



**Suzanne Randall is a parent of one our Tiggers and an experienced special needs nanny with loads of practitioner expertise in helping children with Autism. She was roped in help deliver some training to help volunteers understand what it is like to have a communication and language impairment, what she didn't realize is how much it would help her understand how fabulous our volunteers are! Here's what she has written for the website.....**

I would like to tell you a bit about the "Afacic" course Debora and delivered on Thursday, May 24th. Three of us originally began scheduling the course, then it dropped to 2, which made it more nerve racking. I have only presented in front of a crowd once, my area is one to one, and was finding it all very daunting. However Debra is a good talker and done this many times so this left it relatively easy for me to step in and out. I was pleased at the response the "role play" I had devised went. I had it in mind people could get an idea of what it feels like to be the "child", "parent " or "volunteer" and Deb agreed this was a wonderful idea. Bruce kindly made the cards up for us and even helped by being "my parent" for our initial role play to make sure everyone could see what was wanted from this excercise, Debs was the volunteer. Now this was extremely nerve racking but I put my best into it and survived. Thanks for the clap of appreciation Paul, it was appreciated.

I even joined in with the groups to make up the numbers and played a part that would give the others chance of being "someone different" each time. The end result of this was terrific, and made it definitely worth my while helping present the course. Everyone realised how frustrating it was to be a child with communication difficulties, a parent or a volunteer. I too was quite amazed by my feelings gleaned from this activity. **I found it quite scary and frustrating dealing with situations that can suddenly arise from children you may only see for one hour each week, hardly getting chance to know each of them and their character traits very well, which must make it harder for them. But our volunteers plod on and continue trying their best with our kids, with or without parental support. As a childcare worker of children with special needs myself, but being able to spend far more time with my charges so to know their traits, I feel the volunteers are doing a wonderful job. Keep up the good work guys, and to those who came on the course, thanks for coming**

Suzanne Randall