



## Illawarra & Shoalhaven *DISABILITY NEWS*

Information about Disability and Services for People with Disabilities, their Families and Disability Service Providers

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Dec 2010

# Circle of Support for Rhiannon

*family*

A D V O C A C Y



*A family in southern NSW embrace community connections to lay the foundations for a circle of support.*

I first heard about circles of support at a workshop when Rhiannon was really young. She was only just two.

I found the workshop confronting – maybe because a lot of what was being discussed related to older children and people with disability – like leaving school and possible living arrangements. It felt too far ahead. It also sounded very businesslike – in terms of having meetings and recording progress. I felt that I couldn't facilitate this: we were already doing many different things.

Unsurprisingly, I didn't do anything about starting a circle of support at this stage. I kept learning more and developed some networks with other families who had young children. I also thought about the fact that we already had a terrific community network that supported us.

This felt safe for a while.

I continued attending events and going to workshops and all the pieces started to come together.

I realised that Rhiannon had a range of needs and we wanted her to have the same opportunities as our other children. As much as it could be uncomfortable asking for help – I felt it would be selfish not to invite others into her life.

My partner and I attended a particular workshop about planning for the future a



*...creating an inclusive world*

couple of years ago and it has been in our minds since then that it would be useful to take steps towards a more directed network.

We're not rushing the process. We started by hosting a lunch. We invited everyone we could think of. About 70 people came – about half were kids. We shared Rhiannon's story. We talked about her as a little girl in the context of her family. Our other kids talked about being her brother and her sister.

A facilitator hosted the day. She led a discussion about Rhiannon's gifts and people contributed their thoughts. She talked about the fact that many people with disability are vulnerable to living isolated lives – that many people with disability only have family and paid people in their life. The facilitator also talked about what a circle of support is and why they can be helpful.

We left it at that.

People felt really good about the day. Not only did they think about Rhiannon but they reflected on their own lives and networks. People cried – in a good way. They were moved by the nature of the community coming together. We want to build from that day to get some play dates happening with other kids.

Our next step towards a circle will be a weekend away. We have hired a venue on the coast and invited anyone who attended the first day and anyone who said that they would have liked to be there. My sister and brother-in-law are coming across from Adelaide.

There will be an element of socialising and there will also be a facilitated shaping of our vision for Rhiannon's future. We will be sharing more of what we hope to achieve. We have goals but it will be helpful to hear the contributions of others.

We think that this process will help us refine our thinking about who could be part of a smaller circle next year. We expect that after these two low key events, we will have a clearer idea of the people who will share our vision of supporting Rhiannon to build a great life for her.

*Story by Di Samuels from*  
[www.resourcingfamilies.org.au](http://www.resourcingfamilies.org.au)



## Resourcing Families

### ***Circles of Support Information Session***

A circle of support involves a group of people coming together to help identify and support the dreams of a person with disability. Circles of support have been found to be a valuable asset in facilitating opportunities for people with disability to realise untapped or unrealised potential.

Resourcing Families will be running information sessions across NSW from February 2011 to discuss:

- what a circle of support is
- how circles can be helpful
- how they function
- tips and tools for getting started.

People who attend will have the opportunity of ongoing information and ideas from Resourcing Families.

For more information visit our website at: [www.resourcingfamilies.org.au](http://www.resourcingfamilies.org.au)

### ***Harness the possibilities for young people with developmental disability Information Session***

Hear about resources that are available, what other families have done and how you can benefit from what Resourcing Families has to offer.

Resourcing Families will be running information sessions across NSW to discuss how people with developmental disability and their families can have more control over their lives and opportunities to pursue their dreams.

You will also hear how Resourcing Families can help you think through a positive plan for the future, develop networks of informal support and have the confidence and skills to take on emerging opportunities.

For both sessions Resourcing Families invites - family members, friends and allies of a young person with developmental disability

Where - A venue close to you - as agreed  
 When - At a time and day discussed with you  
 How long - 1-2 hours - it depends on how many questions you have!  
 How much - Free  
 To register - Ph: 9869 7753 or 1800 774 764  
 Email: [info@resourcingfamilies.org.au](mailto:info@resourcingfamilies.org.au)

## Aider Program



### **Assistance for Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents**

Aider supports vulnerable members of the community to live safely in the home in bushfire prone areas. Aider is targeted at vulnerable people who have limited domestic support available from families, friends or other services. The work provided by The Rural Fire Service will be site specific but likely to include clearing gutters, thinning vegetation, removing leaf and tree debris, trimming branches from around and overhanging the home, mowing or slashing long grass. Services can be provided to group homes, community facilities or schools in bushfire prone areas.

