

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 April 2016 1:26 PM  
**To:** FCDC  
**Subject:** Submission: Inquiry into services for people with ASD

To Whom It May Concern

I am emailing my thoughts in regards to the Inquiry into services for people with ASD.

My 11 year old daughter is on the Spectrum and my experience is as follows:

Initially when there were questions raised as to whether something wasn't "quite right" with my daughter she was in Kindergarten, traits were evident, but often classed as "quirky" rather than autistic .

Primary school, these traits became more evident and after following through the procedures of the State school assessment, all I was told was "she doesn't have a disability". Through my own personal persistence, and after a waiting period of eight months to see a local Paediatrician she was finally diagnosed, Aged 8 and placed on the Autism spectrum.

Concern: The lack of services/resources provided to Kindergartens and Schools, to ensure early detection

Concern: To be diagnosed before the age of 6YO is too young, especially for females, whose traits are often overlooked until much later

Concern: Wait time to see a local specialist

My daughter currently struggles with some social skills and is also quite significantly behind in schooling. In 2015 she attended a social skills course at a cost of \$1,300 and gained important social and self awareness skills that are already making a difference. Our family paid the full amount for this course and it is not recognised as a valid service like speech pathology, etc, where you can often get funding help to cover some or all the costs.

Concern: What services/products/etc are deemed vital - alternative methods need to be considered - Each child on the spectrum can have quite unique traits and therefore different strategies/resources are required for the child to progress in life - sometimes we need to think outside the box.

Who knows what the future holds for my daughter and family, but I do believe that "Prevention is better than a Cure", therefore ASD needs help NOW! ASD is not something you grow out of and a lot of ASD people need help and support now and in the future to ensure they are able to contribute to society by being able to work, socialize and survive. Surely people working and contributing to society is a better option than people on the Government handout line.

Concern: Recognition of ASD being a very real issue that need funds and support to help develop ways to change peoples lives with ASD for the good of not only themselves but society as well

Concern: The role out needs to be sped up, 2019 for the Hume region is to far away

Thank you for your time in reading my submission.

Jo Backway



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