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May-June 2011

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PARENT TO PARENT

Association Queensland Incorporated

5 Buller Street
Gladstone South
Phone: (07) 4979 2777
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Board of Management: President: Judy Young
Vice President: Loretta Kreet
Secretary/Treasurer: Jan Bell
Members: Sue Campbell, Lesley Turner

Gladstone Regional Centre Staff
Suzie Lawler, Donna Smith, Pearl Rahme

We have networks across Queensland: see back page for details



Hello!

Welcome friends & family.

We trust you all had a well-deserved relaxed and enjoyable Easter long week-end! In this issue you can find some interesting information about the No Interest Loan Scheme as well as other *SPECIAL OFFERS* for Queensland Carers.

There are interesting workshops that have come 'highly recommended'. April's monthly Parent to Parent meeting was all about **SPORTS and CLUBS**. Kindly let us know if there is a particular sporting activity your child may be interested in.

Don't forget to update us on events, services and/or workshop that you think we should know about so we can **share** it with **everyone**.

Parent to Parent strives at improving our responses to the needs of parents and families in the Gladstone Region and encourage you to share your views and suggestions for articles and topics you may wish to know more about.

Parent to Parent

The Hub

The Gladstone Community Hub is a place to promote social inclusion for people with a disability. This community centre has a variety of functions including being the regional centre for Parent to Parent Association Queensland.



Costa with some members of Port Curtis Rotary Club at the working bee dinner on Saturday night.

The Open Day Celebration was a great success and everyone clearly enjoyed Costa's enthusiastic educational talks, the delicious cakes and different activities. The Community Gardens are flourishing and we welcome you to come around and enjoy the varied facilities offered at The Hub.



Donna, Costa & Suzie, at the end of a successful day!



A very keen group learning about planting green manure

Don't forget to check the Notice Board to see what Activities are happening at the Hub as these can change during the month:

- Yoga Classes
- Computer classes
- Reiki retreat
- * Book club
- * Cooking lessons
- * Hula Hoop

Contact details:

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Email: gladstonecommunityhub@gmail.com



Autism Support Notice Board

'The Gladstone Area Autism Support Group' will not be producing a newsletter in 2011 – all autism information and support will be through Parent to Parent. Although there is no committee, the support contact is Mareika Holmes who is also a member of Parent to Parent. She will be available at the Parent to Parent Support Meetings generally held every last Thursday of the month. Autism Support has a library where books can be borrowed and Mareika will be available for support and sound advice.

Autism Support

The Gladstone Community Hub
5 Buller Street, Gladstone South

Contact: Mareika Holmes

Email: gladstonesg@autismqld.com.au

Pretending to be a normal person day after day is exhausting! By William Shakespeare

This above all: "to thine ownself be true."

Boy, did he nail it on the head! A lot of us go through phases where we think we have to be, act, and look like everyone else in order to fit in. I tried it, and it didn't work. Now I realize God doesn't want an orchestra of identical instruments all playing the same tune, so I let go of the status quo and decided to just be me. Besides, pretending to be a normal person day after day is exhausting!



Tips for teaching children with an Autism or Aspergers Diagnosis

Being a supportive communication partner

Communicating with young children who have an autism spectrum disorder

- Use the child's name first. Then pause before saying the rest of what you want to say. This will allow the child time to focus his attention on what you are saying.
- Use clear, precise language. Say exactly what you mean. Children with autism spectrum disorders do not infer meaning.
- Use positive language that tells the child what he can do.
- Allow the child time to process (think) and respond. Allow the child plenty of time to process your instruction. If he doesn't respond (you may need to wait a minute or more), repeat but do not rephrase the instruction.
- Be dramatic so that the child's attention is more likely to be drawn to you. He/she is also more likely to be able to interpret your body language if you exaggerate.
- Use one word more than the child is using.
- Sing and/or chant – as well as tapping different neural pathways to speech singing and chanting calms the child as well as helping him self-regulate his behaviour.
- Lower your voice or use a monotone – children with autism may have auditory sensitivities particularly high frequency sounds.
- Do not insist that the child looks at you. Adults with autism spectrum disorders report that it actually hurts to have to make eye contact; that they can't look and listen at the same time.
- Use visual communication strategies as well as speech. The visual symbol is a constant whereas speech is transitory.
- Use visual sequences for daily routine; child's work schedule; any change that is going to happen.
- Use specific praise, e.g. "Good putting" rather than "Good work" or "Good boy." The latter comments do not tell the child what it is that he is doing that you like.
- Avoid sarcasm. Children with autism spectrum disorders are literal – they may start hopping if you tell them to hop along to the bath!
- Choose the time of day when your child is most happy and relaxed to focus on language activities.

