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Congratulations Olga!

Mrs Olga Tennison received an Honourable Mention in the B-HERT Philanthropy Awards

The Business/Higher Education Round Table (B-HERT) 2011 Awards recognise outstanding achievement in collaboration between business and higher education in the fields of research and development, and education and training.

Who's our new Patron? Turn to Page 3 to find out ...



Donations

To fund our research activities the OTARC relies on the support of private and corporate donors. Our thanks are extended to the individuals and organisations who have made donations to the [Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre](#).

Donations can be made online or through mail and telephone. To access these options go to <http://webpay.latrobe.edu.au/onestop/tranform.cgi?TRAN-NO=816> Remember to specify that your donation is for the [Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre \(OTARC\)](#). Please note that all donations to La Trobe University are tax deductible. If you need more information, please call (03) 9479 2497 or email otarc@latrobe.edu.au

ASDs affect approximately 1% of the population (i.e., 1:100 individuals) 3 out of 4 people affected are male. - Autism Speaks, USA

Actively fundraising

The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre is excited to announce that anyone now can help fundraise for OTARC in a variety of events offered through EVERYDAY HERO. If you are the type of person who enjoys fun runs, triathlons, walks and other activities, this is a fun and easy way to help a good cause. You can find out more by going to <http://www.everydayhero.com.au/charity/view?charity=1648> to check out what events are currently being organised. You can form a group or participate as an individual. And it's all for a great cause ... Helping research into Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The screenshot shows the 'Everyday Hero' website interface. At the top, there's a navigation menu with links for Home, Sign up, Events, Charities, Events, Schedule, Gift Cards, and Help. The main header area is purple and white, featuring the 'Everyday Hero' logo and the text 'Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre'. Below this, there's a brief description of the center's mission. To the right, a 'Contact' section lists email, phone, fax, and website information. The central part of the page is titled 'Fundraise for Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre' and includes a sub-section 'Select an event to start building your fundraising page'. This section displays several event cards with icons and descriptions, such as 'Melbourne Marathon', 'Entourage Cycle', 'The Age Run Melbourne', and 'Rally: Bentley 11 March 2012'. On the right side, there are sections for 'Find, follow and friend us!' with social media icons, 'Fundraise' with a 'Start fundraising page' button, and 'Donate' with a 'Donate now' button. At the bottom right, a purple button asks 'Want your own fundraising event website?'.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair— Prof Margot Prior, LTU, Melbourne University, and RCH

Associate Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, Centre Director, LTU

Professor Tim Brown, DVC Research, LTU

Professor Brian McGaw, Dean of Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering, LTU

Prof David Finlay, Chair University Human Ethics Committee, LTU

Mr Clifford Picton, LTU Ombudsman

Professor Robin Williams, Director of Alumni & Advancement, LTU

Professor Christine Bigby, School of Social Work, LTU

Dr Catherine Marraffa, Senior Paediatrician, RCH

Ms Lia Castorina, Team Leader - Autism Advisor Program, Autism Victoria

Ms Cherie Green, PhD candidate, LTU Student representative

Director's Report

I am pleased to end this year with the excellent news that **Professor David de Kretser** has accepted our invitation to be Patron of the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre. Professor de Kretser was the Governor of Victoria from April 2006 – 2011. He is the Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor as well as a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering. He is an infertility and andrology expert, and was the foundation director of the Monash Institute of Reproduction and



Development (now the Monash Institute of Medical Research). We are delighted that Professor de Kretser will be our Patron, and warmly welcome him.

We recently held a successful Strategic Planning Day: *Towards 2015: Generosity in Spirit, Excellence in Research*. Our focus was on where we want the OTARC to be in 2015, to examine how we are placed to get there, and what we need to do, in the shorter term, to achieve our goals. One of the identified risks to our operation was the shortage of space we face as a result of our increased activities over the last year, and resulting staff increases. I was surprised to tally over 40 active research projects underway at the centre, and 2012 will see an increase in our student numbers to 28, 18 of whom are postgraduates.



Associate Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, PhD MAPS

On the topic of numbers, I am sad to announce that we will lose two valued members on our Advisory Committee. Both Professor Jacqui Roberts and Mr Oreste Pompetti are stepping down as a result of a change in each of their professional lives, and I wish them well in undertaking their new roles. I would like to offer my sincere thanks for their commitment to us and their involvement in our development as an outstanding research centre in Australia.

