



MEDIA RELEASE
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Innovative free training now available to support greater social and community inclusion for neurodiverse young people

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA – Wednesday, 30 March 2022 – AS Purposeful Limited, a social enterprise that provides specialist services to support neurodiverse Australians, has announced the launch of a free new online training course designed to facilitate greater community participation opportunities for over 400,000 neurodiverse young people across Australia. The *Aspire for Community Groups* course, developed with the support of the Australian Government, provides positive, evidence-based tools tailored for use in open and inclusive community settings, such as sporting teams, youth groups, and extra-curricular activities.

“The *Aspire for Community Groups* course was developed based on feedback from parents, teachers, young people, and community organisations,” said David Harper, Founder & Chair, AS Purposeful Limited. “Research conducted by our partners at Macquarie University found a high level of interest in accessing specialist inclusion support from Australian community groups. We are therefore extremely pleased to announce that this training will be delivered for free to eligible employees and volunteers thanks to the financial assistance provided by the Commonwealth for our *Aspire* initiative.”

Inclusion is a key quality of life indicator for the 6.1% of Australians who are neurodiverse [1,2]. However, social and community participation is extremely low for young people with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and related challenges [3,4]. Immersion into community programs with the support of specialist training, such as *Aspire*, will allow these children and young adults to feel more accepted, develop new social connections, and prepare for entry into higher education and employment [2,5,6].

The *Aspire for Community Groups* course is available on demand for employees and volunteers who wish to support neurodiverse young people in their community organisations and groups. The six-hour self-paced course includes:

- Eight modules, each with bite-sized lessons and quizzes as well as optional reflection worksheets
- 12 specific positive inclusion tools, grounded in an evidence-based Positive Behaviour Support framework

- An innovative lived experience learning framework designed to emulate the experience of participating in small group workshops

Free training places, valued at \$165 per person, are now available for employees and volunteers of eligible community organisations and groups. Interested individuals should visit www.aspurposeful.com.au/go/inclusion to register for this self-paced course. ###

About AS Purposeful Limited

AS Purposeful ('Autism Spectrum Purposeful') is a not-for-profit social enterprise that provides highly specialised supports to facilitate community integration for people who have autism with low support needs – sometimes called “high functioning autism” or “Asperger’s Syndrome” – as well as those with related challenges, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Our vision is a community where neurodiverse Australians are empowered to be as independent as possible, engaging in social, economic, and public life.

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Related Links

Short Promotional video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vh7gtWt7eql>
Course Registration: www.aspurposeful.com.au/go/inclusion
Download the Media Kit: www.aspurposeful.com.au/go/aspiremedia

References

[1] AS Purposeful analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019/2021), Deloitte Access Economics (2019), Autism Spectrum Australia (2013), and Syracuse University (2016) population and incidence data

[2] Taylor et al (2020), *Inclusion of Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Postsecondary Outcomes: A Systematic Literature Review*

[3] Simpson, K, Adams, D, et al (2019), *Investigating the participation of children on the autism spectrum across home, school, and community: A longitudinal study*. Child Care Health Dev. 2019;45:681-687.

[4] Shabat, T, Fogel-Grinvald, H, et al (2021), *Participation Profile of Children and Youth, Aged 6–14, with and without ADHD, and the Impact of Environmental Factors*. Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health, 2021;18:537.

[5] Epstein, A, Whitehouse, A, et al (2019), *Parent-observed thematic data on quality of life in children with autism spectrum disorder*

[6] Sibley M, & Yeguez, C (2018), *Managing ADHD at the Post-Secondary Transition: A Qualitative Study of Parent and Young Adult Perspectives*. School Mental Health 2018;10:352-371.