



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

**Olga Tennison
Autism Research Centre**



VICE CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) does a remarkable job in translating university research into programs that provide profound and tangible benefits for members of the community.

OTARC exemplifies what the University hopes to achieve through its Research Themes, particularly our research program on 'Healthy people, families and communities' – which is world class research with real world impact. The Centre's programs directly support autistic people and their families.

During 2022 OTARC delivered another year of impressive research projects and programs to support early identification and diagnosis, practices and supports, and employment and wellbeing for autistic people. OTARC researchers also contributed to national policy development including the Senate Select Committee on Autism and the guidelines for supporting learning, participation, and wellbeing of autistic children and their families in Australia.

Important consultation and planning work was undertaken during 2022 to define the expanded scale of OTARC's research programs following the extraordinary gift left to the University in the estate of the Centre's generous benefactor, Olga Tennison. OTARC is well placed to continue developing programs to improve social, economic, and community participation and inclusion for autistic people for many years to come.

I would like to recognise the incredible contribution made to OTARC and autism research globally by the outgoing OTARC Director, Professor Cheryl Dissanayake. No-one has done more than Cheryl to bring to life Olga's desire to enrich the lives of autistic people and support their families and carers. I am also very pleased that the University has recruited an exceptional leader, Professor Alison Lane, to take over as OTARC's director.

I congratulate the staff, supporters, and partners of the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre on their achievements during 2022.

Professor John Dewar AO
Vice-Chancellor

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

We spent 2022 re-imagining our work at OTARC to honour Olga's legacy following receipt of her extraordinary bequest. Her gift is now endowed and held in perpetuity to support our work.

Together with Deputy Director, Professor Alison Lane, Strategic Consultant, Jan Ferguson, AO, and our team, we consulted widely to ensure that our revised Strategic Plan will be current, relevant, and meaningful to our internal and external stakeholders. We also considered the Victorian State Autism Plan and the 2022 Report from the Standing Senate Committee on Autism in developing a suite of goals to create knowledge through research and to create impact through evidence informed practice; these will drive our work from 2023 to 2028. Along with revising our Strategic Plan, we also revised our functional and operational structure, particularly following the need to expand our Centre not just in scope but also in personnel to ensure that our goals are both achievable and impactful. We are very grateful to our Advisory Committee and a number of 'critical friends' in assisting us on this journey. Our revised Strategic Plan is available via our website.

2022 saw the much-awaited return of in-person meetings and conferences, with OTARC making significant contributions to both the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) annual conference in Austin Texas in May, and the Australasian Society for Autism Research Conference at the Deakin Waterfront Campus in Geelong. These were very well received, especially Professor Lane's Keynote at the latter meeting. INSAR will be held at the Melbourne Convention Centre in 2024, and I have accepted the invitation from its Board to be the Conference Chair. This will be the first time INSAR has been held in the Asia Pacific region.

I have been privileged to serve as the OTARC Founding Director for 15 years. Professor Alison Lane has taken up this position as of January 2023. I occupy the Olga Tennison Endowed Chair in Autism Research.

Lastly, 2022 was a remarkable year for me, personally. I was honoured with an Order of Australia (AM), being in the last cohort of the Queen's Birthday Honours! I was also elected as Fellow of the Academy of Social Science, Australia (FASSA). I want to acknowledge that receipt of these very 'individual' awards would not have been possible without my many research collaborators and the support of the La Trobe University leadership, all primarily enabled by Olga's initial donations which led to the creation and establishment of OTARC.

Professor Cheryl Dissanyake

Director & Chair, Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre



\$45 MILLION GIFT ENABLES LIFE-CHANGING LEGACY TO CONTINUE

In March 2022, OTARC became the beneficiary of one of Australia's largest single donations to a tertiary education provider. This gift was the culmination of more than a decade's involvement from our benefactor and namesake, the late Olga Tennison AO.

La Trobe University Vice Chancellor Professor John Dewar AO said the extraordinary donation was testament to Mrs Tennison's passion for building a better world.

"Olga was an inspirational and compassionate person who directed so much of what she had – both socially and financially – to ensuring every child on the autism spectrum could thrive," Professor Dewar said.

"It was through her vision, many years ago, that we were able to establish this world-class research centre which has already had an enormous impact in the community – not just in Australia, but globally."

Professor Dewar said the gift demonstrates the potential for any university to attract a significant donation.


"If a university's research is impactful enough, and aligns with the passions of a donor – as it did in this case – it can lead to quite extraordinary outcomes," Professor Dewar said.

Founding Director and Chair of OTARC Professor Cheryl Dissanayake said, unlike many major Australian donors and philanthropists, Olga was not from intergenerational family wealth with a long history of philanthropic giving.

"Olga lived a life without extravagance so the money she and her husband accrued over a lifetime could be put to use in a significant, lasting and meaningful way," Professor Dissanayake said.

"We are so proud that Olga had such a strong belief in OTARC's work, and look forward to honouring her legacy by producing more impactful research in this area for many years to come."





OLGA'S LEGACY ENABLES AN EXPANDED FOCUS ON THE BIG QUESTIONS

As a result of the generous bequest left by Mrs Olga Tennison, OTARC was able to devote a large part of 2022 to revisiting our mission and planning for an expanded team and remit. A crucial part of this process was involving our stakeholders from community groups, Autistic-led organisations and fellow autism researchers in consultations on our future direction. Representatives from the following groups and organisations were invited to provide their thoughts on the priorities for re-imagining OTARC in light of the significant increase in operating funds enabled by the bequest.

ICAN Network
Reframing Autism
Different Journeys
Autism Alliance
Amaze
Australian Advisory Board on
Autism

Australasian Autism Research
Council
Yellow Ladybugs
Aspergers Victoria

We also interviewed Australian and international autism researchers, key Autistic advocates, La Trobe University disability researchers, and La Trobe operational and research support staff. With such a diverse group of stakeholders consulted, the themes that emerged from these interviews were equally diverse. Many stakeholders encouraged OTARC to take the unique opportunity to think broadly, and to take a courageous stance on controversial issues.

MISSION

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Our mission is to enrich
the lives of Autistic
people, their families
and their carers through
high-quality scientific
research, innovation
and translation.

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HOW OTARC EMBEDS LA TROBE UNIVERSITY'S CULTURAL QUALITIES

We seek to ensure a culture where access, diversity and inclusivity are recognised, valued and celebrated. The creation of an inclusive and supporting workplace is our collective responsibility.

We recognise the importance of engaging with the communities we serve, including Autistic people, their families, carers, donors and researchers.

Families and carers play an essential role in the lives of Autistic individuals and are seeking resources and support to better understand and support their loved ones. We are committed to working with these communities to ensure that they have access to the latest research, information, and resources they may need to help them to navigate their lives. We are committed to keeping all our stakeholders, including our generous donors, informed about our progress towards our mission.

Autistic people are experts in their own experiences and have a unique perspective that can provide valuable insights into research and policy. We are committed to actively involving them in our work and providing a platform for them to share their voices and perspectives. We believe that this collaboration is essential to creating practical and meaningful research that has a positive impact in Autistic lives.

Research is a collaborative effort that reaches beyond the boundaries of individuals and organisations. We strive to create opportunities for dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration that foster trust and respect throughout the field of autism research.

We take our cultural qualities seriously
These are:



Connected

Connecting the students
and communities we serve
to the world outside.



Innovative

Tackling the big issues of our time
to transform the lives of our
students and society.



Accountable

Striving for excellence in everything
we do, holding each other to account,
and working to the highest standards.

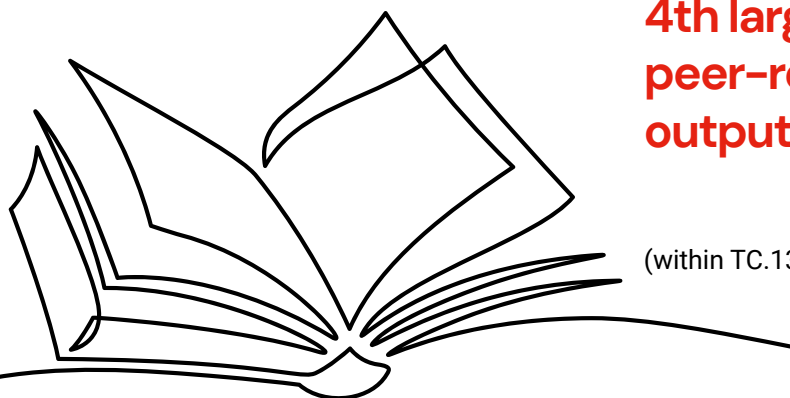


Care

We care about what we do and why
we do it, because we believe in
the power of education and research
to transform lives and global society.

By embodying these values, we will
strengthen La Trobe in its quest to make
a positive impact on the world.

AT A GLANCE



**OTARC was La Trobe's
4th largest source of
peer-reviewed research
outputs**

(within TC.139; SciVal analytics).

59%
OTARC

41%
Other La Trobe

Our members (researchers and affiliates) produced 59% of La Trobe's 2022 publications in the SciVal topic cluster 'Pervasive Child Development Disorders; Autistic Disorder; Child' (TC.139).

TOPIC CODE	TOPIC	LA TROBE WORLD RANKING	FWCI
T.1597	Autism; Children with Developmental Disabilities; Caregivers	6th (48%)*	1.31
T.18425	Autism Spectrum Disorder; Asperger Syndrome; Coping Behavior	8th (88%)*	1.55
T.4324	Autism; Autistic Disorder; Toddlers	11th (91%)*	4.00

* Percentage OTARC publications.

Please note the language in the topic cluster is derived from SciVal
OTARC staff and associates (Affiliates, honoraries, adjuncts), La Trobe University rankings in the top 20 only (SciVal, 2019-2022)
FWCI - Field Weighted Citation Index

24 research students

32 publications

61 conference presentations, invited talks and posters

274 media appearances and mentions

547 research paper mentions (Altmetric)

www.latrobe.edu.au/otarc

49,156 Page views, 18,931 Users

Most visited page - The Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACS) tool



IN THE MEDIA

Our research papers were directly mentioned in the media **547** times.

TOP OUTPUTS FOR 2022 BY ALTMETRIC SCORE



Diagnostic Accuracy of the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance-Revised With Preschool Tool for Early Autism Detection in Very Young Children



Conceptualising Autistic Masking, Camouflaging, and Neurotypical Privilege: Towards a Minority Group Model of Neurodiversity

January

Cheryl Dissanayake

"Autism Science Foundation Launches First-of-Its-Kind 'Profound Autism' Funding Mechanism"
Cision PR Newswire; ABC 27; Your Basin; News Channel 10; Fox 8 WVUE and others totalling 42 News stories

February

Amanda Richdale

"Cracking autism's sleep conundrum"
Spectrum News
By Chloe Williams

Cheryl Dissanayake

"Alarming Rates of Self-Harm in Adults With Autism Expose a Broken System"
Medscape Medical News
By Kelli Whitlock Burton

March

Announcement of Olga Tennison's bequest:

- Australian Financial Review online (subscription required)
– interview with Prof. Dissanayake and Stephen May
- ABC TV Breakfast
– interview with Prof. Dissanayake
- ABC Radio Melbourne Breakfast
– interview with Prof. Dissanayake
- Channel 7 Afternoon News
– full interview with Prof. Dissanayake
- Channel 7 Nightly News
– brief interview with Prof. Dissanayake

- 6PR Radio Perth
– interview with Prof. Dissanayake

Katy Unwin

Guest on Einstein A Go-Go podcast
Interview by Dr Shane Huntington
<https://www.rrr.org.au/explore/podcasts/einstein-a-go-go/episodes/5709-diagnostic-errors-and-modifying-space-for-autistic-learners>

Nancy Sadka, Josephine Barbaro, Melissa Gilbert

"New tools for early autism detection"
Openforum.com.au
<https://www.openforum.com.au/new-tools-for-early-autism-detection/>

Nancy Sadka, Josephine Barbaro, Melissa Gilbert

"Highly accurate tool for the detection of autism as early as 12 months of age"
"Locally developed screening tool detects autism at 11 months"
"World's First Highly Accurate Early Screening Tool for Autism – Detection As Early as 12 Months of Age"
La Trobe News; MedicalXpress; SciTechDaily; Neurology Advisor; MPR; Physicians Weekly and others totalling 160 news stories (example titles above) and a TV and radio potential reach of 1.6M



This word cloud was generated using the titles of news articles for the paper "Diagnostic Accuracy of the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance-Revised With Preschool Tool for Early Autism Detection in Very Young Children".

Josephine Barbaro

"Melbourne autism researchers develop world's most effective early screening tool for children"
ABC News online; Australian Business Journal
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-12/autism-diagnosis-effective-early-screening-latrobe-university/100905128>

Josephine Barbaro

"Blueprint for radical redesign of care for autistic children published"
The National Tribune; Medical Express; University of Manchester News; Wingo-7

April**OTARC**

"Australian universities were philanthropy's winners in March"
F&P Magazine

Cheryl Dissanayake

Guest on Einstein a Go-Go podcast
By Dr Shane Huntington

Melissa Gilbert (quoted)

"Why is autism underdiagnosed in women?"
Upstart.net.au
By Savannah Pocock

Josephine Barbaro, Melissa Gilbert, Nancy Sadka

"Early detection of autism in infants, toddlers, and preschoolers"
InSight Plus, Medical Journal of Australia
<https://insightplus.mja.com.au/2022/15/early-detection-of-autism-in-infants-toddlers-and-preschoolers/>

Jane Mantzalas, Amanda Richdale, Cheryl Dissanayake

"A conceptual model of risk and protective factors for Autistic burnout"
MetaFilter.com

Josephine Barbaro (quoted)

"Australia develops 'world's most effective' autism screening tool"
By Dr Anna Samecki
News GP
Royal Australian College of GPs

May

Josephine Barbaro & Melissa Gilbert (quoted)
"New shift in autism research helping people with autism thrive"

The City Journal.net

By Rebecca Kazmierczak

Darren Hedley (quoted)

"The Great Divide between Disability & Mental Health"

Link Disability Magazine, Apr/May

By Kymberly Martin

June**Cheryl Dissanayake (mentioned)**

"It's about time: 10 women who finally get the honours they deserve"

By Billie Eder et al

The Sydney Morning Herald

Cheryl Dissanayake (mentioned)

"Recognition due for these leaders in their fields"
The Age

July**Darren Hedley (quoted)**

"Suicidal Behaviors and Prevention in Autistic Youth"

By Cindy Lentz

AUTISM ADVOCATE Parenting Magazine

Josephine Barbaro

"Better screening for autism"
Interview by Tegan Taylor
ABC Radio, Ockham's Razor
<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/ockhamsrazor/better-screening-for-autism/13973060>

August**Cheryl Dissanayake**

"Love me, love my disorder: clock TikToking on mental health"

The Australian

By Ellie Dudley

Jane Mantzalas, Amanda Richdale, Jennifer Lowe, Cheryl Dissanayake

"Autistic Burnout: Causes and Prevention Tips"
Autism Parenting Magazine

By Yolande Loftus

<https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com/burnout-autism-prevention-causes/>

Cheryl Dissanayake (quoted)

"Inside the complex world of 'Dr TikTok'"
The Australian Web Stories

By Ellie Dudley

Josephine Barbaro

"Ep85: The ASD Odyssey- a reply"

Pomegranate Health podcast
The Royal Australasian College of Physicians

September

Cheryl Dissanayake

*"Kurt Fearnley, Rebecca Falkingham, Bill Shorten
have NDIS work cut out"*
The Canberra Times

November

Cheryl Dissanayake

"La Trobe researchers shine"
"Autism researcher elected to Academy"
Miragenews.com

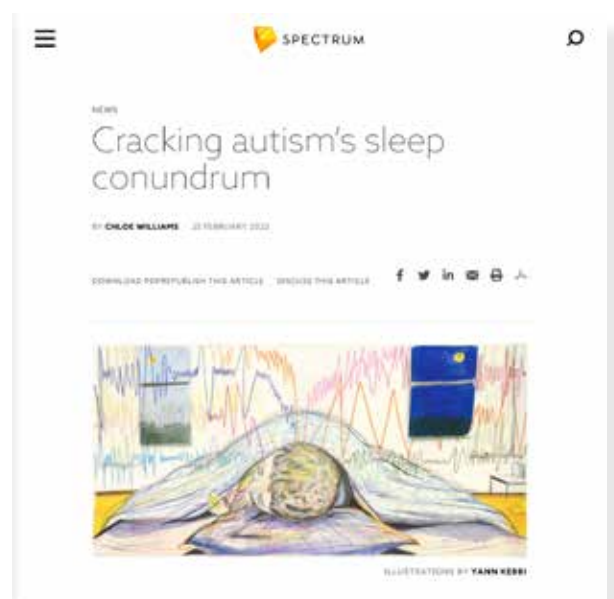
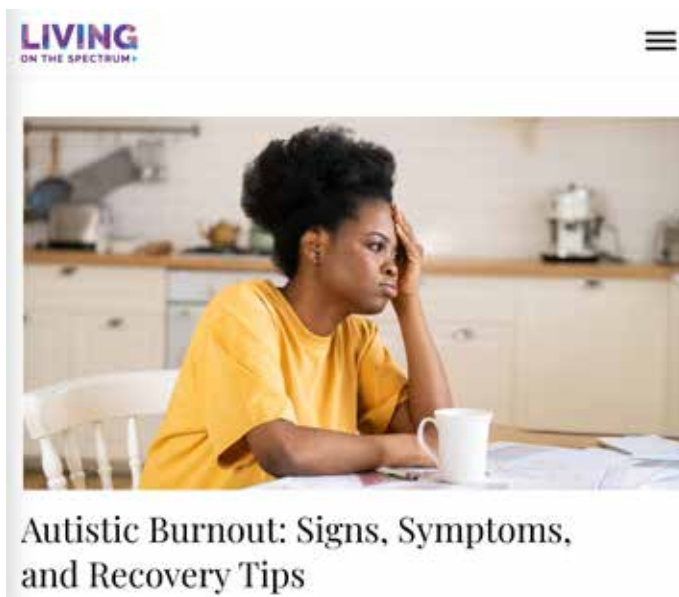
Josephine Barbaro

*"How to talk to your child about their autism
diagnosis – the earlier, the better"*
The Conversation; Rappler; Foreign Affairs
New Zealand; Newsbreak; La Trobe News;
MedicalXpress; Yahoo! News

December

Simon Bury, Alex Haschek, Darren Hedley

*"Spotted around the web: Autism research from
Iran, South Africa and Australia"*
Spectrumnews.com
By Jill Adams, Laura Dattaro, Peter Hess



CULTURAL QUALITIES

CARE



Generosity of spirit drives our actions and interactions.

The quality of care and generosity is exemplified by our late benefactor and carries through to the way that we give back to the communities we serve – and inspires them to give in turn.

PANEL WITH 50% AUTISTIC MEMBERSHIP PRODUCES REPORT ON SUICIDE PREVENTION

Recommendations from the 2021 Australasian Society for Autism Research “Health, Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention in Autism” Conference and Roundtable (led by Associate Professor Darren Hedley) were compiled into a report and policy brief.

An international panel with 50 percent Autistic representation convened by ASfAR released its findings for eliminating suicide within the Autistic community. The final report was published and distributed to stakeholders in June 2022.

- Raising awareness of the increased suicide risk within the Autistic community.
- Identifying gaps in research and practice.
- Identifying solutions and a course of action to reduce suicide behaviour and death by suicide within the Autistic community.

The Report and Policy Brief are a call to action for international governments and organisations to take a leadership position and address the problem of suicide and suicide-associated distress within the Autistic community.



2,002 PAGE VIEWS

253 DOWNLOADS

TRANSLATED INTO
PORTUGUESE



CONFERENCE AND ROUNDTABLE SPONSORS



ADVOCACY

POLICY SUBMISSIONS CONTRIBUTE TO
UPSKILLING HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
AND TEACHERS NATIONALLY

National Guideline for supporting the learning,
participation, and wellbeing of autistic children and
their families in Australia.



OTARC and the Margot Prior Autism Centre submitted their feedback on the draft of this Guideline, which focuses on practitioners delivering supports in community and clinical settings. Dr Nancy Sadka, OTARC Senior Research Associate, made a significant contribution to the development of this guideline as an author and a member of the working group.

The feedback included comments on:

- The guiding principles
- Goal setting
- Selecting and Planning Supports
- Delivering Supports
- Outcomes, Quality, and Safeguarding

OTARC RECOMMENDATIONS AND INITIATIVES MENTIONED IN SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUTISM

The three recommendations included in the Committee's final report were:

1. Develop a National Autism Strategy
2. Improve the capacity of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
3. Prioritise autism research as part of the National Disability Research Agenda.

Our two research-to-practice initiatives included in the Senate Final Report were:

1. A national rollout of OTARC's training program for maternal and child health nurses to improve early identification of autism.
2. Promoting the ASDetect mobile application by parents, health practitioners and educators.

DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING MATERIALS ON SENSORY PROCESSING CHALLENGES FOR QUEENSLAND TEACHERS

Professor Alison Lane and colleague Dr Carl Leonard (University of Newcastle) developed training and decision-making framework materials for use by teachers and therapists in schools to support students with sensory processing challenges. This work was completed for the Queensland Education Department.



Colin Brooks MP and Anthony Carbinas MP visited the Children's Centre in April 2022



Associate Professor Josephine Barbaro and Dr Nancy Sadka
at the Maternal Child and Family Health Nurses Australia conference,
September 2022

CULTURAL QUALITIES ACCOUNTABLE



Being honest, ethical and considered, and honouring the valuable gift of personal information from participants.

GOVERNANCE – ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The OTARC Advisory Committee's role is to:

- facilitate industry, government and non-profit sector engagement and partnerships;
- facilitate the provision of independent input and guidance on the external environment;
- and regularly review progress in the implementation of OTARC's strategic plan.



Professor Marylin Anderson (Chair)
Emeritus Professor,
Office of Life Sciences



Professor Cheryl Dissanayake
Founder, Director and Chair of Olga
Tennison Autism Research Centre



Professor Alison Lane
Deputy Director of OTARC



Professor Suzanne Fraser
Director, Australian Research
Centre in Sex, Health and Society
(ARCSHS)



Professor Stephen Kent
Dean & Head of School of
Psychology and Public Health



Professor Richard Gray
Assoc Provost
(Res and Industry Engagmt)
Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor



Mr Stephen May
Director, Alumni and Advancement



Mr Roger Foenander
Senior Finance Executive



Jim Mullan
AMAZE CEO



Ms Penny Robinson
Autism Advocate;
Lecturer, Monash University

INVITED TALKS

Abdullahi, I. The role of a Somali Mother during her child's Autism Journey. My Daughter and I, Eid Celebration. East African Women's Foundation of Victoria. May 6.

Abdullahi, I. Career path options within the world of autism research, Videos for INSAR Early Career Committee. INSAR On-Demand (autism-insar.org).

Barbaro, J. Identifying autism via developmental surveillance from infancy to preschool: why repeated monitoring is critical. For the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health, Neurodevelopment research program seminar, Monash University. October 21.

