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FOUNDATION

for children with autism



Community Resources

FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Introduction

This booklet includes a number of community resources that we think are valuable for families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It covers a range of supports including family and sibling support groups, respite services, specialist therapy options and telephone support lines. Please note, that this is not a fully comprehensive list of all services available, but an indication of the most common types of services.

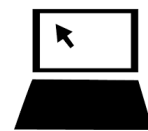
Information & Education

Raising Children Network

The Raising Children Network is a website that provides parenting information for newborns to teenagers. Information is regularly updated and provided in different ways including written information sheets, videos and interactive forums.

It has a specific section for families of children with ASD, including:

- Learning about autism: A range of information is provided about ASD, including information on assessment and diagnosis.
- A Service pathfinder: An interactive guide for parents to help them find and access available services and resources for themselves and their child.
- A Guide to therapies: Reliable information is provided for parents on a wide range of therapies for ASD, including an overview of the therapy, what research says about it and the time and costs involved.
- Parent forums: Parent forums help parents to connect with other parents and discuss issues relating to ASD.



http://raisingchildren.net.au/children_with_autism/children_with_autism_spectrum_disorder.html

My child has Autism Spectrum Disorder Booklet: Information for Queensland families of young children (Queensland Government)

This Booklet is aimed at informing parents of children with ASD. The booklet provides information on topics such as:

- Diagnosis
- Early intervention services
- Early childhood education and care
- Starting school
- Aids, equipment and assistive technology.

The resource also provides contact details including website information for government and non-government agencies.



<https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/my-child-has-information-for-queensland-families-of-young-children/resource/8eaeb03c-c367-4619-9cbb-5bb6475b31b1>

Autism Awareness

Ph: 1300 900 681

Autism awareness's mission is to spark positive change by increasing education and understanding of autism in Australia. Their goal is to improve the lives of all Australians on the autism spectrum and the families who love them. They empower parents and carers with quality information and resources and provide targeted educational programs to families, professionals and the broader community. They support inclusion for people on the autism spectrum. They know that families are the best advocates for their children, and ensure parents have access to the best quality information and supports to help them along the way.



<http://www.autismawareness.com.au/>

Parent Connect

Ph: (07) 4759 2008

Parent Connect guides parents to help determine the best possible response for their family, and offer a range of supports for up to 12 months to implement changes. The service aims to provide parents with knowledge, skills and support to optimise their child's development and their ability to participate in family and community life. Parent Connect also provides services in:

- Diagnosis
- Early intervention services
- Early childhood education and care
- Starting school
- Aids, equipment and assistive technology.

Parents can contact the Parent Connect Facilitator in their area directly, or be referred from disability services, community organisations, and service providers.



<http://www.parentconnect.org.au/>

Autism CRC

Ph: (07) 3377 0600

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) is the world's first national, cooperative research effort focused on autism. Autism CRC takes a "whole of life" approach to autism focusing on diagnosis, education and adult life. It provides the nation capacity to develop and deliver evidence-based outcomes through a unique collaboration with the autism community, research organisations, industry and government.



<http://www.autismcrc.com.au/>

Triple P Parenting Program

Triple P is an internationally-acclaimed parenting program offered free to all Queensland parents and carers of children up to 16 years of age. Triple P offers phone consultations, one-on-one sessions, group sessions, and online modules. You can choose from a variety of courses, including those providing general parenting strategies, advice for specific behaviour problems, or advice for parents of children with a disability (Stepping Stones Triple P). Stepping Stones Triple P recognises that parents raising a child with a disability face exceptional challenges. These courses will help you manage problem behaviour and developmental issues that are common among children with a disability.



<https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/qld-ukn/triple-p/>

Support Groups

Support groups are a valuable way for families to meet, share experiences, gather information, and gain support. There are a number of support groups available in Queensland.

PlayConnect Playgroups

Ph: 1800 171 882

The PlayConnect Playgroups are facilitated playgroups specifically for children with ASD or ASD-like symptoms aged 0-6 years. PlayConnect Playgroups usually meet weekly for 2 hours during school terms and are facilitated by a PlayConnect Development worker. The playgroup is an opportunity for parents to connect with other families and share experiences, information and support each other.



<https://playgrouppaustralia.org.au/national-programs/playconnect/>

South Brisbane Men's Shed (Woolloongabba)

Ph: 0401 277 810

The Men's Shed is a special interest group supporting fathers and male supporters of people with autism. The objective is to provide a safe and supportive environment for men to get involved in activities and receive advice and companionship in a stress free, comfortable and non-threatening environment. They also want to provide a place for fathers and male supporters including brothers, uncles, grandfathers, carers and friends of people with autism to come and talk with others who have similar experiences.



