



Directions

Disability Support Services
— for individuals & families —

MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2015

Thank you to everyone who has joined Directions as a member in 2015. This quarterly newsletter is for you, and for all of the families that we support.

You will find a calendar in the envelope with this newsletter. We hope you enjoy the fabulous photos and learn something new about the wide variety of support services that Directions provides.

Those of you who did not attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) will also find an annual report in your envelope. If you did not pick one up at the AGM, please let us know and we will be happy to send one out.

Merry Christmas and a peaceful new year to everyone!

NEW NAME AND LOGO

Directions is providing services in a changing world, revolving around the new systems of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. In this new environment it is as important as ever to provide excellent services that are flexible and innovative and meet the personalised requirements of every individual that we support. However, in order to ensure that we are sustainable into the future we do need to move with the times: we need our good reputation to spread; we need to be easily recognised and remembered; and we need high quality communications to ensure that our message is both clear and far-reaching. Therefore, as part of the strategic planning for the organisation the Board decided to review our name, logo, website and publications.

It was very important for this to be a consultative process, so a survey was sent out to all our individuals, families, staff and external stakeholders to ensure that they all had the opportunity to provide input.

The key findings from the survey were that:

1. We should keep the name Directions as we have such a strong reputation connected to it;
2. Many people thought that our name should include the word disability in order to clarify exactly what we do, and to make us more accessible to new families and individuals; and
3. It was felt to be very important that we do not lose the connection to families and the importance of supporting them when changing the name from Family Support Association.

Everybody that was sent a survey was asked if they would like to participate in a branding workshop where we worked to develop a true picture of what is really important about Directions, and from there the name evolved. After much discussion the name Directions Disability Support Services was finally. In order to recognise the continuing strong connection to families "for individuals and families" was included in the plan for the logo.

The survey participants had contributed to ideas about the logo, and colours and themes were also discussed at the branding workshop. A large majority suggested blues and greens should represent the organisation. A full design brief was drafted after the branding workshop and this was used to create a contest on Freelancer. We had 573 entries from around the world giving a huge range of alternatives to choose from. After much consultation including the workshop participants, many staff and board members there was a final vote and the humming bird proved to be the most popular.

The humming bird is the only bird in the world that can fly in every direction: forwards, backwards, sideways, and all ways. The colours represent land and sky, night and day, highlighting that we support people anytime, anywhere and everywhere. The new name and logo were officially launched by Dr Tony Buti MLA at our AGM.

NEW WEBSITE

As part of increasing our visibility, and to enable people to access our services more easily, we have created a new website www.directions.asn.au which was also launched at our AGM. We hope that you will have a look and let us know what you think. Thank you to everyone who assisted us by providing quotes and photos for both the website and the annual report, we really appreciate having your support and good regard.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THAT MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

WOODSIDE INITIATIVE

Woodside have partnered with Directions since 2011, with Woodsiders inviting people that we support to join them for a weekend social, family or recreational activity, opening up new and exciting opportunities. The initiative ran in October this year and included some great inclusive activities such as learning circus tricks and unicycling; a day exploring the zoo; an impressively long bike ride; an exhilarating speedboat adventure; and excitement at the Mt Hawthorn fair. There's a brilliant photo from the zoo expedition in the calendar!

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Board and all the senior staff recently spent the day together to plan the future for Directions. We identified all that we do well, and where we need to improve. Then we looked at all the changes happening in disability services and worked out where there were threats to the organisation and where there were opportunities. Directions has always provided the individually-tailored personalised support services that are required by the National Disability Insurance Scheme, so the future is bright and there are many opportunities ahead for the organisation and for the individuals and families that we support. The new strategic plan will be finalised early in the new year and we will send it out to you with the next quarterly newsletter.

DRAMA WORKSHOPS

The Disability Services Commission awarded Directions a grant to raise awareness of the importance of access and inclusion, and we used this to pilot our first fully accessible drama workshop, facilitated by a professional actor and a performing arts facilitator. The workshop was attended by young adults with and without disability. The students had the wonderful opportunity to learn the art of drama and create unforgettable memories with their new-found friends. It was such a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere when the whole hall was buzzing with enthusiastic discussions and laughter between the individuals that we support and the other students as they worked together as equal counterparts to generate a fantastic impromptu play. It was such a successful event that we now plan to make inclusive drama workshops part of our regular monthly calendar.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

We had a very enjoyable and relaxed Christmas party on the edge of Champion Lakes. There was lots of fun with giant games, which got surprisingly competitive at times, and a crazy photo booth. Thank you to all the families that came along and shared the festivities with us.



Annual General Meeting



Strategic Planning



Inclusive Drama Workshop



Christmas Party

JOY MARTIN

Joy Martin was a long standing board member with Directions who was person centred, creative, and always approached problems with a positive attitude and innovative ideas. Joy passed away in 2009 and the Board would like to commemorate her connection with Directions through a section of the newsletter in which staff who demonstrate these qualities are acknowledged and celebrated. If you would like to send in a story about your support worker or coordinator, we would love to hear from you.

Michelle Watson has enthusiastically encouraged her fellow support workers to assist Mona with the Jolly Phonics programme, an innovative way to develop reading and writing skills. After just a few weeks we are already seeing a great development in Mona's literacy. Mona's mother Mahin testifies "Before Jolly Phonics Mona was only copying words to occupy her time. But now, she is learning and she is very keen to learn!"

Kristie says "the support that I get from Nicky Ware has given me a sense of independence and confidence to communicate with people on my own. Nicky helps me find the words I need to communicate but doesn't do it for me. I trust Nicky completely and she has the same values as me".

Kaye, Kristie's mum says "Nicky always has Kristie's best interests at heart. She comes up with very creative solutions and doesn't come across as a support worker, more like a big sister to Kristie. Nicky has people intuition and you can't buy that. She never overpowers Kristie, she guides her gently with wisdom and common sense. Nicky has the ability to make things happen".