

ISSUE 7

Newsletter



April 2011

Seeking interested people

Would you consider joining our dedicated team on the Management Committee? Please contact the office.

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Message from the Service Manager

Dear Readers,

Leisure Connections underwent its recertification Audit on the 16th, 17th, & 18th of March and I am very pleased to inform you that we have successfully achieved recertification. The feedback we received from the auditors was both very positive and constructive. I thought I would share this quote from the report with you. 'The organisation maintains a strong client focus and this was verified by the very positive feedback received from service users and staff. All activities are well planned with a primary emphasis on safety and community inclusion.'

A big thank you to all that participated and assisted in successfully demonstrating that Leisure Connections continues to meet the requirements of the Queensland Disability Service Standards and continues to improve on the service it provides.

Leisure Connections is continually looking for ways to improve the quality of service it provides to Service Users, advocates and family members. Your feedback enables Leisure Connections to evaluate and improve on the way it provides a service and assists in ensuring it continues to provide a quality service. After each meeting you have with the Service manager/Coordinator you will receive a feedback form, this feedback is then given at the next management Committee where service improvements are identified. Please note that providing your name is optional but if your feedback is in the form of a concern/complaint and you wish it to be followed up with you, you will need to provide your name.

Leo Brunker
Service Manager



COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE

COLLEEN DOLAN - HONORARY PRESIDENT

I have been around long enough to see some tremendous changes in the disability field. I have three children one of whom has an intellectual disability. In a couple of months she will be 42 years of age. My husband and I treated all our children the same so if Lynette was naughty she got a smack, the same as the others. Golly, wouldn't that get me into trouble nowadays! My first experience with the discrimination that existed in those days was when I tried to enroll her into our local kindergarten. The principal said "My staff are not qualified". I could have lived with that but then she went on to say "Besides which I have to think of the prestige of my kindergarten. You know what people are like. They will say don't go there - that is where that silly Dolan girl attends". I remember that day as if it was yesterday. I was so angry that I went straight up to my neighbor up the street who was an early childhood teacher and had three children the same age as mine and they were all friends. We decided then and there that we would give that woman some competition. Together with our husbands we established the Freshwater Play Centre. All the equipment was specially built according to the specifications of the Creche & Kindergarten Association. We were ready to open at the beginning of the school year. This venture was so successful that in the second semester of that year our opposition closed its doors. Revenge is not a very commendable emotion but in this instance it was very sweet! Thus began a life of continually fighting to open doors to enable my daughter to lead an ordinary life. I was the founding President of Leisure Connections Association Incorporated and still hold that position almost nineteen years later. It's hard for voluntaries to get the sack! I was the founding President of Real Living Options Association Inc. and currently hold the position of Treasurer. Along my journey I have also been a member of the steering committee of The Cairns & District Child Care Association and was one of the principal drivers in the establishment of the Home Day Care program. I was also the founding Secretary of Noah's Ark Toy Library which is now known as Arc Disability Services. Sometimes I wonder what my life would have been like if Lynette had been born without a disability. Very different I would imagine. I have had a full life, full of purpose and I have to thank Lynette for that. My only regret is that her older sister and younger brother missed out while all these battles were being fought. Despite this they have both grown into very caring adults and always help out Lynette when she needs them. When you come into the office and see a white haired old lady sitting at her desk do come up and make yourself known. There are so many parents I do not know.

"There are no strangers – only friends you have not met"

Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

My Story with Leisure Connections



Leisure Connections would like to start putting in a new section in the Newsletter about our Service Users and their positive outcomes in relation to Leisure Connections Support. We would like to talk about the Activity and what you have achieved by participating in a Leisure/Recreation community Activity. If any Service Users would like their Story to be told please contact the office.

Support Staff



Another friendly reminder about filling in timesheets correctly.

Please ensure that all names and dates are completed. It is also important to have receipts attached and to fill out the feedback on the back of the timesheets. All timesheets are to be handed in by 4:30pm Monday of the Pay week. If you need a calendar to identify these dates you can pick one up from the office.