<https://southbrisbanemensshedinc.wildapricot.org/>

MyTime

Ph: 1800 889 997

MyTime groups provide facilitated peer support for mums, dads, grandparents and anyone caring for children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical condition. MyTime is a place for parents to unwind and talk about your experiences. At MyTime, parents may find other parents who really understand what it is like to have a child with a disability, as well as skilled guidance from facilitators to help parents access information and services in your area. A listing of available groups is also on the website.

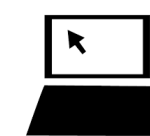


<http://www.mytime.net.au>

Carers Queensland

Ph: 1800 242 636

Carers Queensland is the Peak Body for family carers within Queensland and offers information to family carers including an advisory service, counselling, carer support groups, training, support and advocacy. Carers Queensland is a free service and has regional offices throughout Queensland.



<http://carersqld.asn.au/services/carers-advice-and-support/national-carer-counselling-program>

Young Carers Respite and Information Services

Ph: 1800 242 636

Young Carers is an initiative to support siblings under 25 years of age who may provide significant amounts of care to someone in their family (e.g., parent, brother, sister). The service provides information, referral and advice services delivered by Carers Australia.



<http://www.youngcarers.net.au/homepage/>

Sibling Support Services

Siblings Australia

Siblings Australia is committed to improving the support available for siblings of children and adults with chronic conditions including disability, chronic illness and mental health issues. This website will allow parents to access information about sibling support - services, resources, research and policy. It is aimed at siblings, parents, workers or researchers.



<http://siblingsaustralia.org.au/>

Support in the Community

QLD Government Companion Card

The Companion Card program promotes fair ticketing for people with a disability who require significant attendant care support to attend venues and participate in community events and recreational activities. When buying a ticket for participating venues and public transport services, a Companion Card holder is issued with a second 'companion' ticket at no charge. To be eligible, the individual's need for support must be lifelong or likely to be lifelong.



<https://www.qld.gov.au/disability/out-and-about/subsidies-concessions-passes/companion-card/about-companion-card>

Application form: https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/58362/application-form.pdf

Participating Services: <https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/chiip/SearchBrowseCompanion.aspx>



ASD Services

Autism Queensland

Ph: (07) 3273 0000

Autism Queensland provides a comprehensive range of education, therapy and support services to assist people of all ages with ASD, their families and the professionals working with them. These services are delivered from centres in Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns.



<https://autismqld.com.au/page/home>

Autism Queensland: Early Days Workshops

Ph: (07) 3273 0000

Autism Queensland deliver the Early Days Workshops - a national program funded by the Federal Government under the Helping Children with Autism package. These workshops are for parents and other family carers of children aged 0-6 years who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or are going through the assessment and diagnosis process.



Autism Hub

<https://autismqld.com.au/page/early-days>

Ph: (07) 3328 6950

The Autism Hub is an initiative of the Department of Education and Training (DET). It offers a range of services to support schools and families to improve the educational outcomes of students with autism. The Autism Hub works collaboratively with stakeholders such as Autism Queensland to deliver workshops for teachers and parents. Autism Coaches also deliver local workshops to support identified needs in their communities. The workshops can be face-to-face, webinars, or short courses. To find out more visit <https://ahrc.eq.edu.au/services/workshops>



<https://ahrc.eq.edu.au/>

Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

Ph: 1800 177 120

The Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors helps people with a disability and their families to access support and services they need as they move through the different stages of their life. Disability Services offers a variety of support depending upon your child's needs.



<https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability>

Local Community Health Centre

Ph: 1300 731 805

Your local Queensland Health funded community health centre may have a Child Development Program. It is a specialist public health service, which provides multidisciplinary diagnostic assessment, and intervention. By using a family-centred approach, the program empowers parents to gain a deeper understanding of their child's developmental strengths and difficulties.



<https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/community-health-services/child-development-program/>

Family and Child Connect

Ph: 13 32 64

Family and Child Connect can help with a range of family and parenting challenges. Parents can use this service, as often as needed, there is no limit and no cost. Anyone can contact Family and Child Connect for advice and information, including parents, grandparents, other family members and young people. They'll talk about your situation and work out the type of support you might find helpful. They can help you with:

- Managing your child's behaviour
- Building better family relationships
- Stopping any violence at home
- Budgeting and managing money
- Alcohol, drug or gambling problems
- Housing, health care or other community or government services



<http://www.familychildconnect.org.au/index.asp>

Relationships Australia: Queensland

Ph: 1300 364 277

Relationships Australia offers counselling, mediation, education, and support services to people experiencing difficulties in the areas of relationships, child and family, addiction, trauma-related issues, domestic and family violence, and diverse groups in the community. Relationships Australia is a not-for-profit organisation and offer assistance face-to-face, by telephone and online. Counselling fees are \$75 or \$35 for concession cardholders for a 1-hour counselling session. If this is not affordable, a fee reduction can be negotiated in some cases.



