



Community newsletter

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our Community newsletter.



Life Without Barriers is in an exciting phase of development. As we move towards the middle of 2010 we have a number of important organisational projects that will provide LWB with the necessary supports for future

growth. I'd like to update you on some of our larger projects we have been working on and briefly touch on what the future holds for LWB.

Our IT team is in the final stages of the OS Migration Project, which is due to finish on schedule by the end of May. The process of moving all our staff from Apple Mac to Microsoft Windows systems is one of the largest projects we have ever undertaken and despite its challenges, the IT team have worked tirelessly to make this project a success.

In February, we gathered our managers from every location and across all our services to participate in our 2010 Leadership Conference. The three day event, "Leadership in Action", was an important step in our planning phase, as the Executive Team and Board sought the views of the broader leadership community within Life Without Barriers, in order to shape our strategic direction for the next five years.

Our Client Information and Reporting System (CIRTS) is on track to roll out in August this year and will fulfill an ambition of Life Without Barriers to have a better way of keeping

client records, and tracking our clients' achievements and outcomes.

CIRTS has been custom built for LWB and will revolutionise the way we track, measure and report on the progress of our clients.

Looking forward, the next 6 months sees no signs of LWB slowing down, as we finalise our 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, and commence approaching businesses for sponsorship for our 2011 Carer Conference.

Finally, on a sad note, on 14 February 2010 we lost our friend and highly respected Life Without Barriers Board Member, Carol Peltola. For 30 years, Carol was a leader in the development of services to improve the lives of vulnerable children and families across Australia.

To honour the memory of Carol and her courageous work, the Life Without Barriers Carol Peltola Children's Research Fund has been established. The first project of the Research Fund is a partnership between Life Without Barriers and Griffith University in Queensland, establishing a Chair to support child-focused research into effective support of vulnerable children and families.

I encourage you to read the autumn edition of our Community newsletter to catch up on all this, as well as the fantastic activities our State Teams have been proudly achieving in their areas.

Ray – Chief Executive Officer, Life Without Barriers

inside this issue...

• New Client Information Reporting and Tracking System



• Carer Conference on track

• RAP launches into NT

• Olympic hero in the making



• Peer Support Program

Client Information, Reporting and Tracking System Coming Soon

In August, we will benefit from a brand new system to manage our client records and measure their progress, called the Client Information Reporting and Tracking System (CIRTS).

CIRTS is a computer-based system currently being custom built for LWB that will allow us to securely store important reporting information about our clients, and the care and services we provide to them across Australia and New Zealand. In addition, we will be able to track client progress,

measure outcomes and share this information with our client's networks.

The continuous growth of Life Without Barriers has meant CIRTS is an essential advancement in the way we manage our client records, report on their achievements and share this information with our funding bodies.

Keep an eye out for more information about CIRTS in the coming months.



RAP Launches into the Northern Territory



In February, despite the onset of the Northern Territory's famous monsoonal rains, our Darwin Team celebrated the launch of their Reconciliation Action Plan.

Community members and LWB staff gathered to witness the official opening by Indigenous Development Minister Malarndirri McCarthy, with the Welcome to Country performed by one of our carers, Dorothy Fox.

Guests dined on great food as the "One Mob Different Country" dancers performed five traditional Aboriginal dances. Other guest speakers at the launch included SA and NT State Manager Jane Longbottom and LWB Aboriginal Cultural Support Coordinator Kerri Clarke.

The Darwin Team will implement the Reconciliation Action Plan in their region over the coming months.



"One Mob, Different Country" Aboriginal Dancers

Carer Conference on Track for 2011

Planning for the 2011 Carer Conference is well underway, with the event confirmed to run from 1 – 3 April at the Sebel and Citigate Hotel, Brisbane. The Conference will be themed 'Dare to Care' and will host 300 of our foster carers from Australia and New Zealand.

The overall aims of the conference are to enhance a sense of belonging within our carer community, as well as to provide educational, networking and development opportunities.

