



New Early Intervention Funding for Children with Autism

25 June 2008. Autism Spectrum Australia welcomes the federal government announcement today to provide access to essential early intervention support for children under the age of six diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Autism Spectrum Australia is Australia's largest autism-specific service provider. For children under six it offers an early intervention service and is the Australian distributor of AutismPro (a web based program for families).

Adrian Ford, Chief Executive Officer of Autism Spectrum Australia says, "One of our priorities is to extend early intervention services. This package is a very significant step forward for young children with an ASD and their families."

The government estimates 9,000 children diagnosed with ASD will be eligible to receive up to \$6,000 in early intervention services per year for 2 years before they go to primary school, under the *Helping Children with Autism* program.

Adrian continues, "This will for the first time, enable families across Australia to receive a substantial package of autism-specific funding over a 2 year period. They will be able to access specialist early intervention services from authorised providers."

Further, Adrian Ford said, "Autism-specific early intervention services are invaluable for children diagnosed with an ASD. This is the period in their lives when much can be achieved by applying a comprehensive educational approach that best suits the particular child and their family.

This must be done in a close partnership between families and specialist providers who can work together to help achieve the child's developing potential as they get ready for school. This level of funding will do much to address both the needs of these children and the support required of their families."

For Immediate Release