Barbaro, J. Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism within the Maternal Child and Family Health Service. Maternal Child and Family Health Nurses Australia Conference, Canberra. September 2.

Barbaro, J. **Keynote address:** Developmental surveillance for the early identification of autism from infancy to preschool using the SACS and ASDetect tools. International conference on Neurodevelopmental Disorders, October 27.

Barbaro, J. **Keynote address:** Early identification of autism using developmental surveillance from infancy to preschool: the SACS and ASDetect tools. Child and Adolescent Research Network Conference, November 9.

Barbaro, J. **Keynote address:** Early identification of autism from infancy to preschool using professional observations and parental report: Developmental surveillance using the SACS and ASDetect tools. 2022 Hunter New England Local Health District Psychology Conference, November 25.

Barbaro, J. The Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACS) tool for early autism identification. NAMESTE Plenary Meeting Online, December 16.

Barbaro, J. **Panel contribution:** The Future of NDIS Health and Education panel, Adelaide, November.

Barbaro, J. Early identification of autism from infancy to preschool and considerations for children with hearing and vision loss. Next sense, September 14.

Barbaro, J. Early identification of autism from infancy to preschool using the SACS. Australian Physiotherapy Association, October 6.

Bury, S.M. Supporting Sustainable Employment of Autistic People – Work from the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre. Centre Spotlight Presentation: 4th Annual Autism at Work Research Workshop (US), May 16, Online.

Dissanayake, C. Naturalistic Developmental Behavioural Approaches for Very Young Children diagnosed with Autism. Perinatal and Early Childhood Mental Health ECHO, Goulburn Valley Health. June 21, 2022

Lane, A.E. **Keynote address:** Making sense of sensory experiences in autism: the path forward. Australasian Society for Autism Research, Geelong, Australia.

Lane, A.E. Sensory subtypes in autism: State of the evidence & future directions. Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge, UK.

Lane, A.E. Sensory subtypes in autism: State of the evidence & future directions. Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, Kings College London, UK.

Lane, A.E. Sensory subtypes in autism: State of the evidence & future directions. School of Kinesiology, University of Wisconsin, United States.

Lane, A.E. Evidence-based occupational therapy in Autism. Guest speaker for Ability Partners.

Lane, A.E. Navigating practice decisions for children with sensory processing difficulties. Guest speaker for Melbourne City Mission.

Richdale, A.L. Autism, Mental Health and Sleep for Mental Health Foundation Australia

Richdale, A.L. Sleep problems and Autistic children for Western Autistic School parents, virtual.

Richdale, A.L. Sleep Difficulties, Mental Health and Behaviour in Children and Adolescents. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Forum, online.

Sadka, N. Navigating the NDIS. Presentation for Take Charge Psychology.

Unwin, K. Sensescaping: Understanding the Impact of the Sensory Landscape on Autistic Individuals. Mental Health Research Interest Group (online). Invited by Prof Richard Gray.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

This year saw a significant expansion in the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACS) training program, which was delivered originally to Victorian Maternal and Child Health Nurses in 2019. Additional cohorts of trainees in 2022 covered nursing and midwifery students, health practitioners in four states as well as health services internationally. Many individual practitioners, including psychologists and other allied health professionals, and developmental paediatricians attended these events.

The training was offered in various formats to cater for the needs of corporate cohorts (where a group of professionals from one organisation received a dedicated session), and community groups (where members of various organisations could enrol in a public event).

In a first for the Asia-Pacific region, a group of staff from Autism New Zealand were trained to administer the SACS training to Early Childhood professionals across New Zealand under a 'train the trainer' model.

Training clinicians in telehealth

Dr Melissa Gilbert and Assoc. Prof. Josie Barbaro worked on testing the feasibility and acceptability of SACS-R administered by telehealth. The study involved both parents, and clinicians (who had previously been trained in face-to-face administration of SACS-R).

- South Western Sydney Local Health District – Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust

Training for student MCHNs at the following universities

- La Trobe University
- RMIT University
- Federation University

Academics/research centres

- University of Queensland Child Health Research Centre
"Learning through Everyday Activities with Parents" study
- University of Manchester / Manchester Academic Health Science Centre, May & June.

Health services

- Northern Sydney Local Health District Professional Development Day
- Perinatal and Early Childhood Mental Health ECHO, Goulburn Valley Health
- Queensland Department of Health

COURSES ON OFFER



SACS-Revised self-paced online training



SACS-R + Preschool group training



SACS-R + Preschool virtual community training



Supporting a Neurodiverse Workforce

SACS videos viewed 2,600 times. Total time watched 18 days, 7 hours, 13 minutes, 31 seconds.

Training for employees and managers on mental health and wellbeing

We continued to offer the Supporting a Neurodiverse Workforce online course, an 11-module course covering various aspects of creating autism-friendly workplaces.



Vice-Chancellor Prof. John Dewar met with Neurodiversity Project Manager Beth Radulski about embracing neurodiversity across the University

CULTURAL QUALITIES

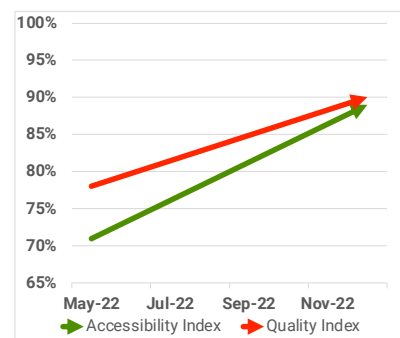
INNOVATIVE

“

Creating a path for science to positively impact the lives of Autistic people and their families.

OTARC WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

In 2022, the OTARC team revamped our website with an all-new look and updated content. La Trobe University also introduced a new website tool (Siteimprove) which helps to make our website more accessible (18% improvement) and provide a better experience for our readers (12% improvement). The accessibility score measures how well a site performs against Siteimprove accessibility checks. Industry benchmarks for education are approximately 80%, and as shown on the graph at right, the OTARC website has a score of 90%.



OTARC RESEARCHERS WELL-REPRESENTED AT

THE AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR AUTISM RESEARCH (ASFAR) CONFERENCE, GEELONG

Staff and students presented on a diverse range of topics at the ASfAR conference in Geelong, Victoria, with 13 presentations in all. The topics covered included: diagnostic issues, supports for children under the NDIS, sensory issues, camouflaging, sleep, employment, and mental health. Professor Alison Lane presented a Keynote on making sense of sensory features in autism, which was very well-received. A notable feature mentioned by many conference attendees was the high proportion of Autistic attendees, both researchers and advocates; and the inclusion of a dedicated topic stream on Participatory Research, which is rightly attaining greater prominence.



CULTURAL QUALITIES CONNECTED



Actively connecting high-quality science with the communities we serve

We connect locally, regionally, nationally and globally through our relationships with industry and community partners, our extensive network of research collaborations, our program of seminars, and through the interdisciplinary nature of our research.

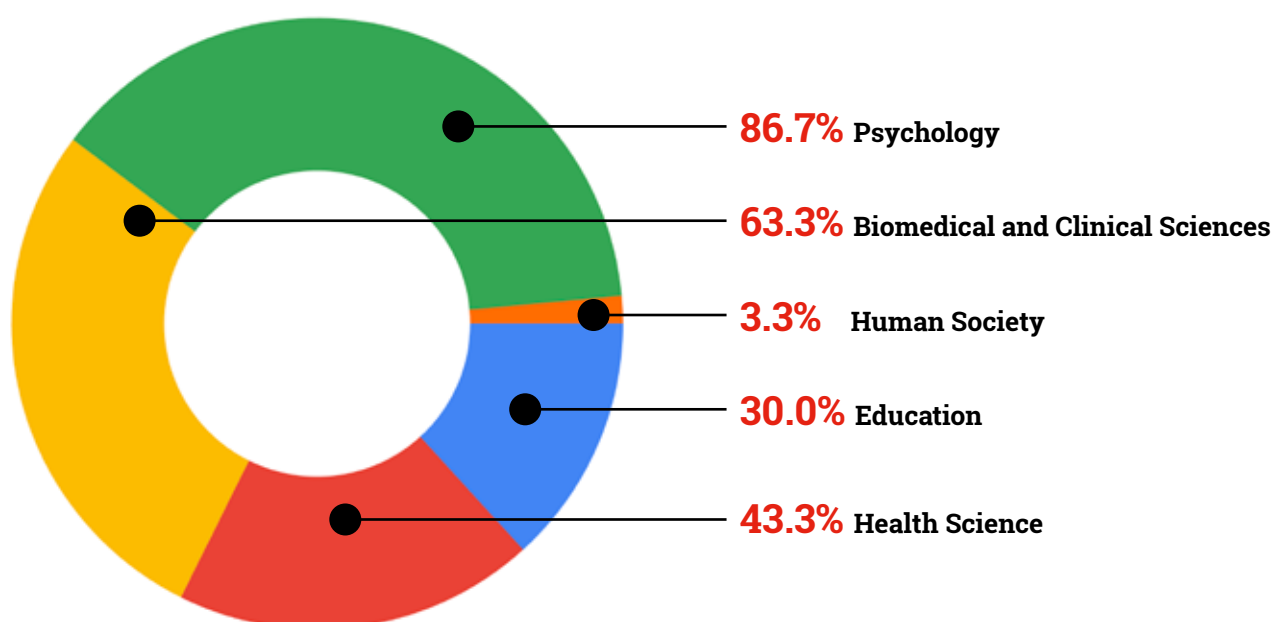
MALAYSIAN PHD SCHOLAR VISITS OTARC AS PART OF HIS PH.D. INTERNSHIP

Mohd Syazwan Zainal is a lecturer at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Ph.D. Scholar in Special Education Program from Universiti Sains Malaysia. Syazwan completed his internship program with OTARC as part of an initiative of the Australian Department of Education in collaboration with the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education and the Academy of the Humanities (AAH). The internship program provided Syazwan with the opportunity to be mentored by Associate Professor Darren Hedley and Associate Professor Jennifer Spoor.



DISCIPLINE CONNECTIONS (SCIVAL 2019–2022): BUILDING CONNECTIONS ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Publications by OTARC Researchers cover a broad range of sub-disciplines, reflecting the complex nature of autism. The sub-disciplines under which OTARC publications have been classified in 2022 appear in the chart below.



MARGOT PRIOR AUTISM INTERVENTION CENTRE

The Margot Prior Autism Intervention Centre continued to provide intensive early autism supports within early education and care settings to children and families throughout the past 12 months. In 2023 we have expanded our early Autism supports to children's local community early learning centres. This program facilitates community partnerships, opportunities to build capacity in our community early learning centres, and more closely aligns with National Disability Insurance Scheme's overarching goals of family choice and control. We are actively working towards expanding this program, with a view to providing early autism supports in rural and regional Victoria in the future.