Sponsorship for the conference is now the main priority. In the coming months, we will be working with Life Without Barriers business partners to secure sponsorship to run the event. For more information, contact Kate Ramzan-Levy, Marketing and Communications Manager, (02) 4033 4505.



2009's Life Without Barriers Carer Conference

Carol Peltola

4 April 1952 – 14 February 2010



On February 14 we lost an inspiring leader and invaluable member of the Life Without Barriers Board, Carol Peltola.

A Clinical Psychologist, Carol devoted over 30 years to improving child safety throughout Australia, using her intellect, integrity, compassion and

connections, along with her strong vision, to bring about change both within Government and at a grassroots level.

She helped Indigenous communities in urban, rural and remote areas to find solutions to complex problems including substance abuse, domestic violence, self-harm, child abuse and neglect, and mental illness. In doing this Carol always maintained a great humility and was known for never making anyone feel small.

To honour the memory of Carol and her courageous work, the Life Without Barriers Carol Peltola Children's Research Fund has been established. The Fund was established to enable research that will build knowledge and evidence in service delivery for vulnerable children and families.

The first project of the Research Fund is a partnership between Life Without Barriers and Griffith University in Queensland, to establish a Chair in the School of Social Work and Human Services. This Chair will support research in an area Carol was passionate about - child-focused research into effective support of vulnerable children and families, from the child's perspective.

An official launch of the Chair was held in partnership with Griffith University on 14 May.

Support for Remote Community



Life Without Barriers and Disability SA have joined to provide a 24 hour disability supported accommodation service for Aboriginal people in the remote community of Ceduna.

Located 800 km West of Adelaide and with a population of 3000, Ceduna, which is an Aboriginal name meaning a place to sit down and rest, has welcomed our support service that now provides care to five clients.

Despite the isolation of Ceduna, the Life Without Barriers carers have made a successful transition and are building strong connections in the community and with other service providers.

Over the coming months we will be developing the Ceduna units to be reflective of the residents' culture as well as

developing a program based around independence, activities of daily living and skill acquisition that the local staff can support.



Ceduna disability support accommodation

2010 'Leadership In Action' Conference

In February, LWB managers from every service, business unit and location across Australia and New Zealand converged on Sydney's Darling Harbour for the 2010 Life Without Barriers Leadership Conference.

The three day event, 'Leadership in Action', was an opportunity for our Board and Executive Team to seek the views of the broader leadership community within LWB in order to shape our strategic direction for the next five years.

Conference organiser and Manager of our Learning and Development Team, Mark Pullin, said the topics addressed over the three days generated inspiring responses from our leaders.

"Improving services to our clients, developing and managing our people, innovation, and creating a future LWB produced some great ideas from our leaders. The Board and Executive Team were very impressed by the level of collaboration", he said.

"Moving forward, we want to continue to work with our leadership team on those big decisions that shape the organisation's future".

The 2010-2015 Strategic Plan is due for completion in the coming weeks.



LWB CEO Ray Dunn



National HR Manager Bruce Mulligan, Aboriginal Cultural Support Coordinator Kerri Clarke, WA Area Operations Manager Martin Binrashedi

Beach Chair gives clients access



A generous donation by the Summer Sensations Festival Committee has helped our Claremont Team purchase a specially modified wheelchair, enabling our clients the freedom to experience the beach.



Beachwheels Beach Access Wheelchair

The Beachwheels Beach Access Wheelchair was donated to LWB through funds raised at an annual family fun day organised by the Summer Sensations Festival Committee, where families were treated to a day of

entertainment, great food and the excitement of the famous 'duck run', down the canal.

Our Coast Care and Beach Walking groups have regularly enjoyed the benefits of the Beachwheels Chair and plans are underway to include a wider range of our clients in these activities.

The Summer Sensations Festival Committee was set up about four years ago to raise money for local community organisations including the S.E.S, local Ambulance and Fire Brigades.

Mac to Windows Migration Complete

Our IT team is now in the final stages of the OS Migration Project which is due to finish by the end of May.

Once complete, this massive project will have resulted in well over a thousand LWB staff members moving from an Apple Mac system to a Microsoft Windows operating system in just over nine weeks.

