



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

aaetC
Australian Autism
Education &
Training Consortium

Autism Spectrum Australia
University of Canberra
Autism SA
Department of Education and Training, Western Australia
www.autismtraining.com.au



positive
partnerships

Supporting school aged students on the

Autism Spectrum

ASSID CONFERENCE

BRISBANE, 2010

TODAY'S SYMPOSIUM

1. Overview of the Positive Partnerships Model

Jacqui Borland

2. Building Capacity: Parents as Partners in Education

Kristen Ody

3. Building Capacity: Moving towards Sustainability

Bronwyn Thoroughgood

Positive Partnerships

supporting school aged students on the autism spectrum

Developed and created by...

aaetC
Australian Autism
Education &
Training Consortium

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A DEEWR funded component of the Australian Government's *Helping Children with Autism* package

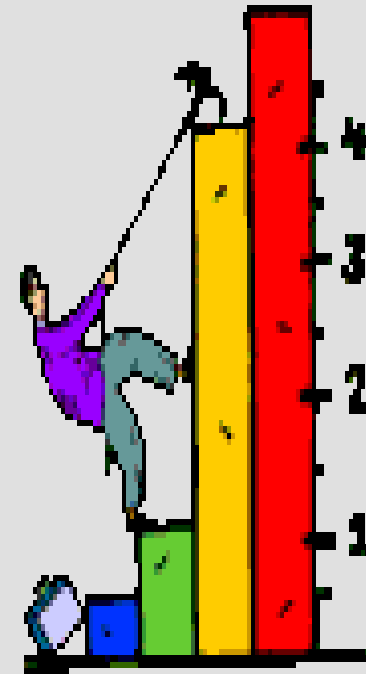


Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**

The Challenge

- To provide a nationally consistent approach to the education of teachers and parents that is ALSO responsive and relevant to local context



Positive Partnerships...

1. *Professional Development* workshops for teachers and other school staff
2. Support for *Professional Networks* for 3 – 6 months after each PD workshop.
3. *Workshops and information sessions* for parents/carers of school aged children with autism
4. Support for *Community Networks* for 3 – 6 months after each parent/carer workshop
5. An on-line platform

The *Positive Partnerships* Website

www.autismtraining.com.au

The screenshot shows the website interface within an Internet Explorer browser window. The browser title is "Welcome to Positive Partnerships Online Learning Portal". The address bar shows the URL "http://www.autismtraining.com.au/public/index.cfm?returnTo=%2Findex%2Ecfm". The website header features the "positive partnerships" logo and the text "Supporting school aged students on the Autism Spectrum". A navigation menu includes links for Home, Parents/Carers, Teachers & Schools, About AAETC, Useful Links, and Site Map. On the right side, there are links for "Contact Us", "Online Learning Portal", "New Users? Register Now!", and "Already a Member? Login". The main content area contains a text block explaining the project's components and a graphic of a child pointing to a board with links to "Workshops for Parents & Carers" and "Workshops for Teachers". A "NEW" banner is visible at the bottom of the content area. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several open applications (Flashing, Basic Screen Recorder, Flashing), and the system clock at 5:03 PM.

Welcome to Positive Partnerships Online Learning Portal

Supporting school aged students on the
Autism Spectrum

positive partnerships

Home Parents/Carers Teachers & Schools About AAETC Useful Links Site Map

Contact Us
Online Learning Portal
New Users? Register Now!
Already a Member? Login

The *Positive Partnerships* supporting school aged students on the autism spectrum project delivers two components of the *Helping Children with Autism* package being implemented by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The aim of both components is to improve the educational outcomes for school aged children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

The two components are:

1. professional development for teachers and other school staff who are working with students with ASD (Professional Development Component); and
2. workshops and information sessions for parents and carers of school aged children with ASD (Parent/Carer Component).

Both components are delivered nationally by the Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium (AAETC).

Click here to register for
Workshops for Parents & Carers

Click here for
Workshops for Teachers

NEW

Waiting for http://www.autismtraining.com.au/public/index.cfm?action=logn&returnTo=...

Internet 100%

start Flashing Basic Screen Recorder Flashing Welcome to Positive ... 5:03 PM

The *Positive Partnerships* Website

Online interactive learning modules, fact sheets, & resources

- Introduction to autism
- completing work
- making friends
- bullying
- sexuality, personal health & hygiene
- managing everyday transitions
- positive behavior support
- communication
- siblings

Positive Partnerships Principles

All aspects of the Positive Partnerships model reflect:

- A current evidence/literature base
- A rigorous focus on evaluation and continuous improvement
- A commitment to building capacity at many levels, and supporting long term sustainability.

