Specialist Peer Mentoring Module

Providing Support to Tertiary Students on the Autism Spectrum and Related Conditions

Program Coordinator Manual

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Curtin University

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Business Cooperative Research Centres Programme

Copies of this executive summary report, the associated mentoring modules and resources can be downloaded from the Autism CRC website autismcrc.com.au

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The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC)

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) is the world's first national, cooperative research effort focused on autism. Taking a whole of life approach to autism focusing on diagnosis, education and adult life, Autism CRC researchers are working with end-users to provide evidence-based outcomes which can be translated into practical solutions for governments, service providers, education and health professionals, families and people with autism.

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Dedication and Acknowledgements

I dedicate this work to all tertiary students on the autism spectrum (and related conditions) who continually strive to realise their educational and life potential.

Dr Jasmine McDonald (Principal Author).

> *"My son is a first year Curtin University student studying Physics and Engineering. Being autistic, he finds it difficult to fit into general social environments, and consequently to make friends and feel accepted. However, the mentoring program has been instrumental in helping him settle into university life, alleviating the enormous stress he had initially been suffering. He has found guidance, support, friendship and understanding. The weekly social group meetings have also been a wonderful part of the program. They have been fun and informative and allowed my son to make friends and meet people who understand him, in a safe and supportive environment. Without this fantastic program he would still be feeling anxious and isolated."*
>
> *(Parent of 1st year CSMP Mentee)*

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Autism CRC Specialist Peer Mentoring Module

MODULE ORGANISATION

The Autism CRC Specialist Mentoring Module is based on the Curtin University Specialist Mentoring Program (CSMP) - http://life.curtin.edu.au/health-and-wellbeing/autism-related-conditions-peer-mentoring.htm) and is broken into the following five separate sections:

1. The *Program Coordinator Manual* for the Coordinator (PDF).

2. The *Specialist Mentor Toolkit* for the Mentors (inclusive of the National Autistic Society [NAS] *Student Mentor Guidelines* and the National Disability Coordination Officer Programme [NDCO] of Australia *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder*) (PDF).

3. The *Mentee Information Booklet* for the Mentees and their Support Persons (inclusive of the National Disability Coordination Officer Programme [NDCO] of Australia *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder*) (PDF).

4. The *Specialist Peer Mentor Training Program* for the Coordinator *(PowerPoint*).

5. The *Mentoring Module Forms, Samples & Templates* for the Coordinator reproduces what is found in Appendix A, B, C, of the *Program Coordinator's Manual.* It is reproduced in Word Document form to allow modifications to be made easily according to individual institution's requirements (Word Document).

The Coordinator will need to be familiar with all five sections of the module so that each part can be used separately, modified, integrated and executed successfully according to the individual needs of their tertiary institution.

MODULE RATIONALE

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) Specialist Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Module has been designed to respond to the growing number of students on the Autism Spectrum and related conditions now enrolling in tertiary education courses worldwide (Bebko, Schroeder, & Ames, 2011; Hastwell, Harding, Baron Cohen & Martin, 2012; Hastwell, Harding, Martin, & Baron-Cohen, 2013). Preliminary research indicates that the prevalence of tertiary students on the Autism Spectrum is approximately 1% of the overall student population as high as prevalence rates of individuals on the Autism Spectrum for the general population (White, Ollendick, & Bray, 2011).

The reported increases in the number of tertiary students on the Autism Spectrum range between two to as much as eight-fold over five years (Bebko, et al., 2011; Hastwell, et al., 2012). International research indicates that these individuals are not

performing to their full academic potential (Equality Challenge Unit, 2011). Researchers in the United Kingdom have found that those with an Autism Spectrum diagnosis have the lowest percentage of first or upper second degree classifications achievement of any disability groups who are engaged in higher education (Equality Challenge Unit, 2011).

Research into life outcomes for adults on the autism spectrum indicates they are a significantly disadvantaged group. A recent international research review investigating the prognosis, outcomes and effective interventions for adults on the autism spectrum found that they are significantly disadvantaged in the areas of employment, social relationships, physical / mental health and quality of life (Howlin & Moss, 2012). More recent United Kingdom (UK) research of 374 adults on the autism spectrum (specifically Asperger Syndrome [AS]) indicates that 66% experienced suicidal ideation, 35% experienced planned or attempted suicide with rates that are more than nine times higher than that found in the normal UK population (Cassidy, Bradley, Robinson, Allison, McHugh & Baron-Cohen, 2014). Support to facilitate this population's inclusion into mainstream society has been lacking with little research investigating the most effective ways to intervene and improve outcomes for these adults (Howlin & Moss, 2012).

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), individuals on the autism spectrum experience impairment in the two domains of social communication and restricted interests/repetitive behaviour. Beyond these impairments there are often more cognitive characteristics to consider including deficits in 'theory of mind' skills, difficulties with executive functioning, weak central coherence, difficulties with sensory processing and motor functioning problems (Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium (AAETC), 2008). Such students may also have a number of relative cognitive strengths in the areas of rote memory, visual spatial abilities, compartmentalized learning, preference for routine and rules, intense interests, savant skills and being logical (AAETC, 2008).

Students on the Autism Spectrum have been increasingly included in mainstream education settings (Frederickson, Jones & Lang, 2010; Jordan, 2005; Leach & Duffy, 2009; Ravet, 2011). However, research has shown that students with intellectual disabilities, including those on the Autism Spectrum, often experience many challenges in accessing the necessary supports in these environments (Ford, 2007; Forlin, Keen & Barrett, 2008; Humphrey & Lewis, 2008a, 2008b; Humphrey & Symes, 2010; Kidd & Kaczmarek, 2010; MacDermott, 2008; McDonald, 2010, 2014; Shaddock, 2005; Shaddock, Smyth King & Giorcelli, 2007; Wing, 2007).

Concerns have been raised about the lack of appropriate, individualized attention and support available, the high attrition rates and the inordinate degree of bullying experienced by such students in mainstream educational settings (Attwood, 2007; Humphrey & Lewis, 2008b; Humphrey & Symes, 2010; Lynch & Irvine, 2009). Additionally, such students often experience social isolation, anxiety and sensory difficulties in mainstream settings where their need for routine and predictability is often at odds with the chaotic, noisy happenings of mainstream education (Humphrey & Lewis, 2008a; Knott & Taylor, 2014; Symes & Humphrey, 2010; Trembath, Germano, Johanson & Dissanayake, 2012; Wing, 2007).

Prior research has also shown that students on the autism spectrum have high dropout rates from secondary school, low rates of post-secondary education, poor post compulsory school integration, reduced independent living and community participation outcomes (Attwood, 2007; AAETC, 2008). Students on the Autism Spectrum are a particularly vulnerable group whose academic success is highly dependent on the quality of inclusiveness that they experience in an educational environment (Kidd & Kaczmarek, 2010; Leach & Duffey, 2009; McDonald, 2010, 2014; Van Hees, Moyson & Roeyers, 2014).

In the Australian context, one recent survey by Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect), 2012) investigating the experiences, aspirations and needs of 300 adults with AS and High Functioning Autism (HFA) from every state and territory in Australia confirmed that, despite this group's aptitude for study, they experience significant struggles to reach their full potential in education. At the time of the survey more than 80% of the 300 respondents with AS and HFA had commenced or completed a tertiary qualification. Of this group, almost 75% identified that they needed support to help them study. Almost 50% of the 300 respondents reported that they received no, or insufficient, additional support for their learning needs during their time in education.

In the same survey, tertiary education disability officers reported that students on the Autism Spectrum experienced difficulties in verbal comprehension, planning, organisation, social awareness and group work. Disability officers also perceived a lack of awareness and understanding of ASCs among tertiary educators. Over 66% of parents surveyed stated that educators in Australia are not well-informed about ASCs. Approximately 50% of the parents surveyed indicated that their child had not performed to his or her full potential while in education. The same survey found that in contrast to an Australian national employment rate of 95%, just 54% of adults with AS and HFA had a paid job at the time of completing the survey - and of those 54% in employment, 33% were found to be working in casual employment (Aspect, 2012).

Current preliminary research indicates that successful inclusion of students on the Autism Spectrum in tertiary education environments incorporates a community of practice where a number of supports and initiatives are available (Barnhill, 2014; Gelbar, Smith & Reichow, 2014; Hastwell, et al., 2012; Hastwell, et al., 2013; Van Hees, Moyson & Roeyers, 2014; Wolf, Brown & Bork, 2009). Promising programs at the tertiary level include many different types of support with the student voice often being given increased importance to ensure that programs remain of greatest, practical benefit to this population of students (Bebko, et al., 2011; Hastwell et al., 2012; Hastwell et al., 2013; Wolf et al., 2009). Peer-to-peer mentoring where tertiary students on the autism spectrum are provided with trained, specialist student mentors to help them navigate university life has been highlighted as an effective means of providing support to these students (Bebko, et al., 2011; Hastwell et al., 2013; Wolf et al., 2009).

MODULE BACKGROUND

In 2014, inspired by the success of a small number of recent, promising peer-to-peer tertiary mentoring programs operating in Canada (Bebko, et al., 2011), the United Kingdom (Hastwell, et al., 2012; Hastwell, et al., 2013; Mowat, Cooper, & Gilson, 2011) and the United States (Wolf, et al., 2009), Curtin University and Autism West funded Dr Jasmine McDonald and Theresa Kidd to develop and implement one of the first specialist mentoring programs for students on the Autism Spectrum in Australia – the

Curtin Specialist Mentoring Program (CSMP). This was in line with federal Disability Discrimination legislation (Disability Discrimination Act, 1992, Disability Standards for Education 2005) and Curtin's Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan (2012-2017) which states a commitment to provide "equitable and inclusive access for people with a disability to its facilities, services, events and academic programs" (p.7).

In its inaugural year CSMP provided specialist mentoring to 17 students over the 2014 academic year, with most mentees electing to retain a specialist mentor for the 2015 academic year. In its second year CSMP provided specialist mentoring to 32 students during the 2015 academic year with most mentees electing to retain a specialist mentor for the 2016 academic year. CSMP also initiated a social group that has become an integral part of the mentoring program.

CSMP is presently jointly funded through Curtin University Counselling and Disability Services (CDS) and the Additional Support for Students with Disabilities (ASSD) Fund, Higher Education Disability Support Programme. The objectives of the ASSD component are to provide funding to eligible higher education providers to assist with the high costs incurred in providing educational support and/or equipment to students with disability to enable them to participate in higher education; and encourage efficient and effective use of equipment and education resources to support students with disability.