It is with great disappointment that I report that the CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders was not awarded funding by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, despite the quality of the bid and the significant momentum created within the autism sector through this process. While the proposed projects put forward received excellent reviews, we were unable to convince the federal government that an Autism CRC is something worth investing in. Indeed, there has been very little government investment in autism research this year. Not a single application for autism research received funding from the NH&MRC in 2011, and only one autism grant was funded by the **ARC. Let's hope for better fortunes in the sector in 2012!**

Turning to 2012, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our staff, students, collaborators and readers the best for the festive season ahead of us, and a Happy New Year. May it be an excellent one for research on Autism Spectrum Disorders!





Calling all Volunteers!

Many of the research projects undertaken at the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre requires the support of volunteers.

If you would like to gain valuable practical experience in a clinical research setting, as well as insight into the nature of clinical research, volunteering is an effective way to do this.

If you would like to receive emails about future volunteer jobs, join our Volunteer Research Projects Register. Please email: l.wilks@latrobe.edu.au

We are also embarking on some exciting operational and marketing projects to increase our overall capacity. These roles include:

- volunteer co-ordinator
- copy writer
- digital graphic designer
- marketing assistant

Many workplaces offer volunteer leave, which provides paid leave for those volunteering their time. Ask your employer if this scheme is available to you. We have been fortunate that some of our supporters have been able access these schemes when volunteering.

If you would like to register your interest in helping us with these tasks, please contact w.nadachowski@latrobe.edu.au

Thanks Peter!

The [Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre](#) is currently implementing a new Customer Relationship Management database provided as a donation from Salesforce.com. This donation, valued at \$24,000 per year, will increase our capacity to better manage our communication with our research participants and supporters.

OTARC volunteer, [Peter Johansen](#), has worked two days a week since mid September to help us 'clean' our databases. He has an exceptional eye for detail and he has been moving through these lists to ensure accuracy and consistency. Peter has recently passed one hundred hours of volunteer work, which is a great milestone. This work will leave an amazing legacy on our future capacity, and we are very grateful for this gift of valuable hours.



More children will be diagnosed with an ASD this year than AIDS, diabetes and paediatric cancer combined.— Autism Speaks, USA



2012 Seminar Series

Presented by Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC)

Supported by ACER

Early Start Denver Model

(ESDM)

One day introductory workshop

with Dr Cynthia Zierhut

19 April 2012

at the

La Trobe University City Campus

\$255 + GST per person

This workshop is aimed at professionals




Best wishes for a safe and happy festive season



The pillar of the world is hope - African Proverb

This year La Trobe University is proud to support the Atiyun Sewker Resource Centre, founded by Ron Karapanagiotidis, a distinguished alumnus of La Trobe.



Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year to all our supporters, volunteers and participants from the team at the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre.

May your summer be safe and peaceful.



Ask a Researcher

A sample of the questions we receive to our 'Ask a Researcher' Service at OTARC. In every issue, we will bring you a recent question and the response supplied by one of our team of researchers. **This issue's** question has been answered by one of our adjunct staff, Dr Naomi Bishop and by our Admin Officer, Lisbeth Wilks, who are both parents of young adults with ASD.

We have a teenage son with high functioning Autism. We have tried to involve him in groups to help him socialize, but he just stands off to the side by himself, and no matter how hard we try we can't get him to socialize. There is not much support for teenagers with Autism in our area. He goes to a regular school, but the teachers say he just stands by himself during lunch. He has no friends. Any thoughts, tips, ideas, suggestions?

Answer 1:

Often with ASD, socializing for the sake of socializing seems pointless (e.g. chatting, hanging out), and there needs to be a purpose for interaction with other people. So carrying out a task in the company of other people is one way of not becoming isolated. This might include a hobby club (chess, computers, book club?), a sporting activity, an environmental task in the community, learning a new skill (puppy training?), teaching or mentoring other students (peers or younger, in school or out of school), getting a part-time job (voluntary or paid, maybe a job that involves helping others?). Going to a friend's house to help plant their veggie patch may be preferable to going to a friend's house with no specific aim in mind. Getting involved in activities where people are not acting like teenagers in a school ground may be helpful e.g. wider age-group activities.

Having the company of people, and/or carrying out productive activities with them, may be sufficient ("nodding acquaintances") to prevent loneliness. If this is in a predictable, non-threatening, non-judgemental environment, then trust will be built up, and companionship may extend to friendship with time.

