

Spectrum News

The Quarterly Magazine of Autism Tasmania Inc.

· Summer 2015/16



Inside this edition:

**Hobart Office Opening
NDIS Tasmanian Rollout
Evidence Based Practices
I Can Network
And more**



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Cover image: 21 Goulburn Street Opening

L-R: Dijon Barrett - Chairperson, Hon, Jacquie Petrusma, Minister for Human Services, CEO -Terry Burke, Immediate past President - Mick Clark

National Disability Insurance Scheme

After many months of uncertainty the Federal and State Governments have finally come to a landing on the roll-out of National Disability Insurance Scheme in Tasmania which was announced on International Day of People with Disability 3 December 2015.

With this age based rollout (please refer to full details of NDIS on page 5) many may be disappointed that there is some waiting yet to their or their child's participation in the scheme and access to much needed services. This is completely understandable but the promise offered by this scheme cannot be underestimated.

Many will now be able to access service for the first time and will therefore need to realign their expectations for this funded individualised support. This is a new world where the being able to clearly articulate and identify your support needs will be paramount. It is vital that goals and aspirations of individuals are considered to maximise the difference that this scheme can make. To this end Autism Tasmania will be looking to conduct regional forums in 2016 linked to the new eligible age groups to the NDIS from July 2016. This will draw on the experience of participants to date and then assist you to navigate the planning process.

The funding provided to Autism Tasmania will also transition during this rollout to the 1 January 2019 and we will be looking for opportunities through the NDIS to further support the autism community to secure the advantages this new planning environment has to offer.

We would like to thank all people that participated in the NDIS and Autism Tasmania Project whether it was via focus groups, individual interviews or by completing the survey. We received 126 completed surveys and we look forward to being able to report on the findings of this work early in the New Year. This information will be valuable input to regional NDIS forums we have planned.

Autism Expo

In the recent Spectrum Bulletin we announced that Autism Tasmania in association with Light It Up Blue was looking to conduct an Autism Expo to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) in 2016.

After some deliberation it has been decided to defer this event to coincide with WAAD Sunday 2 April 2017. This will give us a better opportunity to plan and deliver an event that meets our high expectations and allows for the highest level of participation. We have identified members of an expanded Organising Committee that will meet in February next year to plan for this exciting event.

We acknowledge the support of the Tasmanian Police Charity Trust whose generous donation has enabled us to book the Princes Wharf (PW1) venue for this event.



Pictured are:
Commissioner of Police Darren Hine, Terry Burke and organisers Lynn Batge and Linda Phillips.

I Can Network – Tasmania

Autism Tasmania is pleased to sponsor the "I Can Network" in conducting a two day workshop from 31 March 2016 by founder Chris Varney (see page 6 for details). After his presentation at the Future Directions event at the Derwent Entertainment Centre in June there were a number of participants interested in establishing this enabling program in Tasmania. We will contact these and other people interested in changing expectations via this mentoring program from "I Can't" to "I Can" for young Tasmanians on the Autism Spectrum to gauge the level of interest so that an appropriate venue can be selected.

What's happening at Autism Tasmania

Launceston office upgrade

We were recently offered additional space at our Northern Children's Network premises at Amy Road Newstead and relocated in mid October. The new site provides us with a reception area that houses our Northern Library, a separate meeting room and improved work space for our Northern Information Team.

We look forward to you dropping in soon, but remind you that due to our limited staff resources and other external commitments that a call first can avoid any disappointment.

New Peer Support Groups in 2016

Autism Tasmania is keen to facilitate and support the creation of additional groups in 2016 for individuals on the autism spectrum. These age specific groups will be promoted early in the New Year. In the meantime you can express your interest by calling one of our Information Team Members or emailing us at autism@autismtas.org.au.

New Board

We welcome our Board for 2015/16 and in particular our three new Board Members Dean Lovell (North West Coast), Geraldine Robertson (North) and Kirsty Bartlett-Clark (South).

As a final note for 2015 I wish all our members and supporters best wishes for the festive season and thank the team at Autism Tasmania for the extraordinary and tireless efforts during the year in fulfilling the objectives on your association.

Terry Burke, CEO

Hobart Opening

We were delighted with the attendance at the official opening of our Hobart Premises by Hon Jacqui Petrusma Minister for Human Services on International Day of People with Disability, 3 December 2015. It was a timely opportunity to hear from Minister Petrusma on the day that the NDIS rollout timetable for Tasmania was announced.

We had a strong attendance including Rebecca White Labor Member for Lyons, Cassy O'Connor Greens Member for Denison and Hobart City Alderman

Damon Thomas representing the Lord Mayor.

Apologies were received from Autism Tasmania supporters Federal Member for Denison Andrew Wilkie and Rob Valentine MLC.

Representatives from our funders Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Social Services and the National Disability Insurance Agency were also present.

We were able to showcase the type of facility that we aspire to provide in all three major regions of the State to better support our clients and members which of course is subject to us receiving adequate recurrent funding.

CEO, Terry Burke, spoke of the set up of the new facilities where staff and client services are located on the first floor with the ground floor set aside for member access to the extensive library of resources, training room and member drop in area. He invited members to utilise the facilities to catch up on the latest additions to the library, as a venue to meet with their peers or to have some time out in quiet place for a coffee when visiting the city.

The event also allowed us to introduce our new Chairman, Dijon Barrett, and for our members to meet some of our 2015/16 Board. Past president, Mick Clark, addressed those in attendance and we acknowledge the significant contribution that Mick has made over many years to the establishment and growth of the association.



Five things you need to know about the NDIS in Tasmania



The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the new way of providing individualised support for people with disability, their families and carers. The NDIS is insurance, which gives us all peace of mind. Disability can affect anyone and having the right support makes a big difference.

The NDIS provides eligible people a flexible, whole-of-life approach to the support they need to pursue their goals. It also fosters social inclusion and economic participation.

1. What?



The Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments have agreed on how the NDIS will be rolled out in Tasmania. In Tasmania, the NDIS will be operating state-wide for all age groups by July 2019. The NDIS is currently available for people aged 15-24.

2. When?



The NDIS is a big change and it will be progressively rolled out in Tasmania. People will move to the NDIS at different times depending on age and living circumstances. The NDIS will be operating state-wide for all age groups by July 2019.

3. Who?



12-14 yrs old



25-28 yrs old



4-11 yrs old



29-34 yrs old



0-3 yrs old



50-64 yrs old

+
35-49 yrs old

Eligible residents in shared supported accommodation will access the NDIS together on a house-by-house basis.

4. How?

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is working closely with relevant Commonwealth and Tasmanian government departments to ensure a smooth NDIS transition for all existing and new clients, their families and providers.



5. What can I do to prepare?



If you currently receive disability services and are eligible to enter the NDIS, you will be contacted before you transition. If you are currently not receiving support, you may still be able to access the NDIS. Information and resources are available at www.ndis.gov.au/tas



Visit our website at www.ndis.gov.au/tas



Call us on **1800 800 110**

I CAN NETWORK

Enabling Young Tasmanians
on the Autism Spectrum

Dates: 31st March &
1st April 2016

Time: 9.30am - 4.30pm

Venue: Hobart, Tasmania
(Venue to be confirmed)

2 Day Workshop
on 'I CAN Network' sponsored
and hosted by Autism Tasmania

I CAN Network is a mentoring social enterprise for people on the Autism Spectrum. Together *I CAN* and Autism Tasmania are offering a Two Day Workshop for people wanting to grow a regional network that builds the confidence of young people on the Autism Spectrum.

Workshop will cover:

- Introduction to *I CAN Network*
- Ways of enabling young people on the Autism Spectrum
- Overview of 'Quiet Magic Method' - success stories of young people on the Spectrum in schools and workplaces
- Team building
- Implementation strategies for mentoring

Who should attend:

- Young people on the Autism Spectrum both as mentors and participants
- Parents/ Carers of young people on the Autism Spectrum
- People interested in volunteering to help conduct the program in Tasmania
- Principals/Teachers who are interested in adopting this philosophy in their schools

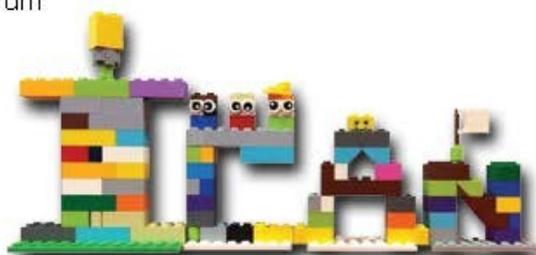
To express interest or ask questions please contact:

Ph: 62 31 27 45

Email: autism@autismtas.org.au



Chris Varney,
Founder I CAN and TEDx presenter



I CAN Network is a movement of people driving a rethink of Autism, from 'I Can't' to 'I CAN'.
With 80% of the team being on the Autism Spectrum,
I CAN Network proves what people with Autism CAN do.

**I CAN
NETWORK**
icannetwork.com.au

The APAC Conference is a recognised forum in which to present and learn about the newest research and practices within the field of autism.

APAC15 featured keynote addresses from international and Australian experts in autism alongside a diverse range of symposia sessions, workshops and poster presentations.

One of the speakers at this year's forum was Raelene Dundon who has kindly given us permission to reproduce the information from her presentation.

Talking to your Child about their Diagnosis: A Journey of Discovery as a Parent and Psychologist.

Raelene Dundon MAPS BSc, GradDipEdPsych, MPsyCh(Ed & Dev)



Raelene Dundon is a registered psychologist and director of Okey Dokey Psychology Services in Victoria. She is also the mother of a son with autism. This article is written based on her presentation at the recent Asia Pacific Autism Conference in Brisbane. Raelene's presentation included a firsthand account of her experience explaining the diagnosis to her son at the age of five, and how his understanding of autism has developed over the last six years. She also reflected on her work as a Child Psychologist,

supporting families as they discuss autism with their children.

Raelene explains that making the decision to tell your child about their diagnosis of autism is a daunting one for many parents: When is the right time? How do you tell them? How will they react? What if they get upset? Should they tell their friends? Parents seeking information to help them through this process are often faced with conflicting advice on the 'right' way to introduce their child to autism and how to help them make sense of what it means to them and their future. The following article contains a summary of Raelene's presentation.

Why tell your child they have autism?

Autism is part of who they are. Knowing their diagnosis helps to:

- Reduce fears and self-blame that something is wrong with them (especially if they are visiting lots of doctors and therapy appointments)
- Provide a better understanding of who they are
- Increase their self-confidence
- Increase their willingness to participate in therapy and their acceptance of strategies to help them.

"I finally knew why I felt different, why I felt I was a freak, why I didn't seem to fit in. Even better, it was not my fault!.....Mum could have saved me a lot of years of worry because I always knew I was different." - Luke Jackson (2002), Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London

When is the right time to tell them?

There is no 'perfect' time, but earlier is better. It is best to tell them before their characteristics are really impacting negatively for them. The right time will vary from child to child. Telling your child about autism is an ongoing process, opportunities will keep popping up. It is helpful to be ready to address

questions as they come up. The following factors should also be considered:

- Parents should consider their own readiness to discuss autism with their child so as to prevent the possibility of the child taking on the parent's anxiety and upset.
- Enlist professional help (from familiar therapists) if needed, and other family members

There are two main approaches to deciding when the time is right:

- 1) Take your cue from the child. This involves waiting for the child to show some indication that they know that they're different.
- 2) Talk about autism from day one – the word 'autism' then becomes part of the familiar vocabulary and can be used to explain things that are happening in a very normalised fashion.

"It was very matter-of-fact. My parents used my diagnosis to explain things to me, like 'that's why you're going to the Putnam School' or 'that's why you're going to the doctor today'... I saw autism as no big deal. It was just matter-of-fact." Stephen Shore, Ed.D. (2013) A Conversation with Stephen Shore about Diagnosis, Autism Consortium.

What do I tell my child?

It is important to tailor the message to your child's level of understanding.

- be honest
- be positive
- be matter-of fact
- keep it simple

Some important points that your child needs to understand:

- Your child is a child first, who also has autism
- Many children have autism. Your child is not alone
- People are born with autism, you can't catch it

- His or her brain works a bit differently
- People with autism can learn strategies to help them with things that are difficult.

The following process may be helpful:

- 1) Talk about strengths and challenges
 - What does your child do well? What do they struggle with?
 - Are they good at the same things you are?
 - How can they use their strengths to help them manage their challenges?
- 2) Discuss your child's strengths and challenges in terms of a pattern
 - other children have the same sort of pattern of things they are good at or find difficult
- 3) Give the child's pattern of strengths and challenges a name - autism

This discussion doesn't have to happen all at one time; it can be a gradual process. It is also important to say that not all children with autism are the same. If your child expresses they don't like having autism, it is important to recognise their feelings and to reassure them. You may like to say "It's ok to be upset, everyone feels upset sometimes". Remind your child that everyone is different. Telling them, for example, that children who wear glasses don't always like their glasses, helps to normalise their emotions as well as their autism.

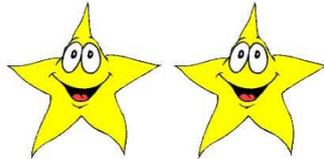
In conclusion, discussing the complexities of an autism diagnosis with a child can be a challenge many parents would prefer not to face. But with a positive approach and an open mind, helping a child to understand and embrace their autism can be an enlightening and rewarding experience not just for the child, but for their family as well.



To view more information on APAC15, including presentations from other Keynote Speakers, go to <http://www.apac15.org.au/>

University Psychology Clinic
Sandy Bay Campus

Cool Kids® Anxiety Group Programs
March – June 2016



COOL KIDS®

10 Week Anxiety Management Group Program
for parents and children aged 8 – 12 years

Program 1 Commencing **Wednesday 27th April 2016 4.00pm – 5.30pm**

Program 2 Commencing **Thursday 28th April 2016 4.00pm – 5.30pm**

Registrations for Cool Kids® close Friday 26th February 2016.

There is an admin fee of \$35 for each family to cover the cost of workbooks.

COOL LITTLE KIDS®

6 Week Anxiety **Prevention** Group Program for parents only
of children aged 3 – 6 years showing early signs of anxiety

Program 1 Commencing **Friday 4th March 2016 9.30am – 11.00am**
Registrations close Friday 5th February 2016

Program 2 Commencing **Friday 29th April 2016 9.30am – 11.00am**
Registrations close Wednesday 23rd March 2016.

There is an admin fee of \$25 for each family to cover the cost of workbooks.

For further details and registrations please see our website:
www.utas.edu.au/psychology-clinic or contact us by phone on 6226 2805.

What counts as evidence?

The diagnosis rate of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is rising. In Australia it is now estimated that approximately one child in every one hundred will receive a diagnosis of ASD (Richdale, 2011). This increase in prevalence has highlighted the need for effective interventions and thus, has demanded that researchers direct their focus to empirically determining which interventions are most beneficial in addressing the challenges faced by individuals with ASD. This body of research has been successful to date in establishing sufficient evidence to enable an increasing number of interventions to be categorised as evidence based practices (EBPs; Wong et al., 2015). This article aims to answer the question "What counts as evidence?"

