

autism
awareness
AUSTRALIA

Empowering
autism families

ANNUAL REPORT
2020 – 2021



About AAA

At Autism Awareness Australia, our goal is simple:

to improve the lives of all Australians on the autism spectrum and the families who love them.

With a national reach of over 130,000 families, we are Australia's leading voice for autism.

Since we began in 2007, we've proudly delivered the majority of our events and programs free to families across the country. We're not a huge organisation and we're not government funded.

Simply put, we are a small team who are committed to improving the lives of all Australians on the autism spectrum, and the families who love them.



Information



Education



Inclusion



Awareness

From our CEO



I'm quite sure no one will easily forget the turmoil of the COVID lock downs, mask mandates and home schooling that we experienced this year.

With all the ups and downs, the AAA team continued to work on our Autism: What Next? Project. The team took the opportunity to work with and film families and colleagues across Australia, often running the gauntlet of opening and closing state borders. Our initial project plan had to be thrown out the window, and so much of the project co-design had to be done over Zoom. The upside to that was that it enabled us to work with so many additional groups in so many places across Australia.

Our AUSTism series returned this year in Sydney and Brisbane but sadly due to COVID, we were unable to hold the event in Melbourne. Hearing the life experiences of people with autism and their families is always such a special evening which brought together our community, who due to the pandemic, haven't had that many opportunities to gather.

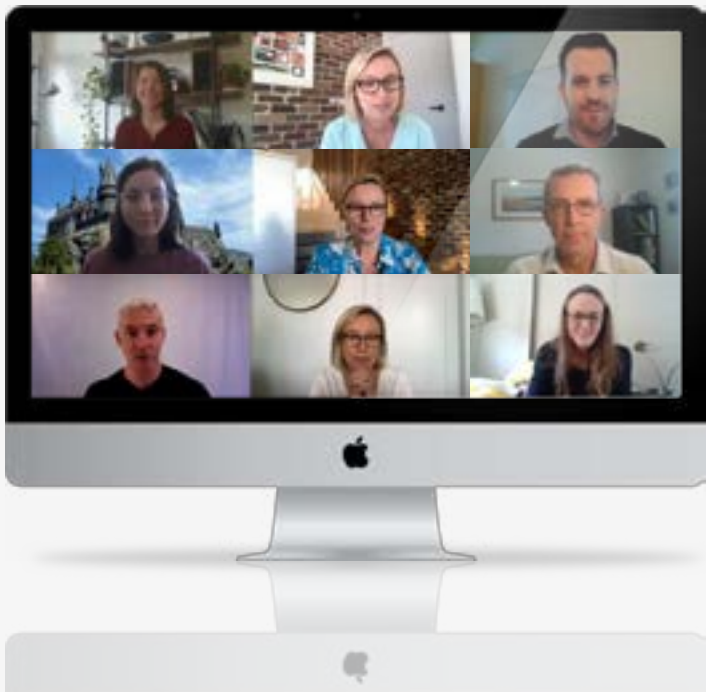
This year we were also delighted to welcome Professor Andrew Whitehouse to our board. Andrew is one of Australia's most respected experts on autism and his insights and contributions to our organisation will be invaluable.

Nicole Rogerson

2020-21 Highlights

Covid-19 video series continued throughout 2020

Throughout the year we expanded our Autism and Coronavirus video series with more interviews and advice from autistic adults, parents/carers and clinicians. Some of the highlights included managing school refusal, top tips for telehealth, looking after your mental health and staying connected.



Dr Andrew Whitehouse joins the AAA board



Andrew Whitehouse is the Angela Wright Bennett Professor of Autism Research and the Director of CliniKids at the Telethon Kids Institute. He is also Professor of Autism Research at The University of Western Australia, Research Strategy Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) and the current president of the Australasian Society for Autism Research.

At the Telethon Kids Institute he leads a large team that seeks to find new and innovative ways to help each and every child on the autism spectrum reach their full potential. Andrew has published over 200 peer-reviewed journal articles and attracted over \$60 million in competitive research grants. He currently presents an internationally syndicated video series called '60 Second Science', which has had over 2 million views. He is an advisor to State and Commonwealth Governments on policies relating to children with Autism Spectrum Conditions, and he chaired the committee that generated Australia's first national guideline for autism diagnosis, and the first national guideline for autism intervention.

Andrew has published one edited book with his twin-brother (Ben), and a popular science book that examined the science behind some of the myths of pregnancy and child development (Will Mozart Make My Baby Smart?). He has also been awarded a Eureka Prize for his research. Prior to coming to the Telethon Kids Institute, Andrew was a Junior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford.

Select Senate Autism inquiry

In 2021 we presented our submission to the Select Committee on Autism. The committee was formed to inquire into and report on the services, support and life outcomes for autistic people. Our submission was a culmination of community feedback and our own experiences.