If your son is standing off to one side, he may be observing and learning social skills, and may be working out whether any of his class mates are 'suitable' as potential friends (e.g. predictable, 'non-threatening.') Alternatively, he may be watching people socializing and this may be emphasizing his 'differences' to him and could be a bit demoralizing. It might be useful for the school to provide an environment where his non-participation is not 'obvious' as this could potentially lead to teasing or bullying, and/or the school could provide alternative activities in the breaks so he does not get bored and/or spend his time wishing he was someone else.

That being said, not all those with ASD need a lot of friends, and this may be a time in his life when the benefits of avoiding activities in the company of teenagers outweigh the stress involved with doing so. Coping with secondary school may be creating enough stress as it is, and any more may affect his health (i.e. he may be making the right choice to have quiet time at school, and even on weekends to 'recover' from school, and not to be pushing himself to join in).

Continued on next page



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The OTARC now has an operating Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) link on our website. It can be accessed through the [‘Ask a Researcher’](#) page.

Staff and students answer questions regarding research and other aspects of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Teenagers can be pretty full-on, and he may find it easier to make friends when 'everyone' calms down a bit with age.

I think it's important that he doesn't feel people are writing him off as antisocial and not having the potential to ever make friends. If he hears this (or picks this up) he may start believing it and/or start "beating himself up" about not behaving like the other kids do. He needs to know that keeping in touch, doing activities with people around, and perhaps being 'open' (e.g. just saying "Hi") keeps opportunity alive for friendship in the future. Rushing or forcing friendship may backfire. We don't need a world with more Paris Hilton types! Quiet, sincere, thoughtful people do make good friends - but very differently to the socialites of this world. He also needs his life to be enjoyable and this may not actually equate with being a highly social life. If going to the movies is more enjoyable by himself, then why not just enjoy it and avoid the stress of going with peers? If the only downside is that it's "not what everyone" else does, too bad. The pressure *not* to be yourself, and to try to keep up with the Jones' social life is huge! Even typically-developing teenagers are getting depressed seeing others that are apparently more socially successful on Facebook, and appearing socially successful is turning into a competition.

Naomi Bishop



Answer 2:

My son (now 32) had his first experience of friendship while playing in a basketball team (in early teens) with Special Olympics (SO).

He has now retired from basketball but competes in other sports (athletics and 10-pin bowling) to stay in contact with the guys he met at basketball. Some of these fellows were very high functioning, but not necessarily ASD. Many do attend mainstream school and their parents introduce them to SO to facilitate friendships.

My son is basically not a person who relies on 'friendships' but he likes being in a group and observing others. I think he learns social expectations through watching others.

It can be heavy going for the 'friends' as my son's areas of interest mean he doesn't have wide topics of conversation and can get quite focussed on footy or railways etc.

The sporting angle taught my son so much about cooperation, commitment, sharing and following direction that it was definitely worthwhile. It also provided him with the opportunity to go away on sporting trips (well supervised and organised) with his peers. Through SO he has also been invited to parties and other social activities – something that never happened during his school days.

My son also belongs to a Recreation Access Program run through the YMCA and our local council. He looks forward to these activities (about twice a month) and considers these people his friends, even though he doesn't see them between organised activities. He often comes home and says he saw such-and-such on the station on the way home. The conversation may have been short but he seems pleased that it occurred.

Lisbeth Wilks



Conference papers

Professor Margot Prior gave an invited address: *Restricted and repetitive behaviours in children with Autism Spectrum Disorders* at the APAC Conference in August. (This item was mistakenly not included in our last newsletter.)

Autism Victoria/Amaze

2011 Autism Spectrum Disorder Research Forum

Thursday, 3rd November 2011

The OTARC team was well represented.

