



# Autism New Zealand Inc.

Including Asperger Syndrome and Related Disorders

## Mind Matters

Nelson  
Marlborough  
Branch  
Newsletter

### From the Chairperson.....

**W**elcome to all our new families and new members.

Thanks to everyone who helped brave the awful weather for our Annual Appeal Collection held Saturday 4 June. Despite the rain the local community gave generously and we raised **\$1,450**, a great effort! Special thanks to our special kids who collected – you made a big difference with your smiley faces.

Back in May we had our first Ten Pin Bowling activity for our new Youth Group. We had 17 kids give it a go and everyone had a great time. Unfortunately we didn't have enough interest in the Vertical Limits Climbing Activity but we hope to look at this again.

We have another Ten Pin Bowling Activity planned for this group on Saturday 1 October (see advert later in the newsletter) and plan a visit to Mini Golf and the Big Blue Slide at Tahuna next February. We don't want the "Junior" ASD group to miss out so we have arranged a Christmas Picnic & Train Ride at Natureland, Tahuna for both our Junior & Youth Group. The aim is for the kids and families to get to know each other as well as be involved in some physical activity which is appropriate to our kids needs. Thanks to Nelson City Council for making this possible.

The Teenage/Young Adult group are meeting regularly on Monday afternoons from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm at Café De Ville in New Street, Nelson. Those who are at college, come along a little later after college. (See ad for details). This group is for ASD teenagers, who have Aspergers/ High Functioning Autism over 15 years of age. If you would like to know more please contact Viv Nelson our Field Officer. Some of these young people practised their cooking skills recently at The Hub where a special "Hands on" cooking class was run. Our thanks go to Julie Marshall-Tideman and Viv Nelson for organizing and the Nelson Marlborough DHB for funding.

Viv Nelson, our Field Officer, has been very busy as we have a number of new families joined in recent months. We hope that you can appreciate that Viv is funded to work for a few hours a week, which does not include the school holidays, so sometimes she may not contact you immediately.

If you would like to talk to Viv please contact the Branch and leave a message. Viv will contact you as soon as she can. It is a great help if you can leave days/times when you are available to talk.

It is an opportune time to give a big "Thank you" to The Canterbury Community Trust and New Zealand Lotteries Grants Board for their contribution to funding.

Cheers, Jill Hounsell, Chairperson

September  
2011



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THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE PEOPLE  
WHO HELPED AT THE  
ANNUAL APPEAL 2011

## Moving is Fun



A gymnastic based movement class for children for with physical activity limitations.


When: Thursday 11.30 – 12.15

Where: Richmond Town Hall (Tasman Recreational Resource Centre)

Just Gymnastics has identified a movement need for primary aged children with physical special needs and has developed a specialised class to help with the child's development, confidence, participation and enjoyment in physical activity.

Enrolment is essential and funding may be available to assist with attendance costs.

To discuss your child's needs, please call Linda on 03 546 6013.

**Contact :** Linda & Steve Mace: Tel 03 546 6013 ; [just.gym@xtra.co.nz](mailto:just.gym@xtra.co.nz) Supported by:  Tasman Recreational Resource Centre

## "Little Stars" Early Intervention Playgroup



When: Every Wednesday morning during term time.

Time: 9.30 am to 12.00 noon

Where: St Barnabus Church, Main Rd, Stoke.

Come along and enjoy a coffee and chat with other families who have a child/children with a disability and/or special needs. Toys, activities, singing and outdoor area (enclosed & safe) This is a very friendly and welcoming group which also has input from Speech & Language therapists, Physiotherapists & Occupational therapist's

**For further information contact: CCS Nelson Tel 03 548 4479**

## Support Autism NZ Nelson/Marlborough



Buy one of these cool lapel pins especially designed for Autism NZ & show your support.

The pins are 32mm in size and are made of enamel/nickel plate with a design made up of small puzzle pieces in blue, yellow and red colours. They cost only \$5; all proceeds to the Branch.

To buy, please contact the Branch:

Tel: 03 539 0285 or e-mail [Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz).

Also available at Support Group meetings and March Workshop.

## Enjoy Great Local Wine and Help Autism New Zealand

Autism New Zealand have joined with three other charities and our local *Spencer Hill Estate Winery* to launch the "**Compassion**" wine label. In what we believe is a New Zealand first, 100% of the profits from the sales of these wines will go to charity and you can choose how you would like this split (you might like to give 100% to Autism NZ!).

