



Media Release

The Hon Greg Hunt MP

**Federal Member for Flinders
Minister for the Environment**

Tuesday, 23rd June 2015

Join my 500km Walk for Autism

In July this year, I will embark on a 500km walk around my electorate to increase awareness about autism and raise money for Abacus Learning Centre and Amaze (Autism Victoria).

I invite you to walk with me for 1km, a day, or any part of the walk to help me support this cause or to meet me along the way for a coffee and a chat. You may also like to assist by making a donation.

Abacus Learning Centre is a not-for-profit organisation based in Hastings that works with children who have autism and provides much-needed therapy to help these children reach their goals.

Abacus is looking to secure new premises in Hastings and funds raised during the walk will assist in ensuring the building meets the necessary building standards.

I have seen firsthand the enormous difference that Abacus' therapy and early intervention can make in a child's life and to the lives of their families, which is why I am committed to supporting them.

Recently I had the pleasure of meeting two-year-old Luke who is full of energy and enthusiasm. Since attending Abacus, Luke has made terrific progress in his learning and his parents are now confident he will be able to attend a mainstream school. This is a tremendous result.

I also met two-year-old Thomas, who loves to get into things and run around, like most young boys his age. Thomas' parents say Abacus has allowed them to learn how to better communicate with him so that he understands and is able to respond back. This seemingly small thing has made an enormous difference in their lives and they now feel they are able to enjoy every moment with their little boy.

Amaze does fantastic work in raising the profile of autism and supports more than 55,000 Victorians living with autism.

Throughout the 19 day walk I will visit 56 schools in my electorate to raise awareness of autism and will be encouraging schools and community groups to support my fundraising effort.

Funds raised will be divided between Amaze (Autism Victoria) and Abacus Learning Centre to help them continue to provide valuable support for children with autism.

Any assistance you can provide will make a real difference to the lives of many children with autism and their families.

To join my 500km Walk for Autism, please phone my office on (03) 5979 3188.

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