

Therapists, Clinics & Services That I Recommend, or Have Been Recommended to Me, for Teenagers with ASD/Aspergers, in South Australia

My list of therapists, clinics, and services that I can personally recommend starts on the next page, and my list of those that have been recommended to me follows after that. You will notice that neither of these lists are very long.

If you have a teenager with ASD/Aspergers who has attended/used any other therapists, clinics, or services in SA that you and your teenager were happy with/found helpful, I invite you to please share your recommendations on my Facebook page, '**ASDaspergers**', which is associated with this website.

The link to my Facebook page is at the bottom of the home page of this website.

This would be a great help for parents who are seeking therapists, clinics, or services in SA that are suitable for their teenagers with ASD/Aspergers (i.e., in line with the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of ASD/Aspergers).

When seeking a private clinic or clinician to assess your teenager for ASD, or to provide them with ASD specialised therapy, I would strongly recommend that you ask the clinic or clinician if they have expertise and/or experience with teenagers with ASD. This is important, because some clinics or clinicians only have experience with, and can only offer appropriate therapy for young children.

If you find that you have to take your teenager across town for therapy with a good psychologist, who has experience in treating teenagers with ASD/Aspergers, and is familiar with the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of ASD/Aspergers, then I strongly recommend that you do so. If you take your teenager to see a psychologist who does not have this kind of expertise, it can do more harm than good.

If your teenager needs treatment from a psychiatrist, it's best to book in and wait for an appointment with a good psychiatrist, who has experience in treating teenagers with ASD/Aspergers, and is familiar with the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of ASD/Aspergers. If you take your teenager to see a psychiatrist who does not have this kind of expertise, it can do more harm than good. *(I am not referring here to an emergency/crisis situation, where your teenager requires hospitalisation due to their mental health. In that sort of situation, they would likely see a psychiatrist in the hospital).*

Although it can take many months to get the correct and much needed support/treatment/therapy in place, don't give up. You still need to start the process. Eventually, those long awaited first appointment dates will arrive.

The only therapists, clinics or services for teenagers with ASD/Aspergers that I can personally recommend from my own experience, are:

Headstart:

Website: **headstartis.com.au**

Services offered:

- ASD assessments (dual or single).
- Psychologists who specialise in ASD/Aspergers (including in the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the issues and needs of teenagers with ASD/Aspergers, for regular, ongoing sessions.
- Speech Pathology.
- Occupational Therapy.
- Group Sessions (Social Skills Groups).
- Feeding Therapy.

Locations/Contact Details:

- **Gawler:**

21-23a Twelfth Street, Gawler South SA 5118 – **Ph: 8522 2621**

Email: gawler@headstartis.com.au

- **Wayville:**

Wayville Village

43-51 Goodwood Road, Wayville SA 5034 – **Ph: 8373 4531**

Email: admin@headstartis.com.au

Dr Melanie Turner

Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

MCP&P (My Child Psychiatry and Psychology):

Website: mcpp.com.au

Service offered:

- Psychiatry, including medication based treatment as well as psychotherapy.
Dr Turner has a special interest in Autism, and much experience treating teenagers with ASD/Aspergers.

Location/Contact Details:

72 Fullarton Road, Norwood SA 5067 - **Ph: 7231 1703**

Email: reception@mcpp.com.au

However, to see Dr Turner, your teenager would have to be referred by their doctor. Patients are only referred to psychiatrists if they present with possible symptoms of psychosis, and/or their doctor thinks they might benefit from psychiatric medication.

Hopefully, your teenager with ASD/Aspergers will never need to be referred to a psychiatrist. However, if they do, I have to warn you, it is very difficult to get into see any psychiatrist, either through the public health system, or the private sector, and there will be a long waiting time before a first appointment.

Good psychiatrists who treat adults are rare enough. However, good child and adolescent psychiatrists are even rarer.

Obtaining an appointment with Dr Melanie Turner would be very difficult, because she is very good, and therefore, highly sought after, but she is only one person, so she can only do so much. She always tends to be fully booked, for many months in advance, and very often, she simply cannot book any further appointments with any new clients.

However, having said all of that, she is the only psychiatrist I can personally recommend.

Therapists, clinics or services for teenagers with ASD/Aspergers that have been recommended to me:

Private Clinics & Clinicians Listed on the Autism SA Website:

The Autism SA website (autismsa.org.au) contains a list private clinics and clinicians in SA that do ASD assessments and provide ASD therapies.

To access this list:

- On the Autism SA website home page, up the top, you should see some headings. Click on the heading called “Autism and Diagnosis”. This should bring up a new page;

- On this new page, scroll down to the tile called “Diagnosticians Directory”. Click on this tile to bring up a list of private clinics and clinicians in SA that do ASD assessments and provide ASD therapies;
- To the left hand side of this list, you should see a list of filter options you can select to narrow down the list of clinics and clinicians to ones that are more likely to be appropriate for your teenager.

Flow Psychology & Therapeutic Services:

Website: **flowpsych.com.au**

Services offered:

- Autism Diagnostic Assessments.
- Clinical and Educational Psychology for regular, ongoing sessions.*
- Speech Pathology.
- Occupational Therapy.
- Art Therapy.

Location/Contact Details:

Starplex, 18-20 Alexander Avenue, Evanston Park SA 5116 - **Ph: 7200 4181**

Email: **admin@flowpsych.com.au**

*I really don't know how specialised they are in the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the issues and needs of teenagers with ASD/Aspergers. However, this is the only clinic in Adelaide's northern suburbs that has ever been recommended to me (besides Headstart's Gawler rooms).

Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia):

Website: **autismspectrum.org.au**

Aspect has a number of different locations and services throughout Australia. However, not all are available in South Australia. Aspect has a special school in South Australia, for children with Autism, called Aspect Tree Top School. However, I don't believe this school would be suitable for teenagers with what I sometimes like to call Aspergers. *(I explain my use of the term 'Aspergers' under the section on my website called, "What do I mean by 'Autism Spectrum Disorder, or what some people call Aspergers'?")*

Aspect does offer some therapy services at various locations in South Australia.

Services offered in SA:

- Psychology.
- Speech Pathology.
- Occupational Therapy.

Locations of therapy services in SA:

- City of Charles Sturt.
- City of West Torrens.
- City of Port Adelaide, Enfield (West).

Contact Details:

Ph: 1800 277 328

I really don't know how suitable their therapy services are for teenagers with what I sometimes like to call Aspergers. You would have to phone the above number, explain your specific circumstances, and ask if they have any services that would be suitable for your teenager with ASD/Aspergers.

However, the website does contain a number of **fact sheets** that provide some very helpful information about ASD, including plenty of information that is relevant for teenagers with what I sometimes like to call Aspergers. I would recommend these fact sheets for parents seeking to educate themselves in order to be better able to support their teenagers with ASD/Aspergers.

What's the Buzz?

Website: **whatsthebuzz.net.au**

Service offered:

What's the Buzz is a series of books/programs designed to teach social and emotional skills to children.

It is designed as a guide for educators to use to teach the program to children in schools.

Psychologists can also use it in their practice.

It has sections for different age levels, including 12 – 15 year olds.

You could ask your teenager's school if they run this program, or if they could run it.

The Alert Program:

Website: **alertprogram.com**

Service offered:

The Alert Program has been designed to support parents, teachers, therapists and children to learn the importance of self-regulation.

How Does Your Engine Run is a guidebook for how to implement the Alert Program. It can be used in school, clinic, or home settings to teach children, including teenagers, how to identify and change how alert they feel (i.e., how to self-regulate). This is especially important for children/teenagers with ASD/Aspergers, as they often have difficulty with self-regulation, due to their sensory processing issues and emotional issues.

This guidebook is designed for people who are familiar with sensory processing techniques. However, someone who is not trained in sensory processing techniques, could still implement the Alert Program with the help of an occupational therapist who is trained in sensory processing techniques.

The Alert Program website also provides the following online courses for the Alert Program:

- **Your Best Self The Alert Program For All Online Course.** This seems to be an introductory course that is suitable for any adults who are new to the Alert Program, including parents of teenagers with ASD/Aspergers.
- **Alert Program Online Course.** This seems to be a more in depth course, suitable for therapists who are already familiar with the relevant theory, and for parents and teachers who have already taken the above introductory course.

You could ask your teenager's school, psychologist, or occupational therapist, if they use this program, or if they could use it. You could look for a psychologist or occupational therapist who uses this program.