

A Message from Luke

Edition 1 - June 2010

Welcome to the first edition of the Luke Priddis Foundation's (LPF) newsletter **Puzzle Pieces**.

Why puzzle pieces? Jigsaw pieces are the international symbol for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). These puzzle pieces represent the complexity involved in diagnosing and treating ASD and the mystery surrounding identifying the cause and finding a cure for this developmental disability. The Luke Priddis Foundation is working towards joining some of these pieces for families who are affected by ASD.

As a father of four kids with a demanding job, I know the challenges our household faces on a daily basis. Having a child with ASD can put added pressure on relationships, day to day activities and family time. Just like many other families in a similar position, sometimes it can feel like we are living and breathing ASD in our house. Together we can work towards making a real difference to kids with ASD and their families.



Recently we launched our first ever direct mail donation appeal. If you made a donation we are very grateful and you will be receiving your tax deductible receipt any day. As the co-founder of the Foundation I want to thank you all for your support, and as the father of a son with ASD I thank you on behalf of the hundreds of other families and children who are helped in some way by your support.

2010 promises to be an eventful year. We will be holding a community forum on the 9th of August to help educate parents, families and professionals about ASD, we will be launching our first playgroup for children with ASD, and also commencing MyTime (respite) support groups.

The LPF has been working to form a relationship with the University of Western Sydney (UWS) and we are excited to announce that the LPF offices have moved to the UWS Kingswood campus, located within the special needs precinct of the University (just off Second Street). Indications have been given that University land will be made available for the first LPF Autism Specific Early Intervention Centre of Excellence (ASEICE), providing for a strong future.

Enjoy our newsletter and stay tuned for future editions.

If you are thinking of making a donation, now is the time with the 30th of June fast approaching! This would allow for your tax deduction to be claimed this year.

Luke Priddis, Director of the Luke Priddis Foundation

From the Prime Minister

On the day of our fourth annual Walk for Autism, David Bradbury presented the Luke Priddis Foundation and Little by Little Inc with a letter from the Prime Minister in support of our work to support kids with ASD. We thank Mr Rudd for this recognition. It's heartening that all our hard work and the support of our community has received attention from such a high office!

I commend the Luke Priddis Foundation and Little by Little Inc for their important work in increasing the community awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders and in raising money to help those affected.

Prime Minister Mr Kevin Rudd

Your Donations At Work

Community Services Funding Grants

Each year LPF offers grants to organisations that provide early intervention services to kids with ASD and their families. Over the past few years the Foundation has provided more than \$60,000 in funding to help these worthy groups help our kids.

Our grant money goes towards providing additional education support, technical equipment, software, reference books and much more. Here are some organisations that have received grant money from the Foundation.

- Lapstone Preschool Early Development Program
- Early Education (Early Ed) Inc at Rosehill
- Kingswood South Public School
- Lifestart Nepean
- Autism & Aspergers Support Group Inc, Inner West
- St Anthony's Family Care, Croydon
- Pendle Hill Public School's Early Intervention Class
- Windsor South Public School's Early Intervention Class
- KU Starting Points Playgroup, Penrith



Case Study

St Anthony's Family Care

The Luke Priddis Foundation had the pleasure of presenting a cheque to St Anthony's Family Care at Croydon to assist with the purchase of a development assessment tool.

This tool allows for standardised measurement of motor function skills, performance & participation for all 58 children who currently access their Early Intervention Services.

Coming Soon...

Playgroups, MyTime Sessions and Workshops

We have a fantastic announcement! LPF will be establishing Playgroups for kids aged 0 to 6 years with ASD or ASD-like symptoms.

Our Playgroups will be a local first as we will be running the groups on Saturdays.... so everyone (not just the primary carer) can attend. The first Playgroups will be located at St Marys Public School where parents, siblings, grandparents and other family members are welcome to come and play in a relaxed and understanding environment. Once our first Playgroup is up and running, we will be looking to establish further Playgroups in the region. We will select locations based on where these groups are most in demand.

LPF will also be establishing MyTime groups for families of children with ASD and other special needs, to be run on Saturdays following our Playgroup sessions. The MyTime groups will be attended by a facilitator to assist family members as they share stories, information and support with other families and carers in a similar situation while the children are kept active and busy by a play helper.

We are very excited about setting up these new groups as we see this as an important service for the ASD community.

LPF will also be holding ASD workshops and seminars towards the end of the year to help educate parents and professionals who work with children with ASD. To find out more about these sessions, please stay tuned to our website www.lukepriddisfoundation.com.

Date for your Diary

Community Forum - Monday, 9th of August 2010

The playhouse at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) will host well known local child psychologist John Blythe to present an overview of ASD. The forum will also include information stalls from local Early Intervention service providers in the area who will be on hand to provide information, support and answer any questions you might have.

Mark this date down in your diary and pass the word around to any family and friends who might be interested.



Recent Events

Walk for Autism

The Luke Priddis Foundation, in partnership with Little by Little Inc, ran the fourth annual Walk for Autism on the 30th of May.

In amongst weeks of torrential rain and 'severe weather warnings' Sunday, 30th of May was beautiful. The perfect day to escape the house and enjoy the sunshine while supporting a worthy cause!