Professor Cheryl Dissanayake attended the INSAR Global Senior Leaders Meeting, September 2022



Masters student Kate Gore (centre) with supervisors Dr Melissa Gilbert (left) and Associate Professor Josephine Barbaro

INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

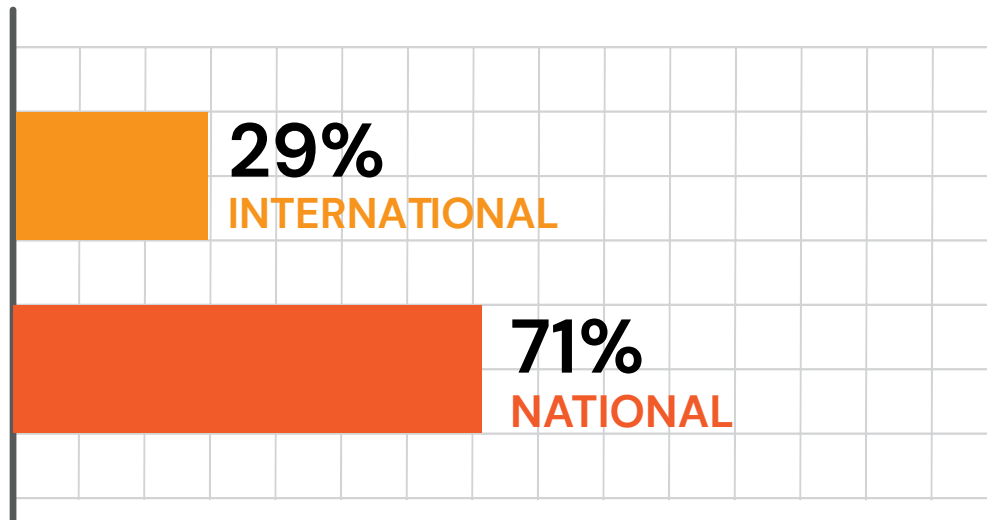
In order to achieve our goal of translating research into practice, we work with organisations whose missions extend beyond academia. These include service providers, mental health clinics, government departments, advocacy bodies and corporations. In some cases we work directly with one organisation, while in others we bring together expertise from many industry and community partners to achieve a common goal. Our partnership with the Department of Education Queensland is an example of working directly with a single organisation. This work embedded evidence-informed practices into service via the production of resources to help teachers cater to the sensory needs of Autistic students.

The production of a policy recommendation document on mental wellbeing and suicide prevention was a collaborative effort involving many organisations. These included psychology clinics The Emotions Clinic and The Melbourne Clinic, as well as service providers in Autism and neurodiversity advocacy group Untapped. We also collaborated with Amaze and Different Journeys on recommendations in the Senate Select Committee on Autism.



COLLABORATORS

Our list of collaborators includes all co-authors on publications, conference presentations and grants and student co-supervision.



AUSTRALIA

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

Beattie, E.
Bent, C. A.
Berends, D.
Bhopti, A.
Bigby, C.
Canton, E.
Capes, K.
Chalmers, A.
Chan, C.
Chetcuti, M. E.
Davy, G.
Dimov, S.
Flower, R.
Hudry, K.
Hussain, A. A.
Iacono, T.
Kuntche, E.
Lawson, L. P.
Li, X.
Mastin-Purcell, L.
McGowan, K.
Morris, E.
Nicholson, J.
Prendergast, L.
Pye, K.
Rees, L.

Ridgway, L.
Rumbold, B.
Sherwood, M.
Shiell, A.
Southall, A.
Spoor, J. R.
Taylor, N.
Upson, S.
Vinen, Z.
Walkowiak, E.
Willis, C.
Wong, D.
Wright, K.
Yaari, M.

AEIOU
Tucker, M.

AMAZE
Templin, C.

ANGLICARE
Frost, G.

**AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**
Batterham, P.

AUTISM CRC
Annear, K.

AUTISM QUEENSLAND

Pilbeam, T.
Autism Spectrum Australia
Fox, P.
Gallagher E.

CURTIN UNIVERSITY
Falkmer, T.

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY
Brown, C. M.
Cooke, K.
Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, M.
Hooley, M.
Santomauro, D. F.
Sciberras, E.
Stokes, M. A.
Westrupp, E.

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY
Bellon, M.
Lizzio-Wilson, M.
Rillotta, F.
Thomas, E. F.
Weber, N.
Wenzel, M.
Young, R.

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Allen, G.
 Caithness, T.
 Kőlves, K.
 Mahler, N.
 Paynter, J.
 Quan, S.
 Shellshear, L.
 Sievers, S.
 Simpson, K.
 Stainer, M.
 Sulek, R.
 Sutherland, R.
 Trembath, D.
 Westerveld, M. F.
 Varcin, K. J.

HEALTHY POSSIBILITIES

Goodall, E.

HUNTER MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Baines, K.

INGHAM INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED MEDICAL RESEARCH

Descallar, J.
 Eastwood, J.

INDASUN

Scaife, P.

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL NEUROSCIENCE

Molenberghs, P.

JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL

Korostenski, L

ST GILES SOCIETY

Fordyce, K.

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Crane, M. F.
 den Houting, J.

MONASH UNIVERSITY

Chellew, T.
 Gallo Cordoba, B.
 Williams, K.
 Freeman, N. C.

MONASH HEALTH

Rabba, A.

MURDOCH CHILDREN'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Frewer, V.
 Godler, D. E.
 Kraan, C. M.
 Morrison, J.
 Rattray, A.

ORYGEN, THE NATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Robinson, J.

POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Feary, J.

QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Williams, K.

REFRAMING AUTISM

Bulluss, E.

RMIT UNIVERSITY

Bartram, T.
 Karimi, L.
 Walter, R.

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

Mozolic-Staunton, B.

SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Jellett, R.

SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL NETWORK

Silove, N.

TELETHON KIDS INSTITUTE

Boutrus, M.
 Clark, A.
 Downs, J.
 Pillar, S. V.
 Rose, F.
 Whitehouse, A. J. O.
 Woolard, A.; Varcin, K.

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

Thirumanickam. A.

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Amor, D. J.
 Baker, E. K.
 Bui, Q. M.
 Clapperton, A.
 Hayward, S. M.
 Uljarević, M.

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

Campbell, L. E.
 Coleman, A.
 Dally, K.
 Harvey, S.
 Johnson, T.
 Karayanidis, F.
 Leonard, C.
 Mallise, C. A.
 Mason, E.
 Murphy, V. E.
 Ray, K.
 Wakely, K.
 Wales, K.
 Whalen, O. M.

UNIVERSITY OF NSW

Arnold S.R.C.
 Eapen, V.
 Grove, R.
 Hasan, I.
 Huang, Y.
 Hwang, J.
 Islam, R.
 Jalaludin, B.
 Karlov, L.
 Khan, F.
 Kohlhoff, J.
 Liaw, S. T.
 Lingam, R.
 Lucien, A
 Masi, A.
 Mendoza Diaz, A.
 Montgomery, A.
 Ong, N.
 Philpott-Robinson, K.
 Tam, C. W. M.
 Trollor J. N.
 Winata, T.
 Woolfenden, S.

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Ferrari, A. J.
Harley, D.
Louis, W. R.
Moni, M. A.
Roberts, J.
Whiteford, H.A.
University of Sydney
Ong, N.

**UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
SYDNEY**

Goodall, S.
Other
Rose, A.

INTERNATIONAL**CANADA**

**UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À
MONTREAL**
Amiot, C. E.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

McMorris, C.
Nicholas, D.

ISRAEL

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
Gabis, L. V.
Gross, R

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

Gal, E.
Schreuer, N.

NETHERLANDS

**VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM**
Begeer, S.

NEW ZEALAND

**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON**
Waddington, H.

UNITED KINGDOM

BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY
Moseley, R.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

van Ommen, L.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Weiss, D

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Eglinton, J.
Mirman, D

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Leidenhag, J.
Nash, H.

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Green, J.

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Cassidy, S.

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Perry, J.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
Lane, S. J.

CLEVELAND CLINIC

Aldosari, M.
Klingemier, E. W.

DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Vivanti, G.

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

Frazier, T. W.

**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**

Albright, C. M.
Butter, E. M.
Burnes, C. O.
Kryszak, E. M.
Stephenson, K. G.
Vargo, K.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Heathcock, J.
Mulick, J. A.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Hardan, A. Y.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Decety, J.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

Nevill, R.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Ferrari, A.
Vos, T.

QATAR

**QATAR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH
INSTITUTE**
Al-Shaban, F. A.





Associate Professor Josephine Barbaro, PhD student Gemma Davy and Professor Cheryl Dissanayake at the ASFAR conference in Geelong, November 2022

The OTARC SEMINAR SERIES



We invite leading international and local scholars to present their research to OTARC researchers, our affiliates and the wider La Trobe community. For the first time, our seminar series was recorded and made publicly available on our website. Hosted on Vimeo, all videos include closed captioning to improve accessibility of the program.

Environmental factors impacting on the participation of children on the autism spectrum

Dr Kate Simpson,
Senior Lecturer, Education, Autism
Centre of Excellence, Griffith
University

Kate has worked with individuals with diverse needs and their families for over 25 years as an occupational therapist, teacher, and researcher.

Autism@Work Employment Programs and Meaningful Work for Autistic Individuals

Dr Jennifer Spoor,
Associate Professor, Management/
HRM, La Trobe University

Jennifer's research interests are in organisational behaviour and applied social psychology across workplace diversity and inclusion, especially with respect to gender and disability, moods and emotions in work groups and social identity theory.

An update on the key themes identified and progress of Autism Connect: a free national autism advice service

David Tonge,
Executive Manager of Autism
Connect & Resources, Amaze

David has a background in health and community service and has an undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in education and an MBA.

A Model for Telehealth Assessment of Autism

Dr Elizabeth Kryszak
Psychologist, Nationwide Children's
Hospital Child Development Center
(CDC), Clinical Assistant Professor
at the Ohio State University,
Columbus OH

Elizabeth's clinical and research work focuses on the assessment of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities including Autism, with a particular focus on evaluating very young children and creating system changes to improve access to services for all families.

Healthy Mothers Healthy Families, from co-delivery to professional coaching: effective ways to improve outcomes for mothers of children with disabilities

Dr Helen Bourke-Taylor
Associate Professor and
Occupational Therapist, Monash
University.

Helen's research interests include participation and education issues for children and young people with disabilities, support for families, maternal health and wellbeing, and psychometrics related to scale and outcome tool development. Helen has authored 80 peer reviewed publications and is the author of HMHF.

We Care - Building Confidence, Competence and Family Quality of Life

Dr Anoo Bhojti,
Senior lecturer & Occupational Therapist, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University

Anoo's research is embedded within the early childhood intervention and childhood disability sector. These research findings have been used to support the early childhood intervention sector in their written submissions to support the inclusion of parents as applicants for the National Disability Inclusion Scheme.

Early detection for better outcomes

Dr Beth Mozolic-Staunton
Associate Professor, Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Health Science & Medicine, Bond University

Beth is an experienced occupational therapist with expertise across a broad range of practice settings including paediatrics, rural health, aged care, rehabilitation as well as school and community-based practice.

Autistics in the Academy

Dr Professor Sandra Jones
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Impact) Australian Catholic University

Sandra provides leadership, advice and support for ACU's strategic frameworks that implement the measurement of research engagement and impact; and supports research engagement and impact across the university's research areas.

Relationship Between Autistic Traits, Gender, and Field of Study in Malaysian Undergraduate Students

Mohd Syazwan Zainal,
Lecturer at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Ph.D. Scholar in Special Education Program from Universiti Sains Malaysia

Syazwan investigates the effects of Autistic traits on career self-efficacy among undergraduate university students in Malaysia.

Building neurodiversity-inclusive postsecondary campuses

Patrick Dwyer
PhD candidate, UC Davis Center for Mind and Brain

Patrick is an Autistic PhD candidate at the UC Davis Center for Mind and Brain, working with Dr Susan Rivera.



RESEARCH PROGRAMS

IDENTIFICATION AND DIAGNOSIS

Research Program Leader: Associate Professor Josephine Barbaro



We develop and evaluate evidence-based approaches to identify and diagnose autism to activate timely and personalised supports.

