

What is an Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) are lifelong developmental disabilities. A person with an ASD may experience the following:

- Difficulties communicating with and understanding other people.
- Trouble with friendships, relationships and other social interactions.
- Unusual behaviours, obsessive interests and a need for routine and sameness.
- Some may also experience differences in the way they process sensory information. *e.g. what they see, hear, touch, taste, smell.*

These differences make it difficult for individuals to properly understand other people and the environment around them.

How common are ASDs?

Current Australian estimates suggest that ASD occurs in 1 in 160 primary aged children¹. ASDs is more common in males than females.

What causes ASDs?

The exact causes of ASDs are unknown. We do know that it is a biological condition present from birth. Genetic factors play an important role. ASDs are not caused by 'poor parenting' as was once thought.

Is there a cure or treatment?

Research and experience shows that the best treatment approach for ASD is a combination of educational and behavioural strategies that are highly structured and designed to meet the particular needs of each individual. Unfortunately there is no known cure.

¹ Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders, 2007

Contact us

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AUTISM
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Human Services

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT



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**helpful
information for
professionals**



What does Autism Victoria do?

- Up to date information about Autism Spectrum Disorders (Autism, Asperger syndrome & PDD-NOS) and related topics.
- Information and advice about Victorian services.
- A specialist Family Counsellor provides emotional support and practical advice specifically related to caring for a person with an Autism Spectrum Disorder*
- The Autism Advisor program – part of the Federal Government's 'Helping Children With Autism' package which can assist eligible families access early intervention funding
- Informative website
- The Spectrum – a useful and informative magazine published four times a year*
- eSpectrum – a periodic email bulletin
- Library & Resource Centre*
- New Parent Information Sessions
- Expos & Conferences
- Policy Analysis at State and National levels
- Lobby government
- Increase public awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders

Become an Autism Victoria Member today

Why is membership important?

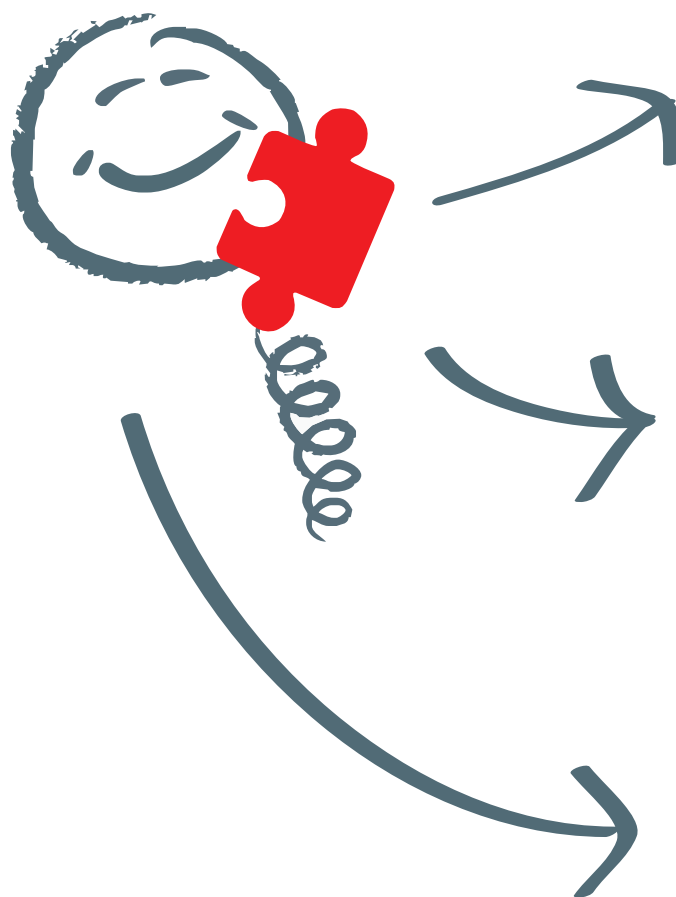
A key role of Autism Victoria is to advocate for improved services and supports for families and individuals affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders.

To achieve this outcome, Autism Victoria must demonstrate that it speaks for many people in its call for improved supports. The best way to achieve this is by having a large membership base, numbers that cannot be ignored by any of the major political parties.

In essence, we need to add your voice to the call for better support through your membership of Autism Victoria. To become a member simply call the Autism Victoria office or join online today.

Services marked with an asterisk (*) are available to Autism Victoria members only

The many ways the Autism Victoria **adviceline** can assist professionals:



- Answer general queries about Autism Spectrum Disorders by phone, mail or email
- Guide professionals through the maze of services and options
- Library and Resource Centre
- Provide information materials in print or electronic format
- Autism Alert cards
- Specialist information packages
- Service directory of professionals
- Information about services over the lifespan
- Advice on individual cases
- Information & speakers to help professionals learn more about ASD

Call us on 1300 598 272