

Welcome to The Scene - the eNewsletter from The Spastic Centre.

The Scene features news, events, issues, links and contacts of interest to people living with cerebral palsy, their families and service providers.

Your feedback and suggestions are welcome. Email rcummins@tscnsw.org.au at The Spastic Centre.

FEATURES

International Day of People with Disability 2006

Celebrate International Day of People with a Disability (IDPwD) on Sunday 3 December 2006 at one of the many special events held across NSW.



From an ability expo at Bourke to a Sportsability 'Come'n'Try' day at Merrylands, a dinner dance at Mudgee and a family fun day at Camden – there is something for everyone!

For more details, visit the IDPwD website at www.internationaldayofpeoplewithadisability.com.au

Arts activities are all listed on the Accessible Arts website

- Sydney events www.aarts.net.au/mod.php?mod=userpage&menu=50300&page_id=179
- Regional NSW events www.aarts.net.au/mod.php?mod=userpage&menu=50301&page_id=180

... including



AART.BOXX

For the first time Accessible Arts, Noise and the Sydney Opera House have collaborated to present an inspiring and intriguing exhibition for two days only - 22 and 23 November 2006 at the Opera House. AART.BOXX is a collection of fantastic works from winners of a nationwide competition by artists under 25 with a disability. It is a chance to view an exhibition of unique voices of a generation of emerging Australian artists who are communicating in a way that is empowering and expressive for the artists that have never had a voice before.

For further information visit www.aarts.net.au/mod.php?mod=userpage&menu=500&page_id=144

PARENTS

Parenting Website Seeks Feedback

The Parenting Research Centre, a Melbourne-based not-for-profit association, recently launched the Raising Children Network website <http://raisingchildren.net.au/>.

The Centre is keen to improve the content of the site aimed at parents who have a child with a disability and is asking for parent feedback on the current content. Responses will be kept completely confidential and will be used to find gaps in the current site content and to direct research in order to improve the information.



If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Michaela Lodewyckx, Research Assistant, phone 03 8660 3500 or email mlodewyckx@parentingrc.org.au

Starting School and High School - Tips and Hints for Parents

New online information is now available to help parents to prepare their child when starting school, or their Year Six child for the big step into high school. 'Time to Start School' is full of practical information on preparing your child for school, costs, uniforms, learning, behaviour, food, making friends and keeping in touch with school life. It can be found at www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/gotoschool/primary/parentbook.pdf

The new **high school** factsheets cover topics such as:

- Preparing for high school
- Feeling good and making friends
- The range of available subjects and study expectations
- The importance of keeping involved in your child's education
- Health and well being for the new high school student.

Copies of the Starting High School fact sheets are available at www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/highschool/index.php

Brothers and Sisters

Sara Webb: Disaster Area uses a fictional family in a variety of humorous situations to help brothers and sisters of people with disabilities know that they share their crazy experiences and inform other teens of what could be going on in the home lives of their classmates and friends. Sara is a gutsy young heroine who faces her personal problems and comes to an acceptance that her siblings are loved and valued members of her family. The story is fast moving and entertaining while the message is powerful, the facts are accurate and the situations are believable.

Author, Liz Wilks, has a son with Down syndrome, a son with autism and a daughter who is special in a normal sort of way. The book is set in suburban Melbourne. The novel tackles themes including disability, siblings, friendships, bullying, sexuality, relationships and sport and is aimed at the late-primary school/early-secondary school age group.

For more information contact Liz Wilks on 03 9486 9600 or email liz@dsav.asn.au.

For information about the book on the Disability Infoexchange website www.disabilitynews.infoexchange.net.au/news/detail.html?filename_num=104159



Free Parent Workshops on Siblings of Children with Special Needs

These interactive workshops are run by Kate Strohm, the director of Siblings Australia Inc and author of *Siblings: Brothers and Sisters of Children with Special Needs* (Wakefield Press, 2002).

