

Press Release



Sunday 29th March 2009, London, UK

“Dear Gordon Brown ...” - a mother’s personal campaign

Autism mother, Polly Tommey’s journey continues in her pursuit of the attention of Prime Minister Gordon Brown on behalf of the thousands of mothers of children with autism in the UK.

Her stark and sharp billboard messages personally addressed to Mr Brown have now been complemented by 2,000 more posters in shopping centres and motorway service stations across the UK.

Once again, Polly’s motivational approach and determination succeeded in persuading iconic celebrity photographer, Terry O’Neill, to take a photograph of her with five other mothers who also have children with autism.

Terry O’Neill identified with Polly’s ambitions and captured the moment in his own unique style. The result is a powerful and defiant image:

**DELIVERING WHERE
GOVERNMENTS HAVE FAILED**



AUTISM MOTHERS

The campaign image has captured the imagination of mothers of autism around the world who are re-creating the image to show their support for Polly’s UK campaign and are sending them into her for inclusion in a growing YouTube montage*.

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To quote Polly Tommey:

"This campaign is about strength not weakness ... it's about demanding support instead of simply hoping for it ... and it's about how we, the parents and the mothers in particular, are having to deliver where our governments have failed across the world."

"Our campaign is about ensuring that children with autism are treated as well as anyone else. It's also about the stress families face when living with autism. This is a serious issue that must be addressed. This is not negotiable - it's fundamental."



Polly summarises the importance:

"Perhaps one day we can aspire to move on from the unacceptable position we all face today where we are the ones who have to deliver alone where our governments have failed."

She concludes, "Nearly 10% of the UK population has someone with autism in their family ... that is a lot of votes, Mr Brown."**

Polly is still waiting to hear back from Gordon Brown after having taken her 12 year old son Billy, who has autism, to Downing Street last week to deliver her letter requesting a personal meeting with Mr Brown.



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Notes for Editors

- * See YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMrFH7APTzA>
- ** Over 500,000 people in the UK have some form of autism – the extended family of parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles equates to 10% of the UK's population.

The Autism Trust (registered charity Nr 1117657) www.theautismtrust.org.uk

The Autism Trust's focus is on building inspiring, sustainable and real futures for the many children with autism in the world today:

A Safe Haven for People with Autism

The objective of The Autism Trust is simple: to create a future with purpose for children everywhere with autism. We aim to do this by developing a worldwide network of innovative, high-quality environments: Centres of Excellence in Autism.

Our goal as The Autism Trust is to provide this through the development of a network of consistently outstanding and innovative outreach centres for autism worldwide. We consider it essential that each of these Centres of Excellence not only provides help and support to individuals with autism but also to their families and those involved with their care, support, ongoing education and development.

Polly Tommey

Polly Tommey is a mother dealing with autism. She is also the founder and Editor-in-Chief of The Autism File. Polly has been producing what is now the leading retail magazine on autism in the UK, USA & Canada (with a current issue circulation of over 40,000 copies) from her family's house in Hampton, West London since 1999. Polly is also the Founder of The Autism Trust, a UK registered charity focused on building an inspiring and sustainable future for children with autism in the UK when they leave full time education.

Polly is regarded as one of the leading figures in autism in the UK as a campaigning and influential journalist and is featured regularly as a sector expert in the media. She is currently directing an investigative television documentary on autism to be broadcast in 2009. Polly also presents a regular radio programme: Autism Issues From Around the World on Autism One Radio; she is Secretary of the Autism Human Rights & Discrimination Initiative; and is a regular attendee and presenter at conferences worldwide. She is married to Jonathan Tommey who runs The Autism Clinic and they have three children, one of whom has autism.

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