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Hello {merge:{field:FirstName}}

Welcome to our April Newsletter!

Happy Easter!



Branch News

Our thoughts and prayers are with Christchurch Branch and the wider community after the devastating earthquake in February. Everyone in New Zealand and abroad has been affected by this natural disaster and it makes one grateful for the small things in life.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members and families. The committee and I look forward to meeting with you at future branch ventures during 2011.

The school holidays are fast approaching and Jo Lloyd has a fabulous holiday programme planned for those enrolled and I am sure there will be lots of fun had. The Branch Staff and Committee have been working together to be able to offer some great support services in the near future. Please watch out for these in future newsletters. **If you would like to be a part of a great committee please email Auckland@autismnz.org.nz with subject Committee.**

The Kids Big Day Out on March 19th at Crystal Mountain was blessed with a warm day and lots of fun activities which ranged from a mini roller coaster, rides on the Crystal Mountain Express Train, performances by many cultural groups and of course the wonderful interaction with the many animals. Mayor Len Brown opened the event and spent some time mingling with the many who attended.

Autism Awareness Day held on April 1 saw Staff members and Committee speaking at schools spreading the word. All feedback has been extremely positive and it was noted that it was great that it was made fun and interactive for the children. We also had Ralph Lauren Newmarket kindly support us on this day as well by wearing our wrist bands and lapel pins in their Newmarket store.

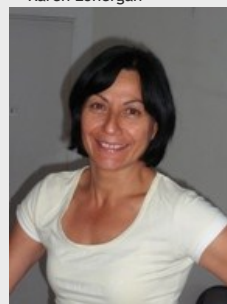
Last month Glenbrook Vintage Trains held their annual event, unfortunately due to the extremely bad weather Auckland Branch were unable to participate, but will definitely be there for their next event, to be held in November. Look out for this in future publications.

On behalf of the committee it is with regret that the Cocktail Event planned for the 8th April was postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. We are hoping to hold this event later in the year. The sub-committee would like to thank those that generously donated some amazing auction items. I would like to thank the sub-committee who worked extremely hard behind the scenes to make this happen, and extend a big thank you to Joanne Lawless, who dedicated a lot of time in the organisation of the event.

Davina Speakman



Karen Lonergan



YOUTH WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME/ HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM SOCIAL GROUP

We meet on the 1st Sunday of each month. 12.00-2.00pm at 65 Morningside Drive, St Lukes. Ring Natasha for more details 846 0913 ext 3 or 021 393 846

ADULT ASPERGER & AUTISM SPECTRUM SOCIAL GROUP

This is held on the 3rd Saturday of the month 3:00-5:00p.m. at 65 Morningside Drive, St Lukes. Please contact Natasha Delgarno on 846 09 13 ext 3 or 021 393 846 for further details

ADULTS ASPERGER SYNDROME/HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM DROP-IN

Venue : Rear of building. 65 Morningside Drive St Lukes. Dates : 1st Tuesday of every month. Time : 12-2pm For more information please ring Natasha on 846 0913 ext 3 or 021 393 846

WOMEN WITH ASPERGERS GROUP

Meets 1st Saturday of every month (except January) 3.00pm-5.00pm at 65 Morningside Drive, St Lukes
Facilitator Christine Lee - 027 270 4010

Auckland Branch Staff

Karen Lonergan - Branch Manager

Emma Cutts - Team Leader Service Delivery

Jo Lloyd - Programme Coordinator

Luminita Sprague - Information Coordinator

Natasha Delgarno - Adult and Youth Liaison Officer

Christine Birrell - Outreach Liaison Officer

Chairperson

Branch Manager



Thank you's

A big and heartfelt Thank You to Southern Stars Charitable Trust and the Heart Children Foundation. Both organisations offered free tickets for our members to the Kids Big Day Out at Crystal Mountain and the Big Day Out Live Variety Show at Life Centre Auditorium. The children and their accompanying parents/caregivers had a fantastic time at both events - we look forward to future complimentary tickets to FUN!

Thank you to our member Brian Pulefolau, who organised a fundraiser at his son's school, Redhill Primary, on Autism Awareness Day. Brian and his team have raised \$147.12 for the cause and have kindly presented Autism NZ Auckland Branch with the cheque.



April School Holiday Programme

The April School Holiday Programme will again be held at Mt Richmond Special School. Due to the Easter Holidays, the programme will run from Monday 18th April to Thursday 21st April (first week), and Tuesday 26th April - Friday 29th April (second week), 9.00am - 3.00pm. Jo Lloyd is the Holiday Programme Co-ordinator. Rob Stevenson will be under Jo's guidance during this holiday programme as the Supervisor. Rob comes highly recommended and is pursuing a teaching career with a focus on children with special needs. The children have some fun activities to participate in which include trampolining, visits to Kelly Tarltons and MOTAT, Sensory Art, Y-Dance and Music. For further information please contact Jo Lloyd on (09) 846 09 13.



World Autism Awareness Day

United Nations Declare Day to Celebrate Autism

Saturday 2 April has been designated World Autism Awareness Day by the United Nations General Assembly, and Autism New Zealand is hoping that all New Zealanders will try to better understand this often confusing condition. Community activities were planned across the country to raise awareness.

Multi Coloured Mayhem Day

Schools nationwide had special mufti days on Friday 1 April to help to raise the profile of autism in New Zealand. One of these schools was Gulf Harbour Primary. Staff members Emma Cutts - Team Leader Service Delivery - and Jo Lloyd - Programme Coordinator (both pictured below) - visited the school to speak about appreciating difference and diversity. Jo and Emma explained why school can be so difficult for children with autism and outlined ways that everyone could help. The day was covered by The Rodney Times, read more here

Red Hill Primary and Birkenhead Primary also held mufti days specifically for Autism NZ, so the Auckland Branch would like to thank these schools and any others in Auckland that participated in the Multi-Mayhem Mufti Day.



