

## How to make your centre more accessible.

You may have heard about the DVC's call for funding submissions to modernise Neighbourhood Houses. Round 2 applications close on Friday 21 September, so there is still time! This is a great opportunity to address a number of problems with Houses and centres such as overcrowding, poor layout, lack of storage, worn out facilities, outdated systems, and inaccessibility just to name some.

**Did you know that there are Australian Disability Standards that apply to all public facilities?**

*The Australian standards relevant to access for people with disabilities, primarily the AS1428 suite, provide detailed technical specifications for achieving accessibility and usability of buildings and facilities. Whilst the requirements of relevant Australian standards are not mandatory in themselves, where building regulations and the Disability Discrimination Act invoke them, they or parts of them become mandatory. The use of enhanced standards is encouraged for public access buildings.*

The Standards should be adhered to in any structural changes made to your centre. What this means is careful planning is needed at the concept and design stages to ensure that mistakes are not made there. If you are considering modernising or changing the structure of your centre you and your Management team will need to think about how: the "young man in the wheelchair" can access all classroom facilities independently while studying the CGEA, who then wants to do Thai Cooking in the evening, the "lady with a twin pram" can access the building to use occasional care for her twins while doing pottery, the elderly lady with the walker can volunteer at reception and on committee without having to worry about navigating steps or uneven surfaces, just to name some.

Some Architects and Council planners are better at understanding and catering for this however, they should not be relied upon as experts in this area. At the end of the day physical accessibility is something that you will need to ensure. Thinking about door widths, hallway widths, toilet access, kitchen and classroom layout, entrance and reception design are some of the things that need to be considered if we are to get access right.

**Where can I get help?**

If you need help on any aspect of this issue please contact us on: **9916 5826**. Be aware that the end result of physical access mistakes is that people are excluded from a myriad of experiences at no fault of their own, so let's not lose the opportunity to get physical access right.

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Affordable Video Production and Duplication Services

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**Challenge Multimedia is a Yooralla enterprise that supports people with disabilities....**

## Kew's Oasis

Aside from a recent change of their name to Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre (KNLC), its business as usual for Robin Kenrick and her team. Robin who is also a member of the ACE Disability Network co-ordinating committee, is proud of her two programs offering additional support so that people with varying abilities can actively participate and enjoy a range of activities. The oasis program has been going since 2000 and focuses on supporting adults with varying abilities and in the past has had good levels of participation from people with a mental illness. The program provides extensive educational, recreational and peer support while operating a drop in centre. While at the program participants can do: cooking, computers, swimming, gardening, art, craft, dance, music, monthly dinner club, obtain outreach and go on outings. All for free. The program runs for 32 hrs a week from Mon-Thur from 10:00am-4:00pm.

## Ability @ Work

Another great KNLC initiative following on from the Oasis Program is the Ability @work program. This program offers work placement and volunteer possibilities for people of varying abilities. Kew works closely with participants to develop a position to suit a person's skills and abilities. Options such as: Food preparation, data entry, administrative support, event management, child care, building maintenance and community information are available as accredited modules from the Certificate 1 in General Education for Adults. The programs runs from Tues-Thurs 9-4 and is free.

KNLC is a great model in this regard. Their philosophy of inclusiveness is reflected in the way they operate and their public statements as such. Robin and her staff are especially recognised for their excellent work with people who have mental illness. If you have an inclusive program or service model and want to share your story please contact us, as we are always looking for great stories to tell.

We like to publicise any Neighbourhood House or Centre or any Educational or Community Service that excels at including people with disabilities in their programs.

## Fun and Funky Disability Chat Show

**What do you mean you haven't heard of the "No Limits Show"? Where have you been???**

This is a great, light hearted chat show about all things Disability related. It's topical and locally produced and heavily involves people with disabilities in all stages of design and production.



All the presenters and most guests have disabilities. The show is entertaining, interesting and insightful as people share their stories and experiences in sometimes hilarious ways. Get your fix of the show on Channel 31 on Monday **nights at 7:30** and meet the bevy of bright and brilliant hosts including the gorgeous Stella Young & Sara McQueenie, hear from the witty and wise blokes Dr George Taleporos, John "Macca" McKenna, Steve "Hurdinni" and Paul Gianni.

Upcoming episodes will feature a focus on women, transition to education, sexuality and sport, and more.

If you want to see previous episodes or want to use the show as an educational tool check out the "No Limits" website at [www.nolimits.org.au](http://www.nolimits.org.au)  
*No Limits is also replayed on Wednesdays at 3pm.*

# What is the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* and what might it mean to you?

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*

Human rights have their strength in the society in which they are upheld. Simply put, they promote and stand for freedom, respect, equality, humanity, non-discrimination and dignity (FREHNDS)!

