



**June 2023**

## **NEWS & FEATURES**

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Joe enjoying the sun at Myuna Farm

# Message from the CEO and Chair

Greetings everyone!

Rather than our usual combined introduction we are going to team tag today as I want to acknowledge our CEO, Kath Ferry given this will be her last “Pebble” as she is ‘retiring’ as of 30 June this year!



Kath has led SASI for the past 11 years during which time we have seen many improvements and challenges in the ever-changing NDIS world. Under Kath’s watch, we have seen the expansion of services and some significant developments and new service models with a highlight being the redevelopment of our Seaford site along with other site improvements and new program models.

On behalf of us all Kath, we thank you for your dedication and leadership and wish you well in whatever future endeavours you pursue ... whether they are on the golf course, travelling or seeing the Melbourne Football Club winning the next Premiership!

The other significant matter is the Board’s very hard work on securing the future of our services and support for our clients, their families, and carers. As previously advised, after much consideration, we will be joining with Independence Australia Group ([www.independenceaustralia.com.au](http://www.independenceaustralia.com.au)) with effect from 1st July this year. This decision has



not been made lightly but we are confident it will be mutually beneficial and provides the best opportunity for SASI’s viability and growth into the future. Rest assured, SASI will continue to operate its current services under the SASI banner, and we are looking at further service expansion and enhancements moving forward. It is important to understand that, as of 1st July, there will be no change to SASI services, supports or staff however the ‘back-end’ administration will move to IAG Community Solutions so families will see updated paperwork coming their way. Following Kath’s retirement our Operations Director, Melissa Violani, will be leading this work and I would like to acknowledge her expertise and great work to date to ensure our work in the autism space continues to flourish.

# Message from the CEO and Chair



FROM ALL OF US AT SASI  
***Farewell Kath!***



I will let Kath say a few words but again, thanks for your work as CEO and all the best for the future – Rob Macindoe (Chair – SASI Board)

Many thanks Rob, for our kind words....

It has been an honour leading SASI over its recent journey and I am sure it will continue to innovate and make its mark supporting autistic people and their families long into the future.....

Our inaugural SASI Disability Expo was held on Sat 17th June and we were overwhelmed with the community response which was fantastic! Thanks to all the staff, attendees and Community Groups who attended to make it a successful event. Next year's event will be moved to a larger more disability friendly site, with lots more parking. We thank those who provided feedback and we have taken all of that into consideration for planning in 2024.

As Rob noted, and many of you know, I am retiring from SASI on 30 June so moving into a new phase of life.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the past 11 years with SASI, which has changed and grown since the start of the NDIS. SASI has a team of loyal, professional committed staff who go over and above to support our clients and their families which is inspiring !

I would like to thank the Board, Melissa and all SASI staff for their support and passion over my time and I am pleased that Melissa will take on the Chief Operations Director at SASI from 1 July.

I feel confident that merging is the right thing to do to ensure SASI supports continue and expand into the future to our autistic community. The NDIS can be a challenging hill to climb but it what we have to work with and its imperative that SASI continues to provide specialist supports to our clients and their families. Goodbye everyone and I look forward to hearing about SASI's achievements in the future.

Happy reading  
Cheers,

Kath (CEO) & Rob ( Chair)



# Mornington Peninsula **DISABILITY EXPO** Linking Community Together



Our first Mornington Peninsula Disability Expo was a huge success and we want to say a big thank you to all the providers and community members who came along. It was so good to meet lots of new faces and see connections being made throughout the day. We can announce that we are looking to secure a new venue – bigger and better – more accessible to our community.



Georgia leading the SASI team at the Expo

We would also like to thank Benton's Linden Fresh Butcher and Baker's Delight for donating lunch. A big thank you to Bunnings for coming out on the day and running an art activity. A special shout out to DJ Henri for providing some great music in the afternoon, BAM Arts Dance Group and Eric (aka Elvis) for the entertainment and support! SASI's dedicated staff was ready to answer all the questions as well as assist visitors with different activities such as Gaming and Horticulture.



Program Leaders like Sarah shared their expertise with the Expo visitors



# Mornington Peninsula DISABILITY EXPO

Linking Community Together



David, Eric and Brent



It is such a lovely thing to watch community supporting community. It really puts a smile on your face.

We can't wait to start planning next year! BAM Arts have also very kindly provided SASI with some vouchers for a free dance lesson. If any clients would love to get down to BAM Arts and have a dance please get in touch!



Francis, Penny and Georgia



Feedback from exhibitors:

"I just wanted to reach out and thank you for hosting us at your event on Saturday. We had so much fun and made many connections with other providers and the community. Thank you so much for having us."

Feedback from a visitor:

"We've recently moved to the Peninsula and found this expo a fantastic source of information on services around the area. Thank you."

# Support Services

## *Let's Talk About...Autism Hub*



Autism CRC is the independent national source of evidence for best practice in relation to autism across the lifespan.

They provide the national capacity to develop and deliver evidence-based outcomes through collaboration with autistic people, families, professionals, services providers, researchers, and government.

At SASI we are excited that we have been granted Affiliate statues with Autism CRC. Affiliates are the formal network of national and international stakeholder entities – across the autistic and autism communities, professionals, service providers, industry and government – they have been a cornerstone of Autism CRC's business model and capacity to deliver quality outcomes.

As an Affiliate SASI has the rights to:

- participate in and contribute to Autism CRC projects (definition, design, conduct and evaluation) and other activities;
- participate in Autism CRC interest groups, and receive internal network communications

The Autism CRC have some incredible autistic led programs.

### Autistic Identity and Connection Program

The program is for autistic people to connect with other autistic people within the community while developing wellbeing and self-advocacy skills from an autistic perspective.

