

# What do we do now?



## An Information Pack for Families

This pack has been compiled and supplied by



AUTISM  
ASPERGER ACT

Proudly supported by Bendigo Bank



## AUTISM ASPERGER ACT

This Information Pack has been donated by Autism Asperger ACT Inc. to parents who have recently had a child diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

It is hoped that the information in this pack will help parents understand more about their child's diagnosis and how the family can help the child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Information in this pack will help families identify appropriate services to access in the ACT.

This pack has been printed using funds supplied by FaHCSIA. Autism Asperger ACT Inc thanks them for their support.

### DISCLAIMER

Autism Asperger ACT Inc does not provide medical or legal advice or services. Rather, Autism Asperger ACT Inc provides general information about autism as a service to the community.

The information provided in this kit is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, therapeutic method, or service provider and does not replace the advice of medical, legal or educational professionals. This kit is not intended as a tool for verifying the credentials, qualifications, or abilities of any organization, product or professional.

Autism Asperger ACT Inc has not validated and is not responsible for any information or services provided by third parties. You are urged to use independent judgment and request references when considering any resource associated with the provision of services related to autism.



AUTISM  
ASPERGER ACT

Autism Asperger ACT Inc was formed in August 2006 when Autism ACT and the ACT Asperger Syndrome Support Network amalgamated to provide one point of contact for families, carers and professionals. Previous to this Autism ACT had been running for almost 30 years and the Asperger Syndrome Support Network for about 5 years.

Autism Asperger ACT Inc is a non-profit, non-political community organization run by parents and other interested people. Our group is an incorporated ATO certified tax deductible organization which does not receive any recurrent funding from government. It relies on fund raising, applications for grants and voluntary donations to meet costs. Membership is free. The association works to improve the lives of children and adults who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a pervasive, neuro-biological disability that occurs before children have their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthdays. There is no known cause for autism and at present, no cure. All children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder have significant difficulties with communication and with social and emotional understanding. Their lack of flexibility in thinking and behaviour impacts on their understanding of the world. The effects of autism on learning and daily functioning range from mild to severe. From being an extremely rare disability in the 1940s, when autism was first described, it is now the most commonly occurring childhood disability. It occurs in approximately 1 in every 160 children in Australia.

Autism Asperger ACT's activities are focused on exchanging information, developing support networks and assisting people to learn new skills to help the children and adults who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition to the general monthly meeting, where an invited speaker provides the focus (first Wednesday of the month) Autism Asperger ACT has a number of special interest groups where families can meet together to share information and provide each other with support.

Our support group for people with Asperger Syndrome and their families meets on the second Thursday evening of the month and there is a games day on the third Sunday each month. Our sibling group meets on a monthly basis throughout the year.

The association has an extensive library of books and some DVDs on all aspects of Autism Spectrum Disorders which are available for all members to borrow. A book box loan scheme operates to lend a selection of appropriate books to child care centres, preschools, school and high schools in all ACT educational sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent). In addition Autism Asperger ACT has a box of books and other materials for siblings.

Our newsletter, Autism Awareness, is issued to all members about six times a year. In addition to local issues this newsletter informs members about Australian and international conferences, reports on relevant research and new approaches to working with people who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Autism Asperger ACT has created a new website which lists association events, Autism events, regular meetings, frequently asked questions, Autism services and useful links to online resources. The website also takes online membership. Alternatively, families can complete the membership form on the following page.

Autism Asperger ACT has received Federal funding to assist in creating a National Autism Register. The membership information that Autism Asperger ACT receives will be used to gather information for the National Autism Register.

Autism Asperger ACT Inc does not charge a membership fee as we wish information and support to be available to everyone, regardless of their financial circumstances.

## SHOUT

SHOUT, which stands for Self Help Organisations Unite Together, is located in Building 1 of the Pearce Community Centre in Collett Place Pearce.

Autism Asperger ACT Inc is one of the many members of this group. We use the secretariat at SHOUT for our main contact. If you need to ring SHOUT's number to leave a message or to book for a seminar please remember that it is a general number and you will need to specify that you wish to leave a message for Autism Asperger ACT Inc.

SHOUT

Tel: (02) 6290 1984

Fax: (02) 6286 4475



AUTISM  
ASPERGER ACT

C/- SHOUT  
PO Box 717  
Mawson ACT 2607  
Tel: (02) 6290 1984  
Fax: (02) 6286 4475  
ABN: 77 473 757 782

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organisation (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Suburb:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone contact:** (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (m) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your interest. I am a:

- person with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- parent of a child who has Autism Spectrum Disorder
- family member of a child who has Autism Spectrum Disorder
- education professional
- health professional
- carer
- other

**I am interested in helping the association by:**

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Autism Asperger ACT Inc is a non-profit, parent run organisation which relies on the voluntary work of its members. Unlike other autism associations in Australia it does not receive any direct government funding.

Autism Asperger ACT Inc welcomes your membership. Members will receive bi-monthly newsletters; regular email reminders; access to a resource library and reduced rates on workshops and programs designed to assist individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

**There is no fee for membership.**

**Donations are gratefully received and fully tax deductible.**

# TEN THINGS EVERY CHILD WITH AUTISM WISHES YOU KNEW

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Some days it seems the only predictable thing about it is the unpredictability. The only consistent attribute -- the inconsistency. There is little argument on any level but that autism is baffling, even to those who spend their lives around it. The child who lives with autism may look "normal" but his behavior can be perplexing and downright difficult.

Autism was once thought an "incurable" disorder, but that notion is crumbling in the face of knowledge and understanding that is increasing even as you read this. Every day, individuals with autism are showing us that they can overcome, compensate for and otherwise manage many of autism's most challenging characteristics. Equipping those around our children with a simple understanding of autism's most basic elements has a tremendous impact on their ability to journey towards productive, independent adulthood.

Autism is an extremely complex disorder but for purposes of this one article, we can distill its myriad characteristics into four fundamental areas: sensory processing challenges, speech/language delays and impairments, the elusive social interaction skills and whole child/self-esteem issues. And though these four elements may be common to many children, keep front-of-mind the fact that autism is a spectrum disorder: no two (or ten or twenty) children with autism will be completely alike. Every child will be at a different point on the spectrum. And, just as importantly -- every parent, teacher and caregiver will be at a different point on the spectrum. Child or adult, each will have a unique set of needs.

Here are ten things every child with autism wishes you knew:

1. I am first and foremost a child. I have autism. I am not primarily "autistic." My autism is only one aspect of my total character. It does not define me as a person. Are you a person with thoughts, feelings and many talents, or are you just fat (overweight), myopic (wear glasses) or klutzy (uncoordinated, not good at sports)? Those may be things that I see first when I meet you, but they are not necessarily what you are all about.

As an adult, you have some control over how you define yourself. If you want to single out a single characteristic, you can make that known. As a child, I am still unfolding. Neither you nor I yet know what I may be capable of. Defining me by one characteristic runs the danger of setting up an expectation that may be too low. And if I get a sense that you don't think I "can do it," my natural response will be: Why try?

2. My sensory perceptions are disordered. Sensory integration may be the most difficult aspect of autism to understand, but it is arguably the most critical. It means that the ordinary

sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches of everyday that you may not even notice can be downright painful for me. The very environment in which I have to live often seems hostile. I may appear withdrawn or belligerent to you but I am really just trying to defend myself. Here is why a "simple" trip to the grocery store may be hell for me:

My hearing may be hyper-acute. Dozens of people are talking at once. The loudspeaker booms today's special. Musak whines from the sound system. Cash registers beep and cough, a coffee grinder is chugging. The meat cutter screeches, babies wail, carts creak, the fluorescent lighting hums. My brain can't filter all the input and I'm in overload!

My sense of smell may be highly sensitive. The fish at the meat counter isn't quite fresh, the guy standing next to us hasn't showered today, the deli is handing out sausage samples, the baby in line ahead of us has a poopy diaper, they're mopping up pickles on aisle 3 with ammonia ??â€™™?. I can't sort it all out. I am dangerously nauseated.

Because I am visually oriented (see more on this below), this may be my first sense to become overstimulated. The fluorescent light is not only too bright, it buzzes and hums. The room seems to pulsate and it hurts my eyes. The pulsating light bounces off everything and distorts what I am seeing -- the space seems to be constantly changing. There's glare from windows, too many items for me to be able to focus (I may compensate with "tunnel vision"), moving fans on the ceiling, so many bodies in constant motion. All this affects my vestibular and proprioceptive senses, and now I can't even tell where my body is in space.

3. Please remember to distinguish between won't (I choose not to) and can't (I am not able to).

Receptive and expressive language and vocabulary can be major challenges for me. It isn't that I don't listen to instructions. It's that I can't understand you. When you call to me from across the room, this is what I hear: "\*&^%\$#@, Billy. #\$\$%^&^%\$&\* ??â€™™"? ??â€™™"? ??â€™™"?" Instead, come speak directly to me in plain words: "Please put your book in your desk, Billy. It's time to go to lunch." This tells me what you want me to do and what is going to happen next. Now it is much easier for me to comply.

4. I am a concrete thinker. This means I interpret language very literally. It's very confusing for me when you say, "Hold your horses, cowboy!" when what you really mean is "Please stop running." Don't tell me something is a "piece of cake" when there is no dessert in sight and what you really mean is "this will be easy for you to do." When you say "It's pouring cats and dogs," I see pets coming out of a pitcher. Please just tell me "It's raining very hard."

Idioms, puns, nuances, double entendres, inference, metaphors, allusions and sarcasm are lost on me.

5. Please be patient with my limited vocabulary. It's hard for me to tell you what I need when I don't know the words to describe my feelings. I may be hungry, frustrated, frightened or confused but right now those words are beyond my ability to express. Be alert for body language, withdrawal, agitation or other signs that something is wrong.

Or, there's a flip side to this: I may sound like a "little professor" or movie star, rattling off words or whole scripts well beyond my developmental age. These are messages I have memorized from the world around me to compensate for my language deficits because I know I am expected to respond when spoken to. They may come from books, TV, the speech of other people. It is called "echolalia." I don't necessarily understand the context or the terminology I'm using. I just know that it gets me off the hook for coming up with a reply.

6. Because language is so difficult for me, I am very visually oriented. Please show me how to do something rather than just telling me. And please be prepared to show me many times. Lots of consistent repetition helps me learn.

A visual schedule is extremely helpful as I move through my day. Like your day-timer, it relieves me of the stress of having to remember what comes next, makes for smooth transition between activities, helps me manage my time and meet your expectations. Here's a great website for learning more about visual schedules: [www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/autism/structure/str11.htm](http://www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/autism/structure/str11.htm) .

I won't lose the need for a visual schedule as I get older, but my "level of representation" may change. Before I can read, I need a visual schedule with photographs or simple drawings. As I get older, a combination of words and pictures may work, and later still, just words.

7. Please focus and build on what I can do rather than what I can't do. Like any other human, I can't learn in an environment where I'm constantly made to feel that I'm not good enough and that I need "fixing." Trying anything new when I am almost sure to be met with criticism, however "constructive," becomes something to be avoided. Look for my strengths and you will find them. There is more than one "right" way to do most things.

8. Please help me with social interactions. It may look like I don't want to play with the other kids on the playground, but sometimes it's just that I simply do not know how to start a conversation or enter a play situation. If you can encourage other children to invite me to join them at kickball or shooting baskets, it may be that I'm delighted to be included.

I do best in structured play activities that have a clear beginning and end. I don't know how to "read" facial expressions, body language or the emotions of others, so I appreciate ongoing coaching in proper social responses. For example, if I laugh when Emily falls off the slide, it's not that I think it's funny. It's that I don't know the proper response. Teach me to say "Are you OK?"

9. Try to identify what triggers my meltdowns. Meltdowns, blow-ups, tantrums or whatever you want to call them are even more horrid for me than they are for you. They occur because one or more of my senses has gone into overload. If you can figure out why my meltdowns occur, they can be prevented. Keep a log noting times, settings, people, activities. A pattern may emerge.

Try to remember that all behavior is a form of communication. It tells you, when my words cannot, how I perceive something that is happening in my environment.

Parents, keep in mind as well: persistent behavior may have an underlying medical cause. Food allergies and sensitivities, sleep disorders and gastrointestinal problems can all have profound effects on behavior.

10. If you are a family member, please love me unconditionally. Banish thoughts like, "If he would just..." and "Why can't she...." You did not fulfill every last expectation your parents had for you and you wouldn't like being constantly reminded of it. I did not choose to have autism. But remember that it is happening to me, not you. Without your support, my chances of successful, self-reliant adulthood are slim. With your support and guidance, the possibilities are broader than you might think. I promise you -- I am worth it.

