



The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

OUR MISSION

Through high quality scientific research, innovation and translation we will expand knowledge to enrich the lives of autistic people and their families.

Our vision is for a world where people living with autism thrive.

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WELCOME



Professor John Dewar

During 2018 the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) continued its remarkable work to translate university research into programs that provide profound and tangible benefits for individuals, families and communities. The Centre's reputation for impactful research

continues to grow, and its excellent standing in the public health sector was evident in the important contracts granted to the Centre in 2018, including funding to train Maternal and Child Health Nurses across Victoria on ways to detect the early signs of autism.

OTARC has continued its research program that examines issues such as ways to improve social participation and inclusion for children with autism, and mental health issues facing employees with autism. It is the impact of this research which is most telling, because OTARC researchers are skilled in using research findings to inform practice.

This focus on practical outcomes is evident in the Centre's work with industry partners, and in its programs to support people with autism to have successful careers and contribute to workplaces and communities around the country.

OTARC staff had a characteristically busy year in 2018, and it was pleasing to see OTARC implement the recommendations of the Centre review undertaken in 2017. This work will only strengthen OTARC's ability to advance knowledge in ways that directly support those affected by autism and their families. OTARC's magnanimous benefactor, the extraordinary Olga Tennison, will be proud of the way that the research she has funded continues to have a striking impact on health and wellbeing.

I congratulate the staff, supporters and partners of the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre on their achievements during 2018.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Dewar'.

Professor John Dewar

Vice-Chancellor, La Trobe University



Professor Cheryl Dissanayake, PhD

Our mission is to undertake high-quality research that results in positive impacts on the lives of autistic people and their families. In 2018, a key achievement was the development of a 10-year Strategic Plan that incorporated 32 recommendations from the 2017 Centre Review.

In addition to the amazing Mrs Olga Tennison who continues to generously support our work, I also want to acknowledge Professor Margot Prior, our inaugural Chair, and Dr Sylvia Walton, our current Chair (and past La Trobe Chancellor) who have been incredibly strong advocates for all we have achieved over the last decade.

A particular highlight in 2018 was the award of a Victorian Government contract to train all Maternal and Child Health Nurses in Victoria on the early signs of autism. Another key project, funded by the federal government Department of Social Services, was the Social Participation Study, which showed that preschool children with autism can thrive in mainstream classrooms.

Our work with industry partner DXC Technology delivered the key learning that mental health issues that are pervasive amongst autistic employees, while employment and mental health are also a focus in the Autism CRC funded Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism. Each of these projects reflect our work within the nexus of research and practice to which our staff and students dedicate themselves. Without their generous contributions, and those of our partners, our mission to expand knowledge to enrich the lives of autistic people and their families could not be achieved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl'.

**Professor Cheryl Dissanayake,
PhD, MAPS**

Director and Chair, Olga Tennison
Autism Research Centre

OTARC AT A GLANCE

Engagement



42

OTARC researcher
publications



46

Conference
presentations
and posters



71

Research
collaborations
and partnerships



44

Media appearances
and mentions

Participant Registry



2,984

Individuals on
Participant Registry



1,103

Those with a diagnosis of autism

594

Of these, those aged 18 or older

Media profile



4,628

Newsletter subscribers



25,050

Podcast downloads



4,098

Social media followers



30,641

Downloads of mobile
app ASDetect

OTARC website statistics

10,565

Sessions

16,853

Pageviews

9,425

New Users



25

Research students



340

Volunteers



32

Training attendees



2

ADOS courses



\$527,890

in donations



CULTURAL QUALITY: CARE

GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT DRIVES OUR ACTIONS AND INTERACTIONS.

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



Mrs Olga Tennison, AO

The establishment of the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre in 2008 was made possible by a generous donation from Mrs Olga Tennison, AO.

Her subsequent contributions have enabled the advancement of autism research in Australia and beyond, with the Centre named in acknowledgment of her unwavering support.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of our commitment to sharing our research findings beyond academia, we host events designed for special interest groups in the autism community.

GRANDPARENTS MORNING

2018 saw the third instance of this popular event. A new workshop-style format meant that as well as hearing from Professor Cheryl Dissanayake on the latest autism research, attendees could choose from four breakout sessions, run by OTARC researchers. The session on Challenging Behaviours proved most popular.

"Presenters had vast knowledge on the subject of autism. Glad I came." – Grandparents day attendee

"It was reassuring to be with other grandparents and share similar problems and emotions. We are so fortunate to have the Centre."

– grandparents day attendee



OTARC Researchers with grandparents



Arihan Joshi with his mother Dr Rucha Joshi (right) and Prof. Dissanayake

PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING

In 2018, we were fortunate to benefit from the efforts of two inspiring fundraisers; Dr Rucha Joshi and Pradeep Raj.

“We’re extremely grateful to the amazing Pradeep Raj: kick-boxer, father and advocate for early autism detection.”

La Trobe graduate Pradeep raised over \$6,500 for autism research through competing in a grueling Muay Thai kickboxing bout. He also tirelessly spread the word through many media activities, including a radio interview on SBS Malayalam, an article in the Whittlesea Leader, and profile pieces in Indian local newspapers.

Not only that, he also won the fight - his first ever!

Dr Rucha Joshi, a former PhD Student at OTARC, encouraged her son Arihan to hold a fundraising and awareness event with friends and family. He raised \$1,000.

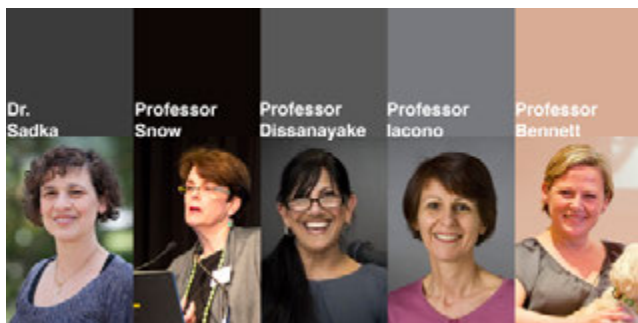


Local father Pradeep Raj raised more than \$6500 for OTARC

PUBLIC TALK: BEST PRACTICE FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

More than 70 parents and health professionals attended this panel talk, which was delivered by OTARC and La Trobe University academics at La Trobe's Bendigo campus. The topics covered were:

- ☒ The last 10 years of autism research: What do we know?
- ☒ Guidance for selecting evidence-based interventions
- ☒ Tips for navigating the NDIS
- ☒ Collaboration across education and allied health for school inclusion
- ☒ Roles for assistance dogs in supporting children with developmental disabilities



THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

More than 340 volunteers are registered with OTARC for tasks including research support and administration, event planning and fundraising.

We send a big vote of thanks to the following volunteers who provided significant support to a range of our activities during 2018.

Madison Astbury

Sarah Fritsche

Natalie Mizzi

Ashley Rattenbury

Rebecca Ravenhill

Maddy Russell-Maynard

Jessica Sawan

Jordan Springer

CULTURAL QUALITY: ACCOUNTABLE

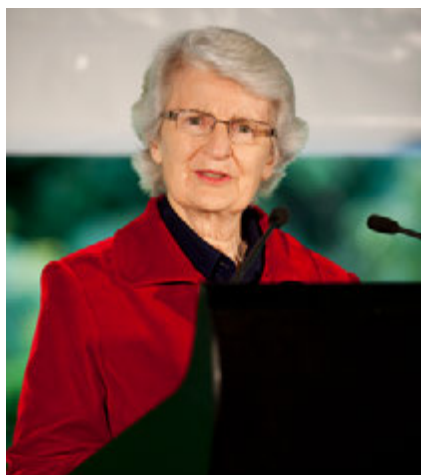
BEING HONEST, ETHICAL AND CONSIDERED,
AND HONOURING THE VALUABLE GIFT OF
PERSONAL INFORMATION FROM PARTICIPANTS.

As well as formal structures to ensure accountability, our researchers share their findings with the wider community via invited talks.

GOVERNANCE

Advisory Committee

The OTARC Advisory Committee meets quarterly to oversee the Centre's direction and operations.



Dr Sylvia Walton, AO

Chair

Dr Sylvia Walton, AO
Former Chancellor
of La Trobe University

Members

Professor Cheryl Dissanayake
Founder and Director of OTARC

Mr Doug Scobie
Centre Manager, OTARC

Professor Robert Pike
Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of
Science, Health and Engineering,
La Trobe University

Professor Stephen Kent
Head of the School of Psychology
& Public Health, La Trobe University

Professor Jayne Lucke
Chair, Australian Research Centre
in Sex, Health and Society

Ms Fiona Sharkie
CEO of AMAZE

Mr Dan Bognar
Parent Representative;
Senior Vice President,
Salesforce Asia-Pacific Region

Mr Stephen May
Director, Alumni and Advancement,
La Trobe University

Penny Robinson
Autism Advocate; Lecturer,
Monash University

Statement on Human Research Ethics Committee

All research at the Olga Tennison
Autism Research Centre is
undertaken with approval of the
La Trobe University Human Research
Ethics Committee (HREC).

INVITED TALKS

Lawson, L. & Haschek, A. *Research opportunities for people on the autism spectrum.* Invited talk to Specialisterne, Melbourne, Australia. February.

Barbaro, J. *Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism in Infants and Toddlers: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Mildura Base Hospital Presentation, Mildura. February. Talk also given at Mildura Rural City Council.

Barbaro, J. *Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism from Infancy to Preschool: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Mildura Rural City Council, Maternal and Child Health Training, Mildura. February.

