





AEIOU Foundation's program was established in 2005, with this year marking its 10th year of operation. In that time, AEIOU Foundation has grown to support more than 220 children each year across eight centres in Queensland and one in South Australia. With a curriculum that meets the 2012 Australian Good Practice Guidelines, AEIOU Foundation's evidence-based early intervention program is the most affordable and accessible of its kind.

AEIOU's transdisciplinary team works with children aged 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 to develop vital life skills, changing the course of their lives.

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AEIOU Foundation is a registered charity (CH1818) under 'The Collections Act' of 1996 and is endorsed as a deductable gift recipient under the Subdivision 30-BA of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Our reporting process:

This is the sixth annual report submitted by AEIOU Foundation, documenting AEIOU's financial, operational and community performance for the financial year ending 30 June 2015. Your feedback is welcome. Please email communications@aeiou.org.au.



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Overview

A decade of difference

In the beginning:

One centre in Brisbane



12 children enrolled







Lynn Wright Memorial Fund established



Extensive lobbying for state and federal funding



Ambassadors Tim Sharp and Alex Perry join **AEIOU Foundation**

Where we are now:

Nine centres

across two states



Operating within NDIS trial site



220 children enrolled: largest cohort of

children in a full-time program in Australia





Successful lobbying for selfdirected funding for families



Firm partnership with Queensland Government



Funding partner in worldfirst Autism Cooperative Research Centre

More than 200 volunteers supporting **AEIOU** campaigns



Research Advisory **Group** firmly established



Data collected to track every child's individual gains



Founding partner of Griffith University Autism Centre of Excellence



\$2.2 million required each year to keep our doors open



1 in 100 **Australians** diagnosed with autism each year

After 12 months in the program 66% of children were reported by their parents to talk in phrases, compared to only 36% at intake



Within the first 12 months of the program 89% of children are successfully toilet trained or are undertaking toilet training





Autism is a lifelong neurological developmental disorder which, according to research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014) affects 1 in 68 people. About 30% of children with autism have an intellectual impairment, and this is indicative of the children AEIOU supports within its early intervention program. AEIOU also sees children who do not have an intellectual impairment but who show a high level of need to develop important foundation skills, including social communication or behaviours to prepare them for independent living and school.

Autism is a spectrum that ranges from severe levels of impairments right through to differences in experiencing the world. While no two people with autism are the same, they generally share two main areas of difficulty commonly referred to as the 'dyad of impairments'. These include:

- Social and communication, including difficulty with body language and verbal communication, reciprocal conversation, emotional and social reciprocity and managing structured parts of the day; and
- Thought flexibility, including difficulty with hyper, or hypo-sensitivity to sensory input, routines, repetitive behaviours and rituals.

There is no cure for autism; however evidence shows early intervention, delivered within a program that meets the 2012 Australian Good Practice Guidelines, will provide children with the best opportunity to reach their full potential.



About AEIOU Foundation

Our mission

To enhance the lives of children with autism and their families and benefit the community through early intervention learning along with practical and caring support.

Our vision

To be recognised as the leading provider of quality early intervention for children with autism and to ensure every child is given the best opportunity to reach their full potential in life.

Our values

At AEIOU Foundation our people are defined by their commitment to excellence in education, therapy and care, working together to make a lasting difference to the lives of young children with autism. The same can be said for every supporter of AEIOU Foundation, who embraces these values.

Together, we believe in:

- Action: Taking steps to achieve goals which support AEIOU Foundation's mission;
- Excellence: Aspiring to do your best;
- Integrity: Showing respect for AEIOU Foundation's ethical and moral guidelines, and also each other's;
- Outcomes: Being solutions-oriented and committed to our clients' and AEIOU Foundation's goals; and
- Unity: Collaborating with each other and our partners.

Our philosophy

AEIOU Foundation believes early intervention should be a right, not a privilege, just like any education.

AEIOU Foundation believes that all children with autism:

- Can learn and have the right to an education;
- Benefit from programs based on individual needs;
- Learn using different learning styles and at different rates:
- Are individuals, with differing personalities, needs, wants, interests and levels of ability;
- Require flexible routines in their daily program to cater for their individual needs;
- Should receive early intervention and access to appropriate assessment;
- Are entitled to a balanced program that bridges the gap between the home, AEIOU Foundation and the community; and
- Benefit from families and staff working together.



What AEIOU Foundation does

AEIOU Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation and is one of Australia's leading providers of full-time early intervention for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who are aged between 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 6 years.

Established in 2005, AEIOU Foundation's goal has remained the same: to provide high quality, affordable early intervention to young children with autism, giving them the best chance to reach their full-life potential. Access to evidence-based early intervention is crucial and research shows when children with autism access this kind of support, they have a much greater chance later in life of living independently, securing employment and developing meaningful and lasting relationships.

We strive for excellence across all pillars of the business, including the fidelity of our program, financial management and research and assessment.

AEIOU's program meets the 2012 Australian Good Practice Guidelines and also the Early Years Early Learning Framework. The service is subject to regular evaluation and auditing processes. AEIOU also works closely with the Department of Communities and National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in our service.

Our curriculum

AEIOU has developed a specific curriculum, supporting children to meet developmental milestones, with an emphasis on their own individual needs.

The curriculum is based on evidence and research, and is organised into nine learning areas, or domains. These include: foundation, social skills, play skills, expressive language skills, receptive language skills, self-help skills, attending skills, imitation skills and academic skills. Within each of these domains, there are four levels of difficulty and subgroups to support continuation of skill development. The goals listed in these learning areas inform what to teach.

Within these domains, there are a hierarchy of skills and children are supported to meet 'prerequisite' skills. This ensures children do not skip ahead to another level, missing a core learning or developmental skill. AEIOU's approach to goal-driven planning means we are teaching developmentally appropriate goals.

At every step, data is collected for the whole class as well as each individual child, and AEIOU's program coordinators work with the therapy and teaching teams in each classroom for fidelity measures. This provides opportunity to monitor each child's progress and identifying areas where more support may be needed, while also reviewing progress for the group, and organisation at large.

Parents are regularly updated and participate in one-on-one meetings on a bi-annual basis (more often if required) to ensure they are up to date with their child's progress, with opportunity to review individual goals.