And finally, three words: Patience. Patience. Patience. Work to view my autism as a different ability rather than a disability. Look past what you may see as limitations and see the gifts autism has given me. It may be true that I'm not good at eye contact or conversation, but have you noticed that I don't lie, cheat at games, tattle on my classmates or pass judgment on other people? Also true that I probably won't be the next Michael Jordan. But with my attention to fine detail and capacity for extraordinary focus, I might be the next Einstein. Or Mozart. Or Van Gogh.

They had autism too.

The answer to Alzheimer's, the enigma of extraterrestrial life -- what future achievements from today's children with autism, children like me, lie ahead?

All that I might become won't happen without you as my foundation. Think through some of those societal 'rules' and if they don't make sense for me, let them go. Be my advocate, be my friend and we'll see just how far I can go.

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# MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

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There are many different myths surrounding ASDs in the world. Here are some of the facts about ASDs.

**Myth:** Autism Spectrum Disorders are rare.

**Fact:** Autism Spectrum Disorders are NOT rare, they affect 1 in every 160 children in Australia.

**Myth:** Autism Spectrum Disorders are an emotional disturbance.

**Fact:** Autism is a neuro-developmental disorder.

**Myth:** Poor parenting causes Autism Spectrum Disorders.

**Fact:** Parents do NOT cause Autism Spectrum Disorders. Parents DO need support to manage difficult behaviours with structure and consistency.

**Myth:** There is a cure for Autism Spectrum Disorders, or people will grow out of the disorder.

**Fact:** People do not “grow out” of Autism Spectrum Disorders. With early intervention and good educational programs progress may be significantly better.

**Myth:** Everyone with an Autism Spectrum Disorder behaves in the same way.

**Fact:** People with Autism Spectrum Disorders are individuals with strengths and needs unique to each individual.

**Myth:** All people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder have special savant or genius like skills

**Fact:** All children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder do NOT possess special genius-like abilities and memorization abilities.

**Myth:** All children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder should be taught the same way.

**Fact:** There is NOT one single treatment that is appropriate for all children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder at all times. Individually tailored programs using a range of teaching strategies are necessary to assist children in reaching their full potential.

**Myth:** People with Autism Spectrum Disorders have to be in special programs “for the autistic”.

**Fact:** Individually designed programs best meet the needs of a person affected by an Autism Spectrum Disorder. They need to be learning, living and working in settings where there is ample opportunity to communicate and interact with others who have the skills they need.

# USING VISUAL SUPPORTS

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As most people who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder are highly visual it makes sense that we support communication and other interactions with visual supports.

Visual supports should be used with all young children with an ASD whether they are talking or not. This is important and people with an ASD usually have difficulty understanding and gaining meaning from the spoken word. We constantly need to remind ourselves that just because a child uses speech, it does not actually mean that they understand what we are saying or that they are using their speech in a meaningful way.

## **Visuals are useful as they are:**

- Static while words and signs are fleeting
- Consistent and when the picture is labeled with a word everyone using the visual will use the same word
- More portable than actual objects

## **Hierarchy of visual supports:**

- Objects
- Remnants
- Photos of the actual object
- Photos of a similar object
- Boardmaker or other symbol system
- Line drawings
- Written words

## **Using Visuals**

Initially the visual should be coupled with the object. As the child grasps the connection the visual can be used rather than the object itself.

Always write the word on the visual as soon as you are able to move beyond remnants. This ensures that everyone calls the object the same thing and sometimes the child actually cracks the visual code and reads.

Just providing visual supports does not mean that your child will automatically use them. You will need to demonstrate their use to your child. Model each step, prompting your child as needed.

Visuals are very important in reducing anxiety and stress for many children.

## **Making Visuals**

Although making visuals is time consuming it is well worth the effort. However, if you do not have time to find pictures take photos of the actual object, or if your child understands, draw pictures on paper.

Visuals do not need to be beautifully made – pen and paper or a small whiteboard or magnadoodle are useful additions to your bag. Visuals can also be made small enough to attach to your key-ring.

*Information needs to be:*

- Relevant to the purpose of the visual
- Clear
- Concise

*Visuals can be used:*

- On schedules
- To share information
- As a checklist list (things to put in school bag)
- As an organizer (getting dressed)
- To support behaviour (how do I feel, social stories)
- To support learning

Gay von Ess  
Autism Consultant and Special Educator  
June 2008

**Visuals Source**

A box for visuals has been put near the library in our office at SHOUT, Pearce please help yourself and/or donate unwanted visuals.

## CHILD SAFETY

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Most young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have little awareness of the need to stay in the garden or near the adult when out at the shops etc. Some children with ASD are 'runners' – they do not just stray away from the adult, if they get a chance they run and keep on running.

There are a number of different ID bracelets on the market and if necessary a Child Personal Safety Alarm is a good investment to ensure your peace of mind as well as your child's safety.

Kids Kontakt ([www.kidskontakt.com.au](http://www.kidskontakt.com.au)) have a variety of ID bracelets as well as temporary tattoos. In addition they stock Child Personal Safety Alarms.

You can have a MediAlert bracelet made for your child which has the advantage of being instantly recognisable as an information bracelet. Visit [www.medicalert.com.au](http://www.medicalert.com.au) for further information.

CareTrak Systems Australia specialise in wrist transmitters with a perimeter system or mobile locator. All wrist transmitters are water proof. Please visit [www.caretrak.com.au](http://www.caretrak.com.au).

Children with ASD will usually initially resist wearing a bracelet. It is however important to persevere – use plenty of distractions for the first twenty four hours or so; after that most children accept them.

Please remember that identification bracelets and Child Alarms etc do not replace adult supervision.

MEDIFAB AUSTRALIA, Kiddiequip Products for Children, phone: 1300 543 343 have a range of safety harnesses that prevent even the most determined children undoing car or stroller seat belts.

# WELCOME TO HOLLAND

by Emily Perl Kingsley

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I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this...

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome To Holland".

"Holland?!?" you say, "What do you mean "Holland"??? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy"

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around...and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills...Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy...and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned".

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away...because the loss of that dream is a very significant loss.

But...if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things...about Holland.

© 1987, by Emily Perl Kingsley.

## NEED HELP WITH TOILET TRAINING?

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### **Continence Promotion Centre**

The staff at the Continence Promotion Centre at the Canberra Hospital is available to help families with ongoing toilet training difficulties.  
Phone: (02) 6207 9977

### **"Are You Ready?"**

"Are You Ready?" is a toilet training package designed for people with intellectual disability. However its highly visually format makes it valuable for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

#### **CONTENTS OF THE PACKAGE:**

Tom's Toilet Triumph - an animated video for young adults and children with intellectual disability. Also available as a DVD.

Cue Cards - A selection of prompting pictures taken from the animated video to assist in the toilet training process.

"Are You Ready?" - Live action video for parents, carers and teachers. Also available as a DVD.

"Are You Ready?" - Booklet to assist those involved in toilet training young adults and children with an intellectual disability.

#### **SUPPLIER INFORMATION:**

IDSC (Intellectual Disability Services Council) - Disability SA (08) 8266 8657

[http://shop.service.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?content=shop\\_front.cfm](http://shop.service.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?content=shop_front.cfm)

View the products and order online from the Service SA online shop

### **Bedwetting Institute of Australia**

Margaret O'Donovan Physiotherapy

Ethos House

28 Ainslie Ave

Canberra City 2601

Australia

Ph: 6248 5066; Web: [www.bedwettinginstitute.com.au/index.html](http://www.bedwettinginstitute.com.au/index.html)

Autism Asperger ACT Inc.'s library has some books on toilet training. We also have the *Are you ready?* pack including Tom's Toilet triumph for loan.

# HELPING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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The Australian Government has committed \$190 million until June 2012 to the *Helping Children with Autism* (HCWA) initiative. The package will help address the need for support and services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). The HCWA initiative will be implemented by three government departments - the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA); the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

The Autism Advisory Service ACT is a component of the HCWA initiative, funded by FaHCSIA and hosted by Autism Asperger ACT. The role of the Autism Advisory Service is to provide information on the HCWA initiative; to help families access the HCWA early intervention funding; and to provide information on Autism resources and services in the ACT.

## **The Department of Health and Ageing:**

- Medicare benefits are available for services provided by consultant physicians, eligible psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists, to diagnose children under 13 years, and provide treatment services for children under 15 years. Conditions apply so please call Medicare on 132 011 or visit [www.health.gov.au/autism](http://www.health.gov.au/autism).

## **The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations:**

- Professional development for teachers and other school staff to support children with Autism. For more information, visit [www.dest.gov.au/schools/autism](http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/autism).
- The *Positive Partnerships* workshops are available to parents with a school aged child with an ASD. Visit: [www.autismtraining.com.au](http://www.autismtraining.com.au) or phone 1300 881 971 for more information and to register.

## **The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs: ([www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au)):**

- Early Intervention Payments: Currently, children with an ASD diagnosis, aged 0-6 years (up to their sixth birthday) are eligible for up to \$12,000 (a maximum of \$6000 per financial year) of early intervention funding. The funding can be used to access early intervention services through an approved service provider. Please phone the Autism Advisory Service ACT on (02) 6140 1061 for further information.
- ASD Playgroups: A Playconnect playgroup for children with ASDs runs fortnightly at the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre. Monday 9:30-11:30am. Please phone Anne on (02) 6262 4478.
- Workshops for families of children aged 0 to 6 diagnosed with an ASD: The ACT Early Days workshops are currently taking registrations. Please visit <http://www.earlydays.net.au> for information and to register.
- Six ASD-specific Early Learning and Care Centres: There are currently no Early Learning and Care Centres in the ACT.

- Autism Advisor Program: Autism Advisors provide information on the HCWA initiative, help families access the early intervention funding and provide general information on Autism services and resources.

For further information please contact the Autism Advisory Service ACT on Ph: (02) 6140 1061.  
Email: [advisor@autismaspergeract.com.au](mailto:advisor@autismaspergeract.com.au)

# HELPING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

## NEW MEDICARE ITEMS

Adapted from information provided by the Department of Health and Ageing  
www.health.gov.au

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### **Items for Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD)**

From 1 July 2008, new items are available on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) as part of the Australian Government's \$190 million *Helping Children with Autism* package.

The new items are available for:

- Consultant physicians (paediatricians and psychiatrists) to diagnose and develop a treatment plan for children aged under 13 years on referral from a GP;
- Psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists to provide up to four services in total per child to collaborate with the psychiatrist or paediatrician on the assessment where required; and
- Psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists to provide early intervention treatment following diagnosis (providing up to 20 services in total per child).

### **Medicare item numbers for the diagnosis and contribution to a practitioner's PDD treatment and management plan:**

- Psychology: MBS item 82000
- Speech Pathology: MBS item 82005
- Occupational Therapy: MBS item 82010.

### **Referral requirements for the diagnosis and contribution to a practitioner's PDD treatment and management plan:**

An eligible allied health professional can provide PDD assessment items (82000-82010) to a child where:

- The child has previously been provided with any MBS service covering items 110 through 131 (inclusive), as provided by an eligible consultant paediatrician; or
- The child has previously been provided with any MBS service covering items 296 through 370 (excluding item 359), as provided by an eligible consultant psychiatrist.

### **Description:**

Professional attendance provided to a child aged under 13 years where:

- The child is referred by an eligible practitioner for the purpose of collaborating with the practitioner for the diagnosis of the child; and/or
- The child is referred by an eligible practitioner for the purpose of contributing to the child's pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) treatment plan, developed by the practitioner;
- The eligible practitioner is a consultant physician in the practice of his or her field of psychiatry or paediatrics;
- The allied health provider attending the child is registered with Medicare Australia as meeting the credentialing requirements for the provision of these services;
- The child is not an admitted patient of a hospital;
- The service is provided to the child individually and in person;
- The service lasts at least 50 minutes in duration.

**These items are limited to a maximum of four services in total per child consisting of any combination of 82000, 82005 and 82010, provided by any combination of allied health professionals.**

**Allied Health Items for early intervention treatment of pervasive developmental disorders (PDD):**

- Psychology: MBS item 82015
- Speech Pathology: MBS item 82020
- Occupational Therapy: MBS item 82025

**Referral requirements for the PDD treatment items:**

An eligible allied health professional can provide PDD treatment items (82015-82025) to a child where:

- The child has previously been provided with a PDD treatment and management plan (MBS item 135) by an eligible consultant paediatrician; or
- The child has previously been provided with a PDD treatment and management plan (MBS item 289) by an eligible consultant psychiatrist.

