

Sunraysia Autism Spectrum Support Group NEWSLETTER

2010, March Issue



SASSG

Sunraysia Autism Spectrum Support Group

Tony Attwood Seminar

March
Issue 1, 2010



From left to right: Donna Milne (President), Tony Attwood, Sharon Middleton (Secretary)

Yes he came!

Approximately 200 people came to listen to the world renowned speaker on Autism and Aspergers, Professor Tony Attwood.

The day was a success and we look forward to another visit from Tony in 2012 so stay tuned.

As Tony mentioned on the day, he nearly didn't come due to a minor health issue and his flight being delayed in Melbourne. We are so glad he DID make it!!

What an excellent speaker he was, some of the time it was like listening to a stand up comedian - but most of the time it was informative, concise and seemed to make such perfect sense that I felt myself nodding in agreement and thinking "yeah that's right" or "Oh I hadn't thought of it like that" or even "I wish *so and so* was here to listen to this". Someone from the audience asked Tony if he would come and live in Mildura, but alas he declined. The good news is, Tony has agreed to come back to cover 2 different topics in 2012.

We had so many people attend from a wide variety of backgrounds and professions. Mums and dads, teachers, aides, psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, carers and other interested persons.

Our group was very fortunate to have the support of the Mildura Rural City Council for this project, their support is what made it possible for Parents and Carers to come and listen to Tony for a significantly reduced fee. Our Thanks goes to the Mildura Rural City Council for supporting our project.

Unfortunately the 'Book in Hand' stall was cancelled at the last minute, so we mustered up some resources which allowed people to have a hands on look at some of the most popular titles from Tony's list of published material. Orders can still be taken until the end of term, and anyone who places an order from the SASSG specific order forms provided will receive a 10% discount off the RRP. If you need an order form please give us a call or an email and we will get a copy of the order form to you. The SASSG are also buying 1 of each of the titles that was on display and you will be able to find these in the Mildura Rural City Council Library shortly.

A VERY big thank you to everyone who volunteered on the day, and we look forward to the next event :)

Welcome to another edition of the SASSG Newsletter. We are always looking for new ideas and suggestions to include and would like to invite our members to contribute in any way possible. If you have any thing you would like included in the newsletter, please submit via email or post. Perhaps you would like to have your say? Share with us something that has worked well for you? Tell us your story, perhaps ask a Question or share some tips and ideas! Potential topics might include a story about your family, favourite recipe's or internet websites, book review, craft ideas for kids, activities etc. It could be anything, please don't hold back! Send it in or give us a call! Please know EVERYONE is welcome to attend committee meetings, but we need to know before hand so we can arrange an appropriate venue size/catering. Contact us below if you would like to attend. Our next meeting is:

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - ALL WELCOME - Monday 12th April, 7:00pm.

Email: Subject "Newsletter" to sunraysia.autism@gmail.com
Post: PO Box CP2084, Mildura Vic. 3501

Welcome Pack:

We are looking for volunteers/helpers to contribute towards developing a 'Welcome Pack' of resources/information for families new to the group and new to Autism Spectrum Disorders. Essentially it will contain information about local and statewide services, important contact information and tips, factsheets and other various important information. Ideally we would like to meet regularly to plan, organize and compile the relevant pieces of information to create the pack. We will require a handful of volunteers to make this happen! If you can help, please email :

sunraysia.autism@gmail.com - Subject : Welcome Pack

Newsletter:

We would like to encourage our families and members to contribute to the newsletter by sending in any suggested reading, stories, tips, hints, even questions or suggestions for what we could include in the newsletter. As with everything related to the group, we always welcome helping hands and invite anyone interested to get in touch with us.

Coffee Club:

Some parents have expressed interest in getting together after a school dropoff for an ongoing coffee morning/coffee club. If this interests you, please email or call us so we can arrange something!

To get things started, we have arranged a FREE lunch and coffee on Tuesday 20th April at 11:30am at the Park for Play in 11th street Mildura. Bring the little ones, come for a chat and a cuppa and bite to eat!

Signposts - for Better Behaviour:

SASSG have allocated some funds for families to participate in the Signposts for Better Behaviour Program through Sunraysia Residential Services. Places are limited, so we encourage you to express your interest as soon as possible to avoid missing out.