A family story

Zander Threadgold

"Before we started at AEIOU, I would wonder if Zander knew who I was. Did he know that I was his mum and Paul was his dad? Now, he's started to call me 'Mum' and comes to me to ask for a cuddle, and when Paul arrives home he runs over and says 'Daddy's home!' - I never thought that would happen for us. More than finally hearing his voice and his amazing vocabulary developing, it means more than I can say to know that he completely understands who we are.

Not only is Zander interacting with us, he is also starting to make friends. Until recently, Zander was completely oblivious to other children – I don't think he noticed them at all. Now, he initiates play. We went to a birthday party recently, and he played with three other boys solidly for about 40 minutes. That was huge for us. We always want our children to have friends, and with an autism diagnosis, you wonder how they'll interact or if they'll have a good social life as they get older."

Tash Threadgold





Message from the Chair



It's often only when we reach a major milestone that we take the time to reflect and appreciate how far we have come. When Louise and I first received the news our son Andrew was diagnosed with autism, we had no idea what was ahead. We were shocked and devastated and even with my medical knowledge I have to admit I knew little about autism. What we did realise was we needed to act immediately. It became clear to us that early intervention is the key; Andrew's time in the Education Queensland pilot program was testament to that. Through that program, our beautiful son began to shine. As he learned to communicate, we could see his frustrations reduce and his social skills improve.

When that program closed, we were shattered. We knew there were many other families like ours, so we researched, advocated and gathered resources to establish our own early intervention program. In 2005, we opened AEIOU's first centre in the Brisbane suburb of Moorooka. It was built on commitment and determination, with the support of our family, friends and the community around us. Its establishment was a giant leap of faith not only for us and our supporters, but for those first families who enrolled in the service. That year, we employed six staff and enrolled 12 children

Ten years on, AEIOU employs 160 staff and assists more than 220 families across eight centres in Queensland and one in Adelaide. We have surpassed many hurdles, experienced a number of highs and learned a great deal. Our work has resulted in an evidence-based early intervention program that is truly making a difference to children, their families and the wider community.

As we celebrate a 'decade of difference' at AEIOU, we are keen to build on our solid foundation. AEIOU is on the precipice of national expansion, with serious discussions underway to establish centres in Canberra, Victoria and South Australia. It is exciting to be at this defining time, not just for our family, but for every family who has accessed the AEIOU program.

At AEIOU, we are also driven to influence policy, playing an instrumental role in the development of the Helping Children with Autism package. As a result, we established a funding structure that makes this service the most affordable of its kind, accessible to virtually any family, regardless of their income.

We are working closely with the National Disability Insurance Agency regarding funding and fidelity measures for autism-specific early intervention, advocating for families who have young children with autism. We have gained critical knowledge working with our inaugural Adelaide centre in an NDIS trial area and we are well prepared when the scheme rolls out in North Queensland in early 2016. We are here to help current and prospective families navigate the transition to NDIS.

AEIOU is also proud to be a co-founder of the Griffith University Autism Centre of Excellence and a funding -partner of the first Autism Cooperative Research Centre. There is so much more to discover about autism and we are keen to be at the forefront of research.

AEIOU's growth and success reflects the work of an army of people. Without the excellent team at AEIOU, who share the same drive and passion as Louise and I, and without the many organisations and individuals who have supported AEIOU through sponsorship, donations, in-kind support and volunteering, we would not be where we are today.

I also recognise the support of my fellow AEIOU Board Members, many of whom have been a part of this organisation since it was established in 2005. My brother Euan Morton, along with Peter Kelly, Brendan Power, Brett Robinson, Stuart Giles, Graeme McFadyen and Scott Reading volunteer their time, expertise and experience to ensure AEIOU's business operations are of the highest standard.

I take this opportunity to recognise Graeme McFadyen, who retired from AEIOU's Board of Directors in March this year. Graeme joined AEIOU Foundation's Board in May 2010, and has made a significant contribution towards our growth and success in that time. On behalf of AEIOU's Directors and staff, I extend our sincere thanks for his commitment to AEIOU Foundation.

When we use the term 'decade of difference', we do so with pride. I believe we have changed the lives of a generation of children with autism and I look forward to working with colleagues, families, friends and supporters to continue creating brighter futures for these young people for a long time to come.

Dr James Morton

AEIOU Chairman and Founder



Message from the CEO



This year, the team at AEIOU Foundation celebrated a 'decade of difference'. This has been a great year to reflect on what we've achieved from an operational perspective, but also the impact this organisation has had on the lives of so many young children and their families. With that reflection comes forward-planning, and I'm pleased to report our strategy for growth is on-track. We are in a great position to transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and expand our service offering across the country.

In October 2014, we launched AEIOU's first interstate service, opening our Adelaide centre, providing unprecedented support to local families. The program is operating from a modified childcare centre AEIOU is leasing in Huntfield Heights, until we construct a purpose-built facility in Glenelg, in partnership with Minda.

Further, a number of sites have been identified for expansion into the ACT and Victoria, where we anticipate opening our program in 2018.

I was delighted to work with the Queensland Government this year to achieve our long-held goal of doubling AEIOU's service capacity on the Gold Coast. In April, Minister for Disability Services Coralee O'Rourke formally announced an allocation of funding which made it possible to open two new classrooms at the centre, enrolling an additional 20 children, many of whom had been waiting for a placement for more than 12 months.

The manualisation of our curriculum continues to be a strong focus. The introduction of specific fidelity measures is ensuring consistency in therapy and education standards across the program, both in service delivery but also appropriate training and support. This is ongoing, with the program receiving constant review. Early studies indicate the program has been significantly strengthened with this approach.

I'm pleased to note that research remains a strong cornerstone of what we do here at AEIOU, and we have increased our Research Department's capabilities during the reporting period. You'll be able to read about studies that have been recently published, or which are underway within this report. We continue to play an active role in the world-first Autism Cooperative Research Centre and, as part of this, AEIOU is across a number of projects which are gaining traction, including but not limited to, the collection of data for an important longitudinal study.

In May, I joined the Queensland Transition Advisory Group (QTAG) alongside a number of other disability service providers who work together to provide key information and advice to assist with the introduction of the NDIS in Queensland. This is a valuable exercise, and a great opportunity to represent the families who stand to benefit from high levels of support through high quality autism-specific early intervention.

AEIOU is a fast-paced organisation and our achievements have been made possible because we have a team that is dedicated to creating a difference. Their tenacity, energy and ability to keep reaching is what sets us apart and I thank each of them for their commitment to the families we support. I also extend my sincere thanks to each of our donors, corporate partners and our Board of Directors; the success of AEIOU and the delivery of our program is also a direct result of their support. Fundraising is the most important ingredient at AEIOU. Very simply, we would be unable to deliver our quality program to so many young families without the generous support from our community.