**(NB – these items have only been available since 1 July 2008)**

An allied health professional wanting to provide any of the items 82000-82025 must be in receipt of a current referral provided by a consultant paediatrician or a consultant psychiatrist.

**Description:**

Professional attendance provided for treatment of autism and any other pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) for a child aged under 15 years where:

A PDD treatment plan has been prepared for the child by an eligible practitioner (under item 135 or 289);

- The child has been referred by an eligible practitioner for services that are consistent with the PDD treatment plan;
- The eligible practitioner is a consultant physician in the practice of his or her field of psychiatry or paediatrics;
- The allied health provider attending the child is registered with Medicare Australia as meeting credentialing requirements for the provision of these services;
- The child is not an admitted patient of a hospital;
- The service is provided to the child individually and in person;
- The service lasts at least 30 minutes in duration.

**These items are limited to a maximum of twenty services, in total (in a life time), per child consisting of any combination of 82015, 82020 and 82025, provided by any combination of allied health professionals. Within the 20 services provided, a course of treatment will consist of the number of services stated on the child's referral (up to a maximum of 10).**

**Who can access these services?**

Children with autism or any other PDD can access these services:

- If their condition is being managed by an eligible psychiatrist or paediatrician under a PDD treatment and management plan and that PDD treatment plan is complete prior to the child's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday; and
- If they are under 15 years of age for treatment.

**What is considered autism or PDD for the purposes of the items?**

- The conditions classified as PDD for the purposes of these services are informed by the “American Psychiatric Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder”, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV-TR) and the World Health Organisations International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10).

## ENHANCED PRIMARY CARE PROGRAM (EPC)

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The Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) program was introduced to provide more preventive care for older Australians and improve coordination of care for people with chronic conditions and complex care needs. The program provides a framework for a multidisciplinary approach to health.

Children who need clinical help to participate in the community either now or in the future, should be able to get clinical help through the health system. If you have a child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who needs help in any of the allied health areas including speech pathology, psychology, and occupational therapy this scheme is worth trying.

### **How to get an Enhanced Primary Care Program (EPC):**

Start by making an appointment with your child, making sure that when you make the appointment you specifically say that you want to talk to the GP about an Enhanced Primary Care program for your child.

Prepare for your visit by writing a list of your most serious concerns. Put these in order of priority. This will help your GP to develop an EPC for your child that provides the individual intervention for your child's highest needs.

It is crucial that your GP understands the difficulties that you and your child experience. Even if you are unable to complete the plan on your first visit it is important that you persevere – hopefully the experience will convince your GP that you do need some additional professional help.

# CENTRELINK

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## **Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16):**

Carer Allowance (child) is a supplementary payment for parents/carers who provide daily care and attention for children with a disability or severe medical condition at home. Carer Allowance (child) may be paid on top of Carer Payment (child) or other payments, such as Age Pension.

## **Who can get Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16)?**

A person may get Carer Allowance (child) if they look after a child with a disability or severe medical condition who requires a lot of additional care or attention in their own home. You must live in the same home as the child you are caring for. Both the carer and the child with a disability must also meet residence requirements.

A person can get either:

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- A fortnightly payment plus the Health Care Card, or
  - A Health Care Card.
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What a person gets will depend on the severity of the child's disability. A single rate of Carer Allowance (child) may be payable where the combined level of disability of two children in the family meets the qualifying threshold.

The Child Disability Assessment Tool (**CDAT**) is a tool used by Centrelink to assess medical eligibility for Carer Allowance (child) when the person cared for is under 16 years. This tool measures the functional ability of the person receiving care. A list of severe disabilities and chronic medical conditions allows fast-track entry to Carer Allowance (child) for children with more severe conditions.

If your child has an Autism Spectrum Disorder, including Asperger Syndrome, you are entitled to the Carer Allowance.

The Carer Allowance is not means tested.

## **Changes to Carer Payment:**

There is a new assessment process commencing July 2009 that will provide improved support for carers. The changes include greater access to Carer Payment and assess the total care load of the carer.

For more information please contact Centrelink on 13 27 17 or visit [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au).

## **RESPIRE AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES**

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There are a number of services that offer limited respite care for families who have a child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

### **CARERS ACT**

Ph: 62969900; Web: [www.carersact.asn.au](http://www.carersact.asn.au)

Carers ACT is the single provider of comprehensive carers support services in the ACT. They provide quality information, direct support services to unpaid family carers including young carers. They also provide community education, advocacy and are the 'voice' of carers in the ACT.

### **CALDOR**

Phone: Baptist Community Services Care Centre on 6221 8135

The *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Occasional Respite* program is available to primary carers of younger people with disabilities. All referrals must come from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background and be permanent residents of the ACT. This program accepts self-referral and requests for assistance from anyone in the community. The Coordinator will advise at assessment the cost of the service. No one will be denied a service due to an inability to pay.

### **DISABILITY ACT**

Ph: 6207 1086 Web: [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability\\_act](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act)

Email: [DisabilityACT@act.gov.au](mailto:DisabilityACT@act.gov.au)

Disability ACT plan and develop strategic policy, allocate funding and provide and monitor services for people with disability & their families in the ACT.

Kese House is an initiative of Disability ACT. Kese house is an overnight respite house for children 5-12 years. It provides up to one week's respite on a rotational basis.

### **KINCARE SERVICES:**

Ph: 1300 733 510; Web: [www.kincare.com.au](http://www.kincare.com.au)

Email: [mail@kincare.com.au](mailto:mail@kincare.com.au)

Kincare provides domestic assistance, personal care, respite, social support, transport and care coordination on a fee for service basis.

### **MARYMEAD CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE**

Ph: 6162 5800; Web: [www.marymead.org.au](http://www.marymead.org.au)

Email: [programs@marymead.org.au](mailto:programs@marymead.org.au); Fax: (02) 6295 9944;

Address: 255 Goyder St Narrabundah ACT 2604; PO Box 4260 Kingston ACT 2604

Marymead provides residential housing, respite care, in home support, sport and recreational activities and educational programs.

### **NOAH'S ARK TEENAGE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Ark is a fun and educational after school and holiday program for high school and college students with special needs. Please see 'Service for Teens' for further information.

**RESPITE OPTIONS ACT**

Phone: 6288 4744; Web: [www.commsatwork.org](http://www.commsatwork.org)

E-mail: [RespiteOptionsACT@commsatwork.org](mailto:RespiteOptionsACT@commsatwork.org)

Address: PO Box 1066, Tuggeranong ACT 2901

Communities@Work Respite Options ACT is a new and exciting service funded by FaHCSIA to provide support to carers and to assist them in their needs and responsibilities. Respite Options ACT provides one on one respite and support services for carers of people who are experiencing severe mental illness and physiological/intellectual disabilities; Social opportunities for the person experiencing mental illness and physiological/intellectual disabilities; Referrals to resources and other service providers; Domestic support; Family support, accompaniment to appointments, in home care while carers go out; Access to events, outings and activities and information and guidance in locating and understanding advice.

**TANDEM (formerly known as FaBRIC)**

Ph: 62872870; Web: [www.tandem.org.au](http://www.tandem.org.au)

Email: [admin@tandem.org.au](mailto:admin@tandem.org.au); Fax: 62872680

TANDEM provides respite and social support to families living in the ACT who have a member with a disability aged between 0 - and 65 years. This includes moderate, severe or profound disabilities, of an intellectual, physical, sensory, medical or behavioural nature.

The support offered is a short term substitute for the usual care given to children/young people with disabilities by their families to allow them to have a break from their caring responsibilities. Support Workers are carefully selected and matched from a team of qualified, skilled and experienced people to meet children/young people and their families' individual needs. Ongoing and regular support is provided within the family home or in the community. Children/young people are assisted and encouraged by Support Workers to learn new skills, participate in social, recreational, sporting and other everyday activities, and develop interests in the community.

## OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

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### **ACT DISABILITY AGED & CARER ADVOCACY GROUP (ADACAS)**

Ph: 6242 5060; Web: [www.adacas.org.au](http://www.adacas.org.au)

ADACAS is an independent community organisation that provides advocacy and information to people with disabilities and the frail aged.

### **BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT UNIT**

Ph: 6264 0200

The Behaviour Support Unit is a component of Belconnen Community Services and is a free service to help with behaviour management strategies; individual support plans; parenting skills; anger management; social skills; training and assistance for teachers and professional development training.

### **CALD Carers Program**

Ph: 6221 8135; Web: [www.carersact.asn.au/cald-carer-groups.html](http://www.carersact.asn.au/cald-carer-groups.html)

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Carer Program is run by Carers ACT. The CALD Carers Program provides support and facilitates access to services for carers from non English speaking backgrounds. The program maintains 18 cultural support groups for CALD carers including Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Filipino, Greek, Hungarian, Indian, Italian, Mon, Polish, Samoan, Spanish, Sudanese, Tamil, Tongan, Vietnamese, Thai and Cambodian. These support groups are facilitated by a Bilingual Group Leader, who speaks the language of the group, understands the culture and can interpret if required.

### **CIT SKILLS FOR CARERS**

Ph: 6207 3628; Email: [CarerSkills@cit.act.edu.au](mailto:CarerSkills@cit.act.edu.au)

CIT Skills for Carers provides flexible and responsive training for family carers through short courses, workshops and individual training. Each year CIT Skills for Carers provides some workshops on Anxiety and Autism, Behaviour Matters as well as more general skills such as First Aid, Massage Skills, Fitness for Carers and SoSafe. There are no fees; times and locations of courses vary.

### **CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

Ph: 6248 7988; Web: [www.citizensadvice.org.au](http://www.citizensadvice.org.au)

The Citizens Advice Bureau provides up to date information, referral & support to all ACT residents.

### **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

Phone: 6296 1133; Web: [www.comcons.org.au](http://www.comcons.org.au)

Email: [admin@comcons.org.au](mailto:admin@comcons.org.au); Fax: 6296 1134

Community Connections is a non-government community organisation which supports people with a disability to achieve an ordinary life. The objectives are to develop capacity for natural support networks, minimise dependence on paid service and maximise inclusion in the community. You are invited to contact the Executive Director, Robyn Culver [robyn@comcons.org.au](mailto:robyn@comcons.org.au) or Alan Brown, Manager of Support Services [alan@comcons.org.au](mailto:alan@comcons.org.au) if you wish to discuss your needs in detail.

Address: 51 Jenke Circuit, Kambah OR PO Box 1945, Tuggeranong ACT 2901

### **COOL KIDS ANXIETY PROGRAM**

Ph: 6201 2883; Web:

<http://www.canberra.edu.au/faculties/health/psychology/clinic>

The Cool Kids Anxiety Program is a cognitive-behaviour group therapy program aimed at helping children and parents to develop better ways of coping with their

worries and fears. The program is for families where children are at risk of developing or have developed an anxiety disorder that interferes with their normal life. The program is for children aged 9 to 12 years and their parents, with small group sessions of between three to five families. The cost is \$85 per family.

### **DEPARTMENT OF AGEING, DISABILITY AND HOME CARE NSW**

Ph: 1300 841 566 (Queanbeyan region)

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care offers NSW residents a first point of contact for information and assistance for disability services and other community support.

### **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE**

Ph: 6234 6826; Web: [www.wcs.org.au](http://www.wcs.org.au)

The Family Support Service is run by the Woden Community Service and caters for families in the Woden Valley Area. It is a free service offering assistance with filling out forms (centrelink, housing etc), advocacy, referrals and liaising with other organizations.

### **LOCAL AREA COORDINATION**

Ph: 6255 7911 (Gungahlin)

6260 5622 (Woden)

Local Area Coordination is a free service to assist individuals with a disability to make empowering life decisions; plan for their future and broaden community and social connections.

### **MY TIME PLAYGROUPS**

Ph: 1800 171 882

ACT Playgroups is facilitating *My Time* playgroups for children with disabilities or chronic illness and their siblings aged 0-6years. *My Time* gives parents the chance to socialise and share ideas with others who understand the rewards and intensity of the caring role. Children will have opportunities for both free and structured play activities including music, gross and fine motor play activities, sensory play and stories. *My Time* is in various locations around the ACT.

### **NOAH'S ARK RESOURCE CENTRE**

Ph: 6287 1117; Web: [www.noahsarkresourcecentre.com](http://www.noahsarkresourcecentre.com)

Email: [noahsarkresources@bigpond.com](mailto:noahsarkresources@bigpond.com)

Noah's Ark Resource Centre is a community organization that provides early intervention services for families, a toy library, a resource library, an inclusive playgroup for 3 years-olds with special needs (offered at Rivett and Giralang); facilitated play and learn sessions for parents with children aged 0-5 years; *My Time* support groups for parents of children with a disability or chronic illness; a playgroup for bereaved families; access to information on community and children's services and support for parents and carer in their children's early years.

