

# **Understanding Social skills**

empowering adults with autism spectrum conditions



# **Autism, Social Interaction and Inclusion in the VET and Higher Education Sectors**

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Understanding Social skills

Assisted by other neurodiverse people

# Acknowledgement

I would like to start by acknowledging the Wadjuk people of the Noongar nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which my work is conducted and is being shared with you today.

I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging

# Aim of this presentation

- To increase awareness of the difficulties people with autism experience in educational, work and social settings
- To bring the Socialeyes program to a wider audience
- To propose ways of increasing social inclusion for people with autism

# Do autistic people have difficulty with the following?



Starting a conversation



Taking turns in a conversation



Handling sensitive topics



Ending a conversation



Using eye contact



# Socialeyes

A social skills development resource

- developed by people with autism and leading professionals (National Autistic Society, London in 2010)
- does not ask people with autism to change ‘inappropriate’ social behaviour, or to copy the ‘typical’ behaviour of others
- provides the option of learning social interaction skills or alternative social strategies
- uses filmed social scenarios to analyse the unwritten rules of social behaviour in detail and facilitates video-modelling

# Feedback from participants

- This helps me engage with people in more ways
- Coming to the group helps me feel normalised
- Environment is good, better than an office or medical centre. This environment improves communications and reduces “threshold fear”

D and L share their experience with work, Uni and their Socialeyes group

# Active recruiters of people with autism:

Bank West

Glaxo Smith Kline

BHP

SAP

Specialisterne

Passwerk

Auticon

Experian

UK Government

Allianz Insurance

Proctor and Gamble

Woodside



# What can we as practitioners do?

Provide and promote:

- Transition/orientation from secondary/ home education to VET / TAFE and University
- VET/TAFE and University programs that facilitate understanding and maintenance of social skills such as Socialeyes and Mentoring Programs
- Social interaction and inclusion in VET and University through Autism Awareness Training
- Links with industry internships e.g. AND

# Interested in more information?

<https://www.ahead.ie/journal/The-development-of-good-practice-principles-for-supporting-students-with-autism-to-work-with-their-peers>

<https://www.adcet.edu.au/resource/9422/webinar-engaging-students-on-the-autism-spectrum-in-tertiary-settings-an-evidence-based-peer-mentoring-program-at-curtin-university/>

<https://www.understandingsocialskills.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7W0XGBThvOQ>

[https://research.bangor.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/group-interventions-for-adults-with-asd\(5c72b75b-da67-4166-a568-55bdf4e950a0\).html](https://research.bangor.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/group-interventions-for-adults-with-asd(5c72b75b-da67-4166-a568-55bdf4e950a0).html)

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%252Fs10803-009-0842-0>