You can **order the wines** online from <http://www.compassionwine.com>

or fill in an order form. For an order form please contact: Jon Boyer,

PO Box 12599 Thorndon, Wellington 6144. Tel: 04—470 7616 Ext 802 or e-mail [jon.boyer@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:jon.boyer@autismnz.org.nz)

This is a wonderful act of generosity and community spirit on the part of the owners of Spencer Hill Winery (who also make Tasman Bay and Latitude 41 wines) and we hope that you will support it by ordering and en-

# Harcourts Supports Autism New Zealand

Harcourts are now proud to be partnering with Autism New Zealand supporting families and individuals affected by autism and Aspergers Syndrome. For members and supporters of Autism NZ we will:

- Refer 10% of the commission earned from the sale of a property owned by a member or supporter of Autism NZ.
- Refer the first three month's property management fees from properties rented through Harcourts Property Management Services owned by a member or supporter of Autism NZ.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. If Autism New Zealand is getting 10% of the commission will I be charged more?**

A. No - you will pay exactly the same commission as someone not supporting Autism New Zealand. Harcourts are donating the money to support your organization and this is not passed in to you.

**Q. What will Autism New Zealand spend the money on?**

A. The money donated by Harcourts will be used to support Autism New Zealand's work to increase awareness of autism and provide support to individuals and families affected by autism. Some will be spent on large projects and some will be spent to support services for families in your local area.

**Q. Do I have to use a certain Harcourts office?**

A. No - Harcourts is a nationwide company with offices in most towns and cities. Visit [www.harcourts.co.nz](http://www.harcourts.co.nz) to find an office or sales consultant near you.

## What you need to do

It's easy to help Harcourts to support Autism New Zealand. When you are thinking of selling or renting your property, whether it is a home, rental property, holiday home, business property or farm just follow these steps:

1. Call Harcourts on 0800 HARCOURTS or email [referral@harcourts.co.nz](mailto:referral@harcourts.co.nz) stating:
  - Your name
  - Your contact phone number
  - The address of the property
  - If you have a particular Harcourts agent you would prefer to use
2. Wait for a call from your local Harcourts agent
3. Sell your property!



Autism New Zealand Inc.  
Including Asperger Syndrome and Related Disorders

**Harcourts**  
REAL ESTATE GROUP LTD

## More Than Eyeball-to-Eyeball

Looking is a critical part of communication and social interaction. We learn information when we pay attention to people's facial expressions, their gestures and other body movements. We learn more by observing what is going on in the surrounding environment.

### Problems with eye contact.

Students with autism are frequently described as having a lack of eye contact. More careful observation can reveal a variety of looking behaviours. Sometimes students:

- \* Avert their gaze to purposely avoid looking at people
- \* Avoid eye contact vigorously as if trying to avoid pain
- \* Don't look because they are looking somewhere else
- \* May look, but they don't look at the important places where other people would look
- \* Do not look like they are looking, but they seem to know everything that is happening

These students do not use their eyes effectively to enhance communication and social interaction. They don't use their eyes well to make a social connection with others.

### What does this mean for social skills?

Looking is an important foundation skill for effective social interaction. Eye contact is the basis for making a social connection with people. Looking at the right things can enhance communication.

Here are some reasons why:

- \* People communicate with body language and facial expressions and gestures. If a student doesn't look at them he will miss very important pieces of communication information.
- \* A lot of social learning comes from watching other people. Not watching eliminates many opportunities to learn new information and model new behaviour

Eye contact lets people know we are listening. Not looking or not looking like you are paying attention can make the communication partner feel ignored. Then they may feel uncomfortable or stop communicating. Focusing on less significant details can prevent students from grasping the big picture or the larger context of an event or interaction.

#### **And here is one more piece**

I have talked with a number of teens and adults with ASD who have told me the same thing. They say, "**I can either look or I can listen, but I have a hard time doing both at the same time.**" They describe having difficulty when too much information is coming in at once.

#### **It is not just an eyeball-to-eyeball thing.**

The solution is not just teaching children to stare at someone's eyes. Staring eyeball to eyeball won't create the result we want. You see it is not just a problem with looking. It is a problem with focusing attention.

#### **So this is what we need to teach.**

Teaching students to look and establish eye contact is OK as long as we are teaching them to do it in a natural way. (We don't want to teach them to stare.) But this is not the only skill that needs to be considered. Here are more:

\* **Orient to the person they are talking to**  
Teach students to turn their body toward the person. That helps students look like they are paying attention.