### **PARENT EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING (PET)**

Ph: 0413 451 607

Parent Effectiveness Training is a parent education program that helps to improve parenting skills.

### **PARENTLINK**

Ph: 13 34 27; Web: [www.parentlink.act.gov.au](http://www.parentlink.act.gov.au)

ParentLink is designed to increase parents' confidence and skills by supporting and linking them with a network of information, ideas and community services.

**PARENTLINE**

Ph: 6287 3833

A free, confidential counseling and information service for parents and carers. Free face to face counselling available for all ages. Mon-Fri 9am-9pm.

**REGIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICES****Belconnen Community Service**

Ph: 6264 0200; [www.bcsact.com.au](http://www.bcsact.com.au)

**Communities at Work:** [www.commsatwork.org](http://www.commsatwork.org)

**Weston Ph:** 6288 4744

**Tuggeranong Ph:** 6293 6500

**Gungahlin Regional Community Service**

Ph: 6228 9200; [www.grcs.org.au](http://www.grcs.org.au)

**Northside Community Service**

Ph: 6257 2255; [www.northside.asn.au](http://www.northside.asn.au)

**Southside Community Service**

Ph 6126 4700; [www.sscs.org.au](http://www.sscs.org.au)

**Woden Community Service**

Ph 6282 2644; [www.wcs.org.au](http://www.wcs.org.au)

**SIBLINGS AUSTRALIA**

Web: [www.siblingsaustralia.org.au](http://www.siblingsaustralia.org.au)

Siblings Australia is a national organization committed to enhancing the well-being of siblings of children and adults with special needs.

**THERAPY ACT**

Ph: 6205 1277; Web: [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/therapyact](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/therapyact); Email:

[TherapyACT@act.gov.au](mailto:TherapyACT@act.gov.au)

Therapy ACT is a program area of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services. It provides a range of multidisciplinary therapy and support services for people with delays in development and developmental disabilities aged from birth to age 65. Therapy and support services are available for physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, social work and psychology. There is no charge for this service.

**YMCA CANBERRA**

Ph: 6251 1683; Web: [www.ymcacanberra.org.au](http://www.ymcacanberra.org.au)

The YMCA offers early childhood services including educational gymnastics, paint and play, rhyming connections and playschool.

## PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDERS

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All families are entitled to access Therapy ACT which provides occupational therapy, speech pathology, psychology, social work and physiotherapy.

Below is a list of private service providers in the ACT and region. Autism Asperger ACT Inc provides this list for **information only**. We do not recommend, refer to or endorse of any therapeutic method or service provider. You are urged to use independent judgment, request references and/or discuss with other families who have used a particular service when considering any resource associated with the provision of services related to autism.

### **Applied Behaviour Analysis**

Fiona Jackson 0402 280 707  
Early Autism Intervention

### **Behaviour Management**

Bobbi Cook  
Child Youth and Family Behaviour Therapist and Counsellor  
Email: [bobbi@bcm.com.au](mailto:bobbi@bcm.com.au) 0408 405 684  
Web: [www.bcm.com.au](http://www.bcm.com.au) 6253 3116

### **Dentist**

ACT Health - Community Health 6205 1463 / 6205 1695  
Dr Peter Wong 6285 3166

### **Education**

Gay von Ess 0413776922  
Autism Consultant and Special Educator

### **Occupational Therapy**

Penny Gardner 0431 857 108  
Shelley Hughes 6282 7828  
Lesley Lee 6282 4030  
Shelia Norman 6299 1218

### **Physiotherapy**

Caroline Stuchbery 0401 351611

### **Speech Pathology**

Renny Horsburgh 6292 6226  
Lyndal Le Bas 6278 3072 mostly 1 to 3 year olds  
Christine McNeill 6288 0725  
Margaret Tong 6161 9794  
Chris Wills 6247 4217  
Judanne Young 6161 1946

**Psychology**

Diana Boswell	6295 6255
Dr Carol Clark	6253 0100
Dr Pamela Connor	6251 5692
Nicole Daley	6162 1163
Eryn Davies	0402 607 644
Ailsa Denyer	6295 5916
Shirley Ferguson	6248 7630
Marshall O'Brien	6273 4314
Jo Richardson	6162 1163
Diana Roe	6288 6856
June Staunton	0414 945 210
Mark Scarborough	6231 4386
Annabel Wyndam	0401 351 422

**Counselling**

Carers ACT	6296 9900
Relationships Australia Marymead	6122 7100
Parentline ACT	6162 5800
	6287 3833

**Podiatry**

The Foot Clinic	6282 5466
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# **SPECIAL EDUCATION – SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY**

The following information has been taken from the ACT Department of Education and Training's website. Please check this site for any changes  
[www.det.act.gov.au/school\\_education/special\\_education](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/special_education)

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ACT Government schools offer a range of specialist settings and programs for children and students with a disability. If your child has a disability and you wish to find out what services and support are available in your area please contact your school counsellor. If your child is not currently enrolled in an ACT Government school, please contact the Student Support Section of the Department of Education and Training on (02) 6205 6925. A description of settings and programs is provided below. If you would like further information on any of these programs please contact the Student Support Section.

## **EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS**

### **General Developmental Playgroups**

Children attend one 2-hour session a week, with 6 children in each group. Playgroups operate in local preschools and Therapy ACT, Holder.

Programs focus on early developmental skills in the areas of:

- joint attention
- turn taking
- attending
- communication

These playgroups are for children aged 2 to 3 years who have needs in two or more areas of development, or significant needs in one area of development, or who are experiencing social and emotional difficulties.

### **Communication and Social Awareness Playgroups (CASA)**

Children attend twice weekly: A 2-hour morning session and a 1 ½ hour afternoon session. There are 6 children in each group with a teacher and 2 STAs. CASA programs operate from local preschools. CASA playgroups are designed to specifically address the needs of children aged 2 to 3 years who have significant needs in communication and social skills development.

### **Therapy and Education Playgroups**

Children attend one 2-hour session a fortnight. Teachers and Therapy ACT therapists work collaboratively to plan and run the program. There are 8 children in each group. This playgroup is for children aged 18 months to 3 years with significant or multiple physical disabilities. The multidisciplinary team approach allows for the overall management of complex issues.

### **Early Intervention Units (EIU)**

EIUs provide four hours (2x2 hours) of educational programs per week for groups of 12 children. The programs focus on attending skills, social interaction and independence and are held in preschool classrooms. An experienced early childhood teacher plans and facilitates the program with the support of an STA. Children attending EIU may also attend mainstream preschool. It is for children aged 3 – 5 years with a mild to moderate developmental delay.

### **Autism Intervention Units (AIU)**

A small group program for children with a diagnosis of ASD. There are 4 children per group. Two 4-hour sessions are provided weekly, staffed by a teacher and STA. Children also attending preschool may receive support from AIU staff. Children are between 3 – 5 years and are eligible for AIU if they have a diagnosis of ASD. Assessments are accepted from Therapy ACT, private Psychologists and specialist medical practitioners.

### **Language Intervention Unit (LIU) (formally Language Preschool)**

A small group program that provides family-centred language support and intervention for children with language delays/disorders. Children attend one 4-hour session weekly in a group with 12 children. LIU is run in partnership with Therapy ACT Speech Pathology. Refer to agreement between DET and Therapy ACT for more details including roles and responsibilities of staff and exit criteria for students.

The LIU is for children from 3 years of age to school entry, **and**

- a) Language is the primary need
- b) With moderate-severe language difficulties, as assessed by a speech pathologist **and**
- c) A developmental assessment rules out other needs that could be more appropriately addressed in another early intervention education program.

### **Early Childhood Centre (ECC)**

A small group setting within a regular preschool environment for children who have a mild to moderate delay and additional special needs. There are 8 children in each group, with one teacher and one assistant. These centres are administered by the primary special schools- Cranleigh, Malkara and Turner. The 3 year old groups operate for up to 8 hours per week. The 4 year old groups operate for 12 hours per week. The groups are for children aged 3 and 4 years with mild to moderate developmental delay, evidenced by either:

- A GQ < 70 *or*
- Meeting the ACT Student Disability Criteria for ASD.

### **Early Childhood Units (ECU)**

ECUs are small part time classes for children with moderate to profound intellectual or multiple disabilities in special school settings at Cranleigh and Malkara Schools. There are 6 children in each group, with one teacher and one assistant. Children are aged 3 to 5 years with a moderate to severe developmental delay, evidenced by either:

- A GQ of < 55 *or*
- An ASD diagnosis plus 3 SDs below the mean on 4 or more domains on an adaptive behaviour test.

## **SPECIAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

**Cranleigh School** and **Malkara School** are special schools for students who require intensive levels of support. They are for students with a moderate to profound intellectual disability or ASD as evidenced by meeting the ACT Student Disability Criteria for a moderate to severe intellectual disability or having a diagnosis of ASD with an adaptive behaviour rating of at least 3 SD below mean on 4 or more domains.

**The Woden School** is a special setting for year 7 to year 10 students. It is for students who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for intellectual disability, or ASD.

**Black Mountain School** offers programs for students of high school and college age. It is for students with a moderate to profound intellectual disability, or ASD, as evidenced by meeting the ACT Student Disability Criteria for a moderate to severe intellectual disability, or having a diagnosis of ASD with an adaptive behaviour rating of at least 3 SD below mean on 4 or more domains.

## MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

In the ACT many children with an ASD attend their local school. To qualify for additional support students need to meet the ACT Disability Criteria. The school counsellor coordinates the application process. The level of additional support is determined through the **Student Centred Appraisal of Need** process.

Teachers from Inclusion Support work with schools to promote the inclusion of students with a disability. They work within a collaborative framework to build the capacity of schools to meet the needs of these students.

Some mainstreams schools have special classes that cater for children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. These classes are:

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### **Learning Support Units Autism (LSU A)**

- For students who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for ASD.
- One teacher and one learning support assistant to 6 students

### **Learning Support Units Generic (LSU Generic)**

- For students who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for intellectual disability, or ASD.
- One teacher and one learning support assistant to 8 students

### **Learning Support Centres (LSC)**

- For students who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for intellectual disability or who have an IQ measured as “Borderline” and demonstrate significant deficits in academic achievement or who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for ASD.
- One teacher and one learning support assistant to 14 students in the primary school setting and 1 to 16 in the secondary school setting

The Department of Education and Training is currently negotiating with Autism Queensland to develop a manual on ASD for all schools. It is planned to be released for the 2009 school year.

Please refer to the Department website for the latest information.  
[www.det.act.gov.au](http://www.det.act.gov.au)

## **SIBLINGS CLUB**

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Autism Asperger ACT Inc runs a club for siblings of other family members (son, daughter, niece, nephew, cousin) of those who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. This is a wonderful opportunity for child to realise that he or she is not the only child with a sibling who has an ASD.

At Sibs Club the children do lots of fun activities, some of which are difficult for families to do with a relative with an ASD. Sometimes there is a discussion about what it is like to have a sibling or other family 'on the spectrum' but mostly the children have fun and make new friends.

Sibs Club is run by a member of Autism Asperger ACT Inc who has a professional background in working with children.

Events are suitable for children from Year 1 to Year 6; kindergarten children are welcome to attend in the second half of the school year.

The club meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday evening of each month, eleven months of the year.

For further information and to arrange for your child to attend please contact Bobbi 6253 3116 or email [bobbi@bcm.com.au](mailto:bobbi@bcm.com.au).

Siblings Australia operates reputable online discussion groups and websites  
[info@siblingsaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@siblingsaustralia.org.au)

[www.siblingsaustralia.org.au](http://www.siblingsaustralia.org.au)

## BOOKS FOR SIBLINGS

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Band, Eve. (2001). *Autism Through a Sister's Eyes*. Future Horizons. Texas.

Bleach, Fiona. (2001). Everybody is Different. *A Book for Young People who Have Brothers and Sisters with Autism*. Autism Asperger Publishing Company. Kansas.

Edwards, Becky and Armitage, Davis. (1999). *My Brother Sammy*. Bloomsbury Publishing. London.

Gorrod, Louise. (2001). *My Brother is Different*. National Autistic Society. London.

Harris, Sandra and Glasberg, Beth. *Siblings of Children with Autism*. Woodbine Press. USA.

Hames, Annette and McCaffrey, Monica. (ed.) (2005). *Special Brothers and Sisters*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. London and New York.

Healy, Angie. (2005). *Sometimes My Brother. Helping Kids Understand Autism Through a Sibling's Eyes*. Future Horizons. Texas.

