



Autism New Zealand Inc.
Including Asperger Syndrome and Related Disorders



Wellington Branch – E Newsletter

February 2011

Hello all. Welcome to another year! I'd like to encourage everyone to find the time this year to connect with others at a support or social group this year. It can help to know there are others sharing our experience of ASD and that there are lots of positive things we can celebrate together.

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Branch News

1. Love to Cook Workshops



Motoko Aotearoa

Health Through Education Foundation
Mātauranga Hei Oranga

This year we are finally able to offer you the 'Love to Cook' workshops run by Motoko Aotearoa – Health through Education Foundation.

Each week participants will learn to prepare suitable meals for lunch or dinner and something sweet. Meals include: pizza and choc chip pancakes, chicken and vege pies and apple crumble, and spaghetti bolognese with a salad and donuts.

The course would be tailored to the needs of ASD in terms of specific abilities and needs of participants and food type restrictions so please include as much information as you can when you contact me to register.

Even if you have registered your interest previously please let me know again if you or a family member would like to attend.

It will be a 7 week course – 2 hour workshops. There will be a maximum of 10 participants plus we need a minimum of 4 aides to help. All food costs are included and the cooks get to eat the yummy results!

Cost: If we have 10 participants - \$164. That's \$23.44 per workshop per participant (less people will mean the cost is higher so get your friends to register!)

Venue: Johnsonville Community Centre (this is central to all in the region and is also accessible by public transport).

Time: Mondays. 4.30 to 6.30pm.

For more information and to register your interest call Karen at the branch 472 1007 or email karen.brady@autismnz.org.nz.



2. Annual Appeal 2011

Thanks to everyone who has indicated they would be prepared to help out with collecting during the Autism NZ Annual Appeal week 1 – 7 June 2011.

BUT...I'd love to hear from some more of you! Please give us an hour or two to man a bucket or maybe you have a family member or friend who can. We have permission from the WCC to collect on the street on Friday 3 June. How about organising a few workmates to spend some time collecting for the branch?

I've got lots of sites around the whole region so one will be close to you - let me know if you can spare some time. It's really easy and a great way to meet others in the ASD community.

Email me on karen.brady@autismnz.org.nz or phone me on 472 1007.

3. Upcoming Seminars

Jen Birch – Living with ASD – Strategies to Cope

Auckland - 11 April & Tauranga - 13 April. 7.00 to 9.00pm. \$35

Jen was diagnosed with Aspergers at age 43. She has a wealth of experience and information to pass on to anyone involved with ASD.

Minds & Hearts – Transitioning – Relationships

Wellington – 30 March, New Plymouth – 31 March, Auckland – 1 April & Christchurch – 2 April. 9.00am to 1.00pm. \$105

The Minds & Hearts group are specialists in ASD and spoke at our 2010 conference. We have invited two of the group to come and talk on these **two crucial and challenging issues. The presentation will include a broad range of ages and stages so everyone can benefit from their expertise and experience.**

Go to www.autismnz.org.nz for more details and then click on “Seminar Registration” to register.



4. 'Ribbon' Lapel Pins - \$5.00

The Wellington branch has these awesome 'ribbon' lapel pins for sale. . These top quality metal pins are 3.2 cm high and are a great conversation opener when people ask what your particular 'ribbon' shows support for.

Price \$5.00. All profit to the Wellington branch. Drop into the office to purchase or drop me an email and I can post them to you.

5. Upcoming – Holiday Programme and Children's Social Groups

The Wellington Branch is planning to run a pilot Holiday Programme in the first week of the April school holidays. The programme would be open to children aged 6 to 12 years and would run for 4 morning sessions (Monday to Thursday - not Easter Friday).

We are also looking at facilitating the establishment of Social Skills Groups for children based on the popular course run by Serena Stace and Penny Tok at the Johnsonville Community Centre. We'd love to hear from any parents or groups of parents that would like help to get a group running in their area.

Enquiries on either the Holiday Programme or Social Groups can be directed to the branch. Email Karen on karen.brady@autismnz.org.nz or phone 472 1007.

6. Compassion Wine – Buy wine and support Autism NZ

Compassion Wine is a group of business people who return 100% of their profits to charity. Simply purchase wine online or by mail-order form and indicate Autism NZ as your charity of choice. All profits from your purchase will help support your local branch.

The wine is from the Spencer Hill Estate Winery in Nelson and they offer Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc.

Check them out and make your order at www.compassionwine.com

7. Research Project – Enhancing Communication Intervention for Children with Autism

Would you be interested in participating in some research at the Victoria University? Professors Jeff Sigafoos and Dean Sutherland are undertaking a study and are looking for young children who are non-verbal or have very few words or communication skills.

Parents would be shown how to teach their children simple communication skills using picture exchange, sign language, and an iPod-based speech-generating device. The children will then be given a chance to choose which communication option they would like to use and it will be assessed whether giving them a chance to assert their preference will influence how efficiently and effectively they learn to communicate. For more information contact:

Professor Jeff Sigafoos
School of Educational Psychology and Pedagogy
Faculty of Education
Victoria University of Wellington
Tel: (04) 463 9772
Email: jeff.sigafoos@vuw.ac.nz

8. Therapy/Parent Training Option

Penny Tok is a qualified psychologist currently finishing her PhD. She is offering a therapy and parent training option to up to four families in 2011.

