

NSW Autism Advisor Program

Call: 1300 978 611 or 02 8977 8345 **Email:** autismadvisor@autismspectrum.org.au **Website:** www.autismspectrum.org.au/aap

Other Options for support Nepean/Blue Mountains Areas

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Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) does not in any way endorse or recommend these resources. We encourage parents and carers to conduct their own research before selecting an appropriate resource for their child.

Please contact the NSW Autism Advisor Program if you would like some more up to date information.



Support Groups

A place to meet and talk with other families who have a child with Autism

PATH Office and Library
Individual support available for families with child on spectrum

Location: Community Connections Building, 114-116 Henry Street Penrith
Phone: 02 4721 0866



Autism Support Group Blue Mountains
Location: Blue Mountains
Contact: Lyn Mason
Phone: 4784 6671
Blue Mountains Action and Support Group
Location: Blue Mountains
Phone: 4758 8694
Blue Mountains Asperger's Support Group
Location: Blue Mountains/Winmalee
Contact: Lynn Trindall
Phone: 4754 4050

Support Group for Mum's, Dad's and Carer's of children with an ASD

Location: Mission Australia, 46 Bringelly Road, Kingswood

When: 2nd Tuesday month from 6:30 – 8:30

Phone: 02 4724 3015

Autism & Aspergers Support Group - Hawkesbury

Location: 12 Stewart Street, South Windsor

Phone: 0425 380 575

Office Opening hours: 9.30 am – 12.30 pm, Mon, Thurs & Fri.

Email:

info@autismsupport.org.au

Website:

www.autismsupport.org.au

Support Group for Mum's, Dad's and Carer's of children with an ASD

Location: Nepean Speech and Language Services, Shop 1, The Broadwalk Arcade 458 High Street, Penrith

Phone: 02 4721 4766

Family Support

Brighter Futures

A program that will support your family if you have complex needs. They will help you find services and supports

Nepean Area:

02 4723 9200

Early Links

Information and support for families whose child has just been diagnosed with a disability or who are seeking a diagnosis
Through Northcott

Penrith Office:
02 4720 4400



Families NSW - Peppercorn Family Services

Peppercorn Family services offer assistance to families over a three month period. They offer family support, case management, home visiting, supported playgroups, community workshops and referrals to other services. For children 0-5 years living in the Hawkesbury region.
Contact: South Windsor Family Centre
Phone: 02 4577 9804

Family Referral Service

Relationships Australia
The Western Sydney Family Referral Service links families with appropriate services to suit their needs.

Phone: 1300 403 373

Email:
frsww@ransw.org.au

Carers NSW

Information services and support for families caring for someone with a disability.

Call: 1800 242 636

Transcultural Mental Health Centre

Provides support and information to carers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities who look after a family member or friend with a mental health problem, including autism

Phone: (02) 9912 3851

<http://www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/>

Gateway Family Services

Gateway service for families accessing services in the Blue Mountains. Includes family support, parent groups, counseling services and referrals.

Phone: 4739 5963

Website:

www.gatewayfamilyservices.org.au

Cerebral Palsy Alliance Intensive Family Support Options Program

For children who may have Autism and another disability or challenging behaviour. It is a 12 week program that provides intensive support to families in difficult situations. Blue Mountains only.

Phone: 1300 888 378.

Parentline

A 24 hour counselling/support line for parents

Call: 1300 30 1300

Gilgai Aboriginal Family Support – Lower Blue Mountains

Phone: 02 9625 2952

Westlink Respite Services Host Family Program

Offers regular, planned respite to families who have a child or adolescent aged 0 -18 years with disability, living at home. Respite can occur in the volunteer's home, the child's home or in the community with a companion. Areas covered include Auburn, Parramatta, Holroyd, The Hills, Blacktown, Penrith, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury LGAs. Call to find out about eligibility.

Phone: 8805 0900

SDN Early Childhood Links – Nepean Clue Mountains, Penrith

Help families access and participate in a range of services that would be helpful for their child.

Children 0-8 with a diagnosed disability or with developmental concerns may be eligible.

Call: 02 47217557



Other support for early intervention services



There are some other support options families can access along with the Helping Children with Autism package.

Below you will find these services listed, please call each service to find out more information (services vary from area to area)

You can also find out about early intervention at www.ecia-nsw.org.au or call 1300 65 68 65

Lifestart

Lifestart offers a variety of programs/sessions for children with a disability.

St Marys

Phone: 02 9623 2100

Website:

www.lifestart.org.au

Department of Education Early Intervention Classes

These classes are for children with a range of disabilities. Early intervention support classes consist of 5 -8 children. Please contact the Disability Programs Consultant to see if there is a class in your area.

