

Spectrum News

The Magazine of Autism Tasmania Inc.

ISSUE: March 2014



Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness 2014



Above: CEO Terry Burke and the Ride for Autism Awareness 2014 Team

From the CEO Desk

Traditionally the start of a new calendar year in Community Sector organisations is a time to regroup after a busy period leading into the holiday session. This is a time for catching up on those less pressing tasks, reporting to funders, planning the year ahead and for staff to have a well deserved break with their families.

This has been the case at Autism Tasmania again this year however there has not been the normally expected drop off in servicing needs with strong demand and client numbers continuing throughout this period.

Initiatives commenced late last year have been developed that set the organisation up for an interesting year as we engage with individuals and families.

Autism Tasmania has been fortunate to secure the services of Kate Wilson as a Consultant on a more regular basis during 2014 and a program of Teacher/Teacher Aid Workshops will be run out of both Launceston and Hobart. We will also be looking at other training opportunities with both educational and service providers in Tasmania.

We are pleased to be working more closely with Amaze (formerly Autism Victoria) with the first collaboration being the development of Fact Sheets on a variety of topics that have been tailored to reflect the delivery of services in Tasmania. We have recently completed the first set of six fact sheets that include behaviours, bullying, transitions, **puberty, social skills in the workplace and a grandparent's resource**. These resources will be available from our offices and uploaded to our website in the coming days.

In addition to this, Amaze will be delivering the nationally accredited training Support Individuals with Autism Spectrum over two days in late May early June further details will be available shortly.

In a lead up to the recent election Autism Tasmania joined with the Tasmanian Disability Education Reform Lobby and Action for Tasmanian Autistic Children to facilitate three regional election policy forums across the State to allow the parties to elaborate on their policies/positions and hear the experiences from those living with autism. Autism Tasmania looks forward to working with the incoming government to ensure the best outcomes for both individuals and families around the State.

Spectrum News includes details of our activities to celebrate autism around World Autism Awareness Day 2 April. These include family fun days in both Hobart and Launceston. This year Autism Tasmania is actively involved in the Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness 2014 and setting up mobile access points en route over twelve days. This culminates with the riders return to Hobart on 2 April having completed the over 1200 km journey. In fact I am writing this report from the Hillcrest Caravan Park before heading off to catch up with the riders who are riding over 100km to Scottsdale after leaving here at 7.00 am this morning.

I look forward to meeting those of you that can make it to a ride stop along the way and extend our gratitude to all those involved for their tremendous effort in helping improve awareness of autism in our beautiful State.

Terry Burke, CEO

Autism Tasmania Board Members:

President
Mick Clark

Secretary
Ms Anita Brunacci

Treasurer
Mr Mike Derbyshire

Board Members
Mr Keiron Cornwell
Mrs Linda Murphy
Ms Abbey Guilbert
Ms Kathryn Fordyce
Mr Simon Chadwick

Itinerary

- Launch Friday 21st March 2014
Event John Paul II Catholic Primary School, Clarendon Vale from 7am. (Live Broadcast on Ultra 106.5FM)
- DAY 1- Saturday 22 March 2014
Hobart Parliament Lawns (9am) ride to Orford
- DAY 2- Sunday 23 March 2014
Orford to Bicheno
- DAY 3- Monday 24 March
Bicheno to St Helens
- DAY 4- Tuesday 25 March 2014
St Helens to Scottsdale
- DAY 5- Wednesday 26 March 2014
Scottsdale to Launceston
- DAY 6- Thursday 27 March 2014
Launceston to Devonport (via Deloraine stop)
- DAY 7- Friday 28 March 2014
Devonport to Burnie ASD Centre
- DAY 8/9- Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 March
Burnie to Queenstown
- DAY 10- Monday 31 March 2014
Queenstown to Derwent Bridge
- DAY 11- Tuesday 1 April 2014
Derwent Bridge to New Norfolk
- DAY 12- Wednesday 2 April 2014 World Autism Awareness day and conclusion of Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness.
New Norfolk to Hobart Parliament Lawns arrival.

...on their way around

"As a father of 2 children with Autism, I understand the struggles families face each day, but I can tell you that children with Autism are awesome!"

Clinton Taylor.

Starting at 9am Saturday the 22nd of March from Hobart Parliament House Lawns a team of riders embarked on a journey to cycle 1200km around Tasmania, and returning to Hobart Parliament House Lawns on World Autism Awareness Day April 2nd 2014.

Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness is a charity event to promote awareness for Autism and also to fundraise for Autism Tasmania.

Autism Tasmania is a not-for-profit organisation that provides information and practical support to people involved in the autism community.

This charity ride aims to promote acceptance, understanding, hope and awareness for all involved with Autism.

In addition, a fundraising goal of \$20,000 will help the lives of many Tasmanian families touched by Autism.



Autism Tasmania would like to invite you to drop in to our mobile access point. We will be travelling to rural and regional communities around Tasmania in conjunction with the Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness 2014 to promote Autism Awareness in the community.

We will be launching a range of information sheets which have been developed in collaboration with Amaze (Autism Victoria)

We are coming to you!

Tasmania for Autism Awareness



Follow the Ride

Ultra 106.5FM Scotty and Joe will keep listeners updated with the progress of the ride live on air between 6am and 10am weekdays.

