



autism
tasmania

ABN: 90 215 494 454

29th Annual Report 2020 - 2021

How we made a difference

Statewide Contacts
autism@autismtas.org.au
(03) 6722 5000
www.autismtas.org.au

Our Appreciation

Autism Tasmania acknowledges the grant funding provided by our funders:

Funders

National Disability Insurance Scheme
Department of Social Services

Partners

Australian Autism Alliance
Australian Advisory Board on Autism
Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC)
Amaze - Autism Connect
Early Childhood Intervention Service
Early Days
Play Connect
Working It Out
Tasmanian Autism Diagnostics Service

Donors

Specsavers Optometrists Glenorchy
The Robert Fergusson Family Foundation
Tasmanian Police Payroll donations

We thank all individuals who supported us during the year and gratefully acknowledge the generous donations made by our members & the community.

Our Program Partners



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ATTACHMENT #1

Audited Financial Statement 2020-2021

About Us

Our Office Locations

Hobart office

21 Goulburn Street
Hobart, TAS 7000

Launceston office

39 Tamar Street
Launceston, TAS 7250
(opened 1 April 2021)

Burnie office

9 King Street
Burnie, TAS 7320
(opened 1 July 2021)

59 Amy Road
Launceston, TAS 7250
(until 1 April 2021)



Autism Tasmania acknowledges the Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the lutruwita (Tasmania) Aboriginal land, sea & waterways. We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.



Our Vision & Mission

Our vision is **optimal outcomes** for all Autistic Tasmanians.

Our mission is to work with, and for, the Tasmanian Autism community to:

- **Create** the right conditions for Autistic Tasmanians to achieve
- **Grow** community knowledge about Autism and how to make a difference.

Autism Tasmania is the peak independent voice for the Tasmanian Autism community.

We work closely with our members and the extended Autism community. We offer free membership to Autistic Tasmanians and their immediate families to access our services including Autism advice, service connections, support coordination, peer networks, and our member library.

We also work with service providers and businesses to provide learning and development in organisations to grow knowledge and confidence. We promote awareness for Autism and the simple adjustments that make a difference. Our systematic advocacy ensures that the voice of the Autistic community is heard and improvements are made.

We have three offices across the state of Tasmania; in Hobart, Burnie, and Launceston. We support the Autistic community as a community-based, not-for-profit, incorporated association and registered charity.

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Core Values

Inherent worth

Social justice

Individual dignity

Respecting language & identity

Evidence-based practice & policy

Collaboration and community

Professionalism & accountability



About Autism

Autism occurs when the brain develops differently. It affects the way people experience and interact with the world.

Given the extraordinary complexity of the brain it is easy to appreciate the range of both positive and negative impacts of Autism. Autism is one of a number of conditions that contributes to neurodiversity.

Autism affects the way people sense, communicate, behave, and interact with the world. It is talked about as a spectrum disorder. People experience their Autism to different degrees, meaning that everyone on the Autism spectrum is unique!

There are however some common autistic traits. Signs of these traits that others may see include:

- different communication behaviours such as not making eye contact, unusual speech patterns, or being non-verbal
- not responding to the behaviour, emotions and non-literal language of others in an expected way
- strong preference for structure and routine
- intense focus on areas of interest
- repetitive noises or movements (known as stimming)
- sensory hypersensitivities to certain sounds, smells, touch, taste, movement, or visual stimuli.

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All, some, or none of these traits may be obvious to others or only noticeable in difficult settings. Some people on the Autism spectrum make a lot of effort to hide their autistic traits.

Just like every person, each Autistic person has their own unique strengths, interests, potential, and needs.

Although Autism is complicated, the good news is that understanding and access to expert supports improves outcomes.

Our logo symbolises the rare native Tasmanian orchid (Theylmitra or sun orchid). This fascinating plant is a significant part of the flora of Tasmania. Its flowers are blue, pink, or yellow. This logo inspires our mission. Just like the Autism community, this extraordinary plant blooms "only when the conditions are right!"



About the Tasmanian Autistic Community

Prevalence

Autism prevalence (number of diagnosed individuals in a total population) and incidence (number of new diagnoses per year) is not accurately known. Nationally consistent diagnosis criteria and data collection processes are emerging, however at present remain focused on childhood diagnosis and on disability. Not all people with Autism identify as having a disability.

Autism Tasmania adopts the prevalence estimated by Autism Spectrum Australia at 1 in 70 persons, or 7,700 Tasmanians. This vastly underestimates the true prevalence and the disadvantage experienced.

NDIS

As at 30 June 2021 38%, or 3,921 of the 10,320 Tasmanian NDIS participants, have Autism as a primary or secondary disability.

Employment

The rate of unemployed Autistic Tasmanians is not yet known. Nationally, **1 in 3 Autistic people are unemployed**. This is almost eight times the rate for other people.

Education

Around **4-6 in 100 children have Autism**. All Autistic children are eligible for extra supports as part of their individual learning plans. The exact number of Autistic children in Tasmanian schools is not known because data about specific disability types are not collected.