Recommended Resources (available online at www.suelarkey.com)

Quote of the month - Anyway

People are unreasonable, illogical and self-centred. *Love them anyway.*
If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. *Do good anyway.*
If you are successful you win false friends and true enemies. *Succeed anyway.*
The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. *Do good anyway.*
Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. *Be honest and frank anyway.*
People favour underdogs but follow only top dogs. *Fight for the underdog anyway.*
What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. *Build anyway.*
People really may need help but may attack you if you help them. *Help people anyway.*
Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. *Give the world the best you've got ANYWAY*
anonymous

For Your Information

Carer's Queensland ran interesting articles in their recent magazine.

Carer Assist No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) brings smiles: While the NILS is generally for the purchase of essential household items like fridges, washing machines, TV's and beds, there is also a Carer Assist NILS loan which can assist carers with some medical problems like having dentures fitted, that may hamper their caring role. (Generally they lend amounts up to \$1200).
Contact your local Carers Queensland office to assess your eligibility, Rockhampton 4921-4486



Sales to Tenants Program, Department of Communities: This program gives the department's tenants the opportunity to make the transition from social housing to home ownership by buying a department-owned dwelling. If you do not own any other house, intend to use the dwelling as your primary home, are an Australian citizen or have permanent residency, have lived in your rental property for at least 3 months and have a good rent payment record, you may be eligible for the program. For more information call the department's hotline on 1300 654 322.

Special Offers for Queensland Carers: Carers receiving a carer allowance or carer payment and all members, staff and volunteers of Carers Queensland can access the following special offers. **Simply open a transaction account with a direct payment established with Heritage Building Society to qualify for:**

- 50% discount on Standard Variable home loan, Fixed Rate home loan and Line of Credit application fees
- 0.15% pa discount on Standard Variable home loan and Living Equity line of credit interest rates
- Nil application fee on personal loans
- 7.45%pa one year introductory rate on Visa Classic and Visa Gold cards
- 0.1%pa above the carded rate on term deposits



Carer Chat Line: If you are interested in chatting with other carers but find it hard to leave home due to transport issues or caring responsibilities, why not join the CARER CHAT LINE where you can enjoy talking with a small group of other carers, every Monday from 10:00 am – 11:00 am, in a group phone conversation at no cost to you. To register, contact John Bal on 4031 0163 or 0407 672 008.

Asperger Partners' Support Group (APSG) is Brisbane based, and has a website: <http://www.aspiepartners.com/>

Are You?

- In a relationship with a person with Asperger's?
- ASD - Not knowing what this means or what supports are there for you?
- Feeling confused, alone or isolated.

Funding



Getting back into the workforce?

Numerous services are available; we have noted the following 2:

Job Access is a **free** service providing help and workplace solutions for people with disability. If you are looking for work, are re-entering the workforce, want to promote your skills in your workplace or seek general support Job Access can help.

The website is a great place to start looking for information on the services available to you and it includes:

- tool kits and guides that will give you practical support
- access to Australian Job search where you can look for work and volunteer opportunities
- success stories of people with disability who have successfully received employment.

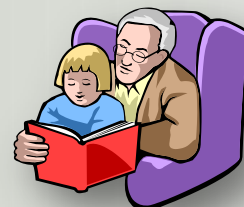
The website below also provides you with information on the **Employment Assistance Fund**. If you have a disability or mental health condition you or your employer may be able to receive financial assistance to purchase a range of work related modifications and services, including:

- the cost of modifications to your physical work environment
- modifications to work vehicles
- adaptive equipment for your workplace
- information and communication devices
- Auslan interpreting
- specialist services for employees with specific learning disorders and mental health conditions
- awareness training on disability for your co-workers.

