



Autism New Zealand Inc.

Including Asperger Syndrome and Related Disorders

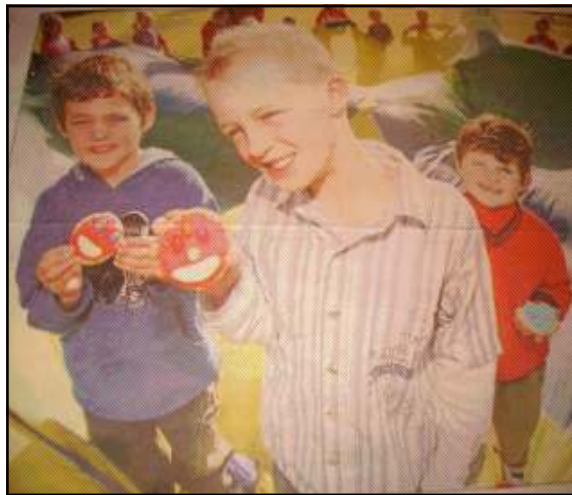
Hello Everyone,

As you will see in the photo below, Frankley School celebrated Autism Week, which was held in June, with a "Difference Day". Children and teachers were encouraged to dress up in colourful clothing and Yarrows (the bakers) Ltd donated biscuits for them to decorate. The Mitre 10 bouncy castle was put to good use, and Sport Taranaki loaned the school it's big earth ball as well as a parachute.

Difference Day raised more than \$350 which will be used to furnish the school's new sanctuary room with toys. This room is new to the school and is a quiet area where children can come to be calm.

Below: Max, Kade and Flynn are holding the biscuits that they decorated.

Well done Frankley School!



The 'Our Stories' Programme organised by IHC, gets schools to make movies about people with disabilities. Three children from St Josephs School in Waitara took four days to make a movie about Waru & what it was like to live with Autism.

For this story and more go to: www.ourstories.co.nz.



Also in this issue.....our Chairperson resigns and meet our new Information Coordinator. We have our 10th AGM in September also! Enjoy!

Karen Glenny (akglenny@ihug.co.nz)

Taranaki Branch Newsletter

Sept/Oct/Nov
2009

Inside this Issue

Pg 2 - Message from the Chairperson.

Pg 3 - Meet our New Information Coordinator

Pg 4 - Welcome to our AGM

Pg 5 - About the committee

Pg 6 - Appitude

Pg 7 - Training

Pg 8— What's On?

Notices

Pg 9— Sue Larkey

President

Mairi Wharehoka

Ph 7591861

Secretary

Vacant position

Treasurer

Vanessa Elliott

Ph7579231

Information

Coordinator

Judi Gopperth

Autism NZ Inc

Taranaki Branch

Communication House

62 Powderham St

P.O.Box 3355

New Plymouth

taranaki@autismnz.org.nz

Ph (06) 7695958

National Office

0800 AUTISM

0800 288476

www.autismnz.org.nz

A Note from our Chairperson—Mairi Wharehoka

It has been a fruitful year for the branch with many new systems set in motion to benefit our members, families, whanau and supporters. Our greatest achievement is the availability of diagnosis for adults. There has been a gap in this area for many years and we can now look to the future with hope for those undiagnosed adults whom have struggled in mainstream life.

Early in the year we delivered a Training Programme to Work & Income Taranaki & Central Districts. The onflow effect of this programme has been positive in every aspect. Recently, we visited the Western Institute of Technology, Taranaki and presented strategies to the Health & Wellbeing Team and the Art & Commerce Faculty. Working side by side with these two major organizations will benefit us all for many years to come.

Our Awareness Week Panel Evening was reported as being very informative to many who attended. World Autism Awareness Day (Waad) was celebrated by many schools & the hospital CACC dept. with people dressed in brightly coloured clothing.

There have been many changes within our Branch; past members leaving to pursue other directions & new members inspiring us with new ideas. Our past Coordinator left us in April & our new one came on board in June. National Office is on the move to Wellington, a new CEO has been appointed & there will be staff changes.

We have an ASD social group and coffee mornings in both north & south Taranaki. These groups have members coordinating them. Look for their details in this newsletter.