SELECT COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

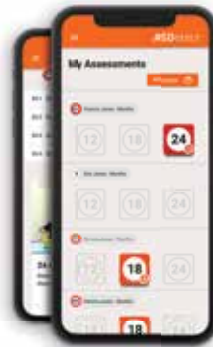
1

A national rollout of maternal health nurse training

2

Promote ASDetect to parents, health workers and educators

ASDetect MILESTONES



100,000+
DOWNLOADS

TOP PERFORMING PAPER

Diagnostic Accuracy of the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance-Revised with Preschool Tool for Early Autism Detection in Very Young Children

This study of more than 13,500 Victorian children found the SACS-R + PR is the world's most effective method of identifying autism in young children. The SACS-R successfully identifies children as young as 11 months old as having a higher likelihood of Autism.

Demonstrating significant reach: Top 5% of research and 42 news stories (Altmetric), FWCI = 5.46 (Scopus)

Barbaro, J., Sadka, N., Gilbert, M., Beattie, E., Li, X., Ridgway, L., Lawson, L. P., & Dissanayake, C. Diagnostic Accuracy of the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance-Revised with Preschool Tool for Early Autism Detection in Very Young Children. *JAMA Network Open*.



CURRENT STUDIES

Evaluation of ASDetect, a mobile application for autism	Josephine Barbaro, Cheryl Dissanayake, Nancy Sadka, Lael Ridgway, Melissa Gilbert, Erin Beattie
ASDetectPRO training needs analysis	Melissa Gilbert, Josephine Barbaro, Radhika Nair, Shannon Elgar (2020 Honours candidate)
Maternal and Child Health Nurse training for the early identification of autism	Katherine (Kate) Gore (Masters candidate), Melissa Gilbert, Josephine Barbaro
The production and validation of a Sensory Observation Autism Rating scale (SOAR) to map autism-specific sensory behaviours and improve early diagnosis	Katy Unwin, Josephine Barbaro, Alison Lane
Developmental surveillance for Autism in early childhood education settings	Beth Mozolic-Staunton, Michelle Donnelly, Jacqui Yoxall (Southern Cross University), Josephine Barbaro
Who is attending? The role of child ethnicity and maternal demographics in research engagement and early identification of autism.	Ifrah Abdullahi, Josephine Barbaro, Nancy Sadka, Jess Scaletti (Honours graduate),
Identifying barriers in accessing supports and services for autistic Australian women and non-binary people	Melissa Gilbert, Josephine Barbaro, Katherine (Kate) Gore
Screening for autism using SACS-Telehealth	Melissa Gilbert, Josephine Barbaro, Nancy Sadka

RESEARCH PROGRAMS SUPPORTS AND PRACTICES FOR DAILY LIVING

Research Program Leader: Professor Alison Lane



We develop and evaluate evidence-based practices and supports that enable Autistic people to live a life that is meaningful to them.

Invited keynote address

THE AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR AUTISM RESEARCH



Making sense of sensory experiences in autism: the path forward

Presented by Professor Alison Lane

TOP PERFORMING PAPER

Social and Behavioural Outcomes of School Aged Autistic Children Who Received Community-Based Early Interventions

School-age outcomes of 31 Autistic children who received community-based Group-Early Start Denver Model (G-ESDM) were compared to 28 age-matched Autistic children who received other community supports and services. While children who received community supports demonstrated higher levels of play disruption than the G-ESDM group, children in both groups continued to have difficulties in their adaptive, social and play behaviour at school. Ongoing provisions are needed to support development into the school years.

Demonstrating global engagement: Shared across Australia, United Kingdom, United States, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Korea, Mexico, Sri Lanka, and Canada (Altmetric), 2968 article accesses (Dimensions).

Vinen, Z., Clark, M. & Dissanayake, C. Social and Behavioural Outcomes of School Aged Autistic Children Who Received Community-Based Early Interventions. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

12

CURRENT STUDIES

Child and Family Outcomes of children receiving the Group Early Start Denver Model (G-ESDM)	Cheryl Dissanayake, Ifrah Abdullahi, Victorian ASELCC Team
Intranasal Oxytocin in Preschoolers with Autism receiving Social Learning Therapy: A Randomised, Double-blind, Repeated Dose Study Paused in 2022 due to Covid-19	Adam Guastella, Geraldine Dawson, Cheryl Dissanayake, Valsamma Eapen, Yun Ju (Christine) Song, Ruth Feldman, Natalie Silove, Katy Unwin, Sally Rogers
Best Practice Guidelines for Working with Sensory Processing Challenges in Schools	Alison Lane, Katy Unwin, Carl Leonard (University of Newcastle), Kylie Wales (University of Newcastle), Tennille Johnson (University of Newcastle)
Effectiveness of a compression singlet on self-regulation in Autistic children: A single case series	Alison Lane, Lacey Chetcuti
Investigating the perspectives of school staff and pupils on flexible seating in a London mainstream primary school	Laura Crane (University College London), Katy Unwin, Heba Al-Jayoosi (University College London), Sarah O'Brien (Autistica), Spencer Hayes (University College London), Aaron Giuliano (University College London)
Sense-scaping the Liturgy: The Impact of Sensory Difference in Autism on Worship	Katy Unwin, Léon van Ommen (University of Aberdeen)
The impact of multi-sensory environment use on children with a range of conditions	Catherine Jones (Cardiff University), Katy Unwin, Georgie Powell (Cardiff University)
Self-reported experiences of itch in Autistic adults	George Tackley (Cardiff University), Katy Unwin, Catherine Jones (Cardiff University), Jack Underwood (Cardiff University)
Identify and evaluate the aspects of emotional regulation therapies that optimise performance and participation for Autistic children and their caregivers	Dianne Blackwell (PhD candidate), Alison Lane, Anoo Bhojti (Monash University), Shelly J Lane (Colorado State University)
Feeding difficulties in young children with a high likelihood of autism	Asmita Mudholkar (PhD candidate)
An examination of inclusive practices in delivering Group Early Start Denver Model in Autistic children	Alison Lane, Kristelle Hudry, Larissa Korostenski (John Hunter Hospital), Georgia Lynch (PhD candidate), Cheryl Dissanayake, Ifrah Abdullahi
School-age outcomes of children with autism and parental wellbeing: investigations on the contribution of method-of-referral and age-of-diagnosis	Cheryl Dissanayake, Josephine Barbaro, Katrina Williams, Alex Ure, Katy Unwin, Melanie Muniandy

RESEARCH PROGRAMS

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Research Program Leader: Associate Professor Darren Hedley



We aim to understand factors that influence the health and wellbeing of Autistic people. These help to inform and enhance supports and practices across the lifespan.



Report and Policy Brief:
Health, Wellbeing and Suicide
Prevention in Autism

2002

Page views



Translated into Portuguese



Website:
Suicide Response Project

1200

Page views

2336

Visitors

22

Hours of video

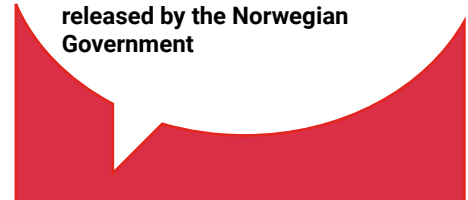


**Our sleep research mentioned
in international policy**



“Human rights for persons
with developmental
disability: It’s about being
heard and seen”

released by the Norwegian
Government



TOP PERFORMING PAPER

A conceptual model of risk and protective factors for Autistic burnout

Based on descriptions of Autistic people’s lived experiences, we developed a Conceptual Model of Autistic Burnout (CMAB) to explore how various risk and protective factors may interact to contribute to, or prevent, Autistic burnout.

Demonstrating significant academic impact: Top 5% of research (Altmetric); 6 citations (99th percentile benchmarked) and a FWCI of 12.03 (Average = 1, Scopus).

Mantzas, J., (OTARC PhD candidate) **Richdale, A. L., & Dissanayake, C.** A conceptual model of risk and protective factors for Autistic burnout. *Autism Research*.

12

CURRENT STUDIES

Suicide prevention, mental health & well-being in Autistic adults	Darren Hedley, Kat Denney, Ensu Sahin, Alex Haschek, Simon Bury, Angela Clapperton (University of Melbourne), Mirko Uljarević (University of Melbourne), Jo Robinson (University of Melbourne), Cheryl Dissanayake, Julian Trollor (UNSW), Mark Stokes (Deakin University)
Intervention for insomnia in Autistic adults (SLEAPI)	Amanda Richdale, Eric Morris, Lauren Lawson
Improving the competence of mental health practitioners in providing care to their Autistic clients	Robyn Ball (PhD candidate), Amanda Richdale, Eric Morris, Lauren Lawson
Inter-Relationships Between Autistic traits and Elements of Depression, Sleep Quality, and Fatigue in Autistic Adolescents and Adults: A Network Analysis	Louise Dickens (Masters candidate – Clinical Psychology), Eric Morris, Amanda Richdale
The Role of Inflexible Behaviour and Thought Patterns in Emotion Dysregulation: The Mediating Role of Sleep	Matthew Strebinos (2021 Honours candidate), Eric Morris, Amanda Richdale
Exploring Factors that Mediate the Relationship Between Psychological Inflexibility, and Psychological Quality of Life: A Cross-Sectional Study	Elisa Pica (2021 Honours candidate), Eric Morris, Amanda Richdale
Characterising Autistic burnout and its underlying mechanisms: An exploratory investigation	Jane Mantzalas (PhD candidate), Amanda Richdale, Cheryl Dissanayake
Coping and resilience in Autistic adults	Melanie Muniandy (PhD candidate), Amanda Richdale, Lauren Lawson
Cross-sectional and longitudinal predictors of sleep problems in young Autistic children from the ASDetect Cohort	Amanda Richdale, Josephine Barbaro, Nancy Sadka
Autism Coming to Hospital: Optimising the care for Inpatients with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Elly Greenwood (PhD candidate), Josephine Barbaro, Louise Ward, Ruby Walter (RMIT)
Does Hope Mediate the Relationship Between Parent's Resolution of Their Child's Autism Diagnosis and Parental Stress	Vrinda Naicker (Honours candidate), Simon Bury, Darren Hedley
Participation, quality of life and parental outcomes in caregivers of school-aged Autistic children	Gemma Davy (PhD candidate), Cheryl Dissanayake, Josephine Barbaro, Katy Unwin
End-of-Life Service Experiences and Autism Spectrum Disorder	Jennifer Lowe (PhD candidate), Bruce Rumbold, Cheryl Dissanayake

RESEARCH PROGRAMS

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Research Program Leader: Professor Cheryl Dissanayake



We determine and promote the best learning and vocational pathways for Autistic people at all levels of education and in volunteer and paid employment.

GUEST SEMINARS



AUTISTICS IN THE ACADEMY

Presented by Professor Sandra Jones
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Impact)
Australian Catholic University



BUILDING NEURODIVERSITY-INCLUSIVE POSTSECONDARY CAMPUSES

Presented by Patrick Dwyer,
Autistic PhD candidate,
UC Davis Center for Mind and Brain

TOP PERFORMING PAPER

Employee engagement and commitment to two Australian autism employment programs: Associations with workload and perceived supervisor support

This research helps to fill a gap in the Autism employment literature by focusing on commitment toward autism employment programs among existing employees.

Demonstrating diverse collaboration for impact: Financial support received from La Trobe University (Building Healthy Communities Research Focus Area Grants, Psychology and Public Health Engagement Income Growth Grant Scheme) and the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services. Authors were supported by industry (DXC Technology, ANZ Bank, Untapped Group) and a Suicide Prevention Australia National Suicide Prevention Research Fellowship.

Spoor, J.R., Flower, R.L., **Bury, S.M., & Hedley, D.** Employee engagement and commitment to two Australian autism employment programs: associations with workload and perceived supervisor support. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: an International journal*.

