

**Connect and Relate for Autism Inc
Relationship Development Intervention®**

The RDI® Program is a cognitive-developmental approach to Remediating Autism
Remember, Dr Steve says "This is not a sprint, it is a marathon"

A Diary from an RDI® Family AUG 2008
Relationship Development Intervention®



From the Diary of an RDI® Family August 2008

I just love this RDI curriculum - camping, walking, holidays all essential parts of "the program!"
We had a GREAT 3 day break. Cold nights and warm sunny days, an almost empty campground and no fixed agenda provided for some terrific time for our family to 'play' together.

At first he was challenged that he/we had 'forgotten' to pack his lego/drains. Some verbal tirade but abandoned by him fairly quickly. Another challenge was he likes to visit other campers and wear out his welcome there.

Also the 'look at me' strategy was to walk into the scrub behind the tent, "I'm going down here" (set out of bounds by us). Found that if we kept an eye on him from a distance he usually returned quickly. Didn't want to appear on the news in the care flight helicopter!

A few outstanding memories...

Mastering riding on two wheels! (see video and notes). Lots of celebrating and a few tears too and we watched him accomplish another milestone and knowing how much the importance of that sense of competence is for him.

He and I developed a game, "the ball game" on a concrete parking square. Using similar roles and strategies as ping pong balls and fly swatters we developed many variations.

He and I went for a walk around the short rainforest circuit. I kept the pace very slow, just walking together holding hands or just beside each other. We stopped to look at the huge fig trees and shared feeling very small when next to these giants. "I can't climb that one" was his idea. Walking together we were sooo relaxed and in 'the zone'. He pulled me closer saying "I love you mum".

I realised this wasn't about walking but just doing/ being together. I spotlighted this by starting to sing the playschool song, "walking in the bush, walking in the bush..."

We made a few variations to the words, "Mum and me in the bush.." kind of thing. I know this was encoded for him. Last night when tucking him into bed and sharing goodnight cuddles he said/sang, "my best camping thing was walking in the bush".

Internally I'm going "YES!! NAILED THAT ONE!"

Other challenges for him were going for a bushwalk in the dark!!

Having a shower/wash at 3pm (when it's warmer).

Eating sausages for breakfast (too much a challenge for him!).

Some feedback from a fellow camper.

We had retrieved him from the neighbouring campsite a few times so he was well known. The camper witnessed his epic bike ride and cheered with us. Dad mentioned he had ASD so this was an enormous milestone for us all. The camper explained she was an ex-primary teacher and had worked with lots of severely disabled kids.

"We thought there was something about him but not ASD ...

He's too aware and interactive and affectionate"

GO RDI.... love it when he breaks every expectation of ASD

as he emerges out of this disorder!!!

Connect and Relate for Autism Inc Registration Number A0051963T

www.connectandrelateforautism.com.au

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