Lowell, James and Tuchel, Tara. (2005). *My Best Friend Will*. Autism Asperger Publishing Company. Kansas.

Peralta, Sarah. (2002). *All About My Brother*. Autism Asperger Publishing Company. Kansas.

These books are available in the Autism Asperger ACT library. Autism Asperger ACT also has several Sibling Boxes (which comprise a selection of materials for siblings and families) that are also available for loan.

## **ACT INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY**

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The ACT Inclusion Support Agency provides a variety of support to long day care, after school care, occasional care, family day care, in-home care and pre-school services.

The Agency strives to ensure that children 0-13 years who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families are included in children's services programs.

ACT Inclusion Support Agency's experienced facilitators offer children's services advice and assistance on how to include children in their services. Facilitators also help with practical ideas about programming and staff training needs. They provide resources and support to services on establishing and building relationships with community agencies and families.

The Inclusion Support facilitator can be a sounding board; someone who can add value to the professional care that a service provides.

### **Collaboration and Partnerships:**

ACT Inclusion Support facilitators liaise with many organisations, connecting services with the support that is available in the community.

The agency aims to provide a service that links children's services, families and support organisations together to provide the best quality care for children.

Phone: 6287 3330

Fax: 6287 4242

Email: [inclusion@commsatwork.org](mailto:inclusion@commsatwork.org)

## AUTISM INFORMATION LINE

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Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) runs an Autism Information Line to help answer the many questions individuals who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder, their families, carers, support staff and professionals may have.

The role of the Autism Information Line is to assist in answering specific enquiries, to provide a referral point for services within Aspect and also to services available in the wider community. The service is staffed by Aspect professionals from a range of disciplines. Sometimes the questions asked are very specific, such as “What is an Autism Spectrum Disorder?”; “Where can I go to get an assessment for my child?” or “What services does Aspect provide?”.

The Autism Information Line can also provide brief practical advice to assist families and carers with their day-to-day management of children with ASDs. The information line has a wide range of information regarding services and resources.

To access the Autism Information Line, please call (02) 8977 8377 between 9.00am and 4.00pm on weekdays. If staff are busy, please leave a voice mail message and your call will be returned at the first opportunity.

Alternatively, please email your queries to [infoline@aspect.org.au](mailto:infoline@aspect.org.au)

Aspect is based in Sydney.



Therapy ACT  
**Autism Assessment and Family Support Team**  
Cnr Weingarh St and Blackwood Tee  
Holder ACT 2611  
Phone: (02) 6205 1274  
Fax: (02) 6205 1266  
Email: [TherapyACT@act.gov.au](mailto:TherapyACT@act.gov.au)  
Web: <http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/TherapyACT/default.htm>

## **FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM**

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The Autism Assessment and Family Support Team at Therapy ACT provides comprehensive assessments for children with developmental concerns.

Part of this service involves a post diagnostic parent education group program which is available to parents of children who have had a diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) within the last 18 months.

The group program involves attendance at a set of parent education workshops aimed at helping parents understand ASD and the behaviours and characteristics associated with this particular disorder. It is presented in an interactive hands on format aimed at providing parents with strategies to manage some of the difficulties involved in parenting children with ASD. Topics include behaviour management, communication, sensory processing, play and social stories.

Time will be available at these groups to discuss particular issues with psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and the social worker to help parents work through areas of major concern for them and their child. It is also a chance for parents to network with each other and share experiences.

At the end of the group program, therapists will provide each parent with a set of individual strategies to assist with some of the problems they may be facing at the current time.

For parents interested in participating in this program, or for further information, please call Therapy ACT, Intake Service on 6205 1246.

Autism Assessment and Family Support Service  
Therapy ACT

# ADVOCACY FOR INCLUSION

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The mission of Advocacy for Inclusion is to provide information, education and representation to effectively advocate for positive and inclusive outcomes for people who have a disability.

## **What does Advocacy for Inclusion do?**

Advocacy for Inclusion acts with and on behalf of individuals in a supportive manner or assist individuals to act on their own behalf, free of conflicts of interest and motivated only by a desire to obtain a fair and just outcome for the individual concerned.

They act to influence systemic change (e.g. to government policies, agency practices and societal structures), which enable people who have a disability to be included as valued members of society.

Advocacy for Inclusion informs, educates, represents, encourages, lobbies, refers, networks, analyzes, facilitates questions and challenges.

## **Who can use Advocacy for Inclusion?**

Advocacy for Inclusion can be used by:

- People who have a disability
- Family members and friends of people who have a disability
- People who speak on behalf of people who have a disability (including members of peak bodies, service organisations, workers, bureaucracy and government)

Advocacy can be provided for people who live in or use services in the ACT region.

## **How does Advocacy for Inclusion protect your privacy?**

Confidentiality is maintained at all times and any information gathered or shared is always with the person's knowledge and consent.

Advocacy for Inclusion is located at Pearce Community Centre, Room 17 & 18, Building 3, Collett Place, Pearce. ACT 2607

Phone: (02) 6286 9422

Email: [info@advocacyforinclusion.org](mailto:info@advocacyforinclusion.org)

[www.advocacyforinclusion.org](http://www.advocacyforinclusion.org)

# **AUTISM ASPERGERS ADVOCACY AUSTRALIA**

## **A4**

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Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia was formed in 2002 in response to the growing demand from people with autism spectrum condition and their families who wished to have a more direct involvement in raising the profile of autism-related issues with the decision-makers, to government and the media.

The aim of the advocacy organisation is to provide a voice on a national and a state and territory level for individuals and groups across Australia.

*A4 is:*

- *A National Grassroots Organisation.*
- *An e-mail based information network.*
- Focussed on the development and promotion of national Autism Spectrum Disorder policy and priorities.
- Concerned with the 'big picture' issues.
- Activities targeting the Federal Government.
- A small step in a long long process.

*A4 is not:*

- *An Autism support group.*
- *A protest group.*
- *Advocacy at the State or Territory level.*
- *An e-mail chat forum.*
- *A cure for Autism.*

There is no membership charge for A4. To join and /or for further information go to [www.a4.org.au](http://www.a4.org.au)

## WHERE TO FIND RESOURCES

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### **Bookinhand**

Bookinhand stocks a wide range of resources on Autism Spectrum Disorder  
Ph: 07 3283 8214; [www.bookinhand.com.au](http://www.bookinhand.com.au); [bookinhand@optusnet.com](mailto:bookinhand@optusnet.com)

### **Footprint Books**

Footprint books is the distributor of Jessica Kingsley books, one of the two main publishers of books on ASD; [www.footprint.com.au](http://www.footprint.com.au)

### **Co-Ordinates Therapy Services**

Books and equipment are available from Co-Ordinates Therapy Services  
[www.therapybookshop.com/coordinates](http://www.therapybookshop.com/coordinates)

### **Photos, Cards, Visual Supports and General Resource Links**

Chelsea's Challenges 03 9758 2473

[www.spectronicsinoz.com](http://www.spectronicsinoz.com)

Boardmaker and PICS for PECS (Autism Asperger ACT Inc. has a loan copy of Boardmaker).

[www.dltk-cards.com](http://www.dltk-cards.com)

[www.dotolearn.com](http://www.dotolearn.com)

[www.inekards.com](http://www.inekards.com)

[www.mayer-johnson.com](http://www.mayer-johnson.com)

[www.prompteducation.com](http://www.prompteducation.com)

[www.seeandspeak.com.au](http://www.seeandspeak.com.au)

[www.slatersoftware.com](http://www.slatersoftware.com)

[www.theracrew.com](http://www.theracrew.com)

[www.usevisualstrategies.com](http://www.usevisualstrategies.com)

[www.visualaidsforlearning.com](http://www.visualaidsforlearning.com)

[www.winningconnection.com.au](http://www.winningconnection.com.au)

### **General Education Resources**

[www.cindysautisticsupport.com](http://www.cindysautisticsupport.com)

[www.fastforword.com.au](http://www.fastforword.com.au)

[www.icommunicatetherapy.com](http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com)

[www.theracrew.com](http://www.theracrew.com)

[www.tiptoeep.com.au](http://www.tiptoeep.com.au)

Google Images – go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and select the images button.

### **Story Builder**

[www.autism.org.uk/storybuilder](http://www.autism.org.uk/storybuilder)

Provides information on the computer-based tool called *Story builder* which can be used by parents, carers and teachers to create individualised stories for children with Autism and Asperger syndrome.

### **Social Stories**

[www.autism-help.org](http://www.autism-help.org)

### **Sensory Toys**

[www.focustoys.com](http://www.focustoys.com)

[www.therapybookshop.com/coordinates](http://www.therapybookshop.com/coordinates)

Books and equipment are available from Co-Ordinates Therapy Services.

The Early Learning Centre (Belconnen Mall), \$2 shops, National Geographic and Socrates also stock sensory toys from time to time.

### **Bullying**

*“Being Bullied: Strategies and Solutions for People with Asperger’s Syndrome”* (Nick Dubin) is a DVD available through the Autism Asperger ACT library.

### **Other Products**

[www.nanasweightedblankets.com](http://www.nanasweightedblankets.com)

Weighted blankets that help children with Autism settle.

[www.brightsky.com.au](http://www.brightsky.com.au)

Provides health care products including personal care, wound care products, supplements, vitamins, skin care, bowel care, pressure management, bedding, support and mobility aids.

## RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

### **ACT Athletics Association**

ACT Athletics provides competitions for all ages in running, jumping, walking and throwing events in Canberra/Queanbeyan and surrounding regions (Cooma, Bega, Goulburn). Competition and coaching available for the disabled.

Ph: 6247 1504; Web: [www.actathletics.org.au](http://www.actathletics.org.au); Email: [info.act@athletics.org.au](mailto:info.act@athletics.org.au)  
Address: 100 Maitland Street Hackett 2602

### **ACT Cricket Association**

ACT Cricket is the cricketing body in the ACT that provides cricket for juniors and seniors as well a broader range of cricket for more recreational players. ACT Cricket also looks after and runs the annual Prime Minister's XI game. The organisation runs initiatives such as the Kookaburra Cup (a Twenty20 tournament for children), the Hume Consulting Group Workplace Challenge (a smaller scale game for workers) and clinics for indigenous and disabled children.

Ph: 6239 6002; Web: [www.cricketaact.com](http://www.cricketaact.com);  
Address: Sir Donald Bradman Stand, Level 2, Manuka Oval Manuka 2603

### **ACT Junior Chess League**

The chess league offers regular chess tournaments.

Ph: 6231 6428 Web: [www.actjcl.org.au](http://www.actjcl.org.au)

### **Australian Army Cadets**

Army cadets help young people to explore their full potential, develop confidence, self-discipline, learn a range of skills and make friends. The program focuses on personal development, community development and army development.

Ph: 1800 674 192; Web: [www.aac.adfc.gov.au](http://www.aac.adfc.gov.au)

### **Canberra Cycling Club**

A cycling program for children aged between 7 and 15 years, teaching basic to advanced cycling skills.

Web: [www.canberracyclingclub.org.au](http://www.canberracyclingclub.org.au)

### **The Farmyard Nursery**

The Farmyard Nursery offers group visits and birthday parties and gives children an opportunity to feed, nurse and pat farmyard animals. Bookings essential.

Ph: 6239 7133 Web: [www.farmyardnursery.com.au](http://www.farmyardnursery.com.au)

### **Girl Guides**

Guides provide a 'non-formal education program that is a dynamic, flexible and values-based training in life skills, decision-making and leadership. It is run by trained volunteer leaders committed to enabling girls and young women into confident, self-respecting, responsible community members'.

Ph: 1300 44 75 48; [www.girlguides-nswact.org.au](http://www.girlguides-nswact.org.au)

### **Gymbaroo**

Gymbaroo programs are specifically designed to develop essential motor skills in children and to inform parents of the importance of early childhood development to health, learning and behaviour. Gymbaroo classes include free play, mat time, equipment time and music time. Gymbaroo is located at Brand Depot, ACT.

Ph: 0422 312 457; Email: [kristie@gymbaroocanberra.com](mailto:kristie@gymbaroocanberra.com)

**Hands on Studio**

The Hands on Studio is a non-profit organization which provides an arts education and life skill development program for young people with a disability. Classes are based at the M16 Studio Complex in Fyshwick. Ph: 6232 7187; [www.centacare-canberra.org](http://www.centacare-canberra.org)

**Indoor Playgrounds****The Fun Factory**

At the fun factory the children can either scale the two tiered climbing structure or crawl and slide around on the giant bouncer. There is a separate play area for under 3's and over 3's can practice their driving skills on The Fun Track with battery operated quad bikes.