The following module outlines a modified, generic version of the Curtin University Specialist Mentoring Program (CSMP). Two independent evaluations of CSMP were conducted during its first semester of operation in 2014 (Hamilton, 2015; Hamilton, Stevens & Girdler, 2016; Siew, 2014). Additionally, a comparative, replication study of the CSMP program, based on the draft CRC module, was conducted at the University of Western Australia (UWA) during semester two, 2015.

Evaluation results of the 2014 CSMP program from the mentee perspective indicate that there was a significant improvement in mentee participants' sense of support and a significant decrease in their apprehension in communicating with others over the course of the program. Mentee participants also reported being highly satisfied with the program with a mean satisfaction score of 4.31 out of 5 (Siew, 2014). Evaluation results of the CSMP 2014 mentor training and program from the mentor perspective indicate that the training was well received with an overall mean satisfaction score of 4.7 out of 5 (Hamilton, 2015; Hamilton, Stevens & Girdler, 2016). Final results from the UWA comparative, replication study are yet to be released. Research papers based on these studies are in development.

Preliminary feedback from the mentees involved with the UWA 2015 Specialist Peer Mentoring Program indicates they valued the program and would like to continue to be involved if the program remained available. UWA are presently investigating an alternative, potentially more affordable model of service delivery where the program would source voluntary Psychology undergraduate mentors in their honours year or last year of a double degree to help provide them with extra professional practice opportunities. It is proposed that supervision of these mentees would be undertaken by a postgraduate, clinical Psychology placement student within Disability Services with their time divided between their mentoring coordinator and counselling roles. Such a service delivery model may be more appealing to some tertiary institutions where the potential cost of delivering such mentoring services may be a prohibitive factor. However, such a service delivery model will need to ensure that student coordinators

and mentors have informed and regular supervision from experienced staff when dealing with such a potentially complicated population of students to ensure duty of care requirements are met.

The module is provided with the intention that other tertiary institutions may use the experience and resources developed by CSMP, UWA and the Autism CRC to adapt to their own circumstances so that tertiary students on the autism spectrum and those with related conditions will have a greater chance to realise their educational potential in tertiary environments.

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Program Coordinator Role

"I have found the Program Coordinator Role to be both rewarding and challenging. It has been highly instructive to get to know both the mentors and the mentees. The mentors have continually shown great dedication toward their mentees and have been instrumental in providing tailored, individualised support to them. The mentors have found that the mentees are all different in their needs and their ability to progress toward their own educational and life goals. The regular supervision meetings help the mentees gain much needed understanding, support and guidance for their role from both the Coordinator and the other mentors – essential when inevitable difficulties arise."

(CSMP Coordinator)

The role of the Program Coordinator is crucial to the success of the program and should be filled by a professional in the field who has had substantial experience dealing with individuals on the Autism Spectrum and their families (Hamilton, 2015). The Coordinator should be allocated adequate time to fulfil the role so that they may deal effectively with the ever growing number of students on the autism spectrum now entering the tertiary system. Recent research confirms that individuals on the Autism Spectrum have particularly complex profiles with some experiencing serious comorbid conditions and high suicidal ideation (Cassidy et al., 2014). The CSMP experience has shown that critical issues arise on a regular basis that need to be addressed appropriately and in a timely and proactive manner before serious consequences occur. Mentors need ongoing support and guidance regarding their often difficult and demanding role. The Program Coordinator should therefore, work closely with the mentors (Disability Advisors and the Counselling team – if available) to ensure the best possible coordinated service to mentees (Hamilton, Stevens & Girdler, 2016).

MANUAL ORGANISATION

The Program Coordinator Manual is broken into four sections:

1. Program Duties.

2. Mentor Information.

3. Mentee Information.

4. Appendices: A (Mentor Information) / B (Mentee Information) / C (Crisis Management Information). All forms in the Appendices are generic in nature or samples from Curtin University or the University of WA.

Program Duties

The following list of duties is provided as a recommended framework only and should be amended according to the resources available to the program in each tertiary site.

The Program Coordinator's role involves the following duties:

- Overseeing specific duties in relation to mentors and mentees as detailed in the following two sections of this document.

- Advertising and distributing information about the program through various channels throughout the year (website, social media, secondary school networks, conferences, Autism community networks etc.) (See Appendix A – *General Program Information, Mentor Induction Flyer* and Appendix B – *Mentee Induction Flyer*).

- Creating and adapting appropriate documentation to support the program (See Appendices).

- Generating a Mentee/Mentor Composite List (See Appendix A - *Mentee/Mentor Composite List*).

- Reading, processing and storing of documentation for weekly time-sheets, social group, mentor weekly reports and other documentation (See Appendix A).

- Developing a working, collegial relationship with the Disability and Counselling Team (if available).

- Receiving supervision and support for the coordination role from a senior member of the Disability / Counselling Team (if available).

- Consulting with the Counselling and Disability Team and other relevant departments / agencies when problematic / crisis situations arise.

- Receiving referrals for the program from the Disability / Counselling Team *(See* Appendix B – *Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Referral Form).*

- Organising meetings with interested parties to educate the campus community about the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program and the nature of Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC).

- Organising and undertaking recurrent evaluations to include key stakeholder feedback (mentor, mentee, relevant tertiary staff members etc.) to continually inform practice.

- Keeping up-to-date with current research in the area to continually inform practice.

Duties (in relation to Mentors)

- Creating links with faculties / departments on campus (Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Education, Speech Pathology, Engineering, Computer Science and so on) to source appropriate mentors (See Appendix A – *General Program Information* and *Mentor Induction Flyer*).

- Providing induction materials to potential mentors of the program (See Appendix A – *Mentor Induction Flyer, General Program Information*).

- Conducting referee checks and interviewing potential mentors to determine suitability to their role in terms of their motivation, education, training, experience and social competence.

- Choosing and pairing of suitable mentors with mentees (See Appendix B – *Mentee/Mentor Composite List).*

- Providing transition support to mentees when a change of mentor is needed (See Appendix A – *Mentor Handover Form).*

- Conducting the initial Mentor Induction Meeting and providing intake materials (See section *Mentor Information - Mentor Induction Meeting*).

- Ensuring Mentors have the necessary current National Police Clearance and Working with Children Checks as per requirements of the tertiary site.

- Providing training and regular group supervision meetings to mentors (See separate *Autism CRC PowerPoint* & *Specialist Mentor Toolkit* Documents).

- Collecting completed Mentor Confidentiality Agreement, Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract from mentors (See Appendix A – *Mentor Confidentiality Agreement, Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract*).

- Chairing weekly mentor supervision meetings during the teaching weeks of the semester.

- Overseeing the mentors' work with their mentees inclusive of providing support during crisis situations that may develop (See Appendix C – *Crisis Management Information*).

- Reviewing and checking receipt of weekly report, attendance at supervision meeting and time-sheet submission (See Appendix A - *Weekly Checklist for Report, Meeting & Time-sheet*).

- Overseeing mentors (and mentees if applicable) charged with running the social group (See Appendix A – *Social Group Weekly Report Form* and *Sample*).

- Meeting with individual mentors (and their mentees if required) on an as-needs-basis.

- Helping to organise appropriate guest speakers and materials for the social group.

- Providing recognition of the mentor role in the form of a reference, certificate or documentation on a student's academic record.

Duties (in relation to Mentees)

- Liaising with parents, support persons, students on the Autism Spectrum etc. about the program and distributing program materials (See Appendix A – *General Program Information* and Appendix B – *Mentee Induction Flyer*).

- Assessing applications and student referrals from Counselling / Disability Services as to a student's suitability to be part of the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program. (See Appendix B – *Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Referral Form*).

  Please Note: Potential mentees cannot be accepted into the program if they have significant behavioural issues that would breach a duty of care to student mentors.

- Providing induction materials for new mentees to the program (See Appendix A – *General Program Information* and Appendix B – *Mentee Induction Flyer* and separate *Mentee Information Booklet*).

- Conducting intake interviews with mentees (and their families / support persons).

- Collecting completed necessary intake / permission / safety plan forms and issuing necessary mentee program information (See Appendix B – *Mentee Intake Form, Mentee Release of Information Form*, *Mentee Consent Form,* Appendix C – *UWA Safety Plan Sample* and separate *Mentee Information Booklet*).

- Liaising with parents / support persons / Counselling / Disability Services (with mentee's permission) about the ongoing support needed by the mentee over time.

- Meeting with individual mentees (and their mentors if required) on an as-needs-basis.

- Helping to link mentees with support and work experience opportunities both on and off campus (See Appendix B – *Brief Information Sheet for Work Experience / Employment Sample* – Completed with mentee's input and permission regarding disclosure of details).

- Organising the handover of mentees from one mentor to another as needed (See Appendix A - *Mentor Handover Form*).

Research / Evaluation Duties

- Conducting ongoing evaluations to continually improve the program based on key stakeholder feedback (with the student mentee perspective being given precedence).

Crisis Management Duties

During mentor training, mentors will be made aware of their respective institution's Crisis Response Plan (See Appendix C – *Crisis Management Response Information and Samples*). They will be instructed that if they find themselves in a crisis situation they should follow their own institution's Crisis Response Plan and contact their Coordinator as soon as possible.

Please Note: Coordinators should ensure that they insert the correct Crisis Management Information in the Specialist Mentor Toolkit (Appendix B – *Crisis Management Information)* according to their own institution policies **prior to issuing the Toolkit to mentors and prior to the training (where direct reference to the Crisis Management Information is made).**

Based on the recent experience of CSMP, some of these crisis situations may involve:

- Serious mental health problems (depression / anxiety / suicidal ideation).

- Harm to self or others.

- Substance abuse (Drug & Alcohol).

- Emotional, Physical and/or Sexual Abuse.

- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Intersex (LGBTI) Issues.

In these circumstances a Coordinator should remind the mentor that their task is to:

- Stay calm, be non-judgmental and use active listening skills to understand their mentee's difficulties.

- Reassure their mentee that any information given will be treated as confidential (unless there is risk of harm to self or others).

- Remind their mentee to use recommended calming strategies noted in their mentee's initial intake form and Safety Plan (See Appendix B – *Mentee Intake Form* and Appendix C – *UWA Specialist Mentoring Safety Plan Sample*).

- Find out the location of their mentee especially if they threaten self-harm or harm to others.

- Note down any important information about their mentee's situation ready to report to other relevant personnel if the need should arise – Security / Police / Coordinator / Disability Services / Counselling etc.

- Remind their mentee of the boundaries of their mentoring role (they are not their mentee's parent, therapist or counsellor).

- Refer their mentee onto appropriate campus personnel and services ASAP to receive professional help especially if suicidal thoughts have been expressed.

- Follow their institution's Crisis Response Plan and ring emergency personnel if needed (see Appendix C – *Curtin Crisis Management Response Chart Sample & UWA Specialist Mentoring Safety Plan Sample*).

- Contact their Program Coordinator ASAP by phone or email about the situation to receive further help.

- Debrief individually with their Coordinator or during the supervision meetings to gain personal support and feedback.

- Seek counselling for themselves if they need ongoing support.

- Discuss mentee's inclusion in program with Coordinator if ongoing issues continually breach the defined role and responsibility of a student mentor.

According to Wolf et al. (2009 pp. 150-152), Myles (2005 pp. 59-73) and the CSMP experience, after a critical incident has occurred it is important that a functional assessment of the behaviour be conducted as most mentee behaviour will be associated with a reason, cause or condition under which the behaviour occurs.

After a mentee has experienced a crisis, the mentor should notify the Coordinator as soon as possible and provide details about the crisis situation. Depending on the situation the coordinator may contact other appropriate personnel, disability and counselling staff who can provide ongoing support and investigate the situation more fully. Parents or support persons (nominated on the initial intake form) may also be contacted to help provide support and background information regarding the mentee's behaviour. Where possible, a team approach to assist the mentee is advised. A review of the mentee's inclusion in the program may also be needed if ongoing issues breach duty of care requirements of a student mentor.

Wolf et al. (2009) recommend the following stress management techniques for this population of students:

- Identify potentially stressful situations.

- Determine what precipitates crises.

- Identify how stress manifests itself (e.g., what behaviours are demonstrated).

- Identify calming methods.

- Determine medications used in past with medical/clinical support. (p.151)

Wolf et al. (2009) also nominate the following stress-relieving activities on campus:

- Regular exercise.

- Outings with peers, friends, or family.

- Maintaining a healthy eating and sleeping schedule.

- Scheduled downtime every day and during each study period.

- Structured time for TV, movies, or video games (with an alarm to end time).

- Yoga or meditation (also a good group activity).

- Listening to music. (p.152)

If further information is sought on functional assessments and stress management techniques, please refer to Wolf et al. (2009, pp. 150-152) and Myles (2005, pp. 59-73).

Please Note*:* Coordinators will need to insert their own appropriate institution Crisis Response information into Appendix C – *Crisis Management Response Information* of this document and into the separate *Mentor Toolkit* (See Appendix B).

MENTOR INFORMATION

Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Model

The Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Model draws on the CSMP experience and research (Hamilton, 2015; Hamilton, Stevens & Girdler; 2016; Siew, 2014) that indicates the quality of mentoring is impacted by such factors as:

- Specialised mentor training (prior to meeting mentees)

- Mentor's approach and self-efficacy (based on training / mentor experience)

- Mentor-mentee relationship (supported by experienced Coordinator)

- Group mentor supervision (on a regular basis)

- Structural supports (Coordinator, Disability / Counselling Support)

- Social group (inclusive of mentors / mentees on a regular basis)

Mentoring Program Model

Mentor Support — Supervision, Access to coordinator, Training

Peer Mentoring

Social Group

Mentor Role

> *"Being a part of CSMP has been an incredibly rewarding, memorable and an invaluable learning experience. As a mentor, I had the honour of working with C., a first year student on the Autism Spectrum. Prior to working with the program, I knew little about the daily challenges and anxieties that those on the Autism Spectrum faced. However, working with C. has made me profoundly aware of how courageous these mentees are in confronting the challenge of university life. The program means that the mentees do not have to do it alone. I saw how the mentoring program provided the scaffolding and support needed for the mentees to adjust to university and develop meaningful friendships. I feel very proud and honoured to be involved in such a worthwhile project that makes such a difference in these students' lives."*
>
> *(CSMP Mentor)*

Roberts (2000) defined mentoring as a:

> Formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that persons' career and development. (p.162)

According to Bebko, Schroeder and Ames, (2011) who developed the York University Asperger Mentorship Program (AMP) in Canada:

> The role of the mentor is akin to that of a "coach", … A coach helps you practice skills, they help you prepare for the game, they cheer you along, and work with you after the game to talk about what went well and how to practise for the next game – but a coach does not play the game for or with you. This analogy is used to clarify that the role of the mentor is different from a counsellor or a friend. (p.5)

The CSMP experience has found this notion of a mentor very useful in clarifying the boundaries of the mentor role. Mentors essentially help 'coach' their mentees by communicating and/or meeting with their mentees for one or more hours per week during the teaching weeks of the semester. The communication channels used are determined by both parties and may also depend upon whether the student is internal (on campus) or external (off campus) to the university.

Key Duties of a Specialist Mentor

AutismCRC

Participate in specialist training / weekly reporting & supervision	Communicate / meet weekly with their mentee during semester	Understand their mentee's profile from intake form and safety plan
Provide flexible and individualised support	Ensure mentee registered with Disability Services to gain accommodations.	Build on the mentee's short and long term life goals including employment
Link mentee to appropriate university services and clubs	Encourage mentee to attend Social Group	Increase mentee's independence, self-advocacy and confidence over time.

AutismCRC

Please Note: The CSMP experience has found that Facebook should not be used by a mentor as a preferred, individual communication method with their mentee as this does not establish appropriate professional boundaries between the mentor and mentee and problems of over-familiarity have arisen because of this.

The mentor role involves the following duties:

- Reading preparatory training material in preparation for specialist mentor training.

- Attending half-day specialist mentor training.

- Familiarising themselves with the profile and needs of their mentee (See Appendix A, B & C – *Mentee Intake Form*, *Mentor Handover Form [if applicable], Safety Plan* and other relevant weekly and medical reports etc. held in their mentee's record/file).

- Establishing boundaries and responsibilities of the mentee/mentor role with their mentee and signing off on Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Form early in the relationship (See Appendix A – *Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract*).

- Being available to work as a specialist mentor for one or more hours during the teaching weeks of the semester.

- Being available to attend regular, group supervision meetings during the teaching weeks of the semester.

- Completing and submitting a short weekly report detailing meeting times, issues arising and referrals by the specified time and date during the teaching weeks of the semester (See Appendix A – *Mentor Reporting Form* and *Sample*).

- Completing and submitting a fortnightly time-sheet detailing working hours if applicable (See Appendix A – *Mentor Time Form*).

- Encouraging their mentee to indicate what difficulties (social, academic, etc.) they may be experiencing with university life.

- Giving advice to their mentee about how to handle these difficulties or where to gain appropriate support/advice.

  Please Note: the mentor may need to accompany the mentee initially to a support service or on-campus group.

- Ensuring their mentee has registered with their institution's Disability Services and has investigated whether he/she is eligible for accommodations/ modifications.

- Participating in the Social Group Coordinating Committee (if possible) and submitting social group reports during supervision meetings (See Appendix A – *Social Group Report Form* and *Sample*).

- Encouraging their mentee to attend the Social Group during the teaching weeks of the semester and attending the group with them as required.

- Encouraging and supporting their mentees to prepare their resumes by connecting them with their Careers Department and to help them seek out work experience/work preferably in their respective fields of study (See Appendix B – *Brief Information Sheet for Work Experience/Employment*).

- Working toward the long term goal of trying to help their mentee gain as much confidence, independence, agency and self-advocacy as possible in preparation for a more successful adult life.

- Completing a handover form summarising the strengths, difficulties etc. of their mentee (See Appendix A – *Mentor Handover Form*) at the conclusion of their mentoring role.

- Participating in an evaluation process as required.

- Developing appropriate self-care and crisis management skills.

CSMP evaluation results regarding the training and the program from the mentor perspective indicate that mentors:

- Found the specialist training and weekly supervision received during the program imperative because of the individual and complicated nature of each mentee's profile.

- Found the weekly supervision meetings allowed them to acquire support, advice and to debrief – nominated as essential for their role.

- Developed a strong, collegial relationship with their program coordinators that was vital to the success of their role as a mentor (Hamilton, 2015).

Mentor Selection

It is recommended that specialist mentors be carefully selected from a pool of successful, experienced undergraduate and/or postgraduate students (e.g. Schools of Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Speech Pathology, Nursing, Education, Computer Science, Engineering etc.). Organising a pool of trained specialist peer mentors by the beginning of the academic year ensures that irrespective of demand, appropriately trained mentors will be available throughout the academic year. If demand is high, some mentors may also be available to mentor two or more mentees. These students will gain valuable training and professional practice experience working with mentees on the Autism Spectrum in a supervised, supportive setting prior to them embarking on careers in their respective fields. Additionally, these experienced students potentially provide a high level of dedication, understanding and expertise when dealing with mentees given their background and success in tertiary education.

Prospective mentors should demonstrate in their application and interview:

- A proven academic track record.

- Suitability to be a mentor.

- Appropriate communication skills.

- Emotional intelligence.

- Good references.

- Relevant experience (if any).

The canvassing and selection process for mentors should occur early in the semester before the mentors are needed so that there is ample time available for selection, induction and training.

Hence, relationships need to be established with the respective Schools / Departments in the tertiary environment concerned. Prospective mentors are contacted via their respective Schools / Departments through use of the *Mentor Induction Flyer* (See Appendix A). The flyer requests that they provide a current resume, reasons for their interest in the program and to nominate an academic staff member who can attest to their suitability for the program. If selected to be interviewed by the Coordinator, prospective mentors should then be emailed a *General Program Information sheet* (See Appendix A) and be invited to attend an interview process where their suitability for the role will be determined.

If successful, mentors should then be given the details of an induction meeting (See next section – *Mentor Induction Meeting* for details) and details of the half-day specialist mentor training (See separate PowerPoint - *Specialist Peer Mentor Training Program*) that they will be required to attend prior to the beginning of the semester. Mentor details should be recorded by the Coordinator on the *Mentee/Mentor Composite List* (See Appendix A).

Mentor Induction Meeting

The Mentor Induction Meeting takes approximately 90 minutes to conduct. At the introductory induction meeting mentors will (See Appendix A – *Mentor Induction Meeting Checklist*):

- Meet their fellow mentors to begin the process of team building and collegiality.

