

# Autism Queensland

44th Annual Report of the Board of Management  
and Financial Statements for 2008

<b>Patron:</b>	Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO Governor of Queensland
<b>President:</b>	Dr Robert van Barneveld
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<b>Auditors:</b>	Hacketts Chartered Accountants
<b>Solicitors:</b>	Clayton Utz

Autism Queensland Inc is a lead Queensland agency in the provision of targeted services to people with Autism and their families

#### **Vision**

A life of choice and opportunity for people living with Autism

#### **Mission**

To be a highly effective facilitator of quality outcomes that significantly enhance the lives of people with Autism

#### **Key Drivers**



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# President's Message

# Looking Forward to 2009



Dr Robert van Barneveld  
President, Board of Management

*While we note in this annual report the tremendous achievements in 2008 that would not have been possible without our dedicated staff, volunteers, members and supporters, I look forward to 2009 and the opportunities that lie ahead.*

## Strategic Directions

For those of you that aren't aware, Autism Queensland adopted a new vision and mission in 2008 that is driving the direction of the organisation in 2009.

The new vision is:

***"A life of choice and opportunity for people living with Autism"***

The new mission is:

***"To be a highly effective facilitator of quality outcomes that significantly enhance the lives of people with Autism"***

These revisions have a strong influence on the way Autism Queensland operates. While Autism Queensland offers a wide range of services combined with dedicated staff with unique skills and expertise, it is often difficult to meet all the needs of those requiring assistance. Under the new vision and mission we will continue to use our skills and expertise to deliver high quality services in those areas where we have the greatest capacity. Effective collaborations will

also be forged to ensure we can facilitate access to a range of service options. Further to this, we believe we have significant capacity to enhance the services we offer in the areas of training and research and development.

## Members Survey

It is important that Autism Queensland remains relevant to its members, and the Board of Management needs to be sure that the members understand where the organisation is heading and that the services are well received. In 2008 we conducted an on-line Member Survey. The response was good with 122 members participating, most of whom were parents or carers of a person with ASD. The sample was split between greater Brisbane (64%) and regional Queensland (36%).

I was very pleased to see that Autism Queensland continues to have a high rating among its members, particularly those who have accessed services in the last 12 months. The greatest demand for additional services comes from regional areas of Queensland, but hopefully we are already working towards addressing some of this need through the Centres now operating in Cairns and Rockhampton. Members felt that there had been a significant improvement in Autism Queensland's community profile and that in general communication was good, although longer lead times for events would be desirable.

Management and staff of Autism Queensland will use the detailed analysis of the Members Survey to ensure our services are further fine tuned. Of course, you don't have to wait for a Member Survey to have an input into Autism Queensland – if you think there are areas where we could improve, let us know.

## Growth

As expected, the Members Survey identified that members would like the opportunity to access more services from Autism Queensland. In greater Brisbane the strongest demand is for training, support groups and library access. In regional areas the strongest demand is for training, family support services, on-site school programs and school/home visits.

Of course Autism Queensland will respond to the need for more services in the future and continually tracks funding opportunities that will support the development of these services.

To provide some confidence that Autism Queensland is improving the quantity and quality of service delivery at an exponential rate, I would like to note the change in the organisation's income over the past 11 years, an increase of nearly \$10 Million. This increase is a direct reflection of enhancement in service delivery. The actual cost of running Autism Queensland relative to the outputs has significantly decreased thanks largely to the efforts of our CEO, Penny Beeston and her team, who have greatly improved the efficiency of service delivery.

## Security and Stability

If Autism Queensland is to fulfil its vision of providing "a life of choice and opportunity for people living with Autism" it is important that we are able to operate for a 'lifetime', or the long term.

The Board of Management is very focussed on ensuring Autism Queensland has a firm financial and strong governance base from which to launch its services, and to insulate the operations of Autism Queensland from the many external financial influences that have potential to compromise income and service delivery. Some of the current actions include:

- A review of all exposure to risk and the development of sound strategies to negate and manage risk.

- A thorough review and update of the Autism Queensland Constitution – this will be presented for consideration by members and stakeholders prior to implementation. Our current Constitution is quite dated.
- Responsible budgeting – the Board of Management continues to approve break-even budgets to ensure as much of the available funds are spent on service delivery without subjecting the organisation to unmanageable levels of debt. Since 2005 we have budgeted for breakeven performance and have come close to achieving that goal on every occasion, despite having to consolidate some pre-existing debts and provisions.

## New Patron

As many of you are aware, Her Excellency, Ms Quentin Bryce, AC former Governor of Queensland, was a tremendous supporter of Autism Queensland in her role as Patron. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her efforts and wish her all the best in her new role as Governor-General of Australia. At the same time, it is my pleasure to welcome the new Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency, Ms Penelope Wensley, AO who has graciously agreed to act as the new Patron of Autism Queensland.



**Dr Robert van Barneveld**  
**President, Board of Management**

## CEO Report

# Autism Queensland is all about people



Penny Beeston  
Chief Executive Officer

*Autism Queensland is all about people and I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the teams who support people with Autism, their families and the professionals working in this challenging and rewarding area.*

### A heartfelt thanks to our Supporters

First and foremost, thank you to those who donated funds, volunteered their services, provided in-kind support or funded our submissions throughout 2008. There were many acts of support and kindness from individuals, groups, businesses and large Corporations and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our organisation delivers extensive education, therapy and support services and the assistance provided through donations and in-kind support makes a tangible difference in our capacity to deliver these services.

Autism Queensland offers special thanks to The John Villiers Trust and the amazing teams at Clayton Utz and Channel 10 who are taking the journey with us to make a difference in the lives of people with Autism and their families.

### Tangible Services

We are an organisation that is on the 'front line' when it comes to providing services to meet the needs of people with Autism and their families. Our multidisciplinary teams in our Schools and Regional Centres are working hands-on with children in educational and early intervention settings every day. Our Support Workers assist adults living with Autism to live valued lives in the community and provide respite to families of children with Autism. As a Registered Training Organisation, we deliver Certificate Courses to adults with ASD to assist them to move into employment.

### Commitment to Regional Queensland

Autism Queensland is committed to providing support and services to families of children with Autism living in Regional Queensland.

Our first Regional Centres in Central Queensland and Far North Queensland are delivering Early Intervention programs through centre-based and outreach programs.

Our Outreach Teams continue to travel throughout the state to support teachers who are educating children with Autism in their classrooms. The future of this long-standing program is uncertain due to changes in the Non-Schools Organisations funding model through the Federal Government. This supplementary funding to Queensland providers of regional outreach therapy programs has been frozen for four years – despite the enormous demand for our services from Education



Queensland, Independent and Catholic schools. Due to the supplementary nature of this funding, and the freeze on any funding growth, this service has run at a significant deficit to the organisation for the past four years, drawing on scarce resources which then reduce capacity to provide other services.

Autism Queensland provides tangible support to a large number of ASD Support Groups throughout Queensland in acknowledgement of the crucial role they play in supporting families of people with Autism. Thank you to the wonderful volunteers in these groups.

### Professional and Parent Support Services

Autism Queensland's Training and Outreach Teams travel throughout Queensland providing educational support and training to Teachers, Allied Health Professionals, families and others who are educating or supporting people with Autism. The Autism Advisor Program commenced in 2008 and provides essential support by way of information and support to parents of newly diagnosed children with Autism. This program is funded through the Federal Government's Helping Children With Autism initiative.

Our Research and Development Team continues to engage in research in collaboration with Universities and to ensure Autism Queensland is actively reviewing and updating its own evidence based practice across all services.



### Governance and Operational Support

Teams at the 'front line' must be supported seamlessly to allow them to focus on their vital roles.

Autism Queensland's voluntary Board of Management met monthly throughout 2008 to govern and monitor the activities of the organisation and to ensure the organisation delivers on its Vision and Mission. This is a dedicated and committed team, led by Dr Robert van Barneveld, that has a broad range of skills and experience to provide governance and strategic direction to the organisation.

Behind the scenes we rely on the strong foundations of our Finance Team to ensure effective and efficient acquittals of moneys into and out of the organisation. We are now an organisation of 170 people, all of whom are recruited and supported by our human resources and management teams. Operationally we have many facilities from which we deliver our services across Queensland, including the safe delivery of children to and from our schools. Our Operations and Ancillary teams ensure smooth operation of facilities and transport. Underpinning all of this is our administration team who support the various services across the organisation to achieve their goals.

