



1st July 2010.

Dear Support Group,

Re: Advocating about the urgent needs of the ASD community

AFSA is an incorporated, self-funded, statewide, voluntary, parent based support group, and is a member of Autism Victoria. Through systemic advocacy our aim is to improve the outcomes and quality of life for individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families and carers. We have been a parent voice, advocating about the many urgent needs of the autism community to Government for about 10 years. We are not a funded agency.

Our campaign '**Autism – Stop the Robbery**' has gained the attention of Senior Ministers and their staff along with senior Government Department personnel. We have their ear so that your urgent needs can be heard through us.

As the state Election approaches (November 27th 2010) our '**Stop the Robbery**' campaign gathers momentum. We have enclosed bumper stickers for distribution to your members.

We also encourage your members to write a letter to Premier Brumby, Minister Neville and a copy to every member of Cabinet. Also please send a copy to the Leader of the Opposition Ted Baillieu MP and his team. MP's contact details can be found on the attachment. Be part of the campaign by including '**Autism – Stop the Robbery**' in the subject line.

To give you a sample of what we do, AFSA's 2009 budget submission is available at our website. **'Autism – Stop the Robbery' Priorities for the 2010/11 Victorian State Budget. Holding Government accountable to the Autism State Plan vision and six priority areas of action.**

AFSAs election priorities submission to Government and the Opposition will be available soon. Our priorities are developed in consideration of the results from our extensive survey (results at www.afsaconnect.org.au) and years of anecdotal evidence gathered from the vast network of parent support groups as well as personal advocacy done from time to time.

Join AFSA free at www.afsaconnect.org.au/membership Add your VOICE and let AUTISM be heard!
Best regards

Meredith Ward
President

About the **'Autism – Stop the Robbery'** campaign



“Autism - Stop the Robbery” is AFSA’s campaign aimed at the Victorian State Government to ensure priorities identified by the community during the development of the Autism State Plan get appropriate and adequate funding. In other words we are holding Government accountable to the Autism State Plan vision and six priority areas of action.

Our lobby strategy is based around **“Autism - Stop the Robbery”** because people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder of all ages and their families/carers are being robbed by this Victorian State Government.

Children and adolescents with an ASD should not be robbed of intervention and education services

People with an ASD should not be robbed of employment and independent living opportunities

People with an ASD and their families should not be robbed of support services

Siblings should not be robbed of a quality lifestyle

Families should not be robbed of respite and hope

Adding your voice to the campaign is as easy as;

Putting a bumper sticker on your car

Writing a letter to MP’s ; Meet your local State MP

Join about 2,500 others in the Autism - Stop the Robbery Face Book Cause

<http://apps.facebook.com/causes/156407>

Sign our on line petition

Care2 website <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/Autism-Stop-the-Robbery>

Facebook http://apps.facebook.com/petitions/view?pid=155645183&_fb_fromhash=ec1474b8dc72981a7262a7739fc5f228

Thanks for helping to make Autism a priority for this State election !

A letter could include the following elements....

Date

Dear Minister _____

Re: Autism – Stop the Robbery.

I am..... (eg. A person with an ASD.... A parent of a person with an ASD, A Grandparent of a person... The President of a support group representing people/families etc etc)

I am writing to you because people with an Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families continue to be robbed of the very services, supports and opportunities they need to be their best. Your Government can stop the robbery by endorsing the Autism State Plan as a budget priority and fund the priority areas for action contained within the Autism State Plan.

My urgent needs arebecause.....

When writing to a Minister or Shadow Minister with direct responsibility you could close with 'In the upcoming Victorian State Election, I will be voting for the party that is prepared to meet my urgent needs.'

*When writing to a Minister or Shadow Minister who **does not** have any direct responsibility for services you could close with*

'Therefore Minister, as a Member of Cabinet we implore you to support the funding of the Autism State Plan in the upcoming Election in a way that would significantly improve the quality of life for people with an ASD and their families and stop the robbery.'

Yours truly...

Facts you might like to quote

Key Findings - 'Life Transition Problems: Young People with Autism Spectrum Disorders'

(This report was commissioned by Minister Lisa Neville, to inform the Autism State Plan)

The findings of both the quantitative and qualitative studies give rise to a number of implications for practice and service delivery, particularly with regard to the need to improve the availability, access, timeliness, equity, continuity, coordination and integration of services provided to young people with an ASD and their families. Information from service providers supported these findings and acknowledged the lack of ASD specific training for professionals working with children and young adults with an ASD and their families.