Finally, the time has come for me to step down as President/Chairperson and I do so with immense appreciation for our committee whom have been inspiring work horses over the past three years that I have worked alongside them. It has been a wonderful time & I am more learned having met you all. I would particularly like to thank our Autism members for simply being yourselves and giving me a greater understanding of life.

***Thanks to Mairi for her dedication
and enthusiasm over the last three years
She will be missed!!***



The statement below is written by a Mum, to encourage other parent's whose journey is in it's early years

"My son is now 42 and is constantly improving and really enjoying life. He was very autistic when he was young and fitted all the criteria but now, though he still has autism, he has made such progress over the years. So to all parents out there, there is light at the end of the tunnel, and people with autism, especially those with high-functioning autism, can make such huge progress and continue to learn. We feel so blessed in having such a son!"

Note from our Information Co-ordinator – Judi Gopperth

Hello all. It is with pleasure that I contribute to what is my first Taranaki Autism Branch Newsletter.

As recently appointed to the position of Information Co-ordinator Autism Taranaki it has been great to meet or chat with so many already and I do look forward to putting many more names to faces.

A little about me....my background is mainly in education – having taught and held leadership roles within the Primary sector for the last 30 years! I shifted to New Plymouth in 2005 and thoroughly enjoy living in the 'Best Little City in the World'. I have two adult children, a daughter who lives in New Plymouth and a son who is in his first year at Otago University.

In my spare time (which seems to be reducing) I follow my passion for property renovation, landscaping and gardening.

Enough about that....now to other important things - happenings at Autism Taranaki

Social groups

These are great opportunities for those interested in mixing, networking, chatting and having time away.

Forward notification of dates and venues are emailed through our data base.

If you have not been receiving this information, don't have email and or would like to be included please let me know. We can update your contact details. More about social groups later in this issue.

Courses

Exciting things are happening in our area and they are happening very soon!!! Ensure your place by registering today. (Phone Michelle at Autism New Zealand on 0800 288 476 ext 704)

- Spell course 25th & 26th August at the Devon New Plymouth (free to parents, grandparents and carers)
- Help course Saturday 22nd August, Saturday 29th August and Saturday 5th October at the Devon, New Plymouth
- Tony Attwood 21st September at Te Papa Wellington

More information about these courses is included within this newsletter.

Library Resources

There are many books, DVD's and other helpful information available to you from our Taranaki Branch office which is situated upstairs, Communication House, 62 Powderham Street. You are always welcome to call in, browse and take on loan. On that subject if you have previously borrowed resources and have had for more than a month it would be great to have these returned so others can also access. Thanks.

Office hours

Tuesday to Friday 10 – 2 pm

If calling outside these hours please feel welcome to leave a message.

Judi Gopperth

Information Co- coordinator

Autism Taranaki Branch



Invitation

Autism Taranaki Annual General Meeting

7pm Wednesday 2nd September 2009

Communication House, 62 Powderham Street, New Plymouth

Special Guest: Autism NZ new CEO, Alison Molloy.

Speaker: Speech Language Therapist, Maree Rowland, will talk about self-regulation—fun, child based activities to help children aged 7 to 10 to regulate their anxiety using a 1-5 scale.

Autism Taranaki's first AGM was held 10 years ago in July 1999

We started as a small group of parents meeting in members' homes with a couple of books and a tiny bank account. We are now a Branch of Autism NZ with an employee and an office, over 400 parents and professionals on our database, and a host of achievements.

The strength of our branch is not just in the current committee at any time, it is also in the skills of others, including many ex-committee members, who are continuing Autism NZ's aims—"providing support, training, advocacy, resources and information on autism spectrum disorders including Asperger syndrome."

They started as "just" parents on the committee but have found something to focus on that they are passionate about.

We hope to be joined by these Friends of the committee at our AGM. Their skills include:

- * Organising social groups—coffee mornings, young adults group, Mum's Night Out.
- * Editing our newsletter
- * Presentations on ASD to local organizations
- * Alternative medicine research
- * Training in ASD diagnosis
- * Lobbying re funding
- * Developing computer programmes to help ASD teenagers
- * Artwork to raise funds
- * Busking to raise funds
- * Writing articles or book reviews for our newsletter



Nominations for President, Secretary and Treasurer can be made before or at the meeting

President: Chair the monthly meetings.

Secretary: Compile agenda, take minutes at meetings, type up and distribute minutes.

Treasurer: Co-ordinate with Autism NZ centralised accounts to pay invoices; bank donations, etc; compile monthly financial report for Committee; apply for Grants for funding and complete accountability reports.

We are lucky to have on our committee;

- Julie, who teaches Special Needs Children.
- Clare; "My role within the committee is 'Health Liaison'. I work full time at the Child and Adolescent Centre as the Paediatric High Needs Service Co-ordinator. Part of my role alongside colleagues is to look at how we are implementing the ASD guideline here at CACC in relation to assessment and diagnosis. Being part of this work enables me to promote and encourage families to join Autism NZ and utilise the supports we have locally here in Taranaki. We are slowly finding that we have had more success with families joining Autism NZ if we can actively promote the service at diagnosis and demonstrate a collaborative approach between health and community organizations. My role within the committee also allows my fellow members to have a greater understanding of the processes within health and vice versa. My colleagues within health seek me out for any 'ASD' related queries and I point them in the right direction where I can or advise them to utilise Judi, our Information Co-ordinator."

•

All Welcome to our AGM

apptitude

thinking differently across the spectrum

p We are a New Plymouth-based support group of and for people on the autism spectrum **ë** with Aspergers syndrome **ë** friends **ë** families **ë** whanau.

p Dealing with autism or Aspergers syndrome can be a lonely **ë** confusing **ë** difficult experience.

p As more and more adults discover they have Aspergers syndrome **ë** we want to make it easier for people to find help **ë** information **ë** advice **ë** gain insights about autism **ë** Aspergers syndrome.

p We get together each month to find out what we can do to help **ë** to support ourselves, and each other. **Join us.**

Find out what can we do for you.

Our next get together will be

On Sunday 30th August

Email me for time and venue

Chris

ë

website

www.nzapptitude.com

chat/forum

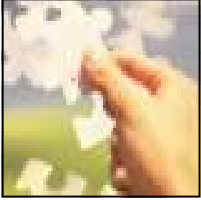
www.apptitude.help-out.net/

coordinator

Chris O'Connor 027 5676049

chris.oconnor@windows live.com

aspergersëautism support groupptaranaki
thinking differently across the spectrum



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Autism NZ offers many courses—mostly free to parents/caregivers of those with ASD.

SPELL, HELP, and Early Bird are the main courses they run in most areas in NZ. SPELL is for both parents and professionals, and HELP and Early Bird are for parents and caregivers. For dates and venues, visit their website on www.autismnz.org.nz

Attention Parents and Carers of People on the Autism Spectrum

Coming to the Devon Hotel in New Plymouth on **August 25th and 26th 2009** is the excellent **SPELL** course, which is **FREE** for parents, carers and supporters. At the end of the course you will have a better understanding of autism spectrum disorders and some excellent tools for planning and managing situations involving individuals on the spectrum. Parents can take up to two supporters to the course free of charge. These can be other family members or professionals (eg a teacher or teacher aide).

When asked what she got most out of the course, a local parent said;

“Fresh understanding. The time to step back from the situation and look practically at initiatives we can put into place to assist my son.”

Another attendee said;

“I liked the real life case studies which showed the individuality as well as the commonalities. People attending also had great stories to share and this created mutual understanding and support. Very positive”

The seminar is two days long and begins at 9am and finishes at 3pm each day. Morning tea and lunch is provided. To register, please phone Michelle at Autism New Zealand on 0800 288 476 ext 704.

Also in New Plymouth this month....HELP, which is a three day course for parents/caregivers. It is being held on the following dates at the Devon Hotel—**Saturday 22nd August, 29th August and 5th September.** This course is free and is being run by Celeste Littek. It covers issues such as behaviour, education, communication strategies and legal issues. Well worth attending as you receive a folder full of information as well as visuals etc to take away

Contact Michelle at Autism NZ—080028476 ext 704

Tony Attwood—Australian Psychologist with a ‘special interest’ in ASD



Tony has specialised in ASD since he qualified in 1975.

He has written several books on the subject

and I can honestly say from experience that he is great to listen to!

He will be presenting in **Wellington on September 21st from 9-4pm**

Costs—\$140.00 for professionals and \$120.00 for family.

To register please contact Autism NZ @ www.autismnz.org.nz or **0800 288 476**

What's on in Sept/Oct/Nov 09?

Committee Meetings

Wed 2nd Sept, 7th Oct & 4th Nov. 7pm @ Communication House.