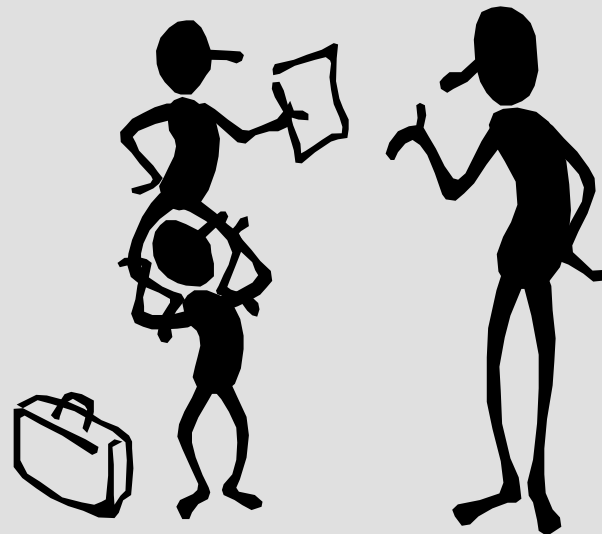
Key Elements of Positive Partnerships

All Positive Partnerships activities have interrelated elements:

- Collaborative planning processes with key stakeholders in each state and territory
- Content and program delivery that reflects engagement at a local level
- Rigorous evaluation and review processes

Multi-level Partnerships

- AAETC
- DEEWR Advisory Committee
- State & Territory Planning Teams
- Local Level Partnerships
- Parents & Professionals



Members of the AAETC



autism spectrum
AUSTRALIA



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA
AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL UNIVERSITY

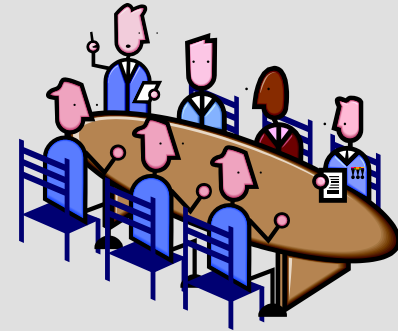


Department of
Education and Training



DEEWR Advisory Committee

- WA Dept Education & Training
- Association Independent Schools, SA
- Catholic Education Commission, NSW
- Australian Parents' Council
- Australian Council State Schools Organisations
- Australian Special Education Principals' Association
- Carers Australia
- Australian Association of Special Education



State & Territory Implementation Teams

- Key stakeholders are represented
- All education sectors are represented
- Positive Partnerships team member
- 3 meetings/year
- Are responsible for providing the local context for the delivery of workshops, establishing of networks etc.



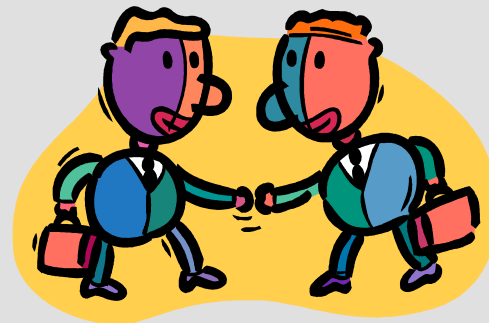
The ACT Implementation Team Story

- ACT DET
- Canberra/Wollongong Diocese
- AIS
- Autism/Asperger ACT
- Positive Partnerships
- Around the same table for the **FIRST** time
- Now have an on-going commitment to collaborative planning



Local Level Collaboration

- Participation in the Professional Development program is cross-sectoral
- Regional Managers are involved in the selection of schools
- Key local professionals (KLPs) are identified to attend workshops and support participants as part of a professional network for 3 – 6 months following workshop



The Hume/Sandhurst Story



- Already a history of collaboration
- Regional Managers worked collaboratively to select particular towns/schools for participation
- KLPs supported schools from other sectors as it made geographical sense
- Each sector has provided support to continue networks and include more schools
- Now collaborating on first Positive Partnerships Facilitator Training program



Sue King from VICPD1 Benalla writes:

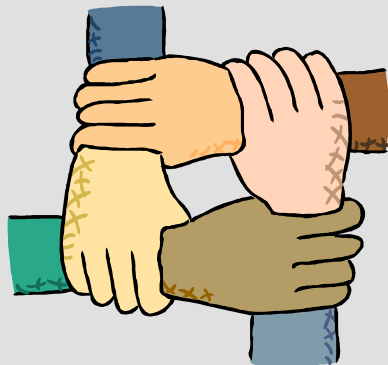
'The networks created in 2009 have evolved into a dynamic, cross sector support system in 2010. Catholic, DEECD and Independent schools have continued to meet at a local level.

To reduce time and the costs involved in travelling, we have set up a series of cluster based, cross sector, collaborative websites called Nings, which allow participants to share resources including; documents, video and photographs as well as ideas through discussion boards; creating a community of practice online.

Membership includes teachers and school leadership teams from the Positive Partnerships Program, as well as staff from schools that did not complete the program, also a strong representation of local occupational therapists, speech pathologists, and psychologists,

Parents and Professionals

- Positive Partnerships gives same tools/same messages to parents and teachers
- Where possible parent and teacher workshops are co-located
- KLPs and KLFs are invited to share information
- Many professional projects are parent-focussed



Quotes about partnerships



- ***The matrix has re-established a partnership between parents and schools. The matrix allows partners to see what is happening, what we need to do and put in place to support the student.*** **Teacher, Vic**
- *At Program Support Group meetings..... I have found that whatever else is going on... when we use the Matrix the focus is totally on the child. The swapping of information and development of understanding has been invaluable.* **Parent, Vic**

Research Projects



- Autism Friendly Schools Project

What is the impact of participation in Positive Partnerships on how schools foster an ‘autism friendly culture’?

