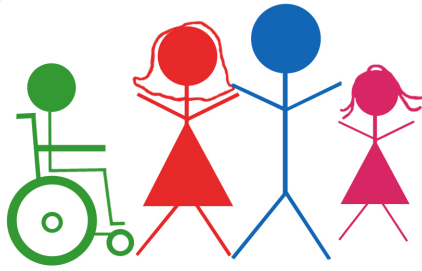


Parent Support Network



Eastern Region Inc.

Supporting Parents, Carers and Families of Children with a Disability or Special Need.

97 Bedford Road, Ringwood East, 3135

Tel – (03) 9259 4312

Fax – (03) 9876 0256

Email: psn-emr@bigpond.net.au

Website: www.psn-emr.com.au

Term 4, 2008

NEWSLETTER

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The Parent Support Network-Eastern Region Inc. publishes information in this newsletter in good faith and is not recommending any organisation or service. Any article printed is to be considered for information sharing purposes only.

From the Co-ordinator

Hello Everyone,

As the end of the year fast approaches and the Christmas decorations start to make their very early appearance in the supermarkets, I would like to say a big thankyou to everyone who have welcomed me into the Parent Support Network family. I have really enjoyed catching up with old friends and meeting new families and the support I have received from the PSN Committee has made my transition into my position as coordinator so much easier.

As usual there are a lot of things happening with PSN and in the eastern region. I try to put as much relevant and interesting information as possible in the newsletter so you have the opportunity to be informed and to participate in events that will support you in your parenting role. Being informed allows you to make better decisions and empowers you to challenge a service or question a practice that does not provide the support that best suits you and your family. Don't forget that part of my role here is to help you with any issues or questions that you might have. I can also support and advocate for you at meetings and can assist you to try and establish a better working relationship with professionals that is based on mutual respect.

As a parent of a child with a disability what I want and look for with services is someone who listens and can understand my family's needs. I look for a commonsense, flexible approach when trying to organise services and supports for my son and I also need to feel that I'm working in partnership with them to achieve this. Many of you probably think I am delusional and of course this approach hasn't always worked but I still aim for it and this is what I also try and achieve for the parents that I support. Please contact me if there is anything you think I might be able to help you with.

As you will see in the newsletter there are a few end of year events and opportunities for parents to get out and enjoy themselves over the next month either as part of a support group or as a family. The weather is warming up, perhaps a bit faster than we want, and the days are getting longer so try and enjoy and indulge yourselves. If you have any suggestions for activities or information sessions you would like me to organise let me know. Keep well and keep happy.

Take Care, Jenny

Chairperson's Report

Hi to Everyone,

With all the gloom that has been looming it is sometimes difficult to find light at the end of the tunnel. Life is often difficult enough without the world interfering and making us feel worse. We are at times luckier than most because we travel more within our own world issues and are not really that concerned with what happens outside. Maybe we have a more fatalistic approach by reasoning what really will make our life harder, global warming or our child throwing an all mighty tantrum in the middle of the shopping centre and trying to get them to the car without encountering the looks of horror and the voices questioning your parenting skills and other useless advice.

This month I have had to deal with service providers lack of interest in protocol and procedure and the lack of respect when they have made an error. It seems to be the carer who has to remain calm, stay nice, fix the issues or smile whilst saying "It's okay, I understand, I don't mind" when inside you are screaming "when will you people ever begin to understand?" and my favourite saying "which part of respite do you people not understand?". We can all learn to use our voices better and insist that we be listened to without fear of repercussions.

Whilst it is very often an extremely difficult road that we travel there are many joys and many good friends and lots of people and organisations around us who are wanting to understand some of our issues, some of the frustrations and even some of our joys.

Take good care of you,

Cheers, Jenny Newman, Chairperson.

Spinal Cord Awareness Week

Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Week will take place between 10 – 16 November 2008, and is designed to raise the profile of people living in the community with a spinal cord injury. It focuses on the causes, recognised the struggles, celebrates the successes and finally highlights the prevention message.

