

**Connect and Relate for Autism Inc** Registration Number A0051963T

[www.connectandrelateforautism.com.au](http://www.connectandrelateforautism.com.au)

**Connect and Relate for Autism Inc**

**WHO WE ARE**

**Relationship Development Intervention® RDI®**



**WHO WE ARE**

**Connect and Relate for Autism Inc**

3/56 Corrigan Road Noble Park, Melbourne Vic 3174

Ph 0417 393 876 Renee Dela Cruz

[www.connectandrelateforautism.com.au](http://www.connectandrelateforautism.com.au)

**Autism Relationship and Communication Development Service**

**Speech and Language Pathologist**

**RDI® Program Certified Consultant**

**Cheryl Barson**

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**Reliez Autism Services**

**RDI® Program Certified Consultant**

**Kris Jennings**

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**ASD Life Quality Connections**

**RDI® Program Certified Consultant**

**Bronwen Prazak**

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**Prue Watson Occupational Therapist**

**Connecting Autism – Relationship Development**

**RDI® Program Certified Consultant**

**Prue Watson**

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[www.pruewatson-ot.com.au](http://www.pruewatson-ot.com.au)

**Renee Dela Cruz Trading as Renee Meyer**

**Provisional Psychologist**

**RDI® Program Certified Consultant**

**Renee Dela Cruz**

0417 393 876

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## Queensland Consultant:

Prue Watson - Occupational Therapist  
Connecting Autism - Relationship Development  
RDI® Programme Certified Consultant  
B Occ Thy UQ; Grad Dip Ed UNE;  
Registered OT Board QLD; OT Aust;  
Health Insurance Commission,  
Private Health Insurance Funds

**The focus of this OT service is to provide Remediation of Autism Spectrum Disorders, including Autism, Asperger's and associated diagnoses under the ASD umbrella through the implementation of the Relationship Development Intervention RDI® programme.**

This Occupational Therapy practice provides assessment and management of Autism /Asperger Syndrome and Autistic Spectrum Disorders and deals with the associated Co-Occurring conditions that can often be seen alongside these diagnoses.

Occupational Therapy consultation and management is available for these associated conditions that may include a range of developmental, processing, social, play, sensory, learning and behavioural difficulties. This may include children with differences in Sensory Processing, Play deficits, Social Skills and Interaction, problems in classroom Learning and Information Processing, , Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder – ADHD, difficulties with Memory, Organization and Problem Solving, Coordination Deficits, Dyspraxia and Developmental Coordination Disorder, Fine Motor Skills and Handwriting, children with Encopresis and Self Care difficulties that may also be evident alongside the Autistic Spectrum Disorder – ASD.

This allows for appropriate and effective Occupational Therapy strategies to be planned and implemented and embedded into the **Relationship Development Intervention RDI® programme.**

The Relationship Development Intervention® RDI® Practice work is family based and aims at providing Families – Parents with the knowledge and tools to remediate the impact of the ASD for the person with autism in their family. The aim of Remediation is achieving the potential for a Quality of Life for the person with ASD and their families. Visits to schools and other community settings and agencies for consultations, management support and training is possible as required.

The OT RDI® Certified Consultant travels outside of the immediate Rockhampton area as required as many of the families accessing the service are in the surrounding regional rural or remote areas or in other cities or interstate.

OT services can be covered through the Health Insurance Commission to provide OT services under the Medicare Extended Care Plan ECP for Allied Health, the Helping Children with Autism Medicare rebates for Allied Health, and for the Mental Health Plan MHP providing Focused Psychological Strategies and most Private Health Insurance schemes.

This OT practice is part of Connect and Relate for Autism Inc and a Dept FaHCSIA approved Provider

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## Queensland Consultant:

**Kris Jennings - Reliez Autism Services**  
**Special Educator**  
**Dip Bus, BA (Griffith University),**  
**MEd (Special Needs) (USQ),**  
**RDI ® Programme Certified Consultant**

Kris is currently establishing her practice in Brisbane delivering Relationship Development Intervention® services to families facing Autism and Asperger's.

She has long been an advocate for young people with disabilities and their families, working with Asperger Services Australia, a self-funded support group providing support to parents, families, carers, and siblings as well as to children, adolescents and adults with Asperger's Syndrome.

*I first found RDI® in 2005 and felt immediately that this was something worth getting excited about. This was one program that addressed the core deficits of ASD and didn't just focus on trying to modify the behaviours. It was a program that empowered the parents to be the primary agents for their child's remediation. However with only one consultant in Australia at the time, the logistics of starting a program was just too overwhelming.*

*By 2007, after being motivated by hearing Dr Gutstein speak in Sydney, we were further convinced that this was what we had been searching for and was something that we MUST pursue. Our family immediately started an RDI® program with our then 13-year-old son. His progress has amazed and continues to amaze us. It is exciting to watch as he develops the ability to think for himself and to stop and consider what we may be thinking. Now he has now established a peer network and is motivated to actively seek and maintain friendships and relationships. We have learned to guide him as together we celebrate his discoveries and we are continually grateful that we have been able to give him this chance for a genuine quality of life.*

*It was this success that prompted me to want to share my discoveries with others.. that they too could experience the joy of seeing their child emerge and grow, so in December 2007, I travelled to Houston to begin my training and became qualified as an RDI® Program Certified Consultant in early 2009.*

*In my RDI® practice, I draw on my experience as both a professional and a parent, which gives me a unique perspective and an empathetic understanding of the challenges faced by the families I work with.*

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## **Western Australian Consultant:**

### **Cheryl Barson**

**Autism Relationship and Communication Development Service  
BAppSc (Speech Pathology)  
Member, Speech Pathology Australia (Western Australia)  
RDI® Program Certified Consultant  
Registered with Health Insurance Commission;  
Private Health Insurance Funds**

**08 9227 8073**

**0422814003**

**autism.rdi.wa@bigpond.com**

Cheryl has worked as a Speech Pathologist with families of children with speech and language difficulties for many years. In particular, Cheryl has considerable experience and interest in children with autism from birth to adolescence.

Through her Speech Pathology practice Cheryl provides assessment and management of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (and associated co-occurring conditions) using the Relationship Development Intervention (RDI®) programme. Relationship Development Intervention® (RDI®) addresses relations and communicative intent, emotional relationships and dynamic thinking.

By combining her Speech Pathology skills with the Relationship Development Intervention® program, Cheryl's work provides parents with knowledge and tools to remediate the impact of Autism Spectrum Disorders in their children. As a result, parents have reported significant gains in their children's desire to communicate, curiosity and ability to relate to others.

Speech Pathology consultation and management is also available for conditions that include a range of developmental, processing, social, play, sensory, learning and behavioural difficulties.

Based in Perth, Western Australia, Cheryl is available for within that State. Visits to schools and other community settings and agencies for consultations, management support and training is possible as required.

Claims for Speech Pathology services can be made through the Health Insurance Commission under the *Medicare Extended Care Plan* for Allied Health, the *Helping Children with Autism* Medicare rebates for Allied Health and most Private Health Insurance schemes.

Cheryl's Speech Pathology practice is part of *Connect and Relate for Autism Inc* - a FaHCSIA-approved Provider of autism intervention services.

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## **Victoria Consultant:**

**Renee Dela Cruz'- Trading as Renee Meyer  
Provisional Psychologist  
BA (Human Services) (Victoria University), Post Grad dip Psych (Curtin),  
RDI ® Program Certified Consultant**

Renee Dela Cruz is a Provisional Psychologist who has 9 years experience working with individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Renee specializes in the assessment, therapy, consultation and management of children with a range of developmental, social, play, learning and behavioural difficulties. Renee specializes in psychological assessment and management of Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders and other common developmental disorders.

Renee provides functional analysis of behaviours and skills, standardized assessments of cognition, adaptive functioning, social and play skills. She provides intervention services designed to enhance functioning and quality of life. Renee visits families in their home, and makes regular observations of behaviour at schools, kindergartens and crèches.

Renee assists families to move from diagnosis to active remediation, implementing intervention plans that are tailored to the child's and family's needs.

Renee has worked with organizations providing counselling for newly diagnosed families and has worked with assessment teams specializing in the assessment and diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Renee often presents educational seminars about Autism to the general public and also presents seminars about intervention to paediatricians, health professionals, schools and parents to promote awareness of effective models for the treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Renee has completed her RDI Training and is now a Certified Consultant.

Renee has also recently completed her 2 year supervision period as a Provisional Psychologist and is currently awaiting full registration.

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## New South Wales Consultant:

**Bronwen Prazak – ASD Life Quality Connections**  
**BA (Japanese) University of Tasmania, A.Mus.A,**  
**Grad.Dip. Ed (UNE)**  
**RDI® Programme Certified Consultant**

**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 Asperger's 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.

In my practise as a RDI®Program Certified Consultant I work with families:

- who are motivated to really understand the truth about the deficits of ASD
- who are prepared to step out of the autism myths
- who want more than bandaid compensating
- who question what their child's potential really could be in spite of the ASD
- who are committed to making a difference for their whole family
- who can shift from the "flat earth" :status quo ASD paradigm: this is all we can expect
- who are prepared to move to a "round earth" new ASD paradigm with a cutting edge intervention program: exploring potential

I coach parents to guide their child, (no matter what age infant, child, teenager or adult and no matter where they are on the spectrum: Autism, Asperger's, PDD- NOS), through the foundational developmental and cognitive steps they have missed building the child's brain pathways and their ability to enjoy quality of life in a dynamic world.