

**Role Outline – Volunteer Group Support Assistant – Family Support Services**

**Values and Commitment**

KAT is committed to providing highest standard of support designed around individual abilities, needs and choices. KAT is committed to promoting independence and inclusion within communities. KAT believes everyone is able to make their own individual contribution. KAT seeks to work in partnership with all relevant parties but in particular with the individual themselves.

**Family Support Information Services**

FSIS is a free service for all people that want to know more about Autism, we currently have contact with over 5000 families a year. The service is primarily an information service that can offer information over a range of subjects and primarily to increase understanding of Autism and increase acceptance of diversity. We offer training, workshops and groups to help a range of individuals to feel more supported and better informed

**Role Overview**

Our volunteers are at the core of our organisation, making up our Support Network, which allow us to reach and make a difference to adults struggling with the effect autism has on their lives. Without our Support Network volunteers, we would be unable to reach the thousands of adults who rely on us for support and information.

**How does this role make a difference?**

Being a group support assistant can be incredibly rewarding. Besides helping others and offering much needed support in your community, it enables you to become more involved with The Kent Autistic Trust’s Family Support activities. Local support groups can offer much needed information and support for anyone affected by autism. The groups give Autistic adults the chance to meet and talk with others who understand their situation.

**What will the role require me to do?**

The role is to provide a safe and supportive environment for Autistic Adults to meet.

Confidentiality is key to this process and it should be stressed that no individual’s personal story should be re-told out of the room. The groups provide information about autism to help others understand. This can be done through discussion, expert speaker or publication hand out.

So we can show how effective we are as a group, you will be responsible for keeping log sheets of attendance numbers. The figures from all groups become a useful tool for the advancement of the service.

The main tasks are:

* To aid with setting up the group setting environment
* To support the Family Support Officer to establish new groups
* To interact verbally with people in the group in a positive manner
* To be aware of Safeguarding and Disclosure issues
* To be aware of what is available to individuals who attend groups
* To maintain a professional relationship with the Family Support Information Advisors and those that attend group
* To undertake other duties in support of the Family Support Information Advisors to ensure the smooth running of groups
* To maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to the service and to present a positive image of the Trust.

**What skills and experience are required?**

No special qualifications are needed for this role but being a good knowledge and interest in autism and the ability to devote time to attend groups is essential. The following skills are required for the role:

* Support assistantship and self-motivation, together with a can-do attitude
* A well-developed ‘listening ear’
* Ability to empathise with people and not to over-sympathise
* Understanding that we provide information rather than advise
* Ability to communicate with people from different backgrounds in a non-judgmental way
* Experience of autism, either personally (friend or family member) or professionally
* Some experience of the voluntary sector would be an advantage

**What training is provided?**

You will receive training to ensure that you have the necessary skills before providing support at a group. If your application is successful, you will be invited to our training event. All reasonable expenses are paid for by The Kent Autistic Trust.

**How do I apply?**

Please apply on line via our website <https://www.kentautistictrust.com>.