We are continuing to grow as an organisation, with our focus constantly on the people living with Autism and on their families. We know the daily challenges these individuals face and the people at Autism Queensland come to work each day with a determination to improve the outcomes for these individuals and their families.

I extend my gratitude to the Board of Management, the Management Team and all of my colleagues at Autism Queensland for their energetic and passionate commitment to people with Autism and their families. I am humbled to lead such a remarkable and professional organisation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Penny Beeston". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Penny Beeston**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# Autism Queensland Services Overview



*Autism Queensland provides education, therapy, support and training services to people with Autism, their families and those working with them.*

**Services currently provided by Autism Queensland include:**

## Family Support Services

Family Support Services provides individual support to families and adult clients through advocacy, referral, liaison, information and general support. Families and adult clients are encouraged to contact the Family Support Services Team whenever they feel the need. In addition to this, the team arranges support groups (for families of people with Autism), sibling programs and camps, parenting courses, mothers' camps and an adult recreation group.

## Outreach Services

Teachers and therapists from the Outreach Services Team visit schools (or other educational placements) throughout most of Queensland to provide information, advice, support and individualized strategies to parents, staff and other key professionals. Short term programs are also available to children under 6 years of age.

## HomeAQtion Programs

This is a short term program being offered by Autism Queensland to assist families with issues at home which impact participation at school. Programs are facilitated by a teacher from one of our schools. These programs are individually tailored to suit each family's needs and may occur either in the home or in one of our centres.

## Accredited, Independent Autism Specific Schools

Autism Queensland's schools provide a range of group placement options for school age children. Our students are grouped according to age, ability and needs with a maximum of six students per group. Students are supported throughout their placement utilising a multi-disciplinary team including teachers, teacher aides, social workers, psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists. Attendance is part-time, for up to two years. Currently our schools have options for one, two and three day per week placements. These placements cater for students between the ages of three and 16 years.

Our schools are located at Brighton, on Brisbane's northside, and at Sunnybank Hills on the southside.

## EarlyAQtion Early Intervention Services

Autism Queensland provides a range of early intervention services for children with Autism under the age of 6 years through EarlyAQtion Central Queensland and EarlyAQtion Far North Queensland. The Central Queensland service operates from a base in Rockhampton and the Far North Queensland service operates from a base in Cairns. Services include group placement programs of 3-5 days per week, Play and Learn Programs and Outreach Programs.

Autism Queensland's schools also provide Early Intervention group placement options for children below school age.

## Autism Advisor Program

Autism Advisors assess the eligibility for the Helping Children With Autism (HCWA) Early Intervention Funding Package. They provide advice and information to families about early interventions services and other related community and support services for young children with ASD and their families.



## Individual Programs

Individual Programs tailored to the needs of the person with Autism, the person's family, the educational setting and/or other support services are provided. These programs are available to children throughout most of Queensland.

These programs are unsubsidised, however some children may be eligible for Helping Children With Autism Early Intervention Funding to cover all or part of the cost of the program.

## Autism Spectrum Disorder Therapy Clinic

Autism Queensland operates a clinic providing speech pathology and occupational therapy. The clinic is staffed by speech pathologists and occupational therapists who have experience working with children with Autism. The clinic operates from Autism Queensland's Head Office located at Sunnybank Hills in Brisbane. This is a fee for service program in which clients can access rebates from Medicare and Private Health Insurers. Children under six years of age may also be eligible to access the HCWA Early Intervention Funding for these programs.

## Respite Services

Autism Queensland provides two centre based respite services for overnight and weekend respite. Autism Queensland also provides school holiday programs on both the north and south sides of Brisbane. These school holiday programs are offered during the Christmas holidays and one other holiday period throughout the year.

## Support Groups

Autism Queensland facilitates 25 support groups in the local community across the state. These groups provide vital support for parents and families of individuals with Autism. These groups meet on a monthly basis and are a great source of local information for families. They also provide support based on real life experience. These groups provide a vital link to Autism Queensland and the services that are offered.

## Accommodation Services

Through our Adult Accommodation Services, Autism Queensland provides support for people to live in the community. Currently there are eight houses across the Brisbane region. Autism Queensland also provides Community Access programs which are tailored to suit the individual involved.

## Training and Consultancy Services

The Training Team provides a range of seminars, practical workshops and courses across Queensland. Autism Queensland is also able to offer fully customised training programs to suit your specific needs as well as extended consultation sessions and individualised programs if requested.

## Registered Training Organisation

Autism Queensland is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) through the Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts. We deliver nationally accredited training programs to professionals working with people with Autism and directly to people with Autism. Autism Queensland is taking a lead role offering nationally accredited training and education services. Training Programs range from the traditional face-to-face delivery to blended online learning.

## Research and Development

The Research and Development Team is responsible for the critical review of existing evidence to underpin our service delivery. Autism Queensland is currently establishing its own research program in partnership with local universities. Autism Queensland is also taking a leading role in the support of Autism research by coordinating a network of researchers.

## Fundraising

Autism Queensland is a not-for-profit organisation. Autism Queensland relies on donations to provide the services and support needed by people with Autism and their families. The support from the community makes a vital contribution to the cost of specialist staff and equipment and the provision of services to people with Autism.

# Schools Report Brighton & Sunnybank



**Brighton School – Principal: Amra Bazdar**

**Sunnybank School – Principal: Jandee Laidlaw**

**Early Intervention Programs**

**– Centre Based: Brighton, Sunnybank**



## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

The establishment of discipline specific mentoring groups within the schools and across the wider organisation has laid a sound foundation for professional sharing and development. This further supports a formal process for delivering evidence based practice in our school programs and practices. Under this framework staff conduct research and engage with Autism Queensland's research and development projects. To compliment this, families are also made aware of external research opportunities, with information regularly disseminated in coordination with Autism Queensland's Principal Research and Development Officer, Dr Jill Ashburner.



Advocacy continued to be a priority and area of strength for teachers and group therapists, with results from data collected by staff indicating that at least 80% of hours dedicated to outreach support from the schools being centred on the provision of expert advice on the ASD related needs and issues affecting students, their families and mainstream teachers. The school based psychologist and social worker further develop this area of expertise to improve case management for students and/or families where needed.

The schools continue to host tertiary student placements and practicums. QUT Service Learning Program students provided positive feedback following their 20 hour placements across the two sites. The year culminated with the visit of two international physiotherapy students from School of Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy in Esbjerg, Denmark.

Whilst the schools continue to be a popular place for tertiary students, they are also a much respected and demanded venue for training. Introduction of Field Based Practicum's, where professional education related staff can attend between 1-5 days at either of the Centre's (in particular age groups or across age ranges), received extremely positive feedback from those professionals who participated. We look forward to growing this service across 2009.

Funding through Independent Schools Queensland's Literacy Numeracy & Special Learning Needs (LNSLN) Programme allowed for the introduction of more formal assessment of all school age students' literacy levels. This information is used to enhance the planning and implementation of appropriate teaching and therapy programs and set specific literacy based IEP goals. This information has also been of benefit to staff of students in mainstream schools.

A highlight on the 2008 school's annual professional development calendar was the attendance of all teaching and therapy staff at the TEACCH Conference held in Brisbane. TEACCH is a methodology aimed at supporting people with Autism through the

provision of visual information, structure, and predictability. Attendance at this conference enhanced the application of the TEACCH strategies across the schools. Autism Queensland staff regularly incorporate structure, clearly defined physical spaces and highly predictable and transparent schedules as advocated by TEACCH into their programs. Other highly regarded approaches used at Autism Queensland include the use of positive behaviour support, the development of functional communication through the development of speech and augmentative and alternative communication systems, pivotal response intervention, and functional skill building. Additionally, Autism Queensland educational programs employ specific teaching strategies that are tailored to accommodate the unique learning styles of children with ASD.



## ENHANCING CHOICE

In response to the ever growing demand for early intervention services, a second two day group placement was established at Sunnybank and Brighton for those students that had just turned five years of age and were no longer considered of early intervention age.

Autism Queensland supports adolescent students through the establishment of a Certificate 1 in Information Technology program. This one day pilot placement, know as Tech Group, has students enrolled to start Term 1, 2009 at Sunnybank.

In addition to ongoing Education Queensland and Independent Schools Queensland accountability, the schools were involved in an annual Disability Services Queensland audit of policies and practices for our Early Intervention Group Placements.

Enrolment procedures for group placement were also reviewed and updated with a focus on making information clearer and more accessible to families and other stakeholders such as the 'mainstream schools' with whom we share students.

