

We are proudly delivering projects for the Peer Support and Capacity Building (PSCB) grant for the NDIS.

"Too many neurodivergent children grow up feeling misunderstood. We're changing that."

Why this matters:

A strong sense of identity and the ability to advocate for oneself are critical protective factors for all children – especially disabled children who often face stigma, exclusion, and reduced autonomy. Supporting identity development and respectful self-advocacy builds confidence, wellbeing, and inclusion.

This project aims to help children feel confident in who they are, express themselves respectfully, and be part of communities that value diversity.

What if inclusion meant meeting in the middle, not asking one side to change?

What we're doing:

We are co-designing practical, inclusive identity and self-advocacy modules with children, parents, and professionals. This also includes real-world piloting and ongoing evaluation.

What we're creating:

Flexible, digital modules for individual, small group, and classroom use, that can be delivered by educators, clinicians and adult mentors, designed for broad accessibility and sustainable scaling – with the goal to build confidence, self-advocacy skills, and connection .

Can we build communities where everyone's needs are respected—without asking anyone to hide?

Autism Self-Discovery Camp

To bring our co-design work to life, we partnered with Aspect South East Sydney School to deliver the first Aspect Self-Discovery Camp – a two-day experience for 16 autistic students.

This event explored how children can be supported to understand their identity, express themselves confidently, and feel proud of who they are.

How do we teach children that their perspective matters—and so does everyone else's?



Key outcomes included:

- Students who proudly affirmed autistic identity – “I’m autistic!”
- Staff gained deeper autism and inclusion understanding
- Powerful connection through lived-experience stories

"I would like to do this every year at least"

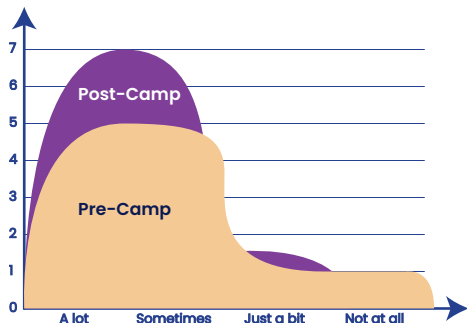
"we have provided the teachers and staff an opportunity to recognise the importance of all of these autism supports that we take for granted"

"Staff have definitely appeared more comfortable in using the word Autism."

"we've given our students an opportunity to discover more about themselves and discover more about their peers"

The camp offered key insights for developing practical resources and showed the power of co-designed, strengths-based approaches.

Student Responses: How much do you like Autism?



**Find us at
the SST
exhibit :**



**Email us
to Find
out more:**



Social Science
Translated

Kathleen Davey
Clinical Psychologist & CEO
Jasmine Gough
Co-Design and Research Translation Officer

Who's Involved:



- **Children (5–17 yrs):** Co-design through workshops, play, and activity testings
- **Parents & Caregivers:** Feedback on clarity, accessibility, and family engagement
- **Educators & Clinicians:** Consultation and co-design of delivery strategies for school settings
- **Neurodivergent & Intersectional Identities:** Shaping identity concepts, language, and inclusivity
- **Context-Specific Experts:** Advising on safety, language, and contextual relevance

This process ensures our resources are practical, affirming, and reflect the voices of those they're designed for.

Evidence-Informed & Co-Produced:

This project is delivered by Social Science Translated (SST), a neurodiverse team, and subsidiary of the Autism CRC.

A parallel PhD by Jasmine Gough, a neurodivergent researcher exploring identity and self-advocacy – is building evidence to inform future research.

How you can contribute:

Whether you're curious or keen to support - contact us at connect@sst-institute.net

Together, we can help children feel proud of who they are and confident to speak up.

STEP INTO THE GREAT TIME MACHINE EXPERIMENT



What do you wish you knew about yourself as a child?

**Send a message
back in time and help
kids understand
who they are!**