Track the Ride online

Clinton's Website will feature a GPS tracker that will be displaying Clinton's progress.

www.rideforautism.com.au/

Donate

give.everydayhero.com/au/ride-tasmania-for-autism-awareness

Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness 2014

ultra 106.5 fm *via my station!*

Amble Inn SNACK BAR

KAURI SPORTS APPAREL

island markets

ROKEBY Petrol

STATEWIDE constructions

CSA Carer Solutions Australia

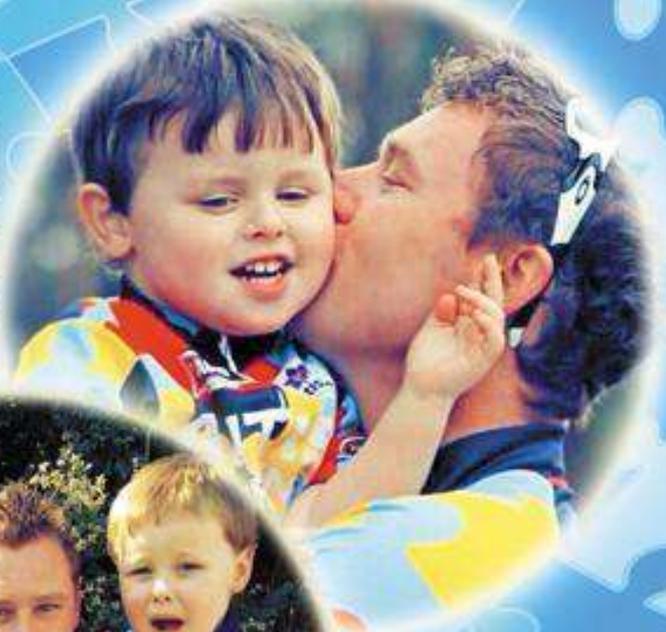
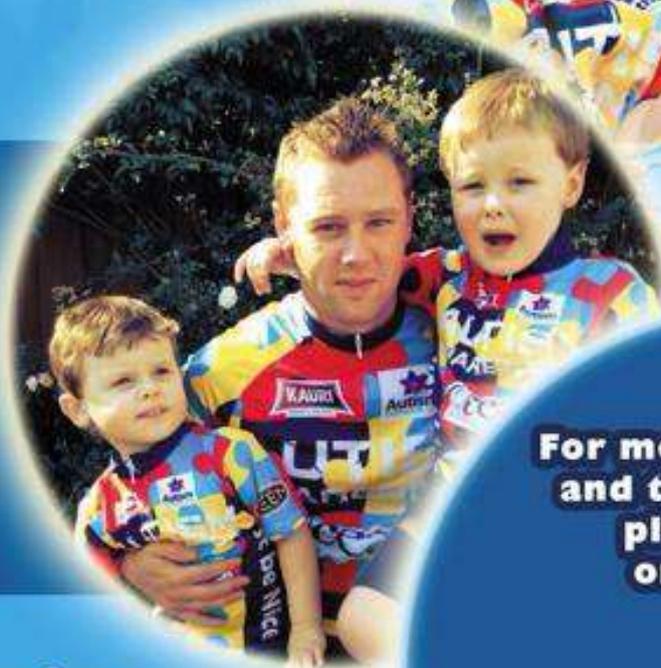
THE BIKE SHOP

BARGAIN CAR RENTALS

Peopleworks

Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness 2014

Our mission is to promote awareness and understanding of Autism, and to raise funds for Autism Tasmania to support families touched by Autism



For more information
and to get involved,
please like us
on Facebook



[www.facebook.com/
RideTasmania
ForAutismAwareness](http://www.facebook.com/RideTasmaniaForAutismAwareness)

**Starts
9am March 22nd
at the
Hobart Parliament
House Lawns**



Aggression and Bullying (including Cyberbullying) among Young People

The Department of Education, through the Professional Learning Institute is pleased to invite parents and carers and members of the wider school community to an evening with the internationally acclaimed health educationalist:

Professor Donna Cross



people.

Professor Cross is an internationally renowned health educator from the School of Exercise, Biomedical and Health Science at Edith Cowan University. She has an international profile in school health promotion intervention research and is a renowned campaigner for the wellbeing of children and young

Reducing bullying has been the social issue of highest importance to Australian students since 2010 and it is a significant issue impacting on the wider community. Bullying behaviour causes both victims and bullies to experience distress and psychological harm, and impacts the ability to learn effectively.

Her most significant research relates to her work on aggression and bullying (including cyberbullying) among young people. She has also made significant research contributions in the areas of drug use, cigarette smoking, child abuse, HIV and road safety. While much of this research was conducted in Australia she has also been involved in youth-based research throughout the USA, South Africa, Canada, and Japan.

South: Tuesday 20 May 2014
Time: 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Where: Derwent Entertainment Centre
North: Wednesday 21 May 2014
Time: 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Where: The Albert Hall Launceston
North-West: Thursday 22 May
Time: 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Where: Burnie Arts Centre

Please RSVP by 4 April to:
suzanne.pennicott-jones@education.tas.gov.au
Phone 6165 5737



We at Carer Solutions Australia are incredibly proud to **be this years' Platinum Sponsor for the 2014 Ride Tasmania for Autism Awareness event.**

Carer Solutions Australia is a new initiative to Tasmania and we are looking forward to working with many individuals and families.

Our organisation enables families and individuals to employ support workers of their OWN choice without the burden of having to take care of the administration involved in doing so.

Here are a few words from a family of an autistic child who uses our service currently, in Victoria –

"Finally I have discovered a solution which allows families with respite funding their choice of support worker.

It also takes away the administrative burden of hiring your support workers directly.

What this means is that if you have funding for a support worker you no longer have to worry about a support workers' inconsistency, unreliability, or lack of understanding of your requirements; you can use the money for a support worker who is already familiar with your loved one that needs to be cared for's - specific needs.

I have found Carer Solutions Australia to be knowledgeable, friendly and genuine in their desire to help families such as ours. Thank goodness someone has finally filled this gap in the care sector!"

If you are interested in learning more about how we can assist you in employing the support worker/s of your choice please visit –

www.carersolutions.com.au

or phone 1300 729 839



BlueLine Wins 'Equity Employer of The Year' 2013

BlueLine Employment is a specialist job agency that is committed to supporting people with disability to gain and maintain employment. They are recognised for their high rate of sustained employment placements and for the quality of support provided to jobseekers, workers and employers.

Their philosophy of working together on an individual basis to build confidence, work ability, job readiness and establishing the right employment plan has led to the successful placement of job seekers in a wide range of occupations and industries.

The BlueLine Employment team don't like to "toot their own horn" too much because they don't believe disability employment is unusual, or really something to be awarded for. They think that all employers should be open minded to employing people with disabilities as a matter of course.

However, Anjie and Greg, who work extensively with both participants and employers, encouraged BlueLine's Manager Jess to put the organisation

forward for the Training Tasmania award. They **thought that making BlueLine's internal Disability Employment Strategy**, and resulting success in the industry, better known to employers would encourage them to consider disability employment in a better light.

"We have around 50% of staff who would qualify as clients of the service, and the other 50% have (or have had) significant people in their lives with a lived experience of disability. We view real life experience with disability as a transferrable skill, like any other skill, when we consider candidates for roles at BlueLine".

They hope that our Disability Employment Strategy brings an extra layer of quality to our service. They **don't just 'talk the talk', they really do know what it is like to seek work and maintain employment while living with a disability!**

BlueLine offer free help to find and keep employment. If you or someone you know has a disability or a permanent health condition and wants help to find and keep employment please give them a call. People on Disability Support Pension can directly register with BlueLine. As a Disability Employment Service there is no cost to eligible clients. Employers are also welcome to use our free Employer Assistance Service.

BlueLine Employment
162 Macquarie Street, Hobart Tasmania.
Tel: 6223 2622
Fax: 6223 7922
info@ble.org.au
www.ble.org.au



Employees with autism provide competitive edge.

More and more companies are waking up to the benefits of recruiting people with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum, according to *Specialisterne*, a social enterprise aiming to support and create jobs for people with autism.

From an aptitude for numbers to the ability to become absorbed in a repetitive task, the qualities often found in people with autism are being increasingly recognized and valued by employers, it says.

Specialisterne, Danish for "the Specialists", was founded by Danish IT manager Thorkil Sonne, whose own son was diagnosed with autism at the age of two. *Specialisterne* now operates in the UK and Ireland, the US, Canada, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Poland and Spain.

There has been more demand for the skills of autistic employees particularly since a high-profile recruitment drive in May by a German computer software giant SAP.

SAP is looking for people with autism to join the company as software testers, and is working with *Specialisterne* to find and support those new employees.

'Emotional support'

Since the drive was announced *Specialisterne* has reported an increase in enquiries from companies interested in hiring people with autism. "There's a growing recognition among companies of the skills autistic employees can bring to the table" said Steen Thygesen, *Specialisterne* chief executive. "SAP has done a lot to elevate this into the mainstream. Interest is definitely growing".

Specialisterne UK does clerical work for NHS clients in its own offices, and works for an IT services company with the employees working in the client's offices. *Specialisterne* general manager Tom Brundage said it provides as much support as it can simply by listening to what employees tell them.

"It can just be little things that we need to keep on top of" he said. "For example, one of the women who works here in the office just really doesn't like people walking behind her, so we just moved her chair so she can sit with her back to the wall, and that is fine. The main thing is that we just try to keep it pressure free".

"In general, our employees just aren't good at handling stressful situations-everyone reacts differently to that and can shut down or lash out. It's really about making the work environment as comfortable as possible".

One of the company's employees who did not wish to be identified, said "it's certainly been a work in progress here, but I can wholeheartedly say that they are working to get it right."

"My reasonable adjustments are more than met, and the emotional and professional support I currently receive has ensured that I not only have a job to come in to every day but I am happy coming into it".

"I've always been involved with technology, and have never had the opportunity to further those skills.

"Specialistene came along at the right time and helped me develop them. I'm fairly logical and methodical, but I do have the ability to think outside the box, which is common misconception about people on the spectrum. I feel I'm a lot more determined than most due to the setbacks I've had with other employers over the years. That, I think more than anything else, sets me, and the people I work with apart. Not our perceived attributes. We're different not less."

Carol Povey, director of the National Autistic Society's Centre for Autism, pointed out only 15 per cent of adults with autism in the UK are in full time employment but most want to work.

Accuracy

Although they can experience great difficulty in finding and staying in employment, often due to inadequate support and misunderstandings related to their condition. Povey added that people with autism can make excellent employees-and not just in technical roles.

"Many people with the condition thrive in a structured and well organized environment and have many strengths that can give employers a competitive edge, such as accuracy, good eye for detail, and reliability."

"We're talking about people who are really good at spotting errors, at ensuring quality and following procedures, and most companies have a significant amount of tasks in that field" added Thygesen, whose son now 15, was diagnosed with autism when he was about 9.

Povey said "Simple adjustments like making job interviews more accessible and providing support so that those in work understand the 'unwritten rules' of the workplace can unlock the potential of a whole army of people with autism ready and willing to work."

Acknowledgements

This article first appeared in The Big Issue in the North (UK)-2-8 December 2013 p4. It is reproduced here with the kind permission of the author and copyright holder Clare Speak.



Profile: Eliza Gill

Who am I?

I grew up in Hobart and my involvement and interest in with people with disabilities began early in life. At the age of 3 I attended Early Special Education (now known as Early Childhood Intervention Service) as part of a reverse integration group, the idea of this program was to provide typical language and play models to the kids attending the centre. This experience is one of my fondest and earliest memories and I still cherish some of the friendship I made there.

In 2011 I completed a Bachelor of Psychology with Honours at University of Tasmania and moved to Melbourne in Jan 2013 to study Master of Educational/Developmental Psychology at Australian Catholic University and am currently in my final year. My current placement is at Bulleen Heights School, which is a school for children with autism from 5 years old through to 18 years old. I am really enjoying this placement; it is both interesting and challenging at the same time as it calls for me to acquire new skills and to modify and adapt those I've previously acquired.

I am particularly interested in autism and early intervention, hence my placement at Bulleen Heights. This may well have been due to my early experiences at Early Special Education but more likely to have been the influence of my mum, Kate Wilson who has

worked with and for people with Autism and their families for almost 20 years. This meant that there was an abundance of information readily available at home and so I was "immersed" in autism from a young age. Now that I am a Provisional Psychologist, I really appreciate the opportunity to talk with mum about ways to support some of the people I am working with given her years of experience in the field.

My study:

As well as undertaking the placement at Bulleen Heights, I am expected to complete a thesis and given my strong interest in autism, naturally the research is centred around this. I have full ethics approval and am I am doing research into prospective memory (PM) in children with and without high functioning autism (Aspergers). Prospective memory is important in everyday life as it is the ability to remember a planned action or intention at the appropriate time. Every day, people are required to remember to do a number of things in order to ensure they meet the demands of daily life. These tasks may range from the simple, such as remembering to replace the cap on the toothpaste or attend an important appointment, to more complex such as remembering to take medication three mornings a week. Specifically, there are two types of PM, time-based and event-based. Time-based PM involves carrying out a task at a certain time (e.g., remembering to take medication at 8am), whereas event-based PM involves carrying out a task when a specific event or stimulus occurs (e.g., remembering to take medication when eating breakfast). To date, research has indicated that children with autism have more difficulty with the time-based tasks as compared to the event-based tasks. I'm interested in investigating whether providing supports to children with autism can improve their performance on both types of PM.

The importance of the study:

Ultimately we want individuals with autism to have a good quality of life and lead as independent lives as possible. Understanding more about how children

with autism process/develop these PM skills and the implications on their day-to-day functioning is not only important, but enables us to potentially address or teach skills according to the information derived from the study.

Who can participate?

Children aged 8-12 years old living in Tasmania with an existing diagnosis of High-functioning Autism (or Aspergers).

What does the study involve?

The use of a computer game designed especially for children which simulates an actual week and represents tasks that occur in everyday life. The participants will also complete a range of puzzle-like tasks. Parents are asked to complete 3 questionnaires. The whole assessment will take approximately 2 - 2.5 hours, and I am available to come a place that is convenient for you (such as your home).

What do you and your child get from participating in the study?

Not only do you gain a sense of satisfaction from contributing to this vital research, you also receive an adult and child movie ticket as a sincere thank-you for your participation.

If you are interested in finding out more about this study or would like to participate, please contact: Eliza Gill ekgill002@myacu.edu.au

I will be returning to Tasmania frequently to undertake this research and my next visit will be here from the 20th - 27th April during the school holidays specifically for my research. I am prepared to make several trips home to Tasmania to undertake my research so please don't feel like participation is restricted to the dates mentioned here.

Please become a participant:

As you can appreciate, I can't do the research without willing participants so if you are interested in participating or know of someone who may be interested please forward this information to them. Your participation could help make a difference to the lives of people living with autism.



Phoenix Danze Studio

Are running a dance class for children with Autism

If your child:

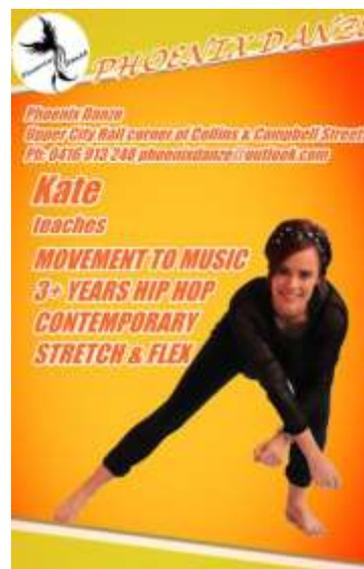
- is between the age of 7-12, and
- Loves Music & Dance

Then please come along and join us!

Sunday's from 3-4pm

Starting 16th March 2014

Corner of Collins & Campbell Street Hobart
Upper level, City Hall



For enquiries or to register please call Kate on 0459 068 939



MAKING FUTURES BRIGHTER

Family Fun Day & Walk



This is an event to raise community awareness of Autism.

Please come along by wearing your favourite colour in support of Autism Awareness.

Date: 13th April from 11am-1:30pm
Domain Athletics Centre

There will be lots of free activities:

Jumping castle, Face painting
Heroes 4 kids, Bubble machine
Activities and sensory tables
Balloons, and lots more.

At 1 pm we will come together and walk a lap of the Domain.

Food and drink will be available for purchase on the day.

Supported by:



Entry by gold coin donation.

Come along and join the fun.



Autism Support (North) Summer Events

Autism Tasmania hosted a number of events in Launceston during January. Our regular booking at the Bike Centre fell on a glorious sunny day, and the children had a lovely time riding and scootering, and trying out the new table tennis table. A mother reported back to me afterwards that on her way home her son had been full of excitement telling her that he had made lots of new friends, and that she **too had enjoyed speaking with other parents. That's what it's all about! It's so thrilling to hear that a simple event gives families not only the chance to have a bit of fun, but also the opportunity to broaden their social networks.**

On January 23, a nervous group of children carried **their laptops into the Northern Children's Network** to attend Minecraft Mania. This was the first time Autism Tasmania had attempted anything so **technical, and so the children weren't the only ones** who were nervous! As the session progressed without a hitch quite a social hum arose; with comments such as "You have an awesome skin", and "Who built that church? It's really good". And with parting questions such as "When can I come again?" We'll declare the session an outstanding success! Huge thanks to Joe for all his technological wizardry (it couldn't have happened without you), and to Nat and Shannon for the social support you provided.

The third summer event in Launceston nearly got blown out of the park ... literally! Fifteen brave and committed people braved the 35 degree temperature and a strong gusty wind to meet for a picnic at Heritage Forest. Despite the weather we **enjoyed each other's** company during a game of cricket, a play in the playground and a picnic lunch. Thanks to all those who attended, **we'll try and arrange** more comfortable weather next time!

Robyn Thomas



Sleep Study in Adults with Asperger's Disorder

Want to find out more about your sleep patterns?

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- Adults aged 25 – 39 years old with a diagnosis of Asperger's disorder or high-functioning autism **AND**
- Adults aged 25 – 39 years old with no history of autism

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

We want to measure people's sleep, associated sleep hormones and behaviours that can be associated with sleep patterns.

To do this we will ask you to:

- Complete some brief assessments
- Complete some questionnaires online
- Keep a sleep diary and wear an actiwatch (this measures sleep)
- Collect some saliva samples

Participants can enter a draw to win one of two Coles/Myer vouchers valued at \$100.



You DO NOT need to have a sleep problem to participate.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact: Emma Baker, PhD candidate,

Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

La Trobe University, Bundoora

Phone: (03) 9479 3271;

Email: ek4baker@students.latrobe.edu.au

Ethics approval number: 12-118

Light it up Blue

Parliament House, Hobart
Town Hall, Hobart
Wednesday 2nd April

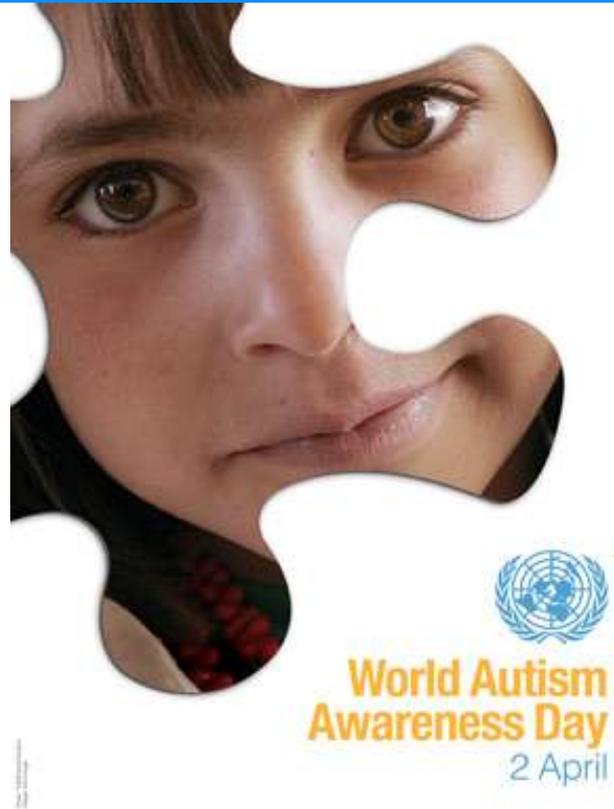


Wednesday the 2nd of April is World Autism Awareness Day and cities around the world are **participating in "Light It Up Blue"**, an initiative where major landmarks and buildings are being lit up blue to show support for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families. Not only are iconic buildings turning blue, Autism Awareness is **encouraging everyone to "Turn it Blue on April 2"** by wearing blue, holding blue fundraisers (think blue face painting, blue cake stalls, decorating the office blue) and turning social media blue to raise awareness of Autism.

We are also excited to announce that the historic Hobart Town Hall will also be turning blue for the first time this year.

Light It Up Blue Hobart is a community event that is only been made possible due to the support and generosity of local organisations and businesses. Gareth Kays from GK Productions Australia has kindly donated his special LED lights that will be used to provide the blue lighting effects.

If you would like more information or would like to discuss the project, please contact Cassie Xintavelonis on 0409 557 958 or via email cassie.lf1@bigpond.com



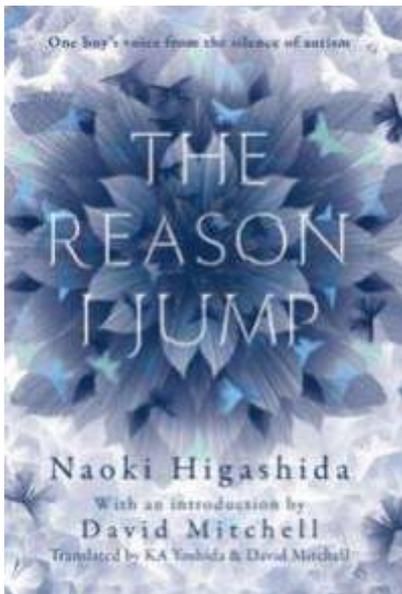
"This international attention is essential to address stigma, lack of awareness and inadequate support structures. Now is the time to work for a more inclusive society, highlight the talents of affected people and ensure opportunities for them to realize their potential."

*Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
Message for the World Autism Awareness Day 2013*

Throughout its history, the United Nations family has promoted the rights and well-being of the disabled, including children with developmental disabilities. In 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force, reaffirming the fundamental principle of universal human rights for all.