- Systems Impact Project

What has been the impact of Positive Partnerships on the way systems support students with an ASD and their families?

Conclusion (Part 1)

- A nationally consistent approach to the education of teachers and parents that is ALSO responsive and relevant at a local level is possible.



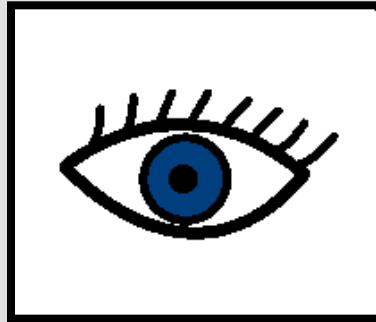
- Collaborative Planning
- Strategic Support
- Multi-level Partnerships

Building Capacity: Parents as partners in education

Kristen Ody

Leader: Content & Delivery

What is the Parent Carer workshop like?



It will look like...



It will sound like...



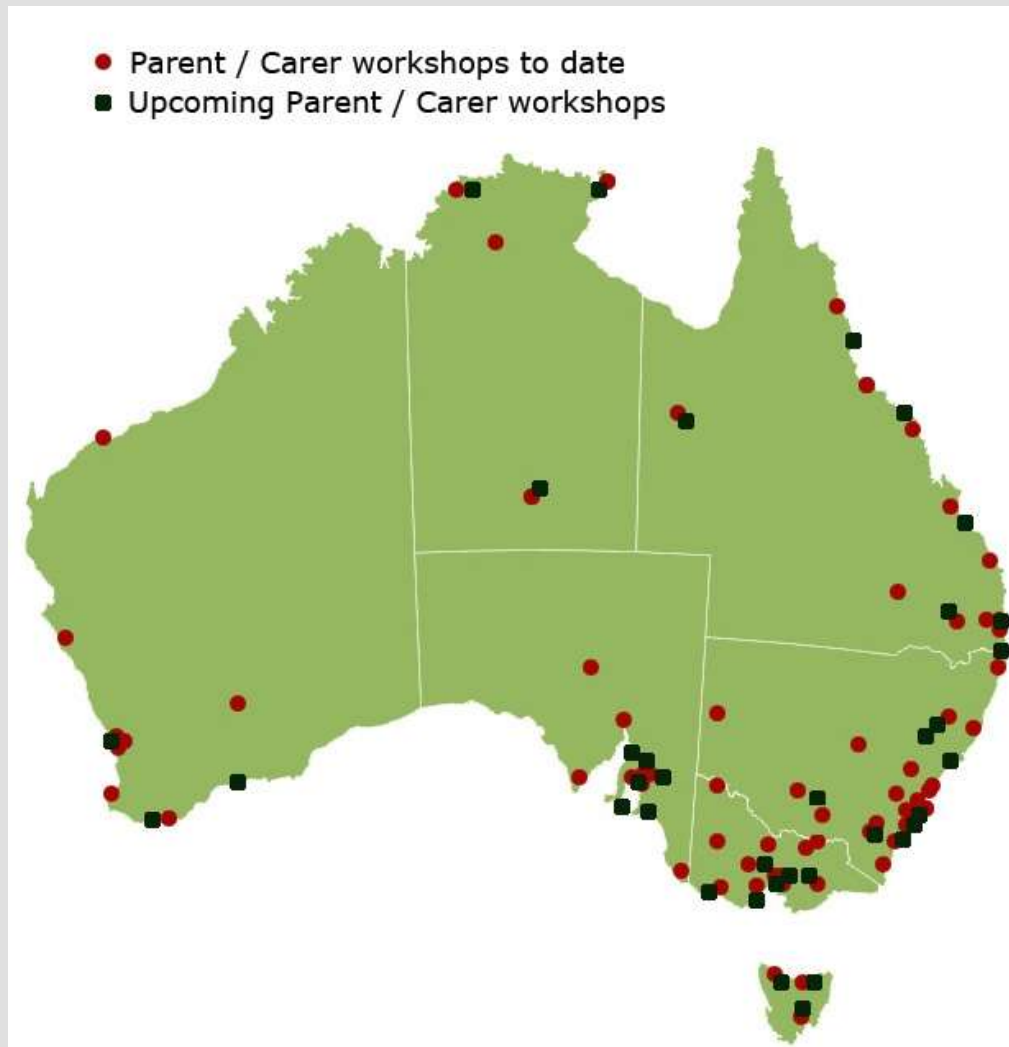
It will feel like...

The story so far...

Parent/Carer Delivery 2008-2011

- As at 17th September 2010 a total of 123 workshops and information sessions for parents/ carers have been conducted nationally.
- A further 56 workshops and information sessions are scheduled for the remainder of 2010 - 2011.
- 4136 parents/carers have participated in the workshops to date.

Parent/Carer Workshop Delivery 2008-2011



Networking and Support

- One of the unique features of *Positive Partnerships* is the networking and further support component that follows the conclusion of the formal program.
- For parents/carers attending the *Positive Partnerships* workshops and information sessions this is provided by a Key Local Facilitator (KLF)
- There are currently 43 KLF's actively working across Australia.

Informal evaluation from the parents...

- *Abnormal has been normal here*
- *Great to be laughing and having fun*
- *Look after yourself “ I matter too”*
- *I will now feel less guilty when he exhausts me*
- *“Felt completely exhausted after Day 1 but good exhaustion. Nice to feel normal and not as guilty in taking a breath that he is not there”*
- *Relief to become part of a group like this*



And more...



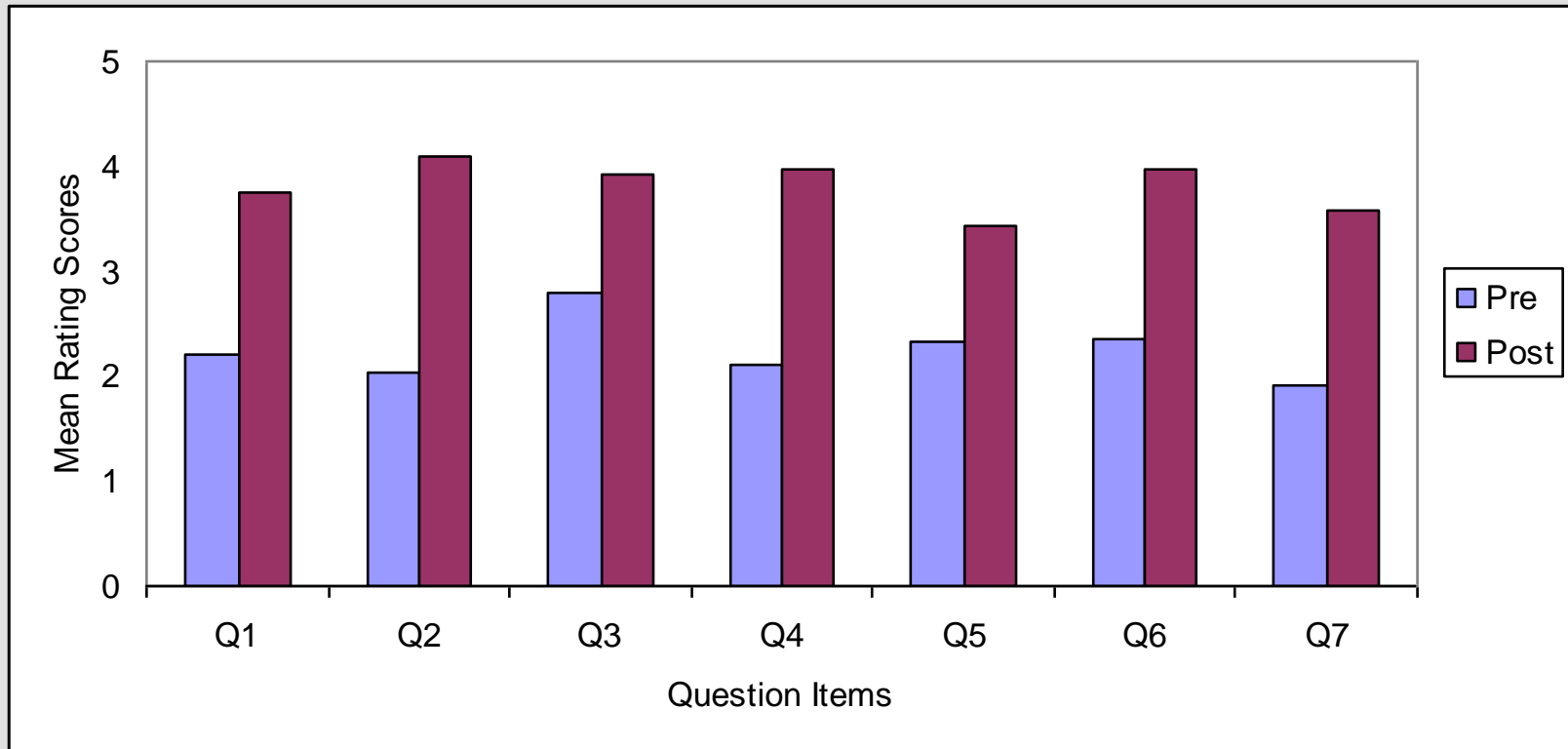
- *First time I feel like I have air.*
- *In this environment my son is just one of the crowd*
- *Know someone is going through the same thing*
- *Relief to be in this environment despite having the diagnosis some time ago*
- *Had a ball. We have battles, have taken a positive look but still had a laugh and had fun*
- *Mind over matter. Those that mind don't matter and those that matter don't mind*

Formal Workshop Evaluation - 2010

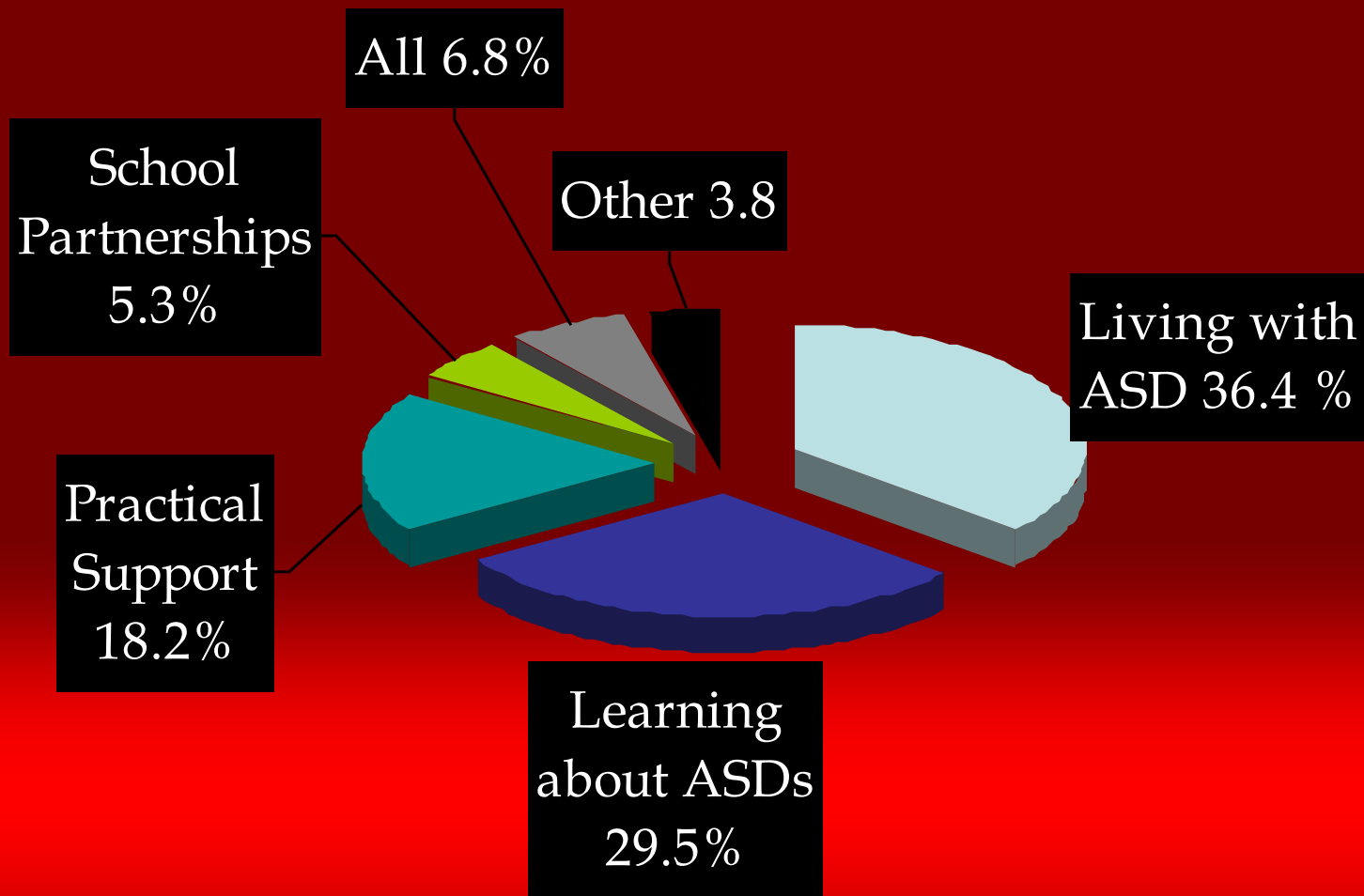
- Formal participant evaluation of the parent/carer component occurs at a sample of workshops
- The majority of participants showed very high level of satisfaction (rated either 4 or 5 – maximum rating 5)
- Overall participants rated their knowledge on ASD and their abilities and skills higher at post workshop than at pre workshop