7

CURRENT STUDIES

Carer supports for Autistic working mothers	Katherine (Kate) Gore (PhD candidate) Josephine Barbaro Melissa Gilbert Rebecca Flower Susan Hayward
Promoting Long-Term Employment of Autistic Individuals through Improved Well-being	Cheryl Dissanayake Jennifer Spoor Darren Hedley Leila Karimi Timothy Bartram David Nicholas Simon Bury
Factors contributing to higher education success for neurodivergent students	Lyndel Kennedy (PhD candidate) Amanda Richdale Lauren Lawson
Exploring the facilitators and barriers to successful transition to university for students on the autism spectrum.	Alison Nuske (external PhD candidate) Fiona Rillotta Michelle Bellon Amanda Richdale
Enhancing wellbeing and social inclusion of marginalised populations: A two-country multi-component project – overcoming the social barriers to sustainable autism employment	Simon Bury Darren Hedley Jennifer Spoor Emmanuelle Walkowiak Alison Lane Naomi Schreuer Cheryl Dissanayake Eynat Gal
Enablers and barriers to successful secondary school experiences for Australian Autistic high school students	Clare Kermond (PhD candidate) Alison Lane Anne Southall
Autistic perceptions of inclusivity statements in job advertisements	Nellie Tansey (Honours candidate) Rebecca Flower Simon Bury

STAFF

ACADEMIC STAFF

Professor Cheryl Dissanyake

Director and Chair, Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

Leader of the Educational and Vocational Engagement research program

- Fellow and Global Senior Leader, International Society of Autism Research
- Lifetime Member, Australian Society of Autism Research
- Recognised as Field Leader in Australia for the fifth year in a row in The Australian Research Supplement

Awarded Member of the Order of Australia (AM)

Awarded Fellowship of the Academy of Social Sciences Australia



"So glad to see Professor Dissanayake on this list. Our son, who is now 30, took part in her studies in around 1998 at Latrobe Uni. We learnt so much, as parents, about Autism and our son from participating in her work. Congratulations Professor."

Professor Alison Lane

Deputy Director, Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

Leader of the Supports and Practices research program and Graduate Research Coordinator at OTARC

- Registered Occupational Therapist
- Member, Occupational Therapy Australia
- Member, International Society for Autism Research
- Member, Australasian Society for Autism Research
- Member, International Society for Developmental Psychobiology



Associate Professor Josephine Barbaro

Principal Research Fellow

Leader of the Early Identification and Diagnosis research program

- Registered Psychologist
- Project Leader with the Autism CRC
- Treasurer, Australasian Society for Autism Research
- Member of Universities Australia Executive Women, LTU Neurodiversity group (staff) and LTU LGBTQIA+ Inclusion working group
- Invited permanent Associate Editor, editorial board, Frontiers in Pediatrics (Neurology)

Winner of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)'s ARCAP Research to Practice Award

Associate Professor Darren Hedley

Principal Research Fellow

Leader of the Health and Wellbeing research program

- Suicide Prevention Australia Fellow
- Editorial Board Member for Autism: International Journal of Research and Practice
- Deputy Editor for Autism in Adulthood

Dr Nancy Sadka, Senior Research Associate

- Invited member, Autism CRC Guideline Development Group, National Guideline for the Assessment and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Australia
- Program leader, Champions Program, Vantage Point Church

Dr Simon Bury, Research Fellow

Early Career Researcher Coordinator

Deputy Leader, Vocational Engagement research program

- Registered Psychologist

Dr Ifrah Abdullahi, Research Fellow

- Co-founder of Muslim ability WA
- Founder of the Young Somali Women's Society
- Co-Founder & Liaison Officer Hope for the Horn Collective

Dr Katy Unwin, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Deputy Leader, Early Identification and Diagnosis research program

- Member of Early Career Researcher committee, La Trobe University

Dr Melissa Gilbert, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

- Consultation with National Disability Insurance Agency: 'Help us tell the NDIS story'; Information Gathering for Access and Planning Co-design Working Group
- Consultation with Experience 360: Chronic Illness Patient Insights and Experiences
- Cultural Qualities Descriptor Listening Circles participant, La Trobe University
- Member, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Disability Working Subgroup, La Trobe University

Dr Megan Clark, Research Fellow

- Provisional Psychologist
- Member of Early Career Researcher committee, La Trobe University
- Consultation with National Disability Insurance Agency: Early behavioural interventions in children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Dr Lacey Chetcuti, Postdoctoral Researcher

- Trial Coordinator of JettProof research study

Melanie Muniandy, Research Associate

- Cohort study team member
- Autism CRC scholarship PhD candidate

WELCOMED TO OTARC IN DECEMBER 2022

Professor Nora Shields, Senior Research Director

- Registered Physiotherapist
- Winner, 2021 VicHealth Leading Health Promotion Research Award

Dr Rachel Kennedy, Research Fellow

- Registered Physiotherapist
- Project Manager, GYM-SPARC
- Churchill Fellow

Alesha Southby, Trial Coordinator

- Physiotherapist (Paediatrics)
- Trial Coordinator for PRESTO

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Doug Scobie.....	Centre Manager
Perrin Date.....	Research Operations Coordinator
Mick Leahy.....	Mobile App Marketing Officer
Melinda Denham.....	Communications Coordinator
Faiza Muhammad Fauzi.....	Executive Officer
Margaret Laughton.....	Administration Officer
Alex Haschek.....	Research Officer

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Kat Denney	Jess Ryan
Jenny Luu	Jason He
Ensu Sahin	Caitlin Argent-Schutz
Alison Odgers	Jodie Wilson
Isaac Morris	

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Dr Rebecca Flower.....	Lecturer, Department of Psychology and Counselling
Dr Kristelle Hudry.....	Associate Professor, Department of Psychology and Counselling
Dr Jennifer Spoor.....	Senior Lecturer, Department of Management, Sport and Tourism
Dr Lauren Lawson.....	Lecturer, Department of Psychology and Counselling
Dr Eric Morris.....	Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology and Counselling
Dr Teresa Iacono.....	Professor, La Trobe Rural Health School
Dr Emmanuelle Walkowiak.....	Senior Lecturer, Economics, Finance and Marketing
Dr Anoo Bhojti.....	Lecturer, Social Work and Occupational Therapy

HONORARY MEMBERS

Dr David Trembath.....	Associate Professor, School of Allied Health, Griffith University
Dr Giacomo Vivanti.....	Associate Professor, Early Detection and Intervention Program, Drexel University, USA
Dr Cynthia Zierhut.....	Early Days Autism Centre, USA
Dr Mirko Uljarevic.....	ARC Senior Research Fellow, Psychology, University of Melbourne
Dr Elfriede Ihlen Dr Han.....	Retired
Ming (Daniel) Leong.....	Co-chair, Autism Initiatives Malaysia
Dr Nusrat Ahmed.....	Hope Autism Centre, Bangladesh

ADJUNCT MEMBERS

Michael Fieldhouse.....	Director, Emerging Businesses and Cyber Security; Dandelion Program Executive, DXC Technology
Professor Amanda Richdale.....	La Trobe University



STUDENTS



Kate Gore – Masters of Clinical Psychology completed

"Understanding the Experiences of Autistic Working Mothers in Australia: An Exploratory Study"



Louise Dickens – Masters of Clinical Psychology completed

"Inter-Relationships Between Autistic traits and Elements of Depression, Sleep Quality, and Fatigue in Autistic Adolescents and Adults: A Network Analysis"

HONOURS

Student	Topic	Supervisors
Claudia Madaffer*	Early therapy outcomes of Autistic children as a function of sensory differences	Alison Lane Josephine Barbaro Katy Unwin Lacey Chetcuti
Vrinda Naicker*	Children's autism diagnosis: resolution of diagnosis, hope and parental stress	Simon Bury Darren Hedley
Josh Peterson	Exploring the Workplace Environment and Characteristics that Help Adults with ADHD Thrive in the Workplace	Rebecca Flower Darren Hedley
Nellie Tansey*	Do inclusivity statements impact disclosure and perceived company support for Autistic adults?	Rebecca Flower Simon Bury
Ashley Alesi	Exploring the Public's Views and Perceptions of Suicide Prevention Education and the Suicide Response Project Website: A Qualitative Analysis	Carina Chan Darren Hedley
Tina Tran	To be determined	Carina Chan Darren Hedley

*Honours students who presented their projects to OTARC staff and affiliates in April.

MASTERS BY RESEARCH

Student	Topic	Supervisors
Georgia Lynch	An examination of inclusive practices in delivering Group Early Start Denver Model in Autistic children	Cheryl Dissanayake Ifrah Abdullahi

PhD

Student	Topic	Supervisors
Gemma Davy	Participation and Quality of Life in Caregivers of School Aged Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Cheryl Dissanayake Josephine Barbaro Katy Unwin
Robyn Ball	Improving the competence of mental health practitioners in providing care to their Autistic clients	Amanda Richdale Lauren Lawson Eric Morris

PhD

Student	Topic	Supervisors
Katherine Gore	Creating supports for Autistic working mothers	Josephine Barbaro Melissa Gilbert Rebecca Flower Susan M Hayward (University of Melbourne)
Lyndel Kennedy	Factors contributing to higher education success for neurodivergent students	Amanda Richdale Lauren Lawson
Melanie Muniandy	Social Support, coping, and resilience in adolescents and young adults on the autism spectrum	Amanda Richdale Lauren Lawson
Beth Radulski	#TakeTheMaskOff: Autistic Performativity and the Neurodiversity Movement (in partnership with La Trobe University's Department of Social Inquiry)	Katie Wright Cheryl Dissanayake
Jane Mantzalas	Characterising Autistic burnout and its underlying mechanisms: An exploratory investigation	Amanda Richdale Cheryl Dissanayake
Jennifer Lowe	End-of-Life Service Experiences and Autism Spectrum Disorder	Bruce Rumbold Cheryl Dissanayake
Elly Greenwood	Autism Coming to Hospital: Optimising the care for Inpatients with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Josephine Barbaro Louise Ward Ruby Walter (RMIT)
Helen Andrews	The role of Self-determination Theory in the adult outcomes of Autistic people	Cheryl Dissanayake Darren Hedley Simon Bury
Dianne Blackwell	Identify and evaluate the aspects of emotional regulation therapies that optimise performance and participation for Autistic children and their caregivers	Alison Lane Anoo Bhojti (Monash University) Shelly J Lane (Colorado State University)
Clare Kermond	Australian secondary school students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Alison Lane Anne Southall
Asmita Mudholkar	Feeding difficulties in young children with a high likelihood of autism	Alison Lane Kristelle Hudry Larissa Korostenski (John Hunter Hospital)
Tayla Chellew (external)	Finding the lost years: Investigating the early signs of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in females diagnosed later in life	Nerelie Freeman (Monash University) Josephine Barbaro
Alison Nuske (external)	Exploring the facilitators and barriers to successful transition to university for students on the autism spectrum	Fiona Rillotta Michelle Bellon Amanda Richdale
Karen Ray (external)	Learning to read and write: The role of handwriting fluency	Alison Lane Kerry Dally (University of Newcastle)
Kelsey Philpott-Robinson (external)	Promoting a therapeutic approach to self-regulation in schools: Getting it "just right"	Alison Lane Carl Leonard Kylie Wales (University of Newcastle)

ACADEMIC IMPACT SUMMARY

SciVal metrics 2019–2022, retrieved 21st Feb 2023

2022
32 articles

**40% open access
publications**



53.0% of peer reviewed papers in the top 10% of Journals
(CiteScore)



Total 479 views

FWCI of 1.61 (where 1 is average)

The field-weighted citation impact (FWCI) is an author metric which compares the total citations actually received by a researcher's publications to the average number of citations received by all other similar publications from the same research field.

