

Disability Services Newsletter

General Manager Update *Wendy Pettifer*

JANUARY 2020



Welcome to 2020 - we hope you and yours had a wonderful Christmas and New Year break! At Woodville Alliance, we are gearing up to have a fantastic year with lots of exciting stuff going on, so get ready!

CHRISTMAS!

Our Christmas Party was enjoyed by all, and it was fantastic to see our clients – and some families – up dancing the afternoon away on the dance floor. We are very fortunate to have the support of Gasparo's restaurant for the event, and they were also extremely generous in allowing clients to use their music equipment. As the party was Hawaiian themed, clients had made hula skirts, and leis and everyone looked fantastically

colourful. You can find the photos on our Facebook page – so if you haven't liked the Woodville Alliance page yet, you should!

This year we also provided services across the Christmas and New Year period to a group of about 30 clients. The clients who attended enjoyed this close-knit group and we will definitely repeat this for Christmas 2020.

JANUARY ACTIVITIES

For January the focus of activities has been on Australia – in honour of Australia Day – and on the Lunar New Year. Clients have been doing arts and crafts – colouring Aussie flags and some of our unique wildlife – to decorate our centres, and the choir have been singing some good old Aussie songs. We even showed the movie Crocodile Dundee in the media room. This week we had an Australia Day BBQ attended by all services, and we ate the traditional snags, along with delicious cupcakes made and decorated by our clients. Everyone had a great time, and it was lovely to see so many clients and staff really getting into the spirit of things with their outfits!





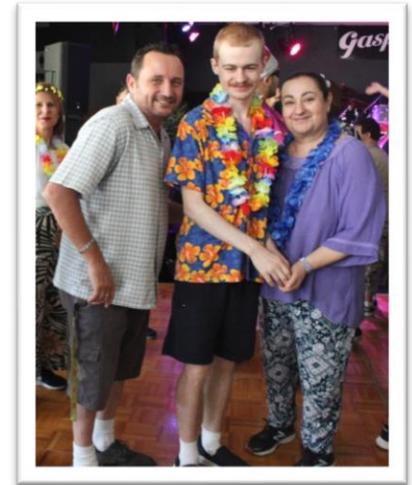
At Leisure Link, clients also cooked food to celebrate the Lunar New Year. We've found that they really enjoy cooking activities and we're pleased to be able to provide a healthy cooked meal for them. We will be doing this more and more as part of our plan to encourage more healthy eating in our services, so look out for more information about this.

NDIS INFORMATION EVENING

The NDIS has been around for a few years now, and it's been a steep learning curve for everyone. I think we are now starting to properly understand how we can get the best out of the scheme for our clients and we thought it would be good to share our learnings with you. We'd also like to talk to you about our general approach to the use of funds – as we want to encourage you to take a more individually tailored approach to the services you use as we expand our offering. If you'd like to hear more, we are having an information evening on **'How to get the Most from the NDIS'**. It will be on Thursday 27th February from 5pm – 7pm in the GeekAbility room at Mandarin Street and we'd love to see you there. We will be sending out more information next week.

GEEKABILITY LIVERPOOL

We are very excited that the first day of our new GeekAbility service based in Liverpool will be on 17th February. This service will be operating out of beautiful premises right in the heart of Liverpool, right opposite the station and TAFE. We already have students ready to start, but there are still places available. The service provides the opportunity to complete TAFE study with close support from educators and disability support staff, alongside practical information about how to survive the world of work, work experience opportunities and a whole lot of fun. If you are interested in the service, please get in touch with Toby on 0490048284

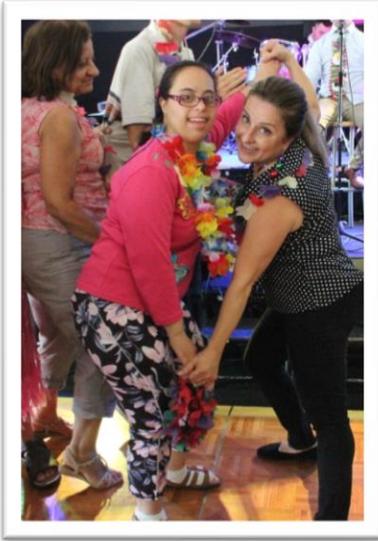


LAUNCH OF NIGHTOWLS

In our last newsletter we told you about our new NightOwls service for 18 – 30-year olds. We are launching the service on **Friday 21st February** with a **Karaoke and Pizza** night at Holey Moley - and we are super excited about it! We will be hiring a private karaoke room at the venue and you'll be able to boogie and sing the night away with your friends while enjoying a few pizzas. The cost for the trip (inc karaoke, pizzas and a drink) is \$25, with the support costs coming out of your NDIS plan. We will meet at Mandarin Street at 6pm, and everyone should be home between 10pm and 11pm. Let Toby know if you are interested in coming asap!

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN US AND YOU

We have had a positive response from you about improvements to our communications. There is still work to do, and currently we are working with support staff on the quality and usefulness of the information they are sharing in communications books. As part of this, I want to remind families that the Communications Book is a useful two-way tool, in which you can also tell us about things that might impact on your loved one's day. These could be things like a bad night's sleep, a minor medical problem or even just that they got out the wrong side of the bed this morning – after all, we all have days like that! We will be launching some new initiatives during 2020 to further improve the information you get from us, so watch this space.



CORONAVIRUS

We are monitoring the situation with regard to this virus carefully and will be sharing and updating our advice to you as appropriate. You should already have received a letter from us about our approach to safeguarding staff and clients. There is no immediate cause for concern but if you have not received this letter, please let us know or give us a ring to discuss any concerns. We have also published the letter on our website and our Facebook page.

EXPANSION OF AFTERNOON AND EVENING PROGRAM

During 2020 we will be expanding our programs so that there are activities available every afternoon/evening of the week. We will be encouraging clients and families to take a 'pick and mix' approach to what is available without feeling they need to sign up to a particular evening for the whole of their plan. We are planning an arts and crafts program, a music program, a sports program and a dance program, and our Lead Educator will be revamping our existing Health and Wellbeing program. First out of the starting blocks will be

the dance program, so if you are interested in that look out for information coming shortly.

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING

We are getting closer and closer to being ready to launch our first Supported Independent Living house. We have been looking at properties and developing an FAQ for parents and families. Once we have identified a grouping of interested clients which we think will be compatible, we will start working with them to find the right home for them. If you are interested in Supported Independent Living and you haven't spoken with us about it yet, please get in touch with Michael on 0490 049 242

VISIT FROM OUR LOCAL POLICE

We have a great relationship with our local police and one of their officers will be visiting our services during February. They will be chatting to our clients about police work and reminding them that they are there to protect and support them. They will also talk to them about the possible consequences of some behaviours. People with intellectual disabilities are over-represented in the justice system, and we want to support our clients to understand the law and how it relates to their behavior.

Well that's all for this month, but please remember myself and my team are very happy to talk to you about concerns or ideas you have so get in touch!

Best wishes

Wendy

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