Aider is a one-off FREE service. Aider will be delivered in areas of highest bushfire risk.

Even though a person may fall within the eligibility criteria, there is no guarantee of the RFS providing services.

For further information please ring Tony Jarrett, Aider Programme Coordinator, on 8741 4955 or email [aiders@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aiders@rfs.nsw.gov.au) or use the web form at [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/aiders](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/aiders)



## DIAL - Disability Information Assistance Line

Providing information for people with disabilities, carers, families and service providers.

- Programs, services and disability organisations
- Referral to services
- Self Advocacy and support groups
- Forums and workshops
- Gaining access to services, aids and equipment
- Receive The Illawarra and Shoalhaven Disability News free each month

Ph **4255 8000** or [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au)



## Rockability 2011

**Bowral Memorial Hall,  
Sat 2nd April, 2011**

If you can sing, dance, tell jokes or juggle, or if you have a unique talent, come to "Rockability". Get your friends together, rope in your carers, form a band, work on your act.

"Rockability", now in its third year, will offer an afternoon of fun and entertainment for the whole family. This year "Rockability" will be showcasing some of the talent from Disability Service Providers throughout Wingecarribee, Wollondilly, Macarthur, Illawarra and Shoalhaven. "Rockability" fans can also expect to see quality bands rocking out for their audience.

To register contact Sharon on 4862 2644 or [sharons@iwi.org.au](mailto:sharons@iwi.org.au)

## Mental Health Carers Information and Support Line

Provides telephone support and information to carers (family and friends) of people with mental illness. The information can include referrals to relevant services, information about mental illnesses, accessing the mental health system, coping skills etc. The



Information and Support line also provides carers with telephone support through understanding the difficulties of your situation. It takes calls from all over NSW and it operates Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5pm.

Contact: 9332 0700 or 1800 655 198



## Shut In

Shut In is the national campaign to raise awareness about people with disability in institutions, to take action to close institutions and to advocate for housing and supports that enable people with disability to live in the community in the same way as everyone else.

Shut In is a human rights campaign that is underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The campaign website brings together information and resources, personal stories from people who have lived in institutions, State and Territory reports on advocacy actions and events and information about how to get involved in supporting the campaign.

Shut In is primarily being run by people with disability and their representative and advocacy organisations

National Coordinators are;

- [PWD – People with Disability Australia](#)
- [NCID - The National Council on Intellectual Disability](#)
- [VALID – The Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability](#)
- [Reinforce](#)

What does Shut In involve?

The campaign brings together information into one central place to create a solid evidence base for our advocacy. Our findings will be published and presented to governments and the community as part of a national speaking tour.

The Shut In website contains a wealth of resources, toolkits, fact sheets and other sorts of information for you to learn more about the reasons why this campaign is absolutely necessary.

The web address is [www.shutin.org.au](http://www.shutin.org.au)

Source; Information from PWD E-Bulletin 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2010

## Shoalhaven Sports Awareness Day



A showcase of sport for people with a disability and their families. A fun day for all ages and abilities.

Sports available include:

- AFL
- Football (soccer)
- Sailability
- Croquet
- Bollywood Dancing / Zumba
- Basketball
- Gym ....and much more



The awareness day will also provide information on opportunities to play these sport and recreational activities regularly in your area. Participants need to be fully supervised with active support.

Date: Wednesday 30th March 2011

Welcome and Registration from 10:00 am

Start Time: 10:30am to 2:00pm

Where: Bomaderry Basketball Stadium and surrounding sporting fields

Cost: Free

A sausage sizzle lunch will be available to purchase on the day.

Registrations are essential and they will close on 18 March 2011.

To register please phone Sport and Recreation on 4228 5355 or email [Catherine.campbell@communities.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Catherine.campbell@communities.nsw.gov.au)



## Stronger Together: The next phase 2011 — 2016

On 3 December the Premier of NSW Kristina Keneally announced \$2 billion in new growth funding for the State's disability services. The funding is part of *Stronger Together: A new direction in disability services in NSW 2006-2016* the governments 10 year plan for disability services. This is the largest investment in disability services in New South Wales' history and the most significant investment made by a State Government anywhere in Australia.

*Stronger Together: The next phase 2011-2016* seeks to address the call from people with a disability, their family, carers and the sector for a more responsive system.

The second phase of *Stronger Together* involves the continuation of service expansion and reforms of the first phase at a cost of \$2.02 billion plus a second round of service expansions and additional reforms at a cost of \$2.02 billion.

This funding will significantly expand service capacity, with the number of places planned for delivery in the second phase totalling 47,200. This is a 70% increase in the number of places planned in the first phase.

Highlights of *Stronger Together: The Second Phase 2011-2016* include:

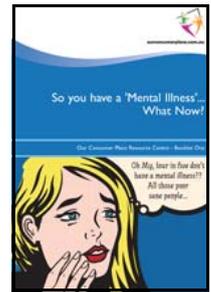
- Person-centred approaches – enabling people with a disability to be key determiners in how support resources are used
- A lifespan approach – increasing certainty by building long-term pathways through the service system
- Large Residential Centre closures – closing all centres by 2017/18
- A service system with the right capacity – ensuring that the resources are available in ways that meet people needs efficiently and the right quality and time.

The full policy is at [www.adhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au)

## So, you've got a 'Mental Illness'? ... What now?

This is a FREE new resource written entirely by mental health consumers – people who have been diagnosed with a 'mental illness'.

The book provides an introduction to the mental health system from the perspective of those who have been there and experienced the system first-hand.



It provides an introduction to the notion of 'consumer perspective' – a particular way of viewing the world from the point of view of those who have lived experience of 'mental illness' – as well as practical information on how diagnoses work, taking medication, where to get help and financial support, and what to expect from the different services available to mental health consumers.

To receive a free copy this book visit [www.ourconsumerplace.com.au](http://www.ourconsumerplace.com.au)

## Suicide Call Back Service

This service provides crisis counseling to people at risk of suicide, carers for someone who is suicidal and those bereaved by suicide, 24 hours per day 7 days a week across Australia.

People who are not linked in with current professional support can also access up to six sessions of ongoing counseling with the same counselor at times scheduled to suit you. Professional counselors, with specialist skills in working with suicide-related issues, will assist you in working through difficult emotions.

The service provides support for people aged 18 and over, although parents of youth at risk are encouraged to call for support.

The service is now also able to offer health care providers:

- A referral point for clients they may have who are at risk of suicide
- Professional advice, information and support in dealing with suicidal clients;

- Access to debriefing and self-care.

Call the Suicide Call Back Service on **1300 659 467** from anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call.

Source: *ARAFMI Illawarra Newsletter Dec 2010 / Jan 2011*

## Autism and Asperger Syndrome Consultancy Service

The Autism and Asperger Syndrome Consultancy Service Australia (AASCSA) has been set up to provide families, carers and individuals plus the wider community a flexible autism and Asperger syndrome specific consultancy service that will support, advise and meet the needs of people affected by autism and Asperger syndrome.

The service offers people affected by autism or Asperger syndrome the opportunity to increase their confidence and achieve a degree of independence through autism and Asperger syndrome specific strategies as well as offering support to families, carers and other professionals.

The AASCSA will meet the needs of each individual and the people who care for them, by providing the following variety of services:

1:1 advice, information and support to parents and carers. During these sessions autism / Asperger syndrome specific resources and strategies will be discussed which will then be made for and sent to families or carers. All resources and strategies will be tailored and made specifically for the individual/family to use at home, school, and work or in the community.

1:1 sessions may include:

- Communication support
- Behaviour support
- Anger and Anxiety management
- Sensory sensitivity information and support
- Understanding what is autism / Asperger syndrome

For more information contact Samantha on 0406 981 983 or [asd.support@hotmail.com](mailto:asd.support@hotmail.com)

## Low Cost Computers

Technical Aid to the Disabled (NSW) have been refurbishing and supplying low cost computers to people with a disability for 18 years.



As a Microsoft Authorised Refurbisher, TADNSW is also able to offer low cost computers to anyone in receipt of any Centrelink benefit or Health Card benefit.

There are other organisations supplying low cost computers to people on benefits, but TADNSW's service is unique because purchasers have the reassurance of repair or replacement of faulty equipment for up to two years, backed up by a written service agreement and consumer guide.

Further details are available from the TADNSW website at [www.tadnsw.org.au](http://www.tadnsw.org.au) or by calling 1300 663 243

## Autism Surf Day

My name is Leane Holmes and I'd like to announce our 4th year of the Autistic Surf Day for children 6-18 and their siblings.



The event has been a great success in previous years approval has been given to have another day in 2011. Therefore I am again sending out an expression of interest for those children aged 6-18 with a form of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and their families.

When: Sunday 16th January 2010

Venue: Sussex Inlet Surf Lifesaving Club

Cudmirrah Beach

Time: 10am – 2pm

If you or someone you know are interested in participating or volunteering please let us know. This is a carefree and fun day for all.

For more information or to register contact Cindy at Noahs Ark on 4423 5022 or Leane on 0414 848 238 or [holmesy35@hotmail.com](mailto:holmesy35@hotmail.com)

## Contenance Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS)



The CAPS is an Australian Government Scheme that provides a payment to assist eligible

people who have permanent and severe incontinence to meet some of the costs of their incontinence products. The payment is made by Medicare Australia directly into a clients nominated bank account.