Evaluation

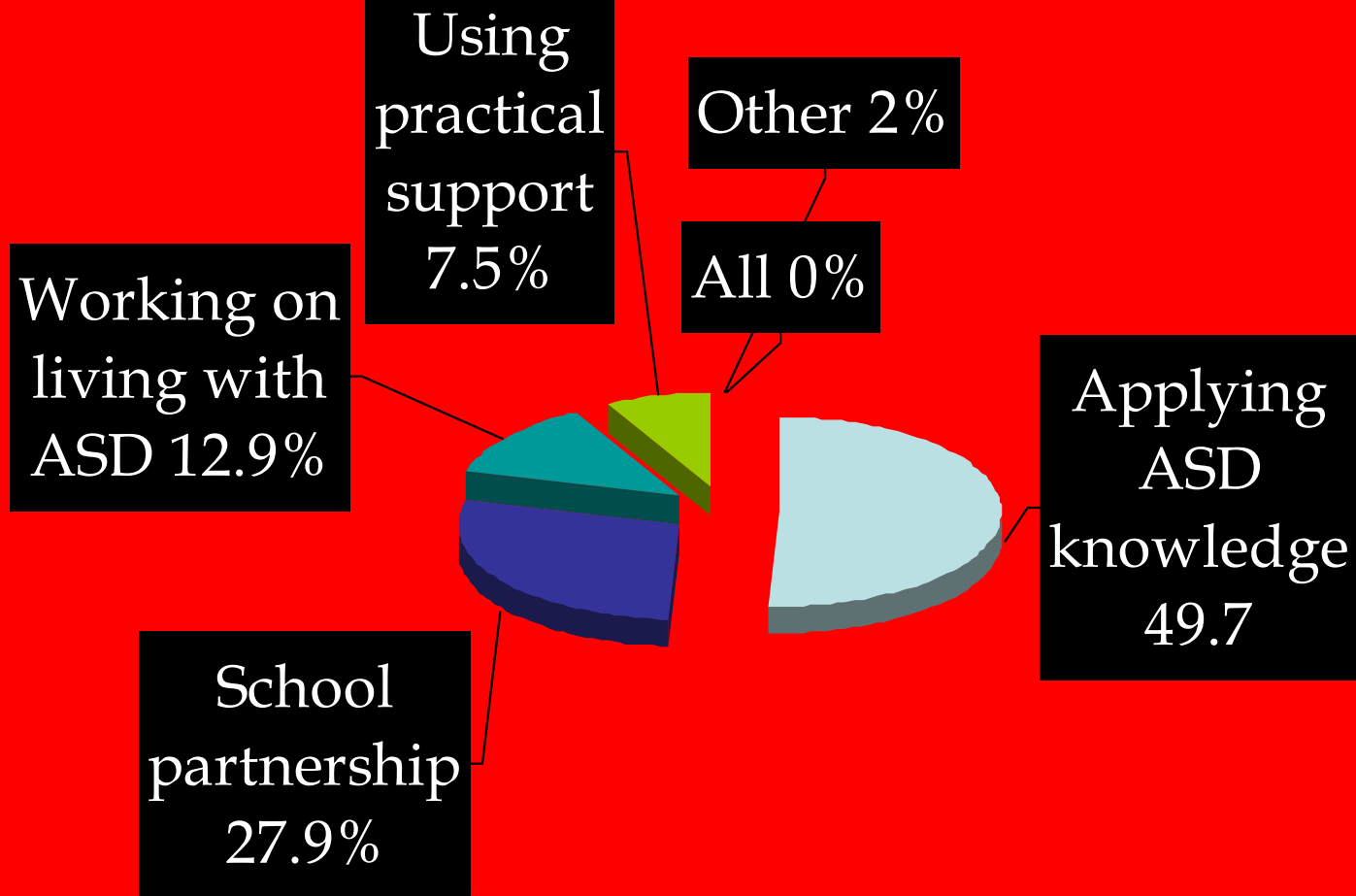
- Parents are asked 7 questions in the perceptions of their knowledge – pre and post workshop.



Most Important thing you learned



How you will apply the knowledge



What do the parents say..



“As a new person to the ASD Spectrum and living remotely, I find it hard to access information/support. The PP workshop in Katherine was wonderful and it was very comforting to me to meet other mum’s/carers.

The facilitators of the Katherine workshop were first rate. What a wonderful surprise I got when I found out they were ‘locals’ from Darwin, and had key expertise in the areas that the workshop covered. The facilitators were relevant, knowledgeable and had experience in ASD... what a marriage of help for us desperate mums”

“Can I also just say, the Canberra workshop was brilliant and it is a credit to the team involved. It has given me a renewed sense of hope and confidence that has been a little lost over the last couple of years, particularly given my son's move into high school” Paul.

“all were important (sessions) and it is great to help us to see from the teachers point of view and to get other parents ideas”



“thankyou for the opportunity to attend- the level of networking with other parents, hearing their experiences and opportunity to learn from them was invaluable...it is also heartening to see the level of awareness of support within the ACT school system”



“ I am sure you are aware of the exorbitant costs of caring for people with Autism, and it was very refreshing to realise that every aspect of this was done from an angle of information, not selling; and a genuine interest in the people attending. I hope that these courses will continue... Many, many warm thanks, Bianca”



“I’m positive that my future dealings with school will improve”

“both my grandsons do not attend mainstream school – at first I thought this would be a disadvantage for me (attendance at the workshop). It wasn’t at all- I am taking away so much”

“Last Friday we met with Annie (after a couple of very interesting weeks of our son’s performance at school!) who is very enthusiastic about setting up a parents group at school. She asked me if I thought it OK to send out letters to those families she thought might be interested. (Statistics suggested to me that there must be 4-5 families with children on the spectrum at the school and I was right).

So that is underway.



She says that the school and Catholic Ed are fully behind her. We have already noticed that Alex is getting on better with the teachers he had problems with so the word is being spread and we are putting some of the strategies that we learnt in place.