Diagnosis

Tasmanians have limited public (up to age 18) and private options for diagnosis. The public waiting lists have consistently exceeded 18 months this year. Autism Tasmania estimates that 300 children are currently awaiting diagnostic services.

Mental health

Around **5-7 in 10 autistic people experience mental health conditions**. This is more than three times the rate for other people. Autistic women and girls experience higher rates of mental illness than autistic men and boys. This highlights the urgent need for mental health services and resources that are designed for and with autistic people.

Barriers to Optimal Outcomes for Autistic Tasmanians

Autism Tasmania is working to reduce the following barriers.

1. **Delayed access** to necessary supports and services due to:
 - Long diagnosis wait list
 - Low or no access to allied health practitioners and skilled support workers
 - Incomplete knowledge of Autism across mainstream services (health, mental health, education, and justice).
2. **Low employment levels** due to gaps in employer knowledge and understanding about the strengths in the Autistic community.
3. **Low social inclusion and participation** due to gaps in community knowledge and understanding about needs and strengths in the Autistic community.



We grew Autism Tasmania...

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Strategy

3 offices across Tasmania strengthened our community access



Partners

1 national program delivered to operate Autism Connect in Tasmania
2 National peak bodies engaged as advocacy partners



Staff

14,198 total work hours, **41%** annual increase
25 staff members, **25%** annual increase



Finance

\$9,319.34 received in donations, **0%** annual increase
\$78,058 surplus for the year, **100%** annual increase



Systems

Introduced statewide call system to increase call responses by all staff
100% staff mobility with improved technology for flexibility



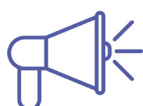
Communication

12 editions of Spectrum e-news delivered, **20%** annual increase
4,315 followers on Facebook, **26%** annual increase
73 posts, **7%** annual decrease
346 members in our private members Facebook group
150,000 website visits
130% annual increase in website landings via organic search results



Governance

2,332 members, **24%** annual increase
9 Board meetings, **125%** annual increase
2 subcommittee meetings, **100%** annual increase



Advocacy

4 national NDIS consultation submissions
6 witness presentations to the Senate Select Committee on Autism

Outcomes

...to strengthen the impact of our programs

Autism Advisory Services

4,527 contacts made, **50%** annual increase

80% of these were clients (Autistic people, their family & carers)



Learning & Development

31 workshops delivered, **64%** annual decrease*

483 participants, **40%** annual decrease*

**decrease due to COVID pandemic*



NDIS Support Coordination

220 services and supports sourced and coordinated

1,350 billable hours, **26%** annual increase



Peer & Social Networks

4 active peer support groups

55 active participants in our new peer groups this year



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Our Board

CHAIRPERSON

Kieran McDonald

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

Philip StEvens (from Oct 2021)

Annette Beechey (until Oct 2020)

SECRETARY

Christine Wright (from Oct 2021)

Annette Beechey (until Oct 2020)

TREASURER

David Donald

BOARD MEMBERS

James Baker

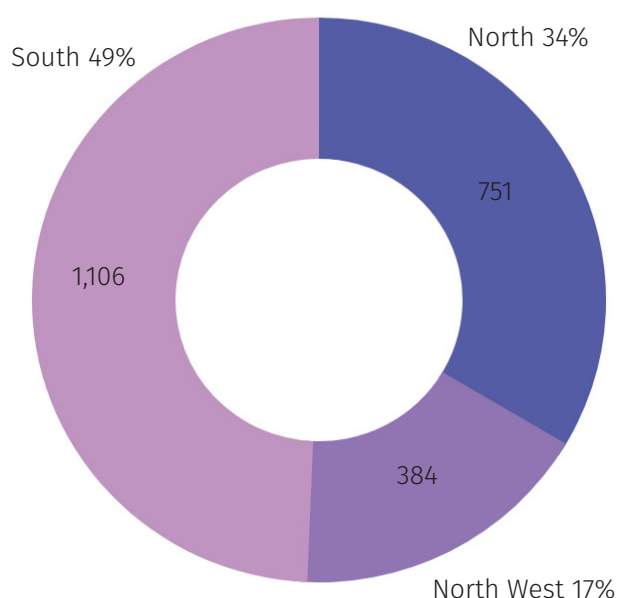
Dr Lisa-ann Gershwin

Laura Godfrey

Skie Mitchell

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Financial members by location



Board Member Attendance 2020-2021

Name	Required	Attended
Kieran McDonald	9	9
Philip StEvens	9	7
David Donald	9	8
Christine Wright	6	6
Dr Lisa-ann Gershwin	9	8
Laura Godfrey	9	6
James Baker	9	6
Skie Mitchell	6	7
Annette Beechey	3	2



Chairperson's Report

It is my privilege to present the 29th Autism Tasmania Annual Report.

Collaboration and community are core values of Autism Tasmania. These have been central to our effort during the 2020-2021 financial year.

During this time, we farewelled retiring CEO, Terry Burke and welcomed Donna Blanchard to this key leadership role.

Building on the solid foundation forged by Terry, Donna has overseen the consolidation of Statewide services. We now have offices in every region of Tasmania – Burnie, Launceston and Hobart to better meet the growing need for Autism Advisory, NDIS Support Coordination and other services including enhanced peer networks.

Autism Tasmania works to ensure the voice of Autistic Tasmanians is heard – nationally and locally.

Collaborating with partner organisations, such as the Australian Advisory Board on Autism and the Australian Autism Alliance, we have influenced reforms to the NDIS.

During recent state elections, we secured pledges from all candidates to address the diagnosis wait list and to invest more in Autism learning and development.

The Board looks forward to working with members, staff, partners and communities to transform our organisation so that we can better deliver outcomes for the Tasmanian Autistic community.

Kieran McDonald
CHAIRPERSON

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Farewell Terry Burke

The Autism Tasmania Board members and staff express enormous gratitude to Mr Terry Burke. Terry served the Tasmanian Autistic community as CEO of Autism Tasmania since 2013. Terry, and Autism Tasmania, worked tirelessly to deliver services and to build the foundation of a successful and sustainable Autism Tasmania Incorporated.

Thank you Terry.



Our Team in 2020-2021

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Donna Blanchard (from Feb 21)

Terry Burke (until Feb 21)

BUSINESS MANAGER

Allison Lapham

ACCOUNTANT

Izaak de Winter

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Robyn Thomas

AUTISM ADVISOR MANAGER

Maree Morgan

AUTISM ADVISORS

Jodie Denman (until Oct 20)

Kerryn Pammenter

Courtney Landers

Roger O'Meagher

Krystyna Moyle

Mellissa Radford

Amanda Gunders

AUTISTIC-LED PEER SUPPORT LEADERS

Geraldine Robertson

Daniel Zomerdyk

AUTISTIC-LED FACILITATORS

Daniel Zomerdyk

Jason Sanderson

Lisa Berry

Holger Brand

Kate Cochran

Soloman Smith

AUTISTIC CONSULTANTS

Paige Hope

Pen Brake

Ruth McTaggart

Donna Kenny



Chief Executive Officer Report

It is an honour to join the Autism Tasmania team and work to build on its 30 year history of making a difference to the Tasmanian Autistic community.

This year we focussed on strategy execution and program delivery.

Autism Tasmania successfully secured national funding under the Information, Linkage and Capacity Building (ILC) grants to target two key objectives:

1. **Build** the capacity of our members - the Autistic community, and
2. **Grow** Autism Tasmania's organisational strengths.

While the year started with national COVID lockdowns, the Autism Tasmania Board and team were busy recruiting to build skills across our four key programs;

- expert Autism advisory
- NDIS support coordination
- learning & development, and
- peer networks.

We successfully recruited new talent to the team, established a statewide presence with three offices in Hobart, Burnie, and Launceston; and invested in best practice technologies. Our staff are now able to work anywhere the community needs us to be.

We implemented new finance systems to significantly increase our operational efficiency, releasing more time for our members.

Together, we collaborated with national partners to ensure that NDIS reforms are right for us all and we presented evidence to the Senate Select Committee on Autism in support of a National Autism Strategy.

Our communication systems have been upgraded to improve our member and community engagement. This annual report showcases these achievements and is a credit to the talent and dedication of the Board and every team member.

Thank you to Terry for setting the foundation for an effective Autism Tasmania.

Special recognition must go to the Chairperson, Board, and the staff for the thorough induction to the impressive and inspiring Tasmanian Autistic community.

Donna Blanchard
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



How we made a difference

Context

Client was a carer and parent of two Autistic children, identifying as Autistic themselves. Both children were struggling in school (with learning and bullying) and the parent was feeling very distressed after a recent breakdown in their marriage.

Outcomes

We immediately worked with the client to prioritise their concerns including a suicidal risk assessment. A referral to the Strong Families Safe Kids program was made and case management was passed on to Mission Australia. The client spoke to our advisor just two months after the referral to share their successes both as a carer and in managing their own wellbeing. Reasonable adjustments in the classroom are now in place for both the children. Importantly, the parent has expressed increased confidence and relief at no longer feeling overwhelmed.

Context

A young client sought advice as they were extremely agitated about their work. They worked three hours a day, three days a week and their employer wanted to increase this to six hour shifts, four days a week. While the extra hours were appreciated, our client felt anxious about their anticipated sensory overload and embarrassment about their need to stim. They were unsure whether they would be supported and accommodated to stim without fear of ridicule or discrimination.

Outcomes

We contacted Disability Employment Services (DES) who agreed to work with the employer to negotiate more suitable work arrangements for our client. In addition they provided ongoing support to our client regarding their employment. The client reported feeling very happy with the situation and secure in their work. They also said they now feel confident that they know where to seek support should challenges arise in this area of their life again.



Autism Advice



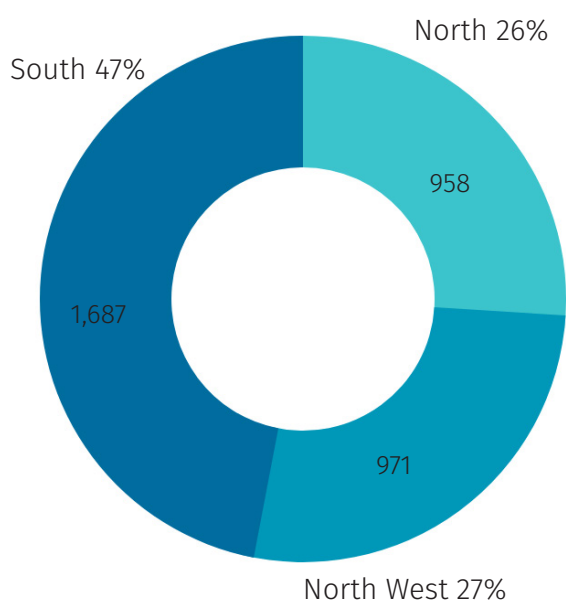
Autism Tasmania's Autism Advisory team guide people through:

- connection with local services, therapists, support and our mainstream and community networks
- the process and experiences of Autism assessments
- the NDIS application and processes
- access to national resources through our delivery of Autism Connect.

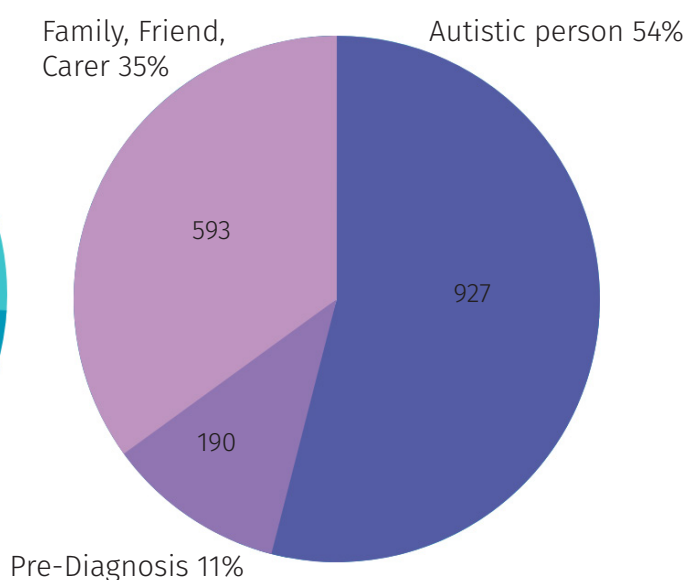
In 2020/21 Autism Tasmania partnered with Amaze to deliver Autism Connect in Tasmania. This national initiative seeks to deliver nationally consistent, evidence informed telephone support to the Autistic community.

Autism Tasmania's advisors conducted a total of **4,527** contacts in 2020/21, 78% of these were clients (people on the Autism spectrum, their family and carers).

Client Location

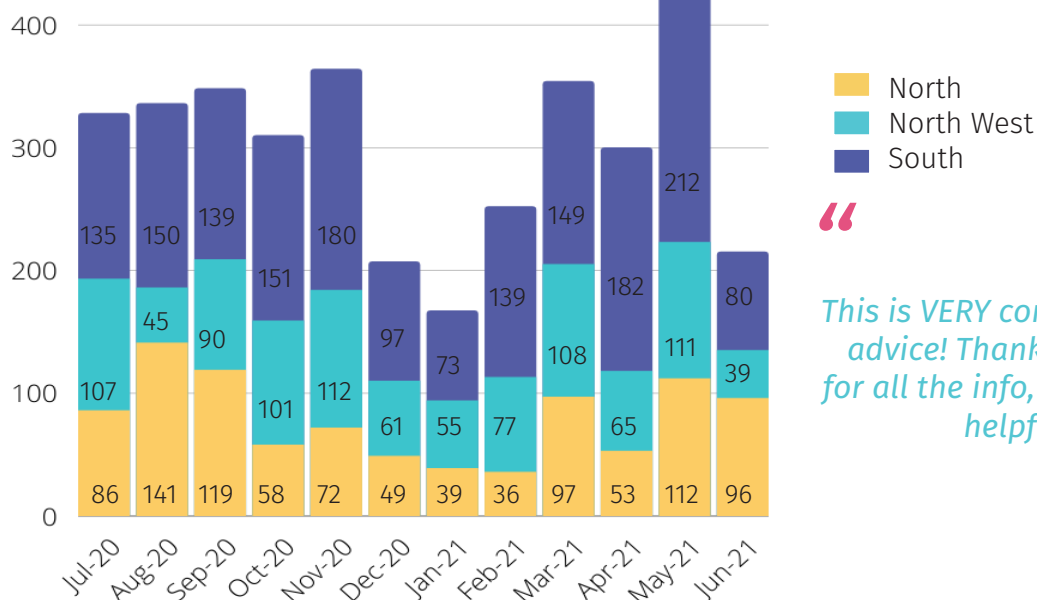


Client Contacts by Category



12

Total Clients by Month & Location



“

This is VERY comprehensive advice! Thanks so much for all the info, enormously helpful.



How we made a difference

Context

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation referred a new client - a single parent of three, the eldest of which (14 years old) is Autistic. The client had very little knowledge of the NDIS and how to navigate their son's plan. Having recently moved to Tasmania, they were also feeling socially isolated.