Call: 131536

Building Blocks

These classes are Autism specific. Early intervention classes consist of one 2 hour class per fortnight. It involves a group program for the child and a parent training session. Located at **Lapstone**

Call: 02 8977 8341

Autism Behaviour Intervention (ABI)

A range of programs funded through ADHC including:
Flexible Behavioural Program, School Readiness, Group Programs, Cool Kids Program and Therapy Packages.

Call: 02 9569 7700

info@abinsw.org.au

Medicare

Please see our Autism Advisor Medicare information sheet for more information

Families are able to choose only one state funded early intervention option.

Other support for early intervention services (continued)



There are some other support options families can access along with the Helping Children with Autism package.

Below you will find these services listed, please call each service to find out more information (services vary from area to area)

Lithgow Early Intervention Program (LEAPS)

Lithgow early Intervention Program provides an educational and therapy service for children from birth to school age who have developmental delay and disabilities

Phone: (02) 63531616

Location: 'The Cottage',
163 Mort St, Lithgow NSW
2790

Lapstone Preschool

Lapstone Preschool offers a variety of programs/sessions for children with a disability.

Phone: 02 4739 2606

Website:

Hawkesbury Early Childhood Intervention Service

Hawkesbury Early Childhood Intervention Service offers a variety of programs/sessions for children with a disability.

Phone: 02 4587 7277

Website:

Connect Child and Family Services

Connect Child and Family Services offers a variety of programs/sessions for children with a disability.

Phone: 02 4758 9966

Website:

www.connect.asn.au

Financial Support

Carer's Allowance

This is administered by Centrelink and assists Carers looking after a child or an adult with a severe disability and/or medical condition which requires much additional attention – Autism included.

Web: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au> (Search for carer's allowance) **Phone:** Centrelink's *Disability, Sickness and Carer's* Line on 132 717

Carer's Payment

Carer's Payment is income and assets tested, similar to a full pension and difficult to qualify for. This factsheet provides a summary of the qualifications, payment rates and income/assets test for Disability Support Pension, Sickness Allowance, Carer Payment, Carer Allowance and Mobility Allowance.

Web: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au> (Search for carer's payment) **Phone:** Centrelink's *Disability, Sickness and Carer's* Line on 132 717

Health Care Card

The Health Care Card may entitle the holder to significant discounts on visits to the doctor (bulk billing) / filling scripts at the pharmacy and entertainment venues (e.g. Easter Show, Sea World).

Web: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au> (Search for health care card) **Phone:** Centrelink's *Disability, Sickness and Carer's* Line on 132 717

Carer Adjustment Payment

The Carer Adjustment Payment is a one-off payment to some families who have a child under 7 diagnosed with a severe illness, medical condition or major disability and are ONLY receiving the Carer Allowance from Centrelink. Families should contact Centrelink directly regarding eligibility. Please click on the following link for further information regarding this payment:

Web: <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/carers-adjustment-payment>

Medicare Safety Net

Web: <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/> (And search for safety net) **Specific Link:** <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/services/msn/index.shtml>

Phone: Medicare on 132 011

Run Project (through My Choice Matters)

Run Projects gives people with disability or their families the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$5000 to do a 6 month project of their choice. The aim is for people with disability to get more choice, voice and control in their lives. The projects should provide new skills and experiences for those involved. My Choice Matters will provide support with the application and delivery of the project. Please note the application deadlines on the website.

Web: www.mychoicematters.org.au

Specific link: <http://www.mychoicematters.org.au/run-your-project.html>

Phone: 1800 144 653 or (02) 9211 2605

Email: info@mychoicematters.org.au

Options for respite



Emergency Respite

Respite options (the amount of respite offered varies)

Area Specific respite

Commonwealth Carer Respite

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centres will put you in contact with your local service (only short-term / emergency service). They can also give you information regarding other services you may be eligible for.

Call: 1800 052 222

www.commcarelink.health.gov.au/

Flexible Respite – Aging, Disability and Home Care (ADHC)

Apply to ADHC to access flexible respite services that include in and out of home care, group and individual programs, day and over night stays and holiday and after school care. Please note this is not emergency respite.

Call: 02 9334 3700

In-home Childcare services

NSW In-home care offers child care in the child's home by an approved carer. It is targeted to families who have no existing access to childcare services.

Call: 02 9779 9999

www.inhomechildcare.com.au

Westlink Respite Services Host Family Program

Offers regular, planned respite to families who have a child or adolescent aged 0 -18 years with disability, living at home. Respite can occur in the volunteer's home, the child's home or in the community with a companion.

Call: 8805 0900

Saint Jax on the Mount

This is a respite service for children with disabilities and their families.

