

Outline of Services 2010

Services and Support for People with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Their Families



AUTISM SA

Leading the way through knowledge,
understanding and acceptance

Autism Association of South Australia Inc. trading as 'Autism SA'

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Leading the way through knowledge, understanding and acceptance ...

Introduction

Autism SA has been providing specialised services to the South Australian community for over 45 years. Our organisation was originally formed in 1964 by a group of parents who were committed to ensuring that early diagnosis, early intervention, appropriate educational programs and effective support for families were available for the autism spectrum community.

Autism SA was the first organisation of its kind established in Australia and the same principles and values that formed our foundation still guide our development today. In 2010 Autism SA will be providing services to over 4,400 people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families, with numbers increasing by approximately 60 new clients each month.

At Autism SA, our mission is to deliver specialised services and promote community awareness to facilitate an inclusive community that values individuals and families living with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Our national networks ensure an ongoing commitment to specialised services and resource development across Australia.

There is incredible complexity and diversity within the autism spectrum community and, as an organisation, we must ensure that our services continue to evolve and develop.

This booklet provides a brief overview of our major services and programs. Further information can be accessed on our website, subscribing to our information email service or ringing the Autism SA Info Line (1300 AUTISM).

We hope that you find this information useful and valuable.



Jon Martin

Chief Executive Officer

Community Relations

The Community Relations Department's main role is to ensure that Autism SA engages in effective fundraising to supplement annual government funding, and to attract grants and major gifts to directly assist with service provision and special one-off projects.

Fundraising: The main fundraising activities of Autism SA are requesting donations and sponsorships, special events, major training and development activities and merchandise sales. Donations to Autism SA are tax deductible.

Bequests: More and more people are remembering Autism SA in their wills, and we are able to refer people to relevant professionals if they require such assistance.

Financial Membership: The Community Relations Department is also responsible for the acquisition of new Financial Members to Autism SA as well as the renewal of existing Financial Members and associated correspondence.

Public Relations: Increasing community awareness is also a key goal of the department, which oversees the following activities and publications including Autism Month (annually in April), *The Autiser* newsletter, promotional brochures, Annual Report, signage and electronic communications including the Autism SA website and the information email service, *Infomail*.

For further information, contact the Manager Community Relations

School Inclusion Program

Autism SA provides support to schools for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder through the multi-disciplinary School Inclusion Program. Eligibility for support is dependant on a child being registered for services with Autism SA. Support can be provided by a Consultant / Teacher, a Developmental Educator or an Occupational Therapist.

Priority of service is given to metropolitan schools dealing with these issues:

Newly diagnosed students	Transition support
Risk of placement	Bullying and harassment
Risk of self harm *	Social skills

** Support regarding self harm will be of a non-clinical nature and will involve information regarding referral to appropriate services*

Other services available from the School Inclusion Program include:

- Professional development
- Attendance at education plan meetings
- Fee for service support
- Specific one-to-one short term programs
- Observations and strategy advice

Support is provided to Department of Education and Children's Services, Catholic and Independent Schools. Greater Adelaide schools can access 2 visits per year and country schools can access 3 visits per 2 academic years.

For further information, please contact the Coordinator School Inclusion Program

Community Services

Day Options Program

The Kandu (Craigmore) program is a specialised day options service tailored to meet the needs of young people and adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who no longer attend school. The aim is to enhance lifestyles by providing support in a range of recreational and prevocational experiences and opportunities. The focus is on community based activities.

Respite Services

Respite services operate out of two Variety Respite Houses, one at Craigmore and the other in Onkaparinga Hills. Respite provides a planned break for children with disabilities and their families. Priority for the respite service is given to children with challenging behaviours. Each service supports four children at a time, using skilled staff and a program tailored to meet the needs of the children. In addition to the overnight weekend stays, the respite service offers limited day outings during school holidays.

For further information, please contact the Coordinator Community Services

Diagnostic Services

To access services from Autism SA it is necessary for individuals to be diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Currently in South Australia there are several options for families or adults seeking an assessment for autism or Asperger syndrome that meet the international recommendations for best practice. Assessments are made by professionals who are experienced in the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, and who work in a multi-disciplinary setting. Autism SA is one of the major centres for the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders in South Australia.

A diagnostic assessment of children at Autism SA involves:

- A play / activity based assessment, involving both interaction and observation which is videoed with the consent of the parents / caregivers
- An interview with the parents / caregivers documenting the child's developmental history and current behaviours
- A questionnaire completed by the child's teacher or a relevant adult who the parents feel knows their child well.

Adults are assessed by way of a conversation based assessment conducted by two members of the Diagnostic Team with the person and anyone they wish to bring. Fees apply for assessments at Autism SA.

Assessments in the community can be accessed at the Child Development Units at the Women's and Children's Hospital and Lyell McEwin Health Service, the Children's Assessment Team at Flinders Medical Centre and through a number of practitioners in private practice. Medicare rebates are available for diagnostic assessments and treatment plans development by child psychiatrists and paediatricians for children under the age of 13 years. For further information regarding the rebates please visit the Medicare website www.health.gov.au/autism or ring the Autism SA Info Line on 1300 288 476.

Individuals from interstate or overseas who have been diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder are eligible for services from Autism SA after the Diagnostic Team has sighted copies of the diagnostic report(s) detailing the assessment tools, and how the person met the criteria.

For further information, please contact the Coordinator Diagnostic Services

Spectrum Advisory Services

Post Diagnostic Appointments: Spectrum Advisory Services arranges appointments with families/individuals in the metropolitan area and telephone contact to families and adults in the country to provide additional information about Autism Spectrum Disorder, relevant services, intervention and treatment programs.

Info Line: The Info Line, 1300 AUTISM (1300 288 476), provides non-clinical information about Autism Spectrum Disorders and facilitates referrals internally to Autism SA staff and externally to other agencies or professionals. It is available 9am-4pm Monday-Friday.

Family Workshops: Topics include introductory sessions for new families, sibling issues, working with difficult behaviours and helping your child with independent living.

The Mentoring Program: The peer mentor program assists people between the ages of 15 and 25 by providing trained peer mentors. The mentors and mentees meet fortnightly for social activities supervised by a staff member.

Brief Clinical Support: Time-limited centre-based assistance is available to families and individuals to assist them to work through issues within structured sessions.

Parent Support Networks: There are a number of family support groups in the metropolitan and country areas. Further information is available on the website and through the Info Line 1300 AUTISM.

Adult Social Development Program: Spectrum Advisory Services offers a range of supports and access to the community to facilitate personal outcomes for adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Autism SA also uses disability arts as a means of helping people maximise their potential. Staff will discuss with individuals the most appropriate placement in a social development group.

Resource Centre: The Resource Centre has a range of books and videos on autism and Asperger syndrome, and subscribes to journals from around the world. Staff are available to assist in finding information. The catalogue of resources is available through the Autism SA website.

Publications produced by Autism SA are on display and are available to purchase.

For further information, please contact the Autism SA Info Line on 1300 288 476

Training and Development

Autism SA provides a range of training options including scheduled training for parents and professionals, and flexible fee-for-service workshops. Training schedules are available from the Autism SA website. Training topics include: information sessions for new families, introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders, working through difficult behaviours, sensory issues, communication, teaching strategies, and behaviour management. Fee-for-service workshops can be tailored to the needs of a workgroup or organisation.

For further information, please contact the Info Line on 1300 288 476

The Early Development Program

The Early Development Program provides support for young children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder up until the child commences school or 6 years. Services include playgroups, Foundation Skills group, kindergarten/transition support, small group and individual therapy programs offered according to need. These programs focus on the development of communication, social and play skills, as well as skills each child will need for preschool and school settings.

The multi-disciplinary team provides short term consultancy, which is accessible for the family at home, kindergarten and/or child care setting, or by telephone contact. Early Intervention Consultants are available to provide short term support to families in the Early Development Program in the metropolitan area.

Families who live outside the metropolitan area receive support services through the Autism SA School Inclusion Program. Staff from this program visit each country region twice a year. The opportunity exists for country families to access metropolitan services if they are prepared to travel.

Autism SA is an approved provider of early intervention services under the Helping Children with Autism Package. Eligibility for these services is through the Autism Advisor Program. Please see the section at the back of this leaflet regarding these programs.

For further information, please contact the Coordinator Early Development Program

Programs Funded under the Federal Government's Helping Children with Autism Package

Autism Advisor Program

The Autism Advisor Program is funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and provides information and support to families and carers of children aged 0-6 years with a diagnosed Autism Spectrum Disorder. Autism Advisors provide advice and information about early intervention services that can help families address their child's specific needs, and on all aspects of the Helping Children with Autism Package including assisting families to access the Early Intervention Funding Package and the Early Intervention Service Provider Panel.

For further information, please contact the Senior Autism Advisor

Early Intervention Service Provider

Autism SA provides services available to eligible families under the Helping Children with Autism Package guidelines. Eligibility is confirmed under the Autism Advisor program. Services are provided by a multi-disciplinary team and include individual therapy, small group programs, family workshops, and short term consultations. Detailed information of these services can be obtained by visiting the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/disability/autism_panel/sa/.

For further information, please contact the Coordinator Early Intervention Services

Australian Autism Education Training Consortium (AAETC)

Autism SA is the state contact for the 'Positive Partnerships: supporting school aged students on the autism spectrum project'. These include professional development for teachers and other school staff who are working with students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and workshops and information sessions for parents and carers of school aged children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

For further information, please contact the National Education and Training Team Member, Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium or visit the website at www.autismtraining.com.au.

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