We've accomplished a great deal this year, and in the last 10 years. With AEIOU firmly established in the industry, and with future growth plans in check, it is almost impossible to believe this time 10 years ago families were unable to access any of the support that is available to them now through organisations such as AEIOU Foundation.

With each strategic achievement, the grassroots reason about why we're here is never far from our minds.

Seeing a child achieve a major life-goal and connect with their loved ones captures the essence of what we do; they are the true moments that we celebrate at AEIOU. Nothing beats witnessing a tender moment between a mother and her child, or hearing one of the children call out 'Goodbye, Daddy!' as they enter the classroom for the day. Imagine what this is like for a parent who has waited so long to hear it.

This is why I look forward to the next 10 years and why we need to continuing growing and advocating for these children. I hope you will join us for the journey.

ch. swen)

Alan Smith CEO AEIOU Foundation



Working together to create bright futures

AEIOU Foundation is outcomes-focussed, and we actively work to support the children in our program and on our waiting list, advocating for their right to high-quality early intervention and their futures, as they progress through school and into vocations.

We engage with parents and carers on a regular basis, encouraging the sharing of knowledge and participation in AEIOU activities and decisions.

At AEIOU Foundation, this year children and their families had access to therapy and education workshops, tailored to support families enrolled in the program and those waiting for a placement.

Families can also access 'My Time' initiatives. My Time is a government funded program, which provides a supportive network for families. Parents can choose to engage in a range of activities based on their own needs. These may include professional seminars, inclusive community activities for the whole family, and social events for parents to gain support from each other, while sharing knowledge and experiences with others encountering similar challenges.

In addition, each quarter, AEIOU Foundation hosts parentliaison meetings, ensuring the parent body from across all nine centres have access to the CEO, a Board Director and nominated Executive Management Team members. This provides families with insight into operational and strategic initiatives, and the chance to share information.

Advocating for families

AEIOU Foundation works closely with State and Federal Government departments to advocate for young children with autism and their families. With the preparations to launch the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) nationally, it is essential for AEIOU Foundation to advocate for families and ensure they receive adequate funding and support, and also provide appropriate guidance and information to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) for a smoother transition to the Scheme. This year, AEIOU Foundation:

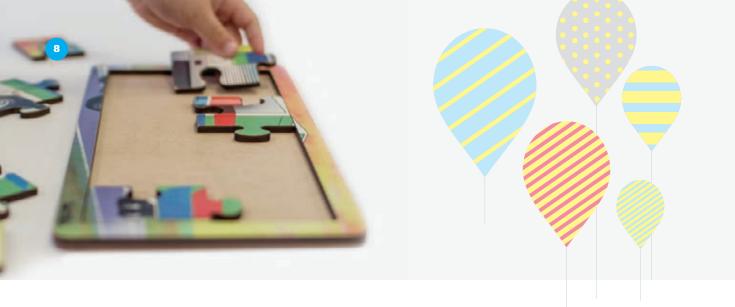
- Represented Queensland families affected by autism on the Queensland Transition Advisory Group (QTAG), providing guidance and advice to assist with the roll-out of the NDIS in Queensland;
- Worked closely with NDIS representatives in Adelaide, a trial site for the Scheme; and
- Chaired the Children's Not for Profit Group, which provides ongoing advice to appropriate government bodies.

Adelaide centre opening

The official opening of AEIOU's centre in Adelaide in October marked our first venture outside of Queensland and provides an excellent opportunity to not only support additional families, but to work within an NDIS trial site, with the centre operating under the Scheme's pilot program.

The centre enrols 10 families and plans are underway to open a second classroom in the next financial year. Plans are still underway to construct a purpose-built centre in Adelaide in collaboration with Minda, by 2017.





Gold Coast centre expansion

Almost a year after AEIOU Foundation opened a purposebuilt centre at the Gold Coast, we were delighted when Queensland Minister for Disabilities Coralee O'Rourke announced funding that enabled AEIOU to welcome an additional 20 families to the program, opening two additional classrooms to support local children.

With an excessive waitlist, it was a long-held goal to increase the centre's capacity from 20 placements to 40, with AEIOU Foundation working closely with the Queensland Government for the allocation of funds to ensure these children would not miss out on their window for early intervention. AEIOU extends its sincere thanks to the Queensland Government for its commitment to the program in this region.

Centre open days

This year we began to host open days on a monthly basis, offering families the opportunity to see how AEIOU's program works and an opportunity to meet our specialist team and access advice and support while waiting for a placement. Across the centres, 107 families took the opportunity to access the open days, more than double the number of attendees from the previous year.

Lynn Wright Memorial Fund

The Lynn Wright Memorial Fund was established in 2006 in memory of AEIOU Founder Louise Morton's mother, Lynn, a passionate advocate for young children with autism.

Led by a volunteer committee, the Fund is designed to ensure all families have equal access to high-quality early intervention at AEIOU Foundation and provides financial assistance to those in genuine need.

With around 40 per cent of families accessing the service on an annual household income of less than \$38,000, this is an essential program for our families.

This year, the Lynn Wright Memorial Fund assisted 31 families, bequeathing \$43,000.



Building connections

AEIOU Gala Ball and 10th anniversary celebrations

To celebrate AEIOU's 10th anniversary, a Masquerade Gala Ball was hosted at City Hall in May, welcoming 220 guests including long-term supporters of AEIOU Foundation, current and past-families who have engaged with the service, official ambassadors, along with State Government representatives from both major parties.

In addition to this, each centre hosted an individual 10 year celebration event and staff received personal awards recognising their commitment and service.

AEIOU newsletters

Each month, AEIOU Foundation issues targeted e-newsletters to staff, parents and donors. This provides an opportunity to engage with our stakeholders and provide current news and information. In addition to this, AEIOU publishes *Eyes on Autism*; a bi-annual glossy newsletter, both in print and online, sharing a range of relevant information from all departments, including therapy and education, fundraising and operations.

Online presence

AEIOU's new website was launched in August, providing an entirely new platform to engage with our community and support families with a recent diagnosis. The site has improved accessibility and includes a parent resource library, with training videos and a range of fact sheets and key information to support their child's learning and development at home. Along with this, a featured blog means we can share relevant and supportive stories with families, along with up-to-date news and information from AEIOU's own therapy and education experts.