Location: 18 Matlock Street, Mount Victoria, NSW 2786

Contact: Judie Stephens or Marinela Mendes

Call: 0419 393 393 (Judie) or 0418 22 40 31 (Marinela)

Email:

saintjaxonthemount@yahoo.com.au

Playgroups

Helping Children with Autism funded playgroup

PlayConnect playgroups can provide information on Autism specific playgroups in your area (run by Playconnect)

- www.playgroupaustralia.com.au/nsw

Other Playgroups

Playgroups NSW can provide information on general playgroups in your area (not disability specific)

- www.playgroupnsw.com.au

MyTime is a playgroup for children with a variety of disabilities. There is a parent support group that runs alongside the playgroup. You can find out information about your local playgroup from the web link below

- www.mytime.net.au

Halinda Supported Playgroup For families who have a child with a disability, aged 0 – 5 years. Come for support, information, fun and friendship

- **Contact:** Jillian 9832 8943

Lifestart Open Playgroup They provide a safe place for children to play and offer a meeting place for parents, grandparents and carers. No bookings required. Taking place in St. Marys and Shalvey

- www.lifestart.org.au

Call: : 9623 2100

Butucarbin Playgroup This supported playgroup is for parents and grandparents who are supporting children from birth to 5 years of age. The playgroup is staffed by Early Childhood workers, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Aboriginal Support workers.

- Clare on 9831 5121 clarep@childrenfirst.asn.au

Child Care Options

Pre Schools

Provide early education and care for children 3-6 yrs.

Web:

<http://www.preschoolsnsw.org.au/find-a-preschool>

Family Day Care

Family day care is care and developmental activities provided for other people's children by a caregiver in their own home.

Web:

<http://www.mychild.gov.au/>

Long day care centres (also known as childcare centres)

For children 0-5yrs, with qualified and other staff. Generally open for at least 8 hrs/day and for 48 weeks/ yr

Web:

<http://www.mychild.gov.au/>

Occasional care services

Are provided at a centre on an hourly basis for short periods of time. They provide developmental activities for children aged 0-5yrs

Web:

<http://www.mychild.gov.au/>

Inclusion Support Funding for child care centres

Inclusion support funding is funding that is provided directly to all types of child care centres to support any children with additional needs (including those with an Autism Spectrum Disorder). It is not for a direct one to one worker, but is to increase the adult to child staff ratio to support all children with additional needs. You can ask the child care centre to arrange this.

SCAN (Supporting Children with Additional Needs) for preschools and vacation care

Provide funding for NSW children's services that are State only funded and are not an approved service for the purpose of receiving the Commonwealth Child Care Benefit (CCB). The aim is to help children with additional needs access preschools and vacation care. You can ask the preschool or vacation care service to arrange this.

Your child care service or preschool should know whether they need to apply for SCAN funding or Inclusion Support Funding.

School Options for North West Sydney

Department of Education and Communities (DEC)

Mainstream Public Schools, support classes and schools for specific purpose

Website:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/our-services/schools/disability-services>

Disability Services Consultant:

Call: 131 536

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

Specialist schools and classes for children with autism

Website:

www.autismspectrum.org.au

Call: 1800 277 328

Local base schools:

Wetherill Park
Call: 02 87863000

Catholic School System

Offers mainstream schools with support as well as a limited number of special schools.

State Coordinator – Specific Learning Needs: 02 9287 1543

Call: 02 9569 6111 (main office) or 02 9568 8253 (Diverse Learning Needs team)

Website:

www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au

Independent Schools

Contact the Association of Independent Schools on (02) 9299 2845 or www.aisnsw.edu.au

Useful services

Transition to school website www.transitiontoschoolresource.org.au

Australian Association of Special Education (AASE)

Support and advocacy for people with special educational needs to ensure provision and access to quality education services.

Website: www.aase.edu.au

Special Learning Difficulties Association NSW (SPELD)

SPELD NSW is a not-for-profit organisation who provide services and advice for children and adults with specific learning needs and those who teach them.

Website: www.speld.org.au **Call:** 9451 9477

Available Workshops

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) offers a variety of workshops for parents/ carers and professionals focused on information about Autism Spectrum Disorders

- www.autismspectrum.org.au (click on the orange workshops tab to access the online calendar)

Early Days workshops are funded by FaHCSIA and are free of charge for parents and carers to help them learn more about Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

- www.autismspectrum.org.au/earlydaysworkshops

Sue Larkey offers workshops for parent/ carers and professionals focused on information about ASD, social skills, play, visuals, behaviour, anxiety and school/ preschool strategies

- www.suelarkey.com.au/Workshops.php

Learning Links offer a variety of different workshops that parents/ carers and professionals can attend. They list all the available workshops on their website. Please contact Learning Links directly to find out more information.