Opening Address and Closing

Remarks: **A/Prof Cheryl Dissanayake**

Diagnosis and Epidemiology Session

- Chair: **A/Prof Amanda Richdale**

Social Learning and Social Cognition

Session – Chair: **Dr Kristelle Hudry**

Psychopathology/Intervention

Session - Chair: **Prof Margot Prior**

Intervention Session – Chair:

Dr Giacomo Vivanti

Papers

Vivanti - Social learning in autism: A prospective cohort study

Dissanayake, Chandler & Newbiggin - Theory of mind in high-functioning autism in middle childhood

Green, Dissanayake & Loesch - 2D:4D digit ratio and autism severity in boys

Richdale, Baker, Short & Gradisar (La Trobe University/Flinders University) Associations between sleep and psychopathology in adolescents with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder (HFASD)

Posters

Bishop - An expanding gene family implicated in autism: The DIA1-family

Aziz, Karmi & Bishop - A novel candidate-gene for autism in individuals with 18q deletion syndrome

Karmi, Aziz & Bishop - Investigating the role of DIA18-related genes in autism and mental retardation

Zierhut & Vivanti - Progress in children receiving the Early Start Denver Model treatment approach in a group deliver: Individual trajectories

Bland, Richdale & Rose - "Every Day Life" program for children and adolescents with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder

Dissanayake, Newbiggin & Chandler - Emotion understanding and empathic responsiveness in high-functioning children with autism spectrum disorder

Baker, Richdale, Short, Gradisar - Sleep patterns in adolescents with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder and typically developing adolescents

Barbaro & Dissanayake - Developmental profiles of infants and toddlers with ASD identified prospectively in a community-based setting




Tell them all about it!

September

Dr Barbaro - *Early detection and diagnosis of ASDs in infants and toddlers.* Kalparrin Early Childhood Intervention Program, Greensborough, Australia.

Dr Kristelle Hudry conducted an ADOS Training in partnership with Irabina Childhood Autism Services. The course was run for 8 trainees .

October

Dr Barbaro —*Early identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders in infants and toddlers: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Sunghnam City Child-Adolescent Mental Health Service. Sogang University. Seoul, South Korea.

Dr Barbaro—*Early identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders in infants and toddlers: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Seoul National University Hospital. Bundang, South Korea.

Dr Barbaro—*Developmental Surveillance of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Infants and Toddlers using the Social Attention and Communication Study-Korean (SACS-K).* Sunghnam City Child-Adolescent Mental Health Service. Sogang University. Seoul, South Korea.

Dr Vivanti - *Social Learning in Autism Spectrum Disorders.* Invited Seminar, ACER Workshop, Melbourne

Dr Vivanti - *Autismo e apprendimento: dalla ricerca alla pratica clinica.* Invited Seminar, University Hospital Brotzu, Cagliari, Italy

Dr Vivanti - *Un programma innovativo di sorveglianza e presa in carico dell'autismo in Australia.* Invited Lecture, Italian National Research Council, Pisa, Italy

November

A/Prof Richdale - *Treating Behavioural Sleep Problems in Children. What Psychologists need to Know.* Australia Psychological Society workshop, Melbourne , with Dr Kate Simpson

Dr Vivanti - *Social Learning in Autism: a Neurodevelopmental Prospective.* Invited Seminar, Swinburne University, Melbourne

A/Prof Richdale & Dr Barbaro—*Assessment and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders,* ACER Workshop, University of Melbourne.

Dr Barbaro— *Detection of infants and toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders in the Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS): My Menzies Journey.* Annual General Meeting of the Menzies Memorial Scholars Association. Clarendon Terrace, East Melbourne.

December

A/Prof Richdale—*Treating Behavioural Sleep Problems in Children. What Psychologists Need to Know.* Australia Psychological Society workshop , Perth with Dr Sarah Blunden.



The sixth, and last, meeting of the Australasian Autism Research Collaboration (AARC) was held at the Asia Pacific Autism Conference in Perth in September (APAC). At the conclusion of APAC, the new 'Australasian Society for Autism Research' was launched. We currently have a call out for members. Until a dedicated website is developed for this society, and an Executive Committee voted in, membership payments will be submitted via direct transfer to a bank account. We hope to hold the ASfAR inaugural biennial conference in Sydney next year (August 2012).

ASfAR

Australasian Society for Autism Research

The Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR) is a member based organization devoted to advancing knowledge about Autism Spectrum Disorders through research and scholarship.

ASfAR membership is open to individuals engaged in academic and research activities (full members), graduate students and post doctoral researchers (student members) and others (affiliate members) who are involved in the study and service of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). Organizations involved in providing services for people with ASDs may become organizational members.

In order to qualify for membership of ASfAR, fees must be paid annually and an initial membership application (see overleaf) must be submitted to the ASfAR Interim Committee (until the Executive Committee is formed). All applications will be reviewed by the Committee.