We look forward to reading their report in mid 2022.



2020-21 Highlights

AWN Survey Report results

In June 2020, Autism Awareness Australia launched a survey to inform the development and design of our digital toolkit, Autism...what next?.

The survey targeted three groups - parents & carers of autistic children, autistic adults with autistic children and autistic adults. Over 950 respondents told us about their diagnosis experiences and what features and information they would want from the toolkit.

This helped us inform this project and make the process easier for families and individuals in the future.



AWN project underway

With funding secured and armed with valuable insights from our survey report, our development of Autism: What Next? is well under way.

- We have collaborations right across the country with over 150 autistic individuals, parents and professionals in four states
- We commenced filming across Australia to create video content for the platform, with over 75 completed topics
- In May 2021 we staged a photoshoot with 18 autistic people and their families, giving us an extensive library of assets to accurately and effectively deliver our content to our audience



2020-21 Highlights

AUSTism in March

After months of waiting, we were thrilled to announce new dates for our AUSTism event series in March 2021.

- Live events in Brisbane and Sydney
- Both events were livestreamed

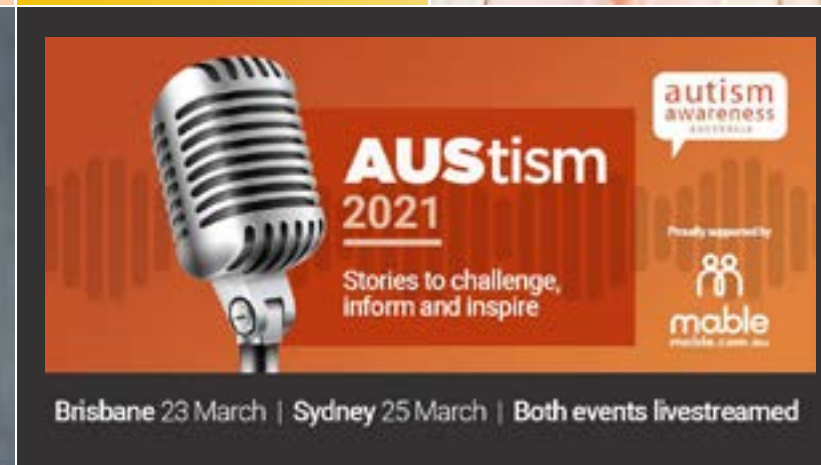
What is AUSTism?

Stories to challenge, inform and inspire... our AUSTism speaker series is an incredible line up of national presenters providing an evening of real stories from real people with real experience of autism – funny, tough, compelling, bittersweet and guaranteed to touch and inspire.

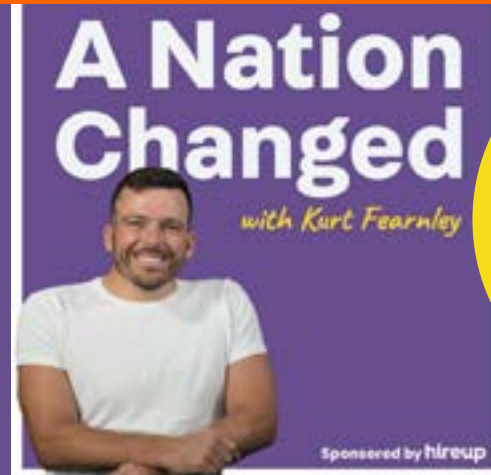
Autism presents differently for every person diagnosed. It's a 'spectrum' of experience, with many wonderful, and sometimes challenging, 'shades' for the people living with it and those who love them.

All Our Speakers:

- **Jocelyn Moorhouse:** Film director, author and autism mum
- **Chloe Maxwell:** Media personality and autism mum
- **Jodi Rodgers:** Love on the Spectrum Sexologist and counsellor
- **Richard and Randa Habelrih:** Autism MATEsCo-founders
- **Karina Holden:** Northern Pictures, Head of Factual (Love on the Spectrum)
- **Barb Cook:** Neurodivergent, author, speaker and keen motorcyclist
- **Jo Abi:** Journalist, TV presenter, writer and autism mum
- **Tim (& Judy) Sharp:** Laser Beak Man Artist with autism, script writer and author
- **Mark Radburn:** Love on the Spectrum Autistic self advocate
- **Michael Whelan:** Host academic, writer, musician and autism advocate



Advocacy & media highlights



We joined the discussion on the A Nation Changed podcast series

JUNE 2021



Our CEO Nicole Rogerson joined the panel on the ABC's Q&A

JUNE 2021



MARCH 2021



JUNE 2021

Our board



Nicole Rogerson **CEO**

Nicole Rogerson is the founding Director of Autism Awareness Australia. She volunteers her time as CEO and is one of the nation's leading advocates for the awareness and understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Nicole is one of the most passionate voices on the challenges of autism in Australia, having hosted numerous seminars, advised the Federal Government and presented to the United Nations. She is frequently asked to speak about autism, with appearances on 60 Minutes, the 7.30 Report, the Today Show, A Current Affair, Today Tonight and Australian Story as well as The Australian, Fairfax newspapers and The Australian Women's Weekly.

Nicole has two sons, the eldest of which is on the autism spectrum.



Sally Collins **Director**

Sally is the Chief Operating Officer at VFMC, Victorian Funds Management Corporation. With 22 years experience in financial services she has lead many large functions within VFMC, NAB, CBA and AXA Australia.

At work, Sally has been a vocal advocate for gender diversity and inclusion and also workplace flexibility. She was recognised as the 2016 recipient of the Financial Executive Women (FEW) Positive Progression of Women award.

It's this combination of Sally's corporate skills and advocacy for tough parenting gigs that brought her to AAA. She's looking forward to learning more about the challenges faced by children on the autism spectrum, and their families, and can't wait to help AAA be as successful as possible in their great work.



Melanie Carrier **Director**

An accomplished Director in Marketing and Advertising, Melanie set her career aside to care for her third child who was diagnosed with autism in 2003. At the time, services were scarce and prognosis was grim. Melanie tirelessly researched best practices for her son.

Melanie and her family have volunteered for events such as Light it up Blue, City2Surf, Surfers Healing and have held their own fundraising boot camps. It was therefore a natural extension for Melanie to join our board and continue to advocate for families like hers, help increase awareness and build upon the many amazing programs and events.

Her passion has always been to support individuals on the spectrum to become independent, fulfilled, contributing members of society.



Tabitha Pearson **Director**

Tabitha is a seasoned executive, with experience across a number of industries, including banking, legal, retail and hospitality.

Tabitha is currently the Chief People and Transformation Officer at G8 Education, a listed Child Care provider. She is an advocate for change and inclusion and is passionate about providing opportunities for those less able or fortunate.

As a mother of 2 boys, Tabitha and her husband are striving to raise amazing men, who are not afraid to speak out for others who cannot do so for themselves. Her youngest son is on the spectrum and she understands the daily challenge that families face, and the need for a supportive community of professionals, friends and family to achieve the best results.



Prof. Andrew Whitehouse **Director**

Prof. Andrew Whitehouse is the Angela Wright Bennett Professor of Autism Research and the Director of CliniKids at the Telethon Kids Institute. He is also Professor of Autism Research at The University of Western Australia, Research Strategy Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) and the current president of the Australasian Society for Autism Research.

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Financials

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income		
INCOME	2021	2020
Donations	127,925	122,525
Training	0	16,450
Special events	7,329	12,924
Sponsorship and grants	633,127	299,601
Interest received	2,669	857
Other income	60,324	0
Total revenue	831,374	452,357
EXPENSES	2021	2020
Advertising and marketing	488	598
Employment benefit expenses	181,091	153,751
Event expenses	78,199	11,739
Event related travel expenses	6099	11,368
Donations collection expenses	1808	2,436
Postage and shipping expenses	137	235
Administration expenses	250,033	135,837
Total Expenses	517,855	315,964
Profit before tax	313,520	136,393
Income tax expense	0	0
Other comprehensive income	0	0
Total comprehensive income for the year	313,520	136,393

Statement of Financial Position		
CURRENT ASSETS	2021	2020
Cash and cash equivalents	533,312	233,461
Prepayments	503	0
Total current assets	533,815	233,461
NON CURRENT ASSETS	2021	2020
Property, plant and equipment	4,621	3,482
Total non current assets	4,621	3,482
Total assets	538,436	236,943
CURRENT LIABILITIES	2021	2020
Trade and other payables	16,120	34,316
Other liabilities	0	0
Employee benefits	25,039	18,869
Total current liabilities	41,159	53,185
Total liabilities	41,159	53,185
NET ASSETS	497,278	183,759
EQUITY	2021	2020
Retained earnings	497,278	183,759
Total equity	497,278	183,759

Statement of Cash Flows		
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	2021	2020
Receipts from donations, sponsorships and grants	761,052	422,127
Receipts from special events and training	7,329	29,374
Miscellaneous income received	60,324	0
Interest received	2,669	857
Payments to suppliers and employees	-528,503	-287,770
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	302,871	164,588
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	2021	2020
Payments from plant and equipment	-3,020	-2,814
Proceeds received on disposal of plant and equipment	0	0
Net cash used in investing activities	-3,020	-2,814
Net increase/decrease in cash and cash equivalents	299,851	161,775
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	233,461	71,686
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	533,312	233,461



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