Barbaro, J. *Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism in Infants and Toddlers: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* Australian Autism Cooperative Research Centre Webinar – Early Years. April.

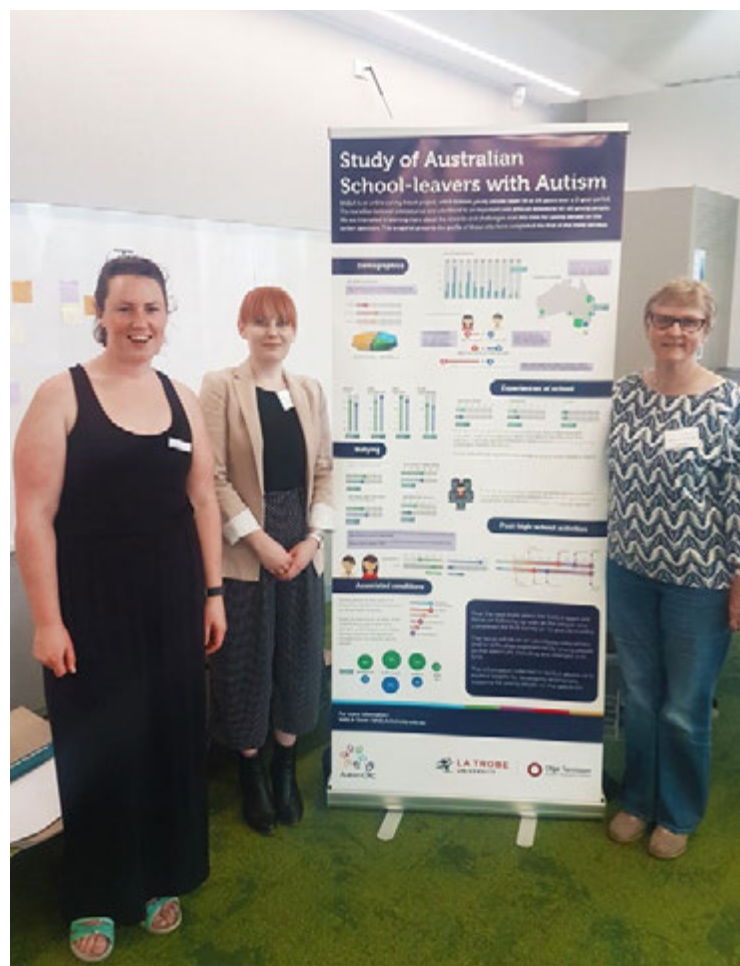
Flower R. L., & Hedley, D. *Autism in the workplace: The RISE at DHHS program.* In Diversity and Inclusion Community of Practice - Autism Awareness: RISE at DHHS. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Department of Health and Human Services, Melbourne. April.

Barbaro, J. *Universal Developmental Surveillance and Early Detection for Autism in Infants and Toddlers.* University of Salamanca Panel, Spain. May.

Barbaro, J. *Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism from Infancy to Preschool: The Social Attention and Communication Study (SACS).* University of Salamanca Training, Spain. May.

Dissanayake, C. *Autism in early childhood: An Australian Perspective.* Wales Autism Research Centre, Cardiff University, May.

Dissanayake, C. *Pretence and autism.* Pretence Workshop, Cardiff University, May.



Alex Haschek, Dr Bec Flower and Assoc. Prof Amanda Richdale at Monash University

Dissanayake, C. *10 years of research at the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre.* Department of Psychology and Counselling Research Colloquium, June.

Green, C, and Bent, C. *Autism Diagnosis in Adults.* Invited conference presentation. Dept of Human Services, Victoria, 14 June.

Dissanayake, C. *Acceptance Keynote for INSAR Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of Professor Margot Prior, International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.*

Barbaro, J. *Supporting children with Autism and their families in the early years: The importance of PlayConnect.* PlayGroups Australia, PlayConnect Toolkit Launch, Canberra. June.

Hudry, K. *Early Intervention for Autism: Informing "Choice and Control".* Invited presentation at Research Into Practice symposium, Telethon Kids Institute, Perth. 18 June.

Lawson, L. *Research opportunities for people on the autism spectrum.* Invited talk to Specialisterne, Melbourne, Australia. June.

Barbaro, J. *The early presentation of autism in infancy and toddlerhood.* Okey Dokey Psychology, Bayswater. July.

Richdale, A., Cai, R.Y., & Dissanayake, C. *Educational experiences and needs of Victorian TAFE and university students with autism spectrum disorder.* Presentation at Community of Practice Event, Neurodiversity Hub, Swinburne University. August.

Hudry, K. Three-minute pitch at Autism CRC Project Leaders Day: *Australian Infant Communication and Engagement Study (AICES) Update*, Brisbane. 28 August.

Hudry, K. LTU Research Week lunch-time seminar series on Social Inclusion: *Comparing outcomes of pre-schoolers with autism in mainstream inclusive vs. autism-specific settings.* 31 August.

Green, C. Guest lecture. *Autism Spectrum Disorders.* Child Neuropsychological Disorders course, University of Melbourne. 31 August.

Flower, R. *Autism and employment.* Invited talk to La Trobe Master of Business Administration students in the Values, Ethics, and Diversity topic, Melbourne, Australia. 27 October.

Richdale, A. *Asperger's and Sleep: Community Event.* Invited talk for Asperger's Victoria, Melbourne, Australia. 30 October.

Hedley, D. & Bury, S. M. *DXC Technology Dandelion Program: Longitudinal Findings and future directions.* Autism@Work Summit 2018. Melbourne, Australia. October.

Bury, S. M. *The psychology of hope.* Social Psychology Seminar. La Trobe University, Melbourne. Australia. October.

Richdale, A. *Sleep and autism.* Invited talk for speech pathologists and occupational therapists, Melbourne, Australia. 14 November.

Richdale, A., Flower, R., & Haschek, A. *Transitioning youth with autism: Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA).* Invited talk at Southern Higher Education Disability Network (SHEDN) – Professional Development Day: Sharing Strategies for Supporting Students, Monash University, Australia. 28 November.

CULTURAL QUALITY: INNOVATIVE

CREATING A PATH FOR SCIENCE TO POSITIVELY IMPACT
THE LIVES OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Baseline results from the Autism CRC Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism

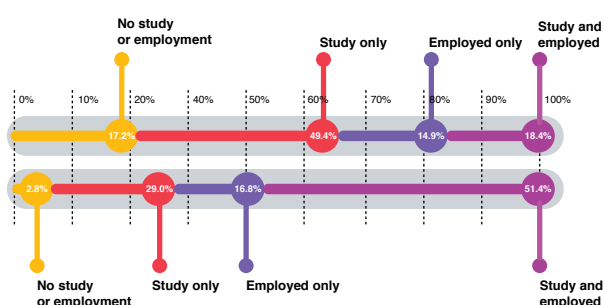
The Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA), led by Principal Research Fellow, Associate Professor Amanda Richdale, is an online survey-based project, which follows young people aged 15 to 25 years over a 2-year period.

The baseline results from the study include both demographic information and data about experiences at school and immediately afterwards.

You can find the full resource at:

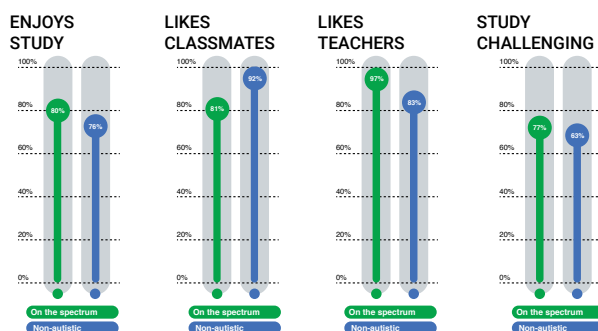
<https://www.autismcrc.com.au/knowledge-centre/resource/study-australian-school-leavers-autism-sasla>

Post-high school activities



"I just want to help others like me and I hope my information will help others. A lot of the questions hit home for me and made me think a lot, a great set of questions."
– TAFE student

Experiences at school





TRAINING FOR ALL VICTORIAN MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH NURSES IN THE EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM

In September, the Victorian Andrews government announced funding of \$1.1 million, which we will use to deliver face to face and online training in the early signs of autism, based on our Social Attention and Communication Surveillance approach. This project, led by Senior Research Fellow, Dr Josephine Barbaro, was commissioned in direct response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Services for People with ASD undertaken in 2016.

YOUNG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM CAN THRIVE IN MAINSTREAM CHILDCARE

A recently-completed study of 44 preschool children with autism attending the Victorian Autism-Specific Early Learning and Care Centre, showed equivalent educational outcomes regardless of whether children received intervention in a specialised or mainstream child care setting. This is a first step toward showing that quality early-intervention can occur within mainstream settings – without compromising child outcomes or the learning environment for peers. The study was funded by the Department of Social Services.

<https://www.latrobe.edu.au/news/articles/2018/opinion/new-research-increases-childcare-choices>

ASDETECT: AN ACCURATE METHOD OF EARLY AUTISM IDENTIFICATION

The study to evaluate our early detection of autism app, ASDetect, has been underway since early 2018. Preliminary data on parents' use of ASDetect indicates an accuracy of 84% in detecting autism in 11- to 30-month-olds, in a sample of 973 children to date.



CULTURAL QUALITY: CONNECTED

ACTIVELY CONNECTING HIGH-QUALITY SCIENCE WITH THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE.

We connect locally, regionally 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.