The school's internal staff exchange program proved such a success for professional growth that it was expanded in 2008 with teachers accompanying Autism Queensland's Outreach and Training Regional Consultancy teams on eight trips across the year. Autism Queensland is unique in its capacity to offer professional experience across a range of services within the organisation and across a range of geographic areas.

The Principals provided professional support to teaching staff based in Autism Queensland's regional centres of Rockhampton and Cairns. Staff from these centres also spent time Autism Queensland's Brisbane based EI Group Placement programs and participated in the professional mentoring groups.

HomeAQtion continued to be a popular option for families struggling with home based educational issues which may not necessarily need the longer term commitment and support of a group placement at either of the schools.



## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

The schools secured additional funding to improve facilities and programs. Funding was sourced via Independent Schools Queensland and Gambling Community Grants.

Achievements included the completion of bathroom refurbishments at both schools, the building of a computer lab and the erection of a multi-sport enclosure and playground shade structures at Brighton. Tanks and other water saving devices have been installed across both schools thanks to the Australian Government Water Fund Community Water Grants. The parent's room at Brighton is open after its relocation on site at the Brighton School. Sunnybank's Early Intervention playground had a mini make-over in preparation for its increased usage and the bright new colour scheme for the doors throughout the school was a delight for students.

Further development of the social work role within the schools saw a focus on assisting families to gain improved knowledge, networking and connection to community resources. Review of services also indicated that alterations to services such as sibling support and parent groups and activities are likely in the future.

Sunnybank staff participated in ongoing training with Apple programs and the use of the newly installed Interactive Whiteboards. Student interest in the multimedia equipment flourished with this new technology for 2008, with staff being particularly proud of the students ever improving skills and interest in this curriculum area.

**Amra Bazdar & Jandee Laidlaw**

# Outreach, Training and Autism Advisor Services



**Manager: Frances Scodellaro**

## *Outreach Services*

**Number of schools visited:** 368

**Number of parent, teachers and other professional or support staff through Outreach 'Help Line':** 2398

### **Locations visited:**

Greater Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Roma, St George and region, Goondiwindi, Townsville and region, Warwick/ Stanthorpe and region, Cairns/Tablelands/Johnstone and region, Weipa, Gladstone/Biloela and region, Rockhampton and region, Gympie and region, Mackay/Bowen/Proserpine and region, Maryborough/ Hervey Bay and region, Bundaberg and region, Chinchilla/Tara/Dalby and region, Kingaroy and region, Emerald and region, Longreach and region.

## *Training Services*

### **Special Events:**

- Regional Symposium (Cairns)
- Bullying Seminar (Brisbane)
- TEACCH Masterclass: Professor Gary Mesibov (Brisbane)

### **Locations visited for Autism Queensland**

#### **Workshops:**

Brisbane, Gold Coast, Longreach, Gladstone, Redcliffe, Sunshine Coast, Mackay, Kingaroy, Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton

## *Autism Advisor Program*

Program commenced 23 October 2008



## **CHANGING PERCEPTIONS**

### **Training**

In line with Autism Queensland's commitment to deliver a major professional development and information event in regional Queensland each year, the Regional Symposium on Autism Spectrum Disorder: *Thinking and Learning Outside the Square* was held in Cairns in May 2008. The symposium focused on presentations promoting a better understanding of Autism, appreciation of difference, creative programming and support based on strengths. Key note speakers Professor Tony Attwood (Clinical Psychologist and Professor, Griffith University) and Dr Jacqueline Roberts (Research Associate, Centre for Early Interventions, University of Sydney) delivered highly informative and engaging presentations together with a wide array of presentations from Queensland based service providers, parents and people with ASD. Participants travelled to Cairns for the two day symposium from all over Far North Queensland and feedback was extremely positive and enthusiastic.

### **Advocacy**

Outreach Teams visited 368 schools across Queensland to provide information and support regarding children with Autism. One of the aims of the Outreach Service is to improve understanding of Autism and the impact it may have on the student in the education setting. Through this understanding schools are able to develop strategies to facilitate the best possible educational and personal outcomes for the student.

In recognition of the growing concern about children with Autism who are at risk of disengaging from school, the Outreach Team initiated, and in collaboration with Townsville ASD Network, organized a forum to explore the issue. The forum brought together over 50 people including parents of children with Autism and a wide range of agencies and professionals providing support and services to children with Autism and/or their families.



## ENHANCING CHOICE

### Services Responses

Following a successful submission to FaHCSIA, the Queensland Autism Advisor Program (AAP) was established in October 2008 to provide information about early intervention and other support options to families of young children with Autism. In its early months the AAP experienced strong demand not only from families of newly diagnosed children but also families of any child under 6 years of age who may have had a diagnosis. In spite of the challenges of limited Early Intervention Services, feedback about the program has been extremely positive as the program establishes a 'first point of contact' for families after receiving a diagnosis.

Also in the latter part of 2008, Autism Queensland submitted an application to FaHCSIA outlining a range of Outreach and Clinic-based Early Intervention Programs (together with other Autism Queensland Early Intervention programs) for approval on the ASD Panel of Providers. This successful application enabled families to utilise the Helping Children with Autism Early Intervention Funding to contribute to the cost of these programs from the start of November and further enhanced families choice of Early Intervention Programs.

The Autism Queensland training team continued to look at new and innovative models of providing information and education. Interest in education programs for adolescents prompted the development



of two new learning programs: *It's All About Me: Understanding Me* and *My Asperger's and Ditching the Parents: Getting Out on Your Own*.

### Regional Responses

During 2008 Autism Queensland's multi-disciplinary Outreach Team visited 20 regions outside Brisbane at least once and in many regions more than one trip was made to that region. The Outreach Team liaised regularly with local advisory groups in these regions and attended Parent Support Group meetings and initiated Professional Network Meetings.

A comprehensive calendar of workshop, seminar and special events for 2008 was inclusive of all major regional centres and a number of smaller regional centres such as Longreach and Kingaroy.

Through secondment to the new Central Queensland EarlyAQtion Service, an Outreach Services speech pathologist delivered the first EarlyBird Parent Programme (NAS) in Australia in collaboration with Queensland Community Health.



## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

### Service Responses

In response to demand for early intervention services and inability to access existing services, particularly in regional Queensland, the Outreach and Training Teams developed a flexible new early intervention program - Kidstart Outreach Program. This program enables families across Queensland to access an individualised program to meet their child's needs.

The Outreach and Training Teams utilised a range of alternative service delivery options for clients in regional areas to increase opportunities to access a service including teleconference and on-line options

### Collaboration

During 2008 collaboration with government and non-government agencies and parent groups was integral to the planning and delivery of the Outreach, Training and Advisor Services. Throughout the year teams established communication networks and processes to support this collaborative process through initiatives such as Local Regional Advisory Groups, Professional Network Groups and Working Parties.



# John Villiers Centre of Excellence Rockhampton



**Team Leader: Kim Laffoley**



## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

For the Early Intervention team in Rockhampton, 2008 was a year of incredible growth, which brought with it many challenges and rewards. Over the year we have grown from a service which in 2007 supported approximately 24 children under six years and their families, to one which by the end of 2008, supported approximately 50.

In January 2008 the service moved into temporary premises in Gracemere, which enabled us to commence the delivery of our intensive group programs. With the generous assistance from Rockhampton North Rotary Club, we were able to complete necessary building work which ensured that the premises were suitable for housing two groups of young children.

The team has worked hard to develop strong collaborative relationships throughout the region, with families, other government agencies and local services. Our teachers and therapists have supported children in a range of other early childhood settings, offering information, support and guidance to staff as required. In addition, staff from other services have come to our centre to observe the work our teachers and therapists do with the children.

We have travelled across our large region, delivering outreach services to families living in rural and remote areas. This has required that we work closely with local service providers to ensure that children and families are supported effectively.

Various members of the team have been involved in public speaking and presentations, both locally and across the region. This has enabled us to increase community awareness about Autism and the struggles for the children and families who have Autism in their lives.



We have been fortunate enough to have received a great deal of support from a wide range of local community organisations. This has taken the form of both financial support and practical hands-on support. Some of the organisations we have received support from include Rockhampton North Rotary, Rockhampton South Rotary, Mt Archer Lionesses Club, Pink Lily Sands, The Sisters of the Rising Star, The John Villiers Trust Fund, Watts Brothers Carpet One, the Lord Mayors Charity Committee.

