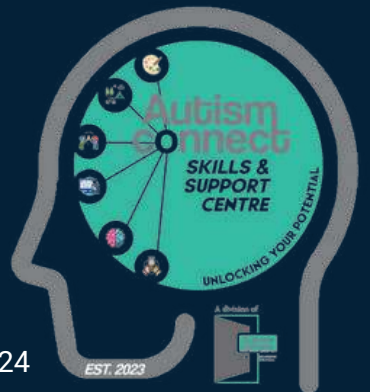


In
TOUCH
Quarterly Newsletter
SKILLS CENTRE

October to December 2024



Stay Connected and Informed with 'In Touch,' Autism Connect's Quarterly Newsletter Bringing You the Latest Updates, Insights, and Stories from the Autism Community.



Thank you for joining us on this journey of connection, awareness, and empowerment within the autism community.

autismconnect.org.za/autism-connect-skills-centre

Director's Note

Nicolette Ripepi



Term 4 Reflections

This is truly my passion project and exemplifies the resilience and skill sets these young autistic men possess. I'm truly inspired by their will to show the world what they are capable of, if just given the opportunity.

#autismconnect_za

#skillscentre

#unlockingyourpotential



Thank you to the team that works tirelessly showing up daily to support, coach, and nurture every young autistic adult to unlock their God given potential. If you the reader feels this project resonates with you connect with us to find out how you can make a meaningful impact.

Thanks for connecting with us.

Nicolette

Welcome to term 4

October 2024

On the 11th of October 2024, we had the pleasure of welcoming our Programme Manager, Ursula Pietersen, to our centre. Her visit was not only insightful but also incredibly productive for both staff and students alike. Ursula engaged with our students and evaluated the ongoing skills programme, providing feedback and suggestions to enhance our initiatives. Her expertise in development is a positive asset, and we appreciate the time she dedicated to understanding our unique environment and the needs of our students. Together, we aim to integrate new strategies that will further empower our students in their journey towards independence and community integration.



Celebrating One Year of Impact

October 2024

We are thrilled to announce that Autism Connects Skills and Coaching Centre is celebrating its one-year anniversary! Over the past year, we have made profound strides in supporting adult autistic individuals, providing them with essential skills and coaching to enhance their independence and quality of life. Our dedicated programs have positively impacted the lives of many students, fostering inclusivity and personal growth. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our Director Nicolette Wendy Ripepi, whose unwavering faith, dedication, and tireless efforts have been the cornerstone of this initiative. We also recognize our board members, staff, students, parents, sponsors, and donors for their invaluable contributions and support. Together, we envision expanding our services to reach even more individuals in the coming year, driven by our commitment to making a lasting difference. Here's to another year of empowerment and excellence at Autism Connect



Skills Centre Open Day

23 October 2024

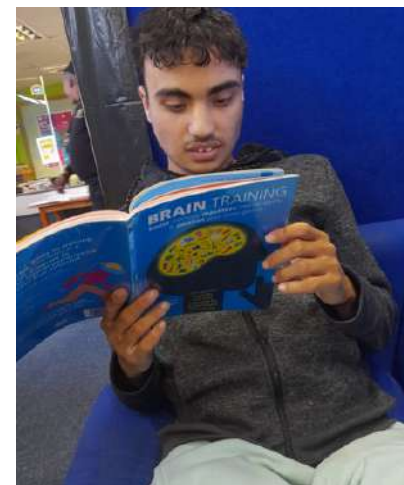
We proudly hosted our annual Skills Centre Open Day on the 23rd of October, 2024, welcoming Glenbridge Lsen School as our valued guests. The event was an incredible success, providing a platform for us to showcase the skills centre and our vision. It was heartwarming to see the collaborative spirit fostered during the day, with engaging demonstrations and tour that highlighted the wonderful achievements of our students and staff. The positive interactions between our students, staff, and the guests from Glenbridge Lsen School exemplify the importance of community relationships. We look forward to nurturing these connections and creating more opportunities for collaboration with Glenbridge Lsen School in the future.



