

The bulletin of Autism Tasmania Inc.

Parent Forums

Included in this mailing is an invitation to all parents to attend a forum to learn more about changes taking place in schools in 2005 to support the learning of students with special and/or additional needs. We strongly urge you to attend one of these sessions if you have a child in a government school or a child attending Early Learning. The forums are taking place in Hobart, Launceston and Ulverstone during November.

There are many changes currently occurring within the Education Department with the introduction of the Essential Learnings curriculum framework and new assessment methods. The recent release of the Atelier report into the needs of students with special and or additional needs is also impacting upon service delivery within schools. Discussions about services for students with ASD are currently taking place, with particular emphasis on the Autism Consultant positions. We urge you to attend the forums to see what the changes may mean for your child.

Please RSVP to the numbers given ASAP – while this is a busy time of the year we are not sure how the changes will impact upon students with an autism spectrum disorder, but this is an opportunity for us to find out more.

Autism Tasmania AGM elects new Office Bearers.....

In September, we held our Annual General Meeting, which was conducted at the Tele-health Studios of the LGH and the RHH. Unfortunately a technical problem prevented the NW Regional Hospital from joining us but members in Devonport were able to participate via a phone hook-up.

Thankyou to everyone who joined us on the night and a particular thank you to Jeff Coulson who joined us by phone.

At the meeting, we held the election of three committee members. New members elected were Mick Clark, Debb Manser and Andrew Davies.

President-elect, Ros Ward thanked the Committee members of 2004 for their efforts especially Treasurer, John Christie, who decided not to seek re-election. To the right, is the Autism Tasmania Committee for the coming year.

As you can see we are currently without a Treasurer

and a casual vacancy has since arisen due to Kate Bridger's decision to take up employment on the mainland.

Your 2005 Committee

President	Ros Ward
Vice Presidents	Penny Cromarty, Mick Clark
Secretary	Cheryl Scott
Treasurer	vacant
Committee	Rosemary Rush, Peter Hatters Debb Manser, Andrew Davies One casual vacancy
Website	Geraldine Robertson

An East Coast Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorder

Doherty's Resort, St Helens: November 20th, 9am - 5pm

GUEST SPEAKER: Ms Wendy Lawson

Wendy is an adult who has an Autism Spectrum Disorder and is a renowned author who has written five books on the subject.

Workshops will include:

Visual Communication Systems including PECS (Picture Exchange System.)

Presenter: Mrs Robyn Thomas

Home Based ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis)

Presenters: Mrs Karen Rawnsley and Mrs Rosemary Rush (both parents of children with an ASD)

How Can I Help?

Information session about Autism Spectrum Disorder for relatives and friends

Presenter: Mrs Rose Clark, Family Support Co-ordinator, Autism Tasmania

(Parent of a 17 year old son with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.)

Occupational Therapy and Sensory Integration

Presenters: Ailsa Lesley and Tahnee Conn, Occupational Therapy Services, St. Giles

PLEASE NOTE:

Parents of children with a disability can enjoy a pampering session. Childcare is available at Poss M'Agic Childcare Centre.

COST FOR CONFERENCE:

Parents and community members: \$40 (discount available for 2 or more members of the same family)

Services providers: \$65

Prices include refreshments and full buffet luncheon

Special price of \$15 for those wishing to attend the afternoon session with Wendy Lawson only.

If you know someone who is on the Autism Spectrum or would simply like to know more about this disorder then register your interest now for this very exciting opportunity. Contact the Healthy Community Project on 63765242 or email coord@bodhra.org.au for a registration form.

ABIT – “Catching Up” Autism Behavioural Intervention Tas Inc Supporting Families Teaching ABA.

Hello to Bulletin Readers,

Just a quick catch-up this Bulletin. My thought for the moment would have to be for our children as they grow up. As parents of children with autism and Aspergers, we learn as others do that no matter how much you get involved, they still grow up! So whether we are ready for it or not, we must suddenly get comfortable with our children taking a larger place in their lives and doing more for themselves.

...so, you say, this is all quite normal and a tad dreary. Everyone knows about kids growing up, so what's the deal? The deal is that as parents our thinking needs to catch up too. The intensity with which we began our parenting and the patience and perseverance it required, make it hard to give over sometimes ...to wean that little bit more... and don't tell me that's another course of grieving around the corner... just when you think you're done with it. Anyway with any luck we'll all keep up with it, at least keep them in our sights for a while longer yet.

Best Wishes Rosemary Rush – President ABIT

Ph 6229 5760 rushm@netspace.net.au

For further information on anything in this article, please contact Rosemary

COMING ABIT events

Rally for Respite – Wed 17th Nov outside Parliament House, Hobart at 12.30pm.

Ph Mary at Tascare with enquiries – 6272 8265

An Audience with Autism – Congratulations all the Tassie people who participated!

Let's Get Together ABIT Calendar of Events No. 5 2004/5

Mon 22nd Nov – Windmill Evening Shopping
Sat 11th Dec – Kinder Gym – Christmas Party
Police Boys & Girls Club
Sun 30th Jan – Family Day at Caldew Train Park, cnr Warwick & Hill Sts, West Hobart. 12 – 2PM BYO everything.

The Autism Community—Show Fundraising Success

Congratulations to everyone who pitched in and made Autism Tasmania's first Pura Milk activity such a huge success - we raised over \$5,000 and sold a record amount of flavoured milk and showbags at both Launceston & Hobart Shows.

This success was all the more remarkable because of the short amount of time we had to respond to National Foods' sponsorship invitation, which arose after Giant Steps decided not to continue with the activity it had built over the last 5 years.