Event: Dr Wendy Lawson's Seminar

ATTENTION, ALL TEACHERS, TEACHER AIDES, FAMILIES AND ASD SERVICE PROVIDERS
Get the inside story on how children with autism spectrum disorder learn and teaching strategies that REALLY work from someone who knows firsthand - our favourite adult with autism, DR WENDY LAWSON, back by popular demand in her second exclusive NZ tour. Join us as Wendy shares her knowledge and insights based on her personal experience and research. Dr Wendy Lawson is an adult with high functioning autism. As a child she was considered to be intellectually disabled, and 'almost incapable of doing as she was told'. Today, as a mother of four, a qualified counsellor, social worker and psychologist with a PhD, Wendy is well-known and respected for her writing and seminars based on her research and her own personal experiences as a person with autism. Wendy was awarded fourth place as Victorian 'Australian of the Year' in 2008. She has written 9 books varying from her autobiography to an everyday text on autism. Her strong personality and sense of humour make her seminars hugely popular throughout the world.

Wendy's talks are enlightening and inspiring for professionals and families living and working with individuals with an ASD.

Auckland seminar date and location:

Friday 3 June 2011 9.30-3.00pm, Hotel Grand Chancellor Auckland Airport

Seminar Content:

Wendy's presentation explores autism spectrum, social demand and how to bridge some of the gaps so individuals with an ASD can truly be involved with an inclusive society. Wendy discusses how individuals with autism learn, and offers practical strategies to assist their learning. Content is applicable to autism and Aspergers, and both children and adults.

Cost: Early bird registration (\$145) closes on Monday 9 May 2011 (payment after this date is \$165). Spaces are limited, so book your spot today!

Book online at www.creatingsuccess.co.nz, or complete the attached registration form

For more information please contact Jo Adkins jo@creatingsuccess.co.nz



New Parent Coffee Group

This month we trialled a coffee group for parents who have received a new diagnosis at the branch. We tried to combine a mix of casual time where members could chat to each other as well as a short session on using visual timetables. The morning went great and feedback from the attendees was that they would like more of the same with a focus on social stories for the next session. If this is something that you would be interested in please get in contact with me on emma.cutts@autismnz.org.nz. Although the original focus was for parents who have a new diagnosis anyone is welcome.



Annual Appeal Week 1st-7th June 2011

Thank you to those who have generously offered your time to assist with the Annual Appeal Week. We still require more collectors and would greatly appreciate if you could spare a couple of hours to help. Please email Autism NZ Inc (Auckland Branch) Auckland@autismnz.org.nz if you are able to assist. We have confirmed bookings in the following community sites:

St Lukes Westfield 2nd & 3rd June 2011

Manukau Westfield 4th & 5th June 2011

Henderson Westfield 4th & 5th June 2011

Glenfield Westfield 2nd & 3rd June 2011

Takapuna Westfield 3rd & 4th June 2011

Eastridge Shopping Mall 4th & 5th June 2011

St Lukes Westfield 2nd & 3rd June 2011 Manukau Westfield 4th & 5th June 2011 Henderson Westfield 4th & 5th June 2011 Glenfield Westfield 2nd & 3rd June 2011 Takapuna Westfield 3rd & 4th June 2011 Eastridge Shopping Mall 4th & 5th June 2011

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Recreation: TRAMPOLINE CLASSES

Extreme Trampoline offers specialists classes for people with autistic spectrum disorders. Our trained and experienced coaches understand the importance of trampolining and a sensory diet in the development of people with autism. We are excited about offering a personalised programme to extend your child's development in a fun yet structured environment. Our current autistic members have improved immensely through our Sunday morning 10-week programme which runs during the term time between 9am-10am. Other options include private day time sessions offered on Tuesday between 11am-1pm and Wednesday between 12noon-3pm. For more information, you can visit our website www.extremetrampoline.co.nz or call us to discuss further benefits of a trampoline programme on 09 636 TRAMP (63 68 726)

Book Corner

Aspies on Mental Health

Speaking for Ourselves

Edited by Luke Beardon and Dean Worton

'At last a book that honestly declares the reality of a population's Mental Health status...As professionals we dare not miss the messages contained within this book. To do so would be detrimental to the future of humankind.' - Dr Wendy Lawson

'At last the story can be told of how life experiences, and especially being bullied, misunderstood and feeling lonely, can cause mental health problems for children and adults who have Asperger's syndrome...Ignorance of Asperger's syndrome is no longer a valid excuse.' - Dr Tony Attwood

People with Asperger Syndrome (AS) can be particularly at risk of developing mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression. Here, adults with Asperger Syndrome speak out about their own experiences of mental health issues, offering sound advice for other Aspies and providing valuable insights for family, friends and also for mental health professionals.

Touching on everything from difficulties at work and college to coping with low self-confidence, self-harm, alcohol, misdiagnosis, sectioning, counselling, medication and battles with mental health services, the book provides a window into how people with AS experience mental health issues, and what can be done to help. The individual accounts describe innovative coping strategies and methods for maintaining emotional and psychological wellbeing as well as practical advice on things like how to stay positive and deal with day-to-day stress and meltdowns.

This is essential reading for adults with Asperger Syndrome, and their families and friends, and will be a useful resource for psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health service providers and other professionals who support adults with Asperger Syndrome.



Autism New Zealand Inc.
Including Asperger Syndrome and Related Disorders