Visit to Strandfontein Library

25 October 2024

On the 25th of October, we had the pleasure of visiting Strandfontein Library, where our students enjoyed a fantastic day filled with learning and exploration. The library staff welcomed us warmly, proving to be exceptionally accommodating to the diverse needs of our students. Their supportive environment enabled our students to feel at ease, encouraging them to engage with the variety of resources available. This trip not only enhanced our students' appreciation for literature but also fostered a sense of community and belonging. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the staff at Strandfontein Library for creating such a welcoming space and look forward to future visits that promote literacy and learning. "Exploring the World of Books!"



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Exciting October Activities

October 2024

Throughout October, our students have excelled in various activities designed to enhance their skill sets and encourage personal growth. The constant engagement demonstrated by our students is truly commendable. They approached each activity with enthusiasm and a strong eagerness to learn, showcasing their dedication to developing new skills. From art projects to group discussions, the diversity of activities this month has provided valuable learning experiences. This unwavering commitment to personal development reinforces our belief in the potential of each student, and we are proud to witness their progress. Our staff remains committed to delivering innovative and engaging programmes tailored to the unique needs of our students.



Muizenberg Beach visit

On the 18th of October, we organized a delightful social trip to Muizenberg Beach for our students. This outing offered a much-needed break from our regular schedule and allowed everyone to relax and enjoy the therapeutic benefits of the ocean. Joined by Programme Manager Ursula Pietersen, we took advantage of the beautiful scenery and pleasant weather to foster social interactions among the students. The calming atmosphere of the beach served as a perfect backdrop for building friendships and engaging in leisurely activities. We recognize the significance of such outings in promoting mental well-being and look forward to planning more excursions that provide similar restorative experiences.





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Celebrating Tyler

1 November 2024

On 1 November we had the pleasure of celebrating a milestone birthday for one of our cherished students, Tyler, who turned 20 years old. As he embarks on this new decade, we extend our warmest wishes for his twenties and the years beyond. This is a time of exploration and growth, and we are excited to support him through this journey as he continues to develop his skills and pursue his aspirations. Tyler has been the reason and driving force behind the Autism Connect Learning Centre and Autism Connect Skills and Coaching Centre.



Strandfontein Pavilion visit

8 November 2024



On 8 November our students took an exciting trip to Strandfontein Pavilion. The outing provided a wonderful opportunity for them to engage with one another outside the usual environment. It was heartwarming to observe the students interacting, sharing laughter, and forging connections. Such experiences are invaluable, fostering social skills and encouraging teamwork, which are essential components of their growth.

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Revisiting Muizenberg Business Park

15 November 2024



On 15 November, we took a nostalgic trip back to Muizenberg Business Park—where many of our memorable morning walks began. The scenic beauty of the park provided a tranquil setting for reflection and connection. Walking with our students through the familiar paths sparked joyful conversations and rekindled cherished memories. Following our stroll, we enjoyed a delightful lunch at KFC, which was, as always, savored by all. Such outings not only strengthen our community bonds but also enhance the overall well-being of our students.

Christmas Cheeseboard Collection

20 November 2024

In anticipation of the festive season, we launched a new initiative on 20 November to enhance our cheeseboard and coaster collection by introducing the 2024 Christmas collection. The excitement among our young adults was palpable as they eagerly prepared to create the festive cheeseboards. This activity not only fuels their creativity but also promotes teamwork and fine motor skills. We look forward to seeing the beautiful creations that will emerge from this project, bringing joy to our community during the holiday celebrations.



Simone Rupnarain

25 November 2024

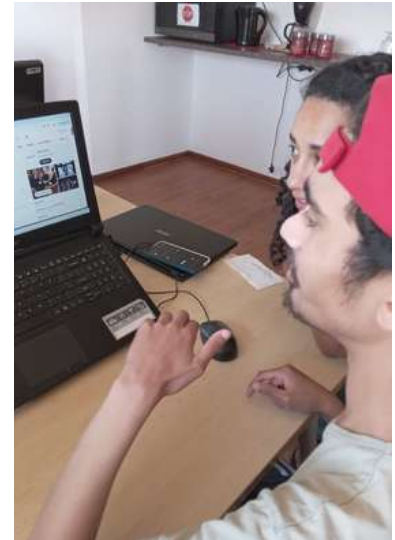
We were thrilled to welcome Simone Rupnarain to our centre. With her degree and honours in Psychology, Simone brings valuable knowledge and insights to both our staff and students. Her dedication to volunteer work reflects her passion for supporting individuals on the autism spectrum. We are optimistic about the positive impact she will have during her time with us and look forward to the productive collaboration ahead.