RESEARCH PARTNER

Co-operative Research Centre for Living with Autism

We are an Essential Participant in the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) which is the world's first national, cooperative research effort focused on Autism. Other participants include government, researchers from other universities, and not-for-profit organisations. The Federal Government and 56 participants have committed \$104.6 million over 8 years to provide lifetime solutions for individuals living with this complex and challenging condition.

The CRC and the outcomes from its three core research programs will ensure individuals with Autism:

1. Have a definitive diagnosis at an early age that can be coupled with a targeted early intervention strategy,
2. Will be educated in an appropriate environment by skilled professionals,
3. Will be given the best chance to find a meaningful and fulfilling place in society through higher education, employment and better opportunities for long term social relationships.

The CRC is based at Long Pocket in Brisbane in association with the University of Queensland. While research occurs at various locations across Australia, OTARC is coordinating two programs:

- ✘ Professor Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr Josephine Barbaro lead work on developmental surveillance and early diagnosis of autism.
- ✘ Associate Professor Amanda Richdale, together with Dr Lauren Lawson and Dr Bec Flower are studying the transition of post-school students into their early adulthood.



Building connections across disciplines

Publications by OTARC Researchers since 2010 cover a broad range of sub-disciplines, reflecting the complex nature of autism.

PUBLICATION ACTIVITY (FROM 2010 ONWARDS)		
SUB-DISCIPLINE	PUBLICATION COUNT	% ACTIVITY
Psychiatric & Behavioral Genetics	91	37
School Psychology	17	6.9
Speech Language & Hearing	16	6.5
Sleep	11	4.5
Educational Psychology	10	4.1
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	10	4.1
Child Development	6	2.4
Psychopharmacology	6	2.4
Pediatrics	6	2.4
Neuroscience Methods	6	2.4
Affective Disorders	5	2
Clinical Neurophysiology	5	2
Social Psychology	4	1.6
Pharmaco Economics	4	1.6

INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Google.org

As one of 10 finalists in the Google Impact Challenge Australia, OTARC accessed invaluable expertise from Google and from their partners Social Ventures Australia. This input has contributed to translating ASDetect into Mandarin Chinese and Spanish, thus extending the impact of our early detection work to children globally.



Salesforce.com

Salesforce.com is the world's leading CRM (Customer Relations Management) provider. Through its philanthropic arm, Salesforce.org, OTARC receives significantly price-reduced licences to a range of software that allows our researchers to connect and collaborate.



Specialisterne Australia

Originally a Danish company, Specialisterne Australia was established in 2015 to support and train adults with autism to find meaningful and productive jobs in established industries. It is co-located at La Trobe University.



DXC Technology Australia

In partnership with DXC Technology Australia, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Defence, the Dandelion Program provides skilled employment for people with Autism in Australia. OTARC continues its research partnership with these organisations to understand how having a job impacts the lives of those with autism.



JVC Kenwood

Dr Kristelle Hudry led a research project to test the feasibility of a new objective, non-invasive eye-tracking device, manufactured by JVC Kenwood Japan, called 'Gazefinder', for use with infants showing features of autism.



The Campbell Collaboration

The Campbell Collaboration promotes positive social and economic change through the production and use of systematic reviews for evidence-based policy and practice. Dr Darren Hedley conducted a systematic review of interventions for anxiety in children with autism.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

Victorian Maternal and Child Health Services

In 2018 we successfully tendered to train all 1250 Victorian Maternal and Child Health nurses to monitor the social attention and communication development of children aged between 11 and 30 months. This collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services ensures that all Victorian babies are routinely monitored for early signs of autism.



Department of Social Services

We continue to work with the five other national Autism-Specific Early Learning and Care Centres to conduct research on the learning outcomes of autistic preschool children.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The following community partners assisted with recruiting participants for the Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism:

Different Journeys

Autism Partnership (Vic + NSW)

ANU

UNSW

Curtin

RMIT

Aspergers VIC

Autism Behavioural Intervention Queensland (ABIQ)

Hearts & Minds

Autism SA

Autism QLD

Autism WA

Autism NT

APAC

Mansfield Autism Statewide Services

AMAZE

Autism West Support Inc

Sacred Heart College

ASPECT

Endeavour Foundation

Autism TAS

Catholic Regional College, Melton

UQ

RESEARCHER COLLABORATIONS

La Trobe University

Professor Dammina Alahakoon,
School of Business

Dr Alana Hulme Chambers,
La Trobe Rural Health School

Ms Agnes Hazi,
School of Psychology and Public Health

Dr Matt Hale,
School of Psychology and Public Health

Professor Teresa Iacono,
Head of La Trobe Rural Health School

Associate Professor Stephen Kent,
School of Psychology and Public Health

Dr Jennifer Spoor,
La Trobe Business School

Victoria

Dr Angelika Anderson,
Faculty of Education, Monash University

Professor Tim Bartram,
School of Business, RMIT

Dr Minh Bui,
Department of Statistics, University of Melbourne

Associate Professor Jeffrey Craig,
Early Life Epigenetics, Department of Paediatrics,
University of Melbourne

Professor Lesley Stirling & Dr Susan Douglas,
School of Languages and Linguistics,
University of Melbourne

Associate Professor David Godler,
Associate Professor Howard Slater and Associate Professor
Lesley Bretherton, Murdoch Children's Research Institute,
University of Melbourne

Dr Diane Jacobs,
School of Allied Health, Australian Catholic University

Associate Professor Neil McLachlan,
School of Psychological Sciences, University of Melbourne

Professor Dennis Moore,
Faculty of Education, Monash University

Professor Svetha Venkatesh,
Director of the Centre for Pattern Recognition
and Data Analytics, Deakin University

Professor Katrina Williams,
Royal Children's Hospital (Centre for Community Child
Health and Department of Developmental Medicine)

Ms Karen McKinnon and Ms Sussan Glenross,
Autism Partnerships

National

Dr Jill Ashburner,
Autism Queensland

Ms Kate Bowen,
Liverpool Hospital, Sydney

Professor Neil Brewer,
School of Psychology, Flinders University

Professor Valsamma Eapen,
Chair of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry,
University of New South Wales

Professor Torbjorn Falkmer,
School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work,
Curtin University

Dr Michael Gradisar,
Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences,
School of Psychology, Flinders University

Professor Adam Guastella,
Brain and Mind Centre, University of Sydney

Associate Professor Alison Lane,
School of Health Sciences, The University of Newcastle

Professor Nick Lennox,
Director, Queensland Centre for Intellectual and
Developmental Disability, Faculty of Medicine and
Biomedical Sciences, University of QLD

Associate Professor Murray Maybery,
School of Psychology, University of Western Australia

Associate Professor Simon Moss,
Charles Darwin University

Dr Jessica Paynter,
AEIOU Foundation, Queensland

Professor Liz Pellicano,
Department of Educational Studies, Macquarie University

Dr Lyndsay Quarmby,
Centre for Rural Health (CRH),
School of Health Sciences, University of Tasmania

Dr Michelle Short,
Centre for Sleep Research, University of South Australia

Associate Professor Kate Sofronoff,
School of Psychology, University of Queensland

Dr Lauren Taylor,
School of Psychology, University of Western Australia

Professor Julian Trollor,
Chair of Intellectual Disability Mental Health, Head,
Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry,
School of Psychiatry, University of New South Wales

Dr Marleen Westerveld,
School of Allied Health Sciences, Griffith University

Professor Andrew Whitehouse,
Telethon Institute for Child Health Research
and University of Western Australia

Associate Professor Robyn Young,
School of Psychology, Flinders University, SA

**Autism Specific Early Learning and Child Care National
Clinical Evaluation Group,**
includes researchers from University of New South Wales,
Griffith University, Curtin University, and the University of
Tasmania

International

Dr Eric Butter,
Nationwide Children's Hospital and
The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA

Professor Tony Charman,
Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London, UK

Professor Geraldine Dawson,
Duke University, USA

Professor David Evans,
Department of Psychology,
Bucknell University, Lewisburg, USA

Dr Eynat Gal,
University of Haifa, Israel

Professor Jonathan Green,
School of Medicine, University of Manchester, UK

Professor Mark Johnson,
Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development,
School of Psychology, Birkbeck College, London, UK

Dr Noomi Katz,
Ono Academic College, Israel

Professor Emiko Kezuka,
Gunma Prefectural Women's University, Japan

Dr Joanna Kwasiborska,
Speech Therapist (Adesse); Lecturer, Department of Speech
Therapy, Academy of Special Education, Warsaw, Poland

Dr Elizabeth Kryszak,
Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Ohio State
University, Columbus, USA

Professor Susan Leekam,
Chair of Autism & Director of the Wales Autism Research
Centre, Cardiff University, Wales

Dr Iliana Magiati,
Department of Psychology,
National University of Singapore, Singapore

Professor Beth Malow,

Kennedy Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, USA

Professor Helen McConachie,

Institute of Health and Society, Newcastle University, UK

Professor James A. Mulick,

Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA

Dr Midori Okuno,

Gunma Paz College, Japan

Professor Sally Rogers,

MIND Institute, University of California, Davis

Dr Atsushi Senju,

Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, Birkbeck College, London, UK

Dr Naomi Schreuer,

University of Haifa, Israel

Dr Vicky Slonims,

Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, London, UK

Associate Professor Chongying Wang,

Director of the Center for Behavioural Science, Medical School, Nankai University, China

Dr Jonathan Wilkins,

Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA

Dr Kent Williams,

Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio, USA

Visitors

Professor Nirit Bauminger-Zviely,

Head of the Autism Research Laboratory and Head of the Graduate Program for Autism Studies at Bar-Ilan University, Israel, spent two months of her sabbatical at OTARC.

