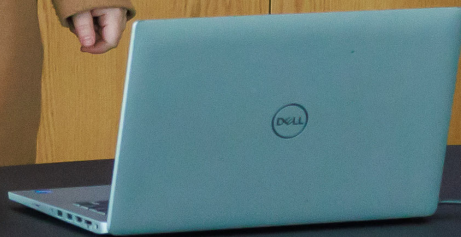
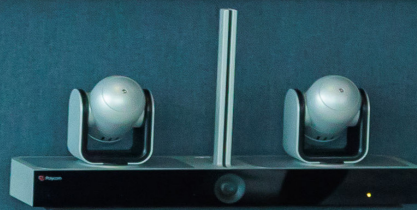


Aspect Autism Friendly 2024

aspect
Autism Spectrum Australia

Autism Friendly



Creating an autism-friendly Australia

a different
brilliant®

Understanding,
engaging and celebrating
the strengths, interests and
aspirations of people
on the autism spectrum.

Acknowledgment of Country

Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present.



Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia)

Level 5, Tower B, The Zenith, 821 Pacific Highway Chatswood 2067

Phone: 1800 277 328

Aspect Autism Friendly

Together, we can create an autism-friendly Australia



About Us

Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia) is Australia's largest service provider for people on the autism spectrum. Our specialised, evidence informed schools program is one of the largest in the world, with additional services that include information and advice, diagnostic assessments, behaviour support, parent and family support, and adult programs. We share evidence-informed autism practice and applied research nationwide.

Aspect's Autism Friendly team consult with a wide range of organisations including airports, shopping centres, retailers, museums, art galleries, councils, sports and stadiums. Our model is 'working in partnership' between Autistic and non-Autistic people, and between Aspect and our partner organisations. All of our work is based on our Autism Friendly Framework – a comprehensive approach to accessibility and inclusion of people on the autism spectrum.

Our team consists of Autistic people who provide both their professional and lived experience perspectives on how organisations can be more accessible and inclusive of Autistic people, and those with other hidden disabilities.

Our Autism Friendly Framework is informed by Autistic involvement, evidence-based research, and Aspect's 50+ years of good practice knowledge. We use the Autism Friendly Framework to guide all of our work.

Autism Friendly Framework



Culture of inclusion



Preparation & predictability



Structure & visual organisation



Sensory adaptations



Communication supports



Proactive problem solving



Staff training



Review and improvement

Aspect Autism Friendly



Rebecca McCash,
Autism Friendly
Consultant



Develop and deliver services in partnership with people on the autism spectrum



Make inclusion a business advantage



Create positive impact



Drive research informed solutions



Rely on a legacy of trust and transformation



Build capacity and cultivate understanding



Avoid the business cost of exclusion

Why choose Aspect Autism Friendly?

Develop and deliver services in partnership with people on the autism spectrum

Aspect Autism Friendly is a service that is an inclusive and genuine collaboration between Autistic and non-autistic staff. We firmly believe that true autism-friendly initiatives can only be achieved by actively co-producing our service with Autistic people. This commitment to authentic partnership ensures that our work is not only accurate but also genuinely effective in creating an inclusive and supportive environment for everyone.

Make inclusion a business advantage

Recognising that 1 in 5 Australians live with a disability, with 80% or more with a hidden disability, Aspect Autism Friendly illustrates that embracing autism-friendly practices is not only an act of inclusion but a strategic business decision. As our society increasingly values diversity, creating environments that are truly inclusive and accessible for Autistic individuals and those with hidden disabilities is not just a moral imperative – it's a strategic business advantage.

Create positive impact

We make adaptations to environments to ensure Autistic individuals and their friends and families can practically access a space and fully participate in society. Testimonials and feedback highlight the tangible difference we make in the lives of Autistic individuals and communities. We can help you become a changemaker in a world that is not designed to be autism-friendly and help to create a world that is.

Drive research informed solutions

Aspect Autism Friendly is dedicated to achieving gold standard inclusion through a robust research-based framework. We conduct original research and employ established research-led methodologies, ensuring a thorough and participative approach to our processes. Continual improvement is central to our ethos, as we regularly review and integrate relevant research to maintain a cutting-edge and evidence-based approach.

Rely on a legacy of trust and transformation

As a nationally recognised organisation, Aspect has a legacy extending over five decades, establishing ourselves as a trusted brand in autism research and practice. Aspect Autism Friendly has over 8 years of dedicated service delivery, and has consistently evolved and refined its offerings. Our track record includes numerous delighted partners such as Sydney Airport, Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) and Disney, spanning key sectors such as retail, transport, arts and culture, sport and business.

