Therapeutic Residential Placement

2017

An individualised therapeutic intervention service for Victorian clients with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

www.autismmansfield.org.au
Mansfield Autism Statewide Services is a unique, highly regarded independent organisation that delivers innovative educational and training programs for people with ASD from infancy to adulthood.

We empower the individual and their families to live independent, inclusive and productive lives through the provision of individually tailored programs.

Our Understanding

We have a strong emphasis on understanding our families that we work with. Being a strong family centred practice we know how autism can impact individuals and families in unique ways. We understand and respect the diversity that is autism.

Our Aim

To support the development of skills and abilities in children with an ASD through education and training. We aim to increase a child's independence, and participation in family, education and community settings.

History

Mansfield Autism Statewide Services was founded in 1968 by Joan Curtis. This was her founding statement which still has relevance today:

'We have a rich history of helping families with strategies to support their child with autism. The Autistic child’s family are their most important teachers, and we aim to give them the understanding, the confidence and determination necessary for the successful parenting of their child.

The person with autism has the same right to be loved, supported, educated and cared for by the community as anyone else, but this right is not automatically honoured. It is still necessary for his parents and friends to battle ignorance, indifference and misunderstanding in order the obtain for him the services he needs to help him reach his full potential as a human being.

That is our goal and nothing less is enough’

Joan Curtis
Founder, Autism a family Affair.
Residential Term Placement
Specialised Individualised Intervention based in Mansfield, Vic.

Short Term intensive residential and educational therapy at the Mansfield Campus. Clients attend a single school term placement for up to 12 clients aged 6 - 16 years.

Emphasis is placed on life skills, independence and social and emotional development. Exercise and leisure and recreational opportunities all play an important role in the program.

Autism Practitioner In Home Package 12 Visits
Statewide Family Services

Mansfield Autism Practitioners (MaPs) deliver in home family and educational support for clients over a period of 12 months for children and young people aged 2 - 16 years.

MaPs work alongside families to offer an individual plan of support. This plan will vary according to the needs of the family and MaPs will work collaboratively with families to prioritise areas of need.

MaPs can support parents at meetings with outside agencies and assist with networking families to appropriate services and resources.

Family Camps - 6 days
Programs for the whole family

Each year we run a number of Family Camps for families. Camps are designed for the whole family to participate, including siblings. They allow families to have a family holiday; network with other families; learn new information and strategies; re-energise and increase confidence. They are a great opportunity to experience our service's unique culture and focus and work alongside our valued staff. They are often a good stepping stone into our other services. Sibling Camps are also offered from time to time. We aim for families to leave camp with an enhanced sense of optimism.

Respite
School Holiday Respite at our School in Mansfield

Short term respite for up to eight children during school holidays and occasional weekends for children aged 3 - 18 years.

Dookie Campus Secondary School
Specialised ASD Education in Dookie, Victoria

Secondary schooling for high functioning individuals based at the Dookie School Campus. The school caters for 12 clients, providing a comprehensive curriculum that allows clients to explore their potential in a rural learning environment. Physical activity and improving social skills are integral to the daily routine.

Consultancy Services

Professional development, parenting courses, school and family support. We are able to assist a variety of organisations and individuals to have a better understanding of Autism and Best Practice for management. If you require any specific training requirements please call the Mansfield Campus to see if we are able to assist.
All Victorian clients with a diagnosis of autism and aged from 6 to 16 years are eligible to attend our residential placement. Our highly individualised program runs from our school in Mansfield, Victoria. Clients from across the state spend a term living at our residence and attending our school. This 24/7 care model provides a highly supportive and consistent environment structured to reduce anxieties and build capacity to learn new skills.

The 9 week placement runs for a school term of nine weeks. We provide a healthy autism environment that is rich in visuals, routines and schedules.

Our program is designed with activities to reduce anxiety - clients participate in these activities alongside individualised interventions. Our curriculum reflects the skills required for everyday life.

Each term we can have up to eight residential clients and up to four day clients who participate in highly individualised learning programs. We have three classrooms each with a teacher and an assistant.

We encourage families and teachers to spend time in our school during the clients placement to learn first hand strategies that we use.

**Intervention focus**

- Independent Living Skills
  - Toileting
  - Sleeping
  - Eating
  - Personal Care
- Communication
- Sensory Programs
- Social Skills
- Anxiety Management
- Transition Support
- Behaviour Management
- Emotion Regulation
- Health & Wellbeing
Supporting Individual Goals

Developing Person Centred Goals, Outcomes and Strategies

We take a holistic approach when planning interventions by developing a full profile of the client. This allows us to see the whole child and not just the behaviours of concern. Our client profiles highlight the client’s strengths, interests and preferred learning styles. We believe in having strong expectations that individuals with autism can learn and be actively engaged in meaningful activities. Developed in collaboration with families and allied health services our goals are individualised, relevant and extend the child’s skills.

Positive Behaviour Supports

Positive Behaviour Support is a comprehensive approach to assessment, planning and intervention that focuses on addressing the person’s needs, their environment and overall quality of life. We work closely with families to determine the underlying cause for the behaviour. At MASS behaviour is always treated as a form of communication, and we work together to determine the purpose of it. Positive Behaviour Support at MASS will involve:

- Using visuals, routines & schedules
- Changing or making accommodations within the environment
- Helping clients experience and try a range of new activities to help keep them engaged in life
- Ensuring positive relationships are formed
- Developing a Behaviour Support Plan that includes primary prevention and responding to early signs of behaviour

Goal Setting Process

1. Broad goals are developed with families prior to placement
2. The function of any behaviour is established through assessment & observations
3. Behaviour Support Plans are written which includes primary prevention, early response to behaviours and safety
4. Individual profiles are written and discussed with all teachers, assistants & residential staff prior to placement
5. Parents meet with staff to discuss specific goals
6. Individual Learning Plans are developed to reflect specific goals
7. Daily goal record sheets are used to keep track of progress
8. Parents are provided with an end of term progress report
As a service provider it is important for us to measure changes in behaviour. Our priority is to increase a person's quality of life by reducing behavioural and emotional disturbances in our clients. To measure this we use the Developmental Behaviour Checklist - parent & teacher versions (Einfeld & Tongue, 2002). It is an empirically validated tool for measuring change.

We also measure the impact placement has on parental mental health. We measure mental wellbeing using the General Health Questionnaire and Stress Thermometer.

Parent / carers will be asked to complete the checklists prior to placement and six weeks after placement.

Individual outcomes are available on request.