As part of Autism Awareness Month in 2008, the team organised a fundraising screening of *The Black Balloon*, which was widely supported by the community and raised approximately \$2000.

Families who are involved with our service have developed strong networks with each other and we regularly hold events such as our family barbecues, which enables them to come together, meet and share their stories.



## ENHANCING CHOICE

Throughout 2008, we ran a range of group programs, including intensive three and four day groups, transition to prep group, how does your engine run group, play and learn group and care for caring parents group. In addition to these group programs, we also offered individual outreach programs for families who wished their children to remain in mainstream settings. The range and quality of the services provided by the team enhanced the range of choices available to families when seeking intervention and support for their children.

2008 also saw us increase the amount of outreach services we delivered across the region. Each term, there was at least one full week when all of the team were involved in outreach, plus the therapists and social worker also delivered outreach services during the school holidays. Our team delivers outreach as far north as Mackay, as far west as Emerald and as far south as Bundaberg.

For those living in rural and remote Queensland, where specialist services are incredibly difficult to find, having Autism Queensland's Early Intervention team visit and deliver services face to face and over the phone, greatly enhanced the range of choice available to these families.



# Centre of Excellence Far North Queensland



**Team Leader: Paula Burnett**



## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

Autism Queensland has successfully made its first footprint in Far North Queensland during 2008 with the commencement of the EarlyAQtion Programs. The EarlyAQtion team is based in Cairns and travels throughout the Tablelands, Savannah, Cassowary Coast, Port Douglas, Mossman and Cape regions providing high quality Early Intervention and support to children under 6 years with Autism, their families and professionals.

The EarlyAQtion Team build great working relationships with community groups and government agencies to ensure we are all working together to improve the lives of children with Autism. The team

has been active in the community speaking about the services of Autism Queensland and providing information about Autism. Autism Queensland held a successful 'meet and greet' morning tea in Ravenshoe with several other organisations. This was a productive morning giving many families the chance to access resources and information for their child.

The EarlyAQtion team has built great working relationships with many families throughout the region. It has been a wonderful experience for the team to bring such a new and exciting service to the families of Far North Queensland. The EarlyAQtion team would like to thank the families of Far North Queensland for their welcome and support throughout 2008.



## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

During 2008 the EarlyAQtion team had a very successful outcome in sourcing funds from government, philanthropic, corporate and community organisations and groups to be able to develop our resources and furnish and equip our new Centre of Excellence. Autism Queensland received the following: new garage from Queensland Country Credit Union; a Springless Trampoline and softfall matting from the Cowboys; a Sunshade Sail structure from Cairns Regional Council; equipment and resources from Mission Australia – Grassroots Funding; playground and front fence from Non-School Organisations. The Cairns Newsagents Charity Golf Day donation contributed to the payment for the side and back fences at the Marr Street property. Great networks have been created with many other organisations throughout the region.

Refurbishment of the new Autism Queensland Centre of Excellence in Marr Street draws to an end and the excitement of the EarlyAQtion Team is alive with the commencement of the Centre Based Programs in 2009.











# Disability Services



**Manager: Glenda Watkins**



## ENHANCING CHOICE

In 2008 Disability Services again attained the Quality Management Services (QMS) accreditation, successfully meeting the requirements of the audit. This was the result of team work from clients, families and staff. Each year we become more knowledgeable and responsive to the QMS and through the continuous improvement process implemented across the organisation we are able to improve on systems and processes as a natural cycle.

Clients and support staff at the houses have been working together on the development of Positive Behaviour Support Plans to empower clients and raise staff awareness about the central importance of communication in behaviour.

The holiday program in 2008 piloted a program directed at children aged 13 to 17 years. We offered a different style of program aimed at the older children focussing on age appropriate activities in the community. We are extending this program in 2009.

Autism Queensland has registered with Disability Services Queensland to access the license to be part of the Comprehensive Health Assessment Program. This program assists and encourages the medical profession to look at whole of life medical issues for people with disabilities, including yearly check ups of both men's and women's health issues.

Autism Queensland staff work closely with clients living in the community and with their families to develop goal plans. Clients participate in a broad range of 'sampling' of options before identifying the types of goals they choose to achieve.

During 2008 the Family Support team developed a Google group for parents of children with Autism. This group has 125 members and is a good support network for families. All sorts of issues are discussed and families have said they now feel they are not alone and that it doesn't matter what their child is doing—someone else's child has done it before and they not only understand but have some good tips and ideas around the issues they are facing.



## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

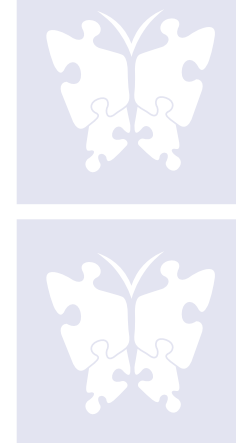
During 2008 Autism Queensland actively sought funding to provide Accommodation and Day Services to metropolitan and regional areas. Unfortunately we have been unable to secure the funds for these programs, but we will be monitoring available funds in 2009.

Support workers with Autism Queensland participated in a range of training opportunities throughout the year including Autism specific workshops with Dr Tony Attwood and the TEACCH Masterclass presented by Professor Gary Mesibov.

2009 will see Disability Services training and engaging staff in evidence based practise and providing accredited training relevant to their roles. Training will coincide with the Quality Management System calendar. Relevant training for staff ensures Autism Queensland delivers a quality service for our clients.

Disability Services will also maintain existing partnerships we have established throughout the sector. These partnerships are an integral part of linking Autism Queensland clients with the community.

# Research and Development



**Principal Research and Development Officer:**  
**Dr Jill Ashburner**



## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

### The development and support of research programs

Autism Queensland Research and Development aims to develop and support research that will enhance the potential of individuals with ASD to achieve valued life outcomes and improve the quality of life of people with ASD and their families.

#### Current Autism Queensland research programs

The following Autism Queensland research programs will add to our understanding of ASD and the effectiveness of current interventions:

- In late 2007 we were successful in gaining a research grant from the Apex Foundation Autism Trust, for a study titled: *The introduction of keyboarding to children with ASD: a Help or a Hindrance*. This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of keyboarding in improving academic outcomes for children with ASD who have difficulty handwriting. The data collection for this study was completed in 2008 and we are currently in the process of analysing the data.
- In November 2008, we were successful in accessing a grant from the Fred P. Archer Bequest for a study on auditory processing and classroom educational, behavioural and emotional outcomes in children with autism spectrum disorder. The main aim of this study will be to explore the associations between the auditory processing (the way that sounds are interpreted) and school performance including academic performance, attention and social skills in a classroom context in both children

with autism spectrum disorders and typically developing children. Mr Michael Katona from the Autism Queensland training team will be contributing to the study as a Master of Philosophy student. This research is being conducted in collaboration with Dr Wayne Wilson from the Division of Audiology and Associate Professor Jenny Ziviani from the Division of Occupational Therapy at the University of Queensland School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences.

- In December 2008, we were successful in gaining a grant from the Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland for a study on *Current Practices, Training and Professional Development Needs of Occupational Therapists who Provide Services to Children, Adolescents and Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Queensland*. This research aims to explore the range of current practices employed by occupational therapists with people with Autism. A series of focus groups comprising occupational therapy practitioners, supervisors of occupational therapists and academics will be used to learn about current issues with regard to services for people with Autism and their families. This information will provide the foundation for the development of a survey to be distributed to all registrants of the Occupational Therapy Board of Queensland in order to determine current approaches, levels of confidence and training needs in this area. The findings will be used to inform training institutions and service organisations about the training and professional development required to support the delivery of high quality occupational therapy services to people with ASD and their families. This research is being conducted in collaboration with Associate Professor Sylvia Rodger (Head of the Occupational Therapy Division) and Associate Professor Jenny Ziviani from the University of Queensland School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences



- Plans are underway for Dr. Gail Woodyatt and Nerina Scarinci from the Speech Therapy Division, University to conduct the following research project in collaboration with Autism Queensland: Current Speech Pathology Practice for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Queensland. The methodology for this project will be similar to the occupational therapy project described above, in that information from focus groups comprising speech pathology clinicians, supervisors and academics will provide the foundation for the development of a survey to be distributed to all registrants of the Speech Pathology Board of Queensland in order to determine current approaches, levels of confidence and training needs in this area.

