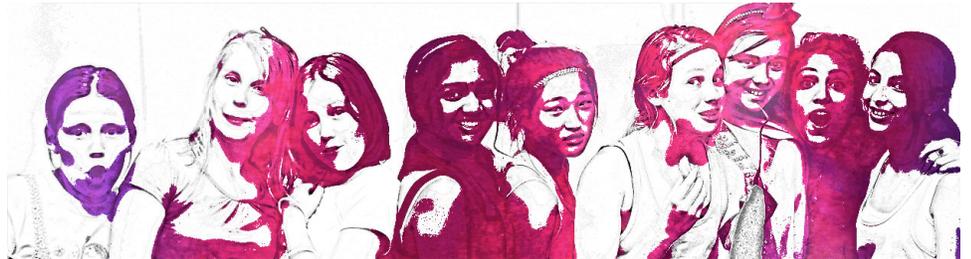


Girls Group



Autism NT in particular are seeing a number of girls being diagnosed until they start middle school, perhaps due to leaving the more nurturing environment of primary school and the need to interact with a wider school community.

Autism NT has observed a sharp rise in the diagnosis of girls. The ratio of boys to girls being diagnosed was around 4:1. Recent research has suggested that diagnoses tools may be biased towards males and contemporary screening methods were inappropriate. Additionally, girls may be better at camouflaging ASD symptomology.

The issues that are being raised by families are the girls:

- may not be struggling to hold friendships or that bullying has started at school
- may have realised that “friends at school” are not actually friends
- may be becoming increasingly introverted as a result of the isolation
- would like to be around like minded girls who understand them
- may have an increase in anxiety levels.

Girls with ASD tend to have different special interest than boys, be more socially aware and driven, more able to follow social actions through observation and tend to not enjoy drawing attention to themselves. It was decided that Autism NT needed to create a program specifically for girls.

The program will have a weekly craft or an activity of interest to the groups. The non-threatening environment allows the mentor to introduce topics such as friendships, mental health, stress management, communication skills etc. but the emphasis of this group will be on having fun. There will be two adult support staff for the group.

Expected outcomes of the group are:

- Creation of a safe place to foster communication
- greater understanding for students about what ASD means
- building of networks and social opportunities for students
- reduce feelings of isolation
- skills development with resiliency and stress management techniques
- FUN!

About the club

Running time: One and a half hours.

Ages: 12 - 16 years

Note: There will be two adult support staff for the group.

For venue, times and availability please contact Autism NT office on 89484424 or email: autismnt@autismnt.org.au