- Full member (\$100 annually)
- Affiliate member (\$70)
- Student member (\$40)
- Organizational member (\$200)
- International member (\$100)

Membership fees will support a biennial national research meeting (to be held in the alternate years to APAC), an ASfAR website, and production and distribution of a half yearly Newsletter, administration of subscriptions, membership etc

For more information email: ASfAR@latrobe.edu.au

- In addition to the usual benefits of membership, ASfAR membership will include:
- Reduced registration fee for biennial ASfAR meeting (limited to two registrations for organizational members)
 - Receipt of Newsletters/reports
 - Ability to vote and run for executive committee positions (only available to full members)
 - Online membership directory
 - Login website with latest information on autism meetings etc
 - Student prizes



Visitors to our Centre

Informing community based professionals about autism is an important part of our role in helping promote awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders, particularly the benefits of early detection and diagnosis.



A/Prof Chongying Wang (pictured above with A/Prof Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr Josephine Barbaro) visited OTARC for 10 days in November. She is Director of the Centre of Behavioural Studies at the University of Tianjin, China. La Trobe University funded her visit. It is hoped we will collaborate with her Centre on a number of research studies in the near future.

An interesting fact from A/Prof Chongying Wang

自闭

This is the word for AUTISM in Chinese characters. It literally means SELF, with TALENT inside/behind a DOOR.

Other visitors to OTARC
1st December—Sylvia Admans from the Ross Trust
6th December—Christine Stocco, Dr John McEachin and Karin McKinnon, Autism Partnership Australia





Publications



You can follow us on TWITTER & FACEBOOK For up-to-the-minute postings of the latest news from our centre you can follow our centre on TWITTER at *OlgaTennison (NB. no space) or become a Friend of OTARC on FACEBOOK (Facebook search: Olga Tennison).

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

Barbaro, J. & Dissanayake, C. (accepted October 2011). Developmental profiles of infants and toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders identified prospectively in a community-based setting. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

Veness, C., **Prior, M.**, Bavin, E., Eadie, P., Cini, E. & Reilly, S. (2011) Early indicators of autism spectrum disorders at 12 and 24 months of age: A prospective, longitudinal comparative study. *Autism*. DOI: 10.1177/1362361311399936

Leekam, S., **Prior, M.**, & Uljarivic, M. (2011) Restricted and repetitive behaviors in Autism Spectrum Disorders: A review of research in the last decade. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137, 4, 562-593.

Vivanti, G. (2011) The Social Nature of Human Cognition: lessons from Autism. *Mnemosyne, Memo Press* . <http://mnemopress.com/mmwp/2011/07/lessons-autism/>

Vivanti, G. (2011) Actions, Gazing and Autism. *City University of New York, How Babies Learn Blog*.

Murphy, A., **Trembath, D.**, Arciuli, J, & Roberts, J. M. (2011) Supporting parents of children with autism spectrum disorders to become informed consumers of evidence on speech pathology practice. *Evidence-Based Communication Assessment and Intervention*, 5, 116-129

In the Media

A/Prof **Dissanayake** was interviewed on SBS Turkish Radio in September, 2011

Dr **Vivanti** was interviewed for the Italian newspaper "La Nuova Sardegna": <http://lanuovasardegna.gelocal.it/cronaca/2011/10/09/news/ogni-anno-nell-isola-50-nuovi-casi-di-autismo-5119364>

The OTARC was referred to in the Sunday Magazine , The Herald, October 2011.

ABC Science website: [Genetic mutations clue to autism drugs](#) by Helen Carter, ABC journalist—A/Prof Cheryl Dissanayake was interviewed for this article. Thursday, 24 November 2011

An article appeared in UniNews entitled [Autism awareness sparks an unexpected friendship](#) about the relationship between Mrs Olga Tennison and A/Prof Cheryl Dissanayake. -12th December 2011

An article about the Margot Prior Wing at the ASELCC was published in La Trobe University's SYNERGY magazine—December 2011

Watch out for an interview in the Weekend Australian with A/Prof Cheryl Dissanayake in early January 2012.