Ms Pura Ballester-Navarro,

PhD Student from the University of Valencia, Spain, spent six months at OTARC.

Mr Dane Dougan,

Autism New Zealand and Dr Larah van der Meer from Victoria University in Wellington visited OTARC to explore collaboration opportunities.

Dr Mayada Elsabbagh,

Assistant Professor in Neurology, McGill University, Canada presented her research at the May Research Seminar. Mayada's research, in the area of early infancy and developmental disorders, is focused on understanding the brain basis of behavioural genetic disorders.

Mr Dan Feshbach,

American founder of Blue Umbrellas and father of a young autistic man is interested in progressing technology solutions for autism having done significant work in this area. He visited to find out more about the use of technology at OTARC.

Dana Fischer,

Department of Clinical and Health Psychology, Ulm University, Germany spent three months at OTARC and presented her PhD research at the September Research Seminar.

Dr Eynat Gal,

University of Haifa, Israel, spent six months at OTARC. She presented her research on eating problems and patterns in children with ASD at the March Research Seminar. She is also collaborating on research on autism employment.

Madam Do Thi Thanh Ha,

from Vietnam is building a Child Development Centre in Hanoi and is keen to promote evidence-based practice; she visited to garner the support of OTARC to deliver relevant training.

Professor Patricia Howlin,

Professor of Clinical Child Psychology at the Institute of Psychiatry, London visited to discuss current research and meet with OTARC researchers.

Dr Murray Maybery,

University of Western Australia, spent time with us on his sabbatical and presented his research on neurocognitive and biological correlates of autistic traits at the April Research Seminar.

Dr Efrat Selanikyo,

Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Ono Academic College, Tel Aviv, Israel, visited to establish a research collaboration. She also presented on the Roim Rahock program in the Israeli military at the April Research Seminar.

Professor Petrus de Vries,

Sue Struengmann Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Cape Town, visited OTARC and presented the August Research Seminar on autism in South Africa.

Dr Ji Wang,

Pediatrician and clinical researcher, Harbin Medical University and Hospital, spent 2018 with us as a Fellow to learn about early identification and intervention in autism and assisted us with the translation of ASDetect into Mandarin.

Professor Helen Tager-Flusberg,
Director of the Center for Autism
Research Excellence at Boston
University and from the Department
of Psychological and Brain Science
at Boston University and the
Departments of Anatomy and
Neurobiology and Pediatrics at Boston
University School of Medicine, visited
OTARC. She presented the December
Research Seminar.



MONTHLY RESEARCH SEMINARS

Intended as a professional development opportunity for both students and staff, as well as the wider La Trobe University community of researchers, these monthly seminars cover a wide range of topics in autism research.

SPEAKER	AFFILIATION	TOPIC	
Associate Professor Katherine Johnson	University of Melbourne	Response Inhibition and Attention Control in Children with and without ASD	February
Dr Eynat Gal	University of Haifa, Israel	Aut-Eat: assessing eating problems and patterns in children with ASD	March
Dr Murray Maybery	University of Western Australia	Neurocognitive and Biological Correlates of Autistic Traits	April
Dr Efrat Selanikyo	Ono Academic College, Israel	It Works: From meaningful military service to paid work in the free market	April
Professor Lesley Stirling	University of Melbourne	Collaboration and conversation: Interactional aspects of pretend play	May
Dr Mayada Elsabbagh	McGill University	Getting Answers from Babies about Autism	May
Dr Simon Bury	OTARC Postdoctoral Research Fellow	The Psychology of Hope	June
Dr Anna Urbanowicz	RMIT University	How can we improve access to quality health services for autistic adults in Australia?	July
Dr Susan Hayward	University of Melbourne	The occupational barriers and enablers for Australian women with high autistic traits	August
Professor Petrus J de Vries	University of Cape Town, South Africa	Autism in South Africa	August
Ms Dana Fischer	Ulm University, Germany	Can you feel the beat? The relationship of interoceptive processes and health-related variables	September
Dr Bec Flower	OTARC Postdoctoral Research Fellow	Current Research with OTARC	September
Professor Nirit Bauminger-Zviely	Bar-Ilan University, Israel	PPSI – Preschool Peer Social Intervention: promoting peer play, conversation and interaction in ASD	October
Professor Helen Tager-Flusberg	Boston University	Early Markers for Language Impairment in Autism	December

RESEARCH THEMES

Theme 1 – Early identification and diagnosis of autism

Identifying the early behavioural signs of autism in infancy and toddlerhood is critical to understanding how autism develops and manifests in the first years of life. This knowledge also assists in identifying and diagnosing children earlier, enabling them to receive intervention in their early and most important years.

Current studies

1. **Prospective identification of autism using developmental surveillance, Josephine Barbaro, Cheryl Dissanayake, Lyndsay Quarmby** (University of Tasmania), **Tony Barnett** (University of Tasmania), **Nancy Sadka & the SACS team**
Funding: Autism CRC
2. **Reducing the age of diagnosis of autism in Nepal: SACS-N, Rena Shrestha, Cheryl Dissanayake, Josephine Barbaro**
Funding: School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University
3. **Brief Autism Detection in Early Childhood (BADEC), Darren Hedley, Rose Nevill** (University of Virginia), **Robyn Young** (Flinders University), **Micah Mazurek** (University of Virginia), **Fei Nah** (Singapore National University)
4. **Approach and withdrawal in toddlers with ASD and developmental delays, Darren Hedley, Heather Nuske** (University of Pennsylvania)
5. **Developmental surveillance for autism in early childhood education settings, Beth Mozolic-Staunton, Michelle Donnelly, Josephine Barbaro, & Jacqui Yoxall** (Southern Cross University)
6. **Social attention and communication surveillance in Warsaw, Poland, Joanna Kwarsiborska-Dudek** (Academy of Special Education), **Przemyslaw Tomalski** (Faculty of Psychology, University of Warsaw), **Cheryl Dissanayake & Josephine Barbaro**

7. **Early identification of autism in Japan, Hiroko Kawashima, Cheryl Dissanayake, Darren Hedley, Emiko Kesuka** (Gunma Prefectural Women's University) & **Midori Okuno** (Gunma Paz College)

8. **Evaluation of ASDetect, Josephine Barbaro, Cheryl Dissanayake, Nancy Sadka, Lael Ridgway** (School of Nursing and Midwifery, La Trobe University)

Funding: School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University

Theme 2 – Intervention for children with autism and their families

There have been many studies to suggest that a child with a disability in general, and autism in particular, often poses increased distress and burden for the family. However, more recent evidence suggests that families also grow in positive ways as a result of the experience of caring for a child with a disability. There is still a lot of uncertainty about which factors contribute to which family experience and outcome. Knowledge about these factors is crucial for the development of programs to support families in their efforts to care for a child with autism.



Current studies

1. **Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention for Autism: Understanding 'What Works for Whom?' Cathy Bent, Cheryl Dissanayake, Kristelle Hudry, Katherine Pye, Giacomo Vivanti** (Drexel University), **Karen McKinnon and Susan Glenross** (Autism Partnership Australia)

Funding: Department of Social Services

2. **Comparing learning and social outcomes of preschoolers with autism in inclusive versus segregated settings: A Randomized Control Trial to test a new model of early intervention delivery, Cheryl Dissanayake, Kristelle Hudry, Alan Shiell, Cathy Bent, Giacomo Vivanti (Drexel University) & the Victorian ASELCC Team**

Funding: Department of Social Services

3. **How does parent coaching add value to evidence-based autism intervention? Kristelle Hudry, Katherine Pye, Xia Li, Cathy Bent, the Victorian ASELCC team, Giacomo Vivanti (Drexel University) & Mirko Uljaravic (Stanford University)**

Funding: Department of Social Services

4. **Supporting Best Practice in the Assessment and Treatment of Minimally Verbal Children with Autism, David Trembath, M. Tucker, Kristelle Hudry, Katherine Pye, C. Muckett, K. Fordyce, G. Hoppenbrouwers, A. DeBlasio, S. Webb, A. Joosten, R. Grove, J. Paynter, M. Westerveld, N. Maher, V. Rose, D. Keen, D. Eapen, S. Riley, T. Iacano, & Cheryl Dissanayake**

Funding: Department of Social Services

5. **Development and evaluation of a Family Support Program for newly diagnosed children with an ASD, Stacey Rabba, Cheryl Dissanayake, Josephine Barbaro**

Funding: Autism CRC

6. **How was your day? Lesley Stirling (University of Melbourne), Cheryl Dissanayake, Kate Sofronoff (University of Queensland), David Trembath, Marleen Westerveld (Griffith University)**

Funding: Autism CRC

7. **Randomised-Controlled Trial of Very Early Intervention for Infants at Risk for Autism, K. Hudry, J. Barbaro, T. Iacono, C. Dissanayake, V. Slonims, J. Green & A. Whitehouse**

Funding: RFA Understanding Disease, Partnership Grant & Autism CRC

Theme 3 – Success in adolescence and adulthood

While we know quite a lot about young children with autism, much less is known about older children and adults. We do know, however, that many young people with autism do not go on to tertiary education or apprenticeships after they graduate from school, and many adults with autism do not find work or work only intermittently. We know little of why this is and the factors that would assist young people and adults to complete further education and find and retain a fulfilling job.