Definition of "evidence"

There are numerous types of evidence that may be considered when investigating the effectiveness of interventions for individuals with ASD. These types offer varying strengths of proof. Systematic reviews of randomised control trials are considered the strongest level of evidence for deeming an intervention as an established EBP. Below this optimal level of evidence there is a hierarchy of six further evidence types including various levels of experimental designs, down to expert evidence and then anecdotal testimonies as the weakest level of evidence. Figure 1 illustrates the seven levels which form the evidence hierarchy.

Levels of Evidence

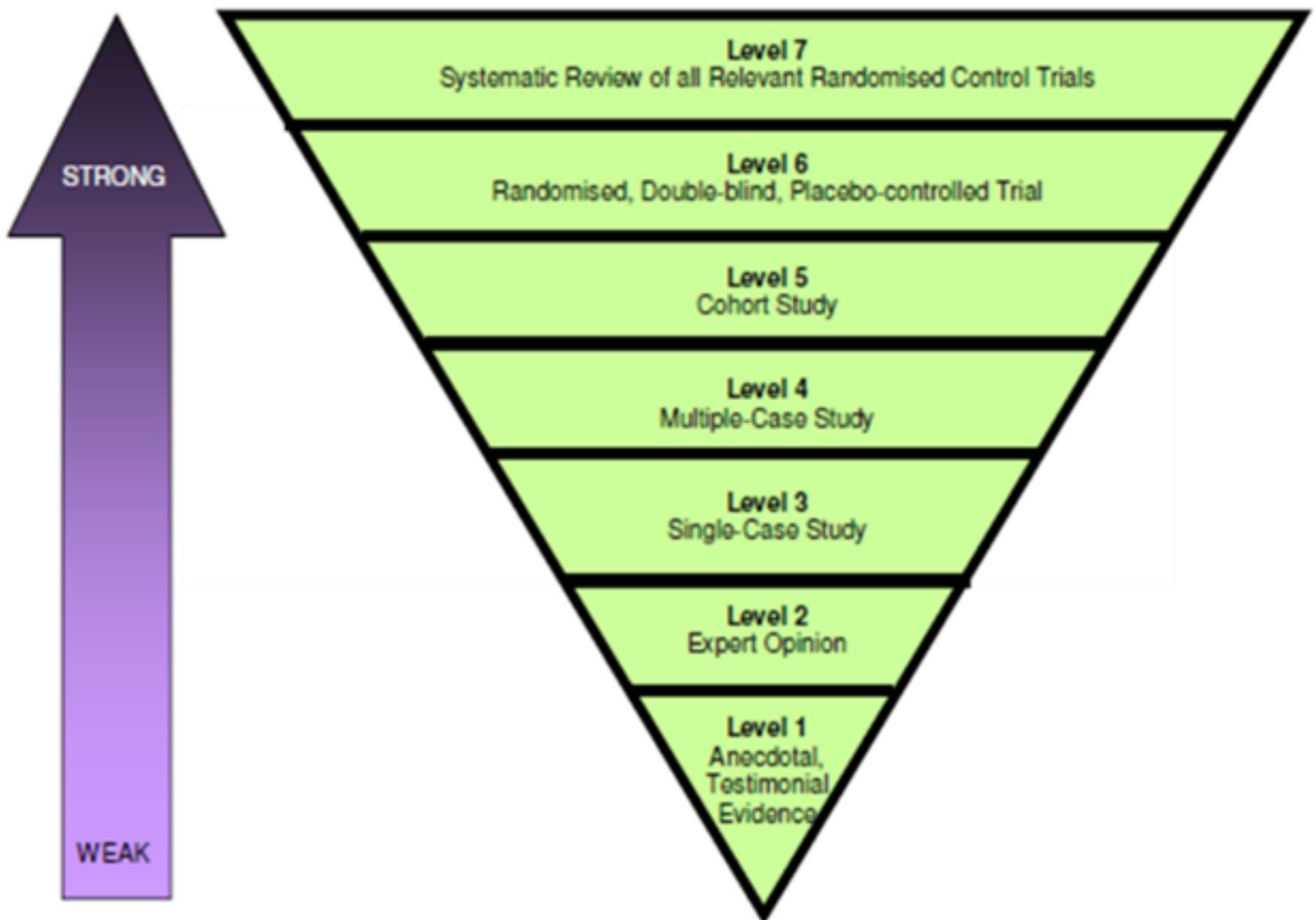


Figure 1: The evidence hierarchy (Keen, 2015).

EBPs are those in which sufficient empirical evidence has been gathered which demonstrates their effectiveness in addressing the core behavioural deficits and excesses characteristic of ASD (Sigafoos et al., 2007). Sound evidence for an intervention can be defined as replicable quantitative results attained from studies which have applied exceptionally high standards of research methodology (Hall, 2013; Sigafoos, Green, Edrishinha & Lancioni, 2007; Slocum, Spencer & Detrich, 2012). This definition contains three important features: quality, quantity and consistency.

In recent years there have been several systematic reviews published which have synthesised and analysed current research studies with the aim of compiling a list of established EBPs for individuals with ASD (see National Autism Centre [NAC], 2015; Wong et al., 2014). The NAC (2015) have identified 14 EBPs, while Wong et al. (2014) have identified 27 EBPs. The apparent inconsistency in findings between the two systematic reviews reflects the impact that the inclusion and exclusion criteria can have on a review's eventual findings as well as the grouping of particular interventions. For example, the NAC list "behavioural interventions" as an EBP, whilst Wong et al. (2014) list a number of behavioural interventions as separate EBPs (e.g. prompting, reinforcement and response interruption/redirection). Each of these reviews considered the quality, quantity and consistency of extant empirical evidence comprising levels three to six of the evidence hierarchy.

Quality of evidence

The quality of evidence refers to the experimental rigor of research studies. Studies which demonstrate a high level of rigor are considered to produce strong evidence that the study results are attributable to the intervention that was applied. Various features of empirical research which contribute to experimental rigor have been identified in the literature. These features are known as quality indicators, and include: stringent participant selection and description; a clear description of the intervention and fidelity of implementation; suitable outcome measures to capture intervention effectiveness, generalisation and

maintenance; and research design with appropriate data analysis (Gersten, Fuchs, Compton, Coyne, Greenwood & Innocenti, 2005).

Quantity of evidence

A study may be of the highest quality, but standing alone it cannot demonstrate whether an intervention is truly effective (NAC, 2015). To gain status as an established EBP a sufficient quantity of quality evidence must be available which indicates that an intervention produces positive outcomes for individuals with ASD. The quantity of studies necessary to contribute to the classification of an intervention varies depending on the quality of the available studies (ie the level of evidence offered). Wong et al. (2014) required either at least two high quality group design articles or a minimum of five high quality single-case design (SCD) articles, or a combination of one group design and at least three SCD studies. Similarly, the NAC (2015) determined that a minimum of two group designs or four SCD studies, or a combination of these would deem an intervention as an established EBP.

Consistency of evidence

Consistency is the third important feature to consider when examining the available evidence for an intervention. A genuinely effective intervention should consistently show beneficial effects in studies conducted by a range of different research groups (NAC, 2015, Wong et al., 2015). In order to ensure that consistency of effects was considered in the ranking of interventions, the NAC set a maximum of 10% of studies which reported conflicting results in order that an intervention to be deemed an established EBP.

Implementation Fidelity

The increasing numbers of EBPs being identified by empirical research bodes well for maximising successful outcomes for individuals with ASD. The responsibility for realising these positive outcomes rests largely with educators and therapists. It is therefore imperative that these practitioners are able to identify which EBP is best suited to the individual characteristics of their students and clients and are able to implement the chosen practice effectively in order that the outcomes achieved in research settings can be matched in the applied setting (Harn, Parisi & Stoolmiller, 2014; Odom, 2009). Odom (2009) proposes that implementation is the crucial link between research and beneficial outcomes for individuals with ASD.

