

For immediate release. With two images.

Families transformed into animated characters to promote clearer perspective on autism

Autism Unlimited has launched an animated online campaign starring local families to challenge people's perspectives of autism.

See It From My Perspective features animation films of everyday situations, voiced by local neurodivergent children, their carers and their siblings.

Each animation shows the challenges some autistic people experience from the scenarios and how this is perceived by them, their carers, professionals and onlookers - the aim being to challenge people to alter their perspective of autism and become an 'ally' to autistic people.

Rebecca Clapcott from Christchurch founded the successful Awesomearchie.co.uk non-profit website with her son Archie, who is autistic.

Rebecca and Archie feature in the campaign's scenario around an autistic boy's visit to the dentist.

Rebecca said: "When Archie was born, our family was thrust into a world that we knew nothing about. We were scared, lonely and only heard the negative side of Autism parenting. Through time, education and the support of charities like Autism Unlimited, we now see the sheer joy of Archie's neurological differences and the many positives that he brings to our family life. So much so, that Arch and I founded our own no profit - Awesome Archie, to spread this very message across mainstream schools in Dorset and Hampshire.

"The See It From My Perspective campaign is deeply personal to us. We want everyone to be an Autism ally, to stand up for the kid that's struggling and to include everyone, at all times. We are hoping our animation will help people realise and recognise the work that goes on behind the scenes of a parent carer and the daily bravery that kids like Arch have to muster. The whole voiceover process was a wonderful experience and we are looking forward to working with Autism Unlimited again in the near future."

Archie said: "It was really fun talking into the camera and being part of an animation. My favourite part was spending time with Tilly, Autism Unlimited's Therapy Dog when we did our voiceover. "

Mark Arnold – aka The Additional Needs Blogfather – comes from Bournemouth and he and his son James, 20, star in the campaign's animation around a visit to a café.

Mark said: "The campaign really resonated with me, both as a professional and campaigner in this area myself, but also as Dad to James, who is autistic and has various additional needs.

"The importance of helping people to see how little acts of acceptance and kindness can make a massive difference was compelling and something that we all wanted to be a part of; it was easy to say 'Yes!'. It's a fun project to be involved in, but we also hope our little story will encourage people to think twice before being mean-spirited towards autistic young people and their families, choosing to be understanding and an 'Autism Ally' instead!"

The See It From My Perspective campaign urges people to post their thoughts on the animations.

It also asks people to share experiences of similar situations they have witnessed or experienced and to nominate members of the public or professionals who have shown kindness and understanding to an autistic person during those instances.

Deborah Goatley-Birch from Hampshire, is herself autistic and is Artist in Residence at Autism Unlimited's Portfield School in Parley.

She features with two of her children in an animation about a visit to the shops.

Deborah said: "It's valuable to share experiences with others and have the opportunity to thank those people in society who have touched our lives in a positive way. This could be a simple act of kindness and doesn't involve any special training or prior knowledge. It's about embracing our richly diverse communities and supporting those who may need it most."

Siún Cranny, CEO of Autism Unlimited said: "We are all very excited by this new campaign which gives a fascinating insight into the challenging lived experiences of autistic people and their families, in situations that many of us would class as 'everyday'.

"We want people to see the autistic person - not the stereotype. And we are very much looking forward to seeing how people respond to the scenarios and hopefully how it changes their perspectives of autism.

"We also hope to shine a light on some of the many heroes out there who are already 'autism allies', and plan to recognise them with our first Autism Ally Awards, later in 2023."

Read the stories for yourself and find out how to join the campaign at: <https://www.autism-unlimited.org/>

Ends

Picture captions:

Archie Clapcott - the inspiration for the awesomearchie non-profit - with his mum Rebecca. Both star as animated characters in Autism Unlimited's See It From My Perspective campaign.

Archie and Rebecca as they appear in their scene

www.autism-unlimited.org

Autism Unlimited provides specialist care, support and also education through Portfield School, Sixth Form and Futures for young people, aged 19-25.

See It From My Perspective follows the charity's successful campaign *Autism – It's more than you think* – which raised awareness of the life opportunities and successes enjoyed by neuro diverse people.

Media information: Debbie Granville at Deep South Media on: 07884 657782 email: Debbie.granville@deepsouthmedia.co.uk