- Be issued the *Specialist Mentor Toolkit*, the National Autistic Society (NAS) *Student Mentor Guidelines (UK)* and the National Disability Coordination Officer Programme (NDCO) of Australia, *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (see below for links to access NAS and NDCO documents).

- Be instructed to read and digest the Toolkit and the other two documents prior to their Specialist Mentor Training.

- Be given details of the training day and have their queries about the program addressed.

- Have the importance and the workings of the social group explained (*See Social Group* Section in this document).

- Be informed of the details of the Social Group and asked to volunteer to be on a Social Group Coordinating Committee (3-5 students needed). (See Appendix A - *Social Group Report Form* and *Sample* and Appendix B – *Mentee Social Group Flyer*).

- Be issued and asked to sign a *Mentor Confidentiality Agreement* (See Appendix A) ensuring any mentee details discussed remain confidential.

- Be issued and asked to get joint signatures (mentee/mentor) on the *Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract* form and return ASAP to Coordinator (See Appendix A - *Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract*).

- Be informed of their contract and payment requirements and dates (if mentors are to be paid).

- Be informed of the need for a current National Police Clearance and Working with Children Check to be gained by them prior to them working with their mentees.

- Be informed of the mentee/mentor pairings (organised to ensure a positive relationship based on the interests and/or backgrounds of both parties).

- Be issued their mentee's file (hard copy) to view and return to the Program Coordinator at the conclusion of the meeting (consisting of their mentee's intake form, Safety Plan and any other relevant information provided).

- Be asked to note down important details of their mentee's file using their mentee's first name only to ensure anonymity (contact details, interests of mentee, specific problem areas, Safety Plan details etc.).

- Be informed that they can set up a private meeting with the Coordinator if they need further time to review their mentee's file or if the file is not yet available.

- Be informed that they will either be responsible for contacting their mentee individually after their training or that a 'Meet and Greet Meeting' will be organised by the Coordinator.

   Please Note: Based on the CSMP experience, it is recommended that the 'Meet and Greet Meeting' be conducted in a group format immediately following the mentor training. This meeting has included the mentees (their support persons) and the mentors and begins the process of developing relationships among the group in preparation for the formation of a social group.

- Be informed of the supervision meeting dates, times and deadlines for weekly reports during the teaching weeks of the semester (See Appendix A - *Mentor Reporting Form and Sample)*.

- Be asked to highlight (bold type) any pressing issues and positive breakthroughs in their weekly reports that may need to be discussed at the supervision meeting.

Please Note: Student mentors are expected to have read through the Toolkit, the NAS and the NDCO booklets prior to training to supplement the mentor training given.

The National Autistic Society (NAS) of the United Kingdom *Student Mentor Guidelines* booklet (PDF format) can be downloaded through the NAS website: http://www.autism.org.uk/studentmentors. The NAS *Student Mentor Guidelines* booklet covers the following areas:

- Understanding the Autism Spectrum.

- The role of a student mentor.

- Getting started.

- Supporting a student with Asperger Syndrome.

- Useful resources.

- Further reading.

Additionally, the National Disability Coordination Officer Programme (NDCO) of Australia *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Transition to Tertiary - Short Version PRINT)* can be downloaded through www.adcet.edu.au/autism-transition.

The NDCO booklet is also issued to the mentees as part of the Mentee Information Booklet (Section 3 of the Manual) they receive when they become a mentee with the program. The NDCO booklet is an excellent resource for both mentees and mentors in relation to understanding some of the challenges faced by tertiary students on the Autism Spectrum. The NDCO booklet covers the following areas:

- Awareness of yourself and others.

- Knowing your strengths.

- Familiarising yourself with the campus.

- Studying at university or TAFE.

- Organising your study.

- What support could be helpful.

- Finding key people who can help you.

- Communication tips.

- Managing stress and anxiety.

Mentor Training

CSMP evaluation results of the 2014 mentor training and program from the mentor perspective indicate that the training was well received with an overall mean satisfaction score of 4.7 out of 5. Results indicate that the training increased mentors' knowledge and insight into the mentee experience (Hamilton, 2015; Hamilton, Stevens & Girdler, 2016).

The goals of the training are for the mentor to:

- Increase their understanding of the different ways an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) can impact on a student in a tertiary education setting.

- Understand their role and develop skills to establish a sound working relationship with their mentee.

- Increase their capacity to provide appropriate, individualised support and guidance to their mentee.

- Understand the importance of interpersonal boundaries, crisis management, confidentiality and self-care.

- Understand the policies, practices and procedures of their Specialist Peer Mentoring Program.

It is recommended that mentor training occurs prior to the beginning of the semester or academic year. The training is timed to take place over a half day and is made up of approximately two 90 minute sessions. To conduct specialist mentor training, the Coordinator should be familiar with the other module documents:

- The *Specialist Mentor Toolkit* for the Mentors (inclusive of the NAS *Student Mentor Guidelines* and the NDCO *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder*).

- The *Mentee Information Booklet* for the Mentees (and their Support Persons).

- The *Specialist Peer Mentor Training Program (PowerPoint)* for the Coordinator.

Please Note: Mentors should be given a copy of the *Specialist Mentor Toolkit* Booklet inclusive of the *NAS Student Mentor Guidelines* and the NDCO *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder* at the Mentor Induction Meeting (see *Mentor Induction Meeting* Section of this document) at least one week prior to training so that mentors have time to familiarise themselves with the contents of these documents **before the training day takes place**.

Mentor Supervision

After specialist training and mentors have had the chance to meet their mentees, regular weekly group mentor supervision meetings should be held for approximately one hour during the teaching weeks of the semester. The CSMP experience has shown that this allows mentors the ability to have the necessary support and to debrief, share ideas and receive feedback from the Coordinator and fellow mentors about the

sometimes difficult situations they may be facing with their mentee. Evaluation research of the original CSMP program indicates that mentees found such supervision vital because it gave them the chance to debrief; brainstorm; share resources; receive support; alleviate isolation; and reflect on their work and the progress of their mentee(s) (Hamilton, 2015, Hamilton, Stevens & Girdler, 2016).

Prior to the weekly supervision meetings, the Coordinator should:

- Remind mentors to highlight (bold type) any pressing issues and/or positive improvements in their weekly reports that may need to be discussed at the supervision meetings (See Appendix A - *Mentor Reporting Form and Sample)*.

- Receive electronically completed *Social Group Report Forms*, *Mentor Reporting Forms* and *Mentor Time Forms* (See Appendix A) from the mentors before the supervision meeting is scheduled so that the Coordinator can be familiar with the relevant details of the weekly events and any pressing issues/ improvements that need to be discussed at the meeting. Use the checklist to help track report, meeting attendance and timesheet submission (See Appendix A – *Weekly Checklist for Report, Meeting & Timesheet*).

- Make hard copies of the completed reporting forms to file in securely stored, paper-based mentee files so that mentors (and permitted others) can view the files individually as needed.

- Store both soft and hard copies of the forms securely in the relevant electronic and hard copy files and folders according to institution policies.

- Check and sign off on *Mentor Time Forms* for approval and submit to relevant departments within the institution so that mentors can be paid for their time (if applicable).

At the weekly supervision meetings, the Coordinator should:

- Chair the meeting and complete *Weekly Checklist for Report, Meeting & Timesheet* to track report and time sheet submission and mentor attendance (See Appendix A).

- Disseminate any relevant program information.

- Receive a brief verbal summary of any pressing issues and/or positive improvements of each mentor's interactions with their mentee based on their completed *Mentor Reporting Form* (See Appendix A - *Mentor Reporting Form and Sample*).

- Give feedback/suggestions to the mentors about any challenges they may be experiencing with their mentee.

- Encourage other mentors to give input regarding how these challenges could also be dealt with more successfully based on their own experiences with their mentee.

- Receive a brief weekly report from the Social Group from one of the Coordinating Committee (See Appendix A for *Social Group Weekly Report Form* and *Sample*).

- Encourage other mentors to give feedback about the Social Group to help improve its appeal and relevance to the mentees who may not be attending.

After the weekly supervision meetings, the Coordinator should:

- Follow up on referrals that need to be made.

- Contact support persons about mentee difficulties that need further investigation.

- Continue with other duties detailed in the *Program Coordinator Role* Section of this document.

Social Group

"The mentoring program offers the mentees a rare opportunity to meet like-minded people their age and fosters the development of interpersonal relationships. There is a scarcity of such opportunities for adults on the Autism Spectrum. My mentee has been at Curtin University for 3 years and had never made any friends. He now attends the weekly social club meetings as well as plays cards with another mentee weekly. These social gatherings mean a lot to my mentee, he continually indicates that he wants to improve his social skills. I believe the mentoring program provides him with an opportunity to reach this goal."

(CSMP Mentor)

CSMP evaluation research indicates that the group nature of the Social Group facilitated valuable opportunities for socialisation and created a sense of belonging on campus (Siew, 2014). Both mentors and mentees should therefore be encouraged and invited to be part of the Social Group Coordinating Committee and attend the social group when possible. The Coordinating Committee should provide a regular report (See Appendix A - *Social Group Weekly Report Form* and *Sample*) during the weekly supervision meeting so that they may inform the larger group of activities and gain valuable feedback regarding the success of the social group.

Based on the CSMP experience, it is recommended that the Social Group:

- Be coordinated by a group of mentors and mentees so that responsibility for and running of the group can be shared.

- Be held weekly in an appropriate campus venue during the teaching weeks of the semester (preferably during a non-teaching time on campus).

- Be advertised through email and a specific, closed Social Group Facebook page created by the Social Group Coordinating Committee where relevant information and social events can be posted by both mentors and mentees.

- Have extra social events organised by both mentees and mentors to occur during the non-teaching weeks of the year.

- Be a safe, welcoming social space for mentees (and mentors) to commune / make friends / practise social skills, presentations etc. / experience belonging/ decrease isolation.

- Be approximately 60 to 90 minutes in length and be held in a regular venue with internet access and a large screen. Have a pre-organised program informed by both mentee and mentor feedback and be organised in two parts:

  o A short (approx. 15 - 30 minutes) formal aspect delivered/organised by the social group committee (e.g. social skills, guest speakers, dating advice, careers etc. based on mentee needs and wants).

  o A longer (approx. 45 - 60 mins) informal aspect (e.g. electronic and board game playing – CSMP favourites Jenga, Fibbage and Pandemic).

- Have a regular report written by a member of the Social Group Committee and delivered at the supervision meeting (See Appendix A – *Social Group Weekly Report Form* and *Sample)*.