1,792 Total mentions in 2022 from all OTARC publications



*For a full list of articles, see the La Trobe Scholars page for each academic staff member.
You can search by name at scholars.latrobe.edu.au

PUBLICATIONS

Books and Chapters

1. **Bury, S.M. M., Spoor, J. R., Hayward, S. M., & Hedley, D.** (2022). Supporting the mental health of Autistic and other neurodiverse employees in the work environment. In S. Bruyère & A. Colella (Eds.), *Neurodiversity in the Workplace* (pp. 241-266). SIOP Organizational Frontiers Series.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003023616-10>
2. Gabis, L. V., **Barbaro, J.**, Gross, R. (Eds.). *Personalized Precision Medicine in Autism Spectrum Related Disorders*. Lausanne: Frontiers Media SA. doi: 10.3389/978-2-88971-677-7
3. **Hedley, D.**, Hayward, S.M., Clarke, A., Uljarević, M., & Stokes, M.A. Suicide and Autism: A Lifespan Perspective. In: Stancliffe, R. J., Wiese, M. Y., McCallion, P., & McCarron, M. (Eds.) *End of life and people with intellectual and developmental disability: Contemporary issues, challenges, experiences and practice*. Palgrave MacMillan.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-98697-1>
Accessed 3889 times, Altmetric = 30
4. **Richdale, A.L.** An Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder, Sleep Problems, and Their Associations. In: McLay, L.K., France, K.G., Blampied, N.M. (Eds.) *Clinical Handbook of Behavioral Sleep Treatment in Children on the Autism Spectrum*. Springer, Cham.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99134-0_1
Accessed 109 times
5. **Richdale, A.L.**, Baker, E.K., & Sciberras, E. Sleep in children with neurodevelopmental disorders. In: Li, A. E., & Chan, K. C-C (Eds.) *Paediatric Sleep Disorders. Case-based Practical Guide*. Springer Nature, Singapore.
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-19-5791-8>
Accessed 1605 times

Resources (All metrics from 3 January 2023)

1. **Haschek, A. & Muniandy, M.** How do resilience and coping strategies influence the mental health and well-being of Autistic adults?
<https://sway.office.com/I4IAPoHTetwvAhM>
Viewed 1067 times
2. **Haschek, A.** Recommendations from the 2021 ASfAR "Mental Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention in Autism" Conference and Roundtable.
<https://sway.office.com/i5VCS78LDJf8VWfp>
Viewed 154 times
3. **Haschek, A.** Has the shift to individualised NDIS funding changed the profiles of children accessing supports?
<https://sway.office.com/GpocW694X7Qm77mx>
Viewed 350 times
4. **Haschek, A.** Building neurodiversity-inclusive postsecondary campuses. Public release of the OTARC Seminar video
<https://sway.office.com/M03qqFamCHGQVb5W>
Viewed 161 times

Reports (All metrics from 3 January 2023)

1. **Barbaro, J.**, Eapen, V., **Gilbert, M.**, **Nair, R.**, Masi, M., Winata, T., Khan, F., & The GP Surveillance team. A multistate trial of an early surveillance program for autism within General Practices in Australia. Final Report. Brisbane, Australia: Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism.
2. **Hedley, D.**, Cassidy, S., Templin, C., Hayward, S. M., **Haschek, A.**, Bulluss, E., Den Houting, J., Kölves, K., Maddox, B. B., Morgan, L., Moseley, R., Rabba, A. S., Rose, A., Stokes, M. A., & Young, R. L. Recommendations from the 2021 Australasian Society for Autism Research "Health, Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention in Autism" Conference and Roundtable and policy brief. La Trobe University, Melbourne.
<https://doi.org/10.26181/19690432.v2>
Viewed 2003 times, 253 downloads
3. Ray, K., Dally, K., & **Lane, A. E. E.** Learning to read the write way – A policy brief. Callaghan, NSW: The University of Newcastle, 2021. ISBN: 978-0-7259-0366-4.
<http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1464146>

4. **Hedley, D.**, Denny, K., **Sahin, E.**, **Haschek, A.**, **Bury, S.M.**, Clapperton, A., Uljarevic, M., Robinson, J., **Dissanayake, C.**, Trollor, J., & Stokes, M.A. Final report: Suicide prevention and mental health & well-being in Autistic adults.
<https://sway.office.com/WIhz78bjbjiWlHOqNL>
 Viewed 159 times

Conference papers and posters

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR AUTISM RESEARCH ANNUAL MEETING (AUSTIN TEXAS/ HYBRID), MAY 2022

1. **Barbaro, J.**, **Sadka, N.**, **Gilbert, M.**, Ridgway, L., & **Dissanayake, C.** Poster: Expanding Social Attention and Communication Surveillance into Preschool (SACS-PR): An Additional Checklist of the SACS-Revised for Early Autism Detection.
2. Brown, C.M., **Hedley, D.**, Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, M., Hooley, M. & Stokes, M.A. Poster: COVID-19 As a Natural Experiment Paradigm: Implications for Personal Wellbeing and Stress in Autistic Adults.
3. **Bury, S.M.**, Begeer, S., **Hedley, D.**, Li, X., Uljarevic, M. & Stokes, M.A. Poster: Predictors of Sustainable Autism Employment: An 8-Year Longitudinal Study.
4. Cooke, K., Ridgway, K.L., Hedley, D., Westrupp, E., Hooley, M., & Stokes, M.A. Poster: Interpersonal Violence in Autism Spectrum Conditions: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis
5. **Davy, G.**, **Unwin, K.L.**, **Barbaro, J.**, & **Dissanayake, C.** Poster: Exploring Occupational Balance and Quality of Life in Primary Caregivers of Autistic Children: A Qualitative Study.
6. **Dissanayake, C.**, Grogan, J., Yaari, M., Jellett, R., & Unwin K.L. Poster: The Impact of Parent Resolution of Diagnosis on Intervention Fidelity in a Parent-Delivered Intervention for Pre-School Children with Autism: A Mixed Methods Study
7. Freeman, N.C., Beattie, E., Gallo Cordoba, B., & **Barbaro, J.** Poster: An Examination of Social-Communication Behaviours in Infants and Toddlers in the General Population.
8. **Gilbert, M.**, **Nair, R.**, & **Barbaro, J.** Poster: A Training Needs Analysis to Determine Professionals' Needs for ASDetectPRO: An Early Autism Training Program and Early Identification Tool.
9. **Gore, K.E.**, **Gilbert, M.**, **Nair, R.**, & **Barbaro, J.** Poster: Early Autism Identification Training for Maternal and Child Health Nurses
10. **Gore, K.E.**, Flower, R.L. **Gilbert, M.**, Hayward, S.M., & **Barbaro, J.** Poster: Understanding the Experiences of Autistic Working Mothers in Australia: An Exploratory Study.
11. **Hedley, D.**, **Denney, K.**, Uljarevic, M., Hayward, S. M. & Stokes, M.A. Panel: A Mixed Methods Study of the Impact of COVID-19 on the Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Mental Health Service Access during COVID-19, of Autistic Adults in Australia
12. **Hedley, D.** & McMorris, C. Panel: A Mixed Methods Study of Suicidal and Non-Suicidal Self-Injurious Behavior in Younger and Older Autistic People
13. **Lane, A. E.**, **Blackwell, D.**, Brent, J., Easey, G., Rowlandson, L., Johnson, T., Lange, R., Schall, U., Campbell, L.E., & Lane, S.J. Panel: Utilisation of Sensory Subtyping to Understand Functional Impacts and Intervention Responsiveness in Autism.
14. **Muniandy, M.**, **Richdale, A.L.** & Lawson L.P. Poster: Coping-Resilience Profiles and Experiences of Stress in Autistic Adults.
15. **Unwin, K.L.**, Hussain, A.A., Chetcuti, M.E., **Barbaro, J.** & **Lane, A. E.** Oral presentation: The Sensory Observation Autism Rating Scale (SOAR): A New Measure of Early Sensory Behaviours in Autism.

AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR AUTISM RESEARCH (ASFAR), GEELONG, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, NOVEMBER 28-29.

16. **Barbaro, J.**, **Sadka, N.**, **Gilbert, M.**, & **The ASDetect team.** Identifying autism early in the family home: The effectiveness of the ASDetect mobile application.
17. **Blackwell, D.**, Hussain, A., Mudholkar, A., Philpott-Robinson, K., Bhojti, A., Kermond, C, **Lane, A. E.E.** & Lane, S. Poster: A systematic review of the effectiveness of emotion regulation supports.
18. **Bury, S.M.** M., **Haschek, A.**, Wenzel, M., Spoor, J. R., & **Hedley, D.** Oral presentation: Learning about autism: Is the source of autism knowledge associated with differences in autism knowledge, autism identity, and experiences of stigma.
19. **Bury, S.M.** M., Jellett, R., **Haschek, A.**, Wenzel, M., **Hedley, D.**, & Spoor, J. R. (2022). Oral presentation: Understanding language preference: Autism awareness, experience of stigma, and autism identity.
20. **Chetcuti, L.**, Scaife, P., & **Lane, A. E.** Poster: Effectiveness of Compression Garments and Related Therapies for Children with Sensory Processing Differences: A Rapid Assessment of a Decade of Evidence.
21. **Chetcuti, L.**, Frazier, T. W., Al-Shaban, F. A., Haslam, N., Ghazal, I., Klingemier, E. W., Aldosari, M., Whitehouse, A. J. O., Youngstrom, E. A., Hardan, A. Y., Uljarević, M. Poster: Categorical Versus Dimensional Structure of Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Multi-Method Investigation.
22. **Clark, M.**, & **Dissanayake, C.** Oral presentation: Characteristics of Children attending an Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Setting Prior to and Following Introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