Each weekly session would include an equal amount of 1:1 child therapy and parent-training plus prescribed work for parents to continue at home.

You have the option of 1 or 1.5 hours and it would be held at the Johnsonville Community Centre. Cost is \$100/hour.

This would be ideal for parents of children newly diagnosed with autism who have not yet accessed other services.

For more information please contact:

Penny Tok

Psychologist

Certificate in Autism, BA (Psyc), MA (App Psy) Current PhD (Psyc)

pennytok@yahoo.com

Phone 021 259 2073



9. Back to School – Routines Help

Back to school can be a time of stress as well as excitement. One of the things that can ease the transition into the school year is to quickly establish some routines to give everybody a sense of predictability and order.

Here are some ideas that may work for you and your family.

* List the morning routine tasks (use words and/or pictures). Put them on the fridge or wall so everybody knows what is expected of them each morning and can remind them if they forget what's next!

E.g. Get up, get dressed, have breakfast, brush teeth, pack bag.

Make it as detailed as is needed for your child. This works for teenagers too!

* Agree on a drop off place and a pick up meeting place and stick to it. E.g. Outside the classroom door or by the library steps. For older children who make their own way home try and have an 'arrived home' routine. Maybe a snack, a quiet time or a chat.

* Talk to your child's teacher and see if you can get a copy of the classroom weekly schedule. Display this at home and each night or morning point out to your child what is coming up. This provides a sense of predictability but it can also help with any unpopular subjects or events. By emphasising that an unpopular subject or event is only for a set time before they move on towards something else children can learn patience and tolerance.

* If you can get hold of your older child's/teenagers timetable it can really help to prevent last minute rushes for PE gear or the homework for a certain subject. The ultimate is to have a notebook that they, the teacher or you can use to note any assignment deadlines. This is a great way to help teach time management and organisational skills.

Support Groups & Social Clubs



10. Lower Hutt ASD Support Group Family Picnic – meeting this week

Everybody welcome! Come along even if you don't normally attend this group - what a great opportunity to meet other families and have a stress free social outing.

Date: Friday 11 February 2011 – wet or fine

Time: 5pm onwards

Venue: Belmont Playcentre – Norfolk Street, Belmont. (At the end of the street on the left)

Tea, coffee and juice will be provided. Bring your own picnic, fish & chips or pizza. BYO wine/beer.

Enquiries to Carol Maud – Phone 569 2037. The first meeting of the year for this group will be held on Monday 21 February 2011 at the Knox Church Hall.

11. Upper Hutt Support Group

Parents with Awesome Kids – PWAK – meeting this week.

This is only the second meeting of this group so make the effort to come along to support and meet others in the ASD community in the Upper Hutt area.

Date: **Friday 11 February 2011** – yes, it is the same night as the picnic mentioned above!

Time: 7 to 8.30 pm. Still time to go to the picnic first!

Venue: Page Pavilion, Davis Sports Field, Camp Road, Trentham.

Topic: Social Stories – Margaret Chatfield RTLB

Website: www.pwak.webs.com

12. Two Adult ASD Social Groups

‘Out of Sync’ – ASD and ADHD

This group meets fortnightly on Tuesday evenings in an informal way to offer general support to each other and to chat about everyday things. Contact Duncan Wilkins on email duncan@dappadee.com to learn more about times and venues.

‘Autism NZ Adult ASD Group’

This group meets monthly on a Sunday – often at the Johnsonville Community Centre to play board games. They also go for walks and to the movies. Due to the coordinator’s family commitments the first meeting won’t be until April and a calendar of events should be available in late March. Contact Karen at the office karen.brady@autismnz.org.nz or the coordinator, Maureen Walker, on email walker@paradise.net.nz to get more information.

13. “The Children’s Club” – Social Skills Group

This is a social group for children aged 6 to 12 years with all kinds of ASD. The focus is on using play to initiate and support social interaction and communication between the children. For more information, or to express interest in a group in your area, please contact the facilitators - Serena Stace and Penny Tok on asd.behaviour.nz@gmail.com

Date: Thursdays (during school terms) from 3 February 2011.

Time: 4.30 to 6.00 pm.

Venue: Johnsonville Community Centre – Room 4

Cost: \$12 per session

14. Wairarapa Support Group – Autism 4 Life

Come along for a tea/coffee and a chat to meet parents and others in the Wairarapa with an interest in autism. Warm welcome guaranteed.

For more information contact Wendy M on 021 0296 5043 or Wendy R on 027 246 3632

Date: Wednesday 16 February 2011

Time: 7pm - gold coin donation please

Venue: Salvation Army – Blue House

210 High Street, Carterton

15. Cloud 9 - Pre-Teen & Teen Aspergers Clubs

Pre-Teen Club (10 to 12 years old) on Saturdays from 11.30 to 1.30pm.

Teen Club (13 to 19 years old) on Saturday from 2.00 to 4.00pm.

Both are held at the Tawa Community Centre. A great place to meet others and have some fun.

To register your interest or if you have any questions, please contact Bill Murray at Cloud 9 Phone 232 4795

Email: foundation@enterclou9.com

Check out our branch website page for all branch information

<http://www.autismnz.org.nz/Branches/Wellington.php>

Or call Karen on 472 1007 or email wellington@autismnz.org.nz