Fidelity is a crucial component of ensuring that implementation of empirically-derived EBPs results in the intended benefit for the individual with ASD. Fidelity refers to the degree to which an intervention is implemented as it was designed to be used (Hall, 2013; Harn et al., 2013). The degree of fidelity to which an intervention is implemented is considered to directly influence the degree of efficacy of an EBP (Harn et al., 2013). Recognition of this influence infers that researchers who devise EBPs must be in agreement with educators and therapists who implement them with regards to the level of fidelity required to optimise intervention outcomes (Harn et al., 2013). To reveal the required level of fidelity it is imperative that the critical components of EBPs be clearly identified.

Identification and awareness of the critical components of an intervention, and adherence to these, allows the educator or therapist to apply professional judgment during implementation of an EBP to deliver it in a flexible way. Flexibility and innovation that occurs as a result of professional judgement allows interventions to be implemented in a way which best suits the context and the individual characteristics and values of the student (Harn et al., 2013; Spencer, Detrich & Slocum, 2012). In order for this to eventuate it is important that researchers aim to clearly identify and validate the critical components of EBPs (Harn et al., 2013). This in turn will ensure that EBPs are accessible and operational for educators and therapists, thus ensuring that a strong

link eventuates between identification of EBPs and optimal benefits for individuals with ASD.

Conclusion

The growing research attention directed at empirical identification of EBPs has been driven by the rising prevalence of the condition and the corresponding demand for effective interventions. Evidence for interventions can be garnered from various sources, ranging from robust systematic reviews of rigorous empirical research studies to relatively weak anecdotal evidence from proponents of any given practice. When determining the classification of an intervention as an established EBP the three crucial factors of quality, quantity and consistency of available evidence are considered. Implementation is the critical link which determines whether any EBP will produce the desired positive benefits for individuals with ASD. Fidelity determines the effectiveness of implementation. Identification of the critical components of an EBP ensures that implementation can occur with a high degree of fidelity whilst also incorporating beneficial innovation and flexibility for the ultimate benefit of individuals with ASD.

The systematic reviews mentioned in this paper are available for free download. Included in each report is a list of the EBPs identified by each group of researchers and corresponding fact sheets for each intervention.

National Autism Centre's report (2015): <http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/national-standards-project/phase-2/>

Wong et al.'s report (2014): <http://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/reports-and-policy-briefs/2014-EBP-Report.pdf>

This article is an extract from a longer paper entitled Evidence Based Practices, written by Robyn Thomas towards the postgraduate Masters of Autism Studies degree of Griffiths University. The full paper (including reference citations) is available by request.



A great place to start for support and services

What is Carer Gateway?

Carer Gateway is a new, national carer service which provides reliable information specifically for carers. Funded by the Australian Government, Carer Gateway offers a website and phone service for carers to access practical information and support.

Who is Carer Gateway for?

If you assist a family member or friend who has a disability, chronic illness, dementia, mental illness or is frail aged, then Carer Gateway could help you.

How can Carer Gateway help me?

Carer Gateway provides information, resources and practical advice on:

-  local support such as respite services
-  how to look after yourself while caring for someone
-  financial and legal considerations
-  what to do in an emergency or crisis situation
-  how to adjust when caring ends.

1800 422 737
carergateway.gov.au

How do I find out about services?

If you are looking for a particular service or would like to know what types of services you may be eligible for, Carer Gateway can help. You can call **1800 422 737** or use the smart service finder tool on the website. By answering some quick questions, Carer Gateway will be able to provide you with information on services in your area to suit your needs.

What if I am already receiving carer support services?

There are no changes to how you currently access support services and you can continue to directly contact your existing service providers.

What if English is not my first language?

If you are more comfortable having a conversation in a language other than English, you can phone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **131 450**. TIS can translate in more than 100 languages and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

What if I have a hearing or speech impairment?

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact Carer Gateway through the National Relay Service (NRS) in two easy steps:

1. visit the National Relay Service website (www.relayservice.gov.au)
2. ask for the Carer Gateway on **1800 422 737**.

What if I have a vision impairment?

The Carer Gateway website includes a ReadSpeaker function which automatically changes written text to speech, providing an audio version of the information on the website.

Simply click the “**listen**” button on any page and it will be read aloud to you.

How do I contact Carer Gateway?

Carers can call the **1800 422 737** phone number Monday-Friday 8am-6pm to speak to our helpful, Australian based team. There is also a website carergateway.gov.au which can be accessed at all times.

Through the website, you can also request for someone to call you back at a convenient time.



1800 422 737

Monday to Friday, 8am- 6pm

carergateway.gov.au

Moving House and Autism

A major change such as moving house can be a time of upheaval for most people. This can be especially so for a person with autism for whom even an everyday change can cause additional anxiety. Getting the right support can help reduce anxiety and stress for the person and make the process more manageable.

Although every person with autism is different, the following strategies may help:

- Plan well in advance. Look at ways you might minimise your packing and moving workload now so that moving day can go more smoothly. Break down tasks into small achievable chunks and mark these on a calendar.
- Work to a predictable schedule. If possible, schedule a regular predictable time to pack. When the time is up, stop. Use a timer, picture sequence, calendar etc to mark off when this will happen. Involve the person with autism in planning this if appropriate.
- Adjust the personal schedule of the person with autism. Create a social narrative or picture sequence of key events. Consider details which may be important or interesting to the individual.
- Make a list of exactly what has been packed and where, in case you need to retrieve anything at a later date – stickers or colour coding may help.
- Start packing non essential items first (see note regarding the person with autism's own belongings below). Be aware that what may be that seemingly non-essential items may have important functions or personal significance for the person with autism.
- Be sensitive about the level of involvement the person with autism takes. To minimise anxiety for the person with autism, some parents and carers may choose to commence packing when the person with autism is not present. For some individuals with autism, however, being involved in the process may give them a sense of control and security which may help them feel calmer.
- It may help to leave the person with autism's space and belongings till last. Ensure the person with autism can have a safe, predictable place which remains unchanged for as long as possible during the

packing and moving process. For example, their bedroom or chill out zone may be the last area to be packed.

- Stay positive about the move. If a parent or carer is stressed, the individual with autism may pick up on this but not have the framework to understand or cope with their perceptions. Take time out to look after your own emotional needs - even short breaks can help. Talking through how you feel with a counsellor may help reduce your own anxiety.
- Welcome any questions they may have, and go through what will happen on moving day. Talk about things which will be similar (eg. we can still go to nana's but we will drive down this street instead; you will still go to the same school but we will live closer etc).
- Familiarise the person with the new home and location. If possible schedule regular short visits to your new area. Choose a time of day where you are not in a rush. Google Streetview may enable you to visit the location "virtually" in advance or as an alternative if real visits are not possible. Visuals such as photos, house plans and maps may help.
- Enlist extra help. An extra set of eyes, especially on moving day, may help the process run more smoothly. For some parents or carers, this may take the form of a friend or family member whose role is to support the individual with autism. Support or respite services may also be of help.
- Make a Safety Plan. This is especially important where an individual may be prone to wandering. Organise to have home security systems installed prior to moving day. The National Autism Centre's Big Red Safety Toolkit (free download from <http://nationalautismassociation.org/docs/BigRedSafetyToolkit.pdf>) may be a helpful guide to creating an individual Safety Plan. Be sure to find out the relevant phone numbers for the locality you are moving to.