Accessibility Weekend

Key Melbourne attractions will be opening their doors for free to all people in wheelchairs and their carers. They include:

National Gallery of Victoria - No conditions / open all weekend

Rialto - Observation Deck - Saturday 16th Only

Eureka Sky Deck

Melbourne Museum - No conditions

IMAX Theatre Melbourne - 8 spaces for wheelchairs only. First in best dressed.

Otway Fly Treetop Walk - No conditions

Old Gippsdown

Darnum Musical Village

Burrinja Gallery and Arts Centre

Immigration Museum

City Museum at Old Treasury

Golden Dragon Museum - Carers must present their carers card upon arrival.

Kryall Castle

Enchanted Maze Garden - There is a fairly steep hill at entrance

National Sports Museum at the MCG - Participating Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th. Accessible parking available from Gate 6, off Brunton Avenue (\$8 per vehicle). Museum is accessible from Gate 3.

Penguin Parade - No conditions

Koala Conservation Centre - No conditions

Churchill Island Heritage Farm - No conditions

Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit - Offering access to History of motorsport display and 15 minute sessions on Australia's largest slot car track. There may be limitations in café area however temporary modifications will be put in place for the weekend

Victorian Network on Recreation and Disability

VICNORD aim to make the connections between sport and disability stronger. They have a newsletter called “Sector Connector” which contains information about issues and good practice within disability and sport. For more information look at their website at www.advocacyhouse.org. Information from articles in their latest newsletter I have included below.

Inclusive Leisure Initiative Update:

Twelve leisure centres across Victoria have been selected to participate in a pilot initiative that will offer them disability awareness training that will include guidelines, an assessment tool and a resource pack for working with people with disabilities. The Resource Pack will include an induction kit for staff, communication tools and generic symbols and pictures for the industry, easy English template and examples of good practice from within the industry. The initiative will commence work in January 2009 with the 12 centres undertaking a self assessment, combined with gathering feedback form customers with a disability.

Positive Body Image Project:

“Making an Appearance—Celebrating the diversity of young people with a disability” is a project that aims to promote positive body image and healthy lifestyle messages for young people with a disability. Young people will develop realistic and diverse images to be displayed in inclusive leisure centres across Victoria. The project is guided entirely by the expressed thoughts, ideas and artistic expressions of young people and works in partnership with the Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS) steering committee and young people. (www.ydas.org)

Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre (MARC) Attendant Support Initiative:

The Attendant Support Initiative is a new service offered at Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre in Glen Waverley. The initiative aims to provide people with a disability an opportunity to receive individualised support to access warm water exercise in the hydrotherapy pool. This initiative is the first of its kind to be piloted in Victoria and is part of the City of Monash Disability Action Plan and Inclusion Framework. It helps to eliminate reliance on external carers and provides greater flexibility for people with a disability. A specialised attendant support worker is available at specific times to assist with mobility, dressing, grooming and entry/exit to and from the pool. For more information contact the Attendant Support Initiative Coordinator Megan on 9561 2111 or megana@monash.vic.gov.au.

Free Sunday Travel for Disability Pensioners & Carers

The Brumby Government are currently providing free Sunday public transport to Victorians who receive a Disability Support Pension or a Carer Payment. Free travel will be provided in the form of a Sunday Pass Metcard which is valid on trains, trams and buses travelling within Zones 1+2 in metropolitan Melbourne and also on town bus services in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. An added bonus is two off-peak free travel vouchers to use on the metropolitan and V/Line transport network. Application forms are available at premium train stations, staffed V/Line stations, The Metshop and Metcard agents. The Sunday Pass can be applied for on the spot at railway stations or mail in a form and receive their Sunday Pass in 14 days. Applicants must fill out a form and show identification and evidence that they receive a Disability Support Pension or Carers Payment. Application Forms can be downloaded and printed off form the metlink website metlinkmelbourne.com.au

Feedback Required

As part of a Masters Course, Rev. Mark Tonkin is asking for feedback from families who have children with special needs living in the Yarra Ranges area about ways that church's in the region can offer support to meet the needs of your family. He is very interested in meeting families individually or as a group to discuss any issues you might have and ways that support can be offered. Mark can be contacted by phone 9754 2278 or email mtonkin@genesis.net.au

Free Family Fun Day

For Children with a Disability and their
Families

At Box Hill Miniature Railway

located on the corner of Belmore and Elgar Roads,
Box Hill

Melways ref: 47 B4

Sunday, 23rd November, 2008

11:00am to 4:00pm

Something for everyone to enjoy

Animal Farm, Bouncy Castle, Sausage Sizzle, The
Amazing Mr Twist and his Magic Show, Drinks and Icy
Poles, Show Bags.