AEIOU Foundation's online presence is increasing, with more than 9,000 followers engaging with the official Facebook page, and a strong audience on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Our social media channels connect families from across our centres, also providing opportunities to reconnect with families who have graduated from the program, sharing a variety of milestones and achievements. Posts are educational, inspirational, informative and engaging. As well families, our social media content connects us with AEIOU stakeholders, friends, supporters, donors and staff.



Therapy and education

This year, the primary focus for AEIOU's Operations Department has been the implementation and review of the manual and curriculum to guide a consistency of quality across our centres and ensuring AEIOU is prepared for the roll-out of the NDIS in Queensland.

During the calendar year of 2014, the curriculum was implemented across all AEIOU centres and from January 2015, an intensive review process began. The delivery of the manual increased consistency in the provision of therapy and education standards across the service, and procedures were developed to better guide and support staff to support quality improvement, and ensure program fidelity.

As part of this, and in preparation of the NDIS, the operations team was approved and five senior therapists were appointed as 'curriculum coordinators', with the responsibility of providing training, support and guidance to staff across all centres, ensuring every family engaged in the program receives the best and most consistent service possible.

The team continues to review the curriculum and devise measures to simplify its delivery for staff, and to establish a hierarchy of goals, with a visual guide to ensure children achieve all 'prerequisite' skills before moving onto a level of learning. While self-help skills have been central to AEIOU's program since its inception, this year we have increased the independence skills addressed in the program, updating the curriculum to support staff to teach some of the more complex skills including toilet training and mealtimes.

Support for families was also increased this year. A parent resource library was created, with a portal for all current families to log into on AEIOU's website. Along with practical information and research articles, three video tutorials were created for families, with helpful step by step guides to support the development of new skills at home. Topics included:

- · Your child and toilet training;
- Encouraging positive behaviour; and
- Motivating your child to communicate.

Members of the Operations Team developed and provided training to current families as well as those on AEIOU Foundation's waitlist. AEIOU's Nathan, Bray Park and Camira centres continued to support students studying education, speech pathology and occupational therapy on practical placements, with programs ranging from three day, to 10 week blocks.

Preparing for the national roll-out of the NDIS is also a primary focus for the Operations Team. Funding structures will change under the NDIS and in conjunction with the finance and communications teams we have been able to deliver a service within the NDIS trial site in Adelaide. We will continue to work closely with families and Local Area Planners from the NDIA, to ensure a smooth transition.



Our people

We continue to have a strong focus on staff development and were successful in securing funding for professional development through the Australian Government's *Long Day Care Professional Development Programme*. This programme is designed to assist providers to meet the training and qualification requirements under the National Quality Framework. In particular, most staff were able to access any of the three identified high priority professional development areas, including:

- · Non-violent crisis intervention;
- · Picture exchange communication systems; and
- · Applied behavior analysis.

We also introduced live induction webinars for new employees - followed up with a series of online induction recorded modules.

Our 20 Question Staff Survey is undertaken on a regular basis and revealed strong agreement from our staff that:

- Their workplace is free from harassment and discrimination;
- They are committed to putting in extra effort to benefit the organization;
- · They are committed to the goals and values; and
- · They enjoy working with AEIOU.

During the reporting period, AEIOU conducted a major review of the Quality Assurance framework to ensure alignment with the Human Services Quality Standards and achieved compliance across all areas audited.

The use of technology to support continuous quality improvements saw the introduction of online iPad forms designed to reduce the administration associated with regular workplace health and safety checks.

All elements of the Workplace Health and Safety Management System were finalised and the annual Workplace Health and Safety audit revealed all locations to be compliant with the WHS Management System. AEIOU's Board of Directors also endorsed the introduction of a state-of-the-art, cloud-based integrated payroll and human resources information management system which went live at the end of the financial year.

Overall, we also achieved a reduction in voluntary turnover, absenteeism and WorkCover claims coupled with increased retention and tenure rates.









Research and assessment

AEIOU's Research and Assessment Department is responsible for assessing the outcomes and fidelity of the program, assessing children upon intake, again at 12 months and upon the completion of the program. The Department is also responsible for key research outcomes. With AEIOU enrolling Australia's largest cohort of pre-school aged children with an Autism Spectrum Diagnosis, AEIOU's research has the potential to support and inform current and future treatment and intervention methods, and create a strong platform with scientific findings that may benefit children and their families now and in the future.

Along with internal assessment and research projects, AEIOU Foundation established a Research Advisory Group and is a funding-partner of the Autism Cooperative Research Centre, the World's first national cooperative research effort focussed on autism, which takes a whole-of-life approach to Autism Spectrum Disorder.



Research outcomes

AEIOU's research and psychology team's ongoing program evaluation provided further evidence of the outcomes for children attending the AEIOU program in terms of communication, everyday life skills, and thinking and reasoning. These outcomes were published and a review of all Brisbane data up to March 2015 was also completed for an internal report. The published outcomes can be found at Paynter, J., Riley, E., Beamish, W., Scott, J. G., & Heussler, H. S. (2015). Brief report: An Evaluation of an Australian Autism-Specific, Early Intervention Programme. *International Journal of Special Education*, 30 (2), 1-7.

Other papers accepted in this period, include:

- Paynter, J., & Keen, D. (2015). Knowledge and use of intervention practices by community-based early intervention service providers. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 45, 1614-1623.
- Paynter, J. (2015). Assessment of school-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*, 25, 104-115.
- Paynter, J. & Fothergill, F. Conducting assessments with young children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (2015). Australian Clinical Psychologist, 1(2), 14-18.
- Paynter, J. Book Review: Foundations of Behavioral, Social, and Clinical Assessment of Children (Sixth Edition) and Resource Guide. (In Press).

Research partners

As part of our commitment to the Autism Cooperative Research Centre (Autism CRC), AEIOU actively participated in a number of key projects, which included:

- Study of Early Intervention Programs for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Clinical outcomes and associated predictors to determine homogeneous sub-types (2014-2017). Project Leader: Eapen, V. Key Personnel: Eapen, V., Dissanayake, C, Paynter, J.*
- Understanding the relationship between child with ASD characteristics, subtypes of ASD, experiences of intervention and school support and developmental and behavioural trajectories (2014-2017). Project Leader: Roberts, .J. Researchers: Roberts, J., Keen, D., Ridley, G., Webster, A., Trembath, D., Westerveld, M., Paynter, J*., Walker, S., Harper-Hill, K., Heussler, H., Williams, K., Clarke, T., Silove, N., & Eapen, V.
- 3. Emergent Literacy Performance of Children with ASD (2014-2015). Westerveld, M., Trembath, T., Ridley, G., Webster, A., Roberts, J., Paynter, J., Hodge, A., Costley, D.

Along with this, AEIOU Foundation was responsible for the completion of CRC grant applications, and development of ethics applications and recruitment of participants. In addition, Dr Jessica Paynter collaborated with CRC partners to develop funding applications to the CRC in the areas of literacy and transition to school that were submitted in March 2015.

AEIOU manual

The first complete draft of the AEIOU manual was completed in December providing a foundation for the development of fidelity measures that will proceed in collaboration with the therapy co-ordinators and operations manager in 2015-2016. To further these developments, the research team built networks with Griffith University Researchers Professor Deb Keen and Dr David Trembath to develop research which will support the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBP) at AEIOU. During this period, Professor Keen and Dr Paynter published an initial questionnaire study that investigated factors linked to use of EBP. Grant applications were developed to follow on from this research to obtain funding to further investigate barriers and facilitators to EBP at AEIOU through a focus group study, and to pilot a model for implementation in 2015-2016.





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Research Grant applications

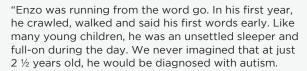
Grant applications from 2014-2015 were all successful and will commence in 2015-2016. They include:

- Trembath, D., Keen, D., & Paynter, J. (2015)
 Implementing research-based practices in early intervention programs for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Griffith University, School of Allied Health Sciences Project Grant, \$10,000.
- Keen, D., & Trembath, D., & Paynter, J. (2015).
 Implementing research-based practices in early intervention programs for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder-2 (ASD-2). Griffith University, School of Arts, Education, and Law, Project Grant, \$9.719.24.
- Costley, D., Kerslake, R., Bruck, S., Beamish, W., Davies, M., Paynter, J., Ashburner, J., & Walker, S. (2015-2018). Models of Practice to support the transition of students with ASD into and between Early and Middle Years classrooms. Autism CRC Strategic Project Grant, \$597,358.
- Westerveld, M., Trembath, D., Paynter, J., & Borucki, Y. (2015-2016). The effects of parental shared book reading intervention on the book reading behaviours and emergent literacy skills of preschool children with ASD: A randomised controlled trial. Autism CRC Innovation Project Grant, \$50,000.
- Westerveld, M., Trembath, D., Flückiger, B., & Paynter, J. (2015-2016). Predicting optimal literacy outcomes in children with ASD in their first year of schooling, \$50,000.



A family story

Enzo Bennett



We emigrated from South Africa when Enzo was just a baby. We had no family out here and he was our only child.

In the beginning, his development was normal, if not somewhat advanced. Then, in the months after his first birthday, we started to notice differences. There were the sleeping issues and the fact he couldn't sit still, but he also never got his hands or feet dirty, only ate certain foods, had regular meltdowns and his communication wasn't progressing.

By the time he was two, I started taking him for speech therapy. At this point, I could no longer take him out to a shopping centre and he wouldn't interact with other adults or children or even make eye contact.

We went through the process and he was diagnosed shortly before 2 $\frac{1}{2}$. It was devastating not knowing how to handle this beautiful child of ours or what our next move should be.

AEIOU has been our saving grace. Enzo started at Bray Park in January 2015 with just five words and 'mum' was not one of them. He had separation anxiety and major tantrums were common when we arrived at the centre each morning. I would often drive away from him crying.

Almost one year down the track, Enzo can recite the alphabet, count to 20, knows colours, shapes and animals and actively interacts with everyone he meets. He is a completely different boy.

He was toilet trained within three weeks of arriving and took to PECS like a duck to water.

In the mornings, he now puts on his own socks and shoes and dresses himself. At the centre, he will put his lunchbox and drink bottle away and then go to play with his special friends.

Not only have I now heard the word 'mum' for the first time, he will say 'bye-bye mummy, love you mummy, see you soon'.

I became attached to the AEIOU staff very quickly because you can clearly see their love for the children. They have helped our family tremendously. I can't imagine where we would be without AEIOU.

As a parent, you just want your child to be accepted one day and have a normal life. It was something we couldn't imagine when we started at AEIOU, but we see that future now for Enzo.

My advice to other parents in a similar situation would be, I can't tell you when, but I can promise you, it will get better, it will get easier and it will all be worthwhile. Just promise me you won't ever give up."

Lizelle Bennett



United with our partners

The delivery of AEIOU Foundation's program, including its affordability and the growth the Foundation has achieved in the past decade would not be possible without the exceptional support from our community; including our private and corporate donors, sponsors, parent fundraising committees, volunteers and the grants we have been awarded to achieve important goals.

It costs AEIOU more than \$46,000 to deliver the program for each child, each year and AEIOU experiences a \$10,000 funding shortfall for each placement. Rather than pass this onto overstretched families, as part of our commitment to maintain accessibility to the program AEIOU employs a dedicated fundraising team to meet this gap. Funds raised for AEIOU Foundation also help to maintain resources and facilities in our classrooms and assist with the growing need for early intervention, supporting plans for the program's expansion.

Meaningful and enduring relationships with our supporters are an essential priority for the team and AEIOU Foundation is sincerely grateful to our partners for their generosity and commitment to the children we care for across our centres.



Fundraising highlights

Signature events

Masquerade Gala Ball

Brisbane City Hall's iconic Grand Ballroom was bathed in pink and blue in May 2015 to celebrate AEIOU Foundation's 10 year anniversary. The elegant Gala Ball was attended by 220 guests, who heard Dr James Morton AM tell the story of AEIOU's first 10 years and his vision for the future. The evening was compered by Tim Cox of Radio 612 ABC and we were honoured to have special guest speaker, The Hon. Cameron Dick, Queensland Minister for Health in addition to The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP and Brisbane City Council Opposition Leader and Councillor for Richlands, Milton Dick

The room was filled with AEIOU's supporters, sponsors, major donors, ambassadors and families, many of whom have been part of the AEIOU family since the beginning. The event's success was due to our amazing supporters and sponsors, which included assistance with auction prizes, and a sponsorship from the Lord Mayor's Fund, Craggy Range Wines, Griffith University, Quality Food Services and ASCA.

A special highlight was the auction of a private sitting with AEIOU Ambassador and Artist Tim Sharp.

Fast Five for Kids

Fast Five for Kids was held at St Laurence's College and included challenging obstacles, creative designing, spinetingling racing, activities for the kids and a tasty BBQ. The event was hosted by AEIOU Ambassador Ian Skippen and all teams helped to raise funds to support a child at AEIOU Foundation for a year.

Take a Hike series

In its sixth year in 2015, Take a Hike is AEIOU Foundation's iconic fundraising event and is held across Queensland in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Townsville. This event is a physical and mental test, bringing together community and business leaders of all fitness levels, with three distances to choose from: 10.5km, 21km (half marathon) and 42km (marathon). Participants could choose to either walk or run in a team or go solo. All funds raised through Take a Hike go directly to covering the funding gap. AEIOU extends sincere thanks to Hyundai Help for Kids who provided vehicle support for the event.



Beneficiary events

Broncos 50:50 raffle

Our 2015 Brisbane Broncos partnership kicked off in round one of the NRL season when the team came face-to-face with 2014 Premiers, the South Sydney Rabbitohs. There were 35 volunteers who assisted with the 50-50 draw.

Rotary Art Spectacular

AEIOU was again delighted to be the major beneficiary of the Brisbane Rotary Art Spectacular. Queensland's most prestigious annual art exhibition showcased more than 350 of the country's best artworks, generating extraordinary support for local charities such as AEIOU Foundation. The Rotary Art Spectacular is formed by the Rotary Club of Stones Corner, Brisbane High-Rise and Hamilton.

St Laurence's College Walkathon

The St Laurence's annual 15km walkathon was again held along the Brisbane River in August. The boys raised enough funds to close the funding gap AEIOU experiences for each child placement. The students at St Laurence's also donate their time and volunteer at AEIOU hosted events and functions.

Mercedes Benz Melbourne Cup

The inaugural Mercedes Benz Brisbane Melbourne Cup Gala was held at Brisbane's iconic City Hall in November. Fashionistas and punters indulged in fine wine, exquisite food and elegant couture, with a preview of AEIOU Ambassador Alex Perry's new season line as they watched the race that stops a nation, in support of AEIOU Foundation.

IGA - Metcash Golf Day

A group of 100 of IGA's owners, managers and suppliers held their annual golf day at the exclusive Palms Golf Course, Sanctuary Cove. These funds raised at the event were used towards helping children learn vital skills, gain independence and positively change their lives.

Centre fundraising

Parents from across our centres create localised 'parent fundraising committees' to raise funds for learning materials, technology resources and centre and playground upgrades. They are supported by the central office Fundraising Team and work tirelessly throughout the year to host a number of events, including trivia nights, Bunnings and Masters barbeques, book drives, chocolate drives, raffles and more.

The community's support of these initiatives and the efforts from each of our parent fundraisers makes an extraordinary difference to the program and learning environment for the children. The funds raised are essential to the success of the program and we thank and each of our important volunteers for their contribution.





Volunteers

This year, more than 200 volunteers supported AEIOU Foundation events, initiatives and administration. Many of our volunteers have supported AEIOU for a number of years and their commitment makes it possible to achieve important goals for the children we support.

Our ambassadors

AEIOU is fortunate to welcome the support of a number of high-profile ambassadors, each making a valuable contribution to the Foundation with their unique skills. We extend our sincere gratitude to each of our Ambassadors for their time and commitment this year:

- Tim Sharp, international artist and motivational speaker;
- Alex Perry, international fashion designer;
- Ian Skippen, media personality;
- Corey Parker, Brisbane Broncos great;
- Cathie Reid, Managing Partner, EPIC Pharmacy Group; and
- Lee Holdsworth, V8 racing car champion.

Thank you to our supporters

Before AEIOU's establishment in 2005, most families with a young child with autism had nowhere to turn. The growth of AEIOU's service and the quality of our program are achievements each of our donors, partners, trusts, foundations, along with State and Federal Government departments, can take pride in.

It is our firm belief early intervention should be a right, like any education, and not a privilege. As a result, increasing our reach and ensuring our program is accessible and affordable for every family is paramount.

All funds raised at AEIOU Foundation go directly towards the delivery of our program and support of children enrolled in the service. The generosity of each donor enables the team at AEIOU to do what we do best: support young children and their families to reach their full potential. Our families generously share their personal stories to help demonstrate the contribution our supporters make to our community. We are grateful for every donor, and recognise every dollar counts. A special thanks also goes out to our major donors, whose support is vital to our ability to provide our service both now and into the future.

Sponsor in focus

Paradise Outdoor Advertising is a North Queensland based company with a strong commitment to supporting local communities. This year, Paradise asked their team who they would like to support; it is their credence to make these decisions in the lunchroom, rather than the boardroom.

As a result, AEIOU Foundation is the recipient of a \$100,000 advertising sponsorship, featuring a range of billboards across regional Queensland throughout the year, supporting fundraising and awareness for the program AEIOU delivers. The partnership doesn't end there: Paradise Outdoor Advertising employees put their best foot forward in AEIOU's Take a Hike Townsville initiative, in a marathon effort to support the children in their local centre. The group will also undertake a refurbishment of the children's playground at the centre.

Private philanthropists

- Brazil Family Foundation;
- The Bryan Family Foundation;
- Dr Ross Forgan-Smith;
- Scott and Mary-Jeanne Hutchinson;
- Dr James and Louise Morton;
- Terry and Mary Peabody;
- Beverley Power; and
- · Michael and Ann Williams.

AEIOU Foundation is also grateful to receive significant support from a number of private philanthropists.

Community philanthropists / Trusts and Foundations

- · Neumann Benevolent Foundation
- · Perpetual Trustees
- E Robert Hayles and Alison L Hayles Charitable Trust
- Towards a Better Future
- Stan and Maureen Duke Foundation
- Queensland Community Foundation
- Keith Gay Charitable Fund
- Community Benefit Gambling Fund

Appeals

AEIOU delivered two major fundraising campaigns during the reporting period, the annual Christmas Appeal and the annual Winter Tax Appeal. The Christmas Appeal was made possible with the support of advertising agency Junior Cru, whose sponsorship was instrumental in delivering the creative artwork for the campaign. In support of the Winter Tax Appeal, Joey de Pasquale's family shared their experience at AEIOU with a look at where they are now, since graduating from the program. Both campaigns were essential in raising vital funds to support program's delivery.





Our supporters













































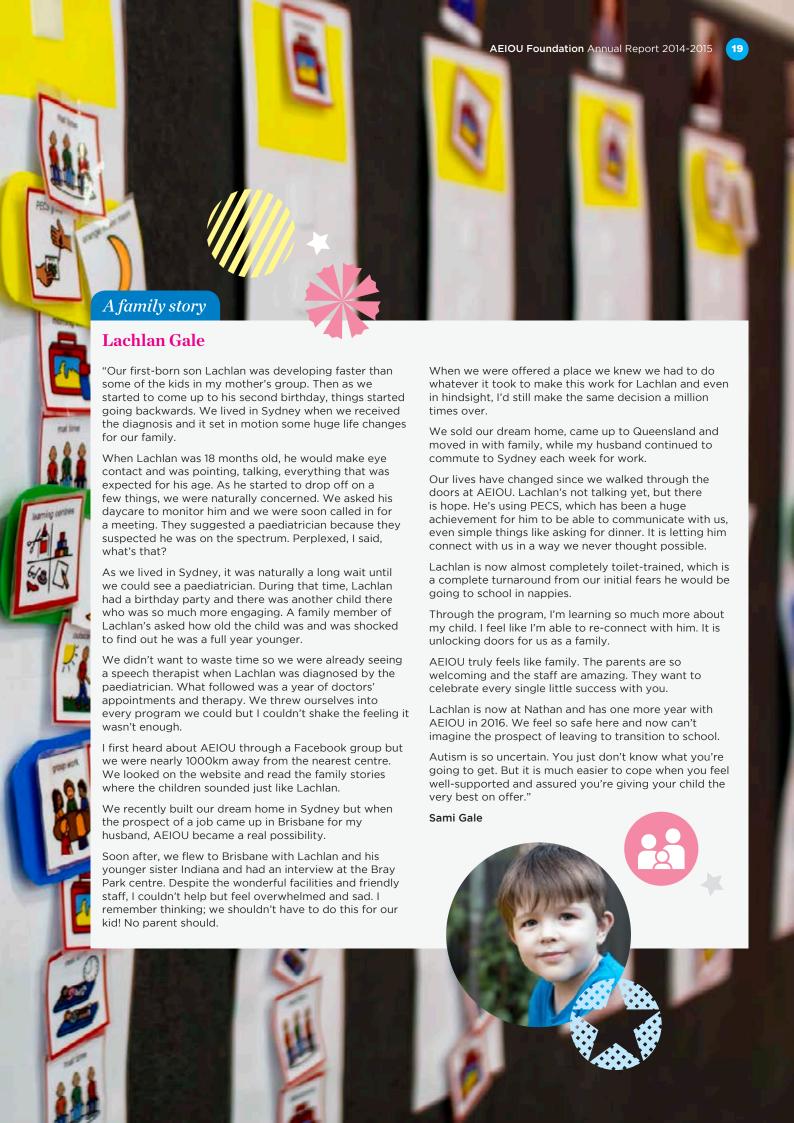












Our structure and governance

Dr A James P Morton AM, BSc (Med), MBBS, FRACP, FRCPA

Chairman and Founder



Dr Morton is an accredited specialist in Haematology & Oncology. He is Medical Director, Haematology-Oncology Clinics of Australasia and Senior Specialist, Leukaemia and Bone Marrow Transplant Service, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

In addition to being the Chairman of AEIOU Foundation, James is also a board member of Haematology-Oncology Clinics of Australasia (2000 - current) and a previous board member of the Leukaemia Foundation QLD (2000 - 2007).

Dr Morton's son, Andrew was diagnosed with autism in 2001 at the age of two. He and his wife recognised the value of early intervention to support his future; however there were no suitable programs at the time in Brisbane. As a result, they founded AEIOU so other Queensland families could have the opportunity to receive high quality care and assistance.

Stuart Giles
Director



Stuart Giles is the Managing Partner & Group CEO of APHS, a national organisation delivering pharmacy services to hospital, oncology, aged care and community pharmacy sectors. Stuart brings an energetic and innovative approach to developing the commercial success of APHS. It is this approach

that continues to see APHS expand the boundaries of healthcare, including development of their award winning APHS Packaging solution for medication compliance in the community and the recent launch of the APHS Integrated Clinical Oncology Network (ICON) project to deliver a best practice day oncology service across Australia.

Named a Regional Winner in 2010 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year, Stuart continues to lead APHS to success alongside his wife, business partner and co-owner of APHS, Cathie Reid.

Peter Kelly Director



Peter Kelly is a business communications strategist experienced in operating high profile environments. As a consultant for Three Plus Pty Ltd, Peter provides advice on media and government relations, community engagement, branding and marketing to a broad range of Queensland and national businesses.

Peter is a former board member of the Australian Paralympic Committee. Peter has two nephews diagnosed with autism who were unable to access fulltime early intervention and has helped AEIOU grow quickly, ensuring its centres make a difference to the lives of children with autism and their families

Graeme McFadyen Director



Graeme brings a wealth of management experience and support to the AEIOU Foundation.

Graeme is the CEO of Trilby Misso Lawyers and since his appointment in 2004, the firm has been accredited by Hewitt in 2009 as one of six best employers in Australia and

New Zealand, recognised as the 32nd best place to work in Australia by the 2010 BRW Best Places to Work in Australia survey and won the 2010 Australian Business Award for Service Excellence.

Graeme is the father of two children, and is committed to making a positive contribution to the community with AEIOU Foundation.

Euan Morton LLB (Hons), BEcon (Hons) BComm **Director**



Euan is the Principal of Synergies Economic Consulting where he consults on a wide range of economic and policy issues. Euan is an Independent Expert under the National Electricity Rules and a member of the Trade Practices Committee of the Law Council of Australia. He is also a director of Ecofund in Queensland. James Morton

is Euan's brother, and James's son, Andrew, is his nephew. Euan has been impressed with the growth and direction of AEIOU and is committed to helping the organisation expand its services to reach more people.

Brendan Power Director



Brendan has been a Director of Harris Black since 1999 and a fellow of The Institute of Chartered Accountants.

He has extensive experience from both an internal and external accounting perspective across a broad spectrum of industries and business types.

Brendan is currently Deputy Chairman of the Brentnalls National Affiliation of Accounting Firms as well as being on the finance committee of Kings College (UQ). He has previously been on the Board of Brisbane Boarders Association Inc.

Brendan's daughter, Mary-Claire, attended AEIOU in its first year and he has seen firsthand the positive impact AEIOU and its full time early intervention program has had on children with autism and their families.

Scott Reading Director



Scott has a Master of Commerce, Master of Business (logistics management) and is completing his PhD.

With combined retail, media, direct selling and small business experience, Scott has more than 21 years in senior management with a breadth and depth in leadership

roles for organisations such as Coles Myer, Gordon and Gotch, Sara Lee, Tupperware and Nutrimetics.

Scott became involved with AEIOU through his son, William, aged six. William has a dual condition of autism and epilepsy and is not part of the AEIOU Alumni. Scott's son inspires him to do better and move forward, and he is proud to work with the Foundation to help guide its development.

Brett Robinson Director



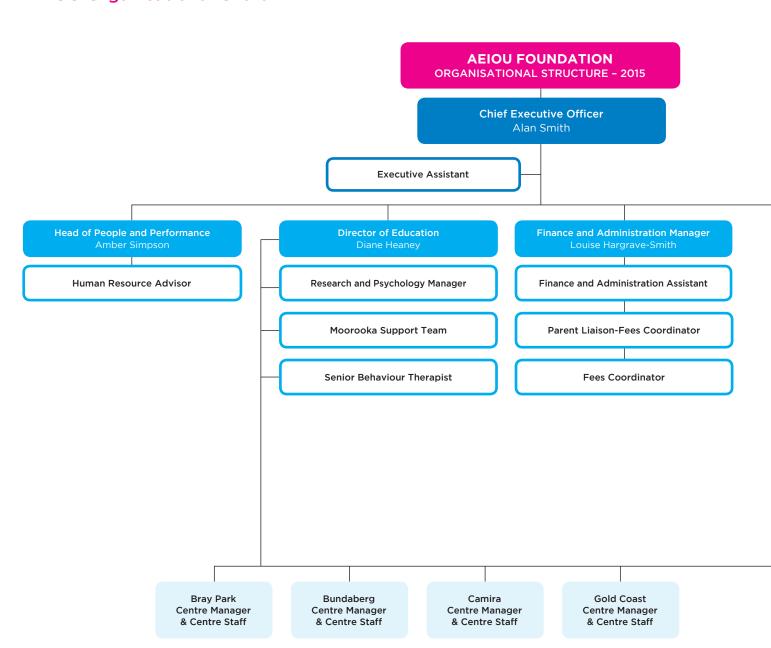
Brett is the Managing Director and CEO of Integrated Clinical Oncology Network (ICON), a shareholding entity comprised of APHS, HOCA, the Queensland Haematology Oncology Group (QHOG) and the Tennyson Infusion Centre, Adelaide. He is also a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

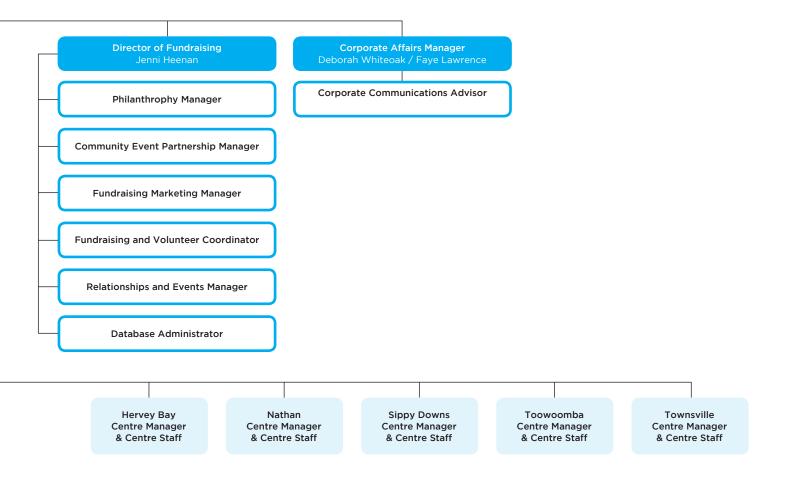
Brett completed a medical degree at the University of Queensland and worked as a surgical trainee before later completing a Doctorate of Philosophy in Clinical Orthopaedics at Oxford. He is registered to practice in Queensland and continues to assist Orthopaedic colleagues in advanced joint replacement therapy. Prior to joining ICON, Brett was the Australian CEO for Mondial Assistance, a French-based global company with a core medical assistance and travel insurance business.

Brett was also the inaugural captain of the ACT Brumbies in the Super 12 competition and in total, played 16 test matches for the National Rugby Union Team. From 2002-2005, he was the General Manager of the Australian Rugby Union's High Performance Unit.

Our structure and governance

AEIOU Organisational Chart





Summary financials

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

		2015	2014
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	2	10,449,082	9,285,409
Other revenue	2	1,901,444	2,185,367
Employee benefits expense		(8,887,316)	(8,318,500)
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense		(424,415)	(348,634)
Classroom and education		(101,193)	(108,126)
Event costs		(212,864)	(314,573)
Professional service fees		(138,515)	(166,423)
Motor vehicle expenses		(39,953)	(74,344)
Printing and stationery expense		(114,973)	(129,439)
Occupancy expense		(273,356)	(241,558)
Repairs and maintenance expense		(349,901)	(324,669)
Telecommunications expense		(129,572)	(120,266)
Travel expense		(48,896)	(62,588)
Other expenses		(618,476)	(594,283)
Finance costs		(19,750)	(9,964)
Surplus for the year	_	991,346	657,409
Other comprehensive income	_		
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	_	991,346	657,409

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2015

As at 30 June 2015		2015	0014
		2015	2014
	Note	\$	\$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,526,128	948,295
Trade and other receivables	5	165,035	176,335
Other assets	6	104,269	84,971
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	•	1,795,432	1,209,601
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	9,517,291	9,730,959
Intangible assets	8	24,609	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		9,541,900	9,730,959
TOTAL ASSETS		11,337,332	10,940,560
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			704500
Trade and other payables	9	987,981	764,598
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		987,981	764,598
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Borrowings	10	57,851	933,851
Long-term provisions	11	201,133	143,090
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	-	258,984	1,076,941
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,246,965	1,841,539
NET ASSETS	-	10,090,367	9,099,021
EQUITY			
Reserves	14	4,447,950	4,292,764
Retained surplus		5,642,417	4,806,257
TOTAL EQUITY	-	10,090,367	9,099,021



for children with autism

2005-2015

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