- Be given regular feedback by both mentors and mentees to ensure the ongoing relevance and appeal of the group.

MENTEE INFORMATION

"Going into university for the first time was challenging and scary yet exciting, all on its own. Struggling with new situations, structure and community made the mentoring program such a vital safety net and building bridge in becoming my own person and making a name for myself. The program gave me a mentor that helped me make and keep friends in my degree and yet support me with regular conversations, meetings and information. I've been a part of programs like this before and nothing compares to the support, care and thrive for my success, it offers."

(CSMP Mentee)

Pre-Mentee Intake Meeting

Ideally the mentee entry process should occur over many months prior to the beginning of the academic year or semester. Potential mentees (and their families) can be informed of the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program through use of a *General Program Information* sheet and *Mentee Induction Flyer* (See Appendix A and B respectively) and recruited through:

- Various advertising means (internal and external to the tertiary institution including social media, Autism Associations, Autism Community Groups, conferences, secondary schools, Education Departments, radio stations, television, newspaper articles and so on).

- The tertiary institution's website.

- The tertiary institution's Disability Advisors (see Appendix B, *Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Referral Form*).

Please Note: Once registered with an institution's Disability Service, mentees can also be informed of the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program and the accommodations and modifications potentially available to them based on their profile and documentation (e.g. use of a laptop in exams, extended time in exams, separate room for exams, a scribe, extensions etc.). Based on the CSMP experience, it is recommended that all mentees be registered with both their Disability Service and the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program to ensure that best conditions for success are made available at the earliest time.

After potential mentees (or their representatives) make initial contact with the Program Coordinator and indicate they want to be part of the program, mentees (and their support persons) should be:

- Emailed relevant general program information before they attend an intake meeting (See Appendix A – *General Program Information)*.

- Asked to attend an intake meeting with the Coordinator where they will be issued a booklet containing necessary program information and forms (see next section) - ideally conducted prior to the beginning of the academic year or semester and prior to the Mentor Induction Meeting.

Please Note: Potential mentees are encouraged to bring a support person / parent if needed to the intake meeting (especially 1st year students). Previous CSMP experience has found that support persons / parents often have different perspectives regarding the relative strengths and difficulties experienced by the individual on the Autism Spectrum. Both perspectives are potentially very valuable as every individual on the Autism Spectrum is highly idiosyncratic in their presentation. Additionally, some students on the Autism Spectrum may have difficulty communicating the details of their situation.

Mentee Intake Meeting

At the meeting the mentee should be (see Appendix B – *Mentee Intake Meeting Checklist)*:

- Issued a booklet containing the:

    o *Mentee Information Booklet* (See separate document).

    o NDCO *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (See reference to separate document).

    o *Mentee Intake Form* (See Appendix B).

    o *Mentee Release of Information Form* (See Appendix B)*.*

    o *Mentee Consent Form* (See Appendix B).

    o *Mentee Safety Plan (*Appendix C).

    o *Mentee Social Group Flyer* (Appendix B)

Please Note: The permission forms allow the Program Coordinator to seek and share information with nominated persons (including parents/support persons, Course Coordinators, Disability and Counselling Services on an as-needs-basis). CSMP has found the ability to discuss matters with other informed parties to be an invaluable resource when trying to support mentors and their mentees through difficult situations.

- Given an explanation of the contents of the booklet.

- Asked to complete and return the relevant forms to the Coordinator ASAP (See Appendix B - *Mentee Intake Form, Mentee Release of Information Form, Mentee Consent Form* and Appendix C – *Mentee Safety Plan*).

Please Note: Mentees may need the assistance of a trusted support person/parent or the Coordinator to complete the intake form.

- Encouraged to ask any questions they may have about the program.

- Informed as to how the first point of contact between mentor and mentee will be made during the initial interview.

Please Note: This may take the form of a separate individual meeting or a 'Meet and Greet' Group Meeting including all mentors and mentees in the program directly after the Mentee Training Day as a forerunner to the Social Group.

- Issued a 'Meet & Greet' flyer if needed (See Appendix B - *Meet & Greet Flyer).*

- Encouraged to contact the Coordinators should they experience difficulties with their mentor.

Post-Mentee Intake Meeting

After the meeting the Coordinator should:

- Take receipt of the completed mentee forms.

- Scan and place the completed intake form, permission forms and safety plan into secure electronic files to satisfy institution record keeping requirements.

- Establish a hard copy mentee file in a secure site to house the documents (intake / permission forms, safety plan, other documentation and weekly reports) for use by the Coordinator and mentors who will need to access the files at different points in time (see Mentor Role Information).

- Record relevant mentee details on the *Mentee/Mentor Composite List* (See Appendix A – *Mentee/Mentor Composite List*).

   Please Note: The composite list allows the Coordinator to access important details quickly and is especially valuable when crisis situations occur and emergency contact details need to be accessed immediately.

- Email the mentee confirming mentee/mentor initial meeting details ('Meet & Greet' group meeting or individual organised meetings).

- Collect and file completed *Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract* at 'Meet and Greet' Meeting or at first supervision meetings.

Useful Resources

Publications (many authored by those on the Autism Spectrum)

Attwood, S. (2008). *Making Sense of Sex: A Forthright Guide to Puberty, Sex and Relationships for People with Asperger's Syndrome*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Attwood, T. (2007). *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Attwood, T., Evans, C.R. & Lesko, A. (2014). *Been There. Done That. Try This!: An Aspie's Guide to Life on Earth.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Attwood, T. & Grandin, T. (2006). *Asperger's and Girls.* Arlington, Texas: Future Horizons.

Autism Association of WA. (2007). *Beyond Behaviour Management.* Perth, WA: Autism Association of WA.

Baker, J. (2006). *The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond.* Arlington, Texas: Future Horizons.

Bebko, J.M., Schroeder, J.H., & Schroeder, & Ames, M.E. (2011). *A mentoring program for students with Asperger and ASDs.* Retrieved from: http://www.counselling.net/jnew/pdfs/handbooksmunualsguides/YORK%20UNIVERSITY,%20A%20Mentoring%20Program%20for%20Students%20with%20Asperger%20and%20ASDs.pdf

Brown, D. (2013). *The Aspie Girl's Guide to Being Safe with Men.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Dubin, N. (2009). *Asperger Syndrome and Anxiety: A Guide to Successful Stress Management.* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Edmonds, G. & Worton, D. (2006). *The Asperger Social Guide.* London: Sage Publications.

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http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/consumers.cfm

http://www.autism.org.uk/

http://www.autism-uni.org/

https://www.autismspeaks.org/

http://www.autism.com/

Please Note:

http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/consumers.cfm

Centre for Clinical Interventions (CCI) WA website (Consumer Resources Section) – provides excellent online consumer modules for the general public to use on Social Anxiety, Worrying, Assertiveness, Depression and many more that may be helpful to a mentee depending upon their individual needs. CSMP has found these modules to be very helpful to mentees who wish to address the specific psychological difficulties

that affect their ability to maintain good mental health. Mentors may need to help their mentee access and complete appropriate modules during their sessions.

http://www.latrobe.edu.au/otarc/

Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) provides information on supporting tertiary university and TAFE students diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), their parents, and tertiary staff interested in learning more about ASCs. This information pertains to supporting students with an ASC in academic settings and comes from a variety of sources including local and international information, peer reviewed research and research conducted at OTARC (funded by DHS, Victoria). The information provided is general and not targeted for specific tertiary institutions.

http://www.autism-uni.org/

Autism & Uni is a multinational EU-funded project that helps greater numbers of young adults on the Autism Spectrum to gain access to Higher Education (HE) and to navigate the transition successfully. They have created FREE resources that HE Institutions across Europe can adopt. These include a set of Best Practice Guides for HE managers, academics and support staff. There is also an Online Toolkit for students to give them the information and strategies needed to manage the transition to university.

Computer Applications (as recommended by CSMP mentors and mentees)

- **Lost on Campus** (Free App. - Australia's biggest campus mapping app, with 42 campuses and over 36,000 locations).

- **Smiling Mind** (Free App. - Modern mediation program developed by psychologists for young people).

- **Anti-Social** (Small cost to buy App. - Makes it easy to target and block any distracting websites).

- **Procrastination** (Free App. - for all procrastinators).

- **SafeZone** (Free App. - for all students and staff that connects directly to the university security team while on campus.)

- **MindShift** (Free App. for young adults to help learn ways to relax, develop more helpful ways of thinking, and identify active steps that will help take charge of anxiety. This app includes strategies to deal with everyday anxiety, as well as specific tools to tackle: Test Anxiety, Perfectionism, Social Anxiety, Performance Anxiety, Worry, Panic, Conflict).

- **Friendmaker** (Small cost to buy App. - companion to Dr E. Laugeson's book, *The Science of Making Friends*, and contains important skills, strategies, role-play videos, and tools for making and keeping friends based on guidance from the UCLA Peers program).

Appendix A – Mentor Information

MENTOR INDUCTION MEETING CHECKLIST

Tick Completed Items:

☐ Instruct mentors to briefly introduce themselves to group.

☐ Issue *Specialist Mentor Toolkit,* National Autistic Society (NAS) *Student Mentor Guidelines (UK)*, National Disability Coordination Officer Programme (NDCO) of Australia *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder* and *Mentor Confidentiality Agreement* (See Appendix A).

☐ Ask mentors to sign and return the *Mentor Confidentiality Agreement.*

☐ Be issued and asked to get joint signatures (mentee/mentor) on the *Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Contract* form to be returned ASAP to Coordinator.

☐ Instruct to read and digest three documents (Toolkit, NAS Guidelines & NDCO Helpful Hints) prior to their Specialist Mentor Training.

☐ Give details of the training day and have any queries addressed.

☐ Explain importance and the workings of the social group.

☐ Ask for and note down names of volunteers to be on a Social Group Coordinating Committee (3-5 students needed so responsibilities can be shared).

☐ Give details of contract and payment requirements (if mentors are to be paid).

☐ Inform regarding National Police Clearance and Working with Children Check requirements.

☐ Issue mentee/mentor pairings list.

☐ Inform of details of mentor/mentee meeting requirements ('Meet and Greet' Meeting or individual meetings to be organised).

☐ Issue details of supervision meeting dates, times and deadlines for weekly reports during the teaching weeks of the semester.

☐ Remind to highlight (bold type) any pressing issues and positive breakthroughs in their weekly reports that need discussion at the supervision meetings.