### Secret Agent Society

A small group program for 8 – 12 year olds valuing neurodiversity and focusing on social emotional development. The program involves Parent Group Meetings, Child Club Meetings, Missions between sessions and computer games.

Georgia Lynch

Support Services Manager



## Conference Of Bright Ideas

I attended a conference on the 16, 17 June in Traralgon and the following are my thoughts of the two days that I attended.

During my City Councilor years and being the Chair of the Economic Development committee, it was suggested to me that “It cost nothing for a Vision”

What is an Entrepreneur?

My definition of an Entrepreneur is a person in the pursuit of opportunity against resources currently controlled.

We need people who think outside the square and are prepared to be a voice in the Community.

This is also required internally as well with people who have creative ideas no matter how small it needs to be discussed and debated. From Little things, Big things can grow.

During the 2 days various ideas were tabled and a great networking event took place This has created discussion on various topics.

- Partnering with like organisations
- Setting up networking groups
- Being a voice to Local Councils and State and Federal Governments
- Leadership development of younger people in our community
- Creating ongoing employment

One great message was “If we don’t encourage change you won’t get growth”

This is a great message to get out there as we now undertake the merge that is happening with our organisation, Onwards and upwards it is a great opportunity for everyone.

David Blythman

Hub Practitioner, Gippsland





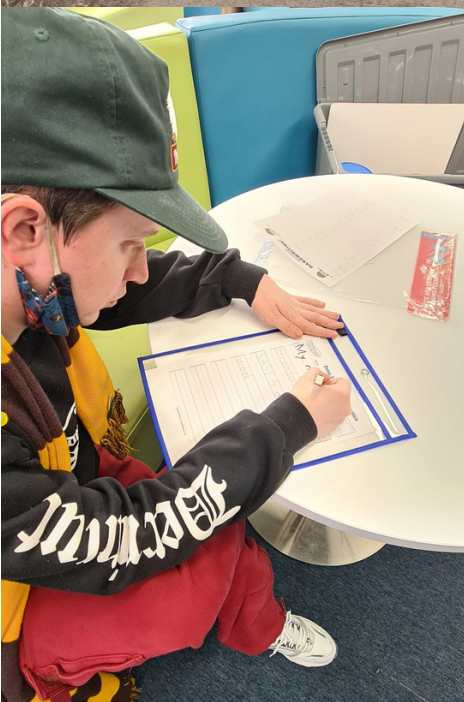
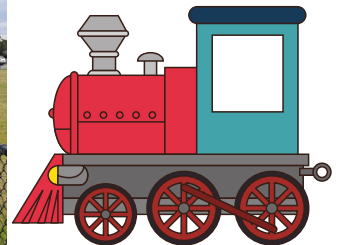
# Latest Adventures



Soaking up nature's wonders while staying active - it's truly invigorating! A peaceful stroll or an exhilarating jog, let us inspire you to make the most of these last few days in the great outdoors



Right: Joe on the train at Myuna farm.  
Below left Helena walks with Xavier and on the right Helena and Todd



SASI's staff are always encouraging the clients to achieve their best - "Your Life, Your Way, Your Choice"  
Here you see Brendan (left) and Ajay (right) practicing their writing skills supported by Shanay





## CREAMY CAULIFLOWER SOUP by Chef Aisha and Chef Malcolm



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 large head of cauliflower
- 3 potatoes
- 1 brown onion
- 1 teaspoon dried tarragon
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1.5 L chicken or vegetable stock
- ½ cup thickened cream
- Salt and pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

1. Chop the onion and fry in the olive oil on a medium heat in a large pot until the onions are translucent.
2. Roughly chop the cauliflower and potatoes then add to the onions.
3. Add the stock and the herbs to pot.
4. Turn the heat down to a gentle simmer and cook covered for 25-30 mins or until the cauliflower and potatoes are soft.
5. Turn the heat off and let the soup cool for about 30mins.
6. Add the thickened cream to the soup and blend with a hand mixer until smooth and creamy.
7. Add salt and pepper to your liking.

## Kath CEO



Kath

How long have you worked for SASI?

11 Years

What does your role at SASI involve?

Providing leadership to the organisation

If given a chance, who would you like to be for a day?

Dr Who (the Jodie Whittaker version!) – I fancy using the Tardis to wing me off to a multitude of different places and times – just think of the havoc I could create?



What TV Show/Movie is your guilty pleasure (yes, time to admit you love it)?

Casablanca is my favourite film (love Humphrey Bogart), and on TV, can't go past Vera – filmed in the area I come from...

Three words that best describe you?

Loyal, Friendly and Fun !

What is the one thing you cannot resist?

A nice Red with some Stilton cheese



What do you do when you are not working?

Theatre, Footy – the mighty Dees, going to the gym and attempting to improve my golf!

Why do you enjoy working at SASI?

I never imagined staying here quite so long! But the people and the passion that staff have for our clients and their families makes it a fabulous place to work and every little step forward our clients achieve is celebrated widely which is fantastic! I will miss it when I move to the retirement gig...



# SCAN ME

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST  
FOR SASI'S CAMPS &  
RECREATION PROGRAMS



SAVE THE DATE 18TH AUGUST @ SEAFORD HUB



# DISCO

SASI Disco is back! Join us for an evening of tunes and refreshments, dancing with your friends

More details to come  
Please email:  
[enquiries@sasi.org.au](mailto:enquiries@sasi.org.au)



Silent Disco option for noise sensitivities



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Want to share your ideas?  
Email us on: [enquiries@sasi.org.au](mailto:enquiries@sasi.org.au)



Supporting the autistic community and people with  
other complex disabilities



Joined forces  
for a stronger future