<http://www.raq.org.au/>

Carers Queensland

Ph: 1800 242 636

Carers Queensland's National Carer Counselling Program provides counselling and emotional support services for carers. Qualified, professional counsellors provide assistance on a one-off basis or over several counselling sessions. Counselling types available include telephone, face-to-face, or group counselling. These services are also available to young carers. There are 12 Carers Queensland regional offices providing support and services to carers.



<http://carersqld.asn.au/services/carers-advice-and-support/national-carer-counselling-program>



Respite Options

Accessing respite is a valuable support option for many families. Depending on where you live and your child's individual support needs there are a number of respite options available. Some families prefer in-home support where a paid worker from an organisation comes to the home and spends time with a child so that the family can go out for a few hours. Other families prefer 'community access' where a paid worker takes the child with a disability out for a few hours for an activity, such as going to the park. Other families prefer out-of-home respite where the child goes for a sleepover at a respite service's premises. There are also some respite options for carers to go on outings or overnight stays. The following are some services available in Queensland.

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre (CRCC)

**Ph: 1800 052 222 (Business Hours)
1800 059 059 (Emergency Respite)**

Relationships Australia offers counselling, mediation, education, and support services to people experiencing difficulties in the areas of relationships, child and family, addiction, trauma-related issues, domestic and family violence, and diverse groups in the community. Relationships Australia is a not-for-profit organisation and offer assistance face-to-face, by telephone and online. Counselling fees are \$75 or \$35 for concession cardholders for a 1-hour counselling session. If this is not affordable, a fee reduction can be negotiated in some cases.

Autism Queensland (AQ): Short-Term Accommodation and Holiday Programs Ph: (07) 3273 0000

Autism Queensland offers customised in-home and centre-based short-term accommodation (formerly known as respite) services.



<https://autismqld.com.au/page/customised-services-for-individuals-families>

TAG5

Ph: (07) 3216 8903

TAG5 services are designed to care and nurture all families who have members with a disability. Services include 48 hour and 5-day sport and recreational camps, in addition to a wide range of respite support options for people with a disability. TAG5 is a Brisbane based service.



www.tag5.com.au



Specialist therapy

Sometimes children benefit from individual therapy support. There are a number of options available if you are to discuss your families needs, make referrals and possible funding options.

Autism Queensland Individual Programs

Ph: (07) 3273 0000

Individual programs are flexible and can be tailored to the specific needs of a child with Autism. These programs are available in Brisbane and regional Queensland in the person's home, school, or at an Autism Queensland Therapy and Education Centre. Fees for these programs vary depending on program structure, format and location of program.



admin@autismqld.com.au

Psychology Services

Psychologists provide support about children's development, their behaviour, thinking, and how children cope generally. They can also provide support to parents who may be experiencing mental health difficulties, including depression and anxiety.

Australian Psychological Society

Ph: 1800 333 497

The Australian Psychological Society is the main professional body for Psychologists. A searchable listing of registered psychologists is available on the Find a Psychologist service on the website or alternatively, they can be contacted by telephone. To find out whether the Psychologist has experience with Autism, use the refine results option "Autism and PDD Medicare Provider", to search on the website.

University Psychology Clinics

Some universities offer a range of psychological services through their Psychology Clinics, which are staffed by provisional psychologists undertaking advanced postgraduate training. These clinics can offer an economical alternative to private psychologists. Please contact via:

- **University of Queensland: St. Lucia (07) 3365 6451 - www.clinic.psy.uq.edu.au**
- **Griffith University: Mt Gravatt (07) 3735 3301, or Gold Coast 1800 188 295 - <https://www.griffith.edu.au/health/clinics/psychology-clinic-mt-gravatt>**
- **QUT Psychology and Counselling Clinic: Kelvin Grove (07) 3138 0999 - <http://www.healthclinics.qut.edu.au/services/psychologyc.jsp>**
- **Bond University: Robina (07) 5595 2527 - <https://bond.edu.au/about-bond/facilities-services/services/bond-university-psychology-clinic>**
- **James Cook University: Townsville (07) 4781 4706 - <http://www.jcuhealth.com.au/our-clinics/psychology>**

Private Therapists

To find a private therapist you can speak with your GP for a listing of locally operated services or alternatively contact the relevant professional organisation:

