

Advocacy for Inclusion Inc



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Dear Reader...



Advocacy for Inclusion is back after a refreshing Christmas break and ready for a big 2008.

In this newsletter you will find an update on the Commonwealth State and Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA), a piece by us about what Advocacy is, an opinion piece on the CSTDA by NCID (National Council for Intellectual Disability), a fascinating read about the New Zealand Disability Strategy and a couple of relevant but humorous cartoons.

There is also a lot of information about happenings in the Disability sector and information on a few conferences.

We hope you have a happy 2008!

Happy Reading

Deborah, Ian, Justin A, Justin R, Sheryl and Stephanie

The National Federation of Parents, Families and Carers have an open invitation for people to be part of the first national gathering of parents, families and carers.

The heading of the meet is titled 'Parents, Families and Carers: Our place in the Human Services, Our Agenda for Change'.

The event is at the University of Sydney on 17-18 March.

For a copy of the flyer, email info@advocacyforinclusion.org

"providing individual and systemic advocacy to improve life for people who have a disability"

PO Box 3653 ♦ Weston Creek ♦ ACT 2611
Room 17 & 18, Building 3 ♦ Pearce Community Centre ♦ Collett Pl ♦ Pearce ACT 2607
Phone: 6286 9422 ♦ 6286 4489 ♦ Fax: 6286 9424
Email: info@advocacyforinclusion.org
Web: www.advocacyforinclusion.org

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From The Executive Officer

Hello All,

The staff at Advocacy for Inclusion wish you all the best for 2008!

While the office was closed over Christmas we are back into the swing with the Individual Advocates currently working with a record number of people and a wide range of systemic issues that we hope to address over the coming year.

I am writing this on Valentines Day, which might also be known now as the day following the day the Federal Parliament, said the long awaited 'Sorry' to indigenous Australians. I think we were all moved by this event and can find reassurance in witnessing that through this symbolic gesture, the injustice and discrimination of so long may begin to be laid to rest.

As part of his maiden speech to the House of Representatives today Mr Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities spoke briefly on disability. Here is part of his address.

"In this great country, if I were another skin colour or if I were a woman and could not enter a shop, ride a bus, catch an aeroplane or get a job, there would be a hue and cry - and deservedly so - but if I am in a wheelchair or have a mental illness or an intellectual disability then somehow the same treatment is accepted. Why should I be told to be grateful to receive charity rather than equality? It is not enough just to rely on the existence of laws to prevent this treatment. It is something that, with every fibre that we have, we should cry out against. It should go without saying that all of us demand equal treatment for those living with disabilities, as we would for any other Australian."

Let us hope that Mr Shorten continues to 'cry out against' the discrimination he succinctly identifies and produces long awaited and fought for change for people who have a disability!

Deborah Hamilton
Executive Officer

PS We are looking at changing the format of the Advocacy for Inclusion Newsletter and I would urge you to contact us with ideas or suggestions for content, format or stories.

FAHCSIA has a new organisational structure

As a result of the recent Federal election and associated change of government, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has a new organisational structure.

A flow chart depicting the new organisational structure and hierarchy can be viewed online at:

www.facs.gov.au/orgchart/org_chart_jan08.htm

If you want Advocacy for Inclusion to send you a paper copy, give us a call on 02 6286 9422.

A new report has recommended increased support for carers of children with a severe disability or medical condition to get back into the work force.

The report by the Carer Payment (child) Review Taskforce was released by the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Ms Jenny Macklin on the 7th February 2008.

The report also recommended

- A new assessment process to recognise the level of care required by the child and provided by the carer and
- Improved service delivery for carers through more accessible information and easier application processes.

A full copy of the Media Release (with links to the report) can be found at:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/carer_payment_report_7feb08.htm

CSTDA Update

The first meeting of the new Federal Minister for Disabilities with the State and Territory Ministers was hailed as a success, both by the Government themselves and the CSTDA and peak bodies.

The new minister with responsibility for people with disabilities, Jenny Macklin, described her first meeting with her state and territory counterparts as "very productive".

The meeting was held in Melbourne on Friday, February 1.

Last year ministers walked out of a meeting with then Community Services Minister Mal Brough after half an hour.

Ms Macklin, who was accompanied by her Parliamentary Secretary, Bill Shorten, said: "It was our first meeting and very productive and a terrific opportunity for us all to get together and agree on the priorities for the new Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA).

In a statement issued on the eve of the meeting a spokesman for the Queensland Disability Alliance, John Mayo, said the Rudd Government's announcement on 9 January that it would extend the current CSTDA agreement to 30 June 2008 was a "sound strategy" in that it would give Labor time for consultation about implementing the 29 recommendations of the 2007 Senate inquiry into funding for people with a disability.

"We hope the Rudd Government will take time beyond 30 June 2008 as required to end Australia's disability funding disgrace and create a CSTDA based on the 29 Senate inquiry recommendations so that Australians with a disability can at long last have an agreement that delivers the services so desperately needed," he said.

The National Council on Intellectual Disability said in a statement prior to the meeting that the Australian Institute on Health and Welfare (AIHW) had reported in 2007 that 27,000 people with profound disabilities were in urgent need.

"That so many people are in dire need when governments have such huge budget surpluses is a disgrace and makes a lie of Australia being a fair and civilised country," NCID President Rob Allen said.

