



Positively
changing the
lives of
children with
autism ...
together

Creating brighter futures for children with autism

Early intervention should be a right for every child, not a privilege.

Right now, thousands of Australian children with autism are missing out on vital early intervention in Australia. You can join AEIOU Foundation to help close this gap.

The simple ability to communicate a need, a want, or an emotion such as fear, love and happiness makes an enormous difference to a child's life and everybody in that child's life. For many families, living with autism is incredibly challenging, with parents often experiencing social, financial and vocational disadvantages.

With this in mind, AEIOU provides children with the best opportunity to reach their full potential in life and provides families with unprecedented support, through training, advice, sharing of resources and much more.

Research shows children with autism have the best chance in life if they have access to best practice early intervention. AEIOU early intervention program is the only one of its kind in Australia. The Foundation has achieved great things for our children and their families.

But, there's more to be done. This year, as we celebrate a 'decade of difference' for children with autism, we are focusing our efforts toward establishing a national service. We want to provide all children with access to our evidence based early intervention program.

To do this, AEIOU plans to construct purpose-built facilities in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Canberra, each able to provide placements for 40 children, and their families.

There is no reason why any child with autism should be denied a key opportunity in life.

With your help, AEIOU can provide that opportunity.



What we do at AEIOU Foundation

AEIOU Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation and one of Australia's leading providers of full-time early education and therapy support for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), aged two to six years.

Founded ten years ago by Brisbane parents Dr James Morton AM and his wife Louise after their son Andrew was diagnosed with autism at two years of age. AEIOU Foundation operates from 8 locations across Queensland, including Brisbane, Toowoomba, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Bundaberg and Townsville. We proudly established our first interstate centre in Adelaide last year, putting us on track to achieve our plan to provide services throughout Australia to meet the need.

The Foundation's unique program is based on a curriculum that has been specifically developed to meet the needs of children with ASD and their families.

Impacts of the program include:

- AEIOU's program helps children with autism develop language, social, play, and fine and gross motor skills, as well as self-help strategies to interact with their environment
- We employ 160 staff, and enrol more than 220 children across our centres each year - that's half of all Queensland children with autism aged 2 ½ and 6 years
- Around 90% of children that complete the program can communicate functionally
- Around 75% of children that complete the program transition to mainstream schools
- It is estimated that for every year of early intervention that a child with autism receives, there is a community cost saving \$2 million over the lifetime of the individual

Each child is supported by a dedicated team comprised of skilled learning facilitators and staff from disciplines of speech pathology, occupational therapy, behavioural therapy, child psychology and early childhood teaching. Our high staff-to-child ratio of 2:1 is unique and integral to the success of our curriculum for our children.

All children are supported to achieve their own individual goals, with an emphasis on achieving and celebrating milestones that many of us might take for granted. School readiness and transition support is an important part of the AEIOU program. Support is provided for the child's transition to their future educational setting.

AEIOU has partnered with Griffith University to deliver an Autism Centre of Excellence, and has also created a Research Advisory Group to foster collaboration across disciplines and undertakes sustainable research to benefit children with ASD and their families in the future. AEIOU has established centres at Central Queensland University Bundaberg Campus and the University of the Sunshine Coast Sippy Downs Campus.

The program we deliver changes the trajectory of children's lives, and we are committed to expanding our services around Australia so that no child misses the opportunities of a fulfilling life.

Our Vision for Children with Autism

At AEIOU, we believe that every child with autism has the right to a brighter future. AEIOU has succeeded because our program works. There are thousands of children within Australia who would benefit from our program and it is the resolute of our Board that with the support and partnerships of philanthropic minded Australians, we will deliver our life-changing program to each State in Australia.

Max's story

My husband and I are from Melbourne, and lived in Qatar for nine years. Our son Max was born in Qatar in January 2009.

Max lost words after turning two, he did not communicate, and he had poor eye contact and demonstrated repetitive movements with his hand. A speech therapist who I met at one of the Australia / New Zealand networking morning teas which I hosted in Qatar prepared me for Max's diagnosis, who was 3 ¼ at the time, after several sessions with him.

