

ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

(Formerly **GRASP** Partner/Spouse Support Group)

ASPIA

*"Mutual acknowledgement and understanding
of the Asperger marriage experience"*

NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2006

HAPPY NEW YEAR to All! and hoping that everyone enjoyed many special moments over the Christmas Season and are now finding a new sense of courage and hope as we enter another year.

NEW VENUE FOR ASPIA SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS!

We have secured a **new**, long-term **venue for ASPIA Support Group Meetings!** The College of Nursing at Burwood has readily agreed to allow us to use a lecture room and community kitchen facilities, including tea and coffee, for just a token cost. The room is on the second floor, modern, carpeted, and will comfortably seat 30 or more. The kitchen is adjacent and has tables and chairs, with a modern clean bench area and a vending machine for other snacks and softdrinks. Restrooms are also just close by. Access to the College will be by use of a security tag or intercom system, and so we need to ask for those attending to **please arrive as close to 2pm as possible** to minimize the number of times we have to open the door or disrupt the meeting. More specific instructions will be posted on the front door so you will know what to do when you get there. If there are any problems, please phone my mobile, 0408 817 828.

Address of Venue:

COLLEGE OF NURSING

14 Railway Parade, BURWOOD (NSW)
Between Shaftsbury Road & Burleigh Street
Just across the road from the railway station
Parking available in Council Carpark at rear,
access via Burleigh & Elizabeth St.
Meeting will be on the 2nd Floor
Gold coin donation

ASPIA will continue to meet on the 1st Saturday of every month in 2006, 2pm – 5pm.

OTHER NEWS

Next Meeting: February 4 Topic: **Managing our own Mental Health.** Field Worker for GROW Ron McCullagh will speak to us about how to keep ourselves mentally and emotionally healthy in our roles as partners. GROW is a support organisation assisting people to stay mentally healthy or recover from breakdown or mental health problems. Brochures & further info available on the day.

Attention Parents & Partners of AS Adults! Sexuality/Social Development Programme for Adults with Asperger's Syndrome. At our last ASPIA meeting we very much enjoyed a visit by Female Psychologist & Speech Pathologist Noel Boycott, along with Psychologist Eleanor Gittins who is already well known to us. Noel, along with Psychologist Harry Mayr, has organised a 10 session Sexuality Programme for AS adults 25 yrs and older, commencing 15 March. The aim of this programme is to help the AS adult gain a better knowledge of sexuality, increase self awareness, enhance self-esteem, improve reading of interpersonal & intimate situations, learn practical coping skills to increase independence and confidence. Enquiries: Noel Boycott on 0402 058 899 or Jane Cotter (02) 8977 8330. Flyer also available from ASPIA upon request.

DVD's of Conference "Understanding the Difference Makes the Difference" in October 2005 are almost ready. DVD No 1 is of Chris & Gisela's two joint-sessions "An Undiagnosed Asperger Marriage" and "The Difference a Diagnosis can Make". DVD No 2 is Chris & Gisela speaking separately, Chris on "The Challenges of Asperger Syndrome" and Gisela on "Strategies for Enabling communication with people with Asperger Syndrome". Cost will be approximately \$35 for one DVD, \$60 for two, plus postage. Those who attended the conference and heard Chris & Gisela speak found their story and suggestions extremely inspiring and practical. Orders for these DVD's are being taken now. Contact ASPIA.

Please remember the research projects mentioned in our Nov/Dec Newsletter.

Saturday 8 July 2006 – Please reserve the date now. We are incredibly privileged to have been able to book **Tony Attwood** for this day. This will be a huge undertaking for our group and much discussion and planning still has to take place, but details will be announced as soon as they are available.

In closing, I am feeling very relieved at securing a new venue for our ASPIA meetings. Burwood has many positive aspects, being so central within Sydney and a major railway station as well. I will be writing to Parramatta RSL Club to thank them for their generosity and accommodation of us since our commencement in June 2003. I'm sure they will be very pleased to know about the progress we have made and the contribution they have made to ASPIA. Notifying other organisations, websites and people about our change of venue is next on my agenda, although I will plan to leave a flyer at the RSL Club in case people still turn up there.

On a personal note, it has become necessary for me to seek full-time employment this year, and I am hoping this will not impact too much on my availability for ASPIA support work. I am still passionate about ASPIA and the support of partners, so my intention is to continue as normal. With a new and more suitable venue, and a sense that ASPIA just needs to continue what it's been doing, I feel things should roll along fairly smoothly. Any suggestions for speakers or topics are always welcomed.

Yours in the "Cause", Carol Grigg.

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