Another important memo is to be aware that if support changes you need to contact the office to see if these changes can be approved. Any change in support needs to be negotiated with the Service Manager/Coordinator beforehand. If it is out of office hours please call and leave a message on the answering machine.

When handing in your insurance details, a copy of your insurance renewal is not suitable. A copy of your insurance policy or a certificate of currency is required. You can directly contact your insurance company and have them fax it to Leisure Connections office directly if needed.

If Support Staff would like more support work please hand in a written schedule of your availability. It makes it more efficient and timesaving for the Service Manager/Coordinator when looking for Support Staff availability.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

National Disability Insurance Scheme

In Committee Comments exactly one year ago you may remember that I mentioned that the Australian Government had asked the Productivity Commission to undertake a public enquiry into a long-term disability care and support scheme. Leisure Connections Association Incorporated made a submission supporting the NDIS. This was one of over 600 submissions outlining the flaws in the current system. The Commission has now delivered preliminary findings which they say is "focused on designing a coherent national system for disability support that is centered around removing the deficiencies of the current arrangements" The publication is available from the Productivity Commission website at www.pc.gov.au. We have a hard copy in the office which we are ploughing through. We can make it available later should anyone be interested in reading it. Two books about one inch thick – light Sunday afternoon reading! First the Commission is proposing a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to be overseen by a new organization, The National Disability Insurance Agency. This would provide disability-related services and supports to the community at large, but with a particular emphasis on funded supports for people with significant disabilities and their carers. Secondly the Commission is proposing a National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) to address catastrophic injuries from accidents, such as quadriplegia, acquired brain injuries, severe burns and multiple amputations. This scheme would comprise a coherent set of state-based, no-fault arrangements for providing lifetime care and support, building on existing schemes. It would have the same basic goals as the NDIS, but would be funded differently. Within the next couple of months forums will be held throughout the country. One will be held in Cairns – date yet not advised. The final report is set for July 2011. A quick overview of the NDIS is available at www.everyaustralaincounts.com.au You can also register your support for this scheme on this website. We will keep you posted on this.

It is our great opportunity to get disability from welfare based system to an entitlement based system as long as it is not "stuffed up" by bureaucracy. One has to wonder how much a new Agency will rob people of support dollars.

MEMO: ALL SERVICE USERS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND STAFF

If possible could we please refrain from coming into the office to speak to Leo, Tenille or Julie on a Wednesday. The office is particularly busy on this day and the office staff can find it difficult to complete their workload with interruptions. If it is important please give us a call and we can arrange a meeting. It would be greatly appreciated and we would like to thank you for your consideration in advance.



Service Users & Families

If there is an activity you would like to do other than the usual supported activity, please do not hesitate to call either the Service Manager/Coordinator to discuss it. On the occasion we can provide support for special events or activities as a one off activity.



It's Easter Time



Leo or Tenille will be in contact with you if your activity falls on the 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 26th April and the 2nd May. Please put some thought into whether you would like to change your activity to another day.

*Happy Easter from the Management Committee
and Office Staff of Leisure Connections*

What's On

Don't forget to check out the fun free fitness at the Esplanade there's a ~~free~~ activity on every day of the week!

Anzac Day Parade
Monday 25th April
9:15 am Esplanade
Anzac Dawn Service Commences at
5:40am

Reminder

The Office will be **CLOSED** on the following dates over the Easter period.

Friday 22nd April
Monday 25th April
Tuesday 26th April
&
Monday 2nd May

CONTACT DETAILS

Service Manager

PH: 40 356 771

Email: servicemanager@leisureconnections.com.au

Coordinator

PH: 40 356 444

Email: coordinator@leisureconnections.com.au

Leisure Connections Association

Incorporated

Fax: 4035 5887

113-115 Aumuller St, Bungalow QLD 4870

P.O BOX 676, Bungalow.