- **Speech Pathology Australia Ph: 1300 368 835**
- **Australian Association of Occupational Therapists (OT QLD) Ph: (07) 3397 6744**
- **Physiotherapist Board of Queensland Ph: (07) 3225 2516**
- **Behaviour Analyst Certification Board Ph: 0011 1 720 438 4321**

Funding support for private therapy

To access a private therapist, it is important to attend your GP initially to discuss what referral options are available. There are often out-of-pocket expenses associated with seeing a therapist; however, some services do offer bulk billing. The following funding options are available:

- **Better access to Mental Health Care Initiative under Medicare -**
<https://www.psychology.org.au/for-the-public/Medicare-rebates-psychological-services>
- **Helping Children with Autism (HCWA)- (currently transitioning to NDIS)**
<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/autism-children>
- **Early Intervention Services for Children with Disability-** <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/program-services/for-people-with-disability/early-intervention-services-for-children-with-disability>
- **Some Private Health Funds**
- **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) – more information in the following section**

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will provide Australians aged under 65, who have permanent and significant disability with funding for supports and services. The first step in accessing the NDIS is contacting the NDIS Partner for your area. Follow the below link to find out who the partner is in your area:



<https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/locations.html>

Before having your planning meeting, it is important that you speak with one of AEIOU's NDIS Transition Support Workers. They will ensure that you:

- Have all the information needed to best understand the NDIS and the application process,
- Have the most up-to-date information to ensure the best outcomes from your planning meeting, and,
- Are familiar with the areas (e.g., communication, self-care, cognition/learning) that the planner will discuss in the meeting, so you are as prepared as possible for your meeting.

AEIOU NDIS Transition Support Team:

- Katrina Ives: katrina.ives@aeiou.org.au or 0418 790 277
- Sean Redmond: sean.redmond@aeiou.org.au or 0468 841 129

For weekly news updates and Q&As from the NDIS, visit: https://www.ndis.gov.au/latest_news

Telephone Support

Telephone supports are another useful resource for families, particularly for out of hours support or when you are unsure of where to start searching for support. Sometimes families prefer to access telephone support lines rather than discussing their concerns in person.

Autism Hotline

Ph: 1300 222 777 (24hr)

This hotline can provide support, advocacy, educate and guide families who have a family member with Autism as well as the general community.

Parentline

Ph: 1300 301 300

Parentline is a supportive counselling service that is available 7 days per week from 8am to 10pm for the cost of a local call.

Carers Advisory Service

Ph: 1800 242 636

The Carers Advisory service provides carers with information, referrals and support. They can be contacted between 9am and 5pm (except Public Holidays).



<http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/how-we-work/national-programs/carer-advisory-service/>

MensLine Australia

Ph: 1300 78 99 78 (24hour support)

MensLine Australia is a national telephone and online (chat or video) support, information and referral service for men with family and relationship concerns. The service is available from anywhere in Australia and is staffed by professional counsellors, experienced in men's issues.



<http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/how-we-work/national-programs/carer-advisory-service/>

Lifeline Crisis Counselling Line

Ph: 13 11 14 (24 hour support)

Lifeline provides a confidential telephone crisis support service available 24/7 from a landline, payphone or mobile. Anyone across Australia experiencing a personal crisis or thinking about suicide can contact Lifeline. Regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation their trained volunteers are ready to listen, provide support and referrals. A free interpreting service for people who do not speak English is available also.



<https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/get-help-home>

Crisis Support Chat (online): <https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/online-services/crisis-chat>

Suicide Call Back Service

Ph: 1300 659 467 (24 hour support)

The Suicide Call Back Service is a 24-hour, nationwide service that provides telephone and video and online counselling to people 15 years and over who fit one of the following categories:

- Anyone who is feeling suicidal
- Anyone who is worried about someone
- Anyone caring for someone who is feeling suicidal
- Anyone bereaved by suicide
- Health professionals supporting people affected by suicide.

Professionally trained counsellors have specialist skills in working with suicide-related issues and can help you to work through the pain and distress you may be feeling. The Callback Service is also available for people who may benefit from short-term counselling, the service can offer up to six telephone counselling sessions. Each session will be with the same counsellor scheduled at a time to suit the person.



<https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au>

Beyond Blue

Ph: 1300 22 4636 (24 hour support)

Beyondblue provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live. Everyone has those days when something is not quite right, you have something on your mind, or things just seem too much. Whatever it may be, sharing the load with someone else can really help. All calls and chats are one-on-one with a trained mental health professional, and completely confidential.



<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

General Health

Ph: 13 43 25 84 (13 Health)

Queensland Health provides a confidential telephone service that provides health advice. You can talk to a registered nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the cost of a local call. Qualified staff will give you advice on who to talk to and how quickly you should do it. The advice is confidential, qualified and supportive.



<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/advice/13health>



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