

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

ASPIA

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

NEWSLETTER – May 2009

Our next ASPIA support group meeting will be this coming

Saturday 2 May, 2pm – 5pm

Clinical Psychologist Dr Julie Peterson will be joining us to facilitate discussion on realistic relationship expectations. At our last support group meeting we were unexpectedly visited by an adult with Asperger's Syndrome who suggested to us that AS partners could be expected to take much more responsibility within a relationship than many in attendance had previously come to accept. The possibilities this person raised resulted in a great deal of confusion and emotional distress being expressed within our meeting. Julie has graciously agreed to join us this week and discuss with us the issue of realistic hope.

College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2nd Floor.
\$2 Members / \$5 Non-Members (covers room hire, etc)
Please bring something to share for afternoon tea.

ASPIA is a support group specifically focused on the recovery needs of the non-Asperger partner in a relationship. Psychologists regularly attend for the purpose of educating us and answering our questions. Without their input we could not move forward.

Adults with Asperger's Syndrome who would also like education and an opportunity to discuss relationship issues in a group context please contact Psychologists Jeroen Decates on 0402 028 588 or info@jdpsy.org or Eleanor Gittins on 0408 954 358 or janetgittins@hotmail.com who both co-ordinate support groups specifically focused on the needs of people with Asperger's Syndrome.

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.

As mentioned above, 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 (general group) or Jeroen Decates on 0402 028 588 or info@jdpsy.org (mens group)

ASPIA INC
ABN 30 583 771 917
PO Box 57 Macarthur Square LPO MACARTHUR NSW 2560
Web: www.aspia.org.au Email: info@aspia.org.au
Ph: 0432 507 828

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Newsletter, Continued – May 2009

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

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

Website Updates – www.aspia.org.au

We have recently updated some of the information on the website, and still have a few more items to update. One item is the Asteen Social Group for teenagers with Asperger's Syndrome. This group also provides an email yahoo group for the teens to keep in touch with each other. The contact person is now Christine Ayo whose number is 0413 781 626 or email christineayo@optusnet.com.au

Free Event - AUTISM EXPO – Saturday 9 May 2009, 10am – 5pm

University of NSW, John Niland Scientia Building

Information for parents, carers, educators & professionals

Includes seminars and an extensive range of exhibitors providing valuable information on everything from services to respite and resources.

For more information visit www.autismawareness.com.au

Liz Dore will be presenting a workshop for parents of teens

“A Practical Approach to Teenage Private Stuff”

Thursday 18 June, 10am–12.30pm or 6pm–8.30pm.

Woodstock Community Centre, Burwood.

22 Church Street, Burwood (Parking available, enter at 93 Fitzroy Street)

Cost is \$60 per person, or \$100 per couple. Enquiries email lizdore@bigpond.com

Please remember to refer to ASPECT's website frequently, particularly if you are a parent with a child or adolescent with Asperger's Syndrome. www.aspect.org.au There are many services and resources available through ASPECT, or contact details and useful links.

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 for further information and inspiration.

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