☐ Issue their mentee's file (hard copy) to briefly view, note important details (such as contact details, mentee interests, Safety Plan) and return to the Program Coordinator at the conclusion of the meeting (10 minutes approx.).

☐ Collect mentee files from mentors and indicate they can revisit or gain access to files at another prearranged time if needed.

Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Information

(Supporting students on the Autism Spectrum and related conditions)

The Specialist Peer Mentoring Program is designed to support students on the Autism Spectrum and related conditions to improve their retention, academic success and well-being at university through the employment of a peer-mentoring program.
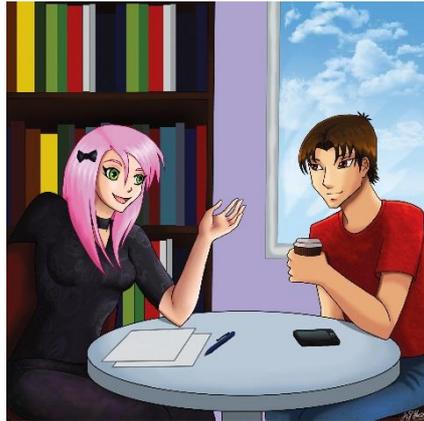
Research has shown that tertiary students on the Autism Spectrum may experience difficulties with:

- Planning and organising.

- Verbal comprehension.

- Group work and oral presentations.

- Forming friendships and joining groups.

- Seeking help / Self-advocacy.

- Anxiety / Depression.

Research has also shown that an experienced specialist peer mentor can help with these difficulties.

What is a Peer Mentor?

A peer mentor is a friendly, successful and experienced student who has received specific training in Autism Spectrum Conditions. Each student mentee is paired with a specialist peer mentor who is available to provide support and guidance according to their mentee's individual needs.

Mentors provide mentees with the opportunity to discuss personally relevant issues and their short, medium and long term academic and life goals. Individual

communications and/or meetings encourage the mentee to develop strategies to work through specific problems and practise target skills. Mentors can also assist students in locating appropriate services or groups on campus.

Mentors work toward the long term goal of trying to help their mentee gain as much confidence, independence and self-advocacy as possible in preparation for a more successful life.

What else can the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program do?

- Facilitate a Social Group to help mentees build a welcoming social network within their campus community.

- Support mentees to gain Work Experience/Employment in their field of interest/study over the course of their studies.

Mentees' key role & responsibilities:

- Respond ASAP to any communications from their mentor during the semester.

- Contact/meet their mentor at agreed times (and locations on campus if applicable).

- Advise their mentor by email/text of any unavoidable changes to arrangements at least 24 hours in advance.

- Communicate any difficulties they may be experiencing to their mentor.

- Be open to try different techniques to improve these difficulties.

- Try to attend Social Group events when possible.

Mentors' key role & responsibilities:

- To listen to their mentee's concerns and provide guidance for overcoming the challenges of studying in a tertiary environment.

- To link their mentee with clubs, services and supports that are on campus to help them succeed socially, emotionally and academically.

- To provide assistance with strategies for organising and planning workloads, working within groups, giving presentations, finding employment and so on.

- Try to attend Social Group events when possible.

Please contact the Program Coordinator below for more information:

(Please insert Program Coordinator contact details here)

Wanted: Specialist Peer Mentors

(Supporting students on the Autism Spectrum and related conditions)

- Are you a successful, experienced tertiary student who would like to gain valuable experience mentoring a student on the Autism Spectrum?

- Are you available to work on campus one or more hours per week during semester?

- Would you like to work in a team environment, receive specialist training and support for your role?

- If your answer is YES to all of these questions, please *email (fill in appropriate Coordinator name and contact details)* ASAP and include the following details:

    1. A current resume.

    2. Reasons for your interest in the specialist mentoring role.

    3. The name / contact details of an academic staff member who can attest to your suitability for the role of a specialist mentor.

Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Time Sheet

Mentor Name: …………………….…..……………………………………..

Student ID: …………………….…..………………………………………..

Staff ID: …………………….…..……………………………………..

School: …………………….…..……………………………………..

I have undertaken the following support services for:

Mentee Name: …………………….…..……………………….............…………

Student ID: …………………….…..……………………………………..

School: …………………….…..……………………………………..

SEMESTER   1   2   Year: 20_ _

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Date: …………………….   Hours Worked: ……………………..

Mentor Signature: …………………………………….Date: …………………………

Mentee Signature: …………………………………..Date: …………………………

Coordinator Signature: ……………………………….Date: ………………………….

MENTOR REPORTING FORM

Specialist Peer Mentor Weekly Reporting Form

Mentor Name: _____

Mentee Name: _____

For Week Ending Friday

Times, Types and Place of Contact:-

-
-
-
-
-

Session Content:-

Strengths:-

Difficulties:-

Possible Solutions:-

Referrals (Where, Reason for referral):-

MENTOR REPORTING FORM (SAMPLE)

Mentor Name: _____G _____

Mentee Name: _____W_____

For Week Ending Friday	14	03	20xx

Times, Types and Place of Contact:-

- 12/3 Meeting with mentee – waited didn't turn up
- 12/3 emailed mentee
- 13/3 emailed mentee and text
- 14/3 reminder text
- 14/3 meeting with mentee

Session Content:-

Emailed W after I waited on Wed and he didn't show up just enquired about how he was and let him know that I waited and that I could meet either Thurs or Fri.
Received email from W, had a busy day and remembered Wed night after it was too late. Was happy to rearrange and scheduled time for Fri afternoon to catch up.

Was early for meeting on Fri, explained the situation on wed needed to do shopping and had phoned a friend, didn't expect him to say he was going right then. Has transport issues, is able to drive but doesn't have a car, relies on friends in order to do shopping. Does use public transport and is competent. Asked if he had a diary has never liked using them, showed him the semester planner and explained how he could map out his assignments felt this might be quite useful.

He advised until today did not have internet access in his room, showed me that he had purchased wireless internet, had also arranged with other students in student housing to share and had advised them that he wouldn't purchase until everyone paid the first month in advance (Check at supervision meeting how others in student housing organise this). Let him know that was good and suggested he use the same strategy if they were cooking for each other so he wasn't always paying.

Doesn't have any goals at the moment is happy with the way things are going, and is finding the work easy. Finds the catch up's helpful, he advised his major problem is usually around exam time, which I suggested it may be good to book in with the counselling service early so he has that added support. He did feel that knowing I would be around e.g. our catch up's would be helpful.

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Looked at his timetable and suggested that maybe Tuesday would be a better day for meeting as he had fewer classes, so would possibly feel less overwhelmed, he agreed and we arranged to meet Tuesday's 12pm from now on suggested he put a reminder in his phone, as I didn't want to be reminding him every week as I felt like I was nagging him, felt this was a good idea.

Spoke about the Social Group and advised him that J. was now studying her Masters at Curtin too and was keen to go along, he thought he might attend next week as we had also moved our catch up which would free him up to attend.

He told me he has also made a friend in Physics, someone who doesn't like being around people, prefers his own company. His house mates were surprised as this was the first person he had brought home.

Also spoke about being safety conscious when catching public transport late at night, keeping to well-lit areas. He felt comfortable with this as where he lived in UK was rural and was a rough area.

Strengths:-

Planning and Organising.

Difficulties:-

Time management.
Transport – more around relying on other people or public transport.
Stress around exam time.

Possible Solutions:-

Continue seeking out appropriate help re time management on campus and alert W to what is available. Check at supervision meeting how others in student housing organise internet access and payment.

Referrals (Where, Reason for referral):-

Refer W to Counselling so he can start to get some help for anxiety prior to the exam period.

MENTOR/MENTEE RESPONSIBILITIES CONTRACT

Responsibilities of a CSMP Mentor

I agree to:

- Respect the professional boundaries between the mentor and the mentee.
- Respond ASAP to any communications from my mentee during the semester.
- Contact or meet my mentee at agreed times (and locations if applicable).
- Advise my mentee by email/text of any unavoidable changes to arrangements at least 24 hours in advance.
- Lodge a regular report documenting issues arising for supervision purposes.
- Communicate with my mentee in clear and specific terms providing a written and/or diagrammatic representation of the communication (if needed).
- Attend the Social Group (when possible) and regular supervision meetings to gain advice and guidance.
- Support my mentee to prepare their resume and seek out relevant work experience / work over time.
- Provide guidance consistent with the defined role of a specialist student mentor.
- Provide feedback about the program through participation in evaluation research.

Responsibilities of a CSMP Mentee

I agree to:

- Respect the professional boundaries between the mentor and the mentee.
- Respond ASAP to any communications from my mentor during the semester.
- Contact or meet my mentor at agreed times (and locations if applicable).
- Advise my mentor by email/text of any unavoidable changes to arrangements at least 24 hours in advance.
- Try to attend any meetings requested by the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program including the Social Group.
- Work toward my own short, medium and long term life goals including employment.
- Communicate any difficulties I may be experiencing to my mentor (or the Coordinators should the need arise).
- Be open to try different techniques to improve difficulties I may be experiencing.
- Provide feedback about the program through participation in evaluation research.
- Contact the Coordinator if I am experiencing concerns / difficulties working with my mentor.

We, (print mentor name) _____and

   (print mentee name) _____have

read and understood the above Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities Form. We agree to these conditions for the mentoring service provided by CSMP.

Mentor Signature_____ Date_____

Mentee Signature_____ Date_____

MENTOR CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (name)..

OF (address) ....

understand that maintenance of confidentiality is an express condition of my role as a specialist mentor.

I undertake to treat as confidential any information to which I may have access in the course of my mentoring role. I shall only access clinical records that are relevant to my duties as a mentor and refrain from accessing any other clinical records of the service. I am aware that unauthorised access to electronic records may be tracked.

If a conflict of interest exists between a presenting mentee and myself, I shall immediately inform my Coordinator. I shall not use such information other than as required in the course of my duties as a mentor within the Service.

I shall not divulge such information to any party outside of the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program either during or subsequent to my role as a mentor except as may be required by a competent court of law or as authorised in writing by the Coordinator.

Signed: …………….. Date..............................

Witness: …………….. Date..............................

SOCIAL GROUP REPORT FORM

Report for Weekly Social Group

Date:

Mentees in Attendance:

Mentors in Attendance:

What happened at the social group?

What areas could be improved?

What is planned for future weeks?