### **Strengthening links with the broader autism research community and local universities**

- Many researchers approach Autism Queensland for support in recruiting participants for their studies. Research and Development regularly supports research that promises to inform future directions of services for individuals with Autism by advertising their projects to potential participants who are clients of Autism Queensland. All research projects are screened to ensure they have appropriate ethical clearance and recognise the rights of research participants to privacy, confidentiality and protection from harm.
- Research and Development staff members support student research projects by:
  - (a) suggesting research topics that would benefit Autism Queensland programs and clients to local universities, and
  - (b) co-supervising honours and post-graduate students who engage in research that is of benefit to Autism Queensland programs and clients.
- Links have been strengthened with local universities. For example Autism Queensland has worked collaboratively with Associate Professor Sylvia Rodger from the University of Queensland and Professor Suzanne Carrington from Griffith University on several projects of mutual interest. The Principal Research and Development Officer also has an academic title as Lecturer at the University of Queensland and lectures annually to University of Queensland occupational therapy students.



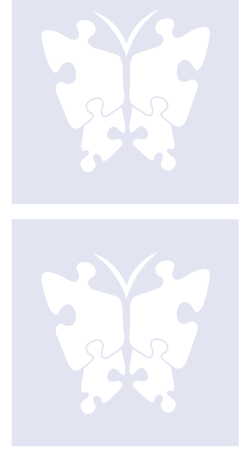
- During 2008, the Principal Research and Development Officer presented current research at conferences including the ARMS Global Autism Conference 2008, the Autism Queensland Research Forum and the Twilight Interactive Videoconference Series: Supporting Students with Complex Behavioural and Emotional Needs.

### **Promotion of evidence-based practice at Autism Queensland**

Research and Development aims to enhance the use of new and existing evidence to underpin services delivered by Autism Queensland.

- During 2008, Research and Development staff members provided reviews of evidence on over 60 different topics to support Autism Queensland programs. Research and Development staff members also provided many reviews of evidence to support discipline-specific professional mentoring groups at Autism Queensland.

# Registered Training Organisation



**Manager: Adam Profke**

## Compliance and Extension Scope of Registration

In 2008 the RTO underwent an external audit by the Department of Education, Training and the Arts (DETA) to ensure compliance to the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 2007 standards. We successfully completed this audit.

Throughout the year we applied to extend our scope of operations. We are now authorised to deliver Certificate I in Business & Certificate I in Information. Both of these programs are integral to our pre-employment training programs.

## Pre-Employment Training Program

Autism Queensland received funding through the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations

under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative. As a result we have established a dedicated pre-employment training centre located at Milton in Brisbane. The aim of the program is to enrol 15 to 17 year olds who are at risk of disengagement and those 18+ who are not employed and give them the skills and knowledge to plan a career and move into the workforce. We were also successful in receiving funding to operate the same training centre in Cairns for programs commencing in 2009.

Graduates from the Certificate I and II in Business and Information Technology are sourcing employment and Autism Queensland is delighted to have one of these Graduates join our staff as a Trainee in Business Administration.

The Certificate Courses provide much more than training in the technical skills required in the workplace, but they are specifically targeting the social and communication skills so necessary for these young people to succeed in the employment interview and be accepted into the workplace.

We are delighted to be able to make a difference in the lives of young people with ASD who have fallen into the void between school and employment.

## Resources Developed

As a result of funding under the Commonwealth Australian Flexible Learning Framework we were able to develop both the Certificate I in Information Technology and Certificate I in Business in an online learning format. The program that we have developed is different from traditional online learning as we have developed these programs to cater specifically for the learning style of an individual with ASD. Early 2009 will see the launch of the online learning platform to support these programs











# Human Resources



**Manager : Renee Allan**



## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

Autism Queensland experienced considerable growth in 2008 bringing many new and fabulous employees to introduce to the already established Autism Queensland team. Staff are informed of new appointments, organisational vacancies and changes to Human Resources related procedures via email.

Our positive and supportive organisational culture was promoted and enhanced in various ways throughout 2008 from our recruitment process through to a shared team building day to launch the year. In Brisbane and the regions there is a strong focus on building a positive culture that creates professional and happy environments for everyone involved.

On Thursday 24 January 2008, Autism Queensland held their annual Staff Appreciation Day to reflect on staff for their achievements of 2007. This opportunity enables staff to share their experiences, discuss strategies and support each other in a positive and energised environment. Staff were recognised for their long service and then participated in a team building session. The day was a great success, introducing newcomers into the Autism Queensland team.

During 2008 Autism Queensland's schools have provided placements for a variety of university students both locally and internationally. The schools have supported educating Physiotherapy, Social Work and Teaching students on short term placements to gain ASD specific training.

In 2007, the Autism Queensland staff intranet site was revamped; throughout 2008 we have continued to make improvements to ensure ease of use for staff. Our aim is for staff to have access to the most up to date information on our policies and procedures.

In 2008 the unemployment rate was at an all time low and Autism Queensland definitely felt the effects of the labour market trends. In response to these trends, Autism Queensland reviewed the conditions of employment for staff across the organisation to enable us to position ourselves as a competitor with government agencies and to ensure retention of our valued staff.

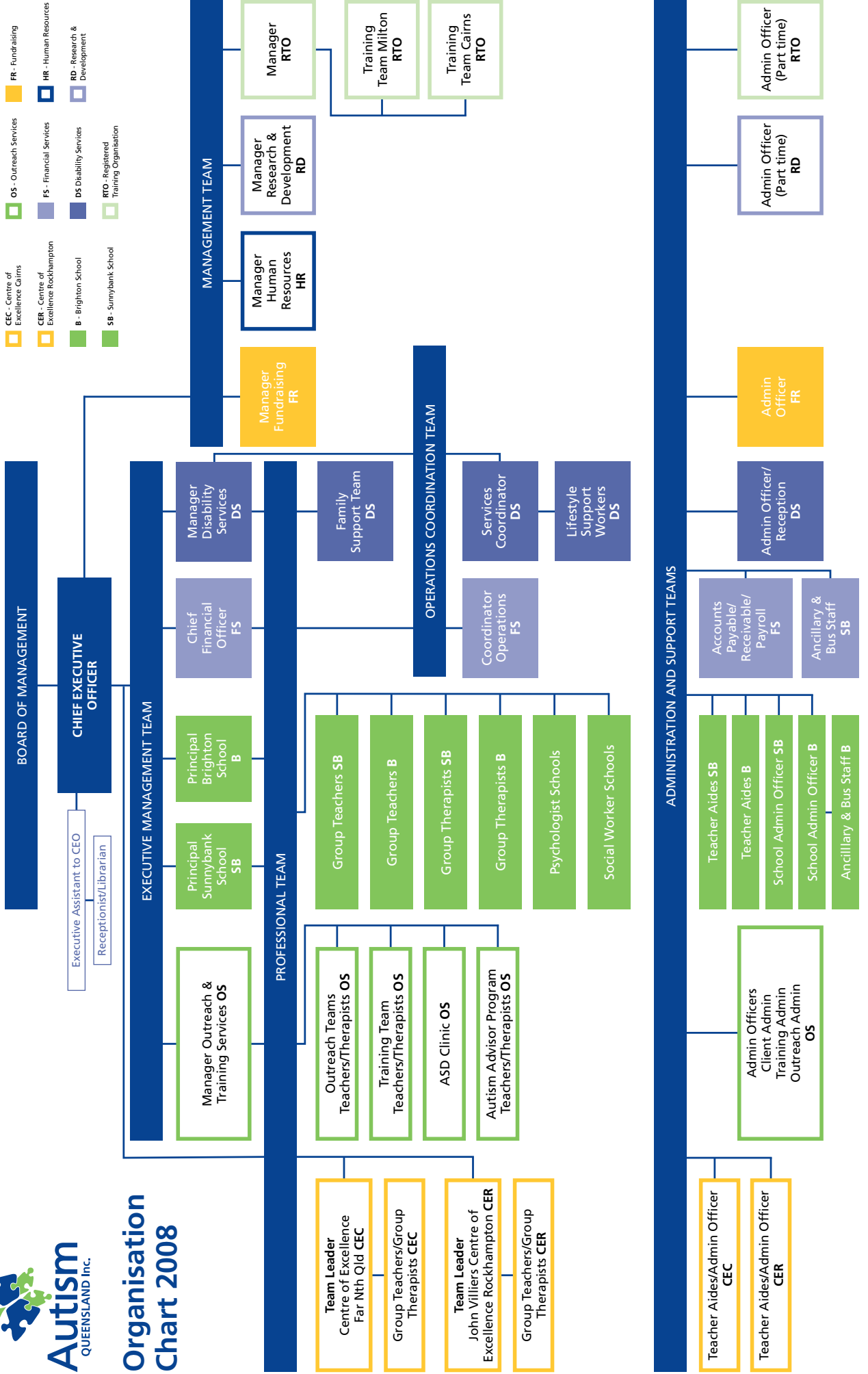


## ENHANCING CHOICE

In 2008, professional development opportunities were provided internally within the first six months of employment and externally after completion of probationary period. Autism Queensland's Training Team provides ASD specific training to our staff. Additional professional development is identified through the annual staff performance appraisal process.



