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Check out our website @ <http://www.nqasg.org.au>

August 2009

## North Qld. Autism Support Group NEWSLETTER

Members of the NQ Autism Support group Inc are pleased to be able to bring you once again a newsletter, thanks to Jo-Anne Davey. We are most appreciative of her time and work.

It has been an eventful year so far. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> March Patrick Sherry from Disability Services Qld addressed members of the NQ Autism Support Group Inc. On the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March the Group in conjunction with NQ Competitive Employment Ltd ran a successful workshop with Kerry Burgoyne as the speaker. The first day was devoted to employers, service providers, and workers in the disability industry while the second day was for adolescents and adults with autism. Topics discussed related to matters those with ASD are likely to face, especially in the workplace, and included conflict resolution, how one should conduct oneself at work, what the employer needs to understand about the working environment for a person with autism, what skills the person with autism needs to learn eg standing in a queue to pay an account, using an ATM, knowing what to do in meal breaks eg where to get the coffee, where to put the cup after use, and what subjects to talk about to work mates.

Play Connect, a playgroup to cater for children from families coping with autism, began in April. It is being run by Birthe Bedet on Tuesdays, 9.30am to 11.30am, from a room in the AEIOU building at 22 Ridley Rd, Kirwan. Anyone wanting to know more can contact Birthe on 0409 609 954. Support Group Members also had a stand at the Playgroup Associations display at the PCYC at Rassmussen in March.

For Autism Awareness Month the Support Group staged a Picnic in the Park on 16<sup>th</sup> May and had a sausage sizzle. Children were able to acquaint themselves with farm animals from Melville's Farm. The Awards night on 1<sup>st</sup> June acknowledged people in the community who helped families with autism. Those honoured were Katrina Blake, Bob Spillane, Jillian Ballantyne, Dawn Willis, Debbie Wooten and members of Lollipops Playground.

As a result of an address by Jutta Dempsey and Kirsty Magarry which outlined sessions they run to assist people with autism to cope with anxiety, anger and social demands, the Support Group offered subsidies to four young people who wished to attend the sessions.

Some families have enjoyed taking their children on a monthly basis to ten pin bowling. Coffee mornings continue on the fourth Friday of the month.

Members of the NQ Autism Support Group are now preparing for the MINDD Seminar on 29<sup>th</sup> August and are looking forward to the symposium, "Beyond Behaviour", on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November at Rydges Southbank, being hosted by Autism Qld.

All in all it has been a busy and interesting year so far.  
Gwenyth Cutler

### Disability Action Week Awards - Nominations close on Friday 7 August 2009

Right across our state there are outstanding people and organisations working to improve the lives of Queenslanders with a disability. The Disability Action Week Awards recognise these individuals, organisations and businesses. The awards are a highlight of Disability Action Week, which will be celebrated from 13 to 19 September 2009.

For further information, including the awards guidelines and nomination booklet, visit <http://www.disability.qld.gov.au/actionweek/awards.html>

### Ask Mandy...

Welcome to ask Mandy...we would like to have a section of our newsletter for Questions and answers and somewhere for you to share your helpful tips or even an inspirational story you may have heard. Please email Mandy at [info@nqasg.org.au](mailto:info@nqasg.org.au)

The following is something that was sent to me from a fellow parent of an aspie, I love the positive take as I refer to my son as having a 'diffability' (different ability) and feel truly blessed for the things that he has and continues to teach me.

## Marching to the beat of one's own drummer...

### The Eight Asperger Advantages

*Yes, there is light at the end of the tunnel! There are aspects of Asperger that you can use to your great advantage.*

#### **FOCUS**

Your ability to focus on one objective over long periods of time without becoming distracted allows you to accomplish large and challenging tasks.

#### **UNIQUE GLOBAL INSIGHTS**

Your ability to find novel connections among multi-disciplinary facts and ideas allows you to create new, coherent, and meaningful insight that others would not have reached without you.

#### **INDEPENDENT THINKING**

Your willingness to consider unpopular or unusual possibilities generates new options and opportunities and can pave the way for others.

#### **INTERNAL MOTIVATION**

Rather than being swayed by social convention, other's opinions, social pressure or fears, you can hold firm to your own purpose. Your unique ideas can thrive, despite naysayers.

#### **ATTENTION TO DETAIL**

Your ability to remember and process minute details without getting lost or overwhelmed gives you a distinct advantage when solving complex problems.

#### **3-DIMENSIONAL THINKING**

Your ability to utilize 3-dimensional visioning gives you a unique perspective when designing and creating solutions.

#### **CUTTING THROUGH THE SMOKE SCREEN**

Your ability to recognize and speak the truth that is being "conveniently" ignored by others can be vital to the success of a project or endeavour.

#### **LOGICAL DECISION MAKING**

Your ability to make logical and rational decisions and stick to your course of action without being swayed by impulse or emotional reactions allows you to navigate successfully through difficult situations without being pulled off-course.

**Source unknown**

"Autism is a way of being. It is pervasive; it colours every experience, every sensation, perception, thought, emotion, and encounter, every aspect of existence. It is not possible to separate the autism from the person."

*Jim Sinclair*

## Interesting Links

### Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4)

Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4) is the national grassroots advocacy organisation for people with autism spectrum disorders including Asperger's syndrome and PDD-NOS.

**Website:** <http://www.a4.org.au>

## CAMP AUTISM NEWS

- Central Queensland Camp Yeppoon -4<sup>th</sup>- 7<sup>th</sup> September
- North Queensland Camp Atherton Tablelands 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009

For more details go to [www.campautism.org](http://www.campautism.org)

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Now is the time to renew your membership of NQ Autism Support Group Inc  
Cost \$10 a family

Cheques are made payable to NQ Autism Support Group Inc.

Address: PO Box 1659, Aitkenvale Q 4815

Or Bank Transfer BSB No: 804050

Account No. 30302966

Please clearly show your last name and email your name and the date you did the transfer to

[payments@nqasg.org.au](mailto:payments@nqasg.org.au)

## Events

10<sup>th</sup> August How to be Money Wise. Financial Counselling. 10am to 12noon at Volunteering NQ, 56 Charles St (Carers Qld initiative)

20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> August, the Asia Pacific Autism Conference (APAC) in Sydney. <http://www.apac09.org/>

29<sup>th</sup> August MINDD seminar, 9am to 4pm, at Townsville Community Learning Centre (TCLC), Thompson St, Mundingburra

3<sup>rd</sup> September Laughter Therapy program, free to carers. Bookings through either Sandy or Glennis 4773 5808 (Carers Qld initiative)

10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> September the Functional Assessment & Behavioural Intervention Clinic (FABIC) is presenting two separate workshops at Mercure Inn, Townsville. On 10<sup>th</sup> Sept the workshop is Developing a Conducive Environment for a Person with ASD. On 11<sup>th</sup> September the workshop is Positive Behaviour Intervention for People with Challenging Behaviour.

13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September Disability Action Week. NQ Autism Support Group will launch a Siblings Group workshop during this week. Details to follow.

29<sup>th</sup> October Sue Larkey presenting Teaching Strategies and Behaviour Support Strategies, 9.30am – 3.00pm.

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> November, Beyond Behaviour Symposium, Rydges Southbank, hosted by Autism Qld. Keynote speakers are Tony Attwood and Kate Sofronoff.

Camp Autism, founded by Mary West, for families with children with ASD, is organising camps. If you want to find out more contact Mary on (07) 47834924 or email [camp\\_autism@bigpond.com](mailto:camp_autism@bigpond.com).

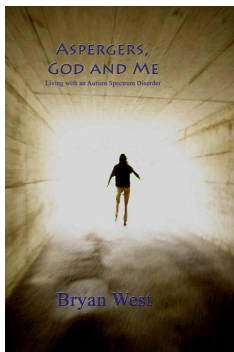
# Books



**Australian Autism Handbook**  
by Benison O'Reilly and Seana Smith

Good books that can help in understanding and managing Autism Spectrum Disorder are often hard to find. Some really useful publications are now available for purchase from our resource centre. **To order, simply phone Pam on 3273 0000 to purchase over the phone by credit card, or post your cheque with an order to Pam Hanson, Autism Queensland, PO Box 354, Sunnybank Qld 4109.**

**Aspergers Book** Aspergers, God and Me: Living with an Autism Spectrum Disorder **by Camp Autism Founder Bryan West is now available. All proceeds will go to Camp Autism.**



The book describes the effects living with undiagnosed Asperger's syndrome has had on the authors life. This is also a story of how his faith has helped change the bitterness that can engulf many people living with undiagnosed Asperger's syndrome. The author has found how to live a fulfilled and happy life despite the trials Asperger's syndromes bring to his life. The book also includes a section on ways to live with a diagnosed or undiagnosed Aspie.

**Camp Autism's price for our Australian Edition (ISBN 978-1-4092-8) will be \$19.95AUD (Recommended retail is \$27.50AUD) plus \$5.00 postage and handling for Australian customers.** <http://www.campautism.org/media.html>

## NQ AUTISM SUPPORT GROUP'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS...

**August 10th** NQ Autism Support Group meeting at 7pm

**August 21st** Ten Pin Bowling 4-5pm

**August 28th** Coffee morning 10am

**August 29<sup>th</sup>** MINDD seminar 9am-4pm  
TCLC Thompson St, Mundingburra

Please note that our meetings have now moved to:  
23 Casey St, Aitkenvale (Nth Qld Competitive Employment Service Ltd)

**September 5th** Maze Mania 10am

**September 14th** NQ Autism Support Group Meeting 7pm

**September 18th** Ten Pin Bowling 4-5pm

**September 25th** Coffee morning - We meet for coffee mornings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month at 10am, at McDonalds The Lakes. If any change to this occurs you will be notified through the network.

## Seminar **Townsville** 29.8.09 Integrative Solutions

# Autism, ADHD, Learning Delay

Find out how Integrative Healthcare that includes biomedicine, allied therapies and neuro-development treats the whole person and helps a child reach their full potential.

Many children with Autism also have ADHD, allergies and digestive disorders. Chronic infections often reoccur until germs are accurately identified and treated. The metabolic-immunologic-neurologic-digestive systems are all closely linked and require an integrative approach to achieve optimal mental and physical health. Treating underlying causes reduces the need for treating symptoms with antibiotics, psychostimulants, histamines, puffers, cortisone cream and surgery. More importantly, an integrative approach can help prevent disease.

## Event Details

Time: Registration 8:30am. 9am-4pm

Date: Saturday August 29, 2009

Place: TCLC Townsville Community Learning Centre

## Did you know?

- 1 in 165 US, 1 in 150 UK and 1 in 120 Australian children are diagnosed with Autism?\*
- ADHD, allergies, autism, asthma often share an underlying chemistry characterized by nutrient deficiencies, infections, and toxicity.\*\*
- 70% of the neurotransmitters in your brain are also in your gut
- A healthy diet is not adequate if the gastro intestinal tract is not properly absorbing nutrients.
- Antibiotics, "the pill", refined carbohydrates, lack of breastfeeding, heavy metals and chemicals all disrupt the microbe balance of the GI tract which can lead to gut & immune disorders and nutritional deficiencies.
- Seemingly healthy foods like milk, bread, soy, egg and corn can adversely affect concentration, behaviour and immunity in a person struggling with digestive disorder, intolerances or allergies.
- Nutritional deficiencies can cause ADHD, allergies, eczema, asthma, speech issues, sleeplessness, hyperactivity, chronic fatigue, poor concentration, chronic illness and more.

\* US CDC, UK Dept Health \*\* Dr. Kenneth Bock, *Healing The New Childhood Epidemics*  
Metabolic Immuno Neurological Digestive Disorders

## Seminar August 29, 2009 include;

**Early Bird Pricing Before 31 July 2009 \$30.00** per person **\$15.00** per spouse

**Standard Pricing After 1 August 2009 \$50.00** **\$25.00**

Spouse discount only with full paying admission ie: \$75.00 in total

**Uni/Student Concession 2 for the price of 1**

Morning Tea & Lunch Provided - Child Care provided. Register now!

NQ Autism Support Group PO Box 1659 Aitkenvale QLD 4814

Visit <http://www.mindd.org> or call 02 9337 3600 for more information. [info@mindd.org](mailto:info@mindd.org)

Cancellations will forfeit 50% of the registration fee

1. For more information email [rhonda.muller@bigpond.com](mailto:rhonda.muller@bigpond.com)

2. Ph/Fax: NQ Autism Support Group (07) 4774 0637 This event is proudly sponsored by HypO2

**Changes to Carer Payment (caring for a child under 16 years) from 1 July 2009**  
**Centrelink's new Disability Care Load Assessment underway**  
**1 July 2009**

From July 1st, the Australian Government's new eligibility and assessment process for Carer Payment (care receiver under 16 years) is implemented.

In a major change from the previous process, the carer completes the Disability Care Load Assessment (child) based on their perception of the support and care load (rather than on the severity of the disability of the child cared for). Separately, treating health professionals complete the Child Disability Assessment Tool (currently used for the Carer Allowance and will be reviewed during the coming year). Both forms are completed independently of each other and will be examined by Centrelink's Carer Special Assessment Team. This new approach is expected to enable around 19,000 carers of children with disability to qualify for the first time.