Ph: 6296-3409; Location: Kambah

**Kid City**

Kid City is for ages 12 months- 11 years. It offers jumping castles, slides, Xboxes, under 2's play area and café. Kid City also hosts birthday parties and disco nights.

Ph: 6241 3144; Web: [www.kidcity.com.au](http://www.kidcity.com.au); Location: Mitchell

**Kids Rampage**

Kids Rampage is suitable for children aged up to 12 years. The playground offers Ball Pulls, Slides, tunnels, activity cockpit, bouncy castle and a separate baby play area.

Ph: 6293 9007; Web: [www.kidsrampage.com.au](http://www.kidsrampage.com.au); Location: Tuggeranong Square

**Monkey Mania**

Monkey Mania offers a climb and slide, ballrooms, interactive themed party rooms, comfy learning centre, café and chill out zone. There is also a variety of other play areas available, including the "Ball-o-city arena", the climbing spider web, and jumping castles. Monkey Mania caters for kids of all ages, with a specific babies' area, toddlers' area and an area for bigger kids. The toddlers' area includes the Comfyland Experience which encourages toddlers to explore and learn through music, educational computer games and sensory input panels.

Ph: 6280 5294 Web: [www.monkeymania.com.au](http://www.monkeymania.com.au); Location: DFO Fyshwick

**Jumping Junior & Teens**

Saturday 9-10 am ages 12 to 18 years

Saturday 10.05 -11.05 ages 5 to 12 years.

Energetic and creative dance for children with special needs and their parent/carer.

Term fee applies. Located at the Canberra Dance Theatre.

Ph: 0435 025365; [www.canberradancetheatre.org](http://www.canberradancetheatre.org); [info@canberradancetheatre.org](mailto:info@canberradancetheatre.org)

**Kids Holiday Activities**

[www.kidsholidayactivities.com.au](http://www.kidsholidayactivities.com.au)

This is a national website with a listing of holiday activities in your local area including aquatic activities, arts and crafts, education programs, leisure activities, holiday programs, adventure activities and more.

**Paint and Play**

Paint and Play is for children aged 0-5 years and their parents/carers. Paint and Play is a fun time to let children do painting, puzzles, play and story time while parents chat. Paint and Play generally runs only during the school term and is at various locations in the ACT. It is run by various organizations (YMCA; DHCS; Community Services, Noah's Ark and Parentline).

**Pegasus Riding for the Disabled ACT**

Pegasus is a not-for-profit community organisation that provides equestrian activities for people with a disability. Lessons are structured on ability, with riders with a disability riding with able bodied riders wherever possible. Individualised programs are developed for each rider. Lessons run during the school term. School holiday programs of 1 - 3 hours duration are also offered.

Ph: 6254 9190; Web: [www.pegasusact.com.au](http://www.pegasusact.com.au); Email: [enquiries@pegasus.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pegasus.com.au)

Address: 119 Drake Brockman Dr., Holt ACT 2615

**Photocaccess**

PhotoAccess is at the Manuka Arts Centre and presents exhibitions, courses, talks, publications and special projects. Photoaccess aims to provide opportunities across the community, including groups and individuals whose access to photo media is limited by gender, geography, income, disability or other reasons.

Ph: 6295 7810; Web: [www.photoaccess.org.au](http://www.photoaccess.org.au)

**Scouts Australia**

Scouts Australia offers children fun and excitement, adventure and challenge. To contact Scout ACT ph: 6282 5211; [www.act.scouts.asn.au](http://www.act.scouts.asn.au)

**Special Olympics ACT Region**

SOACTR is a sport, recreational and support organisation that encourages, prepares and provides opportunities for people with an intellectual disability from the age of 8 years to participate in sport. Children from 6 years welcome but cannot play competitively until they are 8 years of age. There is no upward age limit. We offer seven sports: athletics, aquatics, basketball, bocce, golf, tennis and tenpin bowling.

Ph: 6230 1069; Email: [soactr@optusnet.com.au](mailto:soactr@optusnet.com.au)

Address: PO Box 1129 Dickson 2602

**Swimming**

Swimming ACT runs a learn to swim program for children & adults with disabilities. The program operates from the Canberra Olympic Pool, the Canberra International Sports & Aquatic Centre (CISAC) at Belconnen, Malkara school pool and Cranleigh school pool. Lessons run on a term basis. The cost is \$153 per term (with a Dr's certificate) or \$168.30 per term (without a Dr's certificate).

Ph: 6257 4837 or phone the program co-ordinator-Margaret Roberts on 62584520.

Email [officemanager@actswimming.com.au](mailto:officemanager@actswimming.com.au); Web: [www.swimmingact.com.au](http://www.swimmingact.com.au)

Address: Suite 12B, ACT Sports House, Maitland Street Hackett 2602

Aqua Harmony is a private pool that often suits children with an ASD as it is a smaller, quieter environment.

Ph: 6232 5144

Address: 106 Cotter Rd, Curtin, 2605

Desley Bennett provides swimming lessons for babies, children and adults in Calwell.

Ph: 6292 4900

**Warehouse Circus**

Warehouse Circus is a dynamic, energetic and talented group of young people aged 8 to 25 who provide quality entertainment for the Canberra community. The Circus provides fun, healthy, active and exciting programs for young people which support them physically and mentally. Warehouse Circus also runs programs for young people with a disability. or at risk of homelessness. Its core trainers are specially trained in Social Circ

Ph: 6260 3626 Web: [www.warehousecircus.org.au](http://www.warehousecircus.org.au)

## OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

### Visuals Source

A box for visuals has been put near Autism Asperger ACT Inc's library at SHOUT, Pearce. Please help yourself and/or donate unwanted visuals.

### Meltdown Cards

These cards are designed to hand out to members of the public who appear to be critical of your child's behaviour and of your parenting skills. Each card has a brief description of ASD and is designed to inform the general public.  
Available through Autism Asperger ACT Inc.

### Register of Interests

Following a suggestion Tony Attwood made when in Canberra recently we have decided to keep a register of people with ASD, their age and their interests so that we can connect people of similar interests with one another.

A register of interests for girls and women with an ASD is also available.

If you would like your details or your child's details to be registered on this register please email Polly McIntyre at [bm@autismaspergeract.com.au](mailto:bm@autismaspergeract.com.au) or phone: 6140 1761

### Qantas Carer Concession Card

The Carer Concession Card is issued to people with a disability and high level support needs, who need the full-time assistance of a carer while they are on a plane.

Conditions do apply plus a small fee.

For more information and an application form contact Nican on Freecall 1800 806 769 or email [info@nican.com.au](mailto:info@nican.com.au)

### Music Therapy

#### Music for Everyone

Offers music programs for children with disabilities.

Ph: 6230 7190

Email: [info@mfe.org.au](mailto:info@mfe.org.au)

Address: Ainslie Arts Centre

Elouera Street

Braddon ACT 2616

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#### Music Therapy

Jenny Lavett

Ph: 6258 6675

Web: [www.musictherapyservices.com.au](http://www.musictherapyservices.com.au)

#### Art Therapy

Holly Edworthy

Registered Art Therapist (MA in Art Therapy, BA in Fine Art)

Ph: 0419 99 8142; 6259 3604

Email: [holly.edworthy@inet.net.au](mailto:holly.edworthy@inet.net.au)

For more information on Art Therapy look up [www.anzata.org](http://www.anzata.org)

#### Charity Computers

Charity Computers has a range of products and services including sales and service of PC's, installation of networks and training. The sales of re-used PCs allows people, who otherwise couldn't afford access to IT, that access. The computers come fully installed with software and hardware and enable users to effectively plug in and start using.

Client must demonstrate their need and either be:

- \* An individual on a concession card
- \* A not for profit organisation
- \* A small business

The computers are not the latest technology but run effectively in any work environment, and come fully supported by your local Charity Computers.

Charity Computers Australia

Ph: 6101 6931

46 Lhotsky Street

Charnwood ACT 2614

### **Haircuts**

Just Cuts stores all should have a DVD player that you can request. Take along your favourite DVD and hopefully haircutting will be easier. Remember during the day and the beginning of the week are quieter times and you may not have to wait so long. Tell the staff that your child is on the Autism Spectrum.

N.B. Avoid using the word 'cut;' refer to having a hair trim or hair do. Many children with ASD associate cut with hurt as we say "Don't touch the scissors they will cut you!" etc.

### **Mobility Difficulty Parking**

People with Mobility Difficulty (including families who have highly mobile children with ASD) can obtain a special permit enabling them to park free of charge in government operated car parking spaces. The permit is valid for use in disabled bays. Your doctor needs to help you complete the form.

[www.rego.act.gov.au/parking/parkingmobility.htm](http://www.rego.act.gov.au/parking/parkingmobility.htm)

### **Book Box Loans**

Contact Autism Asperger ACT Inc if you wish to borrow one of our community education book boxes. We have boxes especially for child care, preschool, primary and high school aged children as well as one for community services. Book Boxes are loaned for a term.

## SUGGESTED READING

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Attwood, Tony. (2006). *A Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

Attwood, Tony; Grandin, Temple et al (2006) *Asperger's and Girls*. Future Horizons, Arlington. Texas

Dodd, Susan. (2005). *Understanding Autism*. Elsevier. Marrickville. Australia.

Ernsperger, Lori and Wendel, Danielle. (2007). *Girls under the Umbrella of Autism Spectrum Disorders. Practical Solutions for Addressing Everyday Challenges*. Autism Asperger Publishing Company. Kansas.

Grandin, Temple. (1996). *Thinking in Pictures*. Vintage Books. New York.

Gray, Carol and White, Abbie Leigh. (ed.) (2002). *My Social Stories Book*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

Hall, Kenneth. (2001). *Asperger Syndrome, the Universe and Everything*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

Jackson, Luke. (2002). *Freaks, Geeks and Aspergers Syndrome*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

Larkey, Sue and von Ess, Gay. (2006). *The Early Years. The Foundations of ALL Learning*. Go to [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

Larkey, Sue. (2007). *Practical Sensory Programmes*. Go to [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

Larkey, Sue. (2005). *Making it a Success*. Go to [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

Hodgdon, Linda. (1996) *Visual Strategies for Improving Communication*. Quirk Roberts Publishing. Michigan.

Holliday Willey, Liane (2001). *Asperger Syndrome in the Family. Redefining Normal*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

McAfee, Jeanette. (2002). *Navigating the Social World*. Future Horizons, Arlington. Texas.

Notbohm, Ellen. (2005). *Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew*. Future Horizons, Arlington. Texas.

Notbohm, Ellen. (2006). *Ten Things Every Student with Autism Wishes You Knew*. Future Horizons, Arlington. Texas.

Notbohm, Ellen and Zusk, Veronica. (2004). *1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism*. Future Horizons, Arlington. Texas.

O'Reilly, Bension and Smith, Seana. (2008). *Australian Autism Handbook*. Jane Curry Publishing. Sydney.

Positive Partnership Manual: Discusses behavior support, completing work, transitions, sexuality, making friends, siblings, bullying, and positive behavior. Available at the Autism Asperger ACT library.

Smith, Myles, Brenda and others. (2004). *The Hidden Curriculum. Practical Solutions for Understanding Unstated Rules in Social Situations*. Autism Publishing Company. Kansas.

Tullemans, Anna. (2004). *Talking to Family and Friends about the Diagnosis*. DJ Publishers. Redcliffe. Queensland.

Winter, Matt. (2003). *Asperger's Syndrome – What Teachers Need to Know*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

Yapko, Diane. (2003). *Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders. Frequently Asked Questions*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. New York and London.

## SUGGESTED WEB SITES

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[www.autismaspergeract.com.au](http://www.autismaspergeract.com.au)

Home of Autism Asperger ACT

[www.autismtraining.com.au](http://www.autismtraining.com.au)

Website for the Positive Partnerships workshops for parents with school aged children with an ASD. It assists parents and schools to work together to improve the educational outcomes of children with ASD. It offers on-line training modules providing interactive learning modules and useful learning resources for parents and school staff including information modules on specific topics like bullying, homework and sexuality.

[www.autismawareness.com.au](http://www.autismawareness.com.au)

Includes family entitlements

[www.asatonline.org](http://www.asatonline.org)

Up to date information on treatments and research evidence

[www.autismtoday.com](http://www.autismtoday.com)

Lots of current literature and includes an area where you can “Ask the Expert” a question. This includes people with ASD you can ask questions.

[www.aspect.org.au](http://www.aspect.org.au)

Useful Australian site

[www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com)

The South Australian website for children and youth health

[www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

Useful tips on dealing with bullying

[www.dhcs.act.gov.au/therapyact](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/therapyact)

Information on the services offered by Therapy ACT

[www.det.act.gov.au](http://www.det.act.gov.au)

Information on the ACT Education Department

[www.handscantalk.com.au](http://www.handscantalk.com.au)

Information on sign language.