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SOCIAL GROUP REPORT FORM (SAMPLE)

Report for Weekly Social Group

Date: Wednesday 4th of March 20xx

Attendance:

Mentees:

Mentors:

What happened at the social group?

- The session started on time at 12.15pm.
- Firstly K. facilitated an icebreaking activity "If's & What's" and "Candy Confessions"
- Everyone participated in the activity, all were engaged
- We then played board and table games in groups such an Jenga, Poker, Zombie card game
- E. performed a song she has written herself
- The meeting finished on time at 1.45pm.

What areas could be improved?

- Make sure that any important information about the next meeting is announced before the social group ends e.g. Next week M. is facilitating a session where participants bring something meaningful along with them to talk about – but we didn't manage to tell the attendee's to bring something along with them next week. We will have to ask Mentors to remind mentee's and post it on the social group Facebook page instead.

What is planned for future weeks?

- M. will be running a social activity session focusing on Mentee's interests and passions
- Working on listening and talking – asking questions to find out more about others, starting conversations about other people's interests etc.

MENTOR HANDOVER FORM

To help with the handover process, please complete the form below and return to your Specialist Mentoring Coordinator:

Mentor Name:

Mentee Name:

1. My mentee's main strengths are:

2. My mentee's main difficulties are:

3. The goals that I see as being useful and achievable for my mentee are:

a) Short term:

Have you discussed these with your mentee? Yes/ No

b) Long term:

Have you discussed these with your mentee? Yes/ No

4. Please provide any additional information that the new mentor may find useful.

MENTEE/MENTOR COMPOSITE LIST (SAMPLE)

Mentee List						
Name & School / Faculty	**Student No.**	**Email**	**Phone**	**Entry Date**	**Parent/Support Person Contact Details**	**Mentor Name**

Mentor List						
Name & School / Faculty	**Student No.**	**Email**	**Phone**	**Entry Date**	**Attended Training**	**Mentee Name/s**

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WEEKLY CHECKLIST FOR REPORT (R), MEETING (M) & TIME-SHEET (T) (SAMPLE)

Date	Wk1		Wk2			Wk3		Wk4			Tuition Free	Wk5			Wk6	
MENTOR	R	M	R	M	T	R	M	R	M	T		R	M	T	R	M

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Appendix B – Mentee Information

Specialist Peer Mentoring Program

- Are you a student who is on the Autism Spectrum or has a related condition?

- Would you like an experienced, successful peer mentor to help you navigate university life during the academic year?

- Would you prefer a peer mentor specifically trained to support your individual strengths and needs?

If your answer is YES to all of these questions then please contact (Fill in name/s and contact details of appropriate person/s) ASAP for more details as mentee places are limited.

MENTEE INTAKE MEETING CHECKLIST

Mentee Name:

Tick completed items:

Meeting:

☐ Issue booklet containing:

  o *Mentee Information Booklet* (See separate document).

  o NDCO *Tertiary Education: Helpful Hints for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (See reference to separate document).

  o *Mentee Intake Form* (See Appendix B).

  o *Mentee Release of Information Form* (See Appendix B)*.*

  o *Mentee Consent Form* (See Appendix B).

  o *Mentee Safety Plan (*Appendix C).

  o *Mentee Social Group Flyer* (Appendix B)

☐ Explain contents of booklet.

☐ Ask mentee to complete and return the relevant forms to the Coordinator ASAP (See Appendix B - *Mentee Intake Form, Mentee Release of Information Form, Mentee Consent Form* and Appendix C – *Mentee Safety Plan*).

☐ Encourage mentee to ask any questions they may have about the program.

☐ Inform mentee as to how the first point of contact between mentor and mentee will be made.

☐ Issue a 'Meet & Greet' flyer if needed. (See Appendix B - *Meet & Greet Flyer).*

☐ Encourage mentee to contact the Coordinators should they experience difficulties with their mentor.

Post Meeting:

☐ Scan and place completed forms in mentee file (soft and hard copy).

☐ Record relevant details on composite list.

☐ Send a reminder 'Meet and Greet' meeting email or set up a meeting with their allocated mentor.

Social Group

(Fill in times, day, dates and location)

The Social Group is a fun, social space that occurs each week throughout the teaching weeks of semester. All are welcome! Please bring any board, card or electronic games you'd like to play. Our emails are below if you wish to contact us. We hope to see you there!

(Fill in email contact details of Social Group Coordinators and provide details of the Social Group Facebook page if one has been created)

'MEET & GREET' MEETING
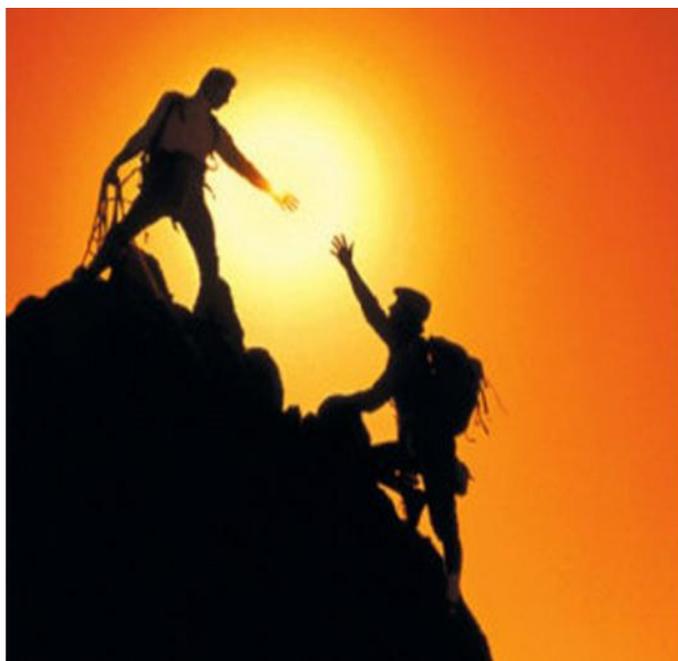
You (and a support person) are invited to meet your mentor and others involved in the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program.

Where?

When?

RSVP?

Coordinator:

(Fill in contact details of Coordinator)

MENTEE INTAKE FORM

SPECIALIST PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

Information provided on this form will be kept confidential. Mentees have very valuable knowledge about what works and doesn't work for them. By providing detailed information mentees will help their mentor understand their individual profile and specific needs more quickly. Not all sections of this form will be relevant to all mentees, please fill out all relevant areas to your situation.

(*It is highly recommended that mentees gain the assistance of a support person / parent when filling out this form because they can often provide additional information that will be useful to their mentor.)

General Information:

Today's date: _____

Your full name: _____

Your preferred name: _____

Your age: _____

Your birth date: _____

Your home address: _____

Your phone number/s: _____

Your preferred email: _____

Your preferred contact method: _____

Your student number: _____

Parent / support person contact information (name, address, phone, email):
_____
_____
_____
_____

(To be part of the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program you will need to give permission for us to contact your parent/support person should an emergency arise or more details about your situation need to be known. Please tick appropriate box on the attached Release of Information Form).

Prior Educational Background:

Where did you receive your high school education (this includes home school education)?

_____

What year did you finish your high school education?

_____

Were you provided with appropriate educational support in your high school setting? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes. (give details)

_____
_____

Have you attended TAFE or any other tertiary education institutions? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes.

If yes, what degrees, diplomas or certificates did you attempt and what were your results?

_____
_____
_____

Did you receive extra support at these other tertiary education institutions? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes.

If yes, what supports were put in place that were helpful?

_____
_____
_____

Current University Information:

Course enrolled in:

_____

Current major:

_____

Year (circle one or more):   First   Second   Third   Fourth   Fifth   Sixth

Academic standing at the moment (circle one):   Good

                                                     Conditional

Course coordinator's name and contact details (if known):

_____

Do we have permission to speak with this person? (tick one)

- o   No.

- o   Yes.

(If yes, please tick appropriate box on the attached Release of Information Form)

Academic & Scholarship Services:

Do you currently receive any assistance to help you with your studies (tick one)?

- o   No. Why not? (give details)

_____
_____

- o   Yes. (give details)

_____
_____
_____

University Disability Service:

Are you registered with the University Disability Service? (tick one)

- o   No. *

- o   Yes.

(If yes, please tick appropriate box on the attached Release of Information Form so that we can access any other relevant background information from your Disability Advisor.)

(*Please Note: All mentees need to be registered with the University Disability Service to gain the services of a specialist mentor and any other accommodations / modifications for which they may be eligible).

Housing Information:

Where do you live? (tick one)

- o On campus.
- o With parents at home.
- o With other family member/s.
- o Off campus: Shared or Alone. (please circle)
- o Other. (provide details)

Please tell us about any difficulties you may be experiencing with your living arrangements?

_____
_____

Student Activities:

Are you a member of any groups on campus? (tick one)

- o No. (why not? give details)

_____
_____

- o Yes. (give details)

_____
_____

Transportation:

Are there any difficulties with transportation to and from university? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes. (give details)

_____
_____

Health Information:

Please indicate your main disability/diagnosis/condition?

_____
_____

When were you first diagnosed with this condition?

_____

Please describe how your condition affects you in relation to the following areas and if known, what helps you to overcome these difficulties. (Fill in areas relevant to you only):

Communication (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Social Relatedness (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Rigidity/Obsessiveness/Resistance to Change (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Sensory Function (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Learning and Memory (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Attention and Organisation (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Behaviour (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Emotions (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

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Self-Care (difficulties and what helps):

_____
_____
_____

Do you have other important health issues or medical conditions others should know about? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes. (give details)

_____
_____

Have you been treated for a psychological disorder such as anxiety or depression? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes. (give details about difficulties and treatments)

_____
_____

How would someone know that you are becoming anxious, stressed, depressed or annoyed?

_____
_____

What should others do to help you when you are highly stressed?

_____
_____

What are the methods that you use to calm yourself when you are highly stressed?

_____
_____

Medication Information:

Are you currently taking any medication? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes. (If yes, give details)

_____
_____

Are there any side effects to the medication that others should know about? (tick one)

- o No.

- o Yes. (If yes, give details)

_____
_____

Personal Strengths and Goals

My areas of special interest are:

_____
_____
_____

My best skills are:

_____
_____
_____

My short term goals are:

_____
_____
_____

My long goals are:

_____
_____
_____

Work and Work Experience

Have you been able to gain any work or work experience? (tick one)

- o Yes. Where and When? (give details)

_____
_____

- o No. Is this something you would like help with? (give details)

_____
_____

Thank you for completing this form. Please provide copies of any documentation about yourself that could be helpful to your mentor and the Program Coordinator. Please complete intake forms, scan and email/deliver them back to the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program Coordinator ASAP. If you experience any difficulties please do not hesitate to contact the Program Coordinator for some assistance. *(Program Coordinator's contact details here)*

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MENTEE RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

I, _____ *(insert your name and student number)* am currently receiving services from the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program. I give permission for you to release information about me to the following persons:

Please tick appropriate boxes:

- o Parent/Support Person.

- o Course Coordinator.

- o Disability Service Staff.

- o Counselling Service Staff.

_____   _____

(Student Signature)   (Coordinator Signature)

_____   _____

(Print Name)   (Print Name)

_____   _____

(Date)   (Date)

MENTEE CONSENT FORM

As part of providing a peer mentoring service to you, the Program Coordinator and your assigned mentor will need to collect and record personal information from you that is relevant to your current situation. This information will be a necessary part of assessing the areas that you may need support with while at university.

Access

You may access the material recorded in your file upon request, subject to the exceptions in National Privacy Principle 6. If you wish to see your file, you may make a request to your Program Coordinator to help you with this.

Confidentiality

All personal information gathered by the Program Coordinators and mentors during the provision of mentoring services will remain confidential and secure except when:

1. It is subpoenaed by a court, or
2. Failure to disclose the information would place you or another person at risk; or
3. Your prior approval has been obtained to
   a) provide a written report to another professional agency e.g. a GP or another professional, or
   b) discuss the material with another person e.g. a parent or employer

Generally files are kept for a minimum of five years and are then destroyed.

I, (*print name/student number*) _____have read and understood the above Consent Form. I agree to these conditions for the mentoring service provided by the Specialist Peer Mentoring Program.

Signature _____Date_____

SPECIALIST PEER MENTORING PROGRAM REFERRAL FORM

The aim of mentoring support is to help students navigate tertiary study and to achieve their academic and personal goals.

Any student who has been diagnosed to be on the Autism Spectrum or has a related condition that affects their ability to study successfully is eligible for support through the program.

* Please Note: It is not recommended that peer mentoring be provided to students with significant behavioural issues that would potentially put their student mentor at undue risk.

Date:

Name:

Student Number:

Phone Number:

Email:

Course of study:

Name and position of Staff Member providing referral:

Reason for Referral:

Contact Details of Staff Member providing referral:

Office use only	
Name of mentor	
Mentor student ID	
Date forwarded	

INFORMATION SHEET FOR WORK EXPERIENCE/EMPLOYMENT (SAMPLE)

Brief Information Sheet on J.

Individuals on the Autism Spectrum can experience difficulties in four key areas:
- Social Understanding.
- Communication.
- Change/Limited Interests.
- Sensory Hyper/Hypo sensitivity.

They can also offer strengths in the following ways:
- Honesty / loyalty.
- Excellent rote memory for areas of interest.
- Visual spatial abilities.
- Detail focused.
- Preference for organised procedures.
- Intense interests / savant skills.
- Being logical.

J. is a highly intelligent young woman who has worked hard to build on her strengths, however, at times she will need support and guidance with her difficulties. It is recommended that J. be assigned a work mentor who can help J. if the need arises.

J.'s Specific Profile

- Social Understanding
    1. May not always understand sarcasm/figurative language etc.
    2. May not fully understand the social nuances of situations.
    3. May have difficulty navigating office politics.
    4. May become shy in large crowds of peers of similar ages.
    (Solution - Provide a Supportive Mentor / Encourage J. to communicate difficulties to Mentor).

- Communication
    1. May not always seek help when needed.
    2. Prefers to have visual information to support verbal instructions.
    3. Needs to have feedback sought regarding her understanding of requirements.
    4. Needs to be encouraged to advocate on her own behalf.
    5. Needs clear list of instructions and tasks.
    (Solution - Have written information to support verbal instructions / Check J.'s understanding of tasks to be undertaken / Use of Mentor).

- Change/Limited Interests
    1. Prefers order, timelines and logicality.
    2. Appreciates being informed of change prior to situations occurring.
    3. Appreciates knowledge and use of established work procedures and practices.
    4. Enjoys playing video games/ board games/cards/dancing/ astronomy/drawing/and watching fantasy or action movies.

(Solution - Have an ordered, organised workplace where change is communicated as early as possible / Communicate J.'s interests to other staff members so that a common bond can be established / Use of Mentor).

- Sensory Hyper/Hypo sensitivity
    1. Limited Food Preferences.
    2. Difficulty with loud sounds.
    3. Difficulty with strong smells.

   (Solution - Allow J. to order/have her own food preferences when social events arise /Seat J. in a quiet area in the workplace/Use of Mentor).

Appendix C – Crisis Management Information (Samples)

CURTIN CRISIS RESPONSE CHART (SAMPLE)

Please Note: Coordinators will need to source/adapt their own appropriate institution crisis management information (i.e. Crisis Response Chart & Safety Plan) and attach it to Specialist Mentor Toolkit (Appendix B):
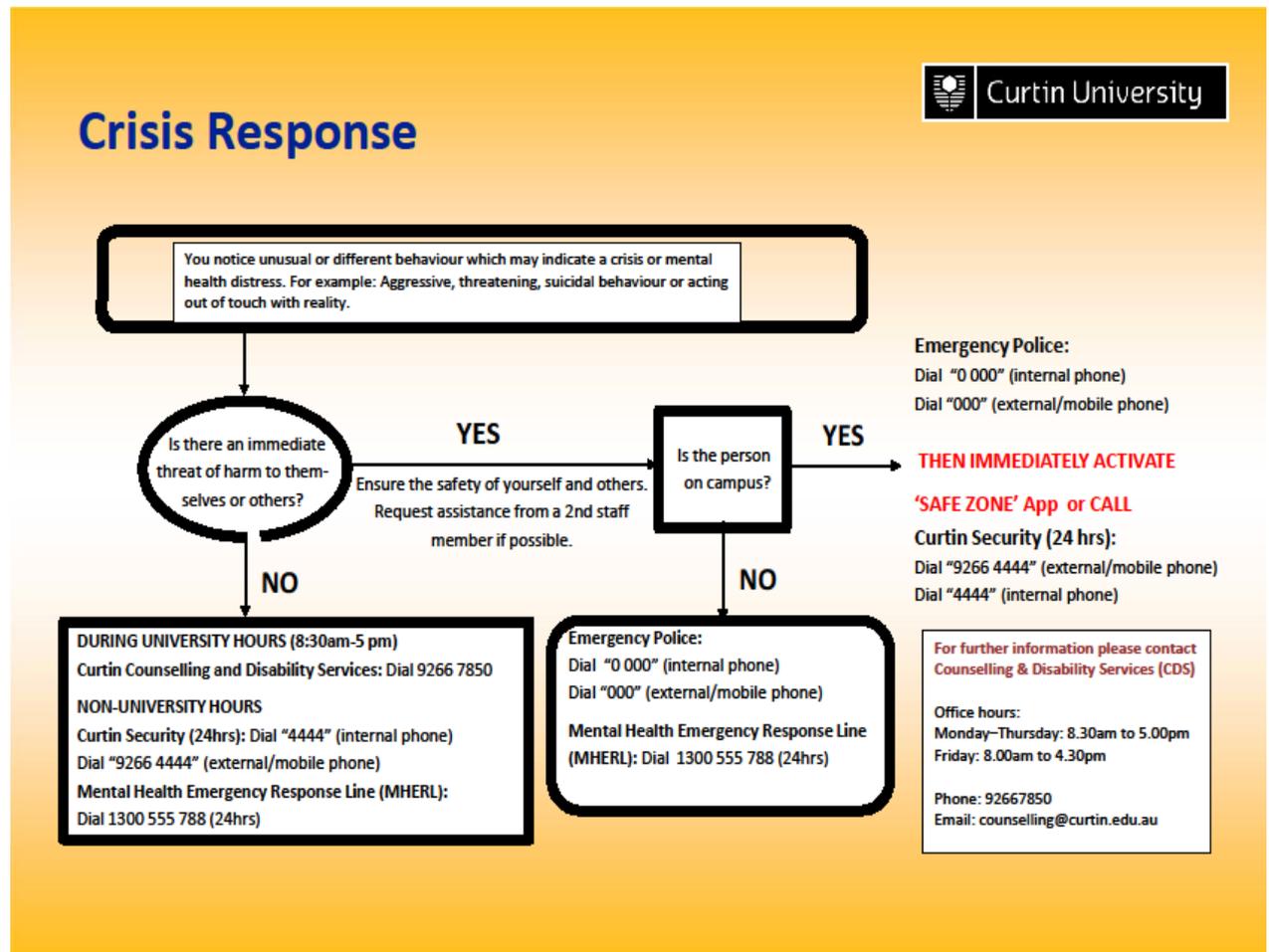
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UWA Specialist Mentoring Safety Plan

Date: __ / __ /_____ Having a plan in place that can help guide you through difficult moments can make a difference and keep you safe. A safety plan is designed so that you can start at step one and continue through the steps until you feel safe. You should keep your plan in a place where you can easily access it.

Things I can do to keep me well: (e.g., keep up my self-care activities like exercise, relaxation, seeing friends and family, attend my one-on-one meetings with my mentor).

Step 1 Recognise My Warning Signs: What sorts of thoughts, images, moods, situations, and behaviours indicate to you that a crisis may be developing? Write these down in your own words.

Step 2 Coping Strategies: Things I can do to improve my mood and keep me safe (relaxation, physical activity, music, deep breaths, positive self-talk, making the environment safe).

Step 3 People I Can Contact For Help: List of family members or friends who are supportive and who you feel you can talk to when under stress.

First Person I can Call

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Name:	Relationship:	Phone:

Other People I Can Call:

Name:	Relationship:	Phone:

Step 4: Professionals Or Agencies I Can Contact		
Professional or Agency:	**Phone:**	**Comments**
GP:	Ph:	During Office Hours
Lifeline Suicide Call Back Service	Ph: 1311 14 Ph: 1300 659 467	24/7 Crisis Telephone Lines
Mental Health Emergency Response Line (MHERL)	Metro callers 1300 555 788 Peel callers 1800 676 822	24/7 assessment, support and referral if required.
If you are at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, contact emergency services on 000.		

I understand the above Safety Plan and agree to follow it to help me keep safe
Mentee Signature: Coordinator Signature: Mentor Signature:

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