

Autism diagnosis on rise

By DAVID COHEN

Peppermint Grove teenager Charlie Paganin plays music, likes computer games, cooking and movies ... and being a 15-year-old boy.

He also has autism, and an increasing number of people are being diagnosed with the condition.

"I stopped work as a dietician when Charlie was diagnosed aged 2½," said his mum Ange.

"Back then, the level of support was very low, so I started researching it on the internet."

When Ange told people her son was autistic, a common response was: "Is that like Rain Man?"

"That was all people knew," Ange said.

Ange was a founding member and is on the board of Autism West, which has its offices on Broadway in Nedlands.

As awareness about autism spreads, more children are being diagnosed - as are adults.

"A lot more older people are coming forward," Ange said.

"Sometimes their partners approach Autism West and wonder if they are autistic."

"These days we have resources for families, and even groups for adults."

Charlie loves going to Christ



Charlie Paganin, with mum Ange, is getting a sneak preview of the latest Disney movie next month.

Church Grammar School in Claremont. He divides his time between ordinary classes and lessons in the school's Peter Moyes Centre.

"On Wednesdays he's in a life skills group at Autism West," Ange said.

"They practise life skills for 90 minutes and go on public transport, shop and cook."

"On Fridays there's the Yes Group, where there's cooking,

music and gaming.

"It is a place where they feel safe."

At school Charlie joins his peers in swimming, music and gym.

He also does art and music with his peers and an aide.

Other subjects are studied with boys in the Peter Moyes Centre, where they have individualised programs.

"Christ Church is very sup-

portive, and they also help Autism West and promote what we do," Ange said.

She said some children with autism wanted to be social, while others did not.

"Some want to be but don't know how - they miss the facial cues," she said.

"Charlie is like any boy - he wants friends."

"But he is still developing his social skills and doesn't want

many close friends yet."

On December 8, Autism West is holding a screening of the Disney film, Frozen, which will be released on Boxing Day.

The lights will be left on during the sensory screening and there will be face-painting and treats.

For \$9.50 tickets contact Autism West on 6389 1833 or info@autismwest.org.au.

Entertain in Style this Christmas

We're Weber Specialists and we've got the lot.



Weber Family Q 320 \$699

"Whether it's a special model kettle, one of the special Q™s or a prestigious Weber® gas barbecue, if Weber sells them in Australia we have them in our stores. That's why being a Weber specialist is a bit like having a Mercedes or BMW dealership. Not only do we have the barbecues; we can help you with all the Weber® accessories, recipe advice, parts and service. Talk about pride! Just call in at our store. We know you will be amazed."



Weber Genesis E-330LP \$1899



Breeze Daybed. All Weather wicker
Was \$1799 **now \$1499**



Swiss grill 4 burner BBQ
Stainless steel Burners
7 year limited Warranty
was \$699 **now \$499**



Gasmate outdoor Kitchen.
From \$1999



Outdoor Kitchen **\$2899**
304 grade Stainless Steel
20 Year limited Warranty includes
Hotplate Rotisserie and Infrared
Burner.



OASIS
UMBRELLA WORLD

When you spend \$100 or more go into a draw for a \$500 voucher.
Ends 15th December

Phone: 9250 6262

1/164-168, Great Eastern Hwy, Midland (opp. Midland Toyota)

Phone: 9389 8363

U4, 158 Stirling Hwy, Nedlands

www.oasisumbrellaworld.com.au