We feel very grateful for all of this

“I just wanted to let you know that the Characteristics Matrix that we learnt about at the Positive Partnerships Workshop, has just been so incredibly useful! I spent a bit of time creating it - and adding to it!

I took it along to the school meeting and the staff were amazed at how much information it contained, and in such a clear and concise way. This one piece of paper has definitely given them a much better understanding of Zac and how they can best meet his needs.

I have since taken it along to our Psychologist and first meeting with OT. The feedback has been extremely positive - everyone has been so appreciative of receiving such valuable information in one concise form. This is a fantastic tool! Thanks again! Jen”



YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Your child's progress might not be that easy to see on a day-to-day basis, but when you reflect from time to time on how far he or she has come, give yourself some credit: Would that progress have happened if you hadn't been planning, praying, pushing for it? ♦ ♦ ♦ Everything you do for your child – every appointment, every therapy, every intervention, but also every smile, every hug, every conversation – makes a difference. ♦ ♦ ♦ But you're also making a difference in the world. Every time you give information about your child's disability to an educator, you make a difference for the next child. Every time you give advice in a support group or online forum, you make a difference for that parent and family. You are a force for good. ♦ ♦ ♦

Building Capacity: Moving towards Sustainability



- What is the *community networking* component?
- What has informed what we do?
- What quality assurance methods have we put in place?
- How do we support our Key Local Facilitators (KLF)?
- Evaluation and research
- A snapshot of the Brisbane South and Emerald Network

What is the *community networking* component?

- Aims to sustain the momentum of the face to face training
- Provides ongoing support, coaching and mentoring for a minimum period of three (3) months by a Key Local Facilitator (KLF).
- Provides parent/carers with the opportunity to share experiences, ideas, strategies and resources.
- Uses a combination of face to face get togethers, online or telephone support.
- Attempts to link the Community Network with the Professional Network where possible.
- Invites any parent/carer with a child with an autism spectrum disorder into the network.

Strategies that build capacity and encourage sustainability

- Create a Local Services Guide
- Provide opportunities for participants to complete their Characteristics Matrix
- Provide opportunities for participants to understand the power of the GROWTH model
- Establish a support network
- Link the Community Network with the Professional Network



What has informed what we do?

- Prezant, F.P. & Marshak, L. (2006) Helpful actions seen through the eyes of parents of children with disabilities. *Disability and Society* 22 (1) pp 31 – 45.

“ Being the recipient of certain forms of help may be as problematic as help that is not forthcoming.”

“ ..professionals charged with the responsibility of ‘helping’ need to consider not only the identification of unmet needs, but also the nature of ‘help’ that is needed.”

- Morison, J.E., Bromfield, L.M. & Cameron, H.J. (2003) Supporting parents of youths with intellectual disabilities and psychopathology. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research* 50 (8) pp 570 - 581

“Often families find meaning from their experience by becoming involved in giving back support to new families in the mentoring program and sharing knowledge through publications about their experiences or participation in community education.”

Quality assurance methods in place

- Establishment of a KEY role to coordinate community networks nationally
- A case study of community networks in September 2009:
 - Metropolitan - Perth
 - Regional – Mt Gambier SA
 - Remote – Mt Isa, Queensland
 - Small state - Tasmania



Recommendations from the case study

- Provide a variety of activities to support participant connections
- Numbers are not important – it's the connections that count
- Provide an overview of available activities within the networking period and clearly state the proposed end dates of the KLF role
- Discern which families could go together and establish groups that will cater for the different needs eg Dad's groups



Recommendations from the case study

- Allow opportunities for families to share their experiences and what is working, with each other
- Provide training as a way to further develop the network and connect families at a deeper level
- Identify key participants to hand over projects that have been initiated during the networking period
- Identify a key person or organisation to maintain the currency of the Local Services Guide

Support for the Key Local Facilitator

- Comprehensive Induction
- Variety of webconferences that teach and support. These include:
 - Getting started: Writing you Action Plan
 - Enhancing partnerships with schools
 - Supporting families through difficult issues
 - Planning and information session post workshop
 - Phasing out your support
 - Australian Catch-up audios



Other support available



- State-based audios with the Key Local Professionals and Key Local Facilitators
- Webconferences on a needs basis eg How to write a Newsletter
- Access to the Positive Partnership webinar series
- Support from their State/Territory Team Leader
- Access to Positive Partnership Shared Drive to access KLF generated resources

Linking the Community and Professional Networks

- KLF attends Day 3 of the Professional Development workshop
- Provide an opportunity for KLPs and KLFs to “meet” via a state based audio to share what is happening in the community and professional networks in their state
- KLF invited to attend the *Celebration of Success* for the Professional Network



Evaluation and Research

25 KLFs – *Summary Reports and Survey*

900 Participants - *Survey*

Non-attenders – *Survey*

Case Studies



What are we aiming to find out ?



- Does participation in the targeted KLF support by the Key Local Facilitator make a difference to the outcomes of the network?
- Is there a relationship between the form of networking the *parents* engaged in, and their ability to help another *parent* with their skills and knowledge?
- Did engaging in the network increase a *parent's* confidence to help another *parent*?

