



Olga Tennison

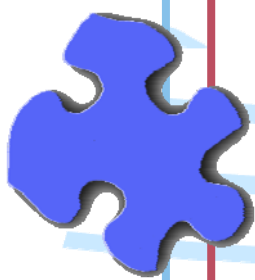
AUTISM RESEARCH CENTRE

A U S T R A L I A

ANNUAL REPORT

2011

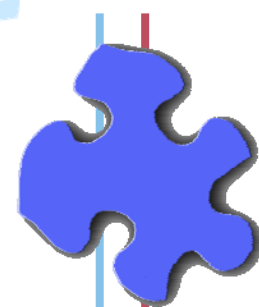




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Annual Report 2010—2011



Introduction

It is wonderful to be completing our third year of operation of the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre. It has been a year of substantial growth at the Centre, which has gone on from strength to strength, and it is with much satisfaction that I look back on all that has been achieved over the past year.

Our increasing number of students and staff at the Centre resulted in the relocation of our offices, and a pending refurbishment of our laboratory spaces. We also have an ever growing network of research collaborators. A number of our staff have travelled overseas (US, Poland, China, South Korea) over the past year to promote the work we undertake at the Centre and to disseminate and foster evidence-based practice, thus extending our international reach. The increasing number of national and international visitors to the centre has also served to increase our collaborations this year, as well as to widen our scope which, together, helps maintain the Centre as an exciting and vibrant place.

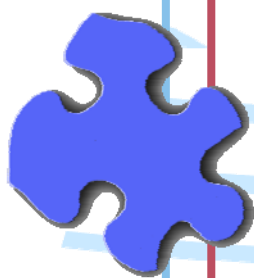
I would like to highlight an important new initiative this year with the recent opening of an Early Diagnostic Clinic for Autism Spectrum Disorders at La Trobe University. This clinic, funded by the RE Ross Trust, is the first in Australia to focus on children under the age of three years in an effort to promote the earlier diagnosis of children with an ASD. It is intended to be a model for others which will build support for a greater focus on early diagnosis and intervention which we anticipate will demonstrate its value to government funding sources in future. This clinic is also a focus in an application to the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research for the establishment of a new Cooperative Research Centre on 'Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder' in which we are involved. I hope that I can report next year that this application has been successful!

In conclusion, I would like to thank our generous donors, and in particular, Mrs Olga Tennison, who continues to support our work. A sincere thank you to all members of our Advisory Committee, chaired by Professor Margot Prior, for their support throughout the year. And, finally, I would like to acknowledge the dedication and creativity of our staff and students who have each contributed to our achievements over the past year. In this report we outline these achievements and activities against our established objectives from the period of July 2010 to June 2011.

I take great pleasure in presenting this report of gratifying progress of the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre to you.



Cheryl Dissanayake, PhD MAPS
Associate Professor & Reader
Director, Olga Tennison Autism
Research Centre



Our Objectives and Achievements

Objective 1

Facilitate large and/or ongoing research projects

With the increase in the number of new staff and students at the Centre over the last year, and the receipt of new research grants, we have begun a number of new projects, as well as continued with existing research studies.

Our vibrant and expanding group of researchers and collaborators brings together expertise across a number of research areas. Of particular note is a new program of research focused on the ways in which very young children with autism learn. This program is led by Dr Giacomo Vivanti using modern eye tracking technology. He oversees the research program at the Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centre in the Margot Prior Wing where, together with Professor Sally Rogers from the MIND Institute at UC Davis in Sacramento, we are also studying the efficacy of implementation of the Early Start Denver Model in a group setting.

Post Doctoral Fellow, Dr David Trembath, with his expertise in the area of speech pathology, is leading a number of research studies together with other collaborators, including Professor Teresa Iacono from the La Trobe Rural Health School in Bendigo. These focus on the use of different communicative interventions, including augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) approaches to enhance the communication and learning of individuals with an ASD. His work will provide a much needed evidence base for the use of these various communicative interventions.

We have continued our collaboration with Dr Jordy Kaufman from the Swinburne University Brain Sciences Institute, which has now gained momentum with the arrival of Dr Kristelle Hudry, Lecturer in Developmental Psychology at La Trobe University. Together with Professor Mark Johnson at Birkbeck College in London, Drs Kaufman and Hudry, and A/Professor Dissanayake are working on a project using event-related potentials to study brain responses in infant siblings of children with an ASD to identify very early predictors of autistic development.

Two new national collaborative studies are now underway with colleagues at the University of New South Wales (led by Professor Valsamma Eapen on early surveillance and screening of developmental disorders) and the University of Western Australia (led by Dr. Andrew Whitehouse on prenatal markers of ASDs, including the role of androgens and early physical growth) following the receipt of two National Health and Medical Research Council grants in 2010.

In addition to numerous grants submitted and currently under review, the Centre is an essential partner in an application to the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research for a Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) on "Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders". The application is for funding over a 10-year period, and was developed by researchers at the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, La Trobe University, University of New South Wales, University of Western Australia and Curtin University, as well as end users including many of the state-based autism organizations, such as Autism Queensland. The CRC program is designed to bring together key researchers and end users in long-term collaborations to achieve outcomes of national significance for people and families affected by ASD.

The research reputation of the Centre has grown nationally and internationally with an increasing number of high impact publications, conference presentations and research grants and tenders. These are each listed on the following pages.

Publications

Dissanayake, C., Shembrey, J., & T. Suddendorf, T. (2010). Delayed Self-Recognition in Children with High Functioning Autism and Asperger's Disorder. *Autism, 14*, 495-508.

Barbaro, J., & Dissanayake, C. (2010). Prospective identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders in infancy and toddlerhood using developmental surveillance: The Social Attention and Communication Study. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Paediatrics, 31*, 376-385.

Barbaro, J., Ridgway, L., & Dissanayake, C. (2011). Developmental surveillance of infants and toddlers by Maternal and Child Health nurses in an Australian community-based setting: Promoting the early identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Journal of Paediatric Nursing, 26* (4), 334-347.

Elsabbagh, M., Holmboe, K., Gliga, T., Mercure, E., **Hudry, K.**, Charman, T., Baron-Cohen, S., Bolton, P., Johnson, M., & the BASIS **Team** (2011). *Social and attention factors during infancy and the later emergence of autism characteristics*. In O. Braddick, J. Atkinson, & G. Innocenti (Eds.), *Progress in Brain Research*, Vol. 189 (pp. 195-208). Burlington: Academic Press.

Goldman, S. E., McGrew S., Johnson, K. P., **Richdale A. L.**, Clemons T., & Malow B. A. (2011). Sleep is associated with problem behaviors in children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, 5*, 1223-1229.

Goldman, S. E., **Richdale, A. L.**, Clemens, T., & Malow B. A. (2011) Parental sleep concerns in autism spectrum disorders: Variations from childhood to adolescence, *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders; DOI 10.1007/s10803-011-1270-5*

Ihsen, E., Troester, H. & Brambring, M. (2010). The role of sound in encouraging infants with congenital blindness to reach for objects. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 104* (8), 478-488.