Topics include:

- Issues for siblings of children with special needs
- How concerns present themselves
- Factors affecting adjustment
- What siblings need
- The role of parents.

The workshops will be held on 15 November 2006:

- from 1pm to 3pm at Centacare Broken Bay, Unit 9B, 44 Wattle Rd (Corner of Mitchell & Wattle Roads), Brookvale, and
- from 6.30pm to 8.30pm at 40 Merrenburn Avenue, Naremburn.

Light refreshments provided. Childcare available at Naremburn but not Brookvale.

Bookings are essential. For further information and to book your place call 8425 8700 or email Sharon Grocott on sgrocott@brokenbay.catholic.org.au.

TECHNOLOGY

Low Cost/No Cost Adaptive Technology Guide For People With Disabilities

A great guide to low cost and no cost adaptive technology was developed in conjunction with the Assistive Technology Forums held in Victoria in 2006.

The resource can be downloaded from

www.adcet.edu.au/Uploads/Documents/OnlineLow_NoCostAT_Guide.doc

Source: *Disability Education & Employment News*

OATSoft

OATSoft is dedicated to improving assistive technology and computer accessibility through the power of open source development techniques. The Open Source Assistive Technology Software (OATS) projects are a great resource and freely available. Projects include software written for on screen keyboards, symbol libraries, text-to-speech, switch input, AAC, environmental control, learning tools and other functions.

For further information visit www.oatsoft.org

Source: *e-bility*

Accessible Telephones

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) now insist that the manufacturers or importers of phones must advise telecommunications companies of features that will make the phones more accessible for people with disabilities. If a phone has larger print on the screen, buttons that are easier to locate by feel, or a vibrate mode which would indicate to a deaf person that a message has arrived, the manufacturers or importers will be required to advise the telecommunications companies. This will mean that these features can be highlighted when people with particular disabilities are purchasing a phone.

SPORTS

Special Days at Sailability – Pittwater

Pittwater and Manly Sailability invites people with any type of disability to a special Come and Try Day on 3 December 2006 from 10am to 2pm at Rowland Reserve, Bayview. Have fun sailing in specially constructed boats with volunteer crew in a non-competitive environment. Sailors must wear a hat that stays on, good sunscreen and water to drink. Sailability provides the life-jackets. \$8 per sail day. Contact Sophie on 9972 8174 for further information.

Source: *Warringah Disability Information Centre*



2006 Junior Wheelie Christmas Camp

This action-packed camp provides junior 'wheelies' (aged 10+, unless special permission for younger) the opportunity to try new sports, meet elite wheelchair athletes, participate in training sessions run by these athletes, exchange experiences with new people, make new friends, and have fun!

The 2006 Camp will be at the Sydney Academy of Sport, Wakehurst Freeway, Narrabeen on 1 December from 4pm and 3 December from 2pm. The cost is \$50 for the weekend or 20 per day.

For information or to register phone Janyne, Sports Development Officer, on 9809 5260 or email jp@wsnsw.org.au.

The Registration Pack is available at www.wsnsw.org.au/pdf/06ChristmasCampRegistrationKit.pdf.

DAY SERVICES

Vacancies at Northern Sydney Day Service in Waitara

The Northern Sydney Day Service currently have vacancies for adults (aged 18+) with a disability who do not attend a day service, are not employed full time and live at home with an older carer/parent in the Ryde, Hunters Hill, Hornsby or Ku-ring-gai local government areas. Service users are supported to participate in community activities, develop relationships within the community and utilise community services and facilities. The program assists service users to develop life skills through community access, in-house activities and individualised programs.

The service operates Monday to Friday between 9am to 3pm. Successful applicants receive two to three days of service per week. Transport is not provided so service users must be transported to/from the service or travel independently. Applications close 30 November 2006.