Changes at Autism Victoria/AMAZE

Professor Margot Prior attended the Autism Victoria (AMAZE) Annual General Meeting on 23rd November. Items of news from this meeting include: The current Chair of Autism Victoria (Prof Bruce Tonge) **is stepping down and a replacement will be nominated shortly**; AMAZE (AV's marketing arm) and the updated website were launched. A presentation on the PlayConnect SEB based resource for parents and carers was launched. (It provides a suite of strategies for use in developing play skills in children with ASD). The Kokoda trekkers group was thanked and congratulated for its contribution to funds for the Autism Victoria Library vitalization.



Collaborations

Our collaboration with the **Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER)** continues.. A/Prof Dissanayake met with ACER recently to plan 2012 events, which will hopefully bring in good numbers. A total of five workshops were presented this year.

On November 2, **Dr Kristelle Hudry** met with **Prof Pat Miranda** (University of British Columbia) to discuss possible research collaborations.



Meetings

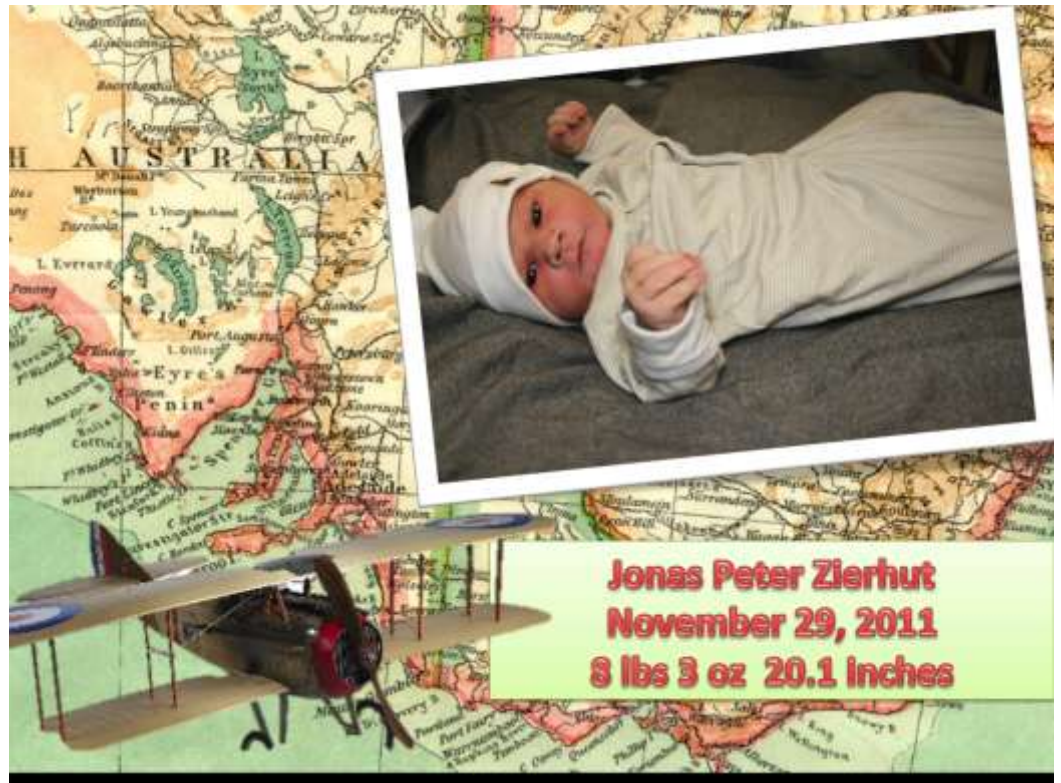
A/Prof Richdale was invited to attend the Annual Board Meeting of the Apex Foundation in Sydney on Nov 18. Discussion about the Apex Trust for Autism and working with the autism research community led to a planned meeting with Mr Stephen Bigarelli, the Apex Foundation Trust Chair, and the ASfAR interim committee to be held in February 2012.



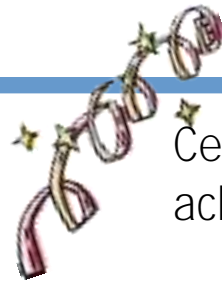
*Donate to Autism research
using **Richies' Community
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You need to enter **Olga
Tennison Autism Research
Centre** on the form, with the
CB number: 81629.

For your nearest Ritchies
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check Ritchies website at
www.ritchies.com.au



Congratulations and welcome to the world to Baby Jonas—fourth son of Dr Cynthia Zierhut. Mother, Father, baby and three brothers are doing well.