FUN JUNGLE PARTY!!

March, Friday 19th

From 6:00pm

Everyone is invited to come along to the Fun Jungle for a play and some snacks! Admission will be free for everyone who RSVP's and free snacks/drinks will be provided for children. Parents can sit, relax and enjoy. They can also order their dinner from the menu at the fun jungle. Children's meals/food will be paid for by the group.

To RSVP, please phone : (03) 50 252816 or email sunraysia.autism@gmail.com (If sending RSVP by email, please let us know how many *children will be attending and what ages*)

Remember to bring a pair of socks & see you there!!!

BBQ at Snakes and Ladders

April, Sunday 18th

From 11:00am

Mums, Dads, Carers, Kids, Grandparents.. FAMILIES! Please all come and have a picnic/BBQ lunch at the Snakes and Ladders All ages playground on Sunday the 18th of April. SASSG will provide some Salads, Fruit Platters and Sausages & Bread for free. Families can BYO lunch if preferred.

Please BYO drinks (or drinks & snacks available at the Snakes and Ladders Kiosk) - If you are able to help cook BBQ/Sausages on the day, please let us know!

Please RSVP for catering purposes,

To RSVP, please phone : 0420 389 504 or email sunraysia.autism@gmail.com

COFFEE CLUB Lunch

April, Tuesday 20th

From 11:30am

Coffee Club:

Some parents have expressed interest in getting together after a "school dropoff" for an ongoing coffee morning/coffee club. If this interests you, please email or call us so we can arrange something!

To get things started, we have arranged a **FREE lunch and coffee**

Tuesday 20th April at 11:30am at the Park for Play
in 11th street Mildura. Bring the little ones, come for a chat and lunch! :) We will need to know you are coming for catering purposes, so please phone or email.

0420 389 504 - sunraysia.autism@gmail.com

Continued....

SASSG Events & Activities

Page 4

(Continued)

RDI Information Session (Relationship Development Intervention) with Renee DeLaCruz	April, Friday 30th	7:30pm
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Visiting Psychologist and RDI Consultant Renee DeLa Cruz will be in Mildura to consult with families and will also be presenting an information session for families on the evening of Friday April 30th. Renee will be in Mildura on a monthly basis and this will be the first of many info sessions we hope to cover a variety of topics. We are currently seeking ideas/requests from families about which topics they would like covered first - Some topics might include The Autism Web: Understanding Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, Toilet training, Successful school and kinder Integration, Social Stories, Anger Management for Kids, Building self esteem, Managing Anxiety, Difficult Behaviours, Token Economy, Using schedules and timers, Communication: How to communicate when your child is pre-verbal, Play dates and Friendships, Getting ready for school, Bullying and so on.

If you have any suggestions or requests, or would like more information about RDI or Renee's visits to Mildura for consultations, please email us : sunraysia.autism@gmail.com or telephone: 0420 389 504

Other Dates to Remember (more information to follow in next newsletter)

The [Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorder](#) has declared that April is Autism Month, incorporating the United Nations' sanctioned World Autism Day on 2 April. **** if you have any suggestions or would like to help with activities for the month, PLEASE EMAIL or CALL!!!! We are always looking for helpers and ideas.**

- **Next Committee Meeting: Monday 12th April @ 7pm ALL Welcome, please phone if you would like to attend 0420 389 504**
- **Pizza and Pasta, Parents Night Out!(Sat. 22nd May @ The Pizza Cafe)**
- **Family Ten Pin Bowling (Fri. 18th June)**

Keep up to date with what is happening with SASSG, join our Facebook group!



Other local events:

Signposts Parenting Programs - 6 x 2 hour Sessions (see flyer attached or view online at:

[http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/dan05/shared_files/Signposts for Better Behaviour Parenting Program General Flyer.pdf](http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/dan05/shared_files/Signposts%20for%20Better%20Behaviour%20Parenting%20Program%20General%20Flyer.pdf))

Sunraysia DisAbility Resource Centre: Please drop in or visit Facebook page for latest news and events. Drop in to the Centre at: 159 Langtree Avenue, Mildura or telephone (03) 5023 258

Signposts Parenting Program

Page 5

“Families tell us that after Signposts they feel less stressed, more capable of managing their children’s behaviour and less hassled about meeting their own and their family’s needs. They also report that their children’s behaviour improves.”