Santa will also be making a scheduled visit

**For more information & to RSVP ring Jenny on
9259 4312**

or email psn-emr@bigpond.net.au

Wheelchair access area available

Everyone is required to wear fully enclosed footwear

Pensioner/Carer Payments

The Federal Government will be providing pensioners, carers and seniors financial assistance in the form of lump sum payments from December 8th, 2008. This is intended to provide additional support in the lead up to a comprehensive reform of the pension system being introduced from the beginning of the next financial year.

Pensioners will receive a payment of \$1,400 to single pensioners and \$2,100 to pensioner couples who receive payments including the Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment and Age Pension. People who are receiving Carer Allowance will also receive \$1,000 for each eligible person in their care.

Support will also be delivered to families, through a one-off payment of \$1,000 for each eligible child in their care, who receive Family Tax Benefit (A) and families with dependent children who receive Youth Allowance, Abstudy or a benefit from the Veterans' Children's Education Scheme payment.

National Disability Strategy

Have your say about the National Disability Strategy.

Submissions must be received by **5:00pm AEST Monday 1st December, 2008**

As part of an ongoing commitment to the rights of people with a disability, the Australian Government is developing a National Disability Strategy in close consultation with the Australian community, disability and carer peak bodies, employers, industry experts and state and territory governments. The Strategy aims to address the barriers that are faced by Australians with a disability and promote social inclusion. It will be an important way to ensure the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities are integrated into policies and programs affecting people with disability, their families and carers. A Discussion paper has been developed to facilitate public discussion and is available in accessible formats. Please contact the number below for more details. The Government would like to hear from people with a disability, their families and carers and others who have an interest in creating a better Australia for people with a disability. To express your views, you can provide written feedback to the email or postbox. The outcomes of the consultations and key points from submissions will be summarised in a feedback report in early 2009. The National Disability Strategy will be released in mid 2009. For further information on the Strategy and to provide feedback, please contact:

The National Disability Strategy Hotline 1800 077 765 or email: nds@nationalmailing.com.au or post:
National Disability Strategy, PO Box 7442, Canberra Business Centre, ACT, 2610

TTY: Phone 1800 555 677 and ask for 1800 077 765

"RUDELY INTERRUPTED" National Tour

A Melbourne Band whose five out of six musicians have a range of intellectual and physical disabilities have made history and become the world's first indie-band to be invited to perform at the United Nations in New York. "Rudely Interrupted" whose music has been hailed by critics as 'some of the most energetic and genuine to emerge from the Australian rock 'n' roll underground' will play to a prestigious audience at the UN's global headquarters in New York to mark International Day of People with Disabilities on December 3rd, 2008. For more information about this group and to help them with fund raising for this trip contact Rohan Brooks on 0411 132 442 or email rohan@rudelyinterrupted.com and website www.rudelyinterrupted.com.

What's On?

Clota Cottage Parent Support Group Program 2008

December 2nd	Christmas Brunch	Bon Bon's Restaurant 1st Floor David Jones The Glen Shopping Centre Glen Waverley 10:00am to 12:00	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312
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Yarrunga Parent Support Group Program 2008

November 20th	Xmas decoration making	Yarrunga Community Centre Croydon Hills 10:00am to 12:00	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312
December 11th	Christmas Breakup Party	PSN Office 97 Bedford Rd, Ringwood East From 12:00 noon	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312

Mooroolbark Parent Support Group Program 2008

November 19th	Guest Speaker EACH Family Relationships Service for Carers	Mooroolbark Community Centre Red Earth Room in Brice Ave 1pm to 3pm	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312
December 11th Thursday	Christmas Breakup Party	PSN Office 97 Bedford Rd, Ringwood East From 12:00 noon	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312

