

History of the ACT-NOW Strategy

The Autism Secondary Consultation and Training Strategy (ACT-NOW) is funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and is delivered across Victoria.

Initial funding (July 2005) was to provide training, secondary consultation and information to parents and service providers working with young children (0–6 years) with ASDs and their families.

Training has included: case study presentations, mentoring, journal clubs, master classes, discussion groups and the development of teaching material and training accreditation programmes. A website <http://www.med.monash.edu.au/spppm/research/devpsych/actnow/> has been developed that includes: fact sheets, training calendars, journal club powerpoint presentations and links to reputable ASDs sites.

By December 2009, the ACT-NOW strategy had provided training to more than 11,000 attendees (see reports on the ACT-NOW website).

In response to recommendations of the Autism State Plan the Victorian Government allocated the ACT-NOW strategy a further 4 years funding (Jan 2010 to Dec 2013).

For more information about ACT-NOW please contact:

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ACT-NOW Project

Monash University

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Your ReACT Coordinator can be contacted at:



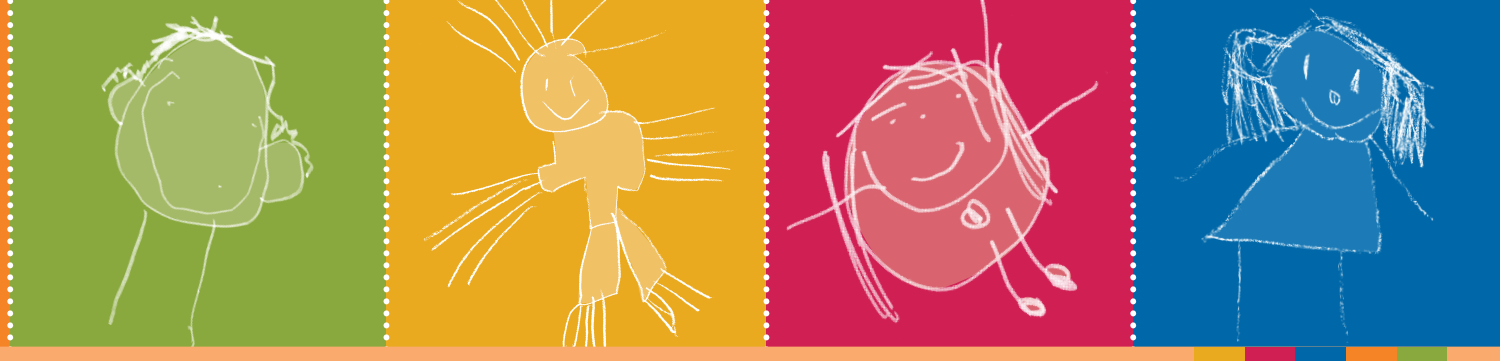
A Monash University, Centre for Developmental Psychiatry and Psychology Project.
Funded by the State Government of Victoria, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development



The Autism Secondary Consultation and Training Strategy (ACT-NOW)



The ACT-NOW Strategy comprises professional development and training, provision of information and resources, community development and secondary consultation.



The ACT-NOW strategy aims to build skills and capacity across each Department of Education and Early Childhood Development region in Victoria to enable the network of regional early childhood service providers to:

- Identify Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)
- Provide an integrated range of evidence based early interventions for young children with autism and their families that will complement and interface with other agencies and services
- Promote understanding of ASDs in the wider community and strategies for working effectively with these children and their families
- Improve linkages between service providers and strengthen partnerships between services and families.

Autism Consultation Team – Now

The ACT-NOW team is based at the Centre for Developmental Psychiatry and Psychology at Monash University. The members of this team have experience and expertise in specialist service provision, community and professional education, service development, support and consultation and family advocacy.

Directors: Prof. Bruce Tonge and Dr. Avril Brereton

Project Manager: Ms Kerry Bull

I.T.: Mr Paul Bower

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Regional Autism Coordination Teams (ReACTs)

A key element of this strategy has been the community development of effective Regional Autism Coordination Teams (ReACTs). A ReACT has been established in each of the 9 DEECD regions. The composition of each ReACT varies between regions given different available service and practitioner profiles but groups usually include representatives from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Pre-School Field Officers, Inclusion Support Facilitators, Specialist Children's Services, Early Childhood Intervention Services, Maternal and Child Health and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, paediatricians, general medical practitioners, regional autism assessment services and parents/consumers.

Each ReACT develops its own training calendar and an action plan reflecting future training needs. The development of ReACTs has facilitated cross-programme partnership and harnessed the good will and interest of a range of views focusing on a common goal.

Each ReACT now meets with the DEECD ReACT Coordinator to:

- Liaise with ACT-NOW staff
- Develop a vision and plan for the coordination and integration of services for children with ASDs and their families
- Identify training and consultation needs of service providers working with young children with ASDs and their families in the region
- Develop a training program that complements and supports existing programs
- Identify information needs that can be provided by ACT-NOW through newsletters, fact sheets, publications, presentations and links to other resources through the website
- Develop linkages between sectors in the region.

A list of the ReACT members can be found on the ACT-NOW website.

If you are interested in becoming a ReACT member contact the coordinator in your region.

