

Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders

ACN 085 018 408

Communiqué from the Board meeting, January 2008

- The **Directors** of the Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders met in Sydney for a 2 day meeting on January 11-12. The Board comprises Adrian Ford ASPECT (Chairperson), Mick Clark AUTISM TASMANIA (Deputy Chair), Penny Beeston AUTISM QUEENSLAND (Secretary), Jon Martin AUTISM SA (Treasurer), Alison Bird AUTISM NT, Alison Bryne AUTISM VICTORIA & Bob Buckley AUTISM ASPERGER ACT. Secretariat support is provided by Julie Hook ASPECT.
- **May 2008** has been deemed **Autism Month** with *Creative Futures* as the theme. Nationally coordinated activities such as recognition award ceremonies will be undertaken by each corporate member in the month. The AAB in cooperation with A4 is also hoping to initiate a 'Friends of Autism' parliamentary breakfast during *Autism Month*.
- The Board identified the **Advisory Board's Achievements for 2007**, which includes:
 - In early March released the Australian prevalence study on autism spectrum disorders undertaken by Dr John Wray and his team of researchers demonstrating an Australian prevalence rate of one in 160 among children aged 6 to 12 years based on national Centrelink data.
 - Held the first nationally coordinated Autism Awareness Week during 13 – 19 May using the theme *Creative Futures* and incorporating such activities as recognition awards for significant people in the autism community and the sale of arm bands;
 - Released a revised and significantly expanded Call to Action on 4 October to fully reflect the agenda of the Board for the Australian autism community.
 - Was involved in advising the *Helping Children with Autism Program* through the representation of three Board members on the national Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Group (ASDAG) for the federal Department of Housing, Families, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA); (See AAB website for the complete document.)
- The Board also identified the **Advisory Board's 2008 Strategic Priorities**, which includes:
 - Foster relationships with key federal ministers in the new government including Bill Shorten, Jenny Macklin, Julia Gillard and Nicola Roxon, along with the new federal shadow ministers;
 - Continue to advise the federal Department of Housing, Families, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs through participation on the Autism Spectrum Advisory Group for the Helping Children with Autism Program;
 - Finalise the document on national standards for the assessment and diagnosis of children with autism spectrum disorders;
 - Finalise the formation of the Expert Reference Group to advise the Board on technical and clinical matters relating to autism spectrum disorders. (See AAB website for complete document.)
- Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) and the Advisory Board will co-host the **Asia Pacific Autism Conference 2009** (incorporating the **Biennial Australian Conference on ASD**). The conference will be held from **20th to 22nd August, 2009** at the **Darling Harbour Convention Centre, Sydney**.
- The next Board meeting will be held by teleconference.
- Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders – www.autismaus.com.au

Contact can be made with the Advisory Board via your respective state or territory Autism organisation -

