

**ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION  
AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED**  
(Formerly **GRASP** Partner/Spouse Support Group)

**ASPIA**

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

**NEWSLETTER – April 2009**

Our next ASPIA support group meeting will be this coming

**Saturday 4 April**, 2pm – 5pm

College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

\$2 Members / \$5 Non-Members (covers room hire, etc)

Once again, our meeting will be for general informal discussion, this time following our workshops with Tony Attwood & Isabelle Hénault. There are many things to talk about, and it would be good to have a bit of a brainstorm rather than presenting a new topic just yet.

Please bring something to share for afternoon tea.

**ASPIA Lunch Club dining together prior to ASPIA Meeting**

Upstairs at the rear of the Avondale Hotel, Burwood Road, opposite Hungry Jacks.

Arrive any time between 12noon & 2pm. All welcome.

**ASPIA MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

**1st May marks the beginning of ASPIA's next Membership Year.**

Membership Applications are invited from partners, ex-partners and others who identify as needing support, information and understanding from the non-Asperger perspective. This is not in any means to be seen as discriminatory, but focused on the needs of one group of people with a shared experience and who have no other safe or relevant place to discuss issues and gain insights (parents of adults with AS are also welcomed).

Membership is \$55.00 per person/family per year and entitles members to discounts, library borrowing rights and inclusion on a peer support contact list.

For adults with Asperger's Syndrome who would like to be part of a support or focus group specifically for AS adults, please contact

Eleanor Gittins on 0408 954 358 or [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com) (general group)

or Jeroen Decates on 0402 028 588 or [info@jdpsy.org](mailto:info@jdpsy.org) (mens group)

**ASPIA Satellite Group in the  
Illawarra/Shoalhaven**

Meets on the third Saturday

of every second month in Berry NSW.

Next meeting will be Saturday 16 May 2009

2pm-5pm (\$5/\$2) Contact Sylvia 4295 7327

or email [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)

**Support Group for Adults with Asperger's  
Syndrome – Nowra area**

Meets on the

last Saturday of every month, 11.30am

Nowra Central Library.

Contact Eleanor Gittins on 0408 954 358 or

email [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)

Keep an eye out soon for "**Asperger Insights**" workshops being advertised by ASPIA with **Dr Julie Peterson** as presenter. Feedback is currently being collected and compiled and topics, dates and a venue will be announced soon.

At our workshops on 13 & 14 March with Tony Attwood and Isabelle Hénault we provided an opportunity for any professionals in attendance to fill out their details on a **Register of Professionals**. This proved very popular which is extremely encouraging because it means many professionals are developing skills and becoming passionate about being involved in Asperger support and services. The list will be available on our website soon.

ASPIA INC

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# ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED

(Formerly GRASP Partner/Spouse Support Group)

ASPIA Newsletter April 2009, Continued

Our workshops with Tony & Isabelle were riveting and amazing, and so much was shared that would be impossible to convey adequately.

### **A few simple thoughts I collected are as follows . . .**

- It may be helpful to think more in terms of an “Asperger Personality Type”.
- The more the Asperger person feels confronted, the less the relationship is likely to work.
- Know each other’s limits socially – work out a strategy to limit our social expectations of our AS partners. Understand that they just don’t cope.
- The Asperger person’s comfort zone may exclude their partner.

### **Book and Resource Recommendations:**

Solutions for Adults with Asperger’s Syndrome by Juanita Lovett, Publisher Fairwinds.  
(One of our regulars has found this book to be most helpful in developing her understanding of how Asperger’s Syndrome in her partner impacted on her marriage, life & family.)

Asperger’s Syndrome and Sexuality by Isabelle Hénault, Jessica Kingsley Publishers  
(Practical ideas including Couples homework)

The Complete Guide to Asperger’s Syndrome by Tony Attwood, JKP

Making Sense of Sex: A Forthright Guide to Puberty, Sex & Relationships for People with Asperger’s Syndrome by Sarah Attwood, JKP

The Asperger Couples Workbook by Maxine Aston, JKP

Website: Making Waves – an innovative and successful relationship violence prevention program from Canada. [www.mwaves.org](http://www.mwaves.org) Mentioned many times by Tony & Isabelle at our workshops. Deals with issues of power and control and “mind over mood” etc.

Great Resource on ASPECT’s website – whole **list of support groups & relevant services** for families and individuals affected by Asperger’s Syndrome all over NSW and even beyond.  
<http://www.aspect.org.au/resources/Support%20Groups%20Sept%202008.pdf>

ASPIA is listed but an oversight has us listed as a “parent group” not “partner group”. Please refer to ASPECT’s website frequently, particularly if you are a parent with a child or adolescent with Asperger’s Syndrome. ASPIA cannot fit into our newsletters all the programmes and services that are being advertised these days. [www.aspect.org.au](http://www.aspect.org.au)

The “Someone to turn to ...” volunteer peer support programme is holding an Initial Training Workshop at Club Burwood on 16 & 17 May. Anyone who could consider taking on a peer support role with other parents, please contact Pauline 8977 8335 or Angela 8977 8348.

### **Asia Pacific Autism Conference 2009 – APAC 09.**

This Conference will be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Sydney, 20 – 22 August 2009. With its theme of Connecting Today: Inspiring Tomorrow, APAC 09 will bring together people with an autism spectrum disorder, families and carers, educators, researchers, service providers and practitioners from across Australia and the Asia Pacific region. It will inspire participants by providing opportunities to build relationships, explore intervention strategies, learn about new research developments and celebrate experiences and achievements and raise awareness about autism spectrum disorders in Australia and the Asia Pacific region. Early bird discount available until 30 May 2009.  
Visit the website [www.apac09.org](http://www.apac09.org) for further information and inspiration.

Repeat ad: For those in **Canberra** who’ve been enquiring about local professionals and support, you can phone Shout on 6290 1984 during business hours or visit website at <http://www.assn.org.au:80/assn/professionals/index.html> for a list.

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