Current Studies

1. **Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with autism, Amanda Richdale, Ru Ying Cai, Mirko Uljarević, Lauren Lawson, Rebecca Flower, Alex Haschek, Melanie Muniandy, Torbjorn Falkmer (Curtin University), Nick Lennox (The University of Queensland; 2014-2017), Julian Trollor (University of New South Wales), David Harley (University of Queensland; 2017-2021)**

Funding: Autism CRC

2. **Australian Longitudinal Study of Adults with autism, Julian Trollor (The University of New South Wales), Nick Lennox (The University of Queensland), Torbjorn Falkmer (Curtin University), Amanda Richdale, Mirko Uljarevic, Lauren Lawson, Rebecca Flower**

Funding: Autism CRC

3. **Tools, strategies and techniques developed to improve the health and wellbeing for adults on the autism spectrum, Nick Lennox (University of Queensland), Julian Trollor (University of New South Wales), Torbjorn Falkmer (Curtin University), David Harley, Amanda Richdale, Mirko Uljarevic**

Funding: Autism CRC

4. **Emotion regulation in school leavers with autism and its relationship with post-school outcomes, Ru Ying Cai, Amanda Richdale, Mirko Uljarevic & Cheryl Dissanayake**

Funding: Autism CRC

5. **Enhancing successful employment outcomes for people with autism, Darren Hedley, Cheryl Dissanayake, Amanda Richdale, Simon Bury & Mirko Uljarevic**

Funding: DXC Technology, Departments of Human Services and Defence

6. **Hiring people with autism: Examining the impact on the person and their workplace, Darren Hedley, Rebecca Flower, Jennifer Spoor, Tim Bartram & Cheryl Dissanayake**

Funding: La Trobe University School of Psychology and Public Health Engagement Income Growth Grants Scheme, Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (2018)

7. **Cognitive profiles associated with STEM occupations in ASD: Characterising the 'autism advantage', Eva Laurent, Amanda Richdale, Darren Hedley**

Funding: School of Psychology and Public Health

8. **Coping and resilience in autistic adults, Melanie Muniandy, Amanda Richdale**

Funding: Autism CRC

9. **Barriers to employment: Ratings of autistic and non-autistic candidates during a simulated job interview Rebecca Flower, Darren Hedley, Louise Dickens**

Theme 4 - Related conditions

Sleep difficulties and anxiety commonly occur in children and adults with autism and they can negatively affect learning, behaviour and family wellbeing. In adults these conditions impact everyday functioning in the community and workplace. We aim to develop a better understanding of these conditions, which ultimately will contribute to the development of better treatment methods both in Australia and overseas.

Current studies

1. **Relationship between intellectual ability, anxiety and sleep problems in adults on the autism spectrum, Amanda Richdale & Pura Ballester Navarro**
2. **Intervention for insomnia in adults with autism, Amanda Richdale, Eric Morris, Lauren Lawson**
Funding: Building Healthy Communities Research Focus Area grant
3. **An investigation of interoceptive ability in adults with and without autism: exploring the impact of power posing in improving interoceptive ability and emotional regulation, Tania Pietrzak, Amanda Richdale, Dana Fischer**



Alex Haschek, Dr Darren Hedley, Dr Simon Bury and Prof. Cheryl Dissanayake at the LTU Research Showcase

STAFF



Professor Cheryl Dissanayake
Director and Olga Tennison Chair in Autism Research

Congratulations to our Director and Chair who was recognised as an Australian Field Leader in Child and Adolescent Psychology in The Australian's 2018 Research Magazine.

She was also one of ten scholars to be recognised as an inaugural Fellow of the International Society for Autism Research.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australian Psychological Society (APS)

Amaze

International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)

COMMITTEE/ADVISORY BOARDS

Australasian Society for Autism Research, Co-founder and vice-President, 2011

Clinical Evaluation Group of the National Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centres, 2008

CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders Research and Developmental Committee, 2013

CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders Biobank Operations Committee, 2014

International Society for Autism Research, Fellow's Committee, 2018

Scientific Advisory Board, Raising Children's Network, 2015

Advisory Board, China Studies Research Centre, 2016

OTARC Advisory Committee 2008

School of Psychology and Public Health Senior Executive Committee, 2015

EDITORIAL BOARDS

Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders, 2016

Autism Research, 2016

LEADERSHIP

Fellow, International Society for Autism Research (invited 2018)

Senior Mentor, International Society for Autism Research (invited 2018)



**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
AMANDA RICHDAL**

Principal Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

European Sleep Research Society
College of Educational and Developmental Psychologists
Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Pediatric Sleep Association
Australasian Sleep Association
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)
Australian Psychological Society (APS)
Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability

COMMITTEE/ADVISORY BOARDS

Psychologists in Intellectual Disability
and Autism Committee
School of Psychology and Public Health Senior
Executive Committee
Chair of the EPIC Early Intervention Board of Management

EDITORIAL BOARDS

Autism Editor for Current Developmental Disorder Reports
Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders



DR JOSEPHINE BARBARO
Senior Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australian Psychological Society (APS)
College of Educational and Developmental Psychology
Intellectual Disability and Autism Special Interest Group
Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

COMMITTEE/ADVISORY BOARDS

Chair, Social Attention and Communication Study/Family Support Package
Advisory Group
Member, Menzies Memorial Scholars Association Advisory Group
Member, La Trobe University China Studies Contact Group



DR KRISTELLE HUDRY
Senior Research Fellow,
Victorian ASELCC

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australian Psychological Society (APS)
Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

EDITORIAL BOARDS

Associate Editor of Research in Developmental Disabilities
Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders



DR DARREN HEDLEY
Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australian Psychological Society (APS)
American Psychological Association (APA)
APA Division 33, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)
Australasian Society for Autism research (ASfAR)
International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD)
Society for Mental Health Research

EDITORIAL BOARDS

Autism: International Journal of Research and Practice
Guest Editor. Advantages and challenges of neurodiversity employment in organizations. Special Issue: Journal of Management and Organization.
Review Editor, Frontiers in Education: Special Educational Needs

DR SIMON BURY
Postdoctoral Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australian Psychological Society (APS)
Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
Society for Mental Health Research

DR LAUREN LAWSON
CRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

EMCR Brain Science Network
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
Australian Psychological Society (APS)
Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

DR BEC FLOWER
CRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

COMMITTEE

Working group advisor (Programs), Asperger's Victoria

DR CHERIE GREEN
Postdoctoral Research Fellow

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

DR CATHY BENT
Research Fellow, ASELCC

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

JODIE SMITH
Research Fellow, ASELCC

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Victorian Branch Executive, Speech Pathology Australia

DR RACHEL JELLETT
Postdoctoral Researcher

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Australian Psychological Society (APS)

Research support and administrative staff

Dr Melissa Gilbert

Research Officer

Dr Nancy Sadka

Research Officer,
Early Identification and Assessment

Alex Haschek

Research Officer

Doug Scobie

Centre Manager

Margaret Laughton

Administration Officer

Alex Aulich

Laboratory Coordinator

Mick Leahy

Marketing Officer

Melinda Denham

Communications Coordinator

Erin Beattie

ASDetect Officer

Mithun Roy

Database Officer

Radhika Nair

ASDetect Project Manager

Honorary members

Professor Margot Prior

Inaugural Chair of the OTARC Advisory Committee,
Honorary Research Professor at the University of Melbourne

Dr David Trembath

Senior Lecturer, Griffith University

Dr Giacomo Vivanti

Assistant Professor, Early Detection & Intervention Program,
Drexel University, USA

Dr Cynthia Zierhut

Early Days Autism Centre, USA

Adjunct members

Dr Nusrat Ahmed

Shuchona Foundation Bangladesh

Dr Philippe Chouinard

Senior lecturer, School of Psychology and Public Health,
La Trobe University

Dr Matthew Hale

Senior lecturer, School of Psychology and Public Health,
La Trobe University

Dr Yuan Gao

Independent Consultant, Beijing, China

Amanda Golding

Autism Family Support Association

Dr Oriane Landry

Adjunct Associate Professor, School of Psychology
and Public Health, La Trobe University

Dr Tania Pietrzak

Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Psychology
and Public Health, La Trobe University

Dr Lesley Stirling

Associate Professor, University of Melbourne

Dr Jennifer Spoor

Deputy Director MBA, La Trobe Business School,
La Trobe University

Dr Teresa Iacono

Professor of Rural and Regional Allied Health
La Trobe Rural Health School, La Trobe University

Michael Fieldhouse

Director, Emerging Businesses & Cyber Security
and Dandelion Program Executive at DXC Technology

Emmanuelle Walkowiak

Senior Lecturer, La Trobe Business School,
La Trobe University

PUBLICATIONS AND OUTPUTS

Journal Articles

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- Cai, R., Richdale, A. L., Dissanayake, C.** & Uljarevic M. (2018) Brief Report: Inter-Relationship between Emotion Regulation, Intolerance of Uncertainty, Anxiety, and Depression in Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 48, 316-325. 2018
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- Cai, R. Y., Richdale, A. L., Dissanayake, C., & Uljarević, M.** (2018). Cognitive reappraisal and psychological wellbeing but not autism spectrum disorder symptomatology is related to resting heart rate variability. *International journal of psychophysiology: official journal of the International Organization of Psychophysiology*. doi 10.1016/j.ijpsycho.2018.12.010
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Hedley, D., Cai, R., Uljarevic, M., Wilmot, M., Spoor, J.R., et al. (2018) Transition to work: Perspectives from the autism spectrum. *Autism: the international journal of research and practice*, 22, 528-541.

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Smith, J., Levickis, P., Eadie, P., Bretherton, L., Conway, L., & Goldfeld, S. (2018). Concurrent associations between maternal behaviours and infant communication within a cohort of women and their infants experiencing adversity.

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Uljarević, M., **Hedley, D.**, Nevill, R., Evans, D., **Cai, R. Y.**, Butter, E., & Mulick, J. A. (2018). Brief report: Poor self-regulation as a predictor of individual differences in adaptive functioning in young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Autism Research*. doi 10.1002/aur.1953

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Book Chapters

Dissanayake, C. (2018). Social behavior and social impairment. In F. Volkmar (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders*. Springer, New York, NY. doi:10.1007/978-1-4614-6435-8_106-3

Forrester, G., **Hudry, K.**, Lindell, A., & Hopkins, W.D. (Eds.). (2018). *Cerebral Lateralization and Cognition: Evolutionary and Developmental Investigations of Behavioral Biases* (Vol. 238). Academic Press.

Systematic Review Protocol

Hillman, K., Dix, K., Ahmed, K., Lietz, P., Trevitt, J., O'Grady, E., Kos, J., Vivanti, G., **Hedley, D.**, & **Uljarevic, M.** (2018, protocol accepted). Interventions for anxiety in school-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*. <https://campbellcollaboration.org/library/anxiety-in-school-aged-children-with-autism-spectrum-disorder.html>

Reports

Bent, C., **Pye, K.**, McKinnon, K., Glencross, S., **Dissanayake, C.**, Vivanti, G., & **Hudry, K.** (2018). *Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention for Autism: Understanding 'What Works for Whom?'* Report to the Department of Social Services. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Hedley, D., Spoor, J., **Bury, S.**, & **Dissanayake, C.** *The Dandelion Employment Program: Longitudinal Findings*. Report for DXC Technology. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Hudry, K., **Green, C.**, **Bent, C.**, & **Pye, K.** (2018). *Comparison across Early Intervention Delivery Methods: And How Does Parent Coaching Add Value?* Report to the Department of Social Services. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Hudry, K., **Pye, K.**, **Capes, K.**, **Bent, C.**, **Dissanayake, C.**, & Vivanti, G. (2018). *Victorian ASELCC Social Participation Trial*. Report to the Department of Social Services. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Hudry, K., Varcin, K., **Chetcuti, L.**, Boutrus, M., & Whitehouse A. (2018). *Gazefinder: Identifying Autism Early Using Eye-Tracking Technology: Report on Phase One of Collaborative Agreement*. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Lawson, L. P., **Haschek, A.**, and **Richdale, A. L.** (2018).

Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA): Baseline Characteristics. Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC), La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Conference Presentations

Bury, S. M., Hedley, D., & Dissanayake, C. *Dandelion Research Program: Mental Wellbeing.* 2018 Autism at Work Summit: Research Workshop. Seattle, USA. April.

Barbaro, J., Sadka, N., Dissanayake, C., & the SACS team. *Universal Developmental Surveillance for Autism in Infants, Toddlers & Pre-schoolers: The Social Attention and Communication Study-Revised (SACS-R) and SACS-Preschool.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Cai, R. Y., Richdale, A., & Uljarević, M. *Patterns of cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression use and relationship with psychological wellbeing in youth on the autism spectrum: A cluster analysis approach.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Dissanayake, C., Searles, J., Barbaro, J., & Sadka, N. *Cognitive and Behavioural Differences in Toddlers with Autism from Multiplex and Simplex Families.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Smith, J., Levickis, P., Eadie, P., Bretherton, L., Conway, L., & Goldfeld, G. *Associations between maternal behaviours and mother-child conversation at 12 months and child language at 36 months in a cohort of women and their children experiencing adversity in Australia.* Speech Pathology Australia Conference, Adelaide, 27-30 May.

Hedley, D. *Employment, mental health and wellbeing.* AIM transition to further education and employment symposium, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 13-14 July.

Richdale, A. *Predicting depression symptoms among adolescents on the spectrum.* The 13th International Conference on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology. Kuching, Sarawak Malaysia. 6-8 August.

Barbaro, J. *Advances in the Early Detection of Autism.* Invited presentation at the Safe Sleep Space Conference, Melbourne Convention Centre, Melbourne, Australia. August.

Flower, R. L., Hedley, D., & Hofmann, C. *Hiring individuals*

with autism: Examining the impact on the individual and their workplace. Disability Employment Australia Conference, Adelaide. September.

Bury, S. M., Hedley, D., & Dissanayake, C. *Longitudinal study of predictors of mental health and well-being in adults with autism in a supported employment setting.* Society for Mental Health Research. Noosa, Australia. November.

Bent, C., Yaari, M., Green, C., Hudry, K. & the Vic ASELCC team. *Characteristics associated with individual differences in developmental gains across one year of early intervention.* Australasian Society for Autism Research. Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Bury, S. M., Hedley, D., Uljarević, M., & Gal, E. *The autism advantage at work: A systematic review of the evidence concerning the relationship between restricted and repetitive behaviours and interests and work performance.* Australasian Society for Autism Research. Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Clark, M., Vinen, Z., Barbaro, J. & Dissanayake, C. *Social competence, problem behaviours and school adjustment of children who were diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder before and after 3-years of age.* Australasian Society for Autism Research. Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Hudry, K., Varcin, K., Whitehouse, A.J.O. & The AICES Team. *Validation of the Autism Observation Scale for Infants (AOSI) in a Community-Referred Sample.* Australasian Society for Autism Research conference, Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Joveska, S., Richdale, A., Lawson, L., Arnold, S., & Trollor, J. *Sleep quality and the autism spectrum from adolescence to old age.* Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR) conference, Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Sahin, E., Richdale, A. & Lawson, L. *Are sleep and mental health associated with vocational independence in young people on the autism spectrum?* Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR) conference, Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Stirling, L., **Dissanayake, C.**, Sofronoff, K., Trembath, D., Westerveld, M., Ashburner, J. & Pamment, L.. *How was your day? Parent, teacher and child perceptions of communication about the school day with children on the autism spectrum.* Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR), Gold Coast. 6-7 December.

Poster Presentations

Alvares, G., Dawson, P., **Dissanayake, C.**, et al. *The Australian Autism Biobank: A national initiative to accelerate ASD discovery research.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Barbaro, J., Sadka, N., Nadachowski, W., Burnside, M., Burnside, L., **Dissanayake, C., Leahy, M., Denham, M & the ASDetect team.** *Early Detection of Autism Using a Mobile Application: ASDetect.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Bent, C., Hudry, K., Maya, J., Dissanayake, C., Rankin, R. et al. *Pilot RCT of early-intervention delivered in inclusive vs. autism-specific settings: Blinded proximal outcomes.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Berends, D., Dissanayake, C., & Lawson, L. *Differences between multiplex and simplex autism: Does parent experience contribute to differences in cognitive and behavioural development?* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Capes, K., Hudry, K., Upson, S., Feary, J., Duncan, E., Bent, C., Rankin, R., Dissanayake, C., Pye, K., & Vivanti, G. *Feasibility, Acceptability and Effect on Classroom Teaching of Delivering Early Intervention in an Inclusive Setting.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Granich, J., A. Clark, A., Busacca, M., Moore, D., Anderson, A., Venkatesh, S., Duong, T., Vellanki, P., **Richdale, A. L.**, Whitehouse, A.J. et al *Parenting stress, self-efficacy and empowerment in primary caregivers of children with autism spectrum disorder receiving Ipad-based early intervention: Outcomes from the Toby trial.* Poster at the International Society for Autism Research meeting, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Hedley, D., Spoor, J., Uljarevic, M., Cai, R., Moss, S., Richdale, A., Bartram, T., & Dissanayake, C. *An Optimistic Outlook Concerning Employment: High Tech Meets Autism Spectrum Disorder.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Hedley, D., Uljarević, M., Foley, K. R., **Richdale, A. L.,** Trollor, J. *Mechanisms underlying thoughts of self-harm and depression in autism spectrum disorder: Findings from a nationally representative sample.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Lawson, L., Joshi, R., Barbaro, J., Dissanayake, C. *Gender Differences during Toddlerhood in Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Community-Based Longitudinal Follow-up Study.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Lawson, L. & Richdale, A. *Factors associated with post-secondary school independence among young Australians on the autism spectrum.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Hudry, K., Bent, C., Maya, J., Rankin, R., Dissanayake, C., Upson, S., Feary, J., Capes, K., Duncan, E., Vivanti, G., and the Victorian ASELCC Team. *Pilot RCT of Early-Intervention Delivered in Inclusive Vs. Autism-Specific Settings: Blinded Proximal Outcomes from LENA Recordings and Classroom Footage.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Lawson, L., Joshi, R., Barbaro, J., Dissanayake, C. *Gender Differences during Toddlerhood in Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Community-Based Longitudinal Follow-up Study.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Lawson, L. & Richdale, A. L. *Factors associated with post-secondary school independence among young Australians on the autism spectrum.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Richdale, A. L., Lawson, L. P., & Uljarević, M. *Predicting poor sleep quality in young adults on the autism spectrum.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Uljarević, M., **Hedley, D.,** Magiati, I., Rose-Foley, K., **Cai, R.-Y., Dissanayake, C., Richdale, A., & Trollor, J.** *Age related patterns of Anxiety and Depression in Autism Spectrum Disorder.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Uljarević, M., **Hedley, D.,** Rose-Foley, K., Magiati, I., **Cai, R.-Y., Dissanayake, C., Richdale, A. L., & Trollor, J.** *Anxiety and depression from adolescence to old age in autism spectrum disorder.* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 9-12 May.

Shrestha, R., Barbaro, J. & Dissanayake, C. *Changes in Knowledge on the Early Signs of Autism among Female Community Health Volunteers in Nepal* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Stirling, L., Douglas, S., **Dissanayake, C.**, & Conte, S. *Engaging the play partner in pretence: Verbal and non-verbal signalling between children with autism and their parents* International Meeting for Autism Research, Rotterdam. 9-12 May.