Outcomes

We worked to empower the client to feel confident in their understanding of the NDIS, the roles of various people and how to communicate with them. The client's son now has daily living supports in place including a support worker and regular speech therapy sessions. We also assisted the client to engage a behavioural specialist. A strong reliance remains in place on this client's support team, including Autism Tasmania, to provide and maintain holistic support and impact real change.

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Context

A parent sought advice about the lack of School Leaver Employment Support (SLES) services available to meet the diverse needs of Autistic people in their local area.

Outcomes

We met with national and local managers of the Disability Employment Services (DES) to identify ways that would make their service more flexible and accommodating for the Autistic and neurodiverse community. As a result our client was offered placement without NDIS funding to complete a trial employment support program. We also worked to provide advice on how best to adjust their other programs and better engage the Autistic community.



NDIS Support Coordination



Autism Tasmania specialises in NDIS Support Coordination for the Autistic community.

We provide support coordination for Autistic participants who have this funded in their NDIS plan. We provide support coordination exclusively to participants on the Autism spectrum and use our knowledge and understanding of Autism to enable participants to find the right supports to achieve their goals.

Support Coordinators help Autistic NDIS participants maximise their choice and control and get the best outcomes from their NDIS plan. We take a person-centred approach to support coordination. This means we listen to clients to find out:

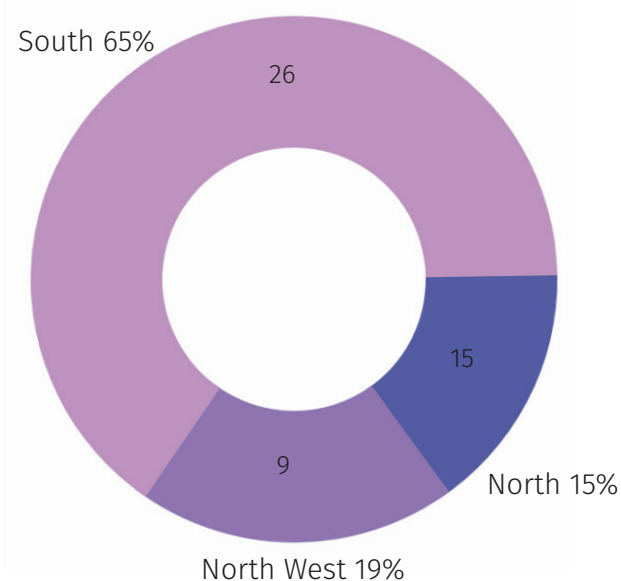
- Who they are
- What they need
- How we can support them to get what they need to achieve their NDIS plan goals.

Autism Tasmania worked to build the NDIS Support Coordination team in 2020/21, successfully recruiting in both Hobart and Burnie.

We work to grow capability & independence, connect participants, and increase choice and control. A key challenge for us is the identified gap in the allied health workforce and the social opportunities to match the diverse needs of our clients.

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Support Coordination Clients by Location



“

Autism Tasmania provided me with masses of help in understanding the way NDIS works, and their knowledge of the rules and guidelines to assist with my constant queries was enormous. It was never any trouble for Autism Tasmania to answer my many calls and emails and clarify any concerns that arose.”

”

1,350 billable hours,
26% annual increase



How we made a difference

Context

Tasmanian Autism Diagnostic Service (TADS) referred a parent who had joined their wait list. Their child was 4 years old and the parent was feeling overwhelmed with information and requested guidance on how to learn more about Autism, both for themselves and for the child's grandparents.

Outcomes

We conducted an initial discussion with the client by phone and then met face-to face. The range of information resources and learning opportunities were discussed. The client enrolled in targeted workshops in Understanding Autism, Progression to School, and Toileting to grow their skills.

As a result the client accessed a wide range of information and resources and importantly, also connected with other families for social and peer support. The client reported that attending these workshops had reduced their anxiety and significantly increased their confidence in readiness for the diagnosis outcome.

.....



Learning & Development

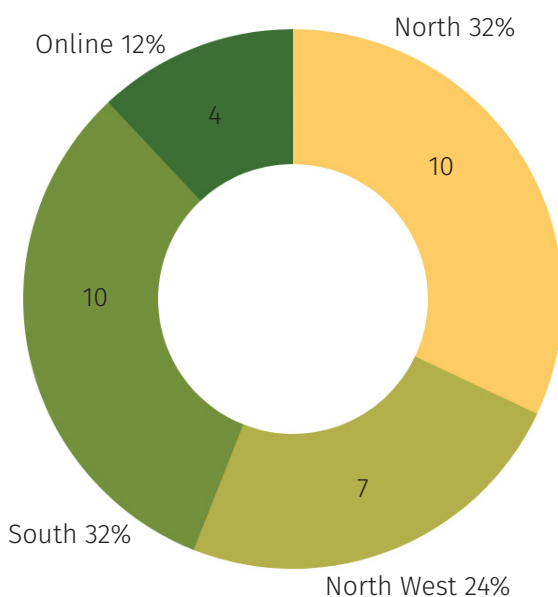


Customised workshops for families, carers, service providers, mainstream organisations, and the community grow knowledge and confidence.