OT visit

21 November 2024

In November, we were fortunate to host Kayleigh Windvogel, an experienced occupational therapist who has been instrumental in supporting Autism Connect for quite some time. Kayleigh's wealth of expertise and her compassionate approach have profoundly impacted her clients and the wider community. We are excited for her to work with our students at the skills centre, as her involvement promises to enrich their learning experiences. We look forward to the insights and methodologies she will share with us, fostering further development and empowerment for our students.



November activities

November 2024

As we approach the end of the year, many of us can feel the weight of fatigue setting in. However, our students have shown remarkable resilience and dedication this November. Despite the various challenges that may lead to burnout at this time of year, they have motivated themselves to engage fully every day. Their commitment to showing up, learning, and participating actively is a testament to their perseverance, and it fills us with pride to witness their determination

Sanlam Disability awareness month market

3 December 2024

This month has been dedicated to promoting awareness and understanding of disabilities within our communities, and we are grateful to have celebrated this important initiative at the Sanlam Centres Disability Expo. The opportunity to showcase our work and achievements during this event was both an honour and a privilege. Engaging with a diverse array of individuals allowed us to share our rich history and narrate the inspiring journey of our organization.



Year End Social - Greenpoint Park

12 December 2024

The day was filled with joy and laughter, a testament to the strong bonds formed between students and staff throughout the year. Engaging in conversation, sharing laughter, and enjoying a delightful array of lunch and snacks created an atmosphere of camaraderie and relaxation. Our students showed remarkable enthusiasm as they participated in enjoying the day, connecting with peers in a supportive environment.





Ending off 2024

13 December 2024

Our last day of 2024 was not only the end of the year but also provided an opportunity to express our appreciation to our dedicated students and staff.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Mohammad Hossain Patel and his family for their generous and thoughtful gifts. Their kindness has left a lasting impression on all of us, embodying the spirit of giving that makes our community so special. These gestures remind us of the love and support we share within our centre.



Birthdays

December 2024

Caleb turns 20



Caleb celebrated his birthday on 13 Dec, and has made incredible strides during his time at the centre, and his journey inspires both peers and staff alike. As he enters his twenties, we wish him a year filled with opportunities, joy, and success.

Mohammad turns 20



Mohammad embodies the values of hard work and determination that we cherish at our centre. As he steps into this new decade, we wish him endless possibilities and happiness. His big day was on 16 Dec.

Jude turns 18



This milestone birthday, on 19 Dec, marks the beginning of a new chapter in Jude's life, one filled with opportunities and adventures. We extend our warmest wishes for happiness and success in all your endeavours, Jude.

Staff year end lunch

19 December 2024

In recognition of the hard work and dedication demonstrated by our staff throughout the year, we ended off 2024 with an end of year celebration. It was a time of relaxing, enjoying a meal together, and reflection on the year's successes. It was also a time to express gratitude for the unwavering commitment of our team, who played an essential role in creating a nurturing environment for our members.



Final thoughts for 2024

December 2024

As the year draws to a close, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our students, staff, parents, sponsors, and donors. Your unwavering support has been instrumental in making this year at Autism Connect Skills and Coaching Centre a truly memorable one.

Throughout the year, we celebrated significant milestones as well as cherished small achievements. Each success story, no matter the size, showcases the hard work and resilience of our students, who have made us immensely proud.

We are grateful for the community that surrounds us and contributes to our mission. Your dedication and encouragement inspire our students to reach their fullest potential.

As we look forward to another year filled with opportunities and growth, we wish everyone a safe and joyful holiday season. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey

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Thank You to Sponsors



Support our Building Project



Autism Connect needs your financial help. Please support our plan to build a state-of-the-art autism-specific learning facility. Your donations will directly fund the construction, equipment, and staffing needed to make this a reality. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a huge difference.

Thank you for your support.



Find out more:

www.autismconnect.org.za/autism-connect-skills-centre

supportservices@autismconnect.org.za

021 569 7234 Press 2 for Skills Centre