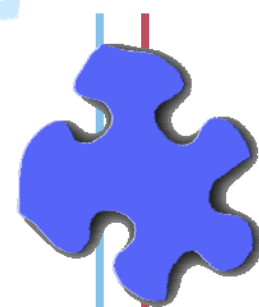
Kelly, R., **Dissanayake, C.**, Hammond, S.W. & **Ihsen, E.** (2011). The relationship between symbolic play and executive function in young children. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 36*, 21-27

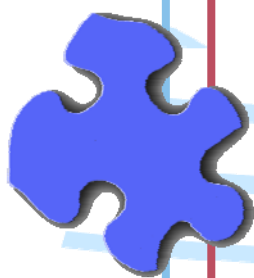
Schreck, K. A., & **Richdale, A. L.** (2011) Knowledge of childhood sleep: A possible variable in under or misdiagnosis of childhood sleep problems. *Journal of Sleep Research; DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2869.2011.00922.x*

Veness C., **Prior M**, et al (2011 in press). Early indicators of Autism Spectrum Disorders at 12 and 24 months of age: A prospective longitudinal comparative study. *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*.

Vivanti, G., McCormick, C., Young, G., Abucayan, F., Hatt, N., Nadig, A., Ozonoff, S., Rogers, S. (2011). Intact and impaired mechanisms of action understanding in autism and typical development. *Developmental Psychology, 47*(3), 841-56.

Vivanti, G., & Rogers, S.J. (2011). *Action understanding and social learning in Autism: A developmental perspective*. *Lifespan and Disability, 14*(1):7-29.





Publications *continued*

Gliga, T., Elsabbagh, M., **Hudry, K.**, Charman, T., Johnson, M. H., & the BASIS team (in press). The use of social cues for word learning in toddlers on the broader autism phenotype. *Child Development*.

Leekam, S., **Prior, M.**, Uljarevik M., (in press). Restricted and repetitive behaviours in Autism Spectrum Disorders: A review of research in the last decade. *Psychological Bulletin*.

Petrides, K. V., **Hudry, K.**, Michalaria, G., Swami, V., & Sevdalis, N. (in press). A comparison of the trait emotional intelligence profiles of individuals with and without Asperger syndrome. *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*.

Vivanti, G., & Rogers, S.J. (in press). Autism and Social Learning. *Lifespan and Disability*.

Book Chapters

Colombi, C., **Vivanti, G.**, Rogers, S. (2011). The Neuropsychology of Imitation Deficit in Autism. In *Fein, D. (Ed.) The Neuropsychology of Autism*. Oxford University Press

Elsabbagh, M., Holmboe, K., Gliga, T., Mercure, E., **Hudry, K.**, Charman, T., Baron-Cohen, S., Bolton, P., Johnson, M., & the BASIS Team (2011). Social and attention factors during infancy and the later emergence of autism characteristics. In O. Braddick, J. Atkinson, & G. Innocenti (Eds.), *Progress in Brain Research, Vol. 189* (pp. 195-208). Burlington: Academic Press.

Report

Togher, L., **Trembath, D.**, & Brunac, M. (2011) *Barriers and enablers to the use of evidence based practice by speech pathologists working for Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC)*. University of Sydney, ISBN 978-1-74210-219-1

These and other publications are available on the [OTARC Publications](#) webpage. Many of the Abstracts on these studies are also linked to this web page.

Conference Presentations

(in chronological order)

Oral and poster presentations and invited keynotes made at both national and international conferences by staff and students at the Centre are listed below.

October 2010

9th Autism Europe International Congress, 'A Future for Autism', Catania, Italy

Barbaro, J., & Dissanayake, C: *Prospective identification of ASD in infants and toddlers using a developmental surveillance approach: the social attention and communication study (SACS)* (Oral Presentation)

Dissanayake, C., Bent, C., & Barbaro, J: *An investigation of social attention in the development of Autism* (Oral Presentation)

Vivanti, G: *Lack of attention to referential cues explains difficulties in understanding intentions in Autism* (Oral Presentation)

Australasian Sleep Association Annual Conference: Christchurch, NZ

Richdale, A: *Does diet affect sleep? Current evidence* (Symposium paper)

Schelleman, M., & **Richdale, A:** *The relative and combined effect of a diet and behavioural intervention on sleep problems in children with significant challenging behaviour* (Symposium paper)

November 2010

The 9th Autism Victoria ASD Research Forum, Melbourne

Baker, E., & Richdale, A: *An investigation of sleep patterns in adolescents with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder compared with typically developing adolescents* (Oral Presentation)

Vivanti, G: *Children with autism use emotional but not referential cues to predict others' actions* (Oral Presentation)

Hudry, K: *Evaluating preschoolers with autism using naturalistic observational assessments of interaction: stable rates of social-communication but varied engagement in shared attention* (Oral Presentation)

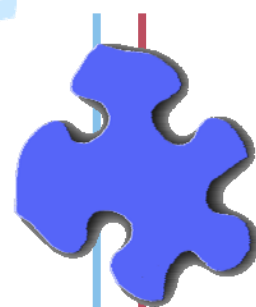
Michaels, C., & **Richdale, A.** *Psychological correlates of sleep problems in children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders: A comparison with typically developing children.* (Oral Presentation)

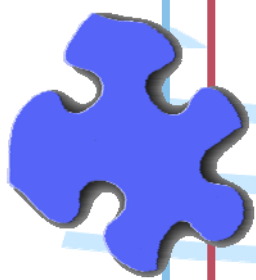
Bland, S., Richdale, A., & Rose, A: *An evaluation of the 'Drama for Every Day Life' program for children and adolescents with high functioning autism spectrum disorder* (Poster)

Robertson, A., & **Richdale, A:** *Friendships in adolescents and young adults: The role of personality characteristics, stress, depression and anxiety* (Poster)

Autism Treatment Network Program Meeting, Washington DC, USA.

Richdale, A: *Sleep problems in children with ASD: Behavioural intervention, why and what next* (Invited keynote)





Conference Presentations *continued*

May 2011

International Meeting For Autism Research, San Diego, USA

Goldman, S. E., McGrew, S. G., **Richdale, A.**, Clemens, T., & Malow, B. A.: *Behavior and Sleep – Associations across childhood and adolescence in autism spectrum disorder* (Oral Presentation)

Baker, E., **Richdale, A.**, Short, M., & Gradisar, M.: *Sleep patterns in adolescents with high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder and typically developing adolescents.* (Poster)

Richdale, A., & Michaels, C.: *Psychological correlates of sleep problems in children with high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder* (Poster)

Dissanayake, C., Newbigin, A., & Chandler, F.: *Emotion understanding and empathic responsiveness in high-functioning children with an ASD* (Poster)

Hudry, K., Bedford, R., Chandler, S., Pasco, G., Gliga, T., Elsabbagh, M., de Klerk, C., Johnson, M., Charman, T., & the BASIS Team: *Profiles of receptive and expressive vocabulary growth in toddlers at high risk for autism spectrum disorders* (Poster)

Barbaro, J. & Dissanayake, C.: *Developmental profiles of infants and toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders prospectively identified in a community-based setting* (Poster)

Green, C., Dissanayake, C., & Loesch, D.Z.: *2D:4D Digit ratio and autism severity in boys* (Poster)

Richdale, A.: Co-Chair of Sleep Special Interest Group.

Broadening Horizons Conference, Gold Coast, QLD

Dissanayake, C.: *Autism - Latest evidence, surveillance and how Maternal, Child and Family Health Nurses can make a difference* (Invited Keynote)

June 2011

Speech Pathology Australia Conference, Darwin, NT.

Jacobs, D., & **Richdale, A.**: *Behavioural profiles of SLI children* (Oral Presentation)

July 2011

Australasian Human Development Association Biennial Meeting, Dunedin, NZ

Dissanayake, C., Bent, C., & Barbaro, J.: *An investigation of social attention in the development of Autism* (Oral Presentation)

Dissanayake, C., Chandler, F., & Newbigin, A.: *Theory of mind in high-functioning autism in middle childhood* (Symposium paper)

Vivanti, G.: *Action Understanding in Autism* (Oral Presentation)

Grants

New Grants Awarded (External)

Whitehouse, A., Maybery, M., **Dissanayake, C.**, Hickey, M., & Pennell, C., (2011-2015). *Prenatal and Early Postnatal Risk Factors in ASD*. National Health and Medical Research Council Grant.

Eapen, V., Williams, K., Jaludin, B., **Dissanayake, C.**, & Woolfenden, S., (2011-2013). *Universal surveillance and Early Identification of Developmental Disorders*. National Health and Medical Research Council Grant.

Dissanayake, C., Iacano, T., & Khosla, R (2010). NHMRC Equipment Grant.

Richdale, A., & Dissanayake, C (2010-2011). *Transition to, and Participation in Tertiary Education for Students with an ASD*. DHS Disability Grant.

Trembath, D., Dissanayake, C., Richdale, A., Iacono, T., and Togher, L (2010-2011). *Practice is Research: The use of single case experimental designs in Clinical Practice*, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Physiotherapists on Developmental Disability. SPOTonDD Research Grant.

Trembath, D. (2010). *Parents as Partners in Evidence Based Speech Pathology Practice*. Speech Pathology Australia Clinical Research Grant.

Dissanayake, C., Trembath, D., Nadachowski, W. (2011). *Child and Family Outcomes Strategy Database for the Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centres*. Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

Dissanayake, C. (2011). *Early Diagnostic Clinic for Autism Spectrum Disorders*. R.E. Ross Trust.

New Grants Awarded (Internal)

Dissanayake, C., & Trembath, D (2010-2011). *Speech Generative Devices for Non-Speaking Children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder*. LTU FTSE Research Grant.

Trembath, D., Dissanayake, C., Richdale, A., Iacono, T., and Togher, L. (2010). LTU eResearch Grant.

Joffe, B., **Trembath, D., & Dissanayake, C.** (2010). *A pilot study of the Structured Use of Music and Movement (SUM&M) intervention program for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*. LTU FHS Grant.

Bloomberg, K., **Trembath, D., & Iacono, T.,** (2010). *A pilot study of key word signing for non-speaking children with autism*. LTU FHS Grant.

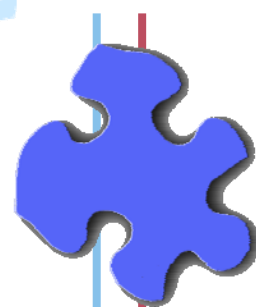
Trembath, D. (2011). *A pilot comparison of electronic and non-electronic communication aids for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. LTU FTSE Early Career Researcher Grant.

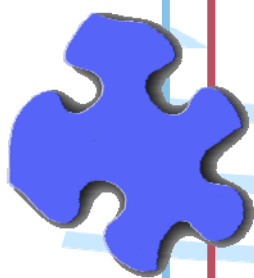
Hudry, K. (2011). *Early Parent-Child Interaction in the Context of High Genetic Risk for Autism*. LTU FTSE Early Career Researcher Grant.

Ongoing Grants (External)

Dissanayake, C. (2008-2010). *Prospective identification of autism in infancy: A follow-up study*. Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

Bavin, E., Dissanayake, C., Kidd, E., & Prior, M. (2010-2012). *Language processing in children with high functioning autism: Evidence from eye tracking*. ARC Project Grant





Dr Josephine Barbaro (standing, middle) with the team at the Sunnam Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre where she gave her last workshop.

Research Highlights

Successful graduate and new post doctoral fellow at OTARC, Dr Josephine Barbaro, was awarded a fellowship by the Australia-Korea Foundation Early Career Research Program in 2011. This program included a two-week study trip to Korea. In addition to meeting with key personnel there, she gave a number of research presentations:

- *Early identification of Autism in infants and toddlers: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Asian Medical Center, Seoul, South Korea.
- *Identifying infants and toddlers 'at risk' of Autism: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Seoul National University Hospital. Bundang, South Korea.
- *Early language and joint attention deficits in infants and toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders.* Sogang University. Seoul, South Korea.
- *Early identification and diagnosis of children with autism from 0 to 3 years of age in Australia.* Gangnam Severance Hospital, Yonsei University. Seoul, South Korea.
- *Identification and diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders in infants and toddlers: Results from an Australian study.* Sunnam City Child-Adolescent Mental Health Center, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea.

Supporting Transition to and Participation in Tertiary Education for Students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder

The Department of Human Services (Victoria) has funded a project aiming to identify the support needs of tertiary students diagnosed with an ASD. The project involves speaking to students in selected TAFEs and Universities across Victoria, as well as their parents and academic and other support staff members about their experiences. Three separate questionnaires have also been launched online to target the three groups of participants to capture the experiences and feedback from a wider sample.

To date, 25 students, 14 parents, and 26 TAFE and University staff members have participated in interviews and focus groups. Questionnaire data are currently being collected. Some of the key themes identified include: high anxiety and poor organization and time management skills amongst students, inability to build and develop peer relationships at university and TAFE, preferred assessment style varies greatly amongst the students, need for flexibility and tailored approach in academic learning and assessments, and staff needs for training on strategies to teach students with ASD and a forum for sharing strategies.

The themes captured from focus groups and questionnaires will feed directly into the recommendations provided to DHS later this year. Based on the recommendations, pilot intervention programs will be introduced and evaluated at two tertiary institutes in Semester 1 of 2012 to improve student, family, and staff outcomes.

Objective 2

Facilitate collaboration with other research centres both nationally and internationally

As our reputation grows, so do our national and international research collaborations. We also have an increasing number of requests by visiting scholars to spend time at the Centre. We have hosted many national and international visitors over the last year. These important activities ensure that the Centre remains a relevant and vibrant place.

Collaborations

International

Dr Sander Begeer, Developmental Psychology, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Professor Tony Charman, Centre for Research in Autism and Education, Institute of Education, University of London, UK

Professor Mark Johnson, Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, School of Psychology, Birkbeck College, London, UK

Professor Pat Howlin, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, London, UK

Dr Joanna Kwasiborska, Speech Therapist (Adesse) and Lecturer, Department of Speech Therapy, Academy of Special Education, Warsaw, Poland

Professor Sue Leekam, Chair of Autism Research, Cardiff University, UK

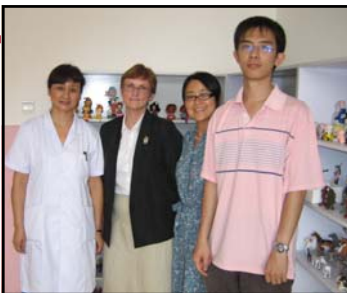
Professor Beth Malow and **Dr Suzanne Goldman**, Kennedy Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, USA

Professor Sally Rogers, MIND Institute, University of California, Davis in Sacramento, USA

Dr Kimberley Schreck, School of Behavioral Sciences & Education, Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburgh, USA

Professor Elizabeth Starr, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, Ontario Canada

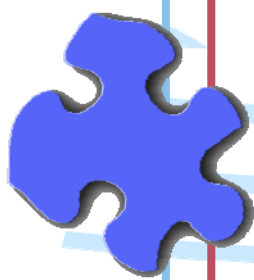
A/Professor Chongying Wang, Director of the Center for Behavioural Science, Medical School, Nankai University, Tianjin, China



The Director of the autism centre in Tianjin, Dr Lau, A/Professor Amanda Richdale, A/Professor Wang and MSc student Ming Shang Jiang.

Associate Professor Amanda Richdale visits China

In September 2010, A/Professor Amanda Richdale visited A/Professor Chongying Wang, Director of the Center for Behavioural Sciences at Nankai University Medical School in Tianjin, in northern China. A/Professor Wang conducts a range research in ASDs and works with the growing autism community in China. A/Professor Richdale met with academics and gave a talk at the Medical School. She also visited the government autism centre and two private autism centres in Tianjin. We are planning for A/Professor Chongying Wang to visit the OTARC in the near future in order that we may undertake collaborative research with her and her colleagues at the research centre.



Collaborations *continued*

National

Dr Joanne Arciuli, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney

Professor Valsa Eapen, Chair of Infant, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, University of New South Wales

Professor Torbjorn Falkmer & Ms. Marika Falkmer, School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work, Curtin University

Dr Mark Neilsen, Department of Psychology, University of Queensland

A/ Professor Leanne Togher, Senior National Health and Medical Research Council Research Fellow, University of Sydney

Dr Andrew Whitehouse, Research Fellow, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research and University of Western Australia

Autism Specific Early Learning and Child Care National Clinical Evaluation Group, headed by **Dr Jacqueline Roberts**, and includes researchers from University of New South Wales, the University of Queensland, Curtin University, and the University of Tasmania.

Parenting Research Centre Early Days Autism Research Group, including researchers from Faculty of Education at Monash University, Disability Studies at RMIT University, and the University of Newcastle

Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER)

Victorian

A/Professor Graeme Johanson (Director, Centre for Community Networking Research), and **A/Professor Shonali Krishnaswamy** (Deputy Director, Centre for Distributed Systems and Software Engineering), Monash University

Dr Jordy Kaufman, Senior Research Fellow, Swinburne Brain Sciences Institute, Swinburne University of Technology

Ms Katie Lyon, Speech and Language Pathologist, SCOPE Victoria, Communication Resource Centre

Ms Gloria Staios & Ms Christine Kendall, Speech and Language Pathologists, Western Autistic School and Spectrum Speech, Victoria

Ms Denise West, Manager, SCOPE Victoria, Communication Resource Centre

Royal Children's Hospital (Centre for Community Child Health and Department of Developmental Medicine), particularly **Dr Cathy Maraffa**, **Professor Katrina Williams** and **Professor Jill Sewell**

La Trobe University

Professor Teresa Iacono, Head of La Trobe Rural Health School

A/Professor Rajiv Khosla, Director of the Business Systems and Knowledge Modelling Lab

Dr Evan Kidd, School of Psychological Science

Dr Danuta Loesch, School of Psychological Science

A/Professor Seng Loke, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences

A/Professor Geoff Stuart, School of Psychological Science

Visitors

Visitors Study Leave

Dr Emiko Kezuka, Gunma Prefectural Women's University in Japan.

Ms Alicia Reilly, Manager at Banardos Children's Services, UK

Professor Elizabeth Starr, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, Ontario Canada



Professor
Elizabeth
Starr



Invited International Visitors

Professor Sue Leekam, Chair of Autism Research, Cardiff University, UK

Professor Sally Rogers, MIND Institute at UC Davis, Sacramento, California, USA

Informal Visits

International

Dr Mari Lehtinen, University of Helsinki

A team of four multi-disciplinary service providers (**Hamimah Ahmat; Siew Lai Ching; Tang Hui Nee; Nasriah Nasir**) from the KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Singapore

Ms Ellen Pritchard Dodge, M.Ed. CCC-SLP, USA

Ms Hilary Friedland (Melb), Kimochi Toy Company, USA

National

Dr Brenda McLaughlan, Academic, scientist, manager, program coordinator, and consultant across the agricultural & animal science industries in Australia and overseas

Ms Karen Gee, Senior School Psychologist, Department of Education, Tasmanian Learning Services

Dr Mark Nielsen, Department of Psychology, University of Queensland

Professor Torbjorn Falkmer & Ms. Marika Falkmer, School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work, Curtin University

Dr Joanne Arciuli, University of Sydney

Mr Lindsay Weekes & Adam, two adults with ASD

Ms Maxine Cowie, & Ms Sharon Garro from Starjump - Building Strong and Confident Learners

Ms Tracel Devereux & Mr Rob Miller, Alpha Autism

Dr Nusrat Yasmeen Ahmed, Flinders University & Director of the Hope Autism Center in Bangladesh.

Ms Lisa Lawler, Community Manager, Irabina Childhood Autism Services

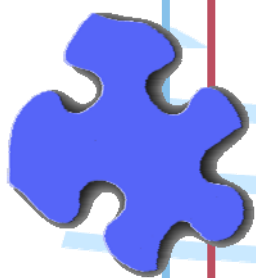
Dr Simon Hauser, Northern Hospital, Epping



**Professor Sue Leekam,
Chair of Autism, Wales
Autism Research Centre
at Cardiff University**

There are only two Chairs in Autism in the world and Professor Sue Leekam has one of them. In February this year, Professor Leekam travelled from her post as Director of the Wales Autism Research Centre at Cardiff University to the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) at La Trobe University.

This wasn't Professor Leekam's first visit to La Trobe as she worked here as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with Professor Margot Prior in 1990. She also spent eight weeks at La Trobe in 2007-2008 as a Distinguished Fellow with A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, Director, OTARC.



Objective 3

Foster and support a National Research Network investigating the cause and management of ASD.

Given the complexity of ASDs, advancement of knowledge demands cooperation across a network of expertise and disciplines. This year we continued to support the activities of the Australasian Autism Research Collaboration (AARC) and to fund the Olga Tennison Autism PhD Scholarship (Ms Nicole Grant is now in the second year of her research study), as well as being one of the essential partners on the CRC application, *Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder*.

CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders



The shared vision of the proposed CRC is to enable earlier, more accurate and efficient diagnoses, and to find more effective and cost efficient ways of enabling children and adults with ASD to achieve valued life outcomes through an end-user driven, cooperative, public-private national Cooperative Research Centre. If successful, the CRC will bring together key autism researchers across Australia in a 10-year, multi-million dollar initiative designed to improve the lives of people with an ASD, and to advance our understanding of this complex body of neuro-developmental disorders.

Australasian Autism Research Collaboration



The AARC had its 5th meeting in the Education Room at the Margot Prior Wing at La Trobe University on June 1 this year. To find out more about our activities and research in Australasia go to <http://sites.google.com/site/autismresearchaustralasia/aarc>. The ASD Branch of FaCHSIA recently approached the Chair of AARC, Professor Margot Prior, to update the review of interventions for children with ASD undertaken by Roberts and Prior

(2006). A working group of members of the AARC, representative of professions and states and territories, has been formed to undertake this review. One important agenda item at our last meeting was the finalisation of the Constitution for the new Australasian Autism Society For Autism Research (ASFAR) which will begin operation this year following an inaugural meeting at the Asia Pacific Autism Conference in Perth (September 2011). Once the new society is established, with a fully functioning executive (voted in), we plan to dissolve the AARC as its activities will be subsumed under the banner of ASFAR. The first research meeting of ASFAR is planned for 2012.

Objective 4

Conduct campaigns to improve the public profile of autism research, thereby attracting additional research funds via grants and donations.

We continue to undertake and participate in activities to enhance the need for and profile of autism research in the community. The World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) provides us with an excellent platform each year to do so.

World Autism Awareness Day Celebrations, April 1 and 2



Staff and students at the Centre dressed in blue to commemorate WAAD to promote the day to staff and students at the University. We also hosted a table in the university common area at lunchtime with our main purpose being to raise awareness of the need of ASDs and the need for research. In distributing blue and red lollies (1 red for every 100 blue lollies to symbolise the prevalence of ASD), over \$160 was raised on the day.

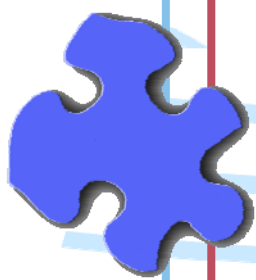


The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) also kindly raised funds at their Melbourne office for OTARC on WAAD. A special thank you to Mandy Stevens and Yana Gotmaker for their efforts.

Some OTARC staff and families also visited Federation Square on Saturday April 2 to watch it turn blue, and to support the efforts of Autism Victoria in hosting the event in recognition of WAAD.

National Autism Summit – Sydney April 1

Autism Awareness, a not-for-profit organization, hosted a National Autism Summit in Sydney on April 1, with approximately 30 invited attendees from across Australia. Our Director, A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, was among them. The theme of the day was 'Simplify, Amplify, Unify' with one of the key topics under discussion being the development of a representative National Autism Peak Body in Australia, and the best ways to achieve this. Senator Jan McLucas, Parliamentary Secretary for Disability and Carers attended at the end of the day. The day concluded with a cocktail party at a venue overlooking the Opera House as it turned blue in recognition of WAAD. It was announced at this event that Autism Awareness had been granted NGO membership to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI). This is the only Australian autism-related NGO to have this affiliation.



Media

We continue to take the opportunity to increase the profile of autism research by using the print, radio and television media where possible. Furthermore, we increasingly use the internet and social media to extend our reach. We have nearly 400 friends on *FACEBOOK*, and many followers on *Twitter* (individuals and organisations) who, in turn, reach out to many thousands of other followers! In addition, we have had between 600 - 800 visits each month to our Centre website www.latrobe.edu.au/otarc over the last year, and have approximately 2000 individuals on our email list. We also have approximately 300 'Friends of OTARC'. All our contacts receive our quarterly newsletter 'Another Piece'.

To raise awareness of individual members of our Centre, we now have a **WHO'S WHO @ OTARC** which is available as a downloadable pdf document from our website.

Other media events

15 February 2011: ABC 774 Drive Program with Lindy Byrnes – A/Professor Dissanayake was interviewed about ASDs

21 April 2011: SBS Radio News, Interview with Dr Giacomo Vivanti on the Margot Prior Wing Early Treatment project

9 May 2011: 774 ABC Melbourne, Penny Johnston interviews A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake on Autism Awareness.

3 June 2011: SBS Radio News, Interview with Dr Giacomo Vivanti on the role of parents in early intervention.

21 February, 2011: Education Age, 'When bee is for breaking through' article on Voice and Movement with a reference to the OTARC evaluation (Assoc. Prof. Amanda Richdale) of this program..



OTARC welcomes Grandparents into its fold

In order to engage with the community local to the La Trobe University area, the Centre hosted a 'Grandparents' Meet and Greet' on 25th February 2011.

We had an excellent response to our first-ever event for grandparents of children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Enthusiastic grandparents came from as far away as Sydney and Geelong to hear about research into ASDs. Most of the OTARC team were present to meet and talk with our visitors, these valuable members of the community and vital members of families with a child with ASD. Overwhelmingly the grandparents wanted to find ways to help and improve the lives of their much-loved grandchild or grandchildren.

A full report of the speeches (By Professor Margot Prior, Mrs Olga Tennison, A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake and Professor Sue Leekam) at the Grandparents' Meet & Greet is available from our website.

Donations

A total of \$520,636 was received in donations

(see financial statement — page 25)

Principal Donors

Organisations

Northern School of Autism

EPIC Centre, Bundoora

The staff of ACER (on World Autism Awareness Day)

Students and staff within La Trobe University (on World Autism Awareness Day)

Individuals

Olga Tennison

Mrs Maryon Walters

Mr Peter Hill

An anonymous donor



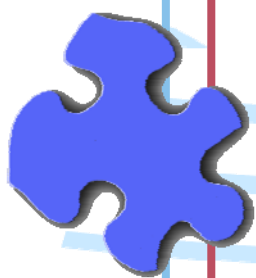
Mrs Olga Tennison

Donations of Goods

The Kimochi company has kindly donated a number of plush toys to children in the new Margot Prior Wing at the Autism Specific Early Learning & Care Centre at La Trobe Community Children's Centre.



Books for the Parent Resource Library at the Margot Prior Wing and the research facilities at the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre were kindly donated from FOOTPRINT BOOKS, WILEY BOOKS and The Australian Centre for Educational Research.



Objective 5

Provide opportunities for student based research and mentoring programs

The growth in our staff numbers has enabled us to supervise an increasing number of undergraduate Honours students as well as Masters and Doctoral level postgraduate students at the Centre. In addition, we have had four Doctoral students successfully complete their candidature within the last year.