\* **Look like a listener**

We need to teach students to look attentive. They must manage the rest of their body so they can attend to a communication partner. Excessive body movement, playing with objects or related behaviors can disrupt good attending.

\* **Watch other people**

Students need to learn what to pay attention to. Having them practice watching people can help. Make it a game. Specific instruction in how to look, where to look, and what details to pay attention to can be beneficial. Students may need help accurately interpreting what they see.

Establishing attention will help students become more successful in the social environment. Developing the ability to look like an attentive communication partner is essential to enhance a student's social presence. It will make a difference in how other people perceive them. Yes it will make a difference.

*The author of this article is Linda Hodgdon, M.Ed., CCC-SLP. Linda Hodgdon is the author of the best seller, Visual Strategies for Improving Communication. She is featured in the award winning Visual Strategies Workshop Video Program.*

*To learn more or to sign up to her FREE E-newsletter, Visit [www.UseVisualStrategies.com](http://www.UseVisualStrategies.com)*

## **Wendy Lawson's Top 10 Tips to Encourage Engagement and Participation**

Dr Wendy Lawson, who has ASD, has been presenting workshops throughout New Zealand. The following are some of her useful tips. For more information, please see her various resources available at [www.suelarkey.co.nz](http://www.suelarkey.co.nz).

1. Firstly please accept my difference.
2. Please use my special interests to motivate and engage: my strengths are motivated by my interest.
3. Find appropriate mediums that facilitate my interest (computers, visuals etc).
4. Show me what's expected, then I have less need to fight for control.
5. Use accessible language. For example: signing, pictures/objects, visual timetables.
6. Let me know what is happening because if I don't know what's coming next I cope by resisting change.
7. Social stories, role play, colour coding, diary's all work for me and help my learning.
8. Be careful how you use words, my literalness can mean I misunderstand you.
9. The modern world uses IT. Computers are enabling for so many of us, they cross the borders between us and can help build connections.



## Fun Activities for our ASD Kids

We would like to offer our ASD kids the opportunity to meet each other and do some "fun" stuff. Our goal is to encourage our young people to exercise, have fun and feel great about themselves.

### Background to this project

Thanks to The Physical Recreation Fund of the Nelson City Council, we have been granted some money from the council. We have set up some activities for our Youth Group for ages 9 -14 years old and those 15 years and over. We also want to organize some activities for a "Junior" Group under age of 9 years, so that the younger kids can join in as well.

The focus is to provide opportunities for our kids to get active at a reasonable price and with support of each other and the expertise of the activities coaches we go and visit.

### Teenage/Young Adult Group Activities

This group is for young people with Asperger/High Functioning ASD between the age of 15 and 25 years. If you would like to join this group who meet every Monday, please contact our Field Officer, Viv Nelson

Email: [viv.nelson@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:viv.nelson@autismnz.org.nz) or tel 03 539 0285 and leave a message.



### Youth Group Activity

#### Ten Pin Bowling at Action Sports Centre Richmond.

Who: For our kids and young people with ASD 9 years to 16 years of age  
 When: Saturday 1 October 2011, 9.15 am until 11 am.  
 Where: Ten Pin Bowling, Action Indoor Sports Centre, 30 McPherson Street, Richmond  
 Cost: \$1.00 per young person (rest is subsidized)  
 What to Bring: A snack and a drink (Café is available on site)  
 Socks, Cotton wool / Ear protectors if a bit noisy



**Important Notes:** A caregiver/parent must be with each young person.

#### How to prepare:

Social Story on Ten Pin Bowling. Go and visit beforehand, you can then watch what is happening. You can also take photos if needed.

#### Things that could be difficult:

Noise (for bowling we have booked 5 lanes to use, so it should not be too busy at that time)

*We are very relaxed and even if you come and your Young person doesn't want to play, that is fine.*

*We want a positive experience for all.*

#### How to Register for these activities:

Places are limited so it is on a first come, first served basis. Email: [Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz) with your Name, contact details & e mail address – name of student and age.

### Junior and Youth Group Activity

#### Christmas Picnic, Natureland & Trains at Tahuna, Nelson

Who: For our kids and young people with ASD  
 When: Sunday 4 December 2011 at 12 noon  
 Where: Natureland, Tahunanui, Nelson  
 Cost: \$2.00 per child/ young person. Entry for 1 adult is included and siblings are welcome at \$2 per head. Under age 2 is free)  
 Bring: A picnic, something to sit on.  
 Weather: If wet postponed to Sunday 11 December 2011



**Important Notes:** A caregiver/parent must be with each young person.

#### How to Register for these activities:

Email: [Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz) with your Name, contact details & e mail address – name of student and age and how many other children will be coming.