For information or an application pack, phone Samantha Livingston, Disability Day Services Coordinator, Centacare Broken Bay (PO Box 636, Hornsby 2077), on 9488 2550, or email slivingston@brokenbay.catholic.org.au.

Source: Warringah Disability Information Centre

HEALTH

How To Talk To Your Doctor

Australia's peak medical scientific body, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has recently conducted a study that has found that 40% of patients visiting health professionals want more information than they're given. Health professionals, too, tend to underestimate consumers desire for information. But if we're not willing to ask, and health professionals aren't able to communicate with us effectively, chances are we may get inadequate treatment and a poor outcome.



With this in mind, the NHMRC has published an online booklet for patients, doctors, and other health professionals on how to improve their communication skills. The NHMRC guide, *Making Decisions About Tests & Treatments: Principles for Better Communication Between Healthcare Consumers and Healthcare Professionals* can be downloaded from www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/files/hpr25.pdf. One of its main suggestions is that patients need to take the initiative and ask more questions of their health professionals.

Read an article about the study on the ABC website at www.abc.net.au/health/thepulse/s1767602.htm.

WEB

Stay Smart Online

The Australian Government has released a new website designed to provide home and small business online users with practical tips and advice on e-security. This website contains basic information on how to secure your computer, best practice tips for smart transacting online, and information on keeping young people safe. A number of the Internet Industry Association's members are offering free security software on a trial basis, which will assist in protecting against spam, viruses and spyware.

The Smart Transacting Online component of the website provides tips on how to bank and shop online while protecting personal information. The Kids Safe Online component will direct parents and teachers to resources provided by NetAlert and the Australian Communications and Media Authority to help them protect their children online. The website also contains an e-security update service, to provide users with easy to understand information on the latest e-security threats and what they can do about them.

Visit website at www.staysmartonline.gov.au

SERVICE PROVIDERS - EMPLOYMENT

Source: *Disability & Education Employment News*

Ace Conference Papers

The Association of Competitive Employment (ACE) is the peak body for open employment services to people with disabilities across Australia. Papers from the 2006 ACE National Conference are now available to download from the ACE website.

Find them all at www.acenational.org.au/library/public/conference_2006_perth.shtml

Australian Skills Vouchers Program

The Australian Skills Vouchers Program targets basic skills development and business skills training for eligible Australians. For further information visit www.vteouchers.dest.gov.au

Welfare to Work Changes - Centrelink Case Study Q & A

Visit www.anu.edu.au/disabilities/DEAN/deanpdday270906centrelinkqna.htm to see the case studies proposed by the Disability Education Association NSW and responses by Centrelink on the Welfare to Work changes.

Skills for the Future

A range of programs and incentives are now available to help your clients make the right choice for their career. Visit Skills for the Future for more information at www.dest.gov.au/skillsforthefuture

EDGE: Research Reports and Training Manuals

- *Increasing the Participation of People with Disabilities in Apprenticeships*. Download from www.edge.org.au/mm10/mm10.htm
- *Key Success Factors in Placing and Supporting New Apprentices with Disabilities Through Group Training: Findings Of A National Study* can be downloaded from www.edge.org.au/pdfs/Report_1.pdf and www.edge.org.au/pdfs/Report_2.pdf

CONFERENCES .. WORKSHOPS .. FORUMS (For all)

Disability Expo 2006

A Disability Expo will be held on Friday 1 December 2006, with life planning sessions on guardianship, wills and estates and planning for the future. To be held at The Show Room, Mingara Recreational Centre, Mingara Drive, Tumbi Umbi NSW from 10 am to 4pm. Free transport will be provided by Red Bus Services from Wyong Station to Mingara and an Auslan Sign Language Interpreter will be available to assist consumers throughout the day. For further information contact Tracey Williams on 4324 2355.

Don't Be a Victim! Keep Safe at Home and at Play!