Richdale, A. L., & Lawson, L. *Predicting depressive symptomatology in older adolescents on the autism spectrum. Symposium: Mental Health and Autism Spectrum Disorder.* International Conference on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Kuching, Malaysia. 6-8 August.

Flower, R.L., Hedley, D. *Hiring individuals with autism: Examining the impact on the individual and their workplace.* La Trobe University Research Showcase, Melbourne. 28 August.

Haschek, A., Lawson, L., & Richdale, A. L. *Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA) Snapshot.* La Trobe University Research Showcase, Melbourne. 28 August.

Haschek, A., Lawson, L., & Richdale, A. L. *Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA) Snapshot.* Safe Sleep Space National Conference, Melbourne. 31 August.

Richdale, A. L., & Roussis, S. *Sleep problem severity and behaviour in children with autism aged 2-to 5-years.* DownUnder 2018, 30th ASM of Australasian Sleep Association and the Australasian Sleep Technologists Association, Brisbane, Australia. 17–20 October.

Haschek, A., Lawson, L., & Richdale, A. L. *Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA) Snapshot.* Best Practice for Children with Autism: Community Information Session, Bendigo, 22 November.

Hedley, D., Spoor, J., Uljarevic, M., Cai, R., Moss, S., Richdale, A. L., Bartram, T., & Dissanayake, C. *An Optimistic Outlook Concerning Employment in Autism.* Poster presented at the 4th Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR) conference, Gold Coast. 6-7 December.

Haschek, A., Lawson, L., Flower, B. & Richdale, A. L. *Longitudinal Study of Australian School Leavers with Autism (SASLA) Snapshot.* Poster presented at the 4th Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR) conference, Gold Coast. 6-7 December.

Foley, K-R., den Houting, J., Arnold, S., **Lawson, L.**, Arnold, S., **Richdale, A. L.**, & Trollor, J. *Preferred terminology for autism in the autistic community.* e-Poster rapid presentation at the Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR), Gold Coast. 6-7 December.

Nuske, A., Rillotta, F., Bellon, M., & **Richdale, A. L.** *Transition to higher education for students with autism: A systematic literature review.* e-Poster rapid presentation at the Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR), Gold Coast. 6-7 December.

Hudry, K., Varcin, K., Chetcuti, L., Boutrus, M., Bent, C. & Whitehouse, A.J.O. *Feasibility and preliminary efficacy of Gazefinder eye-tracking for use with infants showing early signs of autism.* e-Poster rapid presentation at the Australasian Society for Autism Research, Gold Coast, Australia. 6-7 December.

Media activity

Dissanayake, C.
(2018, 10 March)

How you see this optical illusion might reveal a lot about you

The Sydney Morning Herald

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/how-you-see-this-optical-illusion-might-reveal-a-lot-about-you-20180309-p4z3kg.html>

Richdale, A. L.
*mentioned
(2018, 11 March)

Sleep: it's what's important for autism
ASF Weekly Science Podcast (USA)

Richdale, A. L.
(2019, 9 April)

Strategies for helping autistic children (and their families) get a good night's sleep

ABC Life

<https://www.abc.net.au/life/how-to-help-children-with-autism-get-a-good-nights-sleep/10974346>

Richdale, A. L.

(2018, 4 April)

Ask me first: What self-assessments can tell us about autism

Spectrum

<https://www.spectrumnews.org/features/deep-dive/ask-first-self-assessments-can-tell-us-autism/>

Dissanayake, C., & Green, C.

(2018, 6 June)

Growth spurt in head, skeleton mark autism in boys

Spectrum

<https://www.spectrumnews.org/news/growth-spurt-head-skeleton-mark-autism-boys/>

Hedley D., & Uljarevic, M.

(2018, 24 July)

The Link between Autism and Suicide Risk

Interactive Autism Network

<https://iancommunity.org/aic/link-between-autism-and-suicide-risk>

Green, C.

(2018, 6 August)

New research links accelerated head growth and autism

Disability Support Guide

<https://www.disabilitysupportguide.com.au/talking-disability/new-research-links-accelerated-head-growth-and-autism>

Dissanayake, C.

*mentioned

(2018, September)

Research September 2018 – The Australian special reports
<https://specialreports.theaustralian.com.au/1163512/>

4-7 September 2018

Announcement of autism training package for Maternal Child Health nurses generated extensive coverage, Dr Barbaro and Prof Dissanayake interviewed across many outlets, including:

- ☒ Commercial radio: Light FM (Melbourne), Southern Cross in regional Victorian centres, , Imparja Alice Springs, Triple M, The Border, hit104.9 Albury, Triple M Goulburn Valley, hit96.9 Goulburn Valley (Shepparton), Triple M Bendigo
- ☒ ABC radio: Melbourne, ABC Central Victoria, ABC Mildura - Swan Hill (Mildura), ABC Western Victoria (Horsham)

- ☒ Television news/current affairs: Channel Nine news in all capital cities, WIN regional news nationally

- ☒ Online news: ABC Online, ONE News, Yahoo! News Australia, Yahoo! New Zealand, SBS.COM.AU, Mirage News, WEB MSN Australia

Barbaro, J.

(2018, 4 September)

It's hoped children living with autism will now get a better start to school life, thanks to new training for healthcare workers.

Nine News Melbourne

<https://twitter.com/9NewsMelb/status/1037209992795971584>

Barbaro, J., & Dissanayake, C.

(2018, 5 September)

Victoria's Maternal and Child Health nurses to learn to identify autism spectrum disorder

Bendigo Advertiser

<https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/5628876/maternal-and-child-health-nurses-to-learn-to-identify-autism/>

Barbaro, J.

(2018, 7 September)

Autism test 'best in world'
The Advertiser (Adelaide)

Dissanayake, C.

(2018, 18 September)

Detection of autism boost
Preston Leader

Dissanayake, C.

(2018, 19 September)

Early diagnosis key
Diamond Valley Leader, Nillumbik

Barbaro, J.

(2018, 8 October)

Early diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder

ABC RN Life Matters

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lifematters/its-not-autism-its-just-his-personality/10333832>

Dissanayake, C.

(2018, 9 October)

La Trobe university to showcase autism app for China

Mirage News

<https://www.miragenews.com/la-trobe-university-to-showcase-autism-app-for-china/>

Hedley D., & Uljarevic, M.

(2018, 10 October)

The Link between Autism and Suicide Risk

Autism Spectrum News Vol.11 No.2

<https://autismspectrumnews.org/asn-fall-2018-issue/>

10 November – 20 December 2018

The results of Dr Hudry's social inclusion study generated extensive coverage, interviews and articles across many outlets, including:

- ☒ Radio: GOLD104.3, Regional AM Radio; 2SM (Sydney), 2AD (Armidale), 2DU (Dubbo), 2EL (Orange), 2GF (Grafton), 2LM (Lismore), 2MG (Mudgee), 2MO (Gunnedah), 2NZ (Inverell), 2PK (Parkes), 2TM (Tamworth), 2VM (Moree), Triple Z (Lismore)
- ☒ Television news/current affairs: Channel Nine news in all capital cities, NBN and Southern Cross regional news nationally
- ☒ Online news: MENAFN, Daily Bulletin, viw.com.au, newspronto.com, Australian Business, modernaustralian.com, LiveNews.co.nz, ForeignAffairs.co.nz, TheSector.com.au, ParentHub, EssentialKids, EducationToday, UKEdChat, Medical News Life Sciences

Hudry, K., & Capes, K.

(2018, 10 November)

Children with autism show improvements in mainstream schooling

9News.com.au

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/2018/11/10/21/49/autism-school-children-mainstream-classes-la-trobe-university-melbourne>

Hudry, K.

(2018, 28 November)

Autism research: La Trobe University study finds no advantage in specialised classes
Herald Sun

Hudry, K.

(2018, 27, 28 November)

Autism learning Revolution

Preston Leader and Herald Sun, Northcote Leader

Hudrey, K., & Bent, C.

(2018, 30 November)

Young children with autism can thrive in mainstream childcare

The Conversation

<http://theconversation.com/young-children-with-autism-can-thrive-in-mainstream-childcare-104936>

Barbaro, J.

(2018, 9 December)

Jenni 'JWoww' Farley opens up about son's autism diagnosis

The New Daily

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/life/wellbeing/2018/12/09/jenni-jwoww-farley-son-autism/>

Dissanayake, C.

(2018, 10 December)

DXC launches programme to help people on the autism spectrum build ICT careers

CIO

<https://www.cio.co.nz/article/650603/dxc-technology-launches-programme-help-people-autism-spectrum-build-ict-careers/>

Richdale, A. L.