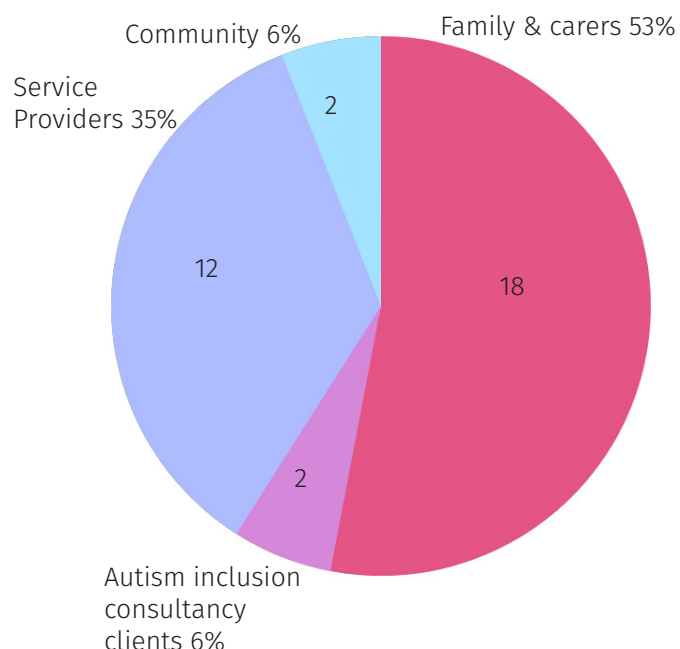
This year we delivered 31 workshops to 483 participants. Unfortunately due to COVID and decreased capabilities, this was a 40% decrease compared to the previous year.

Autism Tasmania is pleased to connect with PlayConnect and the Early Childhood Intervention Service to engage family and carers to participate in learning and development. Autism Tasmania is pleased to implement the national Early Days program in Tasmania.

Workshops by location



Workshops by audience type



16

73% of attendees would recommend Autism Tasmania workshops

97% of attendees felt our workshops increased their knowledge of Autism

87% of attendees felt more confident interacting with individuals on the spectrum

96% of attendees felt our workshops provided practical ideas to implement at work

“

I really enjoyed the workshop, the content was digestible and to the point. Excellent lived-experience speakers and facilitator.

”



How we made a difference

Context

A 70-year-old client was recently diagnosed and was looking for peer networking and social opportunities. They expressed relief and said, "I finally understand the reasons for my struggles in employment and relationships throughout my life."

Outcomes

Autism Tasmania ensured this person had access to a range of information and resources and encouraged their participation in an adult peer group. After attending they reported they found the group somewhat helpful but felt there were no other members at the same life stage as themselves. We were pleased to receive this feedback and worked to introduce this client to one of our Autistic Consultants (who had similar experience) for an informal one-on-one connection. The feedback from this meeting was positive from both parties, and the client stated, "it is so good to finally understand me and that I am not alone."

Context

At the UTAS Market Day in Burnie a new member enquired about the lack of local peer support groups. They advised that they were keen to establish a peer support group with the help of a friend and that they were interested in our assistance.

Outcomes

We worked together to establish a parent/carer peer support group in the local area. The group now meets weekly and all parents and carers of Autistic children are welcome.

Establishing this peer support group has not only had a positive impact on the parents who created the group but also for the local Autistic community. They now all have the opportunity to connect with one another for support, information sharing and connection. This peer support group now has regular members who are strengthening their relationships with each other, local services and the Autistic community as a whole.



Peer & Social Networks



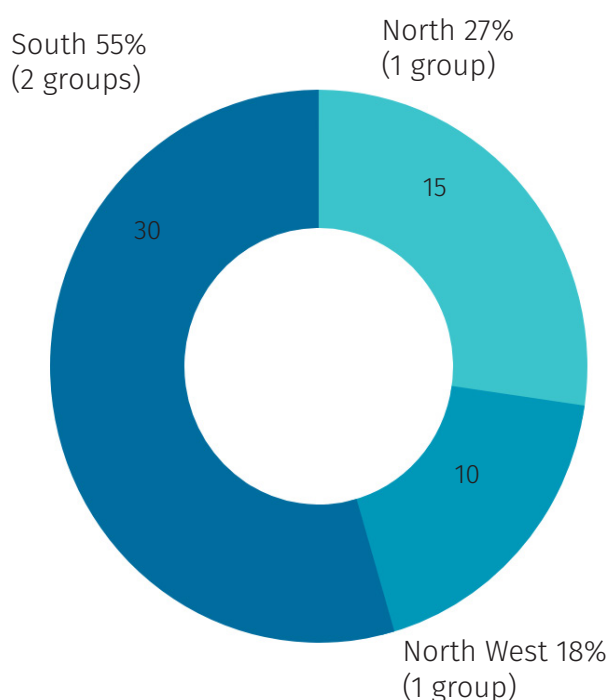
Autism Tasmania understands that every person has their own unique needs and interests and we are working to expand the range of peer groups available statewide for members of the Autism community.

Without the support of extraordinary community leaders, Autism Tasmania would not be able to make a difference to the Autistic Community. Autism Tasmania acknowledges with deep appreciation the significant contribution of the many individuals who volunteer their time and resources to coordinate peer group meetings. There are currently **119 people on the wait list** to join a peer support group.

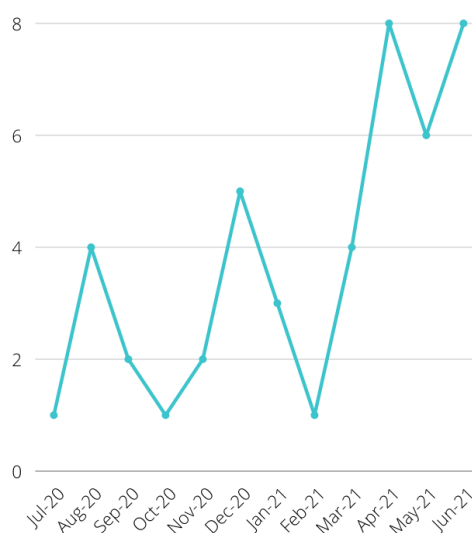
We have three main channels for peer support:

- Peer-led support groups (Peer Support the Autistic Way aka PSAW)
- Social events across Tasmania which foster ongoing connection for parents, children, and adults
- The Autism Tasmania member's Facebook group for networking and discussions

Peer group attendees by location



Member's Facebook group posts by month



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“

I am less isolated and have more things to do around Hobart thanks to the people I have met directly and indirectly through Peer Support: the Autistic Way.

”

Member engagement in the community has increased over the year with a total of 45 posts in the member's Facebook group this year



I support the Tasmanian Autism community.

I pledge to make the following happen when elected:

The State Government must commit to:

\$50,000 per annum to reconvene Tasmanian Autism Advisory Panel to:

- Assess the impact of the ongoing retraction of the NDIS which exposes Tasmanians with Autism to unfair disadvantage.
- Coordinate statewide responses to the new National Disability Strategy, Senate Select Committee on Autism.

The State Government must commit to:

\$350 000 per annum to recruit Allied Health practitioners to reduce the children assessment waiting lists.

The State Government must commit to:

\$500 000 per annum to enable in social and economic participation for autistic Tasmanians:

- Autism awareness training for all front-line government employees.
- New HR recruitment processes and application mentoring to increase employment of autistic Tasmanians.

CANDIDATE

ELECTORATE

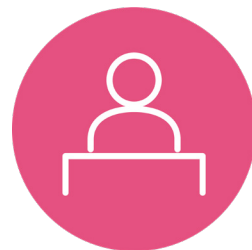
SIGNED

We improve the lives of adults and children on the autism spectrum, their families and carers; and community awareness, acceptance, and understanding of autism.

www.autismtas.org.au



Representing members



Our advocacy ensures that the voice of the Autistic community is heard and improvements are made. We work with our advocacy partners to shape the programs and policies at local, state, and national levels. This includes submissions to influence the range of reforms to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

National

Senate Select Committee on Autism

The Committee conducted public hearings in Tasmania in May 2021 and Autism Tasmania provided witness statements at hearings in Launceston and Hobart.

Autism Tasmania is an active member of the Australian Autism Alliance and together we are calling for a National Autism Strategy to be established. Our submission titled **The Autism Dividend** provides deep insights into the lived-experience of Autistic people and offers considered and strategic options to reforms.

NDIS Policy Consultation

The NDIS continues to be fine-tuned and Autism Tasmania is active in representing the views of the Tasmanian Autistic community, through our active involvement in national submissions. Autism Tasmania provided witness statements in Hobart in May 2021.

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State

Election Pledge

We called all 20/21 state election candidates to pledge their commitment to the Tasmanian Autism community. This can be seen on the opposite page.

Local

Autism Tasmania provided expert advice about Autism inclusion strategies at:

- Hobart City Council
- Hobart Airport Access Committee
- UTAS SPEERMENT Group

“

The voice of Autistic Tasmanians must be heard at national, state, and local policy forums. Autism Tasmania partners with national, state, and local organisations

”



Our new digital library

Filter Titles

Topic

Audience

Search ...



Women and Girls with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Understanding Life Experiences from Early Childhood to Old Age

Girls Life Skills

Read More



What Every Autistic Girl Wishes Her Parents Knew

Parents

Understanding Autism

Read More

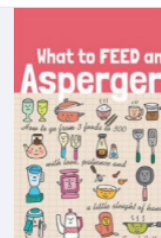


What Is It Like to Be Me?

Children Parents Teenagers

Understanding Autism

Read More



What to Feed an Asperger (Recipe Book)

Children Dietary Parents

Teenagers

Read More

21

Topic

Topic

Adult Diagnosis
All children
Anxiety
Autobiography
Behaviour
Cognitive Behaviour
Coping Strategies
Dietary
Education
Employment
Executive Function
History of Autism
Indigenous Storybook
Life Skills
Mentor
Mental Health
NDIS
Parents/Carers Educators
Play Skills

Audience

Audience

Adult Diagnosis
Adults
All children
Children
Educators
Girls
Parents
Parents/Carers Educators
Professionals
Siblings
Teen Girls
Teenager
Teenagers
Teens

Member library

Our member library is a comprehensive Autism-specific reading and viewing collection available for loan.

