr. Dorothy Armstrong, Occupational Therapist

Too Loud, Too Bright and the seams on my socks hurt – Understanding, Including and Affirming those with sensory processing challenges

18th May,
7:30pm

Dr. Blánaid Gavin, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

25th May,
7:30pm

Mr. Adam Harris, Founder and CEO of As I Am, Ireland's National Autism Charity

Understanding Autism, creating an inclusive community

1st June,
7:30pm

Mr. Michael Ryan, Child/Adolescent Psychotherapist

Supporting your Neuro-Diverse and LGBT+ Teen

8th June,
7:30pm

Ms. Evaleen Whelton, Founder of Ausome Training

Anxiety and Autistic People

15th June,
7:30pm

Ms. Maureen Dunne, National Workshop Manager. Dyslexia Association of Ireland

Dyslexia and Strategies for reading



Dr. Dorothy Armstrong

Dr. Dorothy Armstrong (MSc PhD) is an Occupational Therapist who works with people who are Neurodiverse. She specialises in working with teenagers, young adults and adults with High Functioning Autism (Asperger's), Developmental Coordination Disorder (Dyspraxia), and/or ADHD who also have mental health issues and/or difficulties in the area of executive function. She primarily works with clients using the online platform zoom. Dorothy has made television and radio appearances and is the author of the book 'The Next Adventure: Transitioning to Secondary School when you have Developmental Coordination Disorder' which is available through Dyspraxia Ireland, with all proceeds going to that charity.

Too Loud, Too Bright and the seams on my socks hurt

Understanding, Including and Affirming those with sensory processing challenges.

Dr. Dorothy Armstrong
Tuesday 11th May 7:30 – 8:30pm

We all receive information about the world around us through our senses e.g. sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. This helps us to understand the world around us and helps us to know how to respond to it. It is common for Neurodiverse people to find certain types of sensory information e.g. light, sound, textures overwhelming. Examples of sensory processing problems include:

- Smells other people don't find a problem make the person feel sick
- Finding the noise of a Hoover or hand-dryer painful
- Needing to move or fidget constantly
- Having an anxiety response to light or unexpected touch
- Needing the labels to be cut off clothes

Dr. Dorothy Armstrong will host an evening that is aimed at, parents, teachers, Neurodiverse adults and those who work with people with sensory processing challenges. The webinar is aimed at enabling people to develop a greater understanding of Sensory Processing issues and the strategies that can help.



Dr. Blánaid Gavin

Dr. Blánaid Gavin works as a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and is Associate Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the School of Medicine, UCD. Her current area of clinical subspecialty is ADHD. She has a particular interest in the early recognition and treatment of mental health difficulties in young people. She has published on a variety of topics related to mental health including academic publications and national clinical guidelines. She has developed multiple courses and initiatives aimed at enhancing the understanding of mental health in children and teenagers in addition to increasing the expertise available nationally to recognise and support those who are struggling with mental health difficulties.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Dr. Blánaid Gavin

Tuesday 18th May 7:30 – 8:30pm

This talk will provide an overview of ADHD: the causes of ADHD, how it is diagnosed, how it may impact on functioning and how children and teenagers with ADHD can be supported.



Adam Harris

Adam Harris is the Founder and CEO of As I Am, Ireland's National Autism Charity. Adam Founded the organisation based on his own experiences growing up on the autism Spectrum. A Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Awardee, Adam is a frequent contributor to media and conferences in Ireland and overseas. From Greystones in Co Wicklow, Adam was appointed to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission in July 2020.

Understanding Autism

Creating an inclusive community

Adam Harris

Tuesday 25th May 7:30 – 8:30pm

Adam will explore his experience growing up on the Autism Spectrum in Ireland. He will discuss the differences autistic people experience in day-to-day life, and the challenges that exist due to a lack of understanding of autism. Adam will speak about the strengths of autistic people and how small changes can make a big difference in creating an autism-friendly community.



Michael Ryan

Michael Ryan (MIACP) is a Counsellor/Psychotherapist and Author who works with children and teenagers in primary & secondary schools. He occasionally provides training and hosts workshops/webinars on positive Mental Health. He regularly contributes to media debate on these subjects and has spoken at regional and national conferences on topics related to Mental Health, Wellness, LGBT+ and Autism Spectrum (ASD). He is the author of a "Coming Out" book for Teens called - "The Complete Guide to Gay Life for New Explorers".