# Organisation Chart 2008







# Support Groups



## Ayr ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Anita Julyan  
**Phone:** 07 4782 1123  
**Email:** anitajulyan@bigpond.com

## Bowen ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Nadia Todd  
**Phone:** 4786 5587 or 0406 409 148  
**Email:** rantodd@hotmail.com

## Brighton & Surrounding Areas (Parent Support Group)

**Contact:** Shannon O'Brien (Autism Queensland Family Support Team)  
**Phone:** 3273 0000  
**Email:** FST2@autismqld.com.au

## Bundaberg ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Norelle Kasberger  
**Email:** norelle59@optusnet.com.au  
**Phone:** 4151 7360 or 0437 538 929  
**Address:** PO Box 5034, Bundaberg West Qld 4670

## Cairns ASD Support Group Inc

**Contact:** Jenny / Brigitte / Natalie  
**Phone:** 0488 578 735  
**Email:** casg@lizzy.com.au  
**Website:** www.casg.org.au

## Childers ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Sita Mannaert  
**Email:** smann45@eq.edu.au  
**Phone:** 4123 5503 or 4122 2123

## Dalby ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Chris Allison (Carers Qld)  
**Phone:** 4632 8922 or 0417 716 872  
**Email:** callison@carersqld.asn.au

## Emerald ASD Parent Support

**Contact:** Tracey Quadroy  
**Phone:** 4988 2333  
**Email:** tquad1@eq.edu.a

## Gladstone Area Autism Support Group

**Contact:** Dorothy Lewis-Heselwood , Marieka Holmes  
**Phone:** 4975 7208 or 0411 150 424  
**Email:** autismgladstone@yahoo.com.au

## Gold Coast ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Helen Steinhardt  
**Phone:** 5559 1747 or 0417 700 190  
**Email:** goldcoastsg@autismqld.com.au or HelenSteinhardt@bigpond.com

## Innisfail ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Joanne Ross & Julie French  
**Phone:** 4061 6000  
**Email:** jross70@eq.edu.au or Julie@csci.org.au

## Mackay Autism Support Group

**Contact:** Debbie Brooker or Lois Reck  
**Phone:** 4942 3458 or 4954 7900  
**Email:** mackaysg@autismqld.com.au

## Maryborough ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Tarah Munro  
**Phone:** 4123 2949 or 0428 883 488  
**Email:** munroconsult@bigpond.com

## Moranbah ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Deanne Catelan  
**Phone:** 0418 715 257  
**Email:** catelan@optusnet.com.au

## North Queensland Autism Support Group (Townsville & surrounding areas)

**Contact:** Gwenyth Cutler  
**Phone:** 4774 0637  
**Email:** gwenyth.cutler@optusnet.com.au

### Redlands Support Group

**Contact:** Alice Corcoran  
**Phone:** 3286 5053  
**Email:** jonhc@tadaust.org.au

### Rockhampton Autism Support Group

**Contact:** Laurene Carswell  
**Phone:** 4921 1952  
**Email:** rockhamptonasg@autismqld.com.au or laurene@internode.on.net

### South Burnett Autism Support Group

**Contact:** Jenny Lutz  
**Phone:** 4164 1002 or 0410 588 641  
**Email:** jlutz@bne.catholic.edu.au

### Sunnybank Hills Parent Support Group

**Contact:** Shannon O'Brien (Autism Queensland Family Support Team)  
**Phone:** 3273 0000  
**Email:** FST2@autismqld.com.au

### Sunnybank Hills Parents of Adults with ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Shannon O'Brien  
**Phone:** 07 3273 0000  
**Email:** FST2@autismqld.com.au

### Sunshine Coast ASD Support Group

**Contact:** Linda Kennedy  
**Phone:** 0434 642 094

### Toowoomba Support Group for ASD

**Contact:** Janet Jarvis (Carers Qld)  
**Phone:** 4632 8922 or 0408 873 203  
**Email:** jjarvis@carersqld.asn.au

### Tully Support Group for ASD

**Contact:** Joanne Ross  
**Phone:** 0438 688 693  
**Email:** Jross70@eq.edu.au

### Warwick Support Group for ASD

**Contact:** Chris Allison (Carer's Qld)  
**Phone:** 07 4632 8922 or 0417 716 872  
**Email:** callison@carersqld.asn.au

### Yeppoon Support Group for ASD

**Contact:** Belinda Lindel (Family Connections) and Terri Reaney  
**Phone:** 0419 700 379 and 07 4921 4486 or 07 4939 8508  
**Email:** ga.jones@optusnet.com.au





# Financial Accounts



## Treasurer's Report 2008

*Prepared with the assistance of Chief Financial Officer, Kim Bell.*

The final operating deficit as at 31 December 2008 was \$21,547, which was an encouraging result considering that Autism Queensland's staff levels had increased significantly from 140 in December 2007 to 162 during 2008.

### Revenue

- Subsidies received increased by \$627,879, mainly attributable to Disability Services Queensland's funding for the Early Intervention Program in Rockhampton and Cairns, and the new Federal Government Initiative – Helping Children with Autism Program.
- Fundraising activities decreased by \$110,120, due to the fact that a Fundraising Manager was not appointed until April 2008, and to a lower number of larger donations.
- Subsidies – Capital Items increased by \$196,368 to \$280,047 in 2008.
- Revenue from Training and Workshops also increased by approximately \$152,000.

The total revenue for 2008 was recorded at 10,255,159 an increase of \$1,154,517 compared to 2007.

### Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was recorded at \$10,304,956 compared to \$9,088,280 for the previous year, an increase of \$1,216,676. The items of interest are:

- Adult Services increased by \$240,043.
- Children's Services increased by \$257,878, due mainly to the Early Intervention programs funded by Disability Services Queensland, and the Helping Children with Autism Program funded by Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- Outreach Services increased by \$235,992, due mainly to an increase in the number of staff during the year.
- Administration costs decreased by \$72,378.

### Assets

- Total Assets decreased by a small amount of \$18,706 to \$8,625,678.

### Liabilities

- Trade and Other Payables decreased by \$218,651 due mainly to Subsidies in Advance for Early Intervention programs in Rockhampton and Cairns.
- Total Liabilities – increased also by a small amount of \$29,828.

### Summary

2008 marked another year for growth in terms of increasing the level of services provided to Autism Queensland's clients and stakeholders.

It is exciting that Autism Queensland continues to improve its operations by building a solid foundation, effectively managing risk, and improving its quality services. The Board of Management and staff are committed to continuing to provide high quality services and identifying strategic revenue opportunities.

An audited financial report of Autism Queensland Inc. is attached.

On behalf of the Board, once again I would like to thank all staff for their commitment and dedication in ensuring that high quality services continue to be provided to people with Autism and their families.