Monash Support Group Program 2008

November 20th	Art Therapy Session With Marion Kaye	Mount St Neighbourhood House Mount St, Glen Waverley 10:30am to 12:30pm	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312
December 2nd Tuesday	Christmas Brunch	Bon Bon's Restaurant 1st Floor, David Jones The Glen Shopping Centre 10:00am to 12:00 noon	Jenny Salgo 9259 4312

Celebrating International Day of Disability 2008

Knoxfield Tennis Club is running a Free Fun Tennis Day on **MONDAY 1ST DECEMBER** in celebration of International Day of Disability. Everyone is welcome to attend including carers and the event is endorsed by Tennis Victoria and the Knox City Council.

There will be:

- Free Tennis Instruction (all equipment supplied)
- Free use of 6 tennis courts
- Ball Skills Training
- Free Sausage Sizzle and Disco
- Prizes and giveaways

Venue: Knoxfield Tennis Club, Allister Close & Ferntree Gully Rd, Knoxfield (Mel Ref 73A6)

Time: 10:00am to 2:00pm

Contact: Tim Beare on 9756 0264 or 0421 194 232 or email timdawnbeare@bigpond.com
(Tim is the Club Coach and has had 13 years experience working in the disability field)

All Abilities Football Festival

To Celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities

Venue: State Netball & Hockey Centre, Parkville

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2008

Time: 10:00am to 1:00pm

Participants: Kids and Youths with a disability

The day will feature Football Activities, Wheelchair football Come & Try, Showbags. Face Painting, Information and more

For more information contact Football Federation of Victoria Community Development Coordinator Chris Area on 9474 1833 or carena@footballfedvic.com.au

Swim 4 All - Learn to Swim for Special Needs

Where: Weeroona Road, Murrumbeena

When: Weekends during school term

Private classes are run by Austswim qualified teachers. They are 30 mins in duration and are guided by the swimmers specific needs and the level criteria in the **Swim 4 All** program. Each session is followed by a 30 mins practice/play session supervised by the swimmers parent or carer. It is recommended that all special needs swimmers do a term of private lessons. They are then assessed on an ongoing basis and have the option of a group lesson. Swimmers without special needs are also catered for. Classes are held in a 4 lane heated 18 metre pool used exclusively for lessons. Parent and carers are welcome but are not required to be in the water with their child. Parents will have the opportunity to speak to the teacher to discuss any issues and alleviate any concerns they might have. For more information contact Natalie Clarke on 0411 131 641 or email natalieclarke@ozemail.com.au

Talking Taxi's Project

The Talking Taxi's project was recently launched and hopes to make communication between taxi drivers and passengers easier. It features a small suite of simple communication tools such as picture boards, personal journey cards and alphabet boards. These tools will be particularly beneficial for passengers with a disability that affects their communication. The tools aim to improve communication between drivers and passengers, reducing confusion about destinations, payments and routes. The picture boards contain simple pictures and phrases that are commonly used in taxi's. The Personal Journey Cards involve filling in the cards for each journey, detailing specific information to the taxi driver in a simple way about the desired destination and payment. The tools will hopefully increase the confidence of passengers and allow for more independence in their daily lives. It could also increase the confidence of some parents/carers who aren't used to the people they care for using taxi's on their own.

These tools are available to anyone who wants to use them by contacting the Victorian Taxi Directorate on 93204300 or vtdcommunications@doi.vic.gov.au.

The Parent Support Network has a couple of books of Personal Journey Cards for those who would like to try out this new taxi communication system. Contact Jenny Salgo on 9259 4312.

*PSN wishes to remind carers of the Privacy Policy.
Copies of the policy are available from the office and will soon
be available on the website.*

Outer Encounters

Outer Encounters is a new program that will provide support to assist teenagers with a disability to access quality outside school hours and vacation care services that are appropriate to their needs. The program will also allow parents and carers of teenagers with a disability to participate in or increase their opportunities in the paid workforce.

To be eligible for this program participants must be between the ages of 12 and 18 years and be eligible for services under the Disability Act 2006, they must reside in the outer east metropolitan area of Melbourne, they must be attending school, live at home with family or carers and be medically stable. The Vacation Care program commenced on the 29th September, 2008 and will operate for 5 days each school holiday period. The After School Care program started on the 6th October, 2008 and will operate on Mondays to Fridays from 3pm to 6pm during the school term, excluding public holidays.

For more information contact Cathy Carroll at Villa Maria on 9809 6823 or 0419 893 193 or email cathy.carroll@villamaria.com.au.

[AED Legal Service](#)

AED Legal Service, formerly known as DEAC Legal Services, represents people with a disability from the age of 16 who have issues relating to their disability in the areas of employment, education and training. By using industrial and anti-discrimination legislation they seek to achieve positive outcomes for their clients. AED operates as a free statewide service based in the Melbourne CBD at Suite 4, Level 5, 2-26 Elizabeth St, Their contact details are 9639 4333 or email noni.lord@aed.org.au and office hours are 9:00 to 5:00 Monday to Friday. A Free Legal Advisory Service operates on Wednesday nights from 6:00pm and is manned by both law students and legal practitioners.

Arts Out East Presents Untied

An exhibition featuring works from artists:

Monkami Centre

Croydon Special Developmental School

Croydon Community School

Leaps and Bounds

Truth and Liberation Concern

Wesley Fire and Clay and more

When: Saturday 22nd November 10am to 4pm and Sunday 23rd November 12 to 4pm

Where: Croydon Community School, 177 Mt Dandenong Road, Croydon

Coloured Emotions Art Therapy Workshop

Expressions of Interest For 2009

Once again our Art Therapy Sessions were a huge success this year and will end with a wonderful art display on Wednesday, November 26th at 7:00pm for those who are interested in coming along. Parents who participate in this 10 week workshop learn a lot about themselves and are encouraged to explore and share their experiences of being a carer and the emotions that this brings in a creative and non threatening way. This is a course focussed not on your artistic abilities but more your willingness to try new experiences. If anyone is interested in becoming involved in this unique opportunity next year, please call Jenny on 9259 4312.

New Parent Support Groups

I have had several requests from parents interested in starting support groups in the Shire of Yarra Ranges and the city of Knox. I am happy to support a group in these areas but need to know the level of interest from parents. If there are parents who would like to meet monthly as a group, please contact Jenny on 9259 4312 to express your interest and to let me know what you would like to see a support group offer you. If there are enough parents interested it would be great to begin the new year with the start of some new groups. If you have been thinking about attending a group but were a little unsure about what they offer or were uncertain about taking that first step, please give me a call on 9259 4312 and let me know how I can help you.

Casey Asperger Syndrome Support (CASS)

Proudly presents

Tony Attwood on Friday 27th February, 2009

Tony is a world renowned clinical psychologist who has specialised in Autism Spectrum Disorders for the past 33 years. He has travelled the world presenting workshops and running training courses for parents, professionals and individuals with Asperger Syndrome and is a prolific author of scientific papers and books on the subject. Tony's books and other Autism and Asperger Syndrome resources will be available for purchase at the workshop.

TIME: 8am registration for a 9am sharp start

TOPICS: Cognitive abilities and Managing feelings

VENUE: Amberlee Receptions, 1451 South Gippsland Hwy, Cranbourne

COST: \$45.00 Parents/Carers, \$65.00 Professionals

(includes tea/ coffee on arrival, lunch, morning and afternoon tea

Bookings are essential as there will be no ticket sales at the door

For further information contact Jenni 0439 008 082 or Meghan 0407 883 795

Email: caseyaspergersupport@hotmail.com Web: www.caseyconnect.net.au/cass

Could You Use A Break?

Rosebud Retreat

Rosebud Retreat is run by Care Connect Ltd for use as a respite option for clients and carers. The retreat offers a place to relax and unwind from the everyday hustle and bustle. The retreat is available to Care Connect Clients, their families and staff as well as external agencies although priority will be given to Care Connect respite clients and carers.

Rosebud is approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes drive from Melbourne CBD and is accessible by public transport. It is a popular beach-side centre on the Mornington Peninsula.