Supporting your Neuro-Diverse and LGBT+ Teen

Michael Ryan

Tuesday 1st June 7:30 – 8:30pm

In this talk Michael will explore the world of neuro diverse teens who also identify as being LGBT+. He will look at the prevalence of having both identities and ways in which those who are in their circles can best support them as they navigate the world. The talk will be suitable for parents/guardians, teens, siblings (teen+), friends and professionals in their lives.



Evaleen Whelton

Evaleen Whelton made the wonderful discovery that she is Autistic in 2014 at the age of 37. She realised very quickly that the information she was getting from autism “experts” was in contradiction with the Autistic Community. Since then she has been advocating for positive change for Autistic people in Ireland and around the globe.

Evaleen is founder of www.ausometraining.com which offers training to parents, teachers, SNA's and practitioners online. Her training places the shared experiences of Autistic people at its centre and it is based on the most up to date research. In 2019 Evaleen held Ireland's first ever autism conference which featured only Autistic speakers. She designs and delivers educational workshops as well as collaborating with professionals for her online training.

Evaleen's main focus is on changing the social environment so that Autistic children and adults can live better lives. Over the past seven years she has used her expertise as a speech and drama teacher to develop social skills classes for children as well social skills courses for parents and professionals. In 2020 she authored three social skills activity books for Autistic children. The Konnect series not only teach the Autistic child about other people's ways of communicating but also teach the adults about Autistic communication.

Anxiety and Autistic People

Evaleen Whelton

Tuesday 8th June 7:30 – 8:30pm

Autistic children and adults are disproportionately at risk of suffering from anxiety than the general population.

In this talk Evaleen will share insights on how living in the world as “different” impacts our self-esteem and wellbeing. We are all products of our environments and so we must look at how the social environment responds to Autistic people. Autistic children and adults are often classed as “odd” or “weird”. We often experience bullying and all of this impacts how we feel.

Evaleen will look at how our environment leads to high levels of anxiety in Autistic kids and adults. She will explore ways to cope with and minimise these levels. And she will explore the environmental changes which are needed so that Autistic people can have better mental health.



Maureen Dunne

Maureen Dunne has over 30 years' experience working to increase learning opportunities and access to education for students with disabilities, and students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. She began her career working for the DAI as a tutor. At that time, she also researched and produced a spelling program for young Irish students with dyslexia. She subsequently worked in a school in Madrid which specialized in supporting students with learning differences. While working in TCD, she established the Trinity Access Program (TAP) and the Mature Student Office. In addition, she worked on the roll-out of the HEAR/DARE schemes and was employed in the Disability Office in TU Dublin. She is now the National Workshop Manager with DAI, where she manages the DAI nationwide Workshops; these offer out-of-school specialist tuition in small groups to students with dyslexia.

Dyslexia and Strategies for reading

Why reading, in many different contexts, can be a challenge for young people with dyslexia.

Maureen Dunne

Tuesday 15th June 7:30 – 8:30pm

Everyone loves to get lost in a good story! It's one of the pleasures of life. Yet the English language is a particularly difficult language to read.

This presentation will give some understanding as to why reading, in many different contexts, can be a challenge for young people with dyslexia. It will also discuss some ways around this. In doing so it will explore some of what we learned from a recent Dyslexia Association initiative: The Readable Project.

This online project was modelled on a book club. It endeavoured to awaken, in the students, the pleasure that can be had from stories and a fascination for words.

THIS LECTURE SERIES IS FREE AND REGISTRATION IS SIMPLE.

To register for this webinar series, please follow the instructions provided below.

- On your device, enter the following URL on your browser:
<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/sense-ability-webinar>
(we recommend Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge for optimal connectivity)
- A page will appear with a green 'Let me in' button – click on this button.
- A pop up screen will appear asking you to enter your email (OR select from one of your social media account log-ins – if you have one.)
- Enter your email account and press the green arrow to the right hand side.
- Tick the 'agree to terms of service and privacy policy' box.
- Press green 'Join Event' button.
- A pop up screen will appear asking you to submit your name. Enter your name and press 'Register'
- You'll be brought to the webpage where the webinar will take place.
- Save the URL onto your device. When you reopen it on the day of the event you can proceed directly to the online webinar. You will be sent reminders via email in the lead up to the event(s).

For up to date information about Sense-Ability please follow us on social media or contact your local library service with the subject 'Sense-Ability' in your email;

sligolib@sligococo.ie
leitrmlibrary@leitrincoco.ie
roslib@roscommoncoco.ie



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