Visit the website at www.jobaccess.gov.au or call **1800 464 800** to speak to a Job Access Adviser.

Job Club is a free 6 week course to help carers return to work. The course covers a range of skills including job searching, resume writing, interview skills, dressing for success and confidence building. Contact your local Carers Queensland office or call 1800 242 636 for courses near you.

Grandparent Advisers: Many grandparents take on the responsibility of caring for their grandchildren whose parents cannot do so because of disability, family separation, death or imprisonment. Grandparent Advisers have been introduced in selected Centrelink



Customer Service Centres to support these grandparents by:

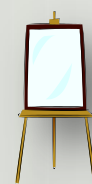
- providing an assessment of family circumstances
- providing information and help to access Centrelink payments and services grandparents may be eligible for
- arranging appointments with specialist Centrelink staff such as Social Workers.
- arranging referrals to other federal, state and community service providers that may also be able to assist.

Grandparents who care for their grandchildren may be eligible for assistance including:

- Family Tax Benefit, which helps with the costs of raising children
- Child Care Benefit, which helps with the costs of child care
- Parenting Payment, which helps with caring for a dependent child under the age of 16 (if you are not already receiving another income support payment)
- Health Care Cards in the name of your grandchild to assist with the cost of prescriptions.

Grandparents living outside of the 5 local areas (Caringbah, Penrith, Oakleigh, Caboolture, Perth) can still get support and assistance by calling the Family Assistance Office on **13 6150** visiting **www.familyassist.gov.au** or by visiting the Family Assistance Office located in Medicare Offices and Centrelink Customer Service Centres.

Workshops & what's on:



PAVE THE WAY: To book into a workshop, please phone Pave the Way: 07 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402 or www.pavetheway.org.au/home/workshop-calendar.php

- Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future: Atherton, Far North Qld - 11 April 2011
- Building Lifelong Supports and Safeguards – Through Inviting Others In: Rockhampton -28 June 2011

H&CS WORKFORCE COUNCIL, registration@workforce.org.au or fax: 07 32377 1497

- Enhancing your 'Sensory Skills': Gladstone – 31 May 2011

CRU, cru@cro.org.au or tel: 07 3844 2211

- Creating an Inclusive Lifestyle, a 2 day workshop for family members of people who live with disability, based on SOCIAL ROLE VALORISATION theory: Brisbane – 5th and 6th May 2011



Autism Queensland: 07 3273 0000 / 07 4926 5188

For more information regarding Education, Therapy and Support services including Early Intervention Funding. To download registration forms go to www.autismqld.com.au and click on workshops

UNDERSTANDING AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Tuesday 31 May (9am—12noon) \$90 (early bird May 13th) \$100 (Standard)

This session will examine the complexities of Autism Spectrum Disorder which include Autistic Disorder, Aspergers Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) and how it may impact on individuals across a range of settings, age ranges and levels of functioning. Difficulties with sensory understanding, communication, socialising, the ability to be flexible and differences in learning style will be discussed in depth. This workshop will provide an insight into some of the underlying reasons an individual with ASD may present with unusual, challenging, limited and/or amazing skills and behaviours. In addition to this, the presenters will outline some general strategies to assist in the support of an individual with ASD. Participants will be involved in practical exercises and discussions. Questions and sharing of information/ideas is encouraged and highly desirable to enhance learning outcomes for all.

CLUES TO MANAGING BEHAVIOUR

Tuesday 31 May (1pm—4pm) \$90 (early bird May 13th) \$100 (Standard)

This workshop will focus on problem behaviours in the educational setting. A framework that can be used to examine the underlying reasons for problem behaviour will be outlined and effective strategies for managing behaviours using a positive behaviour approach will be identified and discussed. Through positive programming and environmental adaptations, students develop a better understanding of expectations, are less likely to engage in problem behaviours and are more likely to engage in the social and learning environment. Participants will be supported to identify strategies to reduce challenging behaviours, develop functional skills and support successful inclusion in specialised and mainstream programs and in the greater community. The importance of understanding the individual's strengths, difficulties, likes and dislikes when developing effective strategies will be highlighted. Participants will be expected to actively engage in a number of learning tasks.