In 2006, Victoria became the first state in Australia to enact legislation that enshrines what many people take for granted by passing the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 VIC (Charter)*. The *Charter* upholds the principles of human rights, not unlike those that are found in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Attorney General Rob Hulls stated: "The *Charter* is "one simple but historic document that articulates our freedoms, rights and responsibilities".

One of the aims of the *Charter* is to create a "dialogue model" which means that all parts of government must 'talk' - the courts, Parliament, public service, Ministers and there is a strong accountability mechanism leading back to Parliament.

## Who does it apply to?

Amongst others- it applies to public authorities (including ACE providers)

## Who is a public authority?

The easiest way to go about this is to look at *section 4* and work out if it applies to your organisation. Do you receive government funding? Do you provide services on behalf of the government? Are you set up under a statute? If you answer yes to this you might fall within the definition and therefore need to think in terms of the *Charter* when you formulate policies and procedures.

## How might ACE providers work differently now?

There is a strong argument that for many ACE providers, they are already working with the spirit of the *Charter* in mind, especially by working with disenfranchised or marginalised sectors of the community.

However a simple test could help you to keep the *Charter* in mind when making decisions:

Have we given proper consideration to human rights?

Are we acting compatibly with human rights?

Is any limitation that we are imposing on rights *reasonable* and demonstrably justifiable? (if you decide NOT to act in line of the *Charter* and you can do so, but you must explain why you are limiting a human right) and are you treating stakeholders as FREHNDS?

The *Charter* hopes to create a 'culture of human rights' and this will only happen when we work within a human rights based framework.

Alyena Mohummadally  
Solicitor and Community Legal Education Advocate  
Blind Citizens Australia

For more information on the *Charter* click on these links..

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cpr.html>

[http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/DOJ+Internet/resources/file/eb504707568fab3/CharterOfHumanRightsandResponsibilities\\_WhatItMeansForYouDL.pdf](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/DOJ+Internet/resources/file/eb504707568fab3/CharterOfHumanRightsandResponsibilities_WhatItMeansForYouDL.pdf)

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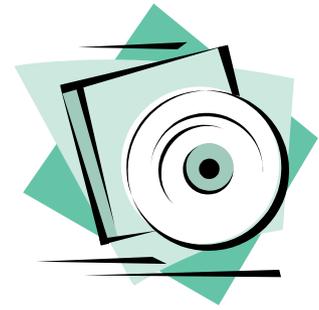
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Get your free ACE Disability Network Kit consisting of a CD Rom with resource lists, posters, on line links and more, simply by sending \$20.00 to: ACE Disability Resource Kit  
P.O Box 200 Flinders Street, Melbourne





## E-Learning in Action



Have you got your copy yet?? Get your free comprehensive learning resource as a CD Rom and learn all about E-Learning and the delivery of education and training using technology. The CD also contains social networking software and mobile technologies. The E-Learning in Action CD has six entry points to help you find the most valuable e-learning information relevant to you or your organisation. To get you free copy of E-Learning in Action contact the Australian Flexible Learning Framework on (07) 3307 4700 or email: [enquiries@flexiblelearning.net.au](mailto:enquiries@flexiblelearning.net.au)

### 2007 ACE Disability Network Co-ordinating Committee grows

Since our commencement in 2003 the Network co-ordinating committee consisted of four Statewide Disability organisations and a Neighbourhood House representative. Today the co-ordinating committee has grown and includes representation from:

ACFE-DVC  
BLIND CITIZENS AUSTRALIA (BCA)-  
FOOTSCRAY COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE  
DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ACTION CENTRE (DEAC)  
GAWITH VILLA  
KEW NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE (KNLC)  
VIC DEAF  
VISION AUSTRALIA  
YOORALLA  
COMMUNITY

Bronwyn Hughes  
Alyena Muhamadally  
Nikki Zerrella  
Elsa Buck  
Carmine Laghi  
Robin Kenrick  
David Peters  
Tony Clark  
Judith Price  
Rick Jamieson

The representatives above are all individuals who have shown enthusiasm, interest and have great knowledge & skills in the area of education and disability and we are very fortunate to have them.

The ACE sector is the beneficiary of this wisdom in the resourcing and project work of your Network within ACE. The Co-ordinating committee meets every six weeks in a central location to discuss ACE related disability matters and plan for the future.

If you would like to know more about either the organisations represented, the committee and its work or need any assistance on disability related matters, please contact us on: **9916 5826** on the Helpline or email to [judithp@ooralla.com.au](mailto:judithp@ooralla.com.au).

### CLP:New Horizons- City/Country Partnership Project

**Wish us luck, we have a Community Learning Partnership submission in with ACFE Western Metropolitan Region for the establishment of a new learning partnership. Learners from both organisations will gain access to a host of new and exciting learning opportunities including: creating blogs & podcasts, short films and digital stories and more, all while studying modules of the Certificate 1 in Transition Education.**

