



RHUBARB

The ISADD Newsletter

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Publisher: Bill Davey
Photography: Jura Tender

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of Rhubarb for 2010.

Last year, we only managed to publish two editions of this newsletter – such was the frantic pace of activity throughout the year. So far, this year appears to be continuing at that pace, but nonetheless, we will try to publish more often than twice!

At time of writing, we have just completed a four-day Program Manager In-Service Training followed by a twelve day Case Manager Training Camp (see reports in this issue). Both were a "full on" experience for all involved, including me – chief chauffeur, logistics supervisor and general factotum -, as well as presenter of a couple of training sessions.

In the middle of the above was a very exciting policy release by the Liberal Party in Tasmania – see the report following.

Daryl Cooper
Editor

EXCITING POLICY FROM TASMANIAN LIBERALS!

The following Press Release from the Liberal Party in Tasmania speaks for itself. The full policy is too long to publish here, hence simply their press release, but importantly it gives commitment to using only evidence based treatment (ie ABA).

What a positive step forward for people with ASD if the Party gains power at the election!

Will Hodgman MP
Leader of the Opposition
Brett Whiteley MP
Shadow Minister for Health and Human Services
Sunday, 14 February 2009

Liberals to deliver Australia-first autism services

A Hodgman Liberal Government will become the first State government in Australia to deliver early intensive treatment services for children with autism.

The Liberals have committed \$4.5 million over four years to begin a staged, long-term and evidence-based approach to autism services which will deliver early screening, diagnosis and early intensive treatment for children with autism.

Mr Hodgman said:

This policy, combined with our long-term commitment to the continuation and expansion of the A-team support program, will for the first time deliver interventional therapy for children with autism, and help ease the pressure on families.

The policy will –

- Introduce early screening for autism at 18 months and two years of age by child health nurses and GPs, in recognition of the fact that a child with autism will display clear evidence of this before the age of three years. Checklists for autism in toddlers are in practice world-wide, take just 5-10 minutes and are 90% accurate in detecting autism.
- Set up a diagnostic panel for those red-flagged by the early screening tool, so those children can undergo full diagnosis. This will use world best practice principles of testing for co-morbidities and other genetic disorders, including epilepsy and Fragile X.
- Establish Early Intensive Treatment Centres for Autism in each region – with the first centre in the south of the State.

The Centres will provide each child with 20—30 hours of intensive behavioural intervention a week by trained therapists, while also providing rehabilitation and treatment for children who are not currently coping in the existing schools system. It will provide transition care for times when children and young people with autism regress, such as family break-up and puberty. The Centre will provide professional development and learning opportunities for parents, teachers and teacher aides, and be accessible to the University of Tasmania for graduate teachers, psychologists and allied and other health professionals, including child health nurses.

- Provide withdrawal areas in all primary schools. The Early Intensive Treatment Centre would also provide assistance to schools to allow continuity for the child's individually tailored program.
- The A-team will be continued and strengthened to work with children with autism who are struggling to cope in the high school environment.

Mr Whiteley said:

The Liberals' policy on autism was a result of listening intently to the experiences of families with children with autism about their struggle to find services and support.

Autism is a health condition – a genetic impairment. However, latest research shows that while autism is a lifelong condition, with early intensive intervention, children with autism can 'recover' (meaning that their disability no longer impairs them from having a normal life; that they can be indistinguishable from their peers).

We must give our children and young people this chance – without it, those children could face a lifetime of care.

Currently services and support for autism do not provide intensive intervention treatment. Many families cannot afford private services and many have struggled to even get a diagnosis.

An autistic child can place enormous strain on a family, and the Tasmanian Commissioner for Children, as well as the Australian Autism Advisory Council, has recommended a minimum of 20 hours of early intensive intervention per child per week.

CONGRATULATIONS

To those who completed Case Manager Training this month:

Kristina Pociute: Lithuania

Kristen Gray: W A

Tara Pollock: W A

Caroline D'Argent: W A

Krisdyanto Mustamu: Indonesia

Endah Pratiwi : Indonesia

Frenny Christianti: Indonesia

Melissa Griffin: New Zealand

Liyuan Zhang: Singapore

Alex Liau: Singapore

Ernest Tan: Singapore

WELCOMES

We welcome Isabella O'Donovan to her new role as a Program Manager in WA, a well-deserved promotion for her. Isabella will now wear three different ISADD Hats, Program Managing, Training and Case Managing.

Welcome also to Kristen Gray as Clinical Psychologist Registrar in WA, as well as Case Manager.

PROGRAM MANAGER IN-SERVICE

This three and a half day training course was held early February in Roleystone. Case Managers from around Australia, from Indonesia and Singapore attended, and Susan from New Zealand participated by video-link (*Wow, we are getting Hi-tech! – Ed.*).

A lot was achieved in ensuring our standards are maintained at a uniform high level in all the locations in which we operate.

SINGAPORE NEWS

ISADD in Singapore has followed Melbourne in getting their own office space. And like Melbourne this marks a significant milestone for the organisation.

The address is 10 Trengganu Street which is in Chinatown near an MRT station and a multistorey car-park.

We also welcome Vyda Chai as Program Manager. Vyda has been with ISADD for many years now, first in Perth, then in Singapore. In the past two years, her work with ISADD has been part-time while she completed her post-graduate studies in Psychology.

INDONESIA

Jura Tender visited this month, visiting Medan and Solo as well as Jakarta.

IRELAND

Sadly, as at the time of writing, we are in the process of winding up ISADD Europe Ltd. With the little amount of work available in Ireland, the cost of keeping the company operating was well in excess of its earnings.

We will, however, continue to support our personnel and clients in Ireland: the closing of the company simply means we will not be in a position to take advantage of any opportunities to expand our service which may arise in the future.

INFORMATION FOR NEW CLIENT FAMILIES

On becoming a client of ISADD, all families should receive a copy of the Parent Handbook, which provides important information on your rights and responsibilities as an ISADD client. If for any reason you were not given one, please ask your Case Manager to get one for you.

If you have been given a copy (hopefully you have!), please be sure to read it, and keep it somewhere where you can access it if something arises about which you are unsure. For example, the handbook will tell you what you need to do if you have any concerns about the service you receive from ISADD, and it tells you the circumstances in which a Therapist has a right to refuse to conduct a therapy session with your child.

And remember, if you have any concern that isn't addressed in the Parent Handbook, you are welcome to contact the Executive Coordinator, Daryl Cooper, on 08 9397 5970 or email daryl@isadd.org

CASE MANAGER TRAINING

I arrived in Perth around 1 a.m. New Zealand time. Having never met Daryl Cooper before I was under instruction to find a man with a beard, glasses and an ISADD badge. I ended up accepting a ride from a man with a beard, glasses, an ISADD badge and a missing tooth (Daryl quickly assured me he usually had a front tooth but it had fallen out in the weekend).

When we arrived at the headquarters I was introduced to Jura and a few other trainees who had been there for a few days already. Everyone was really friendly and it seemed as though the next fortnight would be a lot of fun. Having located my roommate and caravan I went to bed blissfully unaware that a new name had been coined for Case Management Training – “Boot Camp”.

The next day we received our case management training programmes and after introductions to the rest of the trainees and ISADD key personnel we were underway. The material we covered in the

morning was merely the tip of the iceberg, as the day progressed I began to fully understand just how much we had to learn. Later that evening, we had an opportunity to chat over dinner. Everyone seemed a little shell shocked but glad to have made it through the first day.

Tuesday. Wow. I had only just begun to digest all of the information on Cognitive development when we started to cover Visio – Spatial skills...followed by Mathematical skills later that afternoon. A lot to take in, but all incredibly interesting. We were also fortunate that evening to have an address by Dr J Birnbrauer, providing us with a compelling background of ABA and Autism. As the week went on we covered compic, language, social development, video modelling, working in schools and on Friday afternoon a much needed segment on relaxation and dealing with stress.

Saturday was amazing. A group of us went out on the boat with Daryl and Jura to Garden Island. I couldn't believe how warm the water was! A beautiful relaxing day. I was feeling less relaxed however that evening. I have not before now, mentioned our Boot Camp duty roster. On various days we would be either allocated to cleaning (which I had no problems with) or...cooking! I, much like our children, am a master of avoidance and have successfully avoided kitchen duties for as long as I remember. After a few panicked texts to my Mother asking advice, we (cooking was done in pairs thank goodness), managed to pull off a successful Spaghetti Bolognese.

Sunday we ventured into the city. Unfortunately nothing much was open before 11am so we ventured further down to the vibrant Fremantle. It was another beautiful hot day and after braving the markets we enjoyed an ice cold beer before the train ride back.

Monday. We were right back into it with lessons on challenging behaviours. That evening we were treated to what can only be described as an inspiring address by super mum Jenny Johnstone (who has two "recovered" children). During our second week we covered motor development along with dietary and toileting issues. We also gained a lot of practical experience with drill writing and programming exercises. It was another one of those times where you find that the more you know, the more you realise you don't know.

Thursday afternoon we were fortunate again to have another guest speaker, Dr John Wray, who provided us with an interesting presentation on the biological aspects of Autism. He was also kind enough to present us all with our case management training certificates, though I think this came as quite a surprise to him and to the rest of us who were expecting the formalities the next day. However, we now have beautiful graduation photos in our shorts and t-shirts.

On Friday we enjoyed a lunch out at the country club whilst nervously awaiting our final reports.

By the end of the fortnight we had all gotten to know each other quite well either through our work or kitchen experiences. We realised just how well, when a couple of members of our group conducted a series of impersonations of everyone that afternoon. These were very funny and scarily accurate. I am sure we will all remain in contact for some time. I would like to extend a big thank you to Daryl and Jura for their knowledge, hospitality and keeping us entertained. I would also like to thank all of the other key speakers and ISADD personnel from whom we have all learnt a lot.

CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED!

The Editor would welcome any news, views, anecdotes, gossip from client families or from ISADD personnel.

Contact the Editor, Daryl Cooper on (08) 9397 5970, by email daryl@isadd.org or by snail mail at
PO Box 255
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HUMOUR

A little "black" but still very funny.

My wish for the future:
When I die, I want to die peacefully in my sleep, just like my Grandfather did: - not yelling and screaming like his passengers in the car he was driving.

PHOTO CORNER – CASE MANAGER TRAINING



The Trainees



End of Course Lunch





Master Chef



Mmmm!



Not all Work, Some Play