STRESS, ANXIETY AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION ON THE SPECTRUM

Wednesday 1 June (9am—12noon) \$90 (early bird May 13th) \$100 (Standard) One of the most commonly encountered issues for parents and those working with children and adolescents with ASD are how to reduce/manage their stress, anxiety and/or anger. This session will outline some of the common reasons individuals on the spectrum experience stress and anxiety, the ways this can be exhibited through their behaviour (e.g. anger, aggression, withdrawal) and ideas and strategies to manage stress and anxiety more effectively at school, home and in the community. The presenters will highlight the need for broad ranging supports to reduce stress and anxiety and enhance the individual's ability to regulate emotions. Case examples will be drawn on to illustrate useful strategies for children and young people of different ages and abilities.

DEALING WITH BULLYING AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

Wednesday 1 June (1pm—4pm) \$90 (early bird May 13th) \$100 (Standard)

Bullying causes considerable distress to the individual being bullied, his or her family, the school community and the person who is engaging in bullying. Early intervention has been advocated to combat the effects of bullying as targeted interventions can build resilience and social competence in the individual being bullied, the person who is identified as engaging in bullying and in the school community. This workshop will take a community approach to bullying and resilience, focusing on developing resilience and social competence for the individual who has been "bullied", the person engaging in bullying and the school community as a whole. Practical strategies will also be given to enable bullying to be dealt with effectively when it does occur.

Centrelink's pulse

news, views + things to do for DSP customers

visit: www.pulse.centrelink.gov.au

External breast prosthesis – claim your reimbursement from Medicare Australia: Have you, or someone you know, had a mastectomy as a result of breast cancer? Did you know the External Breast Prostheses Reimbursement Program provides a reimbursement of up to \$400 for each new or replacement external breast. For more information go to www.medicareaustralia.gov.au (Click on For Individuals > Services and Programs > External Breast Prostheses Reimbursement Program) or call 132 011*.

Protect your hearing: Australian Hearing has released new research on the positive effect ear plugs have in noisy environments like clubs and concerts. People who wore **ER-20 ear plugs** described them as discreet, comfortable, inexpensive and convenient to carry around. As well as wearing ear plugs, you can protect your hearing in noisy environments by:

- taking breaks from loud venues by going outside or spending time in chill-out rooms
- turning down the stereo at home or in the car; and
- listening to MP3 players at safe levels



For further information about how to protect your hearing go to www.hearing.com.au
You can also check your hearing over the phone by calling Telscreen™ on **1800 826 500**.



File it and Find it

Disabled Surfers Assoc of Australia Inc.
CRU (Community Resource unit)
Down Under Institute
Ozmates Travel
Northcott Disability Services
Autism support line
Education guide for parents with children with a disability
Medical Aid Subsidy Scheme
Asperger' Social Group
Baby Bridges, a Horizon Foundation program
for families who have a child from the age 0-5yrs

www.disabledsurfers.org
www.cru.org.au
www.dui2010.org.au
www.disabilitytravel.com.au
www.facebook.com/l/www.northcott.com.au
1800 004957
www.education.qld.gov.au
www.health.qld.gov.au/mass
Kerrie Café, 0427 040 659
Geraldine McKinnon 07 3245 6600
gmckinnon@horizoninc.org

Local and Community Contacts

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Gympie	Gold Coast	D.A.D.S
Belinda McAuliffe	Wendy Chandler	Graham Mayer
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Warm regards Suzie, Donna, Mareika and Pearl

There is a saying that we rarely regret the things we've done, we are more likely to regret the things we haven't done.

'WHEN ONE DOOR CLOSES ANOTHER OPENS. BUT WE OFTEN LOOK SO LONG AND SO REGRETFULLY UPON THE CLOSED DOOR THAT WE FAIL TO SEE THE ONE THAT HAS OPENED FOR US'

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

To preserve our trees and make for a cost effective delivery, please let us know if you would like to receive your colour newsletter by electronic email.

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