Other reforms include:

- expanded family circumstances for receipt of the carer payment include more than one carer of a child with severe disability or severe medical condition; two or more children with disability or medical condition; a disabled adult and one or more children with disability or medical condition (a person caring for at least one child and another person whose combined care needs are equivalent to a child with a severe medical condition may qualify for Carer Payment);
- exchanged care or 'shared care'—separated parents who are caring for two or more children with a severe disability or severe medical condition may now be eligible for Carer Payment (although an examination of family law may be needed);
- expanded definition of Treating Health Professional to include medical practitioner, registered nurse, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, registered psychologist, Aboriginal health worker in remote areas;
- automatic eligibility for Carer Allowance;
- terminal illness provision (2 years);
- hospitalisation—removal of 63 day cap—Carer Allowance and Carer Payment (child) can now be paid for an indefinite period while the child is in hospital;
- carers of children who require care for periods of three months or more can now be paid on a short term or episodic basis; and
- smoother transition to Carer Payment (adult).

The Disability Care Load Assessment (child) form is very broad. Many applicants will not need to answer every question, only those that apply to their situation. Apart from the comprehensive range of questions, there is an opportunity for the carer to explain in their own words the effects of the caring load as they perceive it. Centrelink is considering publishing guidance notes for carers who may need someone to assist them to apply. If a carer is rejected by Centrelink, the application will be reviewed by the Carer Special Assessment Team in the first instance.

While some 'deficit' language remains, NDS considers the overall tone of the Disability Care Load Assessment (child) is much improved on previous forms.

FaHCSIA and Centrelink will seek feedback from carers about the new process so that changes may be made before 1 July 2010.

Centrelink staff are receiving carer awareness training, developed in conjunction with Carers Australia. However, Centrelink estimates that, on average, each of the 400 centres across Australia only handles one carer application per month. Most carers contact Centrelink by phone for the application form to be posted. Carers who think they may be eligible for Carer Payment (caring for a child under 16 years) can phone Centrelink on 13 2717 or visit their nearest Centrelink Customer Service Centre—more details are at

[http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/individuals/carers\\_changes.htm](http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/individuals/carers_changes.htm).

**This article was sourced from the Mackay Autism Support Group**  
Ph. 4942 3458 Fax 49 421805 E-mail [mackaysg@autismqld.com.au](mailto:mackaysg@autismqld.com.au)

## Pet Theory

Reporter: [Charles Wooley](#)

Producers: [Hugh Nailon](#), [Julia Timms](#)

If you've got the family cat or dog at your feet right now, you probably know how the companionship of animals can make life more bearable.

Research has proven that pets can enhance lonely lives and even have medical benefits for hospital patients. But now the bond of a faithful animal is proving a godsend for children who suffer autism. Not only calming wild behaviour, but perhaps unlocking parts of their brain and enabling them to learn and communicate better.

It sounds incredible even to scientists trying to fathom why, but we've seen the results. Families at their wits end whose lives have been turned around by the animals they love.

### Story contacts:

- For more information about Autism Assistance Dogs visit [www.righteouspups.org.au](http://www.righteouspups.org.au)
- Rupert and Rowan Isaacson's full story can be read here: [www.horseboymovie.com](http://www.horseboymovie.com) A DVD will be out in late August.
- For more information about dolphin therapy please check out the following website: <http://www.dolphinsociety.org.au>
- Anyone interested in learning more about Rowan and Rupert Isaacson's amazing journey can order their book *The Horse Boy - A father's Quest To Heal His Son* by visiting the following website. <http://www.textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/book/the-horse-boy>

Follow this link to the full transcript:

<http://sixtyminutes.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=833416>

### **Beyond Behaviour - 2009 Townsville Regional Symposium on ASD**

**4 – 5 November 2009 at Rydges  
Southbank, Townsville**

Autism Queensland has made a commitment to deliver information of the highest quality to regional areas of Queensland on an annual basis through a two day Regional Symposium on ASD. The symposium will play a vital role in building expertise in North Queensland by bringing together Australia's leading authorities on ASD with local experts in the provision of services for people with ASD.

Check out full details at  
[www.autismqld.com.au](http://www.autismqld.com.au)

### Check out the following websites:

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

<http://www.suelarkey.com/>

<http://www.aeiou.org.au/>

<http://www.righteouspups.org.au/Home/tabid/122/Default.aspx>

[http://raisingchildren.net.au/children\\_with\\_autism/children\\_with\\_autism\\_landing.html](http://raisingchildren.net.au/children_with_autism/children_with_autism_landing.html)

<http://www.beyondblue.org.au/>