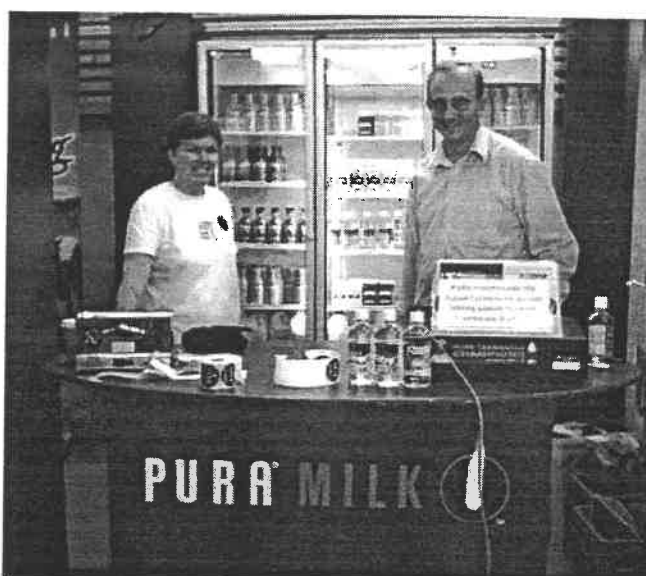
Altogether, we had 31 volunteers from Autism Tasmania, 27 students from The Friends School in Hobart and 10 students from Hobart College, with some people volunteering for several shifts or days - a remarkable effort and testimony to the tremendous level of public support that exists towards the autism community. Sometimes, the hardest thing for us to do is ask people to help; mostly they just want to be asked.

At the end of November, we'll be sitting down with National Foods and talking about our long-term relationship, what the plan can be for events such as Agfest and the Shows in 2005 and how we can further develop the relationship through other autism events and activities. Once we have a clear plan, we'll be back to talk with Autism Tasmania members to work out exactly the level of volunteer support we need and to develop the roles and systems that can further improve the running of

these events.

While raising money is important through these events, so to is getting our name and cause in front of over 160,000 people around the State. In November, for example, we'll be addressing the midday assembly at Friends to talk about autism and formally thank them for their support.

Mick Clark - Vice President



Autism Tasmania President, Ros Ward and new committee member Andrew Davies manning the Pura Milk Stall in Launceston.

Thank you to the many members who helped sell milk at the recent Launceston and Hobart Shows. This is a fantastic fundraising opportunity for us and lifts our profile within the community. All funds raised will support our Family Support Co-ordinator position.

ADVANCE NOTICE - Dr Tony Attwood in Tasmania in April 2005

Autism Tasmania is excited to advise members that Tony Attwood, a noted Autism and Aspergers consultant will be attending our State Autism Conference next year. It will be held at the University of Tasmania, Hobart on Saturday, April 9th and we are in the position of putting together a committee assist with the organization of this major event.

We are looking for individuals who would be

interested in participating in this committee.

It doesn't matter where you are in the state or how much time you can commit, if you would like to help ensure that we have another top quality conference, we'd love to hear from you.

Please contact Penny Cromarty on 6334 1119 if you can help.



*The bulletin of Autism
Tasmania Inc.*

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Family support Coordinator

Phone: 0407 320 048

email:

autism@autismtas.org.au

**Providing lifelong
support to people with
Autism and related
disorders.**

We're on the Web!
www.autismtas.org.au

STOP PRESS !!

**Autism Tasmania was the
recent recipient of a grant of
\$1500.00 from the Launceston
City Council to assist with
family support services in the
greater Launceston area!!!!**

Parent Support Groups

South

December 4th Christmas Family function at Tolosa St Dam, Hut 13 from 10.30am onwards. BBQ or bring a picnic. Enquiries to Debb Manser 6273 6969

December 10th, Christmas Function for parents and carers at the Casino. Details with this mailing. Please note that payment for this evening has to be paid by November 12th. Enquiries to Sharon Plunkett on 6228 3282 or Rose Clark on 6423 2288 or 0407 320 048.

December 14th - December meeting, details later.

January 15th, 2005 - Pool Party at the New Town Pool. Exclusive use of the pools for one and a half hours. Cost per child is \$5.50 bring plate of nibbles as well as a swimming cap for your child (a pre-requisite). We need to pre-pay so bring money to December meeting or contact Sharon on 6223 3282

February 2005 - Hobart Bush Activity or Bellerive Battery or Marine Centre, Woodbridge. Details to be announced after decision at upcoming meeting.

North

November 17th at Munford St, Early Learning beginning at 7.30pm. Guest speaker, Mr Gene Colgrave, psychologist who will be speaking about social skills. Gene has been 'overseeing' social skills group with children in some of the schools in the Esk region. The social skills groups are aimed at children with High Functioning Autism and Asperger Syndrome. RSVP please if possible to Rose

December 6th at midday, Christmas lunch at the Watergarden, Launceston Country Club Casino

January 30th 2pm to 4pm family outing to the bike centre. Bring own helmet and bike if you wish as well as own picnic! The bike Centre is an enjoyable, safe venue for all the family

George Town: Christmas function at the Pier Hotel, Wednesday 24th November from 7pm onwards. Phone Joy Tyler on 6382 1947 for details.

Exeter: November 26th, lunch at the Exeter Hotel. We will be gathering from 11 am onwards to finalise the Christmas family function before we have lunch.

NW, West and East Coasts

East Coast: November 20th beginning at 9am. Mini-conference, guest speaker Ms Wendy Lawson plus other workshops throughout the day. *Details in this Bulletin.*

North-west December 1st at 7.30 at the Community Health Centre, Jones Street, 7.30pm. Topic to be decided. Christmas function to be decided.

West Coast: to be finalised and announced.

Stanley/Smithton: a first meeting tentatively at Stanley on November 24th at approx. 10am. Venue to be decided.