

**ASD Life Quality Connections** and my involvement in **Connect and Relate for Autism Inc** grew out of my own experiences as a mother of a child diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome. We struggled to manage and understand; trying to make sense of what was happening for our child and for the whole family. Social stories, learning to read faces and emotions, teaching skills all left me with a gnawing feeling that there was too much to do and something always missing in what we were doing....compensations are only a bandaid. I had an overwhelming sense of gloom that we were not getting to the heart of the issues and the devastating impact for our child's Quality of Life.

I found the Relationship Development Intervention Program® in February 2005. It immediately resonated with me, Dr Steven Gutstein clearly showed how the pieces of the Autism Spectrum puzzle fit together and added the missing pieces. Rather than being given another lecture show describing behaviours and symptoms; actually finally being guided to a thorough understanding of the core deficits was so enlightening. And it makes so much sense. Here are latest research based explanations and a clinical treatment program addressing all the underlying issues for which we had had no answers: the rigid thinking, aversion to change, inability to understand other's perspectives, failure to empathize, and absolute "black and white" thinking.

The RDI program has and is transforming our family life and the future for our child. With the aid of our consultant we have been empowered as parents to guide our child to feel competent with challenges, to not only actively seek relationships but to monitor, repair and self regulate to sustain them; to be flexible and problem solve for best fit solutions.

It is an amazing journey to watch as a child learns to think for themselves, as they become self aware and understand others, as development generalises and they do things we have never scripted for...it is even more amazing to watch this in a child with ASD. In slow motion we guide and watch the daily little miracles of development, celebrating their second chance for quality of life.