Celebrating achievements

Dr David Trembath's honours students were both awarded first class honours for the following projects conducted in collaboration with the School of Human Communication Sciences. Dr Trembath was primary supervisor for Xuet's project (Karen Bloomberg associate supervisor). Dr Trembath was associate supervisor on Michelle's project (Dr Beverley Joffe was primary supervisor). Michelle received the highest mark in the school of Human Communication Sciences.

Xuet Ying Tan - *Acquisition and Generalization of Key Word Signing in Children with Autism*

Michelle Smith - *A pilot study of the Structured Use of Music and Movement (SUM&M) intervention program for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*



'Exploring Social Cognition: Perspectives from Psychology, Philosophy, and Neuroscience' - Social-Cognition Workshop

We held a workshop on 2nd December for our team and students and staff from the La Trobe University School of Philosophy.

Speakers included

Dr Giacomo Vivanti (OTARC): *From Purposeful Actions to Social Cognition: the case of Autism*

Dr Jack Reynolds, Philosophy, School of Communication, Arts and Critical Enquiry, La Trobe University: *'Body-Reading' Before 'Mind-Reading'? Inter-Subjectivity And The Centrality Of Non-Inferential Perception Of Others*

A/Prof Cheryl Dissanayake (OTARC): *Presenting the Social Developmental Perspective on Social Cognition*

Dr Edoardo Zamuner, Philosophy, School of Communication, Arts and Critical Enquiry, La Trobe University: *A Theory of Affect Perception*

Dr Jakob Hohwy, Philosophy, School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies, Monash University: *Sensory Integration in Autism*

Dr Kristelle Hudry (OTARC): *Parent-Child Interaction in the Context of Emerging Autism*

SACS-K

The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS) has been translated into Korean! Known as the SACS-K, Josie re-visited Korea in October this year to deliver a large workshop on the SACS-K so that it can aid in the early identification of children with ASDs in South Korea.



Trembath, D. (2011) *A pilot comparison of electronic and non-electronic communication aids for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. La Trobe University, Faculty of Science, Technology, and Engineering Early Career Researcher Grant.



News from the ASELCC: The Margot Prior Wing

The clinical program at the ASELCC has been progressing smoothly. The Clinical Manager, Dr Zierhut, has just begun her maternity leave (see Page 14) and will return when the Centre reopens after the Christmas break in mid Jan. Mr Ed Duncan (Speech Pathologist) is acting in her position. A lead teacher position became available and was advertised. Ms Stephanie Horman has been appointed as the new teacher in Playroom One and will commence in January 2012.



*All dressed up and with somewhere to go ...
Dr Josephine Barbaro
pictured with A/Prof
Cheryl Dissanayake at
the PhD Graduation
Ceremony in October.*



The Early Diagnostic Clinic, which opened in July this year, has been a great success with all booking filled until June next year .



Friday 27th January

BioAutism 2012

Queensland Brain Institute
The University of Queensland, St Lucia

The neural and biological basis of autism spectrum disorders

Genetics | Synapses | Circuits | Cognitive mechanisms
Animal models | Therapeutics

Dr Helen Heussler (Mater Childrens Hospital, MMRI, Uni Qld)

“CURRENT CLINICAL PRACTICE AND DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS”

Dr Charles Claudianos (QBI, Uni Qld)

“SYNAPSE DEVELOPMENT AND AUTISM”

Dr Natasha Brown (Uni Melb)

“TRACING AUTISM TRAITS IN LARGE MULTIPLEX FAMILIES”

Dr Peter Enticott (Monash Uni)

“TRANSCRANIAL MAGNETIC STIMULATION”

Dr Jon Brock (Macquarie Uni)

“RHYTHMS OF THE AUTISTIC BRAIN”

Dr Elisa Hill (Uni Melb)

“SYNAPTIC FUNCTION”

Prof David Reutens (CAI, Uni Qld)

“PRENATAL RISK FACTORS”

www.qbi.uq.edu.au/BioAutism-2012



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

qbi
queensland brain institute

Abstract submission by early December.

Posters and additional speakers selected from abstracts.

Free registration.

Satellite of the Australian Neuroscience Society Annual Meeting



Seeking participants

SPEECH PATHOLOGISTS

TEACHERS

PAEDIATRICIANS

SOCIAL WORKERS

GPs

EARLY INTERVENTION PROVIDERS

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

OTHER SPECIALIST SERVICE PROVIDERS

PSYCHOLOGISTS

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

**Do you work with individuals/families with
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS?**

We are keen to hear about the experiences of a range of different professionals working with individuals with ASDs and/or their families, particularly regarding the topic of language. Participants would be interviewed for around 30 minutes, at a convenient time and location, or by phone. To find out more please contact:

Dr Kristelle Hudry
Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre
La Trobe University
k.hudry@latrobe.edu.au
Phone: (03) 9479 5649





seeking participants

Does your child have Autism Spectrum Disorder and/or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?

Is your child aged 7 to 12 years?

Are you and your child interested in participating in a research study?

As part of my postgraduate psychology degree, I am investigating social attention abilities in children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and / or Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. If you are interested in participating, please contact Claire Forsyth at the La Trobe University Child Development



Telephone: (03) 9479 2151.

Email: cl2forsyth@students.latrobe.edu.au

As a thank you for participating, you and your family will go into a draw to win a family movie pass valued at \$60.

Participants are needed for our research projects. If you, or a family member, wishes to participate in research please email the Centre at otarc@latrobe.edu.au or phone 9479 2497. Many research projects need typically developing children as well as children with an Autism Spectrum



Phone: 61 3 9479 2497
Fax: 61 3 9479 1956
Email: otarc@latrobe.edu.au
Web: www.latrobe.edu.au/otarc

WHERE TO FIND US

The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre is situated in a purpose-built child-friendly research facility in the School of Psychological Science (George Singer Building).
Bundoora Campus
La Trobe University



For your information

Page 20 contains events, requests and opportunities from organisations other than The Olga Tennison Research Centre.

We publish these items as a service to our readers.

To find out more about any item on these pages please go directly to the organisation that posted the notice.



Phonological Awareness and School Readiness Intensive Program
Building Blocks for Early Reading and Spelling
 A program for children in Prep and Grade 1 in 2012

Why is "phonological awareness" important?

*Research shows that phonological awareness is the most powerful predictor of success in learning.
 Phonological awareness is one of the key contributors to automatic word recognition.
 Phonological awareness is necessary for the development of independent reading and spelling skills.*

Phonological awareness is the ability to understand that:

- words can be divided into parts; e.g. "wa-ter"
- words are made up of sounds
- the sounds in a word can be sequenced and rearranged; e.g. "t-a-p", "p-a-t"
- each letter makes a different sound



School readiness skills will also be targeted in the program:

- following classroom routines
- developing independence
- problem solving
- organisational skills in the classroom



Monday 16 January – Wednesday 18 January 2012 (9:30am – 12:00pm)
 Irabina Childhood Autism Services
 Facilitated by Aggie Chan & Tania McGuire (Speech Pathologists)
\$210.00 (also available through FaHCSIA)

To take part in this program, children will need to have 4-year-old language skills.
 Please note that children will be screened to determine their suitability.

Contact Reception on 9720 1118 by Monday 28 November, 2011 to register your interest
Places are limited. Irabina reserves the right to cancel the program in the event of insufficient enrolments.



Autism Behavioural Intervention ASSOCIATION | **ABIA**

TRAINING PROGRAMS 2012 <i>Suitable for parents, professionals and carers</i>		
Programs	Dates	2-hour Seminars
Become an ABA Therapist (Level 1) <i>9.30am – 4.30pm</i>	February 6, 13, 20 March 13-15	Task Analysis Feb 16
Level 2 ABA Therapist (PILOT) <i>9.30am – 4.30pm</i>	February 8-9	Top 10 ways to manage behaviour Feb 25
FREE! ABA Information Session <i>Saturday, 10am – 12noon</i>	February 11 March 24	Choosing a curriculum Mar 8
Making it Work (with an ASD student in your classroom) <i>9.30am – 4.30pm</i>	March 2	Generalisation Mar 21
FREE ABA Swap Meet SATURDAY, MARCH 17 10am – 12noon		Toileting Mar 27
		<i>10.30am-12.30pm (Weekday) 10am-12noon (Saturday)</i>

WATCH THIS SPACE!

Inaugural ABA Forum – April 2012
 "ABA TODAY: Effective, Evidenced & Evolved"

CONTACT ABIA
 p: 03 9830 0677 | f: 03 9830 0211 | w: abia.net.au | e: info@abia.net.au