



AUTISM NEWS

Newsletter of Autism Tasmania Inc.

Postal Address

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Australia

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WHAT'S ON!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been a busy time for Autism Tasmania over the past couple of months. In April, we had a visit from Wendy Lawson, an adult with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who presented two seminars for us; one in Launceston, the other in Hobart. Both sessions were very well attended and a report written by Evelyn Player is included in this issue. Wendy will be presenting papers at the conference in Hobart in August.

As you receive this newsletter, Sue Bettison will be visiting Tasmania to present sessions on Toilet Training. Giant Steps and Autism Tasmania are proudly co-hosting her visit. Sue will be presenting to professionals and parents in both the north and south of the state.

Autism Tasmania has been investigating the possibility of an office/shop front for our organisation for the past couple of years. Opportunities have been few, however we may have the opportunity of a shared venue in the near future. We will keep you informed of any developments.

All arrangements are being put into place for the National Conference and we are excited about a special session we are able to include in the program for siblings. A separate mail-out will set out details and seek expressions of interest from you. Look for it soon!

Also at the conference, there will be a display of art work from people of all ages with Autism Spectrum Disorder. An invitation is being prepared to be sent to all members as well as all schools. This will be a wonderful opportunity to show just what activities – small and large, our family members, have been involved in.

Our next newsletter will be issued at about the same time as our Annual General Meeting when all committee positions will be declared vacant. If you are at all interested in the future of Autism Tasmania and being involved at a committee level, please give serious thought to seeking nomination. We can't continue without the voluntary help of a dedicated committee.

In closing this column, I want to praise the current members of the committee and those members who are always helping in the background. Without your help Autism Tasmania couldn't continue. We look forward to seeing many of you in Hobart in August.

Rose Clark

National Autism Conference August 12-14th 1999

The committee members of Autism Tasmania have all received phone calls from people regarding the cost of the conference. We were mindful of a couple of important issues when we prepared the price structure for registration – that we needed to keep the prices as low as possible *and* we needed to cover costs. The price structure for registration has been prepared in consultation with conference organisers: Conference Design.

The registration fees that appear in the brochure are on a par for members as those at the last conference in Leura in 1997 – except for the family registration.

Unfortunately we were not able to make this registration fee as low as we would have liked because we HAVE to cover costs. Autism Tasmania is a totally voluntary organisation and as such receives no direct funding which would enable us to have the benefit of a budget to cushion any deficit; unlike other state associations.

Any surplus made will be returned to Autism Tasmania Inc. and will be used to benefit members in the future.

Rose Clark

Active Committee Members

President	Rose Clark	6423 1056
Vice President	Kathy Gill	6223 7175
Secretary	Rachel Hodge	6393 7183
Treasurer	Roseanne Lay	6244 2540
Committee Members	Lisa Minchin	6223 2317
	Cheryl Scott	6344 8015

WENDY LAWSON SEMINARS

"I know how my son feels for the first time," wrote one parent after attending the recent seminar on Autism by Wendy Lawson. About 50 parents and professionals attended the seminar, which was organised and presented by Autism Tasmania as part of the Commonwealth Respite for carers Programme.

Wendy kept her audience riveted from 10 am until 4pm. A consummate professional, she elicited laughter, compassion, awareness and empathy from her "neuro-typical" audience. She gave insights into how a person with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) thinks and she suggested strategies for successful inclusion into the "world" of the neurological typical. People with ASD are "wired differently" - however the strong message that Wendy gave was that with appropriate intervention they could be taught to think and behave like the majority of the population. Development is simply delayed. "We get there, but more slowly," says Wendy.

We?

Wendy is a Social Worker with a University degree. She is a mother of four children, she is an author and she is a professional speaker. Wendy also has brown hair, wears rose coloured glasses, has a wicked sense of humour - and has ASD. Wendy says she is autistic.

Refreshingly honest, a most worthwhile seminar!

Wendy's autobiography, "Life behind glass" is available on loan from Munford Street Early Special Education Unit. It is also available from the Autism Tasmania Libraries

Evelyn Player

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT INCLUSION REVIEW

Autism Tasmania was invited to prepare a submission to the 'Review of the Policy on Inclusion of students with Disabilities in Regular schools'

Many thanks to those parents who furnished us with details of their own personal circumstances, all of which were included in the submission, which reached its destination by the closing date of April 23rd.

At a second meeting of the Reference Group in Hobart on 25th April, those in attendance (about 14) learned that submissions are STILL being accepted. If you would like to write your own you still can; the address is

"The Office of Educational Review"

Department of Education

116 Bathurst St

Hobart 7000

The meeting on the 25th May was very hastily convened (4 days notice) which may be the reason there were so few there. Lisa Minchin and I, representing YAST and Autism Tasmania respectively, had the opportunity to meet and listen to Professor Luanna Meyer, who is the external consultant to the review.

Professor Meyer is an American by birth, now living in New Zealand. She has an enormous amount of experience in the field of reviews which she outlined at the meeting.

So far, the Education Department has received more than 300 submissions!! Professor Meyer's experience will indeed be useful in steering the review and briefing those within the Education Department.

In speaking about her work with inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools in America, Professor Meyer spoke of the need to be equitable to all and not give parents of special needs children too many options!! An interesting comment and one which made me think a great deal. Professor Meyer also made the comment about bringing services back into regular schools, saying that there are gains for everybody.

There will be more information and meetings concerning the review. Autism Tasmania will keep you informed

Rose Clark

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a life-long disability due to a form of brain disorder. The cause of which is unknown. About one thousand people are affected. Autism Spectrum Disorder prevents people from properly understanding the world around them in an otherwise sense: as well as affecting their ability to communicate, learn, interact with others and play.

These useful cards are available from Autism Tas. for \$1.00 for 20. Keep a few in your wallet to hand out at those times you need to explain your child's behaviour.

Autism Tasmania Inc.

Autism Tasmania's phone number is in your white pages

FEATURE ARTICLE

"Addicted" to Bread and Milk? Casein and Gluten Problems in Autistic Children

Report on Lisa Lewis's section, "Dietary Intervention for the Treatment of Autism: Why Implement a Gluten and Casein Free Diet?" in *Biological Treatments for Autism and PDD* by William Shaw [with contributions by others] [Overland Park], 1998 pp 196-226. By John Wigg

Introductory Remarks

Dietary intervention was one of the original "planks" in Giant Steps, Montreal's intervention programme for autistic children. An intervention like ABA is, in Donna Williams' terms, like training a camel with a load of straw on its back to walk as if it were not carrying a load at all (Williams 1996, p.87). Dietary intervention tries to help the autistic person by removing some of "straws" (impairments) that threaten to "break the camel's back".

The Details

Wheat and milk allergies can induce tantrum behaviour in non-autistic children. Two key researchers into the effects of gluten and casein on autistic people's systems are Paul Shattock from the Autism Research Unit at University of Sunderland in UK, and Norwegian Dr Carl (Kalle) Reichelt. Lisa Lewis has an autistic son, whose behaviour and communication skills have improved noticeably since he has been on a strict gluten- and casein-free diet.

Lewis doesn't claim this dietary intervention is a miracle "magic bullet" cure for autism:

It may not cure, and it may not even help all that try it, but it will help many.

(Shaw and others 1998, p.200)

Gluten is a protein found in some grains e.g.: wheat, oats barley and rye. Casein is a phospho-protein found in milk and dairy products.

High levels of naturally occurring opioids called beta-endorphins are commonly found in the systems of autistic people.

Digestive abnormalities in a significant number of autistic people mean that incompletely digested gluten and casein enter the bloodstream via the gut wall as opioids. These metabolites are casomorphine from casein, and gliadinomorphins from gluten. These molecules will have an adverse effect on the brain's ability to process information and control behaviour intensity and other "output" activities.

Naltrexone is a drug which blocks the opioid receptors in the brain. It has been tried as an "antidote" to the elevated levels of opioids in autistic people's systems with mixed results to date.

A less drastic option is a casein- and gluten-free diet. The problem with casein and gluten and the digestive abnormalities of autistic people is **not** a conventional allergy with rashes and/or bowel irritation and diarrhoea:

Many parents have had traditional allergy tests run, and most report that their children are not allergic to wheat or milk. This is probably true. Children who are helped by this diet are generally not allergic in the traditional sense; they are gluten or casein sensitive. According to Shattock, "The results are akin to poisoning rather than an extreme sensitivity such as occurs in coeliac disease or sensitivity to certain food colourings."

(Shaw and others 1998, p.203)

Initially withdrawal of casein and gluten from an autistic child's diet will mean regression before behaviour improves. (Something akin to "withdrawal symptoms" one might experience when giving up tobacco or caffeine addiction.). Autistic people do not relish change at the best of times.

Another compounding factor in the gluten and casein sensitivity experienced by many autistic people is

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“leaky bowel syndrome”. The gut wall’s usual mucous lining is deficient in this syndrome. Thus, the barrier between intestine and bloodstream fails to filter out materials which are normally kept in the gut until they are properly digested or eliminated at the end of the digestive tract. This syndrome is not a case of diarrhoea, but rather of internal “leakage” of bowel contents into the bloodstream through an abnormally porous intestinal wall. A hyperabsorbent bowel wall goes a long way towards explaining the irregular bowel movements experienced by quite a few autistic children.

Blood and urine samples can be tested to establish whether a person is gluten- or casein-sensitive. Urine is testable for the presence of peptides which reached the bladder from the bloodstream after “escaping” into the circulatory system through a leaky bowel wall. If peptides are found in the urine, the blood can then be tested for IgA and IgG antibodies to gluten and casein and gluten metabolite proteins.

In coeliac disease, there is a lesion of the mucous lining of the intestines. This creates extreme gastrointestinal problems and poor body growth. For people with full-blown coeliac disease, even small amounts of gluten are toxic. Their bowel linings are also extremely porous, allowing materials which normally cannot enter the bloodstream to do so. It is possible that some people may suffer milder forms of coeliac disease which do not present with the unmistakable symptoms of full-blown CD.

Phenol sulfur transferase [PST] is an enzyme which helps detoxify the body via the urinary system by breaking down leftover hormones, neurotransmitters, and a wide variety of toxic molecules. A PST deficiency is linked with “leaky bowel syndrome” and also with the abnormally high levels of the neurotransmitter, serotonin regularly found in the blood of autistic people. PST deficiency will also mean the sufferer may be hyperallergic to strong perfumes (as Donna Williams is), as well as both natural and artificial colourings in foods. Could this explain why so many autistic children go through a phase of eating colourless,

bland foods such as white rice, noodles and white bread?

John C. Wigg

References:

Shaw, William and others (1998) *Biological Treatments for Autism and PDD* Overland Park

Williams, Donna (1996) *Autism: An Inside-out Approach : An Innovative Look at The Mechanics of 'Autism' and Its Developmental 'Cousins'*, Jessica Kingsley, London

Related Web Sites:

ANDI -The Autism and Dietary Intervention Network...Site run by Lisa Lewis and Karyn Seroussi (another contributor to Dr Shaw's book). <http://www.autismNDI.com/>

Autism, Intolerance & Allergy Network http://www.feingold.org/autism_1.html

Did the Wrong Diet Make this Woman Autistic? An article about Donna Williams. <http://www.jaymuggs.demon.co.uk/donna.htm>

Dr Michael J. Goldberg - US paediatrician who is working on immune system abnormalities in autistic and other learning-disabled children <http://www.neuroimmunedr.com/Autism/autism.html>

Dr Reichelt's Work (Archive of web forum posts) : <http://www.panix.com/~donwiss/reichelt.html>
<http://www.wwwguides.com:80/nutrition/diets/glutenfree/menta.html>

Lisa Lewis' Web Page <http://members.aol.com/lisas156/index.htm>
<http://members.aol.com/lisas156/gfpak.htm>

The Autism Research Unit, University of Sunderland, UK...Paul Shattock's "territory". Paul is a Senior Lecturer in pharmacy at Sunderland University <http://osiris.sunderland.ac.uk/aut-cgi/homepage>

Autism News printed an article entitled "Don't mourn for us" by Jim Sinclair, in the March 1999 issue. This is one parent's response to that article.....

ANOTHER PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By: Els Scheepers

The view expressed by Jim Sinclair "Don't mourn for us" (our Voice, Vol.1. No.3, 1993) is understandable. Jim is a high-functional individual with ASD, or as he prefers **an autistic individual**. It must be hard for him to realise that parents grieve over the child they do not have, while Jim himself has found ways to function in the society, managed to reach out and made connection with the so-called neuro-typicals despite his autism.

According to Jim this grief has nothing to do with autism, it is grieving over a "non-occurrence", the child they did not have. Is this true?

The problem I have with this perspective is this:

Many parents did have the child they expected to have. A baby, who looked normal and seemed to develop normally, including pre-linguistic speech, socialisation, eye contact, cuddles, even imitation skills, but it came to a standstill, and the child regressed. The speech disappeared, the eye contact went and other motor-skills got lost. Grieving for the lost skills is real, they were there, and they were gone later. It is not grieving over a non-occurrence. It is hard for parents who saw this happening, the process of losing parts and feeling powerless to do something.

Jim states that autism is not something a person has, but it is what a person is, a way of being. But so are a lot of other disorders listed in DSM IV, such as schizophrenia, personality disorders, anxiety disorders and mental retardation. I am not comparing these disorders but would like to show the impact of these disorders on the total life of the person. It affects their total being, the way they interpret data, the way they perceive the world, the capacity to have intimate relations, the capacity to

hold a job... But we do not call them the retarded person, the schizophrenic person, or the disturbed person, but rather (if it is important) the person with schizophrenia... We see the person first, before we address the disorder or the problem.

A mistake we all make, often is over-generalisation. Not all people with ASD are the same and we all have experienced how different so-called normal people are!

We have learned not to think anymore into categories, but to see the whole DSM as a continuum, and it makes sense. There is no normal and abnormal, there is no black and white. Some people with ASD, have less problems with abstract concepts, some people with ASD can adapt easier to changes than others, some use verbal language, others will never be able to speak. Some can overcome most of their "deficits" in order to function in society; others need continuous help of others.

I do not see my child as an alien because I see not them (world of autism) and us (the world of neuro-typicals). In fact many so-called neuro-typicals are more alien for me than my own child.

- 1) I know what he likes, and what he wants, I understand his way of communication
- 2) I can predict his distress, and his joy
- 3) We can look into each other's eyes, and are happy together.
- 4) He cuddles, and shows he needs the cuddles as much or even more as my daughter does.
- 5) He misses his dad, when he is not around, and is overjoyed when he is back.
- 6) He recognises the people close to him, and feels if they truly love him.

Do I need to say more, he is my child, and we have this special relationship. I love him the way he is, and I expect him to improve even more, we will help him and never give up. It works! Intensive training, working, and playing with your child results in the gradually re-surfacing of the lost skills. It is not "an alien child that dropped into my life", it

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is my child the child I gave birth to, and he is there, he was never "lost". It is not un-acceptance of the disorder, but acceptance that makes us determined to keep on working, to keep on struggling, to keep on searching what we can do to make living easier for our child and to keep on fighting the world that does not want to see, what needs to be done to make the life of children with autism and their families a better one.

Els Scheepers

AUTISM RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SECRETIN UPDATE: December 1 1998

Our Office has been deluged with phone calls, faxes, mail and express mail from parents and professionals world-wide seeking information about secretin. A great many of the requests are marked "URGENT!" or "PLEASE ANSWER IMMEDIATELY." Our small office staff is doing the best it can to cope with the 10 fold increase in orders, working overtime and weekends. We are doing the best we can. Patience is needed!

Results so far: Secretin continues to look very good. So far it seems that 70% of the patients show improvement soon after the first infusion. It is too early to provide details— data are being analysed.

Finding a doctor: Many requestors ask for a list of doctors administering secretin. We have no list at this time. We have received hundreds of requests, and orders for Victoria Beck's secretin book from physicians, and after they have had a chance to read it, and as soon as we can make some extra time, we will write to all of these physicians to see if they are willing to be placed on a referral list. We cannot do that without their permission. We hope to have a list in January.

However there really is no need for such a list

most cases, since administering the secretin is not a difficult procedure. It is generally given intravenously and takes only a few minutes to do (an IV "push" rather than an IV "drip"). Any physician can do it, if he or she wishes to. The secretin book contains all the information presently available.

The secretin supply. Since only a small amount of secretin was used annually, the Ferring Company, which supplies it, ran out of secretin a week after the Good Morning America and Dateline shows aired. The only secretin available after that was quickly bought up, so for some seeks there has been no secretin available.

We have been in frequent contact with the Ferring Company, which was reluctant to increase production in response to the demand lest the FDA accuse them of catering to the "off-label" (unauthorised) use of secretin. Last week I visited the FDA offices in Rockville, Maryland to discuss the matter. Since there is no drug which is approved for autism, the FDA officials were very sympathetic and assured that Ferring could increase production of secretin without penalty, providing that they did not actively promote the use of secretin in autism. I was pleased to pass this welcome information on to the Ferring officials.

A new supply of secretin should be available in mid- or late December, I'm told, and, I hope there will not be another shortage.

I also met with officials at NIH, who, like the FDA officials, were very much interested in facilitating clinical research trials to help evaluate secretin formally and to answer the key questions, which are in dire need if answers: Who is a good candidate? How much should be given, and how often? We simply do not have that information yet.

Sincerely,

Bernard Rimland, PhD

NEWS AND VIEWS

YOUNG AUTISM SUPPORT TASMANIA

(Supporting Families Teaching Applied Behavioural Analysis)

Dr Amanda Sampson's visit in late March was a great success. Mandy is a founding member and past president of our sister organisation in Victoria, the ABIA (Autism Behavioural Intervention Association), a mother of three, including a six and a half year old son with autism and a busy gynaecologist who specialises in pre-natal ultrasound.

Mandy spoke to a group of professionals at the Southern Division of General Practice on March 25th and was very well received. She explained the CHAT list (Checklist for Autism in Toddlers) and stressed the importance of early diagnosis and appropriate intervention. Mandy's son receives 50 hours of one-on-one ABA intervention every week. The next day Mandy spoke to a group of YAST parents in the morning and that evening she addressed a large group of supporters at a fundraiser cocktail party for YAST at the Hutchins School.

A spin-off from Dr Sampson's visit was that Dr Ellie Stein, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist from Clare House in Hobart, together with Ms Annabel Hanke, senior psychologist from Clare House, gave an informative talk on Autism and Behavioural Intervention at a Seminar on Challenging Behaviours for Health Professionals on April 21st.

This month's Southern Division of General Practice newsletter followed-up Dr Sampson's visit with an article on Autism, interventions and support services, it stressed the need for doctors to be aware of autism as a spectrum disorder (something that our members are already too aware of!) and informed doctors about the CHAT list as well as about the existence of the Education Department's Autism Consultant.

Our committee was saddened by President Grace Talbot's announcement at our April meeting of her decision to resign -for family reasons- both as President and from the committee. Grace has worked tirelessly as a supporter and leader of our group since its inception in late 1996, more recently in the capacity of Secretary(1997-8) and then as President (1998-9). She is respected for her energy, honesty, her balanced outlook and her determination to carry out everything she undertakes to the very best of her ability.

YAST is planning an informal sharing day with northern members and other interested families in Launceston on June 26th at Munford Street Early Special Ed as well as a more structured sharing day with Giant Steps on July 11th - the venue is yet to be confirmed. Two of our members and hard-working therapists, Peta Kelty and Amelia Bishop, have been invited to present at an Autism and ABA conference in Perth, West Australia in early July and we are hoping that they will be part of the sharing day with Giant Steps.

A post-graduate psychology student and co-founder of the business ABAKidz ran a successful training day for ABA therapists at the University of Tasmania (Hobart campus) on May 22nd and we are looking forward to her offering further training days in the future. Recruitment and training of new therapists remains a concern for all our members but we can feel encouraged by the huge interest there was in the training day as well as by the fact that a large number of TAFE Disability and Community Studies students recently expressed interest in undertaking training in ABA, after a talk was given at the Clarence Campus of TAFE, by one of our members.

Lisa Minchin - Acting President.

GIANT STEPS UPDATE

It has been an excellent Term 1 for the entire school community at Giant Steps

At a Board level, the Strategic Plan is nearing completion and will be distributed for comment to all of the stake holders very soon.

We have recently held a Working Bee at the Centre to repair a boundary fence. With the assistance of the Lions Club of Deloraine, we have made a good start to the job.

Professional Development has had a high priority this year. The first event was a full-day workshop just after Easter which was conducted by Wendy Lawson. It very well attended by staff, parents and other professionals who work with people with ASD. The feedback from this event was very positive.

By the time this newsletter goes to print, we will have had another Professional Development event. Sue Bettison will conduct a full-day Toilet Training workshop for us on June 18th in Deloraine. This promises to be an extremely worthwhile workshop and is particularly aimed at professionals.

We are also looking forward to the opportunity to meet and share information with members of YAST on June 26th and July 11th.

Autism Awareness Week in May included our now Annual Cake stall at Evandale Market, which raised \$400.00. Many thanks must go to all of the parents, staff, members of FROGS and others, who baked such a variety of cakes and slices for our stall. Later in the week, we held a very successful Trivia Night at the Tamar Rowing Club. Jim Cox (MHR) was our host-keeping up an excellent pace throughout the night-and FROGS provide a "super" supper. Altogether we had 19 tables entered, and we raised over \$1300.00! It was a superb effort from all involved and we are starting to think about next year's Trivia Night.

In Fundraising News: FROGS Launceston will be holding a Fund raising Morning tea on 14th July - all are welcome and Giant Steps will be conducting a major raffle again this year. The prizes are:

1st and 2nd prizes are both *Personal Computers*,

3rd prize will be a *Mexican Style Coffee Table*,

4th Prize will be a *Dreadnought guitar* and

5th prize is a *Night's accommodation at the Prince Albert Inn Launceston*

Tickets will cost \$1.00 each and the Raffle will be drawn on August 31st. Contact Penny Cromarty on 6334119.

Cheryl Scott

NATIONAL AUTISM WEEK Sun 16th May to Sat 22nd May

In the last newsletter, we advertised the dates for this special week and we did indeed have a variety of activities and media coverage.

Our focus this year was "Be Autism Aware" a phrase taken from our public services announcement shown on Southern Cross. We received many positive comments once again from the public; our thanks go to the Minchins for allowing their family to be put in the spotlight.

The phrase, "Be Autism Aware" was introduced to all schools via a poster giving some information on Autism Spectrum Disorders and inviting them to participate in the week by conducting a sticker day. We had a very good response to this with schools in each region participating. This in turn has prompted a number of schools to enquire about and take up membership.

Coupled with this were a small of dedicated supporters who sold a large number of stickers in varying degrees of inclement weather (once again). Many thanks go to those who did sell stickers. This year we raised in excess of \$1000.00 including the funds raised by schools.

During the week all three daily regional newspapers ran articles on Autism Spectrum Disorder and once again we must thank the families who agreed to feature.

The Week ended with a very successful picnic in the City Park in Launceston on Sunday 23rd May with families travelling from as far as Boat Harbour and Hobart! The weather was very kind and a great day was enjoyed by children and parents alike.

The City Park train offered the children (and parents), wearing an Autism Tasmania badge or sticker free rides around the park. It was very noticeable that some parents enjoyed the rides a great deal and were seen on the train a number of times!! WIN Television covered the picnic and several parents and children were seen on the 6:00pm News.

Thankyous go to all those who were involved in any of the activities during the week; it was great to see.

Rose Clark

REVIEW: *Animals Galore* (Australian made, special needs software)

This is the second innovative software package from Education by Design, a Melbourne based software company. It features COMPIC pictographs, speech (with an Australian accent) and has an 'animals' theme. As a program for special needs, *Animals Galore* serves a Triple 'A' rating. It caters to children who are either learning and/or COMPIC in special setting. It is ideal for children with special needs who are included in mainstream classrooms, in the learning of numbers, animals, language, sentence construction and visual/auditory discrimination. The four activities focus on identification (visual and auditory), counting games from 1-10 and from 11-20, matching exercises, listening to animal sounds as well as constructing sentences by selecting one or two word to complete a sentence. The young female voice heard throughout the activities is clear and well articulated.

Teenagers and adults with intellectual disabilities will also discover that *Animals Galore* will complement their programs, especially if they have an interest in animals and pets. Learners can succeed with appropriated tasks that can be both challenging and enjoyable, customised to meet their visual, access and learning requirements.