The retreat is a detached three bedroom unit set at the rear of a block of two that can comfortably sleep 6 to 8 people. Two bedrooms have double bunks, the master has its own ensuite and all bedrooms have built in robes. This house is not fitted with disability aids or equipment..

The main bathroom has a walk in shower and bath and a separate toilet and laundry facilities are available including a washer, dryer and outdoor clothes line. The retreat is self catering and has a fully equipped modern kitchen. There is also a gas BBQ and an outdoor dining area. For entertainment there are two TVs, a DVD and CD player. There are also a selection of games, family DVD's, bicycles, helmets and a table tennis table.

Bookings are available during the week and on weekends. For booking enquiries please phone Catherine Rihak on 03 8805 4135 or email rosebudretreat@careconnect.org.au.

PEOPLE OUTDOORS—ADVENTURE FOR ALL

People Outdoors is a community based organization that strives to provide recreation activities to people with disabilities. This includes various types of programs that enable children, teenagers and adults with all levels of disability to participate in outdoor adventure programs and weekend camping experiences.

The next adventure is to **Norval Lodge at Halls Gap** from **Monday 12th to Friday 16th January, 2009**. It is open to 6 to 18 year olds with a disability living in the Eastern Region of Melbourne with an unpaid carer. Siblings of people with a disability are also welcome. The cost is \$230.00 + \$20.00 transport which includes all meals, activities, accommodation, and 1:1 volunteer support.

To join in the fun please call the People Outdoors camp coordinator Gosia Barcikowska before the 24th November on 9350 5116 or email gosia@auscamps.asn.au, and web

New Resources at the Office

WEBSITE:

Check out The Brainary for some innovative educational resources including boardgames that address areas such as social skills, communication, bullying and special needs. Check out their website www.thebrainary.com or call Chris on 0425 718 687.

NEW DVD:

We have recently purchased The Transporters DVD which is a series from the UK that has been created specially for children with Autism who find it hard to recognize the causes of emotion and the facial expressions that go with them. There are 8 characters, all toy vehicles, with their own personalities and function. Each character has a real human face to make it easier for children to transfer their learning to real life. They can be borrowed from our resource library and for more information see the website www.thetransporters.com.

NEW BOOKS:

"Extraordinary Parenting"—A manual for parents of children aged 0-12 with chronic physical or medical conditions by Elizabeth J Bruce

"Adolescents on the Autism Spectrum" by Chantal Sicile-Kira offers strategies for helping children through the changes of the teenage years and to prepare them for adulthood.

"Listening to the Experts—Students with Disabilities Speak Out" by Elizabeth B. Keefe, Veronica M. Moore & Frances R. Duff

The **Kevin Heinz Garden Centre** in Doncaster is willing to start a gardening program for children with special needs over the weekend if there is enough interest from families. They are wanting parents to contact them so they can find out what type of service you might be looking for. They can possibly provide an OT service as well if the demand is there. Anyone who might be interested should contact Amanda Marshall at Kevin Heinz on 9848 3695

Membership Subscription Renewal

PRIVACY - Your personal details are stored securely and are only used by us for member communications.

Date: _____ Name: _____

Organisation and Title: _____

Postal Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____ Email Address: _____

Parent or family - \$10.00

Professional / Organisation - \$25.00

I would like to make a donation in support of Parent Support Network – Eastern Region Inc:

Amount Donated: \$.....

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$.....

Post to: Chairperson, Parent Support Network – Eastern Region Inc., 97 Bedford Road, Ringwood East, 3135

All Cheques/Money Orders payable to: Parent Support Network – Eastern Region Inc

PSN would like to congratulate our Chairperson Jenny Newman on winning Maroondah’s “Women in Business” Award.

OUR SPONSOR:
*Jenny has supported PSN since 2000. Jenny offers all PSN members, families and friends a \$500 referral fee.
This can be shared with PSN if you wish in the form of a donation.
Thank you Century 21 for your support.*

If you would like to advertise here please call/email the Co-ordinator
Jenny Salgo - 9259 4312
psn-emr@bigpond.net.au

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