**Gordon Dickson**  
**Treasurer**

# Income Statement

## for the year ended 31 December 2008



	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
<b>INCOME</b>			
Subsidies received		8,524,638	7,896,759
Interest received		34,799	62,400
Dividends received		2,120	6,443
Fundraising activities		258,935	369,055
Subsidies – capital items		280,047	83,679
Membership fees		25,333	24,771
Rent received		–	9,660
Levies		412,738	393,769
Profit on disposal of fixed assets		79,580	–
TEACCH		226,970	–
Professional development		266,882	183,937
Sundry income		143,117	70,169
		<u>10,255,159</u>	<u>9,100,642</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Adult services		3,020,138	2,780,095
Children's services		3,825,075	3,567,197
Fundraising		238,064	176,999
Outreach services		1,422,790	1,186,798
Administration		1,048,648	1,121,026
TEACCH		186,703	–
Training		256,898	–
Depreciation and amortisation	2	256,279	197,128
Finance costs	2	50,361	59,037
		<u>10,304,956</u>	<u>9,088,280</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) before donation from John Villiers Trust		<u>(49,797)</u>	<u>12,362</u>
Donation for Regional Services – John Villiers Trust		28,250	59,901
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>		<u>(21,547)</u>	<u>72,263</u>

*The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.*

# Balance Sheet

## as at 31 December 2008



	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents		124,586	551,082
Trade and Other Receivables	3	285,587	169,387
Inventory	4	7,000	–
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>417,173</b>	<b>720,469</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	5	8,114,367	7,793,441
Trade and Other Receivables	4	4,162	8,272
Financial assets	6	89,976	122,202
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>8,208,505</b>	<b>7,923,915</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>8,625,678</b>	<b>8,644,384</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and Other Payables	7	1,101,569	1,320,220
Financial liabilities	8	377,899	53,593
Provisions	9	636,913	632,731
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,116,381</b>	<b>2,006,544</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Financial liabilities	8	415,413	624,580
Provisions	9	223,913	94,755
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>639,326</b>	<b>719,335</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,755,707</b>	<b>2,725,879</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>5,869,971</b>	<b>5,918,505</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS AND RESERVES</b>			
Accumulated funds	10	1,373,122	1,394,669
Revaluation reserve		4,496,849	4,523,836
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>		<b>5,869,971</b>	<b>5,918,505</b>

*The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.*



# Statement of Cash Flows

## for the year ended 31 December 2008



	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>			
Subsidies received		9,556,502	8,027,143
Payments to suppliers and employees		(10,963,172)	(8,105,611)
Received from fundraising		258,935	369,055
Other revenue		1,077,160	688,749
Donation for regional services		28,250	59,901
Interest received		34,799	62,400
Interest paid		(50,361)	(59,037)
<b>Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>		<u>(57,887)</u>	<u>1,042,600</u>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>			
Payments for investments		–	(8,656)
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(823,748)	(501,832)
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets		340,000	–
<b>Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		<u>(483,748)</u>	<u>(510,488)</u>
<b>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>			
Lease principal repayments		–	(36,314)
Repayment of borrowings		(164,022)	(41)
<b>Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>		<u>(164,022)</u>	<u>(36,355)</u>
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash Held</b>		<u>(705,657)</u>	<u>495,757</u>
<b>Opening Cash Brought Forward</b>		551,082	55,325
<b>Closing Cash Carried Forward</b>		<u>(154,575)</u>	<u>551,082</u>

*The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.*

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## for the year ended 31 December 2008



### NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a general purpose financial report prepared in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act Queensland and Australian Accounting Standards. The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and except for the revaluation of certain non-current assets, the historical cost convention has been used.

The following material accounting policies which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

#### Income Tax

The Association is exempt from the payment of Income Tax under the provision of Division 50 of the Income Tax Act.

#### Government Subsidies

Subsidies are received from both the Commonwealth and State Government. Subsidies received for specific capital items are disclosed separately in the Income Statement. Other subsidies being for operating expenses are treated as revenue and included in the operating result for the year to which they relate.

#### Fixed Assets

Freehold land and buildings are measured on a fair value basis. At each reporting date, the value of each asset in these classes is reviewed to ensure that it does not differ materially from the asset's fair value at that date. Where necessary, the asset is re-valued to reflect its fair value. Any surplus on revaluation is credited direct to the asset revaluation reserve.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The assets are depreciated at the following rates:

Buildings	40 years straight line basis
Motor vehicles	7 years straight line basis
Furniture and equipment	4–10 years straight line basis

#### Leased Assets

Leases are classified at their inception as either operating or finance leases based on the economic substance of the agreement so as to reflect the risks and benefits incidental to ownership.

##### *Operating Leases*

The minimum lease payments of operating leases, where the lessor effectively remains substantially all of the risks and benefits of ownership of the leased item, are recognised as an expense on a straight line basis.

##### *Finance Leases*

Leases which effectively transfer substantially all of the risks and benefits incidental to ownership of the leased item to the group are capitalised at the present value of the minimum lease payments and disclosed as property, plant and equipment under lease.

A lease liability of equal value is also recognised.

Capitalised leased assets are depreciated over the shorter of the estimated useful life of the assets and the lease term. Minimum lease payments are allocated between interest expense and reduction of the lease liability with the interest expense calculated using the interest rate implicit in the lease and charged directly to the balance sheet.

## NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

### Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks, and term deposits which could be readily converted to cash.

### Employee Entitlements

Provision is made for employee entitlement benefits accumulated as a result of employees rendering services up to the reporting date. These benefits include wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave.

Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and other employee entitlements expected to be settled within twelve months of the reporting date are measured at their nominal amounts. All other employee entitlements are measured at their present value of the estimated future cash outflow to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

### Going Concern

Notwithstanding the association's deficiency of net current assets of \$1,699,208 (2007 – \$1,286,075) and the operating deficit of \$21,547 (2007 – Surplus \$72,263), the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Board of Management believe that with the ongoing support of both State and Commonwealth funding the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due and payable.

Included with current liabilities are unexpended grant funds of \$423,408 for which costs will be incurred in the next financial period. Further grant funds of over \$1 million were received in January 2009. The Board of Management believe that such financial support will continue to be available.

	2008 \$	2007 \$
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## NOTE 2: OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS

### Finance costs

Interest expense	50,361	59,037
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### Depreciation of Non-Current Assets

Buildings	100,529	99,691
Furniture and equipment	125,858	75,592
Motor vehicles	29,892	21,845
	<u>256,279</u>	<u>197,128</u>

### Employee Benefits Expense

Wages and salaries	7,197,864	6,207,166
Workers compensation	74,777	53,694
Superannuation costs	610,322	514,861
	<u>7,882,963</u>	<u>6,775,721</u>

*Employee benefits are allocated across the services provided as noted in the Income Statement*

The number of employees of the association as at 30 June	162	140
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## NOTE 3: TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

### Current

Trade debtors	26,813	54,179
Doubtful debts provision	–	(31,506)
	<u>26,813</u>	<u>22,673</u>
Prepayments and deposits held	152,704	61,122
Other debtors	106,070	85,592
	<u>285,587</u>	<u>169,387</u>

### Non-Current

Trade debtors	4,162	8,272
	<u>4,162</u>	<u>8,272</u>



	2008 \$	2007 \$
<b>NOTE 4: INVENTORY</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Merchandising stock	7,000	–
	<u>7,000</u>	<u>–</u>
<b>NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
<b>Land at cost</b>	3,110,000	3,265,000
<b>Buildings at cost</b>	3,930,763	3,830,820
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(280,048)	(190,973)
<b>Total written down value of buildings</b>	<u>3,650,715</u>	<u>3,639,847</u>
<b>Property Improvements at cost</b>	230,876	168,600
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(12,926)	(8,430)
<b>Total written down value of property improvements</b>	<u>217,950</u>	<u>160,170</u>
<b>Motor vehicles at cost</b>	229,448	167,776
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(121,327)	(91,435)
<b>Total written down value of motor vehicles</b>	<u>108,121</u>	<u>76,341</u>
<b>Furniture and equipment at cost</b>	2,033,352	1,531,996
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(1,005,771)	(879,913)
<b>Total written down value of furniture and equipment</b>	<u>1,027,581</u>	<u>652,083</u>
<b>Promotion film at cost</b>	8,971	8,971
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(8,971)	(8,971)
<b>Total written down value of promotion film</b>	<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>
<b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS</b>	<u>8,114,367</u>	<u>7,793,441</u>
<b>Movement in Non-Current Assets</b>		
<b>Land</b>		
Balance at beginning of the year	3,265,000	3,265,000
Additions/Reclassification	–	–
Disposals	(155,000)	–
	<u>3,110,000</u>	<u>3,265,000</u>
<b>Buildings</b>		
Balance at beginning of the year	3,639,847	3,722,823
Additions/Reclassification	198,443	12,500
Disposals	(91,542)	–
Depreciation	(96,033)	(95,476)
	<u>3,650,715</u>	<u>3,639,847</u>
<b>Property Improvements</b>		
Balance at beginning of the year	160,170	164,385
Additions/Reclassification	62,276	–
Depreciation expense	(4,496)	(4,215)
	<u>217,950</u>	<u>160,170</u>

<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (continued)

### Motor Vehicles

Balance at beginning of the year	76,341	23,527
Additions/Reclassification	61,672	99,003
Depreciation expense	(29,892)	(46,189)
	<u>108,121</u>	<u>76,341</u>

### Furniture and Equipment

Balance at beginning of year	652,083	265,056
Additions/Reclassification	501,356	462,619
Depreciation expense	(125,858)	(75,592)
	<u>1,027,581</u>	<u>652,083</u>

## NOTE 6: FINANCIAL ASSETS

### Non-Current

Shares in listed securities	89,974	122,200
Investment in subsidiary company	2	2
	<u>89,976</u>	<u>122,202</u>

Autism Queensland Inc. controls 100% of the share capital of a company incorporated in Australia, being Aqcom Pty Ltd. The company did not trade during the year and has not been consolidated into the Autism Queensland Inc. accounts due to the immaterial nature of its transactions.

## NOTE 7: TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

### Current

Trade creditors	207,774	181,646
Other creditors and accruals	470,387	505,037
Subsidies in advance	423,408	633,537
	<u>1,101,569</u>	<u>1,320,220</u>

## NOTE 8: FINANCIAL LIABILITIES

Within one year	377,899	53,593
One year or later and no later than five years	415,413	624,580
	<u>793,312</u>	<u>678,173</u>

*Included with the interest bearing liabilities at the reporting date is the bank overdraft facility with Westpac Banking Corporation.*

WBC bank overdraft	279,161	—
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In the previous audit period the average floating interest rate for the overdraft was 8.70%.

The bank loans are secured by Bill of Mortgages over the Association's freehold property as follows:

Childrens Crisis Care – 121 Jackson Road, Sunnybank Hills

Children Respite Residence – 331 Jackson Road, Sunnybank Hills

Therapy Centres – 136 North Road, Brighton and 437 Hellawell Road, Sunnybank Hills

Adult Respite Residence – 24 Keeble Street, Corinda.

<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## NOTE 9: PROVISIONS

### Current:

Employee entitlements	536,913	532,731
Building provisions	100,000	100,000
	<u>636,913</u>	<u>632,731</u>

### Non-Current:

Employee entitlements	<u>223,913</u>	<u>94,755</u>
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## NOTE 10: ACCUMULATED FUNDS AND RESERVES

### Accumulated Funds

Brought forward at beginning of year	1,394,669	1,322,406
(Deficit)/Surplus for year	(21,547)	72,263
Prior year adjustments	–	–
Carried forward at end of the year	<u>1,373,122</u>	<u>1,394,669</u>

### Asset Revaluation Reserve

Brought forward at beginning of year	4,496,849	4,496,849
Revaluation increments	–	–
Carried forward at end of the year	<u>4,496,849</u>	<u>4,496,849</u>

### Unrealised Gain Reserve

Brought forward at beginning of year	26,987	26,704
Revaluation decrements	(26,987)	283
Carried forward at end of the year	<u>–</u>	<u>26,987</u>

## NOTE 11: COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

### Contingent Liability – Residual Financial Interest of the Commonwealth and State

#### Commonwealth

Commonwealth of Australia has made grants to fund a number of the Association's capital expenditure projects. The Commonwealth retains, for 20 years, a right to repayment of a proportion of the grants (reducing by 5% per annum) if the Association should sell or otherwise dispose of or cease to use facilities principally for the purpose approved by the Commonwealth.

The residual interest of the Commonwealth amount is: **2008: \$ 913,965** (2007: \$ 600,722)

#### State

State of Queensland have made a grant to fund the Association's capital expenditure project. The State retains, for 20 years, the right to repayment of the grant if the Association should sell or otherwise dispose of or cease to use the facilities principally for the purpose approved by the State.

The residual interest of the State amount is: **2008: \$ 573,453** (2007: \$ 603,635)



<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## NOTE 11: COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES (continued)

### Operating lease commitments

Operating lease commitments are payable:

Within one year	217,290	142,342
One year or later but no later than five years	18,750	–
<b>Commitments not recognised in the financial statements</b>	<b>236,040</b>	<b>142,342</b>

## NOTE 12: SEGMENT INFORMATION

The Association operated predominantly in the Educational and welfare support of those with ASD within Australia.

## NOTE 13: CASH FLOW RECONCILIATION

### (a) Reconciliation of Cash

Cash Balance comprises of:

Cash at Bank and on Hand	124,586	551,082
Bank Overdraft	(279,161)	–
	<b>(154,575)</b>	<b>551,082</b>

### (b) Reconciliation of surplus for the year to funds from operation

Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	(21,547)	72,263
Unrealised loss on investment	5,239	
Depreciation	256,279	197,128
Provisions and bad debts	(31,506)	207,344
Profit on sale of non-current assets	(93,458)	–
<b>Changes in assets and liabilities</b>		
Receivables	(80,584)	46,705
Inventory	(7,000)	–
Creditors and accruals	(85,310)	519,160

<b>Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities</b>	<b>(57,887)</b>	<b>1,042,600</b>
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## NOTE 14: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

No members of the management committee have entered into a material contract since the end of the financial year and there were no material contracts involving management committees' interests existing at year end.

## NOTE 15: EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

No events have occurred up until the date of this report which have not been previously brought to account in the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2008.

## NOTE 16: FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

### a. Financial Risk Management Policies

The Association's financial instruments consist mainly of deposits with banks, accounts receivable and payable.

The Association does not have any derivative instruments at 31 December 2008.

The main risks the Association is exposed to through its financial instruments are interest rate risk, liquidity risk and credit risk.

#### *Interest rate risk*

The Association is not exposed to any material interest rate risk.

#### *Foreign currency risk*

The Association is not exposed to fluctuations in foreign currencies.

#### *Liquidity risk*

The Association manages liquidity risk by monitoring forecast cash flows and ensuring that adequate unutilised borrowing facilities are maintained.

#### *Credit risk*

The maximum exposure to credit risk, excluding the value of any collateral or other security, at balance date to recognised financial assets, is the carrying amount, net of any provisions for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. The Association does not have any material credit risk exposure to any single receivable or group of receivables under financial instruments entered into by the Association.

#### *Price risk*

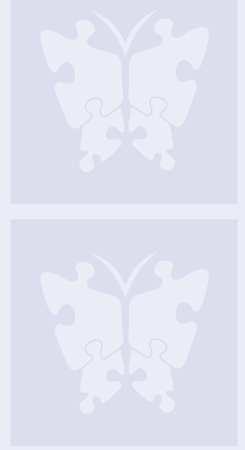
The Association is not exposed to any material commodity price risk.

### b. Interest Rate Risk

The Association's exposure to interest rate risk, which is the risk that a financial instrument's value will fluctuate as a result of changes in market interest rates and the effective weighted average interest rates on those financial assets and financial liabilities, is as follows:

	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate		Floating Interest Rate		Non-interest Bearing		Total	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
Financial assets								
Cash at bank	7.81%	6.48%	124,586	551,082	–	–	124,586	551,082
Trade and other receivables	–	–	–	–	289,719	177,659	289,719	177,659
			124,586	551,082	289,719	177,659	414,305	728,741
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>								
Payables	–	–	–	–	1,101,569	1,320,220	1,101,569	1,320,220
Financial liabilities			793,312	678,173	–	–	793,312	678,173
			793,312	678,173	1,101,569	1,320,220	1,894,881	1,998,346

# Statement by the Board of Management of Autism Queensland Inc



The Board of Management has determined that the association is a reporting entity and that this general purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards.

In the opinion of the Board of Management the financial report :

- a. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Autism Queensland Inc. as at 31 December 2008 and its performance for the year then ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.
- b. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Autism Queensland Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of the Management Committee and is signed for and on their behalf by:

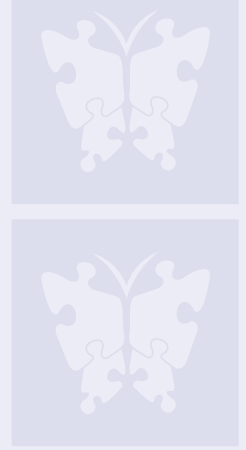
**President**  
**Dr Robert van-Barneveld**

**Treasurer**  
**Gordon Dickson**

**Dated this 12th Day of March 2009**



# Independent Audit Report to the Members of Autism Queensland Inc



## Scope

### The financial report and board of management's responsibility

We have audited the financial report of Autism Queensland Inc for the year ended 31 December 2008 consisting of the Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement, accompanying notes and Statement by the Board of Management for Autism Queensland Inc.

The association's board of management are responsible for preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) and the association's constitution. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board of Management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

### Audit Opinion

The financial report of Autism Queensland Inc. is in accordance with the Association Incorporation Act (Qld) including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 31 December 2008 and of their performance for the year ended on that date; and
- ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld).

**Hacketts DFK**

**Partner: L J Murphy**

**12 March 2009**





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