23. Davy, G., **Clark, M.**, **Date, P.**, **Muniandy, M.**, Unwin, K., **Barbaro, J.** & **Dissanayake, C.** Oral presentation: Participation and Quality of Life in Primary and Secondary Caregivers of Autistic Children
24. Davy, G., Unwin, K., **Barbaro, J.** & **Dissanayake, C.** Poster: Participation and Quality of Life in Primary Caregivers of Autistic Children: A Qualitative Study
25. Gore, K., Hayward, S.M., Flower, B., **Gilbert, M.** & **Barbaro, J.** Oral presentation: "Maybe no one knows we need help": Understanding the Experiences of Autistic Working Mothers in Australia.
26. **Gilbert, M.**, Gore, K., **Nair, R.**, & **Barbaro, J.** Oral presentation: Early autism identification training for maternal and child health nurses.
27. **Gilbert, M.**, **Nair, R.**, & **Barbaro, J.**, Oral presentation: A training needs analysis to determine professionals' needs for ASDetectPRO: an early autism training program and early identification tool
28. **Dissanayake, C.**, Grogan, P., Yaari, M., Jellett, R. & Unwin, K. Poster: Parent resolution of diagnosis and intervention fidelity in a parent-delivered intervention for pre-school children with autism.
29. Kermond, C., Southall, A., **Lane, A. E.** Poster: Autistic adolescents, examining what helps or hinders their successful experience of secondary school.
30. Kennedy, L., **Richdale, A.**, & Lawson, L.P. Oral presentation: Executive functioning and mental health differences between neurodivergent diagnostic subgroups in Australian and New Zealand higher education students.
31. **Lane, A. E.**, *Keynote Address*: Making sense of sensory experiences in autism: the path forward.
32. Lawson, L., **Richdale, A.**, Chalmers, A., Uljarevic, M., Morris, E., Arnold, S., & Trollor, J. Oral presentation: Transdiagnostic Pathways to Understanding Anxiety and Depression in Autistic Adolescents and Adult.
33. Madaffer, C., **Lane, A. E.** & **Chetcuti, L.** Oral presentation: A novel sensory subtype model for 3-4 year old Autistic children and its influence on outcomes following support programs.
34. **Muniandy, M.**, **Richdale, A.**, & Lawson, L. Poster: Coping-Resilience Profiles and Experiences of Stress in Autistic Adults.
35. **Richdale, A.**, **Chetcuti, L.**, Morris, E., Hayward, S., **Abdullahi, I.**, & Lawson, L. Oral presentation: Mediators of Sleep and Depression in Young Autistic Adults.
36. Santomauro, D.F., **Hedley, D.**, **Sahin, E.**, Brugha, T.S., Naghavi, M., Vos, T., Whiteford, H.A., Ferrari, A., & Stokes, M.A. Oral - The global burden of suicide among people on the autism spectrum.
37. Sulek, R., Trembath, D., Whitehouse, A., Varcin, K., Waddington, H., Pillar, S., Allen, G., Annear, K., Eapen, V., Feary, J., Goodall, E., Pilbeam, T., Rose, F., **Sadka, N.**, & Silove, N. Development of the National Guideline for supporting Autistic children and their families.
38. Trembath, D., Whitehouse, A., Varcin, K., Waddington, H., Sulek, R., Pillar, S., Allen, G., Annear, K., Eapen, V., Feary, J., Goodall, E., Pilbeam, T., Rose, F., **Sadka, N.**, & Silove, N. The National Guideline for supporting Autistic children and their families: Recommendations and Implementation.
39. Waddington, H., Trembath, D., Varcin, K., Sulek, R., Pillar, S., Allen, G., Annear, K., Eapen, V., Feary, J., Goodall, E., Pilbeam, T., Rose, F., **Sadka, N.**, Silove, N., & Whitehouse, A. Effects of non-pharmacological supports on outcomes for Autistic children and their families: an updated systematic umbrella review.
40. Zainal, M.S, **Hedley, D.**, Uljarevic, M., Spoor, J. R., Ismail, H. N., Low, H. M. Poster: Translation of the 28-item Autism-Spectrum Quotient (AQ-28) in Undergraduate Students in Malaysia: Effects of Gender and Field of Study.

Other Conferences

41. **Sadka, N.**, **Barbaro, J.** Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism within the Maternal Child and Family Health Service. National MCaFHNA conference.
42. Mastin-Purcell, L., **Richdale, A.**, Lawson L., & Morris E. Fused to Thoughts and Trying to Sleep. What's the Link Between Psychological Inflexibility Processes, Pre-Sleep Arousal and Sleep Quality? ACBS World Conference, San Francisco (hybrid), June 14-19.
43. Kennedy, L., **Richdale, A.**, & Lawson, L. Executive Functioning Impacts on Mental Health and Success for Neurodivergent Students in Higher Education. Asia Pacific Special Education and Mental Health Conference, Penang, Malaysia (virtual), August 26.
44. **Muniandy, M.**, **Richdale, A.**, & Lawson L., Coping-resilience profiles and experiences of stress in Autistic adults. Asia Pacific Special Education and Mental Health Conference, Penang, Malaysia (virtual), August 26.
45. Philpott-Robinson, K., Blackwell, D., **Lane, A. E.**, & Lane, S. Self-regulation and occupational therapy: Conceptualising the evolution of terminology through literature review. OT Exchange, Melbourne, Australia.
46. Philpott-Robinson, K., Blackwell, D., Mallise, C., Leonard, C., **Lane, A. E.**, & Wales, K. Teacher and therapist perspectives of self-regulation for children aged 4-12 years. OT Exchange, Melbourne, Australia.
47. Philpott-Robinson, K., Wales, K., Wakely, K., & **Lane, A. E.** Poster: Embedding occupational therapy services in educational settings in Hunter NSW. OT Exchange, Melbourne, Australia.
48. Philpott-Robinson, K., Wales, K., Wakely, K., Mason, E., & **Lane, A. E.** Occupational therapy students: An asset to embedded occupational therapy services. OT Exchange, Melbourne, VIC.

49. Lewis, S. A-L., **Richdale, A.**, Arnold, S.R.C., Trollor, J.N., & Lawson, L.P. E-poster - Sex Differences in Restricted and Repetitive Behaviours for Autistic Adolescents and Adults. Autism Europe, Krakow, Poland, October 7-9.
50. **Richdale, A.** Online presentation: "Sleep Difficulties, Mental Health and Behaviour in Children and Adolescents", Australia, October 13.
51. **Richdale, A.** Online discussion panel: "Child and Adolescent Mental Health Forum, Mental Health Foundation", Australia, October 13.
52. **Richdale, A.**, Morris, E., **Chetcuti, L.**, Hayward, S., **Abdullahi, I.**, & Lawson, L. Mediators of Sleep in Young Autistic Adults. Poster at SleepDownUnder, Brisbane, Nov 8-11.
53. Morris, E., Lawson, L., & **Richdale, A.** Flexibility Around the Clock: How to Promote a Less Rigid and Values-Based Approach toward Sleep. Workshop presented at the ANZACBS conference, (virtual), Nov 18.
54. Mastin-Purcell, L., Lawson, L., **Richdale, A.**, & Morris, E. Sleep in Context: A Bayesian Network Analysis of Psychological Flexibility Dimensions, Pre-sleep Arousal, Autism Traits, Anxiety and Depression. Paper presented at the ANZACBS conference, (virtual), Nov 19.
55. Ray, K. Dally, K., & **Lane, A. E.** Impact of a whole-class intervention on literacy in Australian kindergarten children. Oral presentation to World Federation of Occupational Therapy 18th Congress, Paris, France; Aug 28-31.

WITH THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

NEW GRANTS IN 2022

Department of Education, Queensland

Best Practice Guidelines on Supports for Students with Sensory Processing Challenges.
Alison Lane, Katy Unwin

La Trobe University: School of Psychology and Public Health

Identifying barriers for Autistic women in accessing supports and services.
Melissa Gilbert, Josephine Barbaro

Validating clinical measures required to evaluate the effectiveness of a sleep intervention in Autistic Adults.
Chief Investigator: Lauren Lawson
Contributor: Amanda Richdale

Understanding behaviour and sleep in young Autistic children identified via ASDetect
 - a mobile application for the early detection of autism.
Nancy Sadka, Amanda Richdale, Josephine Barbaro

Hunter Children's Research Foundation

Improving early detection of childhood neurodevelopmental differences using mid-pregnancy biomarkers and infant behaviours
Chief Investigator: Vanessa Murphy, University of Newcastle
Contributor: Alison Lane

Bond University

Early Detection, Early Action: Translating best practices for early identification and support of young children with developmental conditions by front-line professionals.
Chief Investigator: Beth Mozolic-Staunton, Bond University
Contributor: Josephine Barbaro

ONGOING GRANTS FUNDED BY:

John Templeton Foundation

Investigating the impact of sensory properties of the church and worship services on autistic people.
Katy Unwin

Cross-disciplinary (Psychology, Philosophy, Ethics & Theology) planning grant
Chief Investigator: Joanna Leidenhag, University of Leeds

Contributor: Katy Unwin

STATE GOVERNMENT

Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria
 Department of Social Services, Victoria

INDUSTRY

Indasun Pty Ltd
 Untapped Pty Ltd
 Victorian Endowment for Science, Knowledge and Innovation

FEDERAL SCHEMES

National Health and Medical Research Council
 Department of Industry, Science and Resources
 Autism Cooperative Research Centre
 Australian Research Council Linkage. Partners: DXC Technology, Autism Spectrum Australia

OTHER

The Churchill Fellowship
 Suicide Prevention Australia
 La Trobe University:

School of Psychology and Public Health;
 Social Research Platform;
 Strategic Innovation Fund;
 Department of Social Inquiry



FINANCIAL REPORT

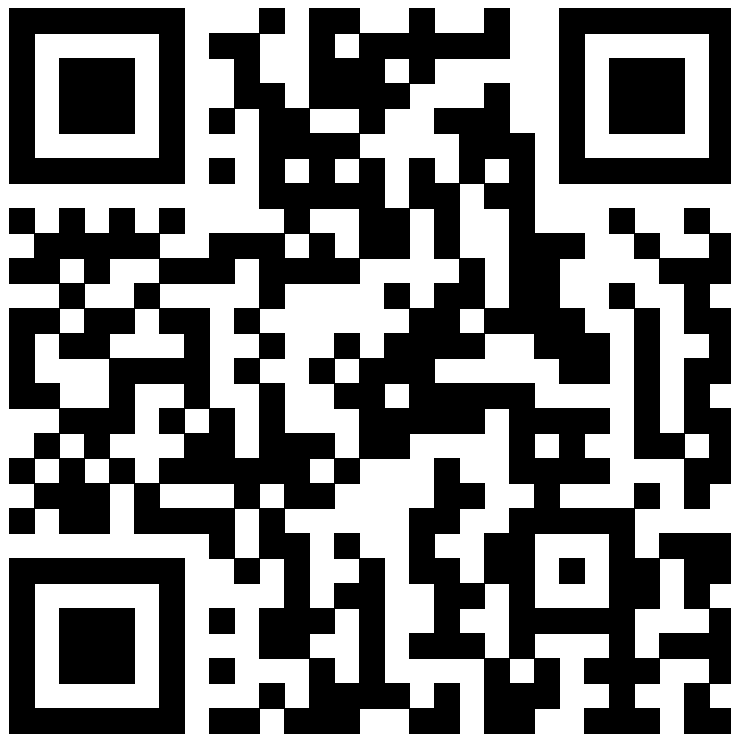
as at 31st December 2022

Income: for the period 1st January to 31st December 2022		2021 Total	2022 Total
Research grants		505,094	2,203,063
Research donations		250,000	
Commercial income		42,876	81,594
Other grants		-	
Other donations		60,705	
Foundation transfers		860,000	
Internal income/transfers		277,743	108,882
In-kind contributions		202,649	213,521
Investment income		58,877	207,273
Other income		128,835	91,934
Total income		2,386,779	2,906,267

Expenditure: for the period 1st January to 31st December 2022			
Employee salaries and on costs		2,369,375	2,205,565
Academic (continuing and fixed-term staff)		1,573,171	1,561,664
Academic (casual)		1,818	5,022
Administrative (fixed-term staff)		715,303	546,958
Administrative (casual)		65,565	91,256
Other salary costs		13,518	665
Non-salary costs		261,868	349,450
Infrastructure	IT, maintenance, services	48,483	45,826
Depreciation		9,898	1,383
Professional fees	Externally contracted services	9,144	77,732
Student related	Scholarships, stipends, training	21,504	40,129
General operating	Consumables, stationery, minor equipment	7,152	9,856
Staff (non-salary) costs	Incl. travel, accommodation and incidentals	21,069	68,263
Sundry items and other expenses		89,672	106,262
Total Expenses		2,631,243	2,555,015
Yearly Operating Result		-244,464	351,251
Prior Year Carry-Forward		-387,768	-632,232
Net Operating Result		-632,232	-280,981

La Trobe University also makes a significant in-kind contribution to OTARC in addition to providing financial support

La Trobe in-kind contributions		2021 Total	2022 Total
School Support		202,649	246,819
La Trobe Support			55,584
Research Focus Area support		0	20,000
Operating deficit/School contribution		244,464	
Total		447,113	322,403



Contact details

Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

General enquiries

T +61 3 9479 2497

E otarc@latrobe.edu.au

latrobe.edu.au/otarc

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