Postgraduate students

PhD Candidates

Sarah Chan: *Memory, narratives and the self in children with high-functioning autism*

Cherie Green: *A mixed longitudinal study of growth in boys with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

Rucha Joshi: *Autism in girls*

Heather Nuske: *Emotional Reactivity to Others' Facial Speech in Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

Doctor of Clinical Psychology Candidates

Katherine (Kat) Crea: *The mental health and wellbeing of toddlers who have a sibling with an Autism Spectrum Disorder*

Zena Elhassan: *A study to determine if the simplified elimination diet (a diet that excludes foods that contain additives, salicylates and amines) can improve sleep and daytime behaviours in children with autism*

Germaine Gerkis: *Language processing in children with high-functioning autism using eye-tracking*

Rebecca McStay: *An investigation of caregiver wellbeing across the lifespan*

Doctor of Clinical Neuropsychology Candidates

Kavi Jayasinghe: *Sensory Symptoms and Repetitive Behaviours in Autism Spectrum Disorders*

Alex Zammit: *Assessing Attention to Social Stimuli by Adults with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder.*

Masters of Clinical Psychology Candidates

Claire Forsythe: *Investigating social attention in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

Clare James: *Targeting sleep problems in children with autism with behavioural interventions*

Nicole Porter: *The potential effects of bilingualism on parent-child interaction and communication for families of children with autism.*

Lisa Rumney: *The potential effects of bilingualism on maternal synchrony in families of children with Autism.*

Honours Candidates

Parise Nichole Genticoglou: *Examining how sleep problems in children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affect mother's sleep and well-being*

Michelle Smith: *Music and movement based treatment for children with ASD*

Xeut Ying Tan: *Key word signing for children with ASD*

Successful Completions in 2010 - 2011

Postgraduates

Josephine Barbaro - PhD, *'Prospective identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders in infancy and toddlerhood using developmental surveillance: The Social Attention and Communication Study'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake)

Felicity Chandler - Doctor of Clinical Psychology, *'An exploration of the internal working models of caregiver attachment in children with high-functioning Autistic Disorder'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake)

Amanda Newbigin - Doctor of Clinical Psychology, *'Self-perception, social understanding and social responsiveness in children with high-functioning autism from the perspectives of 'self' and 'other'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake)

Jessica Mifsud - Doctor of Clinical Psychology, *'A comparative investigation of symbolic play competency in children with high-functioning autism'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake)

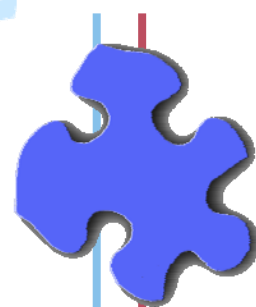
Honours

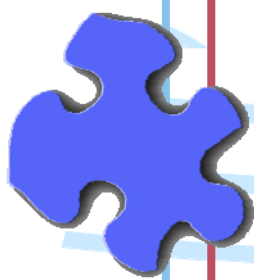
Emma Baker: *'An investigation into sleep disturbances in adolescents with high-functioning autism and Asperger's Disorder'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Amanda Richdale). Emma was awarded the highest thesis mark in the School of Psychological Science in 2010.

Lindsay Pamment: *'Symbolic understanding of pictures and objects in children with high-functioning autism'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake)

Zoe Robertson: *'Friendships in adolescents and young adults: The role of personality characteristics, stress, mood and anxiety'* (Supervisor: A/Professor Amanda Richdale)

Sarah Rostron: *'The structure and organization of narrative in children with high-functioning autism'* (Supervisor: Professor Edith Bavin)





Objective 6

Foster knowledge transfer to practitioners within the field

In addition to giving numerous invited talks to practitioners in the field as well as hosting a number of events for these community-based professionals, we have established two new initiatives over the last year.

Ask a Researcher

The Ask a Researcher service, available from the [OTARC website](#), involves our researchers at the Centre answering questions relating to research on Autism Spectrum Disorders submitted by service providers, teachers, students, parents and family members of affected individuals and those with an ASD themselves. Our aim is to provide evidence-based information in response to the questions submitted to us so that we can foster increased knowledge on ASDs in the community.

ADOS Training

The OTARC began to offer training to clinicians and researchers on the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) in 2011. The courses are facilitated by Dr Kristelle Hudry, a WPS/ACER accredited ADOS trainer. Kristelle has a PhD in Educational Psychology and expertise in Autism Spectrum Disorders, including early detection and diagnostic assessment.

A maximum of 6 trainees per course permit intensive small-group interaction to facilitate learning across 4 days.

Invited Talks

August 2010

Josephine Barbaro: *Identifying infants and toddlers 'at risk' of an ASD: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS)*". Maternal and Child Health Monthly Meeting, Local Government Area of Hume, Melbourne.

Josephine Barbaro: *Autistic Spectrum Disorders – The importance of early detection and role of the GP.* Annual Women's and Children's Health Update, Melbourne.

September 2010

Rucha Joshi: *Autism in Girls.* Presented to staff at Korowa Anglican Girls' School, Melbourne

October 2010

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Research findings in autism.* Presented to staff at Noah's Ark, Werribee, Melbourne

Dr David Trembath: *Research developments in ASD.*, Videoconference workshop presented for the NSW Hunter New England Health and the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability, and Home Care Interagency Education Day

Dr Giacomo Vivanti: *Strategie di intervento per l'autismo in eta' prescolare: dalla ricerca alla pratica clinica.* AUSL Ravenna, Ravenna, Italy

Dr Giacomo Vivanti: *Il disturbo linguistico nell'autismo.* Centro per l'Autismo UONPIA di Modena, Modena, Italy

A/Professor Amanda Ricdale: *Sleep and autism spectrum disorders.* Workshop for Vietnam Health training program for 3 visiting health professionals from Children's Hospital 1, Ho Chi Min City. Supported by CLAN and HOC MÃI.

November

A/Professor Amanda Ricdale: *Comparison of sleep patterns and children with autism and other developmental disabilities.* Kennedy Center, Vanderbilt University, USA

Invited Talks *continued*

February 2011

Dr Giacomo Vivanti: *Learning and cognition in Autism; & Autism: from research to clinical practice.* Giant Steps, Sydney (2 talks)

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Research findings in autism.* Northern Autistic School Staff Development Day, Melbourne

March 2011

Dr Giacomo Vivanti: *Imitation and learning in Autism Spectrum Disorders.* Presented at the School of Psychological Science Research Colloquia, La Trobe University

A/Professor Amanda Richdale: *Sleep in typically developing children and children with developmental disorders or ASD.* Presented to staff at the EPIC Centre, Melbourne

Dr David Trembath: *Research developments in ASD.* Videoconference workshop, NSW Hunter New England Health and the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability, and Home Care Interagency Education Day

April 2011

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Autism in infancy and toddlerhood: Finding the path to early identification.* Presented at the Brain Sciences Institute Research Colloquia, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Realising a dream: Establishing the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre.* Presented at the Infinity Leadership Program, La Trobe University

Dr Kristelle Hudry: *The development of atypical social-communication in autism: Getting answers from high-risk cohorts and intervention trials.* Presented at the School of Psychological Science Research Colloquia, La Trobe University

Dr Kristelle Hudry: *Social-communication in young children with autism: Measurement, early intervention, and early identification.* Presentation to the Autism Team, Royal Children's Hospital, Traralgon, Melbourne

May 2011

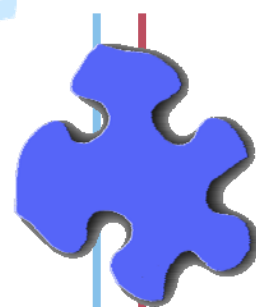
A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: Training a multidisciplinary team of clinicians on the early identification of ASDs in Poland. This group of six dedicated staff, headed by Dr Joanna Kwarsiborska, run a privately funded clinic called Adesse in central Warsaw where they offer evidence-based intervention and diagnostic services.

