



## PRESS RELEASE

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The Burnie Autism Specific Early Learning and Child Care Centre is now part of Tasmania's most experienced early childhood development service, StGiles.

This month, StGiles officially takes over the day to day operation and stewardship of the ASELCC from the Burnie City Council.

StGiles, whose autism teams include speech pathologists, occupational therapists and psychologists, already offers its services at regular clinics at the East Devonport Child and Family Centre.

The ASELCC, one of only six in Australia, is a Tasmanian leader in autism programs and provides small groups of toddlers and pre-school children with early intervention strategies that are individualized to the needs of each child and its family.

The 20-member ASELCC team is comprised of specially trained educators, teachers, speech pathologists, an occupational therapist, a social worker and a psychologist who provide a one-stop-shop for families and children in a friendly and fun child care setting.

Strong research partnerships with University of Tasmania, the Autism CRC and other ASELCC centres nationally, contribute to a dynamic, well informed workforce.

Children of all ages can access the ASELCC using Medicare, Helping Children with Autism and Better Start funding.

The benefit of the amalgamation to NW families and carers of children with autism will be that two very dedicated teams have been brought together, StGiles chief executive Ian Wright said.

StGiles, established 78 years ago, will bring scale and generations of early childhood experience. "StGiles can also fill the gap once children turn six with ongoing therapy that hopefully prepares them for school," he said.

StGiles employs Tasmania's largest paediatric allied health team with more than 90 speech pathologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and psychologists working from centres in Launceston and Hobart as well as community settings.

ASELCC manager Kathryn Fordyce said: "The ASELCC will be in safe hands with StGiles as they share our passion to help young children with autism be the best they can be through evidence-based early intervention and strong partnerships that build parental, workforce and research capacity".



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Mr Wright, congratulated the Burnie City Council on the innovation it showed by embracing the Commonwealth's ASELCC vision in 2009 and its success in operating the ASELCC for more than five years.