Learners can interact with the program via mouse, the standard keyboard (ie, using arrow keys and the space bar) or by arrow keys and the space bar) or by scanning. The screens employed throughout the program are well designed and uncluttered. The background colour can be graphical or filled in a solid colour, catering to users who are vision impaired. The COMPIC pictographs are consistently placed in the choice bar, and are accessed in each activity in the same manner.

The package is suitable for a wide range of users, and caters to many abilities, yet is aware of users who have special learning and access needs. At \$69.00, it definitely provides value for money. It requires Windows 95 or later and a sound card.

Product: *Animals Galore Software*
Cost \$69

Supplier: either
Education by Design
3 Namara St
Burwood East 3151

Phone: (03) 9894 4826

Fax: (03) 9886 3328

Email: jo@edbydesign.com

Internet: <http://www.edbydesign.com>

Or
Spectronics
POBox 5073
Laburnum 3130

Phone: 9894 4826

Fax: 9894 4936

Internet: <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com>

*Reprinted from the Association for Children with a
Disability (Tas) Inc*



Thankyou

to the Tasmanian Doll
and Teddy Collectors
who gave us half of the
proceeds of their recent

Doll and Bear Fair

which was held at the Wrest Point
Casino on June 19th and 20th June

We're on the Net!

Autism Tas

AUTISM TAS IS ON THE NET

Our address is

www.autismtas.org.au

AUTISM TASMANIA – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In accordance with the constitution we have to hold our AGM within 3 months of the end of the financial year. As the conference is in August, the month we usually have our AGM, the committee feel it is prudent to defer the meeting until September.

Our past practice is to hold our AGM in different locations and this year it will be in Ross at the Man o Ross Hotel on September 18th.

The AGM, itself will be preceded by a special meeting to discuss Autism Tasmania's Logo. There are details regarding this in the newsletter.

For our organisation to continue we need people to be on the committee which meets approximately every 2 months – usually in Ross. If you are interested, please give one of the present committee a ring.

Rose Clark

ASPERGER'S GROUPS

Asperger's North Western Support Group

Next Meeting to be held at Leighland's Christian School, Leighland's Ave, Ulverstone on Saturday 10th July from 1:30pm-4:00pm. Contact Eileen Prunster 6445 1696.

Asperger's Northern Support Group

Meetings are held at 1:30pm at Walker House, Newnham on the *last Saturday* of each month. Phone Rachel Hodge 6393 7183 for details

Asperger's Southern Support Group

Contact Roseanne Lay on ph.6244 2540

Proposed Logo Change

Available from Autism Tasmania

Autism Spectrum Disorder Information

Gold Lapel Pins \$3.00 ea (+\$1.50 for postage and handling)

Library borrowing from our 3 regions

North 6334 2843

North West 6442 4079

South 6244 2540

Committee Member, Lisa Minchin, proposes that we consider changing our association's logo. Here is her argument for a change:.....

It has been suggested that we vote to change the Autism Tas logo at the coming AGM. Currently the logo is the International pied/two-colour puzzle piece put inside an outline map of Tasmania.

It is very difficult to see what the current logo actually represents as the Tasmanian outline and the puzzle piece are hard to distinguish. The basic premise of logo design is for a logo to convey a single, clear message, something which the current one does not do. Given that our state organisation has the word "Tasmania" in its title, surely it is not necessary to superimpose the map of Tasmania over the "puzzle piece"?

We have already made a slight alteration to the international puzzle symbol to eliminate what was perceived to be a hole in the head. Some people claim the figure in the puzzle piece looks as though he/she is crying (and object to that), while others think the figure looks as though he/she is shielding him/herself from the world.

Personally, I have no objection to our current puzzle piece figure but I do object to its central message being obscured by the superimposed map of Tasmania. The alternative logo that is proposed was used in the recent button day stickers.

Lisa Minchin

From this

to this?



Please note:

Each of the other State Associations use the puzzle piece. Some use it by itself – others use the logo with writing indicating which state it is representing.

If we are to change the logo we all need to give it thought. What do you think? Please write to us and let us know your thoughts

President