We had approximately 350 registrations for the walk including a few special guests. Our own Federal MP, David Bradbury and his family showed their support, along with state opposition leader Barry O'Farrell and his team. Penrith's Labor and Liberal bi-election candidates John Thain and Stuart Ayres also joined us for the walk.

Our loyal supporter Jim Aitken OAM was in attendance to officially open the walk. Jim once again was our major event sponsor. Without his help the walk would not have been such a success. Nepean Rotary and Yarramundi Rural Fire Brigade manned the BBQ while the kids kicked around a ball at the AFL clinic which was run by the Glenmore Park/Emu Plains Junior AFL Club, had their faces painted by the wonderful volunteers from the Kurrambee School community and visited the animals at the petting zoo. We send out a big thank you to all the supporters of this event. We saw some new faces on the day alongside our loyal supporters and friends. It's great to see how much the kids have grown since the last walk. Thank you to all the Kurrambee School volunteers who showed up en masse to assist.



“ Everyone came together for a good cause - to help kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders & special needs. ”
Allen Cullen, Chairman of Little by Little Inc

2010 Golf Day

The 2010 Luke Priddis Foundation Golf Day was held on Friday, 5th of March at Penrith Golf Club. The 113 players who joined us on the day enjoyed a BBQ breakfast, 18 holes of golf, a BBQ lunch, drinks and prizes. The Foundation was also proud to welcome three of our loyal Ambassadors, Petero Civoniceva, Tim Grant and Meredith Smith.

Once again our loyal and much appreciated supporters at Penrith Air Supply were our gold sponsors, making the day a huge success, with over \$15,000 raised for the Foundation and 113 players enjoying a great day on the course.

Make a difference...

Help us to continue supporting these wonderful kids and their families by making a donation.

By donating now, you can help enable us to employ additional support staff for our new Playgroups and MyTime groups. \$2,000 per group per year will provide

family members with much needed assistance so they can make the most of these sessions. Any amount you can afford will help us fund this support.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible, so as we approach the end of the financial year, please keep us in mind!

Donation

\$35 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 Other \$ _____

Visa Card Master Card Cheque *Please make cheque payable to: Luke Priddis Donations.*

Name on Card: _____

3 digit code: _____

Card number: _____

Expiry date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Ongoing Support

I would like to find out more about making regular monthly donations. I would like information about giving through my Will.

ASD Services & Funding

Funding Opportunities for Kids with ASD

Paying for all the early intervention services required to support your child with ASD can certainly add up! To help families access additional funding, here is a brief summary of some funding opportunities available. Visit our website www.lukepriddisfoundation.com for more information.

LUKE PRIDDIS



FOUNDATION

- The government has extended the FaHCSIA funding for children with ASD. Families can now access up to \$12,000 over two years for their child with ASD up until the child reaches the age of seven. www.fahcsia.gov.au
- Children with ASD (and their families) can now access over 35 sessions of treatment per year and receive rebates through Medicare, with no age limit! Go to www.health.gov.au for more information.
- DADHC has money available to families who are participating in a project they fund or co-fund. The money is available upon request to assist with the purchase of equipment to complement the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). For more info you can contact DADHC in your area. www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au
- Under the 'Helping Children with Autism' package, children under 13 can access four assessment sessions (over their lifetime) and those 15 and under can access 20 treatment sessions (over their lifetime). www.fahcsia.gov.au



ASD Supplies

Sensory Tools store is now open at Hobartville (near Richmond NSW) for all your sensory / OT needs. If you don't live nearby and want to find out more, give them a call on (02) 4578 6123.

Looking for a weighted blanket or toys to help with sensory regulation? Try **Nanas Weighted Blankets**, in Newcastle NSW, started by a grandmother of a child with ASD www.nanasweightedblankets.com

Behind the scenes

A Big Thank You to our Supporters

Here are just a few of the many organisations who have supported LPF over the years:

- Cellarbrations Kingswood
- Harvey Norman Auburn
- Computer Air Services
- Timeline Photography
- Penrith Air Supply
- Coca-Cola Amatil
- St George Illawarra Dragons
- SEI Carbide Australia
- ANZ Mobile Lending
- Penrith Limousines
- HomeScaff NSW
- JennyRen Gifts
- Westpac Penrith
- Rawson Homes
- K D Furniture
- Penrith Myer
- Jim Beam
- Fosters

Volunteer

Do you have skills and abilities that would be useful to the Luke Priddis Foundation? Are you an excellent speaker, a great event planner, a whiz in administration or can you cook a mean snag? We need community champions to volunteer their time, skills and energy to help the Foundation reach its goals.

If you can help out we'd love to hear from you. Please email or phone Shonagh at the LPF office on (02) 4732 4992 or email enquiries.lukepriddisfoundation@bigpond.com to discuss possible opportunities.

eNews

You can help us save money and trees by electing to receive our newsletter via email. Simply email Shonagh at enquiries.lukepriddisfoundation@bigpond.com to let us know and to make sure we have your email address.



Did you know?

Studies show that 1 in 160 Australian children aged between 6 and 12 yrs have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. ¹

However, some researchers suggest this figure could be closer to 1 in 100. ²

¹ Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders, 2007

² Gillberg & Wing, 1999

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Supporting Kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders