

News and events from Autism Connect Learning Centre

APRIL TO JUNE 2021

Autism Connect Learning Centre aims to function as a learning and resources centre within our community, providing a specialised early learning programme that is Autism specific. Our ethos encompasses neurodiversity and advocacy of inclusion, focusing on learner intervention.



Director's Note

Nicolette Ripepi

This term has certainly been a busy one of note.

At Autism Connect we are actively involved - and invested daily - in the lives of our learners. We continue to be interested in the well-being of each child. Our aim, as always, is to keep Autism Connect and its' impact going and that keeps us anchored! Become an integral part of the life of Autism Connect – by investing and supporting the learning programme. We want to earnestly thank our partners and sponsors during this term, especially in the current economic climate, that you see fit to support our programme. Without you, we cannot continue with the work we so love and enjoy doing by investing and actively making an impact in the communities we serve. Thank you for taking the time to walk this journey with each and every one of us.

“Because of you, we are”

*“Even if a person with autism cannot speak or respond, they still hear your words
and feel your attitude.
So be kind, compassionate, and uplifting...always”*

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We can't believe that we've reached the end of another term. It has been a busy, yet exciting term. Here are some amazing highlights we can look back at:

Family Fun Day

We started our second term with Autism Awareness Month which takes place annually during the month of April. AC had our annual Autism Awareness day which was in form of a Family Fun Day. We are grateful to all those who have supported our special event. We had face painting, a jumping castle, an introduction to art therapy, cupcakes, special prizes and so much more! A special thanks to all our sponsors - the Ricky Crayfish Guys who made delicious crayfish rolls and boerewors. We also wish to thank Mr. Mutombo, our DJ, for entertaining us with great music! Yes, you missed out if you didn't attend. Look forward to seeing you at our next event!



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Autism Rights March

On the 21st of May 2021, the staff of AC joined Autism Western Cape as they marched to Parliament. The purpose of the march was to ensure that the rights of autistic children and adults are met in South Africa, and a Memorandum was handed over. Thank you, Autism Western Cape, for spearheading this momentous event. Thank you to all who attended amidst the cold and rain, and for showing your support.



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Graduation of Martin and Jared

What an amazing graduation we had! We are extremely proud of our learners. We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks, gratitude, and appreciation to the Simpson family for Jared, and the Mutombo family for Martin. You've done exceptionally well with these young boys. Jared has been with AC for 4+ years and Martin just over two years. How exponential their growth has been over this time. We are going to miss them for sure. Thank you for choosing Autism Connect they will always hold a special place with us. Congratulations!

An infographic with an orange background. On the left, a child is shown stacking colorful blocks (yellow, pink, blue). Text on the left reads "DID YOU KNOW?" in blue and "STACKING OBJECTS" in red. In the center, a quote says "IT DOESN'T HAVE TO MAKE SENSE TO YOU... RESPECT THAT IT MAKES SENSE TO THEM." Below the quote is a small image of a child and the text "Autism Awareness". On the right, white text reads: "Children with autism often like to line up, stack, or organize objects and toys. In fact, these activities often take the place of real, symbolic play. But the desire for order is not."

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Art Therapy with Kym Hagins

Art Therapy is facilitated by Kym, and our learners are thriving. She is currently our Administrator and has a degree in Art Direction. She started this term with Art therapy, which provides our learners with an easier way to express themselves. It helps improve areas such as cognition and sensory-motor function, self-esteem and self-awareness, emotional resilience insight, social skills, and regulation.



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End of Second Term

While learners enjoyed a short break, the staff were busy deep-cleaning at the centre and attending various workshops and training sessions during their holiday. Presentations were done by Adea Pillay (Lead Educator) and Ursula Pietersen (Programme Implementer).



Autism Connect staff members successfully completed a Health and Safety Course and Basic fire fighting training, which was facilitated by Chavon from Enviroengineering. Well done!

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Autism Western Cape Academic Intervention and Monitoring System training (AIMS)

The staff of AWC completed their practicals at our learning centre during the last week of June. It was an impactful week with the team and they learned so much from our learners. We wish the team of AWC well with this training, as they are an integral part to the autism community within the Western Cape.



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Civvies Days

We've had numerous civvies days throughout the term and our learners had great fun. Civvies is a part of our monthly curriculum and learners are encouraged to participate in days such as SA World Book Day, Easter Hunt, PJ day and so much more. We are grateful for the support of our parents as they dress up their children. Below are a few photos of various civvies days.



UPCOMING CIVVIES DAYS: Movie Day - 16th July 2021 | PJ Day - 23rd July 2021 | Super Hero Day - 30th July 2021

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LET'S BUILD!

HELP BUILD A BETTER & SAFER FUTURE FOR OUR LEARNERS

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We have embarked on a buy-a-brick campaign to raise funds for our L.A.N.D (Learners with Autism Needs Donation) Campaign. The funds will be utilized to build a brand new facility that will ensure a bigger and safer school environment, and we would like YOU to be part of this next chapter.

HOW IT WORKS.

Buy as many bricks as you like at a cost of R100 per brick.

(NB!! - There are prizes up for grabs!!)

HOW TO DONATE.

Autism Connect NPO | Standard Bank | Acc No: 10140388697 |

Reference: Buy-a-brick and Your Name

Buy a Brick Fundraising Campaign

Autism Connect has embarked on a "buy-a-brick campaign to raise funds for our L.A.N.D (Learners with Autism Needs Donation) Campaign and we would like you to be a part of this exciting project. Ask us how? You can tangibly support this project by simply donating directly to this project. Your continuous support is valued. Thank you once again to all who have already purchased a ticket! Together we can do this. Together we can make a difference! For more info and our banking details, [CLICK HERE](#)

APRIL IS AUTISM
ACCEPTANCE MONTH.

APRIL 2ND

IS WORLD

AUTISM DAY.

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COVID RELATED NEWS

- **As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic together as a Centre, we ask for your ongoing support and co-operation in the following:**
- **Informing us if your child exhibits symptoms for Covid-19.**
- **Informing us if your child has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.**
- **To encourage wearing a face cover at drop-off and pick-up each day.**
- **Donations of masks, sanitiser or surface cleaners are welcome.**

**As always please feel free to contact us with any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns.
Thank you always for your ongoing support.**

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THANK YOU!

During this quarter we wish to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the generous support by our wonderful and amazing sponsoring partners:



The Crayfish Guys came on board to support our Autism Awareness and Acceptance Day held in April by providing nutritious meals to the crowd for all to enjoy.



De Beers Marine for your unwavering support over the past 8 years. With this donation we are able to rebuild and upgrade our current facility.



Environeering, as always for supporting and ensuring our staff are trained and our safety structures are in place at the learning centre.



COMING SOON!!

Autism Connect is currently undergoing a rebrand and we will reveal our new identity very soon.

WATCH THIS SPACE!!