Sydney North Gathering (including Gordon Gals) invites all women with disabilities to hear a guest speaker from the Crime Prevention Unit and Chatswood Police. The afternoon is organised by the ANZ Project for the NSW Network of Women with Disability in partnership with Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association and Physical Disability Council of NSW.

The workshop will be held at the Gordon Club, Mandarin Centre, Victor Street, Chatswood from 2pm to 4pm on 16 November 2006. The Chatswood railway station is wheelchair accessible. Three hour free parking below Mandarin Centre and in nearby shopping centre car parks.

For further information and to register contact Bronwyn Moye at NSW Network of Women with Disability on 9552 1606 or 0418 204 045 or visit their website at www.pdcnsw.org.au/women/.

Source: *Warringah Disability Information Service*

CONFERENCES .. WORKSHOPS .. FORUMS (SERVICE PROVIDERS)

Count Me In – Inclusive Sports Education Workshops

Offered through the NSW Sport and Recreation and the Australian Sports Commission's Disability Education Program, this workshop aims to assist sport and physical activity providers to better include people with a disability in sport and physical activity. It's open to anyone in the general community interested or involved in the provision of sporting opportunities that include people with a disability.

Two workshops are being run during October:

- Nowra on 15 November 2005 from 6pm to 9.15pm
- Sutherland on 22 November 2006 from 6pm to 9.15pm

For further information call 131 302 or visit www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/training/dep_courses.asp

Workshops for Professionals on 'Siblings of Children with Special Needs'

Siblings Australia Inc, NSW Health Dept and Centacare Broken Bay invite disability service providers to a 'train-the-trainer' workshop with Kate Strohm, director of Siblings Australia Inc and author of *Siblings: Brothers and Sisters of Children with Special Needs* (Wakefield Press, 2002).

Topics include:

- Issues for siblings of children with special needs
- How concerns present themselves
- Factors affecting adjustment
- What siblings need – a 'settings' approach
- Role of service providers and others
- Running sibling groups
- Networking/Where to from here?



The workshop will be held from 9.30am to 3.30pm on 16 November at the Centacare Broken Bay, 40 Merrenburn Avenue, Naremburn 2065. The cost is \$25 (includes GST and lunch) per person.

Bookings are essential. For further information and to book your place contact Caroline Reilly on 8425 8700 or email Sharon Grocott on sgrocott@brokenbay.catholic.org.au.

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

Mulholland Walker

Mulholland walker as new, blue medium size. Used for 2 months only. Cost \$4,023 but will sell for \$1500 ONO.

For further information contact Louise on 0413 015 411 or home on 9727 2824.

JOB VACANCY

Part Time Drum Tech/Roadie Wanted For Drummer Andrew Hewitt - No Experience Needed.

Andrew Hewitt, drummer with cerebral palsy, is looking for a reliable person based around Sydney's Eastern Suburbs to work as a drum tech/roadie to assist with his upcoming performances.

Successful applicants must have a current drivers licence, van or a large station wagon, and possess a passion for music and live performance. The position requires a person to pick Andrew and his equipment up at his home, drive to venue, assist with unloading and setting up of drum kit and PA equipment, pulling down and returning home. No experience necessary as will train on the job. Some interstate travel may be required.

For more information please email Alison McGuire at alison@drummerstix.com.au or call her on 0421 883 168. Andrew's website is www.drummerstix.com.au

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in items of The Scene are the individual opinions of the respective authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of The Spastic Centre or the editors. Products and companies featured in The Scene are not necessarily endorsed by The Spastic Centre. The Scene is intended to be informative only and should not be relied on as medical or other technical advice on any matter. The Spastic Centre and editor take no responsibility for the information published in this newsletter or any person's actions in reliance on that information.

What would you like to see in "The Scene"? Contact Robyn, Phone 02 9975 8251 Fax 02 9451 4877, Email rcummins@tscnsw.org.au if you would like to contribute any ideas, advise of any future events or know of any websites that might be of interest to others.
