

**ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION  
AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED  
ASPIA**

*Mutual acknowledgement and understanding  
of the Asperger marriage experience.*

**July 2008 – NEWSLETTER**

Our next regular support group meeting is  
**this coming Saturday July 5**  
Usual venue – College of Nursing, Burwood  
14 Railway Parade, Burwood, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 2-5pm  
\$5.00 non-members; \$2.00 members

Our speaker will be  
**Psychologist NOËL BOYCOTT**  
Who will be speaking for us on  
**Communication and Empathy**  
Come along for a great time of learning and discussion

At our June meeting we were very grateful that Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates was able to attend at very short notice. We enjoyed an amazing and very beneficial discussion time.

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**Other news and items ...**

**Members, please remember to renew your membership**

**ASPIA Lunch Club**  
Now meeting at **TOMOYA RESTAURANT**  
**119 Burwood Road Burwood**  
above the Avondale Hotel (opposite Hungry Jack's)  
From 12 noon – 2.00pm  
Great food and friendship

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**Illawarra/Shoalhaven ASPIA Satellite Group**  
Next Meeting is on 19 July in Berry  
For details, please contact Sylvia on (02) 4295 7327  
or email Eleanor Gittins on [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)

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**Canberra Partner Support Group?**

We have a partner in Canberra who is keen to start a group in Canberra – anyone interested please let me know via the ASPIA email address: [info@aspia.org.au](mailto:info@aspia.org.au) .  
There are presently about 6 contacts on our list from Canberra.

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**Other ASPIA speakers for 2008**

Psychologist Julie Peterson will be our speaker for 2nd August  
Eleanor Gittins – date to be confirmed  
Jeroen Decates – date to be confirmed

**ASPIA INC (Asperger Syndrome Partner Information Australia Incorporated)**  
*Providing information, contacts and support for partners (and family members) of adults with Asperger's Syndrome*  
PO Box 57 Macarthur Square LPO, MACARTHUR NSW 2560 (Aus)  
Enquiries: Carol Grigg 0408 817 828  
Visit our website for more information and useful links  
[www.aspia.org.au](http://www.aspia.org.au)  
[info@aspia.org.au](mailto:info@aspia.org.au)

**SOCS – Social & Occupational Skills Program at TAFE**  
**for students with Asperger's Syndrome**

Meadowbank TAFE is advertising their Social and Occupational Skills Program (SOCS) for students with Asperger's Syndrome for 2nd Semester, commencing 21 July. Please contact Simon Piggott on (02) 9948 4491 or email [simon.piggott@tafensw.edu.au](mailto:simon.piggott@tafensw.edu.au) for information.

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**The Rainbow Room**

"The Rainbow Room, located in Chatswood, is a haven for families who have children with disorders, chronically ill or disabled, mums with post-natal depression, and those who have a special need, eg: cancer, widowed." I believe their services are free and they hold morning teas, pamper mornings and seminars. Partners from ASPIA are also welcome.

Please contact Jane Frick on Mobile: 0407 918 689 or Email: [rainbowroom@nsc.org.au](mailto:rainbowroom@nsc.org.au).

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**Additional Notes . . .**

In our last Newsletter I talked a little about ASPIA's aims in relation to support of partners and mentioned some helpful material for building improved emotional well-being.

This time I want to talk a little bit about what goes on in our meetings. It could be understandable that partners with Asperger's Syndrome may fear we are "Aspie bashers" and that we are trying to break up Asperger marriages.

Those who attend our meetings would be aware that most of the partners attending our meetings are looking for ways to stay with their marriages and in the majority of cases they do. We have sought to bring frequent professional input into our meetings so that partners can learn more about AS, understand their AS partners and find ways to ease the mis-communication and conflict that is a dominant characteristic in their relationship. We are also building up an excellent library of books that all focus on understanding AS & practical suggestions for a more successful relationship.

For many partners just understanding makes all the difference because they can then make adjustments to their expectations of themselves, their partners and their relationships and live more at peace within that. We see the difference on their faces from one month to the next as they begin to come to terms with their own reality and find ways to respect themselves better.

For some the help has come too late. The long-term confusion, lack of awareness of AS, absence of support and intervention and layers of unresolved issues have all taken too great a toll. The partner has to face the reality that to hold the relationship together any longer could mean the loss of their own emotional and physical health and well-being permanently. In many cases it is the needs of the children that must become the priority.

Some who previously separated have chosen to return to the relationship on new or refreshingly unconventional terms, including partial separation. This may enable them to enjoy "togetherness" in activities that they enjoy, but also to enjoy activities as individuals as well.

Some continue on in the difficult circumstances and are just glad to have our newsletters or a place like our ASPIA meetings to receive validation and be reminded of their own value.

The best situations are where the partner with Asperger's Syndrome is willing to accept their AS and co-operate with professional advice and the guidance of their partner. Every non-AS partner would wish for this, and it is the key that would make a beautiful difference in every situation.

Yes, ASPIA meetings are a place for sharing our difficulties but this enables partners to de-brief and receive validation – all in the context of confidentiality and relative anonymity.

Once we have had an opportunity to "get things off our chest" we are then ready and able to take on board the positives of new learning to help us approach our relationships with renewed energy and hope.

My thoughts are with you all, Carol.

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