That year, April 2012, we were in Australia for three weeks for my sister's wedding. We rang ahead and booked specialist appointments for Max. After many tests Max was diagnosed with autism.

Nothing, however, could have prepared us for the devastating news when a team of professionals told us that our young boy had autism. That day, was without doubt, the darkest of our lives, equalled only by the day, several months later, when we explained Max's condition to his two sisters.

Two days later after the diagnosis we left Australia with Max and our two daughters and returned to Qatar to try and seek further therapy but had no idea how heart breaking our journey was going to be. Qatar had no formal programs for children with special needs.

We did a lot of soul searching about how we were to move forward, we knew our time was limited as early intervention was so critical for a child with autism. So we researched cities with the best facilities in Australia to provide therapy for Max, while also setting up programs in Qatar to support Max in the short term. We read a lot, and AEIOU kept on coming up with amazing results for kids with autism and we put his name on the waiting list. It took us 18 months from Max's diagnosis to find a job in Brisbane and return to Australia.

We packed up our lives and left our amazing life in Qatar for the unknown in Brisbane.

We had no idea how Max would cope with the move and were unable to make him understand, we still do not know if he understands that he will never see our home in Qatar or many of our friends from there again. We arrived in Brisbane in September 2013. There were no spots for Max at AEIOU so we enrolled him in a kindergarten for the final months of 2013 but only 2 days a week were available as he needed a special needs assistant.



Max started with AEIOU in January 2014. The staff at AEIOU has been amazing, supportive and helpful; providing strategies to manage Max's autism at home as well as developing his skills at AEIOU. Max's AEIOU speech therapist made a home visit so we could include our girls, Lily 12 and Scarlett 10, to best support Max's development.

The support that AEIOU has given to our family and to Max directly at school has been incredible.

We now have a hope for the future that Max will grow to be an independent and contributing member of the community, something so many people take for granted for their children.

Angela Sullivan
Max's Mum

AEIOU Wish List for our children throughout Queensland

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| <p>Different Roads to Learning packs These effective tools assist in educating and empowering students with autism. These classroom aids and learning materials include Movaid, visual and audible timers, ABA language builder cards etc together with DVDs such as Fitting In & Having Fun, Handwriting Without Tears etc.</p> <p>Each set costs \$3,220 and would be shared across classrooms - we have 9 centres.</p> | <p>\$28,980</p> |
| <p>Laptop Computers – compatible with interactive whiteboards Interactive whiteboards are an integral component in delivering our unique early intervention program. To operate effectively, each Centre requires a compatible laptop.</p> <p>Each Laptop is quoted at: \$2,000 each by 9 centres.</p> <p>With the increase in our services, we would require a further 7 laptops compatible to interactive whiteboards.</p> | <p>\$18,000</p> <p>\$14,000</p> |
| <p>Interactive Whiteboards Our Gold Coast centre recently opened a further two classrooms to meet the need in this area but without the use of interactive whiteboards.</p> <p>Each Interactive Whiteboard, including software costs: \$7,200 x 2 classrooms</p> <p>Our Townsville centre will in 2016 open an additional classroom to meet the need and therefore will require an additional interactive whiteboard.</p> <p>Our Sippy Downs centre will add an additional classroom in 2016 and will require an additional interactive whiteboard.</p> <p>Our Camira centre requires a replacement interactive whiteboard.</p> <p>In 2017 our new Logan Centre will be ready for operation to alleviate the long waiting lists for our services. We will require 4 interactive whiteboards.</p> | <p>\$14,400</p> <p>\$7,200</p> <p>\$7,200</p> <p>\$7,200</p> <p>\$28,800</p> |
| <p>Research Materials Cognitive Assessment 1 – Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence Cognitive Assessment 2 Kits</p> <p>Adaptive Behaviour – Vineland</p> <p>ADOS Gold including Scoring Kits</p> <p>Mullen Scales – Kit and Software</p> | <p>\$5,000</p> <p>\$2,200</p> <p>\$6,600</p> <p>\$2,000</p> |