- www.learninglinks.org.au/index.php/workshops

Tony Attwood is running workshops throughout NSW in 2013 which have a focus on Asperger's Syndrome. To find out more about dates and prices please access his website.

- www.tonyattwood.com.au/
-

The following Helping Children with Autism panel providers offer workshops you may be able to pay for using your funding. Please look at their websites for more information.

- Lizard Centre www.lizardcentre.com
- Connect Therapy www.connecttherapy.com
- RDI Family Connections www.familyconnectionssydney.com.au
- Aspire Early Intervention www.aspireearlyintervention.com/
- Quirky Kids www.childpsychologist.com.au
- Fabric www.fabric.com.au

Useful Resources

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

Aspect is the state autism association and offers a number of services including family support programs, schools, intervention programs, adult programs and a diagnostic and assessment services. Aspect has also produced fact sheets and manuals which are available on their website.

Website www.autismspectrum.org.au

Call: 1800 277 328 (1800 ASPECT)

A Different Brilliant

Celebration of people with autism being 'a different brilliant'

www.adifferentbrilliant.org.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is an independent statutory agency whose role is to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which will support a better life for hundreds of thousands of Australians with a significant and permanent disability and their families and carers. From 1 July 2013, the first stage of the Scheme rolled out in South Australia, Tasmania, the Barwon area of Victoria and the Hunter area in New South Wales.

www.ndis.gov.au

Autism Fact Sheets

A variety of fact sheets on different topics from the National Autistic Society UK <http://www.autism.org.uk/a-z>

Companion Card

This card is designed to promote the rights of people with a disability who require a companion to fully participate in events. The Companion Card is issued to residents of NSW with a significant and permanent disability who are unable to participate in most community based activities without significant assistance with mobility, communication, self care, planning and where the use of aids and other technologies does not meet those needs. The companion card is not issued to every person with a disability. Families are encouraged to read the eligibility criteria to see if they would like to apply.

Website: <http://www.nswcompanioncard.org.au/>

Call: 1800 893 044

Penrith City Toy Library

Term time toy library sessions at Penrith, St Marys and St Clair. Most sessions include group story time. All children welcome to attend. Toys available for loan. Toys for children with additional needs available for loan for up to 8 weeks through a specialist outreach service.

<http://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/Our-Facilities/Library/Kids-and-Students/Toy-Library/> or contact Ruth on 0418 664 879

Variety NSW

Variety - the Children's Charity is a national not-for-profit organisation committed to empowering Australian children who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs to live, laugh and learn by giving practical equipment, programs and experiences. <http://www.variety.org.au/NSW/How-we-help-/>

General Counselling

Services available at the Cranebrook, Penrith, St Marys, St Clair, Springwood and Katoomba Community Health Centres
Phone: 1800 222 608

Online Book Stores

www.resourcesathand.com.au (ASD specific book store)

www.footprint.com.au (ASD specific section)

The Australian Autism Handbook

A handbook written by two parents of children with Autism in Australia. This book may be available through your local library and is available to purchase through most book stores.

Through the Maze

Information and support handbook for parents and carers of children and young people with a disability in NSW (can be downloaded for free)

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

Useful Websites

Autism Community Network

www.autismcommunity.org.au

Autism Awareness Australia

www.autismawareness.com.au

Therapy Connect

www.therapyconnect.amaze.org.au

Online Inclusion

www.oi.org.au

Activities and Clubs

Riding for the Disabled

Riding for the disabled is available to people with a disability throughout NSW

Website: www.rdansw.org.au

Sailability

The focus of this organisation is to provide sailing and boating to people with a disability across Australia.

Website: www.sailability.org/au/australia

Rainbow Club

The rainbow club provides swimming lessons for people with a disability.

Website: www.rainbowclubaust.com.au

Soccer

Children up to 15 years with additional needs

Website www.stmichaelsoccer.com

Sibling Support

Family Camp

Aspect is organising family camps throughout the year. The camps are held in Lake Macquarie and the Riverina Murray, they are a great opportunity for children and families to connect with one another and partake in fun activities

- Contact Aspect on 02 8977 8397 or access their website <http://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/family-camp>

Young Carers Program

The young carer program supports young people who are helping a family member with any health issue. It is a 24 hour support number.

- Call 1800 052 222 or access on their website www.bensoc.org.au

Below are some websites where you can get some online support

Young Carers <http://www.youngcarers.net.au>

Siblings Australia www.siblingsaustralia.org.au

Livewire www.livewire.org.au

OAR's Autism Sibling Support Initiative:

<http://www.researchautism.org/family/familysupport/SiblingSupportInitiative.asp>