

Fact Sheet: FAQs The AEIOU Foundation

CONTACT US ON:
1300 273 435

aeiou
FOUNDATION
for children with autism

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects the way children relate to the people and environment around them. Children with autism experience difficulty with social interaction and relationships, communication and language (including body language), repetitive behaviours and fixed interests and activities. Their sensory, cognitive and motor skills may also be affected.

Autism Spectrum Disorders include autism, Asperger's disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) and can be diagnosed by a Paediatrician or child Psychiatrist.

There is no cure for an Autism Spectrum Disorder however quality early intervention programs like those provided by the AEIOU Foundation can assist children on the autism spectrum develop language and social skills – enabling them to reach their full potential.

The AEIOU Foundation

The not-for-profit AEIOU Foundation is a leading autism charity offering full time early intervention programs for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) 2½ to six years of age.

AEIOU opened their first centre in Brisbane in 2005 with 12 children and 6 staff and now have several centres across Queensland assisting hundreds of children and their families. The AEIOU program is overseen by a dedicated team of professionals including speech pathologists, occupational and music therapists, early childhood teachers, psychologists, and learning facilitators. The high ratio of specialists to children is key to the success of the curriculum.

What is early intervention?

Early intervention and ongoing family support can make a huge difference to the quality of life of a child with autism. Many young children who participate in early intervention demonstrate gains in the areas of communication, social skills behaviour and IQ (Rodger et al 2004, Simpson et al 2005).

Early intervention involves a specific, structured approach to education for children with autism from an early age. Compared with children who begin intervention at a later stage, starting before the age of 4 has shown significant improvement in a child's ability to learn new skills and adapt to their environment (Bibby et al 2002, Mudford et al 2001).

Children with autism will also benefit from highly-structured interaction with other children to help them grow in confidence and experience playing and learning in groups. This is why early intervention is the most recommended treatment for children diagnosed with an ASD.

The AEIOU Program

Our centre offers an intensive, personalised program for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The AEIOU program employs a variety of effective teaching strategies coupled with supportive learning environment to help encourage and nurture children to be independent learners.

The curriculum has been specifically developed by the AEIOU Foundation for children with autism. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is created for each child based on their needs and regularly reviewed and updated. AEIOU aligns with Best Practice Guidelines for effective early intervention (find out more at the Australian recommendations for best practice in Early Intervention visit www.health.gov.au).

The AEIOU program offers:

- Full day and part time structured programming to help reduce stress and promote effective learning;
- Transdisciplinary team;
- Consistency of staffing and programming;
- Opportunities for children to interact socially with each other;
- A combination of structured large and small group activities;
- Individual teaching instruction that is tailored to each child's individual needs;
- Speech and Occupational Therapy embedded into all aspects of the learning program;
- Circle time, learning centres and exploratory play options; and
- Visual, physical and verbal support.

Eligibility

To be eligible for enrolment at AEIOU, a child must meet the following criteria:

- Be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (includes Autistic disorder, Aspergers) or Pervasive Development Delay Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).
- Aged between 2.5 and 5 years of age at intake.

Children who meet these criteria must then undergo an assessment by AEIOU staff to determine suitability for the program.

AEIOU is a family centred service that recognises families are the key people in supporting their child's development. Staff work with each family to share knowledge, strategies and resources to ensure that learning is carried from the educational setting into the child's home environment. Families must be willing to work with AEIOU to achieve the best outcomes for their child.

Weekly Timetable

The AEIOU centres operate as a long day care facilities with the intensive program running from 9:00am to 2:30pm Monday to Friday (excluding Wednesdays when the program concludes at noon). Some AEIOU centres are open 7.30am to 3.30pm while others are 7.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. The program operates within a caring and nurturing environment that respects individual family beliefs and values.

Measurement of Outcomes

AEIOU recognises the importance of being accountable to families and other stakeholders and is dedicated to demonstrating the efficiency of this unique program. The children are therefore assessed on intake, and then again at regular periods throughout the program so that their progress can be clearly documented.

These assessments will be completed with parent interviews and observational assessment to gather data on areas such as self-help skills, play skills and social interaction. Each child's program will be evaluated frequently and adjusted where necessary.

Transition and Continuity

AEIOU's ultimate goal is to have our students transition into mainstream schools. AEIOU will work with the individual child and their future school to determine the level of support required during the transitional period. This will vary from child to child and will be assessed on an individual basis at the time of transition.

Fees

The AEIOU Foundation strives to provide affordable access to their autism-specific program. AEIOU feels strongly that services should be affordable so no family is disadvantaged. To achieve this, the Foundation fundraises and lobbies extensively across Australia. Our Parent Assistance staff are trained to provide families with support and advice about their fees and what rebates are available. Scholarship programs are also available for eligible families. To find out the net costs for your individual circumstances, call 1300 ASD HELP (1300 273 435).

Centre locations

BRISBANE METRO

Bray Park	7.30am – 3.30pm
Moorooka	7.30am – 3.30pm
Nathan (Griffith University Campus)	7.00am – 5.00pm
Park Ridge	7.30am – 3.30pm

Emerald	(Mon, Wed, Fri) 9.00am – 3.00pm
Gold Coast	7.00am – 5.00pm
Sunshine Coast	7.00am – 5.00pm
Toowoomba	7.30am – 3.30pm
Townsville	7.30am – 3.30pm



Contact

If you have any questions about the AEIOU program, our centres or how to enroll, contact our Parent Assistance line on **1300 273 435** or email **info@aeiou.org.au** or visit our website **www.aeiou.org.au**

Central office **(07) 3220 7500**