Mum's Night Out

7.30pm @ Elixar Café for dessert and coffee. Tue 15th Sept, 20th Oct & 17th Nov.

Contact Karen Glenny ph 7512287

Coffee Group—New Plymouth

Third Tues of each month 10-11.30. Different venue each month.

Contact Rowena ph 7591287

Hawera Coffee Group

Every second month @ Hawera playcentre. Children welcome. Thurs 17th Sept, 10am

Contact Lynda Parata ph 06 2788314

Apptitude Support Group

Next meeting on Sunday 30th August.

Contact Chris O'Connor 0275676049

NOTICES

***Taranaki Guide to the Gluten-Free, Casein Free Diet**

– You may have read that some people with ASD find removing gluten (wheat protein) and casein (dairy protein) from their diet improves their concentration and general well being. We are a group of Mums here in New Plymouth who have tried this diet with our kids, and have found it makes a difference to them. We have put together a list of recipes and products and where you can buy them here in New Plymouth. If you'd like a copy contact Karen Glenny akglenney@ihug.co.nz

***Halberg Trust Funding.** The Halberg Trust Activity fund will meet costs over and above what it would cost an 'able-bodied child' to participate in sport. Examples of funded activities include specialised sports equipment, sports activities, coaching and school camps, as well as swimming lessons. Your child must be at least five years of age.

For more information and application forms contact John Sigurdsson (tel 759 0930 x 702), at Sport Taranaki.

***Moveable N P** – gym class for 5-13yr olds with disabilities. Held at NPGHS in their bouncy floor gym, on Fridays at 10-10.50 & 11-11.50. The cost is \$25 per term and those attending need to come with a caregiver.

Contact John Sigurdsson ph 7590930 ext 702 @ Sport Taranaki.

***Moveable Hawera**—special needs gym class held at St John's Gym Club in Burnside Ave, Hawera on Mondays from 11-11.45. Ph (06)2786766 or you can contact Morven Woodhead at 8am on (06) 2784033

DISCLAIMER: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF AUTISM NZ INC. FROM TIME TO TIME IN THE INTEREST OF PROVIDING THE WIDEST POSSIBLE RANGE OF INFORMATION TO OUR MEMBERS WE MAY INCLUDE SOME APPROACHES TO AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS NOW AVAILABLE. THIS DOES NOT, HOWEVER, IMPLY THAT AUTISM NZ INC. ENDORSES ANY PARTICULAR APPROACH.

Sue Larkey in New Plymouth—Making it a Success 2009

I was recently fortunate enough to hear Sue Larkey speak in New Plymouth. Sue has experience both as a teacher of children with ASD in main stream and special school, and she can see the positives and challenges for both. Sue is easy to listen to and she is practical in her strategies and respectful when talking about the kids she has worked with.

Here she lists her ***Ten Essential Tips for Understanding ASD***

1. ASD students don't have to look at you all the time.

Reason = *They find looking and listening at the same time hard to do.*

2. Give them time to answer your questions.

Reason = *They have slower processing time. Sometimes it can take them up to a minute to formulate the answer in the correct sequence.*

3. If they feel pressured they will answer with stock standard answers.

Reason = *They know it will get them out of trouble quickly. This may include: "I don't know", "Yes", "Maybe" and often this isn't their true answer!*

4. They often don't 'generalise' information between people and places.

Reason = *Homework for teacher "x" is in the yellow basket, but for teacher "Y" it's to be in the green basket.*

5. They find organization of their school equipment difficult.

Reason = *They are best with one folder with everything inside. Limit the number of pens, pencils etc.*

6. Limit their choices and be very specific with choices.

Reason = *They find choices overwhelming and are often concerned with making wrong choice due to their difficulty with problem solving.*

7. Be as clear, concise and concrete as possible.

Reason = *People with ASD have difficulty with abstract thinking.*

8. Avoid verbal overload.

Reason = *They are visual learners and verbal information take them longer to process and retain.*

9. Avoid verbal arguments by redirecting them to what they should be doing. E.g. "Start your work"

Reason = *They often enjoy verbal arguments.*

10. Asperger people need positive feedback to know they are on the right track.

Reason = *Because of their fear of failure and they want to be Mr/Ms Perfect.*

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter please hit reply and put 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.