**Note your 2012 Diary - Sunday 26 February Mini Golf & Big Blue Slide at Tahuna, Nelson**

## Develop Social Skills

Develop social skills, friendship skills, life skills, organisational skills, effective communication skills as well as build confidence, resilience and empathy through fun music and drama activities. Activities are focused on the needs of the participants in small groups.

**Who:** For primary and intermediate age children (including home schooled children) with special needs.

**Where:** Richmond, Hope and Nelson

**When:** Mondays (term time) after school  
Other sessions may be arranged during the day in Nelson.

**Cost:** \$150 per 10 week term (\$15 per session per student)

The programme tutors, Maria Reid, Latasha Sutton and their team come from an educational background and are all passionate about enhancing positive, effective communication. They have been involved with students with special needs, helping to develop social and communication skills using arts based programmes. See [www.mleducational.com](http://www.mleducational.com).

**For enquiries and bookings please contact Maria:**

Tel: 03 - 544 7102 e-mail: [mariareid1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mariareid1@xtra.co.nz)

or **contact Rachel Rimmer:** Tel: 03 - 540 3984; Mobile: 021 908 664



*Note from Jill: "There have been a few of us Mum's who have joined this Social Skills Programme with our kids. Over the last few weeks we have seen our kids challenged, and undertake new thinking skills, which I did not expect to see. The use of music and drama makes this type of learning fun. Just speaking as a Mum, I found this group very rewarding and a positive step."*

## Teenage/ Young Adult Group

***This Group is for young people with Asperger/High Functioning ASD only***

*We hope to set up a similar group in the near future, for those young people with ASD who have greater needs or may require additional support*

If you are a person between 15 years & 25 years who has Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism and would like to meet and talk with other young people with ASD, come and join us for an afternoon.

**When:** Every Monday from 2.30pm to 4.30 pm (but check school holidays)

**Where:** Café "De Ville", New Street, Nelson

Things you need to know:

- Person with ASD must be fairly independent and able to be left at a table on their own
- A parent or caregiver **MUST** need to attend initially. (They will sit at a different table to you)
- Food & Drink at your own cost.



For more information contact our Field officer Viv Nelson.

E-mail: [viv.nelson@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:viv.nelson@autismnz.org.nz) or Tel: 03 - 539 0285 and leave a message

## "Help!" Programme Marlborough 2012 – Parents Wanted!

The NAS "Help" programme is for parents and carers of school age children, young people and adults who have received a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The programme consists of 6 seminars, 3 + hours each covering a range of topics that will help you to understand your child and apply practical strategies to manage you child's behaviour. This programme is **Free**.

In order to bring this programme to our region, we need to have a minimum of number of families to register. It is a great opportunity and usually runs over 3 Saturdays.

**For further information and an Expression of Interest Form, Please contact either:**

**the Branch:** Tel: **03 539 0285**, Email: [Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz)

**Pat Gluck**, National Programme Manager, Autism NZ Inc: Tel 04 470 7616, Email: [Pat.Gluck@autismnz.org.nz](mailto:Pat.Gluck@autismnz.org.nz)