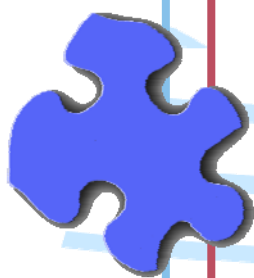
June 2011

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Research Findings in Autism.* Invited talk to the Asperger's Syndrome Support Network, Melbourne.

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Can we diagnose autism in infancy: Barriers and solutions?* Presentation to Psychiatrists at the Clinical Controversies Meeting, Sydney

Dr Josephine Barbaro: *The importance of early detection of Autism Spectrum Disorders: The role of the GP, Maternal and Child Health Nurse, Paediatrician and Allied Health Provider.* Monash Division of General Practice. Yarra Yarra Golf Club, Melbourne.





ACER/OTARC Workshops

July 2010

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake: *Autism in Infancy: Promoting the early identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders.* Sydney, NSW

September 2010

Dr David Trembath: *Making sense of Speech Pathology: A guide for parents of children with autism,* Sale, Victoria

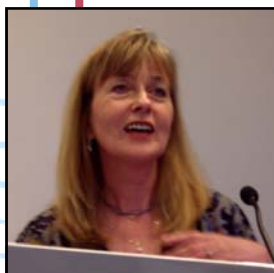
November 2010

Professor Margot Prior & Dr Josephine Barbaro: *Repetitive behaviours in Autism Spectrum Disorders,* University of Melbourne

April 2011

A/Professor Amanda Richdale & Dr Josephine Barbaro: *Diagnosing Autism Spectrum Disorders from infancy to adulthood: Who's involved, what to look for and the assessment.* University of Melbourne

Public Presentation by Professor Sue Leekam



The OTARC hosted a public presentation by Professor Sue Leekam during her visit in February 2011. The title of her talk was 'Understanding autism as a spectrum: Research using The Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO)'. The two-hour public lecture to clinicians, researchers, students and professionals who work with ASD captured a full house at the Undercroft Theatre at La Trobe University.

The DISCO was discussed in relation to the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and the Autism Diagnostic Interview which are currently used in Australia. In comparison to these tools, currently considered as providing a gold standard in diagnosis of ASDs, Professor Leekam argued that the DISCO provides a more detailed clinical profile of the individual in question, and is very useful in monitoring progress of individuals with an ASD.

The discussion that followed this most compelling talk indicated that there are a few clinicians in Victoria who utilise the DISCO in their clinical work. Representatives from Autism Victoria who attended indicated that there is community interest in training on the DISCO.

Other Initiatives

Federal Government Initiatives

Early Days

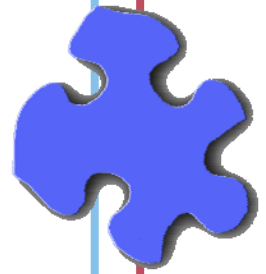
We have continued to work in partnership with our colleagues at the Parenting Research Centre (PRC) who coordinate two of the federal government HCWA initiatives. The Early Days Workshops is a national program of free workshops for mothers, fathers and other family carers of children aged six and under who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The workshops provide evidence-based information and strategies that parents can use to promote their child's development at home. These workshops have now been developed and will continue to be delivered across the country.

Raising Children Network

The second initiative that we engage in with the PRC is developing content for the Raising Children Network Autism website which provides parents and carers with online evidence-based information about caring for and raising their child or children with an ASD.



The official opening of the Margot Prior Wing: The Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Professor Margot Prior, Mrs Olga Tennison and A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake.



Professor Sue Leekam is shown around the Margot Prior Wing by Professor Margot Prior, Ms Jenny Reynolds (Director of the La Trobe Community Children's Centre) and Dr Giacomo Vivanti.



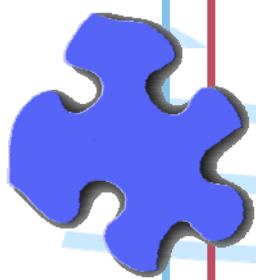
The Margot Prior Wing

The OTARC is centrally involved with the Victorian Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centre: The Margot Prior Wing, at the Community Children's Centre within La Trobe University. The federally funded Centre, which is one of six across the nation, opened its doors with 25 enrolled children and families and an almost full complement of staff on July 19th, 2010. It was formally opened by the Honorable Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs on 3rd December, 2010.

The Margot Prior Wing, a joint collaboration with the Royal Children's Hospital, currently supports a total of 25 children and their families. Professor Sally Rogers visited for a period of two weeks in August 2010 to train 4 of the 11 staff at the service on the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM), which she developed together with Professor Geraldine Dawson.

Dr Giacomo Vivanti, the Research Fellow at the Margot Prior Wing, continued to support these staff following his arrival (also in August 2010) until the appointment of the Clinical Manager and Psychologist, Dr Cynthia Zierhut in March 2011. Dr Zierhut (like Dr Vivanti) comes to us from the UC Davis MIND Institute in Sacramento where she had the role of Treatment Coordinator on the Early Steps Study which implements the ESDM under the direction of Professor Rogers. Dr Zierhut is now training the rest of the staff.

The Margot Prior Wing, along with the other five ASELCCs, participates in a federally funded Clinical Evaluation Strategy under the direction of Dr Jacqueline Roberts. The OTARC recently won the tender to develop and maintain the database for the clinical evaluation data collected across the six ASELCCs. It is hoped that, together, this research strategy will provide important new data, heretofore unavailable in Australia, on the developmental and psychosocial outcomes for children and their families who attend these six centres. Each centre implements an early intervention program for the children as a crucial part of their daycare experience. Only two of the centres (Vic & NSW) implement the ESDM.



Early Diagnostic Clinic for Autism Spectrum Disorders



A new initiative this year is the establishment of the first Early Diagnostic Clinic for ASDs. We were successful in securing funding from the R.E. Ross Trust to undertake this initiative for children who have been identified with symptoms of ASD by community-based early childhood and health professionals. The clinic

realises our aim to combine key diagnostic, intervention and research activities at La Trobe University. We are committed to early identification and diagnosis of ASDs so that children and their families may have access to the earliest possible support to promote positive developmental outcomes.

The clinic is a direct outcome of research by A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr. Josephine Barbaro which showed that early identification of ASD symptoms by community-based early childhood and health professionals is not only possible but also very reliable, as most of the children referred were diagnosed with an ASD at 24 months, which was confirmed at follow-up at 4 years.