Parenting Research Centre



Signposts is for parents of children, adolescents and adults who have an intellectual disability who would like to learn positive ways to manage difficult behaviour before serious problems develop. **Signposts aims to strengthen families** by increasing their skills and confidence, and linking them into a network of like minded people who understand Positive Behaviour Support. The program is spread over six two hours sessions and covers:

- Dealing with Stress in your family
- Your family as a team
- Measuring your child’s behaviour
- Systematic use of everyday interactions
- Planning for better behaviour
- Developing More Skills in your child
- Replacing difficult behaviour with useful behaviour

***Sunraysia Autism Spectrum Support Group
has funded four groups in 2009.
Individualised 1:1 programs can be purchased
from SRS Creative Futures.
Contact SRS Intake for details on 50221741***

*Signpost programs can be provided in
fours ways:*

- ✓ *In person 1:1 with a practioner*
- ✓ *In group sessions*
- ✓ *By telephone in regular contact with
a practioner*
- ✓ *Self directed, at a family’s own pace
with practioner support*

What parents say about Signposts

- I found the program rewarding in many ways.
- It helped me to focus on the positive things Nathan is achieving, rather than getting lost and frustrated with the negatives.
- I was able to identify triggers, which were causing negative behaviour and worked on minimising these.
- It’s not complicated. It’s actually simple. Everything was broken down.
- Both my husband and I still refer back to the basic principles of the course when dealing with demanding behaviour. To be honest, we personally use it more for our 'normal' children than for our son with 'special needs'.
- I’m enjoying being a parent again - for the first time in ages.
- It gave us the confidence to handle things.
- It 'floored' me to find that if I waited, I got a response every time.
- I was able to meet and share experiences with other parents.
- I thought I knew what I was doing. I was way off track.
- Compliance is a non-issue for us now.
- I developed tools that can be used over and over again to deal with the difficult behaviours that are exhibited at some time or another by most children.
- If you put in a little time and effort, I don't see how you can go wrong.

As parents of children with ASD, we're always looking for information that will help us and our children. Soon the library will have a range of resources we can all borrow, and as a committee we also thought it would be a good idea to share a few useful internet sites with each issue of this newsletter. If you have any you would like to recommend to other parents please feel free to email them to us at :

sunraysia.autism@gmail.com

1. Social bookmarking

delicious.com

Delicious is a social bookmarking site. If you want to learn about how to use social bookmarking have a look at the following video, it takes you through the steps needed to use delicious.com and explains how useful social bookmarking can be. It is a great way for us all to share the information we have found on the internet about ASD with each other.

[http://www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=83247&title=Delicious social bookmarking in Plain English](http://www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=83247&title=Delicious_social_bookmarking_in_Plain_English)

2. Zac Browser

http://www.softlist.net/program/zac_browser-software.html

ZAC Browser (Zone for Autistic Children) is the first web browser developed specifically for children with Autism, and Autism Spectrum Disorders such as Asperger syndrome, pervasive developmental disorders (PDD), and PDD-NOS). Zac Browser is for children - for their enjoyment, enrichment, and freedom. Children touch it, use it, play it, interact with it, and experience independence.

ZAC is the zone that will permit your child to interact directly with games (a LOT of games) and activities (focused on MANY interests) that cater specifically to kids who display the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, like impairments in social interaction, impairments in communication, restricted interests and repetitive behavior. ZAC has been an effective tool for kids with low, medium and high functioning autism.

ZAC focuses on the children and their interaction - But also provide an excellent forum for parents, caretakers, teachers, and others to share their experiences, tools and resources and to unite as a caring, compassionate, and extremely knowledgeable community.

Zac Browser is award winning software and was featured on major media such as Associated Press, New York Times, PC World, ABC News, CTV, PC Magazine, Seattle PI, The Boston Globe just to name a few.

When you download Zac Browser, on your desktop you should also get a shortcut to "The Autism News" <http://www.theautismnews.com/> which contains a variety of interesting news articles.



HOLIDAY PROGRAM
APRIL HOLIDAY FUN
Monday 29th March - Friday 9th April
(Except public holidays) 9am to 5pm
Contact Gifford - 5022 1741
gdennison@srsinc.com.au
RSVP 19TH MARCH
HIGH NEEDS WEDNESDAYS SENSORY DAYS
10am - 3pm

SRS Holiday Program:
Contact:

Gifford : 50221741

[gdennison@
srsinc.com.au](mailto:gdennison@srsinc.com.au)

R.S.V.P
19th
March

PlayConnect ASD Playgroup - Mildura

PlayConnect is a playgroup specifically for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD like symptoms and their families. The playgroup gives everyone a place to connect with other families, find ASD information & resources.

The children have opportunities to access play activities that are suited to children with ASD. The group is initially facilitated by a Development Worker and aims to become self sufficient. Families are encouraged to get involved and have fun!

A new group is for 2010 is starting now and ready for new enrolments. Throughout the year, new families are always welcome to join.

The Mildura PlayConnect ASD Playgroup operates on Mondays at the Total Learning Centre, 12th Street Mildura.

For session times and more details, please contact:

Sharon : (03) 50252816 or 0400 05 7676



Basketball For All Program

Page 8



BASKETBALL FOR ALL

Special Needs Basketball

Each Monday and Wednesday evenings at the Mildura Basketball stadium (8th St)

- Young ones - Monday night from 4pm
- Older group - Wednesday night
-

Please phone Marree 0409235680 or Kathie 0400134899

News from Mallee Sports Assembly:

From Tanya Wild
Project Officer, Mallee Sports Assembly



Recently we had the Northern Mallee Sports Star Awards where we had over 400 people attend. We celebrated all achievements in sport and recreation sector. Our guest speaker for the evening was brilliant of Nicole Livingstone. Talking about being the best we can be, and finding your passion in life. For the second year we had the Rural Access Athlete with a Disability Award, this was won by Mark Slade for Swimming, Triathlon and Cycling. We congratulate Mark for his success and nomination for the award.

Why not nominate someone you know for this award in 2010.

All abilities Cricket – Mallee Duststorm. The team was in Melbourne for the Canbourne All Abilities Cricket Carnival on the 14th of February. The team had great success and fun over the three days they were in Melbourne. They were successful in winning all of their games and received a participation medal. Who knows what they will be able to do next year.

Do you want to play sport? Do you know what sports there are to play?

If you want to find out more, contact the MSA office, 255 Eleventh St, Mildura,

phone 5021 3464 or email tanya@malleesportsassembly.org.au

Mc2 web site.

Our website is part of the Vicnet, my connected community, government initiative. You can view our site as a read only page or you can join and receive emails of new items posted, look at past meeting minutes, post items on the notice board or even have chats with other members. This may be useful if you are having an issue and would like to ask other parents how they may have handled similar situations. It is Free and easy to join;

All you have to do to join is go to the web address :

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/autismssg/index.html> and click on the register button and it will guide you through the process. Alternatively you can email us a request to join, and we can send an invitation via email with links to click. sunraysia.autism@gmail.com

Facebook.

Yes... we are on facebook!!!

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Mildura-Australia/Sunraysia-Autism-Spectrum-Support-Group/81050373246?ref=ts>

(or just search for “ Sunraysia Autism Spectrum Support Group”)



SASSG
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Sunraysia Autism Spectrum Support Group

PO BOX CP2084

MILDURA, Vic. 3501

M: 0420 389 504

E-mail: sunraysia.autism@gmail.com

Our office is located at the Sunraysia Disability Resource Centre - 159 Langtree Ave, Mildura.

Open Mon– Fri. Sharon is at this office on Tuesdays 10-1:00pm. So come in and have a coffee and a chat.

Also there are computers connected to the internet available for you to use FREE of charge.

Our Committee

<u>President:</u>	Donna Milne
<u>Vice-President:</u>	Narelle Smith
<u>Secretary/Public Officer:</u>	Sharon Middleton
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Stuart Middleton
<u>Fundraising Coordinator:</u>	Sally-Anne Harvey
<u>Other Committee:</u>	Terri Filippi Tania Antonie Sharon Graham Kirsty Leutner Kelly Osborne