To be eligible for the CAPS an applicant must be five years of age or older and meet one of the following criteria:

A - have permanent and severe loss of bladder and/or bowel function (incontinence) due directly to an eligible neurological condition; or

B - have permanent and severe loss of bladder and/or bowel function (incontinence) caused by an eligible other condition provided the applicant is the holder of a Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) or entitlement.

To assist Health Professionals in assessing clients for the CAPS, a list of eligible neurological conditions or eligible other conditions can be found on the website.

To apply for the CAPS an applicant needs to complete a CAPS application form which includes a health report to be completed by a Health Professional and submit to Medicare Australia for processing.

The CAPS payment for 2010-11 is up to \$497.79, indexed annually. The payment is based on a pro-rata rate from the date Medicare Australia receive an application for the CAPS.

If you have any questions about completing your CAPS application form, please contact Medicare Australia on 132 011 and select option 1.

Further details are on:

<http://www.bladderbowel.gov.au/furtherinfo/caps/default.htm>

## The Australian 1 in 4 Poll Project

Are you an adult who has a disability or a disabling condition in Australia?

Do you care for an adult with a disability in Australia who requires assistance ?

Would you like to have your say about a range of topics?

Deakin University and Scope Victoria's new project is designed to provide a vehicle for people with disabilities to express their views on a range of social issues. This research is being done over the next three years and will have several different surveys on different topics over that time. A website has been constructed for this purpose.

The first survey is about social inclusion. It is for people who have a disability who would like to have their say about being included in society. We want to hear what you have to say about feeling part of your community and what makes you feel included or excluded.

The survey can be found on [www.1in4pollaustralia.com](http://www.1in4pollaustralia.com)

Responses will be used to influence government policy as well as to inform future practice.

## Home Power Savings Program

The NSW Government's free program helps eligible low income households save up to 20% off their power use. You are eligible if you have a nominated Centrelink or Veteran's Affairs concession card.

The program offers free in-home advice from an energy expert and a Power Savings Kit that includes a stand-by saver power board, energy efficient globes, draught-proofing strips for around the door, door snakes, a low flow showerhead, shower timer and tap aerators.

Home Power Savings Program is available to all eligible households across NSW until 30 June 2013. Eligible households should call 1300 662 416 to book a free assessment.

## For Sale

\$34 950

2003 Honda Jazz  
VTI-S Automatic 1.5  
litre with 36 571 kms



- Converted for wheelchair access
- Over \$50 000 spent new
- Registered to 26/08/2011
- Alloy wheels
- Brand new tyres
- Serviced regularly since new

Contact Brian on 0408 410 720

## New web resource portal & on-line training

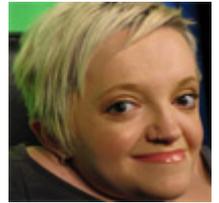
The Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Office of NSW Health is pleased to announce the launch of a new web resource portal.

The portal provides information, advice and on-line training for the community, as well as for health professionals, around improving the physical health of those who use a mental health service.

If you, or someone you know, uses a mental health service, or you provide health care for someone who has a mental illness, visit the web portal today.

[www.cadre.com.au/nswhealth](http://www.cadre.com.au/nswhealth)

## New ABC website for Disability Community



Hi. I'm Stella Young and I'm the editor of Ramp Up, the ABC's new online destination for news, discussion, debate and humour for everyone in Australia's disability communities.

Whether you live with a disability, are a friend or family member of someone with a disability, work in the sector or just want to get a better picture, this is a lively community space to have your say.

This site is your space so shape it, feel empowered and to take your place in the disability community."

The website is at [http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/?WT.svl=Rampup\\_Homebanner](http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/?WT.svl=Rampup_Homebanner)

## Season's Greetings



*The staff and management would like to wish our readers and partners in service provision a merry Christmas and a new year filled with well-being and prosperity.*

**Would you like to receive this newsletter in printed form or by email?**

**Contact: The Disability Trust on [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au)**

**100-102 Jardine Street Fairy Meadow NSW 2519**

**Postal: PO Box 395 Fairy Meadow NSW 2519**

**Phone: 4255 8000 or Fax: 4255 8088 Website: [www.disabilitytrust.org.au](http://www.disabilitytrust.org.au)**

*The newsletter is prepared by the Information and Advocacy Service aimed at covering a wide variety of services and issues across the disability sector. The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of The Disability Trust. Should you have a story or information that you would like included in the newsletter please contact the Information and Advocacy Service.*

*...creating an inclusive world*