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Information on the Helping Children with Autism Medicare items and provides access to published guides such as ‘Early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorders: Guidelines for best practice’.

[www.lifeskills4kids.com.au](http://www.lifeskills4kids.com.au)

List resources to help your child develop critical life skills

[www.med.monash.edu.au/spppm/research/devpsych/actnow/factsheet.html](http://www.med.monash.edu.au/spppm/research/devpsych/actnow/factsheet.html)

Useful Facts Sheets

[www.nellefrances.com](http://www.nellefrances.com)

AspergerChild.com aims to provide parents, carers, families, educators and professionals with reliable information and support in their journey with ASD’s.

[www.raisingchildren.net.au/autism](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au/autism)

An Australian Parenting site with an ASD-specific section.

[www.rdicconnect.com](http://www.rdicconnect.com)

Provides information on Relationship Development Intervention

[www.siblingsaustralia.org.au](http://www.siblingsaustralia.org.au)

A website to help children and adults who have a sibling with special needs.

[www.teacch.com](http://www.teacch.com)

Information on the TEEACH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication- handicapped cHildren) program.

[www.tonyattwood.com](http://www.tonyattwood.com)

Website of Tony Attwood- A Psychologist who specializes in ASD's.

[www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

Useful strategies and resources

[www.thewatsoninstitute.org](http://www.thewatsoninstitute.org)

Information on the Watson Institute today- an educational organization, specializing in educating children with special needs.

[www.wrongplanet.net](http://www.wrongplanet.net)

Has a very interesting online forum.

### **For the kids:**

[www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au)

Home of the ABC- provides games and activities for young children.

[www.askkids.com](http://www.askkids.com)

Features interactive "edu-tainment"

[www.comiclife.com](http://www.comiclife.com)

Create amazing comics and photo books.

[www.do2learn.com](http://www.do2learn.com)

A goldmine of activities and resources.

[www.dltk-kids.com](http://www.dltk-kids.com)

Features children's crafts and colouring pages.

[www.learningtreasures.com](http://www.learningtreasures.com)

Provides education resources including games, spelling sheets, science experiments, maps, maths sheets and more.

[www.symbolworld.org](http://www.symbolworld.org)

Visuals galore!

[www.pbskids.org/lions/games/blending.html](http://www.pbskids.org/lions/games/blending.html)

Interactive games for the early years.

[www.polyxo.com](http://www.polyxo.com)

Teaching children with Autism

[www.lego.com](http://www.lego.com)

The Lego website

[www.watchmelearn.com](http://www.watchmelearn.com)

Uses multisensory products to engage children in learning.

## SERVICES FOR TEENAGERS AND ADOLESCENTS

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### **ACT REGIONAL COMMUNITY BUS SERVICE**

Ph: 6251 2100; Web: [www.bcsact.com.au](http://www.bcsact.com.au)

Belconnen Community Service provides a flexible community bus for people who, for a variety of reasons, have no other transport option. Transport runs from Monday-Friday 9:30-3:30pm. Eligibility required. The bus also has monthly excursions to places of interest in Canberra.

### **THE ARK TEENAGE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Ph: 6287 1117 to speak with Margaret Senior or Wendy Addison

Email: [noahsarkresources@bigpond.com](mailto:noahsarkresources@bigpond.com)

When: 3:15pm - 6:15pm weekdays during school term

Where: Noah's Ark Resource Centre  
East Wing Rivett Primary School  
Bangalay Crescent  
Rivett

Cost: \$14.00 per session

The Ark is a fun and educational after school and holiday program for high school and college students with special needs. It is an interesting, educational and fun program that includes: independent living skills, exercise, homework assistance, arts and crafts and computer tuition.

### **BELCONNEN COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Ph: 6264 0200; Web: [www.bcsact.com.au](http://www.bcsact.com.au)

Belconnen Community Services runs a number of children, youth and disability programs.

### **BRIDGES**

Ph: 6264 0232 or email: [bridges@bcsact.com.au](mailto:bridges@bcsact.com.au)

Bridges is a service for people with a disability to prevent social isolation. Services include assistance with transport, life skills training, recreational courses and accompanying individuals to community activities. Courses run per term and a small fee applies.

### **THE BIG RED BOOK**

Ph: 6247 3540;

Web: [www.youthcoalition.net/public/Projects/BRB.html](http://www.youthcoalition.net/public/Projects/BRB.html)

The Big Red Book is an online directory of youth services.

### **CATHOLIC CARE (formerly Centacare)**

Ph: 6163 7600; Web: [www.centacare-canberra.org](http://www.centacare-canberra.org)

CatholicCare provides a number of services for adolescents and their families. Services include the Flexible Family Respite Program (short term and emergency respite); Adolescent Mediation & Family Therapy (FACES) – a counselling service for young people (aged between 10-21 years) and their parents or caregivers; and accommodation support services for young people with a disability.

### **COMMUNITIES AT WORK: Tuggeranong and Weston Creek**

Ph: 6293 2146 Web: [www.commsatwork.org](http://www.commsatwork.org)

Communities at Work offers *Fun4 youth*- A social and recreational program for young people aged 12-21 years with a disability. It is based at the Tuggeranong Youth Centre. Communities at Work also run the Weston Creek and Tuggeranong youth centres.

**FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS TOGETHER (FAST)**

Ph: 6205 9693

FAST is an early intervention and prevention program that works with families to support Government high school students who are disengaging from their learning. FAST is based at the Lyons Education Centre.

**GUNGAHLIN REGIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Ph: 6123 4488; Web: [www.gres.org.au](http://www.gres.org.au)

The Gungahlin Regional Community Centre runs the Warehouse Club- an afterschool and holiday care program for young people aged 11-21 years with a disability.

**HEADSPACE ACT**

Ph: 6201 5343; Web: [www.headspace.org.au/act](http://www.headspace.org.au/act)

Headspace ACT provides support, information and assistance for young people aged 12 to 25 years who are experiencing emotional or mental health issues and/or a substance use issue.

**KIDS HELPLINE**

Ph: 1800 55 1800; Web: [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

Kids Helpline offers a free online or phone counseling service for young people aged 5-25 years.

**THE LINK**

Ph: 6232 2444; Email: [youthinthecity@anglicarecg.org.au](mailto:youthinthecity@anglicarecg.org.au)

A comprehensive contact list for the youth and community sector. Developed quarterly by Youth in the City, Anglicare Canberra and Goulburn.

**MENSLINK**

Ph: 6239 4699; Web: [www.menslink.org.au](http://www.menslink.org.au)

Menslink is a mentoring and support program for young men aged between 14 and 21 years.

**NAVIGATE**

Ph: 6258 5933; Web: [www.ywca-canberra.org.au](http://www.ywca-canberra.org.au); Email: [navigate@ywca-canberra.org.au](mailto:navigate@ywca-canberra.org.au)

Navigate is a free and confident counseling service to help young people (aged 12-18 years) and their families.

**RECONNECT**

Ph: 6163 7600; Email: [reconnect@centacare-canberra.org](mailto:reconnect@centacare-canberra.org)

Reconnect is a free and voluntary early intervention program for young people (aged 12-18 years) who are at risk of homelessness or already homeless and their families.

**SEXUAL HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING ACT: Schools Disability Program**

Ph: 6247 3077 Web: [www.shfp.org.au](http://www.shfp.org.au)

Sexual Health and Family Planning schools disability program supports the growth and learning of students with a disability in regard to their social safety and sexual and reproductive health needs. SHFP ACT also run SOsafe- A set of visual and conceptual tools designed to promote social safety to clients with an intellectual disability and ASDs.

**STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES (SPICE)**

Ph: 6251 4060; Web: [www.spice.org.au](http://www.spice.org.au)

SPICE is a preventative program for students aged 12-15 yrs who are at risk of leaving school. The program provides students with an alternative schooling option by offering work placements in an industry of their choice.

#### **TEEN HOUSE**

Ph: 6207 1086; Web: [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability\\_act/services](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act/services)

Teen House is hosted by Disability ACT. It is an out of house, overnight respite house for young adults (over 12 years) with a disability.

#### **WODEN COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Ph: 6282 2644; Web: [www.wcs.org.au/programs/youth\\_services/csr.html](http://www.wcs.org.au/programs/youth_services/csr.html)

and [www.wcs.org.au/programs/disability](http://www.wcs.org.au/programs/disability)

Woden Community Service offers a number of programs for teenagers. Programs include Community Supported Respite- a program for young people aged 12-25 years with a disability; the Community Life Skills Program: A community access program for adults with a disability; and Local Area CoOrdination which aims to "build individual, family and community self sufficiency so that individuals with a disability can achieve what they want to achieve, live how they want to live and are valued as full and equal members of the ACT community" (Disability ACT).

#### **WINNUNGA NIMMITYJAJ ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE**

Ph: 6284 6222; Web: [www.winnunga.org.au](http://www.winnunga.org.au)

Winnunga Nimmityjaj Aboriginal Health Service is a drop in health service for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth.

#### **YWCA CANBERRA**

Ph: 6175 9900 Web: [www.ywca-canberra.org.au](http://www.ywca-canberra.org.au)

The YWCA Youth Services Unit provides programs and services for young people aged 12-25 years. Programs include SCOPE Youth Outreach Service (based at Ainslie) and the Mura Lanyon Youth Centre and Youthlinx (based at Conder).

#### **SCHOOLING OPTIONS FOR YR. 11-12**

(Please also see Special Education- services for students with a disability)

#### **Dickson College**

Ph: 6205 6455; Web: [www.dicksonc.act.edu.au](http://www.dicksonc.act.edu.au)

The Foundations for Independence Program (FIP) provides an opportunity for students with special needs to complete a package of study related to their future options in a range of areas including further education, work, accommodation and recreation.

#### **Canberra College**

Ph: 6205 5777 Web: [www.canberrac.act.edu.au/curriculum/futures\\_program](http://www.canberrac.act.edu.au/curriculum/futures_program)

The Futures Program provides an educational package that responds to the needs, interests and abilities of students with special needs. It designs and delivers accredited courses, vocational courses and modified courses and liaises with parents and community groups, industry groups and training organizations.

## POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS

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### **ANU DISABILITY SERVICES CENTRE**

Ph: 6125 5036 Web: [www.anu.edu.au/disabilities](http://www.anu.edu.au/disabilities)

The ANU Disability Services Unit offers case management support, study adjustments, advocacy, assistive technology and information on other support services.

### **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY: EQUITY AND DISABILITY UNIT**

Ph: 6209 1170; [www.acu.edu.au/disabilityservices](http://www.acu.edu.au/disabilityservices)

The Equity and Disability Unit offers ACU students support in note taking, assistive technology, library support, exam support and general disability support.

### **BELCONNEN COMMUNITY SERVICE Disability Unit**

Ph: 6264 0232; Web: [www.bcsact.com.au](http://www.bcsact.com.au)

The BCS Disability Unit offers a number of programs including Bridges- a program that helps participants to participate within their community and to reduce social isolation; and the Community Access and Skill Development program- a program which combines social interaction with a range of recreational and living skills activities.

### **CANBERRA INSTITUTE of TECHNOLOGY DISABILITY SERVICES**

Ph: 6207 3328 or 6207 3329 or 6205 9184;

The CIT offers student support services to help students with disabilities enroll and study at the CIT. Support includes classroom support, tutorial support, technical equipment, ergonomic furniture and exam support.

### **CAREERS MARKET**

Web: [www.canberracareersmarket.com.au](http://www.canberracareersmarket.com.au)

The Careers Market is the largest event of its type in Canberra and assists young people in the Canberra region to consider their post-school options.

### **DISABILITY ACT**

Ph: 6207 1086; Web: [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability\\_act](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act)

Disability ACT funds two support models for school leavers with a disability.

- 1. Transitional Pre-vocational support:** This service is available for up to 3 years and can assist people who have the capacity to participate in vocational activities including employment, volunteering, further education or training but need additional support.
- 2. Ongoing Community Access Services:** Community access services assist school leavers to maintain and further develop their artistic and recreational learning and life skills to use community facilities and participate in community events.

### **DISABILITY SERVICES AUSTRALIA**

Ph: (02) 9791 6599; Web: [www.dsa.org.au](http://www.dsa.org.au)

Disability Services Australia provides assistance for school leavers with a disability. Programs include vocational services (employment at DSA work sites; employment support and assistance); community services (accommodation support, community participation and behavioural support) and commercial services for businesses.