In 2007 The United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared 2 April as World Autism Awareness Day to highlight the need to help improve the lives of children and adults who suffer from the disorder so they can lead full and meaningful lives.





"The Reason I Jump"

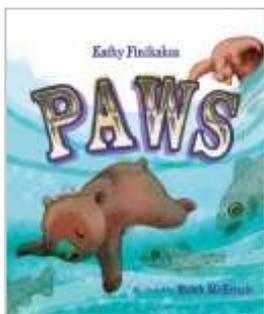
Naoki Higashida
I enjoyed reading Naoki's book which allows the reader an insight and answers to the many similar questions we ask ourselves on our pathway to autism knowledge. It demonstrates to the reader that there are many forms of 'having a voice'.

Some of these questions I can relate to my grandson's presentation and my brain is activated. The overall message for us "Earthlings" is to never give up on "US", try and understand why US act, learn, say, play and meltdown. US are trying our best to teach you how to understand US have patience".

Earthlings need to stop, watch and listen to the environment Us live in not pass Us by."

The stories add an extra component to the book and allow the reader a chance explore their imaginations.

Yvonne Newitt



Book Giveaway!

A young child with Autism who struggled to fit in inspired primary school teacher Kathy Finikakos to write this touching story about the fundamental need to belong. Paws started as a little story

told to students to demonstrate how they could find their place in the world.

Paws is a curious little baby bear who questions everything. He adores his famous father Roman, who teaches Paws to find contentment in his own corner of the world.

Autism Tasmania has selected 2 winners who will receive copies of this wonderful children's book.

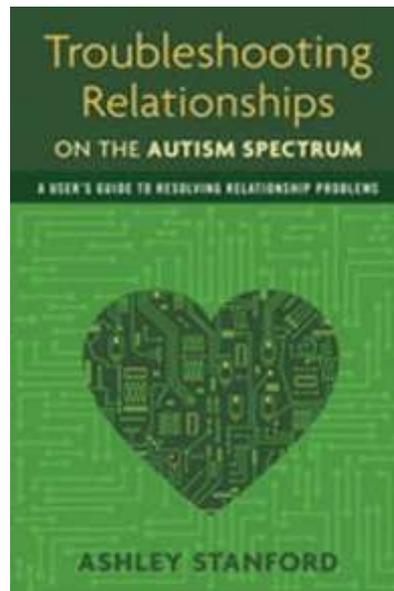
The winners are:

Melinda Davey

Annette Griggs

Congratulations!!!

This book is also available to members to borrow through the Autism Tasmania Library



"Troubleshooting Relationships on the Autism Spectrum: A Users Guide To Resolving Relationship Problems"

Ashley Stanford

Published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers London and Philadelphia.

Main Theme:

Aimed at resolving relationship difficulties between couples where a partner has an ASD.

Most interesting points:

- Each chapter has a clear summary/maintenance section sequential analysis of issues eg Identification and evaluation
- **The use of 'logical reasoning' techniques**
- Specific examples and solutions eg. My Partner (on the spectrum or not) is messy

Weaknesses:

- Highly systematic and prescriptive which may not be suitable for those who seek a more flexible approach
- Workbook like style with tasks, steps and tests.
- Simplistic comparison of a computer and a **person with an ASD. Suggests 'rebooting' the relationship.**

Who would you recommend read this book to?

Those who would like a clear systematic way of viewing relationship difficulties and solutions.

Other comments:

This book offers many concrete examples of how and what to do when troubleshooting relationships with a partner on the spectrum. Whilst the book attempts to be clear and helpful, it does hinge on analysis **paralysis in the reviewer's opinion. That said, people who enjoy task orientated approaches complete with 'tests' and methods will find it an enjoyable and helpful read.**

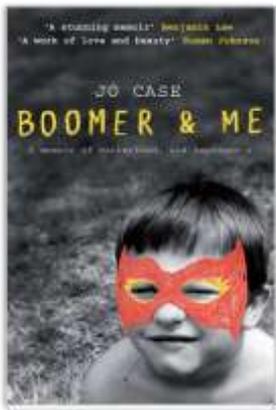
★★★★☆

Deborah Smith

We have a huge selection of new books covering a range diverse topics. And a new DVD! Magnificent 7.



The Library is available to members and Membership is now free for people with autism, parents and grandparents. If you would like to become a member, please see the back cover for a membership form.



Written by author Jo Case, **'Boomer and Me'** is a humorous, down to earth and often touching account of a mother and son's mutual journey through Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis, doubt and eventually acceptance and self discovery. Set largely in Melbourne and Adelaide, **'Boomer and Me'** is a refreshing and entertaining autobiography to which many parents will relate.

which follow, Jo is surprised to realise she is not only coming to a deeper understanding of Leo, she is also recognising herself.

What begins as an attempt to find answers and **supports for her son, turns into a mother's own** account of life as a parent who is also on the Autism Spectrum. The novel is aptly titled, it intertwines two stories - one about Leo, the other about herself. Between juggling the ordinary demands of motherhood, joint custody and work – Jo paints a portrait of common social and communication challenges for children and adults alike.

Initially seeking advice from his school as to whether her son Leo (aka Boomer) is gifted, Gen X mother Jo discovers there is more at work with Leo. Leo is referred for assessment and is diagnosed with **Asperger's Syndrome**. Jo seeks to understand **Asperger's** and throws herself into reading and researching. Through the many light bulb moments

'Boomer and Me' also challenges the notion of disability versus difference and, set against the familiar Australian metropolitan landscape and with the sheer honesty with which Jo bares her soul, it has a familiarity about it which might leave readers feeling like they have done more than simply read a memoir but have also made a friend. Amy Jansen

Autism Specific Professional Development *for Teachers, TA's & Child Care Educators*

Understanding ASD*

What is ASD, core characteristics and associated features.

Launceston 6 May 2014

Hobart 8 May 2014

Visuals

Rationale and use of visual strategies to support and enhance learning.

Launceston 3 June 2014

Hobart 5 June 2014

Transitions & Routines

Planning for major and minor transitions and establishing routines.

Launceston 24 June 2014

Hobart 26 June 2014

Sensory sensitivities

Raising awareness and strategies for the school setting

Launceston 29 July 2014

Hobart 31 July 2014

Understanding anxiety

Recognising symptoms and triggers.

Launceston 19 August 2014

Hobart 21 August 2014

Social Skills

Explicit teaching of social skills to promote inclusion and social interactions.

Launceston 9 September 2014

Hobart 4 September 2014

Positive Behaviour Support

Reducing challenging behaviour with replacement skills

Launceston 14 October 2014

Hobart 16 October 2014

** This first session is highly recommended and is a must for anyone who has not had any previous ASD training.*



Choose from a series of 7 workshops focusing on students with ASD in the school setting.

Individualise the programme to meet your needs.

Cost: \$38.50 per session
(GST included)

Certificate of attendance for each session

Hobart

Venue: Autism Tasmania Training Room 2
1 Bowen Road Moonah

Time: 7-9pm

Launceston

Venue: **Northern Children's Network Training**
Room 59D Amy Road Newstead

Time: 7-9pm

For booking enquiries

Phone: 1300 288 476

or email:

admin@autismtas.org.au



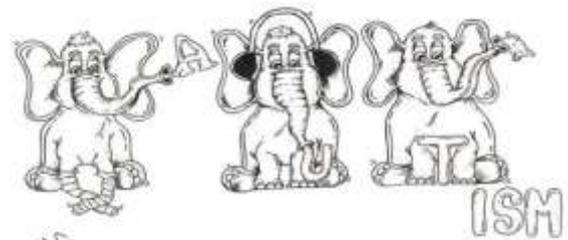
At a recent Autism Information Evening in Launceston parents of young children with autism engaged in an insightful and valuable discussion with some generous mothers who came to share some tips they have learnt from raising their own children on the spectrum. The following tips are a selection of those discussed during the session, and reflect the views of the parents who attended this Autism Information Evening. For more detailed notes from the evening please contact Autism Tasmania.

- If your child has a tendency to run away, make yourself known to police, tell police about your child's characteristics with a written profile (communication, physical appearance, stressors, favourite places and interests etc. include a photo). Write an action plan for yourself (and keep it somewhere handy; when you're in crisis it's hard to even remember how tall your child is, let alone what they are wearing).
- In regards to fostering a relationship with your **child's school: be partners, beware of your emotions** (If you are really upset, vent via journaling or ringing a friend, calm down before talking to school, always delay before sending an **email you have written when you're upset**).
- Play an active role in teaching and practising school -readiness skills (e.g. waiting, sharing, turn-taking).
- Set routines at home so that your child is calm going through school gates.
- Receiving a diagnosis may help to shed light on **your child's behaviour, and help you to work with** his characteristics rather than fight against them. In this way, the diagnosis can be a positive experience for the whole family in some cases.
- Empower your children. All neurotypicals are born with a toolbox, and know which tool to pick out for each situation. ASD children only born with a hammer, so we need to give our children the tools and teach them when to use them.
- Be respectful of your child and their diagnosis; choose who you share it with.
- Be a squeaky wheel, be a voice for your child.
- Parents are in it for life; others will come and go, so look after yourself!
- Keep a journal. Record who said what to whom and dates of everything, you will use it more times than you can imagine. Also record a personal note

of something good or special that happened that day. Read back over these on the hard days.

- Try to see him first as a child, then the autism, not the other way around. This is difficult, and professionals sometimes don't help, but first of all he/she is your son or daughter.
- Autistic sensory children and naughty children are not mutually exclusive terms. Try to separate the two.
- Autistic children can learn, but you do need to break the task down a lot and more than you.

UNDERSTANDING AUTISM WALK 2014



EAST COAST TASMANIA

Saturday 12th April 2014

Starting at the Scamander Beach Resort Hotel Foreshore at 10am (with registration from 9am) and walking to Wrinklers Beach and return (approx. 4km)

Cost for registration is a donation (or purchase a T-shirt)

T-shirts and singlets will be available for Adults \$20 and Children \$10 or join a group of 5 or more and get your tees for \$15 each. There will be a sausage sizzle and chocolate wheel following the walk, at the Scamander Beach Resort Hotel, and raffle tickets will be available for purchase. There will be a Jumping Castle for the kids and Wave Rider for the older kids (or young at heart) and live music for the afternoon.

So bring along your friends, family, prams and dogs for a fun day for all.

For further information email eastcoast.autism@gmail.com or phone Karen on 0418 375 450

Harmony Day



Harmony Day Everyone Belongs

Harmony Day is an Australian Government programme and coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Since 1999 Harmony Day has been widely celebrated across schools, childcare centres, community groups, churches, businesses and federal, state and local government agencies.

In conjunction with Giant Steps school and the Next Steps programme Autism Tasmania celebrated Harmony Day in Deloraine. We shared fantastic food, music and conversation with students parents and community members. The message of "Everyone Belongs" was truly experienced and strengthened community connections.

Reference: <http://www.harmony.gov.au/about>

Information Sessions in the North West for Autism Awareness:

- Queenstown: Sunday March 30th RSL Club
11am – 2pm. Includes Ride for Autism Welcome, BBQ and the movie, 'The Magnificent Seven'
- Burnie: Wednesday April 9th 3.30– 5pm.
Venue to be confirmed
- Smithton: Thursday 10th April, Smithton Community Hospital – Community Meeting Room: 1pm – 2.30pm
- Devonport: Tuesday 15th April, 3.30 – 5pm
Devonport Community Health Centre:
- Ulverstone: Wednesday 16th, Montgomery Room (located at the Post Office end of the Woolworths car park): 3.30 – 5pm

Thanks TAS Brick!

Recently TAS-Brick Collectors Club President Brent Prins presented a \$500 cheque to Allison Lapham from Autism Tasmania. Autism Tasmania thanks TAS-Brick for their generous support! There are some exciting TAS-Brick events planned for 2014, so please "like" the TAS-Brick Facebook page, check their webpage: <http://www.tazbrick.com/> and watch our page to find out more.



Jewellery
for a
Cause



20% of the sale of each piece of jewellery sold is donated to the very important cause it represents.

The founder of Jewellery for a Cause, Kirin Matthews, has a passion for supporting charitable organisations and important causes.

With Jewellery for a Cause, *buying something special means you're doing something special.* Jewellery for a Cause donates 20% of every jewellery sale to a charitable organisation the jewellery represents, helping raise not only awareness, but also financial support for valuable services.

Check out the Jewellery for a Cause website and Facebook page.



Please consider nominating Autism Tasmania as the beneficiary of your 20% donation.





Autism Tasmania are proudly supporting families by providing workshops for mothers, fathers and other family carers of children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Early Days is a national program funded by the Federal Government under the Helping Children with Autism Strategy and is run by local



REGISTER TODAY!

Email:

Launceston workshops

robymt@autismtas.org.au

Phone

Robyn Thomas
(Northern facilitator):

0458 375 604

or Hobart:

1300 288 476

This workshop is for parents and other family carers only. For professional development opportunities, please contact your state/territory Autism Association.

Diagnosis: Autism? Where to now?

Early Days Introductory Workshop

May 26

During this workshop you will learn:

- About ASD and what it means for you and your child
- Practical strategies that can make a difference to your **child's development**
- How to select and maximise an intervention service

Tips for Everyday Skills

June 23, 9:30 – 12pm

During this workshop you will learn:

- Why everyday self help skills can be hard for a child with ASD
- Strategies to help develop all skills
- Tips to specifically help with toileting
- Tips to specifically help with sleep

Understanding Behaviour – A Step by Step Guide for Parents

September 22, 9:30-2:30pm

During this practical workshop you will learn:

- **How to understand your child's behaviour**
- Ways to select and teach your child new behaviour
- How to promote positive behaviours

- Free of charge to attend
- Workshops are held in small groups and give you the chance to meet other parents
- Light refreshments provided, BYO lunch
- Childcare is not provided

Launceston celebrates Autism Awareness !



April is Autism Awareness month. Autism Tasmania is hosting a family fun day and warmly invites you and your family members to join us on

Saturday 12th April
2pm – 4pm

St Catherine's Hall, Penquite Rd, Norwood

We have some fun activities planned with our friends from Playgroup Tasmania, as well as a jumping castle, a coffee cart and a dedicated sensory quiet area for those who may need a break.

Plenty of free off street parking available across the road (church car park).



Social/Support Groups and Information Sessions

Southern Tasmania

New Norfolk

Ptunarra Derwent Valley Child & Family Centre
Second Thursday morning in the month - 10.00am - 11.30am.

Dunalley

Dunalley Community Neighbourhood Centre,
Arthur Highway
First Thursday morning in the month - 10am - Midday

Hobart

Autism Tasmania office, 1 Bowen Rd, Moonah
Wednesday 23rd April 2014 - 10:30am - 12:30pm

Contact: Robyn Davis 0408 376 838

Hobart - **Asperger's Syndrome Adult Support Group**

Autism Tasmania office, 1 Bowen Rd, Moonah
Last Sunday in the month 2.00 - 4.00pm

Contact: Rose Clark 0407 320 048

North West Coast

Burnie

Burnie Community House, 24 Wiseman St,
Burnie
Third Thursday in the month - 10.30am - midday.

Circular Head

Smithton District Hospital's meeting room

Third Friday in the month - 10.30am - midday.

Devonport

Devonport Community Health Centre,
Cnr MacFie & Steele Sts Devonport
Third Monday in the month - 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Burnie - **Asperger's Syndrome Adult Support Group**

152 Wilson Street, Burnie
Second Saturday in the month 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Contact: Rose Clark 0407 320 048

Northern Tasmania

Launceston

Autism information sessions are conducted regularly at:

Northern Children's Network, Amy Road, Newstead.

Please contact our office for details.

Bike Centre family get togethers in school holidays.

Contact: Robyn Thomas 0458 375 604

Launceston - **Asperger's Syndrome Adult Support Group**

Aspire Building, 190 Charles Street, Launceston
First Saturday in the month 1.30 - 3.30pm.

Contact: Rose Clark 0407 320 048

Regular visits are made to Scottsdale, Campbell Town and George Town. Please contact our office for details.

West Coast

Meetings on the first Thursday in every month on a rotational basis - Rosebery, Queenstown, and Strahan 10.30am - midday.

Please contact Rose Clark 0407 320 048 for details of upcoming venue.

East Coast

Monthly meetings organised by East Coast resident Karen Rawnsley 6372 5077 or 0418 375 450
Regular visits are also made to St Helens by Autism Tasmania staff. Please contact our office for details.

For more information please call: 1300 288 476

or

Email autism@autismtas.org.au