Build capacity and cultivate understanding

We recognise and respect the unique expertise of our partners in their area of work, and aim to build capacity in alignment with the specific environment and preferences of our partners. Through the establishment of long-term and trusted partnerships we embark on a journey of mutual learning, evolving together over time. Our collaborative approach fosters mutual growth, lasting partnerships, and a shared vision for a more inclusive Australia.

Avoid the business cost of exclusion

Overlooking the importance of autism-friendly practices can inadvertently result in hidden costs for businesses, from loss of customer base, to a less engaged workforce. Neglecting to address the needs of staff members with hidden disabilities, such as autism and their support networks, may result in decreased morale, productivity, and overall job satisfaction. Our mission emphasises the importance of autism-friendly practices, not just for the direct benefit of Autistic individuals but for the broader societal and economic benefits of embracing diversity.

Working in partnership



Cultural institutions

Museums, Zoos, galleries, exhibitions



Sports and exercise

Sports clubs, sporting events and activities



Retail

Shopping centres, shops



Airports and transport

Airports, trains, trams



Educational institutions

Universities, TAFE and schools



Stadiums and events

Sports stadiums and concerts



Conferences

Large and small scale conferences



Businesses

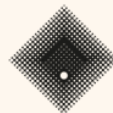
Corporates, small businesses, not-for-profits, social enterprises



Other

Get in touch today to see how we can cater to you or your businesses needs.

Our partners



"We are proud to work with Aspect's Autism Friendly team and create a soccer clinic that is accessible for children on the autism spectrum."

— DANNY EGARCHOS, COMMUNITY MANAGER AT WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS

"Inclusion is really important. It's important that everybody in our community is made to feel welcome."

- TOM TUTTON



Our Services: embracing diversity and inclusion

What is an Environmental Assessment?

An environmental assessment involves one or more autistic people walking through an environment or activity, assessing autism friendly features whilst it is being used on a typical day and time. The Autistic consultant describes moment-to-moment positives, challenges and stressors, and these are logged by a walkthrough partner, who then writes a report.



This information can then be used in a variety of ways:

- To make changes in the environment that make it more generally accessible and inclusive
- To create genuinely inclusive events
- To develop resources (like sensory maps and visual stories) that provide important information to people before they visit
- To identify and promote the unique positive aspects of the place or activity

"Some of the things in the room which we thought would be overstimulating, like a bouncing LED light, were actually supported by Aspect. They also pointed out a few things to remove which we hadn't even considered like hand dryers in the nearest bathrooms."

— Asher Nowlan, MCC's Customer Service and Accessibility Manager

What is a visual story?

Visual stories are used to prepare a person for, and increase the predictability of a new environment or situation. This helps bring familiarity to a process and to reduce anxiety and stress.

Visual stories provide helpful information about the process, sensory experiences and hidden curriculum rules. These are best identified through an environmental assessment. Visual stories use videos, photos and icons, and are written in plain english to be accessible for as many people as possible.



What is a sensory map?

A sensory map is a simple way to identify areas of an environment where there are potentially overwhelming sensory experiences – loud, smelly, bright, crowded – and where to find quieter, calmer areas.

Sensory maps give customers with sensory processing differences, like autism, an opportunity to plan ahead before visiting new environments, and better navigate situations that may overwhelm or cause anxiety or stress.



What is a quiet or sensory space?

Quiet spaces are designed for anyone needing a short time away from the stress and stimulation of an environment. A quiet space should feel relaxing, and have limited sensory input to support people to calm down, or feel safe to meltdown.

Sensory spaces (or sensory playground/ exploration spaces) are designed to provide opportunities for people to seek positive sensory experiences, supporting them to regulate and relax through a variety of sensory options. These can include different types of seating, opportunities for movement, and sensory adaptation and activities (i.e. light, sound, tactile etc).

Both types of rooms help to reduce anxiety and stress, just in different ways. Offering a variety of options allows people the opportunity to use their own strategies to stay calm and complete their journey.



OUR SERVICES

Flexible training options

One of the main barriers to accessing programs and environments is that Autistic people are often not understood or made to feel like they are not welcome. This can be because hidden disabilities can be difficult to identify, and often staff just don't know how to understand, relate to or support someone on the autism spectrum.

Our training model is flexible to suit your needs. We offer face to face training workshops or can create webinars and customised learning modules for distance learning. Training can be tailored to the audience, for example customer facing staff, or HR or managers employing Autistic people. The content can also be tailored to focus on either:

- Neurodiversity
- Hidden disabilities
- Supporting people in a quiet room
- Built environment design
- Activities/programs

Matthew and Emma presenting Autism Friendly work at the FAMS Conference, 2023



Rebecca and Tom conducting team training at Sydney Airport, 2024



Communication Board – Before Security Screening (Passenger)

GCA GOLD COAST AIRPORT

I need help HELP	I am lost, where do I go? ?	Where can I collect a suitcase (luggage)? ?	I will spell it. Can you spell it? SPELL IT	I don't understand ?
I have lost something ?	Where do I check in? Where do I get my ticket? ?	Where is the quiet room? ?	I will write it down ?	Can you slow down what you are saying? SLOW DOWN
Have my flight details changed? ?	Where is bag drop? ?	Where is baggage claim? ?	I need my headphones ?	Please wait for my response PLEASE WAIT
I have an emergency ?	Where is security screening? ?	Where is pickup? ?	Where is the toilet? ?	What I want to say is not on this board ?

Communication board at Gold Coast Airport

NO YES

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0
Q W E R T Y U I O P
A S D F G H J K L
Z X C V B N M ?
Spacebar

I'll start again
Can you write it down?
I need some help
Finished

GCA GOLD COAST AIRPORT

Visual communication supports

Some people with hidden disabilities communicate non-verbally, or become non-verbal when feeling overwhelmed. Visual communication supports can help people who communicate differently to understand each other and get their needs met. This includes:

- People who cannot talk out loud, or who become non-verbal when overwhelmed
- People who have speech that is difficult for others to understand
- People who use languages other than English
- Frontline staff

Communication boards use pictures/icons and text to identify key information, locations and questions. Aspect can advise on the development of visual communication supports, including key concepts and recommended visuals, and review resources. The organisation will be responsible for the design and production of the resources, with support from Aspect.



Autism Friendly team members Emma and Tom with Emma Watkins (Emma Wiggle) at Disney's Beauty and the Beast Musical Relaxed Performance in Brisbane, 2024

Events and initiatives

Aspect can allocate consultation hours to provide guidance on the development of inclusive events and/or initiatives, including:

- Quiet hours
- Early access/adapted events
- Adapted programs (i.e. sport/art/education)
- Tours
- Relaxed performances

Additionally, we can promote your initiatives through our social media platforms, our Autism-Friendly event calendar, newsletters, and to our large school network and communities. We can also engage with traditional media outlets to coordinate coverage. And we will support you to design genuinely inclusive promotions of your services that will engage the Autistic community.



OUR SERVICES

Implementation checks

Implementation checks are an essential element of a quality assurance approach. As part of the environmental assessment, recommendations will be provided that form part of a checklist that represents good practice, accommodations and processes.

Audits are essential to demonstrate good practices are in place and help to continuously develop ideas to improve your environment for customers with hidden disabilities.



Custom consults

Our Autism Friendly team understands that every organisation has unique needs and challenges when creating inclusive environments. Custom consults offer a tailored approach to support your journey toward becoming autism-friendly. Through these consultations, we collaborate closely with your team to understand your specific goals to work out what best suits you.



Built environment design

While there has been significant work in developing physically accessible environments, there has been no universal approach for autism friendly design, and often little research, evidence or consensus that includes meaningful autistic input. To address this, the Autism Friendly team has developed a list of good practices for designing autism-friendly spaces.

Aspect can provide built environment design guidelines for use by your organisation's design team when planning new spaces or offices. This includes one education session with designers.



Aspect Practice Think Tank

The Aspect Practice Think Tank comprises of Autistic adults who provide input and advice on a wide variety of projects.

Aspect can:

- Conduct either a 2 or 4 hour Think Tank session to provide feedback
- Host online meeting and record the session for feedback purposes only

Resource review

Aspect Autism Friendly team can review existing resources and provide feedback on how to adapt resources to be more accessible for Autistic people and those with other hidden disabilities.



Aspect Western Sydney School, Wetherill Park, 2024

"Aspect's Autism Friendly training was amazing and I highly recommend that it be more openly available to anyone working in customer service both inside and outside of educational roles" – CLIENT



Aspect Autism Friendly

For businesses looking to create more accessible and inclusive environments and experiences, Aspect Autism Friendly is your indispensable partner.

Working in partnership with organisations and Autistic people, we provide evidence-informed, authentic advice and practical strategies to ensure that everyone – be it customers or staff – is made to feel welcome, accepted and included.

It just makes good business sense... and it's the right thing to do.

Get in touch

E: autismfriendly@aspect.org.au

W: [aspect.org.au/our-services/autism-friendly](https://www.aspect.org.au/our-services/autism-friendly)

[Complete the Autism Friendly enquiry form](#)



Autism Friendly

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