

Statewide ACE Inclusion project begins....

The ACE DisAbility Network has commenced a new *Statewide* project that provides a range of supports and training to ACE providers around Inclusion of people with disabilities in ACE. The "***Inclusive Strategies in ACE project***" has four key objectives that address specific matters of need and provides a new impetus around improving both the understanding and practise of Inclusion in the ACE sector.

The project will offer education and awareness raising sessions to ACE providers & tutors on the concept and practice of Inclusion and on other disability education related topics.

The project will also provide free resources, forms and practical advice on site support aimed at strengthening service provision to people with disabilities in ACE. Project workers are available to attend network and cluster meetings or regional forums to speak to groups by arrangement.

The Network is keen to know what specific resources ACE providers would like on inclusion or disability related topics and would appreciate feedback on this question at any time. Examples of useful resource ideas may include: A generic disability resource manual, a list of disability websites, toolboxes or a tutor's wisdom resource for classroom tips/modifications to name some. Your suggestions are welcome!!!!

A bit about the ACE DisAbility Network

Recently we were asked these questions by a curious e-mailer and decided that it was a good idea to inform people about the identity & work of the ACE DisAbility Network itself.

□ What is the ACE DisAbility Network?

It's a Network consisting of ACE & peak disability providers that are committed to supporting ACE providers to better serve the needs of people with disabilities in their programs and activities.

□ What organisations make up the Network?

Yooralla Society Of Victoria, The Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, Gawith Villa and Disability Employment Action Centre (DEAC). All of our member organisations are **peak statewide** disability organisations that **also** provide accredited and non-accredited courses for students with a variety of disabilities and have a wealth of disability specific expertise.

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□ Why was the ACE DisAbility Network established?

People with moderate or severe disabilities and their families were expressing frustration that they were unable to undertake courses or gain work. Another reason was that both State & Federal Governments want to improve the representation of people with DisAbilities in all areas of education and training, including ACE and have devised specific laws and policies to bring this about.

□ When was the ACE DisAbility Network established?

In mid 2003 there was a small meeting of representative organisations, that led to further meetings and discussions that included Central Western ACFE providing support and the Network was born.

□ Who does the ACE DisAbility Network serve?

Two key groups: Personnel in the Statewide ACE sector including Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres and people with Disabilities and their families.

□ How can ACE providers become involved or benefit?

In many ways, by participating in training offered, by utilising the resources and skills of the Network on disability and by working to ensure that your centres provide equal access to all programs and activities to people with disabilities, regardless of disability. The Network can help you with all of this.

Reaching Out- The true story of Kim Johnson

*I, lonely Being, eulogise each persevering friend reaching to me.
Gates were often opened. Writing gives me the niche I need to utilize my voice.
Love makes the diffidence over my actions blanch,
egging me on with ever viable activities which
add to confidence.*

Written by Kim Johnson

Kim has **Rett Syndrome** a neurodevelopmental disorder seen almost exclusively in girls that severely affects speech and movement. Medical staff told Kim's mother that Kim was retarded. When she was 22, Kim was shown how to point to words and then letters on visiting the DEAL Communication Centre, and was able to demonstrate to her therapists that she was an intelligent woman who was able to read, and type sentences.

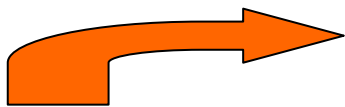
"A chain of exciting people gave me valuable skills including communication. Having lived a few years in a government institution without being able to exert kinetic control, great changes occurred when hidden denizens of language were revealed through facilitated communication." Kim Johnson.

Kim has since done her VCE and intends to go onto university.

Stories sought.. Stories sought..

If you know of someone with a disability that has learnt to read, write, participate in your centre or the community please ask him or her to send in a story or e-mail with the details. We are compiling stories & pic's to place on our website to highlight the fact that people with Disabilities can achieve a great deal with the right support. Tutors stories of working with people with Disabilities are also sought. E-mai stories to: olympiat@yooralla.com.au or call 9916 5821.

DisAbility Network NEWS



Did you know???

The Department of Education, Science and Training provides a range of supports for learners with a Disability.

The Australian Government assists providers with meeting the needs of students with disabilities through the **Disability Support Program (DSP)**, which provides funding to eligible higher education providers to undertake activities that assist in removing barriers to access for students with disabilities. The DSP consists of three components:

- Additional Support for Students with Disabilities (ASSD) provides funding towards the cost of providing educational support services and/or equipment to students with disabilities with high cost needs. Further information about ASSD is available from the Department of Education Science and Training website http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/programmes_funding/programme_categories/special_needs_disadvantage/higher_education_disability_support_program.htm
- The Regional Disability Liaison Officer (RDLO) initiative assists people with disabilities to move between school, VET and higher education and to suitable employment.
- The Disability Coordination Officer (DCO) program, which is administered by the Vocational Education and Training Group of DEST, operates under similar principles and guidelines as the RDLO initiative.

Together the RDLOs and DCOs form an integrated national network of around 30 officers working to improve the coordination of service delivery to students with disabilities across the tertiary education sectors. People with disabilities who want to undertake post-school education should contact their nearest RDLO/DCO for assistance. Further information visit the Regional Disability Liaison Office website at <http://www.goingtouni.gov.au/Main/Resources/StudentSupport/Disabilities.htm>

The RDLO/DCO website is a web based information resource that provides up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information for:

- prospective students and graduates with disabilities,
- their families and friends,
- their teachers, community service providers,
- career advisory staff

The site provides information to people with disabilities to encourage them to make a successful transition to further education or training, by providing information on courses and the support services available for students with disabilities, and provide information to graduates with disabilities on appropriate employment organisations, such as employment mentoring agencies and career services.

[Please pass this information on to any person that may benefit.](#)

DisAbility Network NEWS

The ACE DisAbility Network is conducting a free one - day workshop for ACE providers called.

"All You Ever Wanted To Know About Disability But Were Too Afraid To Ask"

Date: Friday 16 September
Venue: Hotel Y 489 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Time: 8:30-4:30pm

Topics include:

- Disability Awareness: An overview of disability and its impact on the learning environment.
- Disability Discrimination. A general overview of Human Rights leading into the Disability Discrimination Act with a particular focus on education. Participants will also have an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on related matters.
- Resources - What's available and how to use them.

Technicians will present the most up to date information on adaptive software packages available to support students with disabilities. They will be available to discuss your particular application needs. There will also be a display of equipment suitable for the learning environment with hands on practical demonstrations.

And much more...

Lunch and Refreshments will be provided.

RSVP: To Louise Oswald: 9916 5832 or email louise.oswald@yooralla.com.au by **Friday 9 September, 2005.**