*mentioned

(2018, 17 December)

The Problem with This Year's Most Comfortable Holiday Fad

The Atlantic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2018/12/weighted-blanket-history-holiday-gift/578347/>

RESEARCH GRANTS

New Grants

1. Aulich, A., Richdale, A. L., Morris, E., Bent, C., Lawson, L., Cavuoto, M., & K. Hudry. **La Trobe University Research Infrastructure Grant** (2018). Purchase of Actiwatch Spectrum Plus for the School of Psychology and Public Health.
2. Barbaro, J., (CIA), Nair, R., Dissanayake, C., Manzano, J., Scobie, D., & Alvarez, N. **Department of Education and Training, Victorian Government** (2018 – 2019). *Maternal & Child Health Workforce Professional Development Training on Autism*
3. Dissanayake, C., Barbaro, J., Shiell, A. & Williams, K. **NHMRC Project Grant** (2018-2022). *School-age Outcomes of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Parental Wellbeing: Investigations on the contribution of Method-of-Referral and Age-of-Diagnosis.*
4. Hedley, D., Flower, R., Spoor, J., & Bury, S. **Department of Health and Human Services** (2018). *Hiring people with Autism: Examining the impact on the person and their workplace.*
5. Lawson, L., Haschek, A., & Richdale, A. L. **La Trobe University Social Research Assistance Platform** (2018) *Validation of the Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale (LEAS) for Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum.*
6. Lietz, P., Kos, J., O'Grady, E., Trevitt, J., Hedley, D., Vivanti, G., & Uljarević M. **Campbell Collaboration Grant** (2017-2018). *Interventions for anxiety in school-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): A systematic review.*
7. Hobbs, Lawson, L., Schurholz, Sing, and Jenkins. **La Trobe University Research Culture Fund** (2018) *Do you care? Early parenthood and caring responsibilities for early career researchers.*
8. Hudry, K., Bent, C., Pye, K., Capes, K., Rankin, R., Green, C., Iacono, T., & Pellicano, E. **Building Healthy Communities Research Focus Area Collaboration-Ready grant, La Trobe University** (2018-2019). *Fostering Inclusion and Participation for Pre-Schoolers on the Autism Spectrum.*
9. Richdale, A. L., Morris, E., & Lawson L. **Building Healthy Communities Research Focus Area grant, La Trobe University** (2018). *Addressing insomnia in autistic adults.*
10. Waddington, H., & Barbaro, J. **University of Wellington**

(2018). *Training Plunket Nurses to Identify Risk for Autism in Young Children in New Zealand.*

Ongoing Grants

- Dissanayake, C., & Barbaro, J. **Autism CRC Core Program 1** (2014–2017). *Project 1.005RC, Developmental Surveillance for ASD.*
- Dissanayake, C., Hudry, K., Shiell, A., & Vivanti, G. (Drexel University) and the Victorian ASELCC Team. **Department of Social Services** (2016–2019). *Comparing learning and social outcomes of pre-schoolers with autism in inclusive versus segregated settings: A randomized controlled trial to test a new model of early intervention delivery.*
- Dissanayake, C., Hudry, K., Vivanti, G. (Drexel University) and the Victorian ASELCC Team. **Department of Social Services** (2016–2019). *Early intensive behavioural intervention for autism: Understanding 'what works for whom?'*
- Dissanayake, C., Richdale, A. L., Hedley, D. & Uljarevic, M. **Hewlett Packard Australia** (2015–2018) *Successful employment outcomes for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.*
- Dissanayake, C., Richdale, A. L., Hedley, D., & Uljarević, M. **Hewlett Packard Enterprise and the Australian Government Department of Defense** (2016–2018) *The Dandelion program.*
- Hudry, K., Barbaro, J., Iacono, T., Dissanayake, C., Maybery, M., (University of Western Australia) & Whitehouse, A. (Telethon Kids Institute). **Autism CRC** (2016–2019). *A randomised-controlled trial of a parent-mediated therapy for infants showing early social-communication delays.*
- Richdale, A. L., Falkmer, T., Lennox, N., & Troller, J. **Autism CRC Core Program 3** (2014–2017). *Project 3.016RC, Unique ASD Profile School Leavers.*
- Richdale, A. L., Falkmer, T., Lennox, N., & Troller, J. **Autism CRC Core Program 3** (2014–2017). *Project 3.012RC, Base Resources Project.*
- Whitehouse, A., Dissanayake, C., Eapen, V., & Heussler, H. **Autism CRC Core Program 1** (2014–2017). *Project 1.001RC, Base Resources Project.*

STUDENTS

A total of 25 students (Honours, Masters, Doctoral and PhD candidates) undertook their research at the Centre during 2018.

Successful completions in 2018

PhD

Peter Fanning

Early learning and intellectual development in Autism

Supervisors: Dr Giacomo Vivanti, Dr Darren Hocking and Professor Cheryl Dissanayake

Ru Ying Cai

Painting a picture: Profiles of school leavers with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Supervisors: Associate Professor Amanda Richdale and Professor Cheryl Dissanayake

Honours

Grace Christou

Comparison of the Early Developmental Trajectories of Multiplex and Simplex Autism.

Supervisor: Professor Cheryl Dissanayake

Louise Dickens

The effects of disclosure on perceived employability of adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Supervisor: Dr Rebecca Flower

Sanya Jovevska

Sleep problems in adolescents and adults with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder: examining gender and age-related differences

Supervisor: Associate Professor Amanda Richdale (Dr Lauren Lawson, co-supervisor)

Rosanna Pingitore

Examining the relationship between interoceptive sensibility, alexithymia, autism traits and disordered eating traits in the general population

Supervisor: Dr Tania Pietrzak and Associate Professor Amanda Richdale

Ensu Sahin

Does mental and physical health influence independence in young people with ASD?

Supervisor: Dr Lauren Lawson
(Associate Professor Amanda Richdale, co-supervisor)

Current Students

PhD

Lacey Chetcuti

Temperament among infants showing early signs of ASD

Supervisors: Dr Kristelle Hudry and Dr Mirko Uljarević

Hiroko Kawashima

Promotion of early identification of ASD in rural Japan

Supervisors: Professor Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr Darren Hedley

Eva Laurent

Cognitive profiles associated with STEM occupations in autism: Is there really an autism advantage?

Supervisors: Associate Professor Amanda Richdale, Dr Darren Hedley and Professor Cheryl Dissanayake

Joanne McIntyre

Decreasing defensive responses: an intervention study of emotional regulation, social engagement, auditory processing and motor skills in children with Autism

Supervisors: Dr Darren Hocking and Dr Darren Hedley

Katherine Natoli

Sex Differences in Cognition, Core Autism Symptoms and Comorbid Symptoms in Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Supervisor: Dr Kristelle Hudry

Stacey Rabba

Development and evaluation of a Family Support Program for newly diagnosed children with an ASD

Supervisors: Professor Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr Josephine Barbaro

Rena Shrestha

Identifying Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Nepal: Implementing and Evaluating Social Attention and Communication Surveillance

Supervisors: Professor Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr Josephine Barbaro

Melanie Muniandy

Social Support, coping, and resilience in adolescents and young adults on the autism spectrum

Supervisors: Associate Professor Amanda Richdale and Dr Lauren Lawson

Master of Science**Rachael Rankin**

Factors Influencing Burnout in Therapists Delivering Early Intervention to Children with Autism

Supervisor: Dr Kristelle Hudry

Stefanie Dimov

Language development and joint attention in infants showing early signs of ASD

Supervisors: Dr Kristelle Hudry and Professor Teresa Iacono

Master of Clinical Psychology**Daniel Berends**

ASD outcomes as a function of cognitive compensation

Supervisor: Dr Kristelle Hudry (Cathy Bent, co-supervisor)

Alexa Chalmers

Influence of Autism Symptoms and Transdiagnostic factors on Anxiety, Depression and Insomnia in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Supervisor: Associate Professor Amanda Richdale (Dr Lauren Lawson, co-supervisor)

Ashlee Hancock

Caregivers' Experiences of Using ASDetect: A Mobile Application for the Early Detection of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Supervisor: Dr Josephine Barbaro

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report of the Olga Tennison
Autism Research Centre for the year
ending 31 December 2018.

INCOME: FOR THE PERIOD 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2018

	2017	2018
Research Grants	671,769	1,512,657
Research Donations	755,136	500,000
Commercial income	198,192	172,778
Other Grants		7,228
Other Donations	37,600	27,890
Internal income/transfers	151,289	75,290
In-Kind Contributions	212,065	292,425
Investment income	103,114	99,235
Other income	73,998	446,908
Total income	2,203,163	3,134,410

EXPENDITURE: FOR THE PERIOD 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2018

Employee salaries and on costs		1,767,463	2,401,710
Academic (continuing and fixed-term staff)		941,616	1,398,372
Academic (casual)		119,042	27,305
Administrative (fixed-term staff)		463,959	839,099
Administrative (casual)		244,846	75,696
Other salary costs		0	61,238
Non-salary costs		622,690	721,378
Infrastructure	IT, maintenance, services	66,213	151,473
Depreciation		37,105	23,974
Professional fees	Externally contracted services	127,520	206,079
Student related	Scholarships, stipends, training	107,110	135,463
General operating	Consumables, stationery, minor equipment	60,147	23,179
Staff (non-salary) costs	Incl. travel, accommodation and incidentals	144,975	80,394
Sundry items and other expenses		79,620	100,816
Total expenses		2,390,153	3,123,088
Year operating result		-188,990	11,322
2017 carry-forward		452,219	263,229
Net operating result		263,229	274,551

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

LA TROBE IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

	2017
Research Centre Support	60,000
School Support (includes salary support for nominated positions)	232,425
Research Focus Area support	
Total	292,425

OTARC GOALS

At OTARC we instigate positive change for autistic people by:



Leading research that enables early identification, diagnosis and intervention



Developing and evaluating innovative approaches that enrich the lives of autistic people



Generously engaging with stakeholders in research development, knowledge transfer and successful implementation of research findings



Training the next generation of outstanding autism scholars and clinicians



Achieving research and operational excellence

CONTACT DETAILS

OTARC

Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

General enquiries

T +61 3 9479 2497

E otarc@latrobe.edu.au

latrobe.edu.au/otarc



facebook.com/OlgaTennisonAutismResearchCentre



twitter.com/OlgaTennison

latrobe.edu.au