NB: '*parent*' refers to both '*parent*' and '*carer*'

Snapshot of Emerald Community Network

KLF: Paula Swain (parent)

- Hesitant at first
- Attended support audios and web conferences
- The greatest outcome of network was the Autism Information night.

“Overall the evening was a great success, Not only was it a great way to help link families to services, but it was also a great exercise just linking families together to help form their own networks.”

“I am in shock this morning, as in yesterday’s local newspaper, The Central Qld News, They have a SMS to the Editor. Two anonymous people have texted to the paper personally thanking me for running the Autism Information Evening last Thursday Night. I am in complete shock, as I did not expect people to do this. I have had a card from one lady, and I have had emails personally thanking me, but this is at another level, and I am truly humbled by their kind words. I didn’t even read this myself, I was actually telephoned by a friend, who told me that these texts were in the paper. How observant am I? When my husband gets home tonight, I will get him to scan the page in and I will email it to both of you (because I can’t use the new the scanner yet!!). Paula”

A snapshot of Brisbane South community network

KLF – Haley Tancredi (speech pathologist)

- attended support audios and webconferences.
- The many wonderful outcomes of the network include:

Newsletter

**Creative ways to build a network that was VERY slow
to engage**



Brisbane South Parent/Carer Newsletter

Edition 1

June 2010

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the Positive Partnerships Brisbane South Parent Carer Newsletter. I hope that this newsletter will be a way for you to access information, learn about resources available in our community and develop support networks through our group.

I really feel that the Positive Partnerships workshop was just the start of great things for our group. What a wealth of information the room at Macgregor Gardens held for those two days. And I am not talking about our (though skilled) presenters. If we add up the years of autism experience that each of you as parent hold and combine it, we are probably talking thousands of years of experience. I hope that through my role as KLF we will have many opportunities to share this knowledge and build on it as we give and take tips, strategies, ideas and resources with each other.

Happy reading!

Haley.

In this issue

To start, check out our group news and dates for meet ups. You will also find an update on some of the latest Local Services Guide additions and our first Parent Profile (of me unfortunately!). This issue also features articles on Tim Sharp and the first of several instalments on making visuals. Finally, check out the results of the KLF Priorities Questionnaire, the Classifieds and At Your Local to find out what is happening in our community.

Positive Partnerships

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Both components are delivered nationally by the Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium (AAETC).

Website: www.autismtraing.com.au

Brisbane South KLF

KLF: Haley Tancredi

Phone: 0424 746 509

Email: brisbanesthklf@gmail.com

“..a professional piece of work and so informative, chatty and engaging as well.”

“I have found the newsletter a fantastic idea for sharing information...It is brimming with useful information.”

Activities organised during the network..

- School holidays outings
- Stampin' up Craft mornings
- Walking, chatting and coffee
- McDonald's Matrix and GROWTH discussion group
- Family day and sausage sizzle
- Behaviour information sessions
- Visual supports make and take

What one mum says..

“I appreciated the support provided by our KLF, Hayley Tancredi. The conversations and dialogues have continued as emails. Having the ongoing support allowed us to continue airing and sharing concerns, questions and suggestions for a variety of issues on a more personal level. It hadn't occurred to me that some of these issues directly related to the ASD and not the neurotypical child. I attended a small meeting of parents to revise over the GROWTH model and we were able to listen to and support each other. I still get caught up in the emotions of my boys. I just feel better equipped to deal with them. There are many more options than my automatic ones of old. “

Positive Partnerships Online Learning Portal - Windows Internet Explorer

http://autismtraining.com.au/ Live Search

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Positive Partnerships Online Learning Portal

Welcome, Bronwyn Help Feedback Logout

pp positive partnerships Supporting school aged students on the Autism Spectrum (4) (0) (1105)

Home Positive Partnerships Learning Resources About Autism Autism Friendly Schools Support Networks Learning Inbox (1109) My Profile

Online learning modules

[click here](#)

An Introduction to Autism Information Topics


- Siblings
- Sexuality, Personal Hygiene and Safety
- Positive Behaviour Support
- Bullying
- Communication

- Making Friends
- Completing Work
- Managing Everyday Transitions

eLearning Feedback

Please provide your feedback about new topics or areas in ASD you would like to learn about

[Click here to complete the survey >>>>](#)




Coming Soon

6 videos that capture "real stories" from the perspective of students, parents/carers, teachers and school executive.

View our Showcases to see Positive Partnerships in Action


This month see how a newsletter can be useful in connecting networks >>>>



Parent tip:

Be patient, network and ask questions

Parent from QLD workshop



Welcome

The Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium (AAETC) welcome you to the online learning platform of the *Positive Partnerships* initiatives. This online platform provides access to interactive learning modules and useful learning resources for teachers, other school staff and parents/carers of school aged students on the autism spectrum.

This online learning platform also hosts discussion boards to support the professional development workshops for teachers and other school staff.

Over the course of the project additional interactive learning modules, learning resources and fact sheets will be added to build a practical resource that aims to improve the learning outcomes of school aged

Internet 100% 3:19 PM

Start Positive Partnerships ...