

Let's start the conversation

Press release

For immediate release



Sydney, Australia (March 16, 2011) – Leading Australian charity, Autism Awareness is hosting Australia's inaugural National Autism Summit on Friday, April 1st 2011. The summit brings together 30 of Australia's leading experts in the field of autism research, medicine, education and public policy, to develop a united action plan for autism in Australia.

The summit will focus on fundamental issues such as autism funding, support services and early intervention.

The National Autism Summit will be held at the Brain and Mind Research Institute at the University of Sydney, to coincide with World Autism Awareness day (WAAD).

Journalist and TV personality Ellen Fanning, will facilitate the event over the two days of the summit. On Friday evening at the summit's close, the delegates will proceed to the overseas passenger terminal to witness the sails of the Sydney Opera House, lit a brilliant blue as the start of the global - Light it up blue campaign.

The Summit and the *Light it up blue* event will be supported by a press and marketing campaign, which includes extensive media exposure in both metropolitan and regional centres. The Autism Awareness website www.autismawareness.com.au will encourage those not able to attend the - *Light it up blue* event to participate in other ways.

Regular updates on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter together with newsletters sent through the Autism Awareness database will aid the campaign.

The City of Sydney have lent their support and banners will be erected throughout The Rocks and Circular Quay area for the period March 28 to April 3.

About Autism

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that typically lasts throughout a person's lifetime. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is our nation's most common developmental disorder. People with ASD have problems with social and communication skills. Many people with ASD also have unusual ways of learning, paying attention, or reacting to sensations.

In Australia, 1 in 160 children have an Autism spectrum disorder and more children are diagnosed with ASD than childhood AIDS, diabetes and cancer combined.

In most cases the cause is unknown.

About Autism Awareness

Autism Awareness is an Australian-based not-for-profit organisation, which was founded in February 2007. Since then, it has grown into the nation's largest autism education and advocacy organisation, dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in our community.

Since its inception, Autism Awareness has run many successful events and campaigns including three Autism Expos in Sydney, a television community service announcement campaign, distribution of 'The Early Warning Signs' childhood developmental booklet to medical centres nationwide, creation of a comprehensive nationwide online directory of professionals and services, hosting of a concert, Altered State, to raise funds and awareness for ASD and most recently a series of free Autism Information days in regional QLD, VIC and NSW.

It is our hope that increased awareness and understanding of autism within the community will lead to earlier diagnosis and more effective treatments, helping to reduce the impact autism has on a child and their family.

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