1. Mental health problems in young people with an ASD are prevalent
2. Those with HFA and AD experience high levels of psychopathology
3. Parental mental health problems are significantly greater than for parents of children with ID and the general population
4. Family dysfunction is significantly higher than the general population for all families with a child with an ASD
5. Reduced quality of life, burden of disease and high cost to the individual, family and community are associated with all ASDs, particularly for those who also have mental illness, are female, and are greater than for disability in general
6. Approximately 30% of young adults with HFA or Asperger's Disorder do not have a day programme, school or work placement
7. Approximately 50% of young people with an ASD do not receive any help with the process of transition from either primary to secondary or secondary to post school options which impacts adversely on their mental health. The most critical transition help is from primary to secondary school and is associated with subsequent lower rates of mental health problems
8. Behaviours (antisocial) which might involve the police or courts are common in young adults with an ASD. Further research into this problem is needed
9. Health and mental health care for young people with an ASD is patchy at best and clinicians lack expertise
10. Despite the critical relationship between parents and teachers, there is no planned method of regular communication between parents and teachers for all children and young adults with an ASD
11. There is no service plan across the life span prepared by a multi-disciplinary group (health, education, housing and welfare) including the parents that is regularly reviewed and available for young people with an ASD and their families.
12. Case management is not available to all young people with an ASD.
13. All professionals, teachers and care workers who provide services to young people with ASDs currently do not receive ASDs specific training
14. Currently, there is no accreditation process for people delivering ASDs training
15. There is no single point of reliable and evidence-based ASDs information and services

Prof Bruce Tonge, Dr Avril Brereton, Ms Kerry Bull June 2008

“Autism is associated with burden and stress for parents (Howlin et al., 2004). The demands placed upon parents caring for a child with autism contributes to a higher overall incidence of parental stress, depression, anxiety and adversely impacts upon family functioning and marital relationships compared to parents of children with other intellectual, developmental or physical disabilities (Dunn et al., 2001; Yim et al., 1996) (Tonge, Brereton, et al, 2006).”

An extract from the report *The State of Victoria's Children*

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/children/annualreports.htm> Outcomes data in relation to children with a disability, CALD children and children in out-of-home care continue to be limited, and this is particularly so in respect of Victorian data. Available data suggest that outcomes for children in these groups are generally poorer than for the general child population. However, as shown below, this is not the case for all indicators: • Australian research shows that a considerable proportion (around 63 per cent) of children with a disability experience difficulties at school. In Victoria, around 20 per cent of people aged over 15 years with a disability have not attended school or have only progressed to Year 8, compared to 5 per cent of the general population, and only 55 per cent of people with a disability are employed, while over 81 per cent of the total Victorian population is in paid work.

List of Cabinet Members

Name	Ministerial Office	Internet	
Full	Portfolios	Address	Email
<u>Hon Jacinta Allan</u>	Minister for Regional and Rural Development Minister for Industry and Trade	Level 36, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne 3000	jacinta.allan@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Daniel Andrews</u>	Minister for Health	Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000	daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Peter Batchelor</u>	Minister for Energy and Resources Minister for the Arts Manager of Government Business Legislative Assembly	Level 20, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000	peter.batchelor@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon John Brumby</u>	Premier Minister for Veterans' Affairs Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Level 1, 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne 3002	john.brumby@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Bob Cameron</u>	Minister for Police and Emergency Services Minister for Corrections	Level 26, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne 3000	bob.cameron@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Ms Lily D'Ambrosio</u>	Minister for Community Development	Level 36, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne 3000	lily.d'ambrosio@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Joe Helper</u>	Minister for Agriculture Minister for Small Business	Level 22, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000	joe.helper@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Tim Holding</u>	Minister for Finance, WorkCover and Transport Accident Commission Minister for Water Minister for Tourism and Major Events	Level 26, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne 3000	timothy.holding@parliament.vic.gov.au

<u>Hon Rob Hulls</u>	Deputy Premier Attorney-General Minister for Racing	Level 3, 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne 3002	rob.hulls@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Gavin Jennings</u>	Minister for Environment and Climate Change Minister for Innovation Deputy Leader of the Government (Council)	Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000	gavin.jennings@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr John Lenders</u>	Treasurer Minister for Information and Communication Technology Minister for Financial Services Leader of the Government, Legislative Council	Level 4, 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne 3002	john.lenders@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Justin Madden</u>	Minister for Planning Minister for the Respect Agenda	Level 17, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne 3002	justin.madden@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr James Merlino</u>	Minister for Sport, Recreation and Youth Affairs Minister Assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs	Level 7, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000	james.merlino@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Ms Maxine Morand</u>	Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development Minister for Women's Affairs	Level 1, 2 Treasury Place, East Melbourne 3002	maxine.morand@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Lisa Neville</u>	Minister for Mental Health Minister for Community Services Minister for Senior Victorians	Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000	lisa.neville@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Martin Pakula</u>	Minister for Public Transport	Level 16, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne 3000, Ministerial PO Address:	martin.pakula@parliament.vic.gov.au

	Minister for Industrial Relations	PO Box 2797 Melbourne 3001	
<u>Mr Tim Pallas</u>	Minister for Roads and Ports Minister for Major Projects	Level 16, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne 3000	tim.pallas@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Bronwyn Pike</u>	Minister for Education Minister for Skills and Workforce Participation	Level 1, 2 Treasury Place, East Melbourne 3002	bronwyn.pike@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Tony Robinson</u>	Minister for Gaming Minister for Consumer Affairs Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs	Level 5, 1 Macarthur Street, East Melbourne 3002	tony.robinson@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Richard Wynne</u>	Minister for Housing Minister for Local Government Minister for Aboriginal Affairs	Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000	richard.wynne@parliament.vic.gov.au

Last update to data in this list: 2010-05-05

List of Members of the Opposition

Name		Internet
Full	Portfolios	Email
<u>Hon Louise Asher</u>	Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party Deputy Leader of the Opposition Shadow Minister for Urban Water Shadow Minister for Small Business Shadow Minister for Tourism and Major Events Shadow Minister for Women's Affairs	louise.asher@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Ted Baillieu</u>	Leader of the Liberal Party Leader of the Opposition Shadow Minister for the Arts	ted.baillieu@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Robert Clark</u>	Shadow Attorney General Shadow Minister for Finance	robert.clark@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Richard Dalla-Riva</u>	Shadow Minister for Industry and State Development Shadow Minister for Major Projects	richard.dalla-riva@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr David Davis</u>	Leader of the Opposition (Council) Scrutiny of Government Shadow Minister for Health Shadow Minister for Ageing	david.davis@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Hugh Delahunty</u>	Shadow Minister for Youth Affairs Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs The Nationals Whip (Assembly)	hugh.delahunty@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Martin Dixon</u>	Shadow Minister for Education	martin.dixon@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Matthew Guy</u>	Shadow Minister for Planning	matthew.guy@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Peter Hall</u>	Leader of The Nationals in the Legislative Council Shadow Minister for Skills and Workforce Participation	peter.hall@parliament.vic.gov.au

	Shadow Minister for Tertiary Education and Training	
<u>Mr Nicholas Kotsiras</u>	Shadow Minister for Innovation Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Opposition Whip (Assembly)	nicholas.kotsiras@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Ms Wendy Lovell</u>	Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Council) Shadow Minister for Country Victoria Shadow Minister for Housing Shadow Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development Manager of Opposition Business (Council)	wendy.lovell@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Andrew McIntosh</u>	Shadow Minister for Corrections Shadow Minister for Crime Prevention Freedom of Information Shadow Minister for Integrity of Government Manager of Opposition Business (Assembly)	andrew.mcintosh@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Terry Mulder</u>	Shadow Minister for Public Transport Shadow Minister for Roads	terence.mulder@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Hon Dr. Denis Napthine</u>	Shadow Minister for Ports Shadow Minister for Regional Cities Shadow Minister for Racing	denis.napthine@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Michael O'Brien</u>	Shadow Minister for Gaming Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs Shadow Minister for Energy and Resources Shadow Minister for Exports and Trade Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Public Private Partnerships	michael.o'brien@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Ms Jeanette Powell</u>	Shadow Minister for Local Government Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs	jeanette.powell@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips</u>	Assistant Shadow Treasurer (including Transport Accident Commission and WorkCover) Shadow Minister for Community Development	gordon.rich-phillips@parliament.vic.gov.au

	Shadow Minister for Information Technology Shadow Minister for the Aviation Industry Shadow Minister for Federal/State Relations	
<u>Mr Peter Ryan</u>	Leader of The Nationals Shadow Minister for Police & Emergency Services Shadow Minister for Regional and Rural Development Shadow Minister for Bushfire Response	peter.ryan@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mrs Helen Shardey</u>	Shadow Minister for Health	helen.shardey@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Ryan Smith</u>	Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations Shadow Minister for Manufacturing	ryan.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Mr Peter Walsh</u>	Deputy Leader of The Nationals Shadow Minister for Agriculture Shadow Minister for Country Water Resources	peter.walsh@parliament.vic.gov.au
<u>Ms Mary Wooldridge</u>	Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change Shadow Minister for Mental Health Shadow Minister for Drug Abuse Shadow Minister for Community Services	mary.wooldridge@parliament.vic.gov.au

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