Resources which may help:

Autism Tasmania's Fact Sheet: Effectively Preparing Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders for Transitions, download <http://www.autismtas.org.au/fact-sheets>

The National Autistic Society UK's article Moving House <http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/at-home/moving-house.aspx>

Pedestrian Safety and Autism

For some individuals with autism, skills such as crossing the road may never be appropriate or safe without the supervision or assistance of a therapist or carer. Please consider the needs of the individual when teaching pedestrian safety. The appropriate therapist can help develop a plan for teaching functional skills such as crossing the road safely.

Even an individual who may seem to understand road safety rules won't necessarily remember to follow them or be able to put these into practice due to the demands of the environment or other processing differences.

It is also important to note when individualising information on pedestrian safety that you review all information carefully to ensure it is consistent with Australian road rules and safety guidelines.

For example, in Australia we look RIGHT first because in most situations in Australia traffic travels in the left hand lane and that is the direction from which cars etc will come first. This may not be the case in different countries such as the United States.

Crossing the Road

As a first step, the Tasmanian Road Safety Advisory Council advises parents and carers to familiarise children with the concepts and terms: **STOP, LOOK, LISTEN** and **THINK**. This is consistent with material used in Tasmanian government schools.

It is also important to teach the child to **WALK NOT RUN**. Running across the road increases the likelihood of falling over – it may take longer to recover from a fall than it does for a car to stop!

The interactive website SmartStop, produced in connection with MetroTas around bus safety, also includes the basics of teaching your child to Stop, Look, Listen and Think, quiz and games for kids. <http://bussafety.transport.tas.gov.au/>. There is helpful information on suggested stages of teaching road safety which a parent or carer can then further individualise (again, taking care to review all information carefully to ensure it is consistent Australian road rules and safety guidelines).

For an overview of the Tasmanian road safety rules for pedestrians, see: http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/licensing/publications/tasmanian_road_rules/road_safety_rules/pedestrians



Some strategies parents or carers might use to individualise this information for their child may include:

Traffic light symbols. As these are frequently used to indicate other behaviours, it is important that the individual understands what these mean in their original context – traffic.

PECS and other visuals such as photos. Creating an individual picture schedule or sequence with targeted safety behaviours.

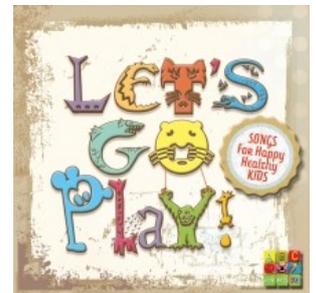
Key word signing to emphasise words such as Stop, Listen etc

Video modelling – recording a specific location or sequence in advance using smart phones etc and playing back to prepare or review.

Google streetview – look at streetscapes in advance to prepare the individual for that particular environment.

Songs – such as the ABC *Crossing the Road - Let's Go Play For Kids*'

<https://soundcloud.com/abcmusic/10-crossing-the-road>



Other helpful information:

Kids and Traffic. A large family website developed by Macquarie University and the NSW Centre for Road Safety covering a range of road safety information and downloadable tip sheets.

<http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au>

Raising Children Network – Pedestrian Safety.

Detailed general information (not autism specific) for parents including information on driveway safety, getting in and out of the car, crossing the road etc. http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/pedestrian_safety.html



"PlayConnect" Playgroups are designed to help families with children with autism. It is about connecting with other families.

Families that have a child aged from 0-6 years with autism or autism like symptoms are welcome to join a "PlayConnect" Playgroup. Children do not need a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to join. Siblings aged 0 to 6 years old are also welcome to attend.

"PlayConnect" Playgroups meet, either weekly or fortnightly, for two hours. During playgroup sessions, caregivers and children participate in a variety of play activities suited to the needs of children with autism.

Sessions are initially run by a Development Worker, for between 6-24 months, until they are able to transition to become community, parent-run playgroups. Families will also receive information about other services for children with autism.

Numerous studies have shown the value of playgroup on young children's social, cognitive, emotional and language development. Parents and caregivers say playgroups are useful because they help them connect with other families in similar situations.

"PlayConnect" is not therapy based however the "PlayConnect" Development Worker can provide families with information about strategies for play and specialist services in their local area. Families can also contact the Playgroup Australia's ASD Advisor for advice about children with autism on 1800 790 335.

There are currently two "PlayConnect" Playgroups running in Tasmania:

• **Northern Tasmania**

35 Holbrook Street, Invermay

Every Thursday during school terms 9:30am-11:30am

Playgroup Consultant is Lori Crocket – 1800 171 882

The Toy Library is open Mon-Fri between 9:30am and 2:30pm

• **Southern Tasmania**

156 Albert Rd, Moonah

Playgroup Consultant is Vanessa Pilan – (03) 6228 0925

The Toy Library is open Tues & Thurs between 9:30am and 2:30pm

If families are keen for a "PlayConnect" Playgroup in their area they are encouraged to register interest by contacting their Playgroup Association on **1800 171 882** (Toll Free) or by visiting the Playgroup Australia website: <http://playgroupaustralia.org.au/National-Programs-2/Play-Connect.aspx>



Give Individuals with Autism WINGS.

This was the title of SMARTER Brunei's 7th National Conference to which I was invited to speak in October – a welcome return to a lovely country with wonderful people.

SMARTER (Society for the Management of Autism Related issues in Training, Education and Resources) - a non-government, family support organisation run by and for parents and family members exclusively for autism from childhood to old age in a seamless journey to independence where possible.

I first visited Brunei in 2003 as guest speaker for their second conference on Autism Spectrum Disorder. People often ask, why Brunei, how did you get an invitation to go there? Like Tasmania, Brunei is a small country with a population of 220,000 people and the parents were interested in another Country/ State with an Autism body that had a small population like them. Debbie Smith, a lecturer at the time at University of Brunei Darussalam had previously worked at University of Tasmania in Hobart and was aware of Autism Tasmania and Giant Steps. Debbie is now lecturing at Flinders University in Adelaide.

I have been lucky to return many times and on Sunday 4th October I left Tasmania, sponsored by the Australian High Commission for Brunei for my 7th visit, again as key note speaker for their Autism Conference which took place from Friday 9th – Sunday 11th October.

The Australian High Commission supported and co-sponsored the conference through the New Colombo Plan which is also supporting 8 undergraduate students and 2 lecturers from Flinders University who spent a three week placement at one of the two autism centres in Brunei leading up to the

conference. The students are studying Disability and Social Inclusion.

The Australian High Commissioner, His Excellency Todd Mercer opened the conference and he and two of his staff played a major part in the organisation and presentation of the conference.

Prior to the Conference

For the five days before the conference I visited both of the SMARTER Brunei's autism centres in the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan. The Edge is a centre for the younger children on the spectrum – from diagnosis to end-primary school age and the BACA (Brunei Autism Centre for Adults) campus for the older students. There is also an outreach centre in the south of the country at Kuala Belait - all of these centres have been opened since 2002. The services they offer are world class and are exemplary in the programs they offer their students, service delivery and support for families. Their documentation and record keeping have been ratified by a number of universities and the international autism bodies.

During my time visiting the centres I saw the Flinders



Rose Clark and Debbie Smith with local parents

University students working with the young person they had mainly been assigned to for the duration of their visit. Their responsibilities included working in a centre (either the Edge or BACA), community activities and building up a performance item for the conference dinner which featured an amazing excerpt from 'Looking Through the Autism Wonderland,' Welcome to the Tea Party scene. This show had been performed in the past however the students needed a refresher in relation to the content, costumes and stage layout. Watching the performance it was hard to believe that the performers were not professional – it was truly amazing.

The connections that the Flinders University students made with the children and their families was extraordinary to see, with very emotional partings from the young people with autism, their families, staff at the two centres and the students themselves. I'm certain that for some the Brunei – Australia link will be very long lasting.