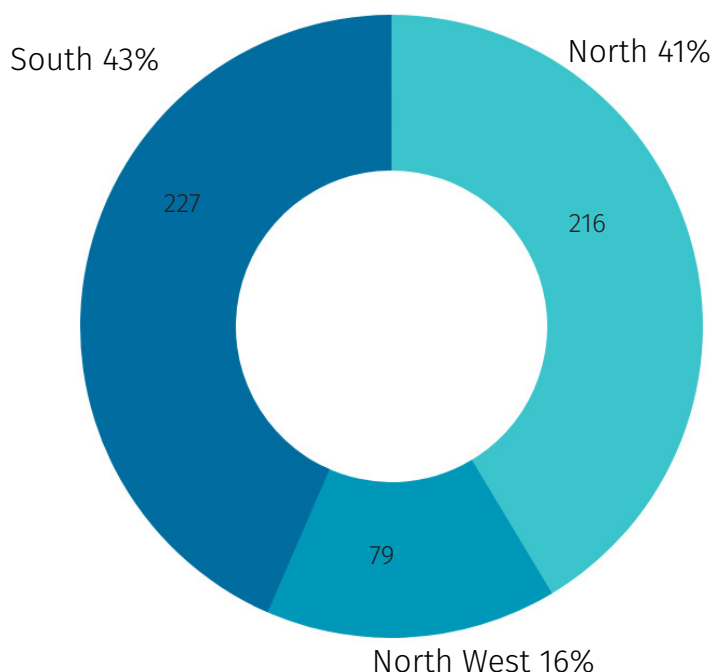


This year we launched our new online library system to increase statewide access to quality resources. Members can now browse and order books online for delivery to their home, or collect in-person from one of our offices.

We have 522 publications available for loan, which includes 77 new titles added in 2020/21, a 17% annual increase. In 2020/21 we processed 78 book loans to 23 members, a 13% decrease due to the impact of the pandemic.

Our new digital interface will encourage members all over the state to engage with our library ensuring our service is truly statewide and increasing accessibility.

Library books by location



22

“

I found the range of books about puberty and teenage development really helpful in encouraging my child to engage in open conversations about their experiences.

”



Terminology Policy

When in personal communication with someone on the Autism spectrum, it is respectful to follow their lead in terms of how they would like to be referred to in regard to their Autism (for example: Autistic, person on the Autism spectrum, person with Autism, person with ASD, **Person with Asperger's/ Asperger's Syndrome**).



Position Statement

Terminology Policy

The language used to describe autism is important.
Many different preferences are evident and expressed by Autistic
Tasmanian's and their loved ones.
No single terminology preference is right or wrong.



Preferred Terminology

The terminology used by Autism Tasmania in its communications and publications is guided by the advice of the Autism Cooperative Research Centre (Autism CRC): <https://www.autismcrc.com.au/language-choice> Importantly, this advice is consistent with preferences expressed in two recent member surveys:

1. The Autism Tasmania Members Survey September 2018
2. The Autism Tasmania Members Survey September 2020 to inform Autism Training for Allied Health Professionals

Autism Tasmania's published materials and communications use the following terms interchangeably:

- Autism
- Autism spectrum
- Autistic person
- Person on the Autism spectrum
- Person on the spectrum
- Autistic community (refers collectively to people on the Autism spectrum)
- Autism community (refers collectively to people on the Autism spectrum and their family, friends, and allies).

When in personal communication with someone on the Autism spectrum, it is respectful to follow their lead in terms of how they would like to be referred to in regard to their Autism (for example: Autistic, person on the Autism spectrum, person with Autism, person with ASD, **Person with Asperger's/ Asperger's Syndrome**).

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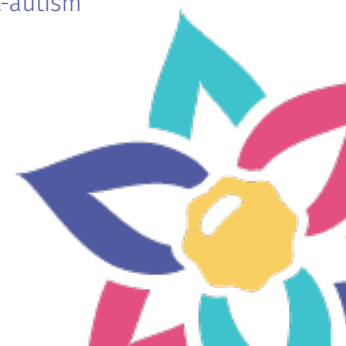
Non-Preferred Terminology

Autism Tasmania is guided by the recent member surveys and by position statements of key national and international Autistic-led or Autistic-informed organisations (ASAN-NZ, Australian Autism Alliance, Autism Journal, National Autistic Society UK) to avoid use of language which pathologises or stigmatises Autism. In particular, the following terms are avoided:

- Functioning labels (e.g. High/low, severe/mild): Many Autistic adults and family members express that dividing autistic people into categories does not fully represent the diverse abilities and challenges faced
- Has Autism
- Person/child/adult with Autism
- ASD / Disorder (unless in specific reference to the diagnosis).

References

ASAN-AU/NZ: <https://www.asan-au.org/autistic-the-word/>
Autism CRC: <https://www.autismcrc.com.au/language-choice>
Autism Journal: https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/autism_terminology_guidelines.pdf National Autistic Society UK: <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/help-and-support/how-to-talk-about-autism>





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