The IT Team, the training team and each LWB site have worked tirelessly to ensure the project is a success. Support from the LWB community has meant that cultural, logistical and technical challenges could be overcome.

The end of the project marks an important milestone for LWB and a new beginning for IT. With fresh contemporary platforms and new capabilities, we are extremely excited about the future for LWB IT services. We can now move our focus towards delivering more value, more support and more services than previously.

The last site scheduled for migration is Ballina on the 21st of May.



Fostering NSW Launches in Sydney



Life Without Barriers has partnered with Fostering NSW, a NSW State Government initiative, to help boost foster carer numbers in the State.

The campaign was launched 21 April in Sydney's Hyde Park by the Minister for Community Services, Linda Burney MP, who said it was the largest ever state-run recruitment drive for foster carers.

"From next week, the community will be seeing advertisements on their televisions, hearing it on their radios and reading about it in their local newspapers," Ms Burney said.

"We want to get the message out far and wide, and start a public conversation about the importance of fostering and the urgent need for more people to take up this important role."

Fostering NSW's tag is 'growing together' and therefore at the launch native Australian seedlings were handed out to passersby to signify the need to nurture and support our young people.

Our Sydney Area Operations Manager, Tamena Yarak, was at the launch handing out seedlings and said it was important for Life Without Barriers to support and work with Fostering NSW.

"We'll support anything that helps to get more foster carers on board," Tamena said.

Life Without Barriers will be working with Fostering NSW to promote foster care throughout the state over the coming months.



Care Coordinator Vanessa Thambayah, Area Ops Manager Tamena Yarak, Management Coordinator Michael Polkinghorne

Olympic Hero in the making



A Life Without Barriers foster care child, Dean, has won 5 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze at the Level One Gymnastics Competition in Adelaide.

Dean was the only under-15 year old to represent NSW at the Special Olympics National Championships

The constant travel and training for Dean and his foster carers, Dawn and Rob, paid off, as Dean competed and won against opponents much older and more

experienced than him at the Competition.

LWB are proud to support Dean in his journey, and are privileged to have such a talented and dedicated person in care achieve his potential.

Preparation and planning is now underway for Dean to go to the World Special Olympics in 2016.

Peer Support Program for new Carers



In March, a new program was launched in the Brisbane region linking experienced carers with new carers. The aim is to build a strong carer support system that provides the opportunity for carers to share valuable knowledge.

The Peer Support Program has been developed based on the principle that support for carers is richer and more effective when carers play a central role in the support system.

Queensland State Manager, Scott Bray said the benefits of the program are not limited to just new carers.

"The Peer support program is intended to enhance the capacity of all care team members, including existing carer support groups," he said.

"We will be monitoring the progress of the program throughout the year and seeking feedback from our carers to gauge its effectiveness."

Grant Helps Service



In March, our Fremantle Office received a generous grant from Lotterywest to support our services in the region.

We received \$254,435 to assist us to provide furniture, equipment, information technology and two vehicles for the establishment of a 16-bed hostel for homeless young people with mental health issues.



Brand new Ramp for Parry Street Day Centre



Brad Johns Officially opening the new ramp



A brand new ramp providing better access for clients into our Parry Street Day Centre has been constructed, free of charge, thanks to some generous Newcastle builders.

Brad Johns and his Team, Charlie Peden, Bob, Joy and Mick Walters from Box Concreting, Redicrete, Reoweld, Saddingtons and JBM Excavations respectively, donated their time and materials after we contacted Brad for a quote.

Hunter Day Program Manager Sharon Armanski said that Brad and his team worked tirelessly to complete the ramp.

"The boys started on Wednesday and by Thursday afternoon the ramp was finished", she said.

"They enjoyed lunch with our staff and clients and really got a feel for the centre and exactly what their generosity would provide."



Karen Lee and Belinda with carer Aja

A big thank you to Brad and his team for building the ramp, which now extends to the shady areas of our Parry Street garden and provides our clients and staff with easier access into our centre.