



April 7, 2015

For Immediate Release

MASTER Goes Blue for Autism

This April, MASTER Institute will be donating 10% of proceeds from The Ant Patrol® Children's Stories to Autism Queensland in support of *Go Blue for Autism* month.

As a natural blue, Hugo the Socially Unaware Ant from The Ant Patrol® will be MASTER's Ant Ambassador to help Autism Queensland raise awareness and build understanding of ASD.

Hugo the Socially Unaware Ant is a little **blue** ant who tends to get his antennae in a twist.



In his story *Pick Your Moment* from The Ant Patrol® Children's Stories, Hugo has difficulty reading the social situation and sometimes just gets it 'wrong'.

Just like children living with ASD, Hugo may not always be aware of others' thoughts and feelings or understand why people act the way they do.

Luckily the ever helpful Hoppy Ant steps in to guide the learning of skills necessary to overcome these difficulties, and Hugo's story is a happy one.

The stories *Pick Your Moment* and *Name of the Game* from The Ant Patrol® series introduce children to the skills of social awareness and perspective taking, the foundations of social success.

Throughout April, Hugo will share his insights on Autism along with many other valuable skills to help children read the social picture, think about their friends' interests, and consider others' thoughts, feelings and actions.

Co-founder of the MASTER Institute, Ms Aisling Mulvihill says, "It can be a real challenge for children who experience social awareness difficulties like our ant Hugo.



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"Their behaviours and actions can be misinterpreted as naughty, rude or inconsiderate when in reality a child may not have recognised what is happening in a social situation.

"It is important to consider what might be difficult for a child who has ASD. If someone takes the time to help a child notice the important social information, they are setting him/her up for social success".

People with Autism value friendships just like anybody else but making and maintaining friendships can be difficult.

Help us raise awareness and understanding so that those living with Autism are more accepted, understood and supported by the people around them.

If you would like to donate directly to Autism Queensland, please visit their website at autismqld.com.au to make a donation.

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About MASTER Institute

MASTER provides services, resources and guidance for parents, teachers and allied health professionals in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of young children. Dr Deberea Sherlock and Aisling Mulvihill founded the MASTER Institute in 2012. From the combined professions of educational and developmental psychology and speech-language pathology, they bring to MASTER over 20 years of collective specialised experience in the area of children's social and emotional development. Their work is strongly guided by a desire to engage children through creative learning and the wider value of working collaboratively with families and schools.