## Books Available To Borrow

**We are currently building a library of resource books which are available to borrow free of charge.**

1. Thinking in Pictures by Temple Grandin (My Life with Autism)
2. Asperger Syndrome by Tony Attwood (A guide for parents and professionals)
3. The New Social Story Book by Carol Gray
4. Visual Strategies for Improving Communication by Linda Hodgdon (Practical supports for Home and School)
5. Solving Behaviour Problems in Autism by Linda Hodgdon (Improving Communication with Strategies)
6. Asperger's Syndrome by Winter (What Teachers Need to Know)
7. Various Autism Spectrum Quarterly Magazines
8. Asperger's... What does it mean to me ? by C Faherty.
9. Congratulations! It's Asperger Syndrome by Jen Birch
10. Taking Care of Myself by Mary Wrobel
11. Toilet Training For Individuals With Autism by Maria Wheeler
12. Exposure Anxiety - The Invisible Cage by Donna Williams
13. "The curious incident of the dog in the night time" by Mark Haddon
14. Kiwi Social Skill 1 by Tautoko Services.
15. Kiwi Social Skill 2 by Tautoko Services
16. Jenison Journal - Gray's Guide to Bullying
17. Relationship Development Intervention with Children, Adolescents and Adults by Steven Gutstein & Rachelle Sheely
18. Conference Notes Rotorua 2005 Unwrapping the Gift - Focus on Ability
19. What is Asperger syndrome, and how does it affect me? - A guide for young people.
20. I have Autism ... What's that? by K Doherty & Ors.
21. Making it a Success by Sue Larkey.
22. The Essential Guide To Secondary School by Sue Larkey & Anna Tullemans.
23. How To Stop Your Words Bumping Into Someone Else's by Anna Tullemans & Rhonda Dixon.
24. Practical Sensory Programmes for Students with ASD by Sue Larkey.
25. Socially Speaking by Alison Schoeder
26. Surviving Social Situations in NZ by Tautoko Services.
27. All Cats Have Asperger Syndrome by Kathy Hoopman
28. Exploring Feelings—Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Manage ANXIETY by Dr Tony Attwood
29. Exploring Feelings—Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Manage ANGER by Dr Tony Attwood
30. Putting the Pieces Together; Helping young children understand ASD by Sue Larkey & Gay Von Ess
31. Aspergers and Girls by Tony Atwood, Temple Grandin e.a.
32. No More Meltdowns by Dr Jed Baker
33. Thriving in Adulthood with Asperger's Syndrome by Craig Kendall
34. Behaviour Solutions for the Inclusive Classroom by Beth Aune, Beth Burt & Peter Gennaro
35. Teacer Assisstants Big Blue Book of ideas by Sue Larkey & Anna Tullemans
36. Special Girls Business
37. Special Boys Business

These books are available by post or collect from :  
Yvon Smit's shop

Jewel beetle, Upstairs above Whitcoulls,  
240 Trafalgar Street, Nelson.  
Phone 03 5480487

E mail [yvon@jewelbeetle.co.nz](mailto:yvon@jewelbeetle.co.nz)



**Thanks**

**fresh choice**

Thank you  
to Fresh  
Choice  
Richmond  
for  
donating  
\$200 for  
new books  
for our  
library.

**Please return our books to the Branch Library ! We all want to use them and they have cost us a lot of money! For books which are not returned an invoice for the full cost of the book, will be sent to the person who borrowed it."**

**Thanks**



## Nelson Marlborough Branch

Coordinator: Robyn Young  
 Field Officer: Viv Nelson  
 P O Box 18, Upper Moutere  
 Nelson.

Phone 03 539 0285

Email

Nelson-Marlborough@autismnz.org.nz

### About Us

We are a group of parents, who work on a voluntary basis, offering support and information to other families who have someone with an Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Nelson & Marlborough region.

### Key Activities

- Provide parents and carers with support,
- Information & advice
- Field Officer Support
- Provide information to professionals and liaise with other agencies
- Provide workshops
- Raise awareness of ASD
- Provide a Newsletter with information, and what is happening locally
- Books available from our Branch Library
- Support Groups

### National Office

P O Box 12599  
 Thordon, Wellington 6144  
 Phone 0800 autism  
 (0800 288 476)  
 (04 470 7616)

[www.autismnz.org.nz](http://www.autismnz.org.nz)



## Come & Join Us

Meet other parents who understand,  
 exchange ideas/information,  
 & have a laugh!

### Support Group Nelson

**Morning** When: 10.30 am Thursday 15 September 2011  
 10.30 am Thursday 10 November 2011

Where: De Ville Café  
 New Street, Nelson

Note: Venue is child friendly with gate at the entrance.



**Evening** When: 7.30 pm Thursday 22 September 2011

Where The Stables Tavern (upstairs room)  
 McGlashen Avenue, Richmond



### Support Group Marlborough

Thanks to Lyn Caughey of SF Marlborough (Supporting Families in Wellbeing) for hosting this on our behalf

When: 10.30 am First Tuesday of Every Month

Where: Family Room at the office of SF Marlborough  
 4 Scott Street, Blenheim

Everyone is very welcome.



### Our thanks to :

- **Lioness Club of Nelson**
- **The Canterbury Community Trust**
- **New Zealand Community Post**
- **Fresh Choice Supermarket, Richmond**
- **Community Organisation Grants Scheme**
- **New Zealand Lotteries Grants Board**
- **The Lion Foundation**
- **Pub Charity**
- **Nelson City Council**

### *The Autism NZ Inc (Nelson/Marlborough Branch)*

*does not necessarily support, endorse or recommend any method, treatment, product, programme, or therapist for those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. We do, however, seek to inform, in the belief that you have the right to know, so that you may make informed choices.*