Mr Allen said this would only happen if Ministers show the political will to make a difference and demonstrate this with a substantial allocation of additional funding to some of Australia's most vulnerable families.

The NCID have called on all governments and oppositions to make 2008 the year in which this national unmet need is addressed and to ensure that planning takes place immediately so that the next AIHW report no longer identifies anyone in serious need.

What does it cost to raise a child with an intellectual disability?

Professor Einfeld (University of Sydney), Professor Bruce Tonge (Monash University) and A/Professor Chris Doran (University of Queensland) are currently investigating the costs for families of raising a person with an intellectual disability.

This information will assist in future advocacy for government support.

They need information from families to answer this important question.

If you would like to participate in the study, or would like further information, please contact the Research Assistant, Siân Horstead, via email shorstead@med.usyd.edu.au

Or by

Calling **02 9351 0884**

Due to funding cuts the Disability Sports Education Program will no longer be run by ACTSPORT. This will be taken over by ACT Sport and Recreation Services. However ACTSPORT will still run the Milo Cricket Day, the Be the Best you Can Be Athletics Carnival, the Lord Taverners Scholarships and provide information about local Funding and Grants. ACTSPORT looks forward to providing these events and will also continue to advocate for the sports disability community.

Individual Advocacy

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is information, education and representation.
(Advocacy can also involve referral where necessary. Referral means seeking another organization to support you if required)

An Advocate Will:

- Listen to you and your concern.
- Work with you to identify the issues they can help you with.
- Work with you to identify and prioritise the main issues.
- Provide you with information on ways to address and work through your issues.
- (We may not always be able to solve things)
- Stand beside you if you want assistance to speak up
- Assist you if you want to try to solve your issues yourself.
- Speak for you if you are unable or need help to speak for yourself.
- **Help you to identify and understand the importance and possible outcomes of taking action.**
- Refer you to other agencies if the advocate is not able to help you.

ADVOCACY IS NOT COUNSELLING, CASE MANAGEMENT OR SUPPORT WORK

An Advocate Will Not:

- Speak for you without your consent
- Do something that you have not agreed to.
- Speak to someone without your permission.
- Take control from you.
- Keep information from you.
- Assist you to do anything illegal.
- Assist you to do anything which may cause harm to yourself or to someone else.

If you need an advocate or would like any further information on advocacy please contact Advocacy for Inclusion on info@advocacyforinclusion.org or by phone 02 6286 9422

Something to think about...



Make sure you use non-discriminatory language - Put the person before the disability



Yes I wonder why he feels compelled!!

News...Information...News...Information

Behavioural Assessment and Support for Persons with Autism (ASD)

When: Friday 28th March 2008

Time: 9am-4pm

Where: St George Leagues Club, 124 Princess Highway Kogarah Sydney

Developing a Conducive Environment for a Person with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Seminar Content

A person with ASD can find their daily environment challenging. When the environment is challenging for any person, the level of anxiety is likely to increase, resulting in some form of behavioural deterioration. This programme, written by Tan Curtis, is designed to assist those who work with an ASD person to become aware of & modify common environmental challenges. As a result, the ASD person will be less anxious & therefore less behavioural deterioration will occur.

You will learn about:

- Anxiety, ASD and behavioural deterioration.
- Sequence of behaviour
- Functions of behaviour
- Identifying common challenging situations to which an ASD person is likely to be exposed.
- Identifying when interventions are required.
- Providing behavioural and environmental supports to the ASD person.

Bookings can be made using one of the options below:

- Phone 07 31023707 leave a message with your phone number include the area code a consultant will call back within 24hrs.
- Email: nicole@thecaba.com.au - include your organisations name, the names of people attending, your contact number then an invoice will be emailed to you.
- Fax 07 33196155 include your organisations name, the names of people attending, your contact number and email address then an invoice will be emailed to you.

Cost \$160 plus \$16 GST.

Morning / Afternoon tea provided.

The Radiance Dance Project 2008 is a year-long creative dance/movement theatre community dance program for women with & without disabilities in the ACT region.

Participants will experience the enjoyment & freedom of collective creative expression through movement, make meaningful connections with others & develop confidence in self-expression through the practical activities and performances.

For a copy of the flyer and contact details email us on info@advocacyforinclusion.org

Recently in the news:

US cop "dumps paraplegic from wheelchair"

An American policewoman has reportedly been suspended after she was caught on tape dumping a paraplegic man from his wheelchair.

The Tampa Tribune has reported that Deputy Charlotte Marshall Jones has been suspended without pay following the incident in late January involving 32-year-old wheelchair-bound Brian Sterner.

The Tribune says security footage from inside the Hillsborough County Jail in Florida shows Deputy Jones dumping Mr Sterner out of his wheelchair onto the floor before searching him, as he lay unable to move.

"She was irked that I wasn't complying to (sic) what she was telling me to do," he told the Tribune.

"It didn't register with her that she was asking me to do something I couldn't do."

Mr Sterner was arrested for attempting to elude a law enforcement officer after he was cited for blocking an intersection.

He spent five days in jail before posting \$A2420 bail.

The Tribune reports that the incident will be investigated.

The full article can be found at the webpage:

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=379241>