

From: Inquiry into Abuse in Disability Services POV eSubmission Form
<cso@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 22 April 2016 2:32 PM
To: FCDC
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Ms Sherri Cincotta
T: 0437 407608
E: info.creatingconnections@gmail.com

Director
Creating Connections Australia Pty Ltd




SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Terms of Reference:

b) the availability and adequacy of services provided by the Commonwealth, State and Local Governments across health, education, disability, housing, sport and employment services.

We have identified a crucial gap in the education system for people on the Autism Spectrum where the individuals attend mainstream school settings. Having many of our clients as well as our own children attend mainstream schools, we have experienced an overall misconception about Autism and how it presents in individuals who are 'higher functioning'. It is our experience that students are expected to fit within the mainstream education ideology with very little support for those inherent characteristics of Autism. Teacher education and professional development that focuses on how to best support and work with autistic characteristics is lacking, and often when teachers are seeking support from us it is without the backing of funding or the ability to pay for professional development. Professional development is necessary in order for schools to provide the best possible support for autistic students, but having the right classroom and learning environments are also crucial, and at present time (our experiences show) many of these are also failing to provide adequately for sensory needs. Every student has a right to be educated and provisions need to be made to be inclusive of all differences.

Through the work that we do with Creating Connections Australia it has become evident to us that there is a lack of understanding and knowledge about Autism Spectrum in many sectors. We continue to work with young adults who find it incredibly difficult to gain employment because employers are unaware of the challenges that these young people face on a day to day basis. Things such as the way in which the work environment is set up – noisy, crowded workspaces, bright and overstimulating rooms, the requirement to be social with work colleagues, just to name a few.

We have worked closely with disability service organisations to assist them to acknowledge and help support both their clients and employees who are on the Autism Spectrum. The disability sector is in need of education and training particularly because they work with and directly support people with Autism. In our experience, many people working within the field have very little formal training in Autism and lack the

understanding of how best to support people on the spectrum.
We hope the inquiry will help in working towards addressing some of these issues.

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File1:

File2:

File3: