



AUSTRALIA'S FIRST SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FOUNDED BY PEOPLE WITH AUTISM TAKES ON THE NATION IN #AUTISMRETHINK

The I CAN Network, Australia's first social enterprise founded by Autistics, continues to make great strides in our push to show society what people with Autism CAN do.

After a busy few months we're pleased to say that our programs continue to enjoy great success.

Our flagship mentoring programs are now in 10 primary schools and 25 high schools. We work across Victoria in three key regions: metropolitan Melbourne, South West Coast and Kyabram, soon to be expanding in Albury/Wodonga and central Victoria. We will be delivering our program in Queensland in July this year.

Excitingly, we are bringing our #AutismRethink to businesses as well, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics purchasing our consultancy program for the benefit of 46 staff across the country.

Our Speakers Agency has expanded to 22 members and we're seeing booking numbers increase by the week.

I CAN Camps continue to book out too, and we continue to receive enquiries in advance of advertising our camps which are one of our most popular programs, covering a range of ages between 13 and 24.

Our advocacy voice is getting louder. In February we led over 10,000 members of our community in a call to Assistant Immigration Minister Alex Hawke MP, who was seeking to deport a teenage immigrant and her family due to the young woman's Autism. This is unacceptable in a modern, inclusive society like Australia and we are pleased to say the Minister rethought his decision and allowed the family to stay in Australia following a groundswell of advocacy and justified outrage by the I CAN Network and the Australian Autism community.

We are actively making a positive difference in the lives of young Australians with Autism.

This isn't just coming from us – we're hearing it from the parents, teachers, guardians and most importantly, the young people involved in our Network.

Our mentees are telling us we're doing it right. Over 80% of mentees are satisfied with the program they've joined, and feel a sense of belonging and community. They tell us how happy they are to have found a place where they can be themselves, with other people just like them. Take a look at our social impact review overleaf to see just how strong an impact we have had on our community.

This is reflective of our unique approach to Autism. Fifty per cent of our team are on the Autism Spectrum, so our activities are driven by Autistic voices and experiences, building on past experiences to empower a new generation of people with Autism and prove to society what these people can do. This is a voice that has been missing from Australian discourse in the past. And by carving out a space for these voices to be heard in the design of empowering, enabling, educational programs, we are encouraging autonomy and self-determination in Australia's young people with Autism, every day.

We're ready to move forward and take our programs to the next level across Australia. We're ready to promote an inclusive society, one that is proudly neurodiverse and sees Autism as a benefit, an advantage and a positive.

Are you?

You can join our #AutismRethink at www.icannetwork.com.au.

The I CAN Network is driving a rethink of Autism, from 'I Can't' to 'I CAN'. We mentor young people on the Autism Spectrum to live life with an 'I CAN' attitude. We bring out the 'awe' in AWEtism through education, advocacy and providing opportunities. We build networks across schools, universities, TAFEs, communities, businesses and governments. Over the month of April, we are running our Humans on the Autism Spectrum campaign, sharing the untold stories of Autism on our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. Follow us there to hear the voices of the unheard.

For more information on the I CAN Network, visit www.icannetwork.com.au or contact Danielle Kutchel, Marketing and Advocacy Manager on danielle@icannetwork.com.au.