L-R: Low Kok Wai (SMARTER creative and musical specialist)

Mr Todd Mercer High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam

Datin Paduka Hjh Adina Othman - Deputy Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Malai Hj Abdullah Bin Malai Hj Othman - SMARTER President

The Conference

The title of the conference, 'Give Individuals with Autism Wings,' was the theme throughout the three days and was the title of my keynote paper. WINGS is the acronym for Wholistic Integration to Nurture and Guide them to Self-Actualisation. Now most people will question the W in Wholistic. However Malai who is the President CEO of SMARTER Brunei loves acronyms and wasn't going to be stopped by the spelling of a word – hence the W at the beginning of holistic.

Malai Hj Abdullah Bin Malai Hj Othman is the driving force behind the organisation in Brunei. He is also a father to three daughters and a son with autism, Farid, who is now 19 years old. Malai has worked in the mental health sector in both Brunei and the UK and has many wonderful contacts in various health and education departments as well as government

departments which have been supportive of the development of an autism organisation in Brunei.

The conference featured papers from Debbie Smith (Flinders University) speaking about C.O.S.T (Challenges, Obstacles, Setbacks and Threats) to running an intervention service/centre and also another on C.A.S.H (Contribution financially, Assistance in infrastructure, Supporting disability friendly policy and Human capacity building). As you can see the acronyms played a huge part. A number of parents also spoke each day about their experience of being a parent and the services they had used. The content was varied and extremely interesting.

The conference drew delegates from the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia as well as the Australian contingent from Flinders University. A large group of educators from the Philippines undertook 4 days training with Malai at The Edge Centre learning about autism and the programs that SMARTER Brunei run including STEP (Social, Training, Educational and Psychological intervention) program. SMARTER run many such programs and their adult centre trains the students in many courses – Office Training, Basic Electronics, Computer, Basic Certificate in Baking and Photography.

I spent many hours in the Bakery at BACA (the centre for older students) which is a fully operational cooking facility where the students produce biscuits to sell at various outlets. The visuals for each step are comprehensive and well produced so that each team knows what their jobs are. There are also steps at the end to clean up and pack away so that the bakery is ready for the next cooking session. The students, mostly older boys/young men, have an enormous sense of pride in what they do. When I left Brunei I noticed in the coffee shop at the airport that they were selling SMARTER biscuits in small containers!

Day three saw the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports attend the afternoon session to present certificates to those students at BACA who had reached competency in one of the courses that are on offer. It was inspiring to see the pride from those receiving and also their families – pride mixed with many tears.

Again it was a pleasure to visit a place I've grown to really love and to see the huge leaps they've made in their provision for people on the autism spectrum. Contrary to popular belief the people in Brunei are not wealthy and most money for their autism centres come from fund-raising and some occasional larger donations. SMARTER Brunei truly are an amazing group of people.

Rose Clark



Ruth Croser has joined the group of independent therapy providers co-locating at the Children's Therapy Centre in Bellerive. Ruth is at the centre Monday and Tuesday all day, Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings, but is able to do therapy sessions through school/home/childcare visits any day of the week.

Ruth has worked in paediatric occupational therapy for over 20 years in South Australia and Tasmania. She completed a teaching degree in special education in 2001 and has subsequently worked as an educator in various support teacher positions (while continuing with consultative OT). Working with students on the autism spectrum and their families has been a significant part of her working life in both occupational therapy and teaching. This has included running early intervention groups in Adelaide (Novita), Launceston (St Giles) and Hobart (ECIS), working 1:1 with students and their families, class teaching at Southern Support School and working in leadership roles in the education department alongside autism advisors and school teams supporting students with autism to access the curriculum.

Types of therapy support Ruth is able to provide include individual assessment and therapy sessions, equipment recommendations to maximise your child's abilities, collaborative sessions with other professionals, technology support assessments, professional learning for those working with your child, child group sessions (a fine motor skills group for students in grades 1-3 will be commencing in term 1 2016 and an exciting group collaborating with music therapist Minky van der Walt is in the pipeline also) and parent information/training groups.

Email: ruthcroser@iinet.net.au

Website and online appointment request form: www.encourageequipenable.com

Facebook page: [facebook.com/ruthcroserot](https://www.facebook.com/ruthcroserot)



Hobart Occupational Therapy is operated by Dianna King (Di) and, opening in January, will be co-located with Heidi Smit Occupational Therapy in Bellerive. Di is a registered occupational therapist and is a provider for DSS through HCWA. Di is available to visit at home, school and other community settings as well as in the clinic.

Di is an enthusiastic and passionate Occupational Therapist who enjoys working with families and individuals to identify their goals and become more independent in their daily lives. She takes a very practical and functional approach to making a difference in people's functioning in their day to day lives. Di has a wealth of experience in working with people and their families from early intervention to adults in the later stages of their life. She has developed a special interest in sensory processing and ASD and has completed a Master of Health Science (OT) with a focus on sensory and information processing. With over 14 years experience as an occupational therapist, Di has worked collaboratively with a variety of other professionals including speech pathologists, paediatricians, medical practitioners, teachers, psychologists and physiotherapists across a variety of settings.

Hobart Occupational Therapy provides services for people across their lifespan to address concerns about their function in daily life eg meal times, toileting, self-care, sensory processing, fine motor skills and handwriting. They are also planning to develop a service in conjunction with a dietician for Mealtime Management to address concerns for children at mealtimes which seems to impact so many families. Hobart Occupational Therapy is looking into the possibility of connecting with communities outside of Hobart such as the north-west and east coast of Tasmania to provide an outreach service supported by local allied health assistants and Skype support from therapists alongside semi-regular face to face visits from therapists.

Contacting Di: Mobile 0473188213, the clinic 6245 9232 or email admin@hobartot.com.au. More information about Hobart Occupational Therapy is available on their website hobartot.com.au.



Rebecca will be joining Eastern Shore Children's Therapy Service in Bellerive Quay in January 2016.

The Bellerive Quay therapy centre offers multidisciplinary services including Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy and Educational Support.

Rebecca has over 13 years of paediatric Speech Pathology experience. She has a diverse range of skills in assessment and intervention of speech and language delays and disorders. She has particular interest in the field of Autism and speech sound disorders.

Rebecca's approach to speech therapy is to use a play-based, family-centred philosophy to engage with the child and their family and to establish, work towards and review realistic and meaningful goals.

Rebecca lives with her husband, two small children and five chooks.

For a current list of Tasmanian HCWA Panel Providers please go to our website

<http://www.autismtas.org.au/services/autism-advisory-service>



EARLY INTERVENTION INDIGENOUS LIAISON PROGRAM

Our main objectives are:

COMMUNITY

Raise Awareness of Disabilities within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and with service providers.

RELATIONSHIPS

Build Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and link them with relevant support services.

SUPPORT

Work in collaboration with Disability Organisations, NDIS, Carers Australia and other service providers, and assist them with community visits.

CULTURAL

Provide and lead cultural perspective to Disability Organisations, NDIS, Carers Australia and other service providers to improve their understanding of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

The Early Intervention – Indigenous Liaison Program is funded by Department of Social Services and hosted by Autism Queensland.



For more information contact:
Jodie on 1300 288 476 or
jodie@autismtas.org.au





THE SOCIAL SKILLS PICTURE BOOK
for High School and Beyond



'The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond' - is produced by Dr Jed Baker, a behavioural consultant and director of the U.S. based Social Skills Training Project.

It is a practical resource which teaches key social skills required in various situations common to teenagers and young adults including verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

Especially designed to draw on the comparative strengths in visual processing many individuals with autism, the book largely presents key information in colour photographs (hence the term "picture book"). The photographs are of people demonstrating various social skills in the correct (and sometimes incorrect) way. "Thought bubbles" show what people might be thinking during these interactions.

The text which accompanies the photographs is succinct and supportive. For readers who would like more a detailed information on the approach, Baker also provides a longer written explanation of the theories and evidence behind using visuals, the function of certain behaviours and the best ways to promote skills acquisition in the first part of the book.

The social skills covered in *The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond* include conversations, building and maintaining friendships, asserting your feelings, conflict resolution, asking someone out on a date, dealing with teasing, compromising, working as part of a group, respecting each other's space, and job interviews. The skills depicted are intended to be role-played and practiced.

I found this to be a very accessible and helpful resource. I particularly appreciated that the book

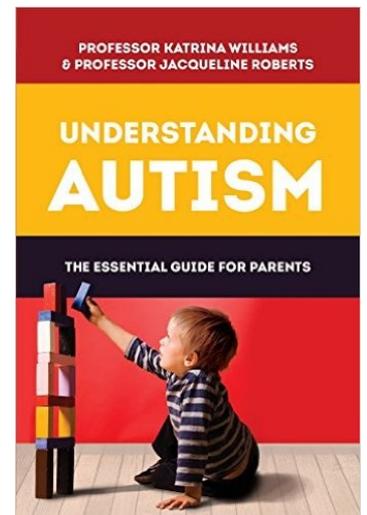
visually illustrates the positive and negative consequences of ways of interacting. The cause and effect of different responses is clearly shown. The book also leaves room for creativity and personalisation; Dr Baker suggests that the person with autism or their carer make a personalised booklet in which to detail each new skill as it's acquired.

Not only would a personalised booklet be helpful to reinforce and remember what has been learned, it would also serve as quick reference when out and about - in an A4 format, *The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond* won't easily fit into a pocket or smaller bag! *The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond* would compliment other works by Dr Jed Baker and any on social skills, managing stress or transitioning into adulthood.

Amy Jansen

Understanding Autism - The Essential Guide for Parents

(Professor Katrina Williams & Professor Jacqueline Roberts)



This is a new reference book for parents and carers of children with autism which has been written by, and draws on the experience of two leading experts in the field.

Professor Katrina Williams is a founding member and executive committee member of the Australasian Society for Autism Research and Jacqueline Roberts who is Professor of Autism at the Autism Centre of Excellence at Griffiths University.

Understanding Autism provides parents/carers/family members with a comprehensive, yet stream-lined tool to assist them in navigating the minefield of information which they are often inundated with, and sometimes overwhelmed by, before, during and after the assessment and diagnosis process.

This book explores everything from potential causes of autism, through to how it may present at various ages and stages within the life of a child. It dispels some of the more common myths and misinformation

that are often associated with autism and provides the reader with clear, non-judgemental and trusted information. It also addresses common problematic behaviours and conditions that can often appear in conjunction with autism (anxiety, depression) and practical advice and support on how families can best manage the child's transition into adulthood.

Understanding Autism also touches on the often forgotten aspect of self-care for parents and the importance of this. It focuses on the actuality that autism does not just affect the child who has been diagnosed; but can impact on the whole family unit and the need to be physically and emotionally well to support your child with autism. It provides many instances of case studies whereby parents can draw practical examples of how to cope with the stressors they face and to better understand their young person/s autism.

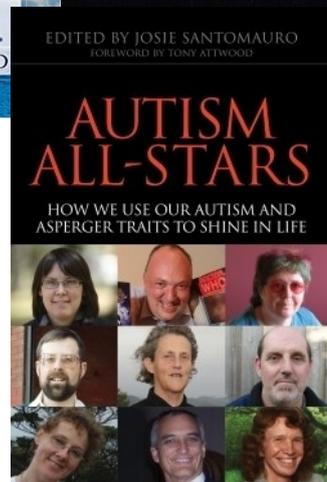
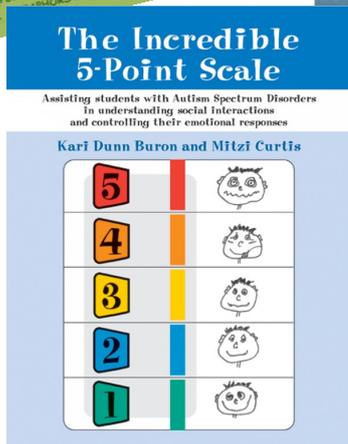
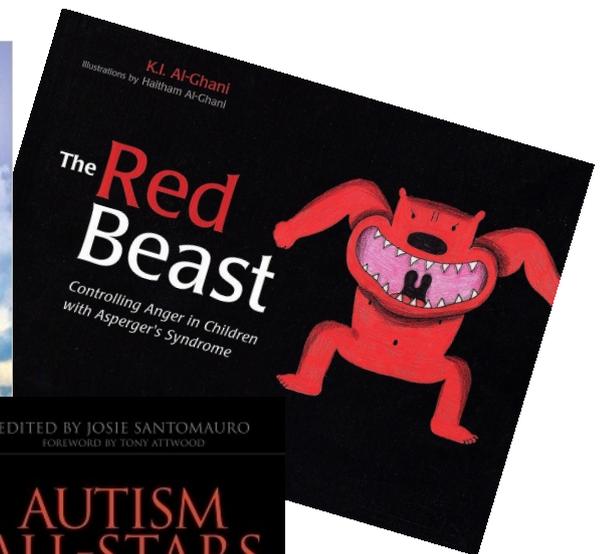
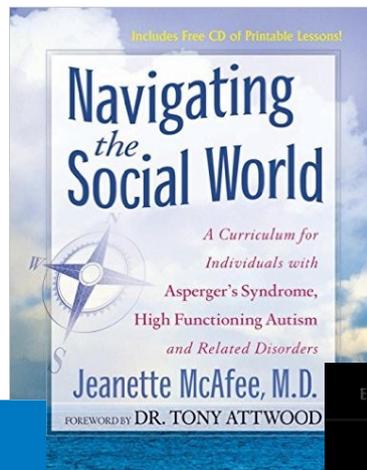
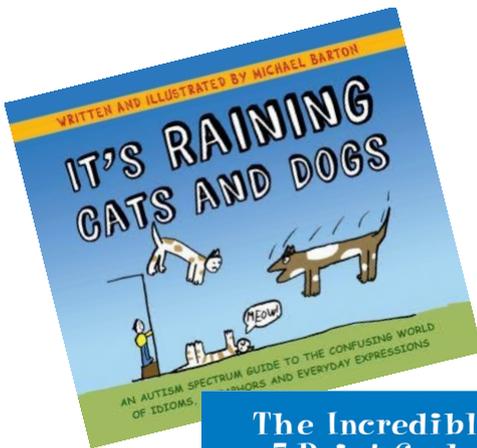
The book is written in a very clear and easily understood format and successfully provides families with a sensitively written, yet very factual account of the complexities of autism and would provide families with a valuable, empowering and relevant resource in helping them to achieve the best outcomes for their children.

Jodie Denman



Below are a sample of the many new resources purchased for our libraries in Newstead and Hobart over the last 6 months. Thank you to the staff at MyState Foundation (pictured here presenting the cheque to CEO, Terry Burke is Richard and Jane from MyState) for their generous donation to make this possible.

For a full listing of our resources please refer to our website under [Services](#)



News from the North West Coast

The last part of 2016 has seen a number of events happening on the north-west coast. The TA Professional Learning sessions during term 4 were very well attended – most were full to capacity, which was 24 enthusiastic teachers/teacher aides upskilling their knowledge in their own time. There was a good mix from across the coast and from all three education sectors: Department of Education, Catholic and Independent Schools.

We anticipate offering them again in 2016 as they have been extremely popular with positive feedback about the content.

Parent focus groups continue to be well attended with a mix of topics and guest speakers attending the various groups across the north-west and west coasts. Parents have found building their knowledge of autism and services in their local communities particularly helpful and the sharing of knowledge in some sessions has been wonderful to witness and extremely beneficial to those attending.

A parent session recently run in Burnie titled, "*Your Guide to Better Transition*" was a great success with a full house and enthusiastic discussion around the topic. Parents indicated that they felt much more confident with their new found knowledge and not as hesitant about their child's transition to a new class as they had previously.

More parent sessions are anticipated to be held in Burnie and Devonport in 2016.

A new focus group, 'Mothers of Girls on the Spectrum' recently met in Devonport to discuss their mutual interests, need for specific information and the idea of regular get-togethers. It was decided that there will be a 'film afternoon' during the school holidays to be held in Devonport and for family members including siblings. The film to be shown is 'Temple Grandin' and details will be advertised on Autism Tasmania's Facebook page.

A HOLIDAY PICNIC will be happening in Ulverstone at the Dinosaur Park during the school holidays in the second week of January, the day depending on the weather forecast! Details will be on Autism Tasmania's Facebook page and parents attending a registered Social/Support focus group on the North West Coast will receive an email notification. We look forward to seeing you and your family then.

Adult Asperger groups

The three adult Asperger groups operating in our state, located in Hobart, Launceston and the north-west continue to flourish with new people attending each. The groups meet regularly each month. The Hobart group recently celebrated its 10th anniversary which is a great milestone – many of the people who still attend were at the first get-together. Each year the group has worked on topics of interest producing some informative and helpful strategies for group members on such issues as resumes, employment, the workplace and relaxation and anxiety. The year is usually ended by a picnic in the Botanical Gardens just before Christmas.

The Launceston group is in its 6th year and meets on the first Saturday in the month at from 1.30 – 3.30pm as well as a 'drop-in afternoon' each Thursday from 2 – 4pm. Like the Hobart group, there have been some very interesting discussions relating to topics of interest that have arisen during the year.

The North-West group, the newest of the three, is in its 3rd year and meet for lunch/coffee on the second Saturday each month – discussion and good food are the centre-point for the couple of hours spent together. All groups are very welcoming of new people who would like to come along. There is a focus topic each month chosen by the group and sometimes an invited guest speaker talking about their specific area of expertise or interest. Each of the groups are open to older adolescents and adults who either have a diagnosis or think they maybe on the spectrum.

For a listing of all Autism Tasmania statewide Social/Support Groups please see page 26 of this publication.



Launceston School Holiday Activities

January 2016

Autism Tasmania is excited to offer the following free family events.

Bike Centre January 7, 9am – 1:30pm

Launceston City Council Road Safety Centre, 47-67 Lawrence Vale Road,
Bring your bikes, your scooters, your helmets and your family! Sausages will be available for you to sizzle. Tea and coffee will also be provided. No registrations required, just turn up!



Minecraft Mania January 13, 10am – 2pm

Please contact Robyn Thomas to register and receive further details.

Bring your own laptop (with Minecraft installed) and join the LAN party. We will have a lunch break from 12- 12:45 so bring your lunch and a sunhat.

*Please note that if we experience networking difficulties this event will still take place, but may involve participants playing individual games on their own computers.



Picnic in the park, January 20, 11am – 2pm

Heritage Forest, Conway Street, Mowbray

Bring your lunch and sun hats and come for a picnic lunch in Heritage Forest. Have a turn on the flying fox, play in the playground or bring an activity to share.



Please note that children are required to be accompanied by a parent or guardian to each of these events. Contact Robyn Thomas for more information. Phone: 0458 375 604 , email: robynt@autismtas.org.au

Social/Support Groups and Information Sessions as at December 2015

Southern Tasmania

Dunalley

Dunalley Community Neighbourhood Centre, Arthur Highway

First Thursday morning in the month

11:30am - 2:30pm

Contact: Amity - 6253 5579

Hobart

Monthly on Tuesdays 10:30am - 12:30pm

Venue and day may vary, please contact us for current location or find us on Facebook "AUTISM WARRIORS!!"

Contact: Robyn at robyn@autismtas.org.au

Hobart Adult Aspergers Group

Last Sunday in the month 2.00 - 4.00pm

Contact: Rose Clark 0407 320 048 for venue details

Regular visits are made to **Bridgewater, Clarence Plains, Geeveston** and **New Norfolk**. Please contact our office for details.

North West Coast

Autism information sessions are conducted quarterly at:

- Burnie
- Circular Head
- Devonport
- Wynyard

For details please contact Rose Clark 0407 320 048

Circular Head Focus Group

Third Friday in the month 10.30 - Midday

Community Meeting Room

Smithton District Hospital

Contact: Rose Clark 0407 320 048

North-West Adult Aspergers/High Functioning Autism Group

Second Saturday in the month 1.00 - 3.00pm

Contact: Stephen - stjf08@gmail.com or Allison on 1300 288 476 for venue details

North West Parent and Carer Focus Group

Third Thursday in the month 10.30 - Midday

Burnie Neighbourhood House

24 Wiseman Street, Burnie

Contact: Kym 0487 493 188

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 Autism Chat & Connect Northern Children's Network, 59D Amy Rd, Newstead

Second and Fourth Tuesday in the month

10:00am - 12.00pm.

!!NEW!!

Contact: Deb 0417 528 978

Adult Asperger Group—Launceston

First Saturday in the month 1.30 - 3.30pm.

Contact: Rose Clark 0407 320 048 for venue details

ASD Tasmanian Midlands

Kindergarten Room - Campbell Town District High School

Every third Monday in the month

9.00am - 11.00am

Contact: Sarah - 0410 093 704

ASD Chatter

Deloraine Primary School

First Tuesday in the month

12.30pm - 2:30pm

Contact: Patsy- 0439 376 281

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

!!NEW!!

West Coast

West Coast Focus Group

The Linc Library—Queenstown

Every second Thursday in the month

10.30am - midday

Contact: Sharon - 0429 117 413

**For more information please call: 1300 288 476
or email autism@autismtas.org.au**



EARLY DAYS PARENT/CARER WORKSHOPS

Autism Tasmania are proudly supporting families by providing workshops for mothers, fathers and other family carers of young children (0-7 years) who have a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum or who are going through the assessment and diagnostic process.

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

SOUTHERN WORKSHOPS

**My Child and Autism
(formerly Introduction to Autism)**

Thursday 18 February 2016
10:00 am - 2:30pm

Understanding Behaviour

Thursday 25 February 2016
10:00 am - 2:30pm

Helping my Child Cope with Change

Thursday 10 March 2016
10:00am - 12:30pm

Transition to School

Thursday 24 March 2016
10:00 am - 12:30pm

**My Child and Autism
(formerly Introduction to Autism)**

Thursday 5 May 2016
10:00 am - 2:30pm

Understanding Behaviour

Thursday 26 May 2016
10:00 am - 2:30pm

Tips for Everyday Skills

Thursday 9 June 2016
10:00am - 12:30pm

Play and Social Learning

Thursday 23 June 2016
10:00am - 12:30pm

Facilitator: Jodie Denman

E: jodie@autismtas.org.au

Venue:

21 Goulburn Street, Hobart
(limited off-street parking available at rear of building)

Northern and North West Early Days workshops to be announced in early 2016

To register and to obtain further details on the content of any of the individual workshops please contact your local Early Days facilitator



ABN: 90 215 494 454

Hobart

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Our offices will close Wednesday 23 December 2015 and re-open Monday 4 January 2016.

The Board, Management and Staff of Autism Tasmania wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!



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