

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

**ASPIA**

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

**NEWSLETTER – February 2009**

Our first ASPIA meeting for 2009 will be this coming **Saturday 7 February**. We are very excited to announce that **Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates** will be attending the meeting and facilitating a discussion time – the focus will include a "holiday de-brief" and "facing a new year".

Bring any questions – Jeroen can field anything that's thrown at him!

**ASPIA Lunch Club meets each month prior to ASPIA Meeting**

Avondale Hotel, come upstairs and to the restaurant in the back. The Hotel is on Burwood Road, just 15 metres from the entrance to Burwood Station, opp Hungry Jacks. Arrive any time between 12noon & 2pm. Most meals \$10-\$12. Coffee available. Great opportunity for fostering friendship. All welcome.

**\*PRIORITY\* Just 5 weeks until our Workshops  
with Tony Attwood & Isabelle Hénault - 13 & 14 March 2009**

*I can't stress enough how beneficial these workshops will be for anyone affected by Asperger's Syndrome within the family or professional field. An experience not to be missed – bringing you a wealth of information and insights that will enlighten and encourage you for years to come.*

**Theme: Asperger's Syndrome beyond Childhood**

Two one-day Workshops with Dr Tony Attwood and Dr Isabelle Hénault  
Friday 13 March 2009 "Asperger's Syndrome in Adolescence & Beyond"

**Saturday 14 March 2009 "Asperger's Syndrome in Couple Relationships"**

Wesley Conference Centre, Pitt Street Sydney. Registrations essential.

Visit [www.aspia.org.au](http://www.aspia.org.au) or phone 0432 507 828 for more information.

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

Will now meet on the third Saturday of every second month in Berry NSW. Next meeting will be Saturday 21 March 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**

Please direct expressions of interest to Eleanor Gittins on 0408 954 358 or email [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)

Interested professionals are also welcome to enquire

In one of ASPIA's recent meetings Patricia Berrutti spoke on Self-Care for Carers. Presently, Patricia has some vacancies in an "**Eight Stage Healing Process**" group to be held at Canley Vale commencing next week. These workshops are free. If anyone is interested, please contact Patricia by this Wednesday 4 February 2009.

The "Someone to turn to ..." volunteer peer support is holding training workshops (Vietnamese) on 9 February & 9 March. Contact Pauline 8977 8335 or Angela 8977 8348.

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ASPIA Newsletter February 2009, Continued

Lots of other announcements ...

### **Friendship & Dating Skills Training for Teens and Young Adults**

Liz Dore is a relationship and sexuality counsellor and will be holding training sessions at Woodstock, Burwood on **Saturday 21 & Saturday 28 February 2009**.

11am – 2pm – Friendship Skills for teenagers aged 13 – 18 years

3pm – 6pm – Dating Skills Training for young adults aged 18 – 26 years

Please contact Liz on 0416 122 634 or email [lizdore@bigpond.com](mailto:lizdore@bigpond.com)

### **TAFE classes for Young People with Asperger's Syndrome**

#### **Social & Occupational Skills: February – July 2009**

TAFE, North Sydney Institute, 149 West Street, Crows Nest

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9.30am – 2.30pm

Contact : Simon Piggott, Ph: 9448 4431, Mob: 0434 322 451

Email: [simon.piggott@tafensw.edu.au](mailto:simon.piggott@tafensw.edu.au)

### **Asia Pacific Autism Conference 2009 – APAC 09**. Website [www.apac09.org](http://www.apac09.org)

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.

### **Introduction to ASD & Mainstream School Strategies.**

Jane Cotter from ASPECT's Educational Outreach is holding a one-day presentation on 6 March 2009 Burwood RSL. Contact Jane: 8868 8504 Aimed at teachers but parents welcome.

Learning Difficulties Coalition of NSW Inc is holding a seminar on "**Practical Management Strategies for School Students with AD/HD**" (for parents & teachers). 24 February, 6.30pm, Hornsby RSL, 4 High Street. \$10. Contact 9806 9960 or [www ldc.org.au](http://www ldc.org.au)

From time to time in our meetings people mention dietary links to Asperger's Syndrome. For those who are interested in following up on this, there is a free talk being given on the link between Autism and autoimmunity, including a look at possible natural managements of Autism. Monday February 9, 7.30-9.30pm, Rouse Hill. Call 9836 3410 or email [info@naturalhealth.com.au](mailto:info@naturalhealth.com.au) . Speaker is Dr Valentina Szabo.

**Out of the mouths of ...** From time to time I am stopped in my tracks by the "down to earth" insights my own children express in relation to Asperger's Syndrome. Recently my 12 yr old son compared his childhood experience with an Asperger father to that of the concept of the "Hole in the Wall" Game Show. In this game, if the contestants are able to contort their bodies to match the shape in the wall and manoeuvre through the hole as the wall passes over them, they avoid ending up in the plunge pool. My son summarised with "Mum eventually got a cramp ... and I couldn't hold my handstand for long enough". (Carol Grigg).

ASPIA INC

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