



Facilitator Expression of Interest – 2010

What is tips?

tips for autism is a course where a team of people dedicates three days to developing interventions and plans to support their particular child with autism spectrum disorder.

The course is free to participants and available for teams who support students aged between 5 and 12 years. The child's parent and school must attend and there is no maximum number who can attend (the more people who know the child well, the better the outcome). There is a maximum of 8 teams on each course. Each team works together and information about individual children is only shared amongst those who support that child.

tips is funded by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and some teacher release funding is available.

Course content

Information about the course is available on the website; www.tipsforautism.org.nz.

Each daily session follows a set pattern:

1. a 'chalk and talk' presented by a facilitator, which gives key information for the topic
2. team activity to focus on assessing each individual child's strengths & needs in this area
3. demonstration of evidence-based strategies and supports
4. team activity to plan a goal for the child using the strategies.

tips for autism is not prescriptive and is based on facilitated learning rather than lecturing. There is plenty of opportunity for discussion and practical application of what you learn. Resource material is available at different levels and individualised to meet the needs of different children's strengths and interests. Information is shared about each child/student only within that team, not with the full group.

The course uses principles of effective practice drawn from the professional development literature and its evidence base is consistent with the NZ Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline published in 2008.

This course has just finished a three-year evaluation for the Ministry of Education by a team from Massey University.

About the facilitators

The course is co-facilitated by a special educator (Ministry of Education, Special Education staff, Supplementary Learning Support teacher – LST – or Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour - RTLB) and a parent who is also qualified as a teacher. They are both experienced facilitators, tuned in to the latest evidence, and have real life examples to make theory practical. There are currently 14 facilitators and 25 courses were held in 2010.

How are Facilitators trained and what does the role entail?

Facilitator training is a commitment of five days – two days intensive work with other new facilitators; and observation of a three-day course (with activities and opportunities to demonstrate skills) throughout the three days. Following this, new facilitators will present 2 courses with an experienced facilitator to support and mentor.

After training, all facilitators will present 3-5 programmes per year (9-15 days). Facilitators receive ongoing education and support and attend a two-day annual meeting where decisions are made about any changes to the programme and the work programme for the following year. Other expenses (travel and accommodation) are also covered.

- **Ministry of Education, Special Education (GSE) staff or RTLB or SLS who become facilitators:** After training, facilitators will continue to work from their current location, but be released from their duties to present 4-5 programmes per year – funding for release is provided to their District or employing school. Applicants need to have the support of their District Manager or employing Principal/management Board.
- **Parent Facilitators:** Parent facilitators must also have a teaching or equivalent tertiary qualification and are contracted by the Ministry of Education, Special Education (GSE) to present 4-5 programmes a year.

For more information:

If you would like to find out more – enquiries can be directed in the first instance to either:

Keryn Mells – Project Leader (keryn.mells@minedu.govt.nz). Phone (04) 463 8951; or one of the current facilitators –

Cheryl Palmer, ASD Regional “Go-To” person – Autism for the Central South Region (cheryl.palmer@minedu.govt.nz), or 06 3509896

If you are interested in becoming a facilitator, please:

- send an expression of interest outlining details of how your skills and experience **match those in the key competencies** on the next page;
- advise that you have the support of your manager/employing Principal if appropriate;

Candidates will be short-listed based on the information provided and then be invited to present further information as part of a video conference interview with a selection panel.

Expressions of interest should be addressed to:

Stephanie McHardie (Stephanie.McHardie@minedu.govt.nz), Project Officer, Ministry of Education, Special Education, P. O. Box 1666, Wellington. Expressions of interest should arrive no later than **5pm on Wednesday 15 September 2010**.

Key criteria for 'tips for autism Facilitators

Characteristic	Essential	Preferred
Knowledge of autism	History Characteristics Experience of using autism-specific strategies	Good knowledge of specific communication, socialisation and cognition strategies
Good theory to practice links	Can demonstrate the links between theories and their practical application in natural (home and school) settings Ability to give insightful and informative examples	Experience of providing successful interventions in the school or home setting Ability to demonstrate and provide a rationale for examples of interventions
Experience as presenter	Experience of presenting to an audience or teaching a group Good presentation skills and style Excellent communication skills	Skills, experience and understanding of group facilitation Empathy and understanding of the needs of adult learners
Ability to stand in the shoes of the individual with autism	Ability to demonstrate an understanding of and empathy for the perspective of the child	Ability to use meaningful examples to convey the experience of people with ASD Experience of working with / supporting different children with ASD
Good facilitation skills	Understanding of group process Understanding and respect for the roles and responsibilities of different participant groups Knowledge and understanding of equity and cultural issues	Good understanding of and ability to use problem solving techniques Respect for different ways people learn and change attitudes Ability to observe team process and mediate appropriately
Ongoing learning and course development	Willingness to reflect on own practice; give and receive constructive feedback Able/prepared to work with other facilitators and Project Leader to inform changes to the course	Experience of reflective professional learning and practice Ability in time to assist in ongoing roll-out by mentoring new facilitators if required

Expression of interest checklist:

Please ensure that your expression of interest contains all the following information:

Name:	Check ✓
Phone contact(s) Email address Postal Address	
Current employment/situation:	
Details and confirmation that your manager/employing Principal has approved your potential release (if RTL/LST or GSE staff). Details of your relevant tertiary education/human services or similar qualification (if you are a parent).	
How your skills and experience match each of the key criteria on the previous page:	
Characteristic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of autism • Good theory to practice links • Experience as presenter • Ability to 'stand in the shoes' of the individual with autism • Good facilitation skills • Ongoing learning and course development 	

Expressions of interest must be received by Wednesday 15 September 2010