**FAMILY LEADERSHIP and YOU (FLY)**

Ph: 6281 0974; Email: [sallyr1@inet.net.au](mailto:sallyr1@inet.net.au)

FLY assists families to create a positive and rich life for a young person with a disability.

**IDEAS: Information on Disability and Education Awareness Service**

Ph: 1800 029 904 Web: [www.ideas.org.au](http://www.ideas.org.au)

IDEAS is based in NSW and provides free information services and products including a free phone information service, online information, community events, newsletters and directories of services and products.

**JOBACCESS**

Ph: 1800 464 800; Web: [www.jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au)

JobAccess is a free service offering expert advice and information about the employment of people with disabilities and mental health conditions.

**MAX EMPLOMENT**

Ph: 1800 625 350; Web: [www.maxemployment.com.au](http://www.maxemployment.com.au)

Max Employment provides integrated employment, health and training services in an intense case-management style with the aim of preparing the client for employment.

**NATIONAL DISABILITY COORDINATION OFFICER**

Ph: 133 873; [www.deewr.gov.au/ndco](http://www.deewr.gov.au/ndco)

The National Disability Coordination Officer program targets the barriers that people with disabilities face in gaining access to and completing post-school education and training. The NDCO is based in NSW. For the Queanbeyan coordinator please ph: 6297 6899. For all other enquiries call 133 873.

**PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope)**

Ph: 6264 0200; Email: [bcspath@yahoo.com.au](mailto:bcspath@yahoo.com.au)

PATH is a process which helps people with disabilities to turn dreams and aspirations into real and possible futures. PATH is run through Belconnen Community Services.

**SHAW POSSIBILITIES**

Ph: 6254 2012; Email: [admin@shawpossibilities.com.au](mailto:admin@shawpossibilities.com.au)

Shaw Possibilities is a not for profit organization that provides personalized accommodation, support, life-skills training and links to the community for people with disabilities.

**UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA DISABILITY SERVICES**

Ph: 1800 864 226; Web: [www.canberra.edu.au/disabilities](http://www.canberra.edu.au/disabilities)

The University of Canberra disabilities office provides advice and support for students with a disability.

**NETA (Network of Employment and Training Agencies):****ADVANCE PERSONNEL**

Ph: 6285 2466 Web: [www.advance.org.au](http://www.advance.org.au)

Advance Personnel provides a personalized employment service assisting people with disabilities to develop skills, find jobs and maintain employment. Referrals are through Centrelink or directly to Advance Personnel.

**CATHOLIC CARE – Open Employment Program**

Ph: 6163 7600; Web: [www.centacare-canberra.org](http://www.centacare-canberra.org); Email: [open@centacare-canberra.org](mailto:open@centacare-canberra.org)

Centacare operates a small client-focused program aimed at supporting and assisting individuals with disability to gain and maintain employment in the open labour market.

**CRS Australia**

Ph: 1800 624 824; Web: [www.crsaaustralia.gov.au](http://www.crsaaustralia.gov.au)

CRS Australia provides vocational rehabilitation to assist people with disabilities to understand and manage their barriers to work. Services are provided by allied health professionals.

**JOB SOLVE**

Ph: 6280 6032; Web: [www.jobsolve.org.au](http://www.jobsolve.org.au)

Job Solve aims to create employment solutions for people with disabilities in the ACT/ Queanbeyan regions.

**KOOMARI**

Ph: 6280 6143; Web: [www.koomari.com.au](http://www.koomari.com.au)

Koomari provides a range of employment options for people with disabilities. A support and advisory service is also available to employers.

**LEAD**

Ph: 6257 7088; Web: [www.lead.asn.au](http://www.lead.asn.au)

LEAD assists people with disabilities to access the community, develop new skills and gain employment.

**WORK-WAYS**

Ph: 6247 3611; Email: [admin@work-ways.com](mailto:admin@work-ways.com)

Work-Ways provides support to people with mental illness to obtain and maintain employment. A professional recruitment service and educational program is also available for employers.

## GLOSSARY

**Aphasia:** The complete or partial loss of ability to use or understand language.

**Apraxia:** A disorder of voluntary movement, consisting of partial or total incapacity to execute purposeful movements, without impairment of muscular power, sensibility and coordination. The person has difficulty sequencing movements in the service of a goal. May be specific to speech.

**Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA):** A style of teaching which uses a series of trials to shape a desired behaviour or response. Skills are broken down into their simplest components and then taught to the child through a system of reinforcement.

**Asperger's Syndrome (AS):** A developmental disorder on the autism spectrum defined by impairments in communication and social development and by repetitive interests and behaviours. Unlike typical autism, individuals with Asperger's Syndrome have no significant delay in language and cognitive development.

**Assistive Technology:** Technology used to assist a person with a disability (for example alpha smarts or computer programs) particularly within the Government school system.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A particular symptom complex with core symptoms including developmentally inappropriate degrees of attention, cognitive disorganization, distractibility, impulsivity and hyperactivity, all of which vary in different situations and at different times. Common secondary symptoms include perceptual and emotional immaturity, poor social skills, disruptive behaviours and academic problems.

**Atypical Autism:** A general term for conditions that are close to but do not quite fit the set of conditions for autism or other specific conditions.

**Auditory Integration Training (AIT):** A technique used to relieve hearing dysfunctions by "retraining" the ear to hear in a more balanced fashion.

**Augmentative Communication:** The use of aids to help an autistic child communicate his/her wants and needs. For example, photographs and picture exchange communication.

**Autistic Savant:** An autistic individual who displays incredible aptitude for one or two skills (e.g. amazing musical or artistic ability).

**Autistic Spectrum Disorders:** A term that encompasses autism and similar disorders. More specifically, the following five disorders listed in the DSM-IV: Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, and Retts Disorder.

**Co-morbid Condition:** Having more than one concurrent diagnosis. Another term for this would be "dual diagnosis". Many people with autism have one or more additional diagnoses, such as ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome or Epilepsy.

**Discrete Trials:** A short, instructional train which has three distinct parts: e.g. a direction - a behaviour - a consequence. Many discrete trial programs rely heavily on directions or commands as the signal to begin the discrete trial.

**Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-III, DSM-III-R, DSM-IV):** The official system for classification of psychological and psychiatric disorders prepared by and published by the American Psychiatric Association.

**Dyspraxia:** A disorder of motor planning.

**Echolalia:** Repeating words or phrases heard previously. The echoing may occur immediately after hearing the word or phrase, or much later. Delayed echolalia can occur days or weeks after hearing the word or phrase.

**Electroencephalogram (EEG):** A test that uses electrodes placed on the scalp to record electrical brain activity. It is often used to diagnose seizure disorders or to look for abnormal brain wave patterns.

**Epilepsy:** A brain disorder in which clusters of nerve cells, or neurons, in the brain sometimes signal abnormally. In epilepsy, the normal pattern of neuronal activity becomes disturbed, causing strange sensations, emotions, and behaviour or sometimes convulsions, muscle spasms, and loss of consciousness. Having a seizure does not necessarily mean that a person has epilepsy. A diagnosis of epilepsy needs to be confirmed using an EEG or brain scan.

**Expressive Language:** The use of spoken language.

**Fragile X Syndrome:** A genetic disorder that shares many of the characteristics of autism. Individuals can be tested for "Fragile X" by having a special test ordered by a doctor.

**High Functioning Autism:** Individuals with autism who are not cognitively impaired are called 'high functioning'.

**Hyperlexia:** The ability to read at an early age. To be hyperlexic, a child does not need to understand what he or she is reading.

**Hypotonia:** Low muscle tone.

**International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization (ICD-10 currently):** A numerical system used to classify diseases and disorders, including autism. Sometimes used in conjunction with DSM criteria.

**Individualized Learning Plan (ILP):** A plan that identifies the student's specific learning expectations and outlines how the school will address these expectations through appropriate special education programs and services. It also identifies the methods by which the student's progress will be reviewed.

**Intelligence:** A broad concept made up of a large number of widely different yet specific skills. Its measurement through the use of intelligence tests attempts to assess these skills in order to provide a global score representative of an individual's level of functioning. Scores on intelligence tests relate a child's performance on the test to that of other children of the same chronological age.

**Intelligence Quotient (IQ):** A standard score derived from intelligence tests. It represents the intellectual age of the child (that is the age at which the average child would perform at a given standard) divided by the child's chronological age at the time of testing. The scores are organised such that 100 is an average score (i.e. when

the intellectual age and chronological age are the same) but any score between 90 and 110 is considered average.

**Joint Attention:** The ability to follow someone else's gaze and share the experience of looking together at an object or activity

**Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI):** A diagnostic technique that uses the magnetic qualities of body chemicals to produce an image of the brain.

**Meltdown:** A meltdown is when a person with an ASD has received so much sensory information (sounds, lights, smells etc) that they lose control of their behaviour and appear to have a tantrum.

**Neurotypical:** A term used for neurologically normal individuals.

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):** Having a tendency to perform certain repetitive acts or ritualistic behaviour to relieve anxiety.

**Occupational Therapist (OT):** Individuals who specialize in the analysis of purposeful activity and tasks to minimize the impact of disability on independence in daily living. The therapist then helps the family to better cope with the disorder, by adapting the environment and teaching sub-skills of the missing developmental components.

**Perseveration:** Repetitive movement or speech, or sticking to one idea or task that has a compulsive quality to it.

**Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD):** A term that encompasses autism and related disorders. It specifically refers to the following five disorders listed in the DSM-IV: Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, and Retts Disorder.

**Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS):** A diagnostic category that is used when there is a severe and pervasive impairment in the developmental of reciprocal social interaction or verbal and non-verbal communication skills or when stereotyped behaviours, interests and activities are **present, but the criteria are not met for a specific Pervasive Developmental Disorder.**

**Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS):** An augmentative communication system. PECS teaches people with language difficulties to exchange a picture of a desired item with a teacher/parent, who immediately honours the request. Allows people with language difficulties to initiate communication.

**Pragmatics:** The use of language in social contexts (for example, knowing what to say, how to say it and when to say it).

**Proprioception:** The ability to sense the position, location, orientation and movement of the body and its parts.

**Rett's Disorder:** A disintegrative disorder where after a period of normal development, between the ages of 5 and 48 months, head growth decelerates and there is a loss of previously acquired skills. Other symptoms include stereotyped hand movements, uncoordinated movement and language difficulties. Only reported in females.

**Receptive Language:** The ability to understand language of others.

**Risperidol (generic name: Risperidone):** Risperdal, like other new antipsychotic drugs currently under development, is designed as a serotonin/dopamine antagonist. While its exact mechanism of action is not yet understood, Risperdal seems to block the action of serotonin and dopamine, two neurotransmitter chemicals in the brain. Conventional antipsychotics seem to primarily affect only dopamine.

**Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor (SSRI):** A class of drugs used as antidepressants. Functionally, they increase the levels of serotonin in the body. These drugs can be dangerous if mixed with other drugs such as other antidepressants, illicit drugs, some antihistamines, antibiotics and calcium-channel blockers. Some examples of SSRIs are Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil.

**Sensory Integration (SI):** This is a term applied to the way the brain processes sensory stimulation or sensation from the body and then translates that information into specific, planned, coordinated motor activity.

**Serotonin:** A neurotransmitter implicated in the behavioural- physiological processes of sleep, pain and sensory perception, motor function, appetite, learning and memory.

**Speech Pathologist:** Individuals who specialize in the area of human communication. The focus is on communication, not speech, to increase the child's ability to impact and to understand their environment.

**Stim:** Short for 'self-stimulation', a term for behaviours whose sole purpose appears to be to stimulate one's senses. Many people with autism report that some 'self-stims' may serve a regulatory function for them (i.e. calming, increasing concentration, or shutting out an overwhelming sound).

**T.E.A.C.C.H. (Treatment and Education of Autism and Related Communication Handicapped Children):** This is a therapeutic approach broadly based on the idea that individuals with autism more effectively use and understand visual cues. It focuses on promoting independence by using items such as picture schedules to break down tasks step-by-step. This enables an individual to better comprehend and perform the task independently. This approach often aids receptive communication and sequential memory.

**Theory of Mind:** The ability to understand that others have beliefs, desires and intentions that are different from one's own.

**Tourette's Syndrome:** Both multiple motor and one or more vocal tics present with tics occurring many times a day, nearly daily, over a period of more than one year. The onset is before age 18 and the disturbance is not due to direct physiological

effects of a substance or a general medical condition. The disturbance causes marked distress or significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

**Vestibular Sense:** The “movement sense.” This sense is involved in balance and position in space as well as muscle tone.

**Visual Supports:** The presentation of information is a visually structured way to make it easier to understand; e.g. daily schedule may be shown using photographs or Boardmaker.