The clinic, which runs every Thursday, was developed to focus on very young children, and only accepts referrals of children up to 36 months of age from throughout Victoria. The children are assessed by a team of professionals from OTARC with expertise in the very early diagnostic assessments of ASDs, and who work in close collaboration with specialist Paediatricians from the Royal Children's and Northern Hospitals, as well as community-based Paediatricians, who provide the necessary follow-up health checks and ongoing medical care of the children.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the R. E. Ross Trust who contributed \$1,000 per assessment, so that the cost for families for assessments are minimized.

Other activities

Other research related activities engaged in by staff at the Centre include reviewing manuscripts for major national and international peer review journals, grant applications, and conference submissions.

A/Professor Dissanayake continues in her work as an Editor for 'Frontiers in Developmental Psychology', and A/Professor Amanda Richdale is currently co-editor with A/Professor Kyle Johnson (Departments of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon) of a new book: *Advances in Autism: Sleep Disorders* (In preparation).

Dr Giacomo Vivanti has been appointed as a member of the Editorial Board for the Encyclopedia of Autism and Related Disorders (to be edited by Springer in 2011). He is also a scientific consultant for the Italian National Research Council and a member of the Italian Department of Health Committee on Autism Diagnosis and Treatment Guidelines.

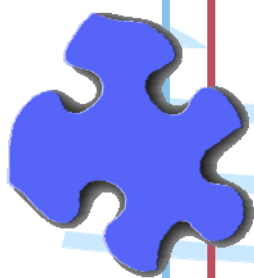
All members of the OTARC continue to meet fortnightly. These meetings comprise a monthly research seminar and monthly laboratory meeting. The staff members at the Centre also meet on Friday each week to share their research ideas and directions and to foster our collaborative research initiatives.

Dr Kristelle Hudry has established the OTARC ADOS reliability meetings once per month to provide a forum for trained researchers (staff and students) to establish and maintain confidence and reliability with administration and coding of this instrument.

Financial Report

For the period ending 30th June 2011

Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre Income Statement		Ending 30 June 2011	Ending 30 June 2010
		Actual \$'000	Actual \$'000
Revenues			
Commonwealth Grants - DEEWR		42,201	0
State Government Grants		243,847	0
Research Revenue		127,286	50,467
Investment Revenue	Interest on monies held	78,236	48,310
Commercial Revenue		29,587	217,084
Other Grants and Donations	Donations	520,636	321,625
Other Revenue		12,379	51,512
Internal Grants		114,011	140,519
Total Revenue		1,168,184	829,516
Expenses			
Total Employee Benefits and on costs		446,440	356,748
Academic		379,149	230,759
Casual - Academic		57,051	81,081
General		34,125	30,679
Casual - General		32,846	0
Other salary related		-56,730	14,230
Total Non Salary Expenditure		102,822	53,393
Infrastructure Related	Maintenance, services	21,799	3,318
Depreciation	Depreciation	6,790	0
Professional Fees	Consultancies, etc	656	9,091
Student Related	Scholarships, Stipends, Training	41,665	23,311
General Operating	General Admin Costs	14,056	8,545
Staff related	Travel (Conference), Accomm., Entertainment	19,874	8,414
Other Expenses	Sundry Items	1,380	484
Internal Expense Transfers		-3,399	231
Total Expenses		549,262	410,142
Net Operating Result		618,922	419,375
Internal Transfers	FSTE Allocation	-50,000	-75,173
Underlying Operating Result		668,922	494,548
Opening Balance of Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre		1,924,860.46	1,430,312.46
Movement for the Financial Year ending 30/06/2011		668,921.66	494,548.00
Closing Balance as at 30/06/2011		2,593,782.12	1,924,860.46



Staffing and Centre Personnel

Staff

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, Director (and Reader in the School of Psychological Science)

A/Professor Amanda Richdale, Principal Research Fellow

Dr Elfriede Ihlen, Honorary Research Fellow

Dr David Trembath, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Dr Josephine Barbaro, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Dr Giacomo Vivanti, Research Fellow, ASELCC/OTARC

Dr Kristelle Hudry, Lecturer in Developmental Psychology in the School of Psychological Science

Ms Lisbeth Wilks, Administrative Officer

Ms Carmela Germano, Laboratory Manager

Academic Adjuncts

Professor Edith Bavin, Adjunct member (School of Psychological Science)

Dr Naomi Bishop, Adjunct member (Department of Microbiology)

Dr Diane Jacobs, Adjunct member (School of Human Communication Sciences)

Research Assistants

Ms. Irene Giaprakis, Research Assistant

Ms. Emma Baker, Research Assistant

Ms. Lindsay Pamment, Research Assistant

Ms Ru Cai, Research Assistant

Ms Gladys Cheung, Research Assistant

Ms Kate Argentino, Research Assistant

Ms Teena Caithness, Research Assistant

Ms Nicola Dunn, Research Assistant

Honorary Team Members

Ms Amanda Golding, Amagol Consulting/Autism Noticeboard

Mr Wojciech Nadachowski,

Staffing and Centre Personnel *continued*



Professor Margot Prior (Chair),

Governance - Advisory Committee

Professor Margot Prior (Chair), Adjunct Professor at La Trobe University, University of Melbourne University, and Royal Children's Hospital

A/Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, Centre Director, La Trobe University

Professor Tim Brown, DVC Research, La Trobe University

Professor Brian McGaw, Dean of Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering, La Trobe University

Prof David Finlay, Chair University Human Ethics Committee & Director, La Trobe University

Mr Clifford Picton, University Ombudsman, La Trobe University

Professor Robin Williams, Director of Alumni and Advancement, Office of the Vice-Chancellor, La Trobe University

Professor Christine Bigby, School of Social Work, La Trobe University

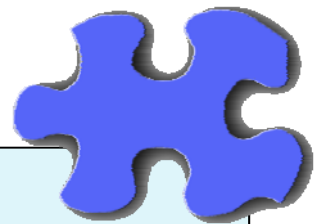
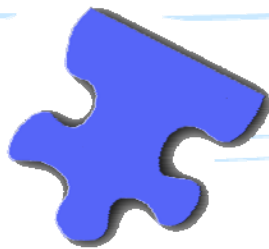
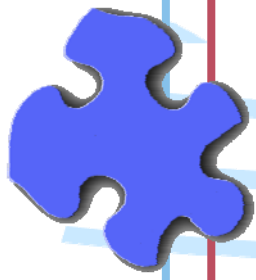
Dr Catherine Marraffa, Senior Paediatrician Developmental Medicine, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne

Ms Lia Castorini, Autism Victoria

Dr Jacqueline Roberts, A/Professor, University of Sydney, NSW

Mr Oreste Pompetti, Finance & Administration Manager EPIC Centre, Bundoora

Ms Cherie Green, PhD candidate, Student representative for OTARC, La Trobe University



The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) was initially established as a joint initiative of La Trobe University and Autism Victoria. This establishment was made possible with a private donation by Mrs Olga Tennison in 2007 and the Centre is named after her to acknowledge her generosity.

Our mission within the Centre is to advance knowledge of the nature and causes of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs), as well as to develop and study evidence-based strategies for supporting children and families affected by an ASD.

The OTARC is situated in the School of Psychological Science within the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering (FSTE) at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia.