



Southwest Advocacy News

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CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Greetings to all members, clients and supporters of South-west Advocacy Association (SWAA) and welcome to another edition of our newsletter.

As mentioned in our last newsletter, problems with the acces- sibility of public transport are a big issue for people with dis- abilities. A statewide project called Accessible Transport Watch is still looking for people with disabilities from coun- try Victoria to assist in gathering information about problems with public transport. People with disabilities who are inter- ested in participating in the project should check out the in- formation provided in this newsletter or contact us for further information.

SWAA has recently been informed that it has been granted a small amount of funding to enable it to continue managing the Active Participation Register (APR) project in Warrnam- bool, Moyne and Corangamite for another 12 months. We are very keen to try to increase the number of people with dis- abilities who are involved in this project and plan to do some active recruiting work in the next few months.

The Active Participation Register provides people with dis- abilities with information on opportunities to get involved in consultations, planning, and decision-making forums in their community. It is a way of trying to make sure that the views of people with disabilities are heard and of giving them op- portunities to participate and have more of an influence in the community. We think that the APR project is a really good way of informing and empowering people with disabilities, but it will only work if people with disabilities know about it and get involved.

If you or someone that you know is interested in learning more about the Active Participation Register project please

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contact us. Some more detailed information on the APR and a registration form are enclosed for you to complete if you would like to join the project. It costs people nothing to be listed on the APR, you can opt out at any time if you decide you don't want to be involved, and you will be provided with some very useful information that could lead to some great opportunities to be more involved in your community (bonus set of steak knives not available at this time).

Finally, the Commonwealth Government recently announced a \$12.2 million increase in funding for advocacy across Australia over the next four years. While this announcement is very welcome, it is very much needed by the advocacy sector and the vulnerable and disadvantaged people that we advocate for. Unmet need for a variety of essential disability services remains huge. \$12 million may sound like a lot of money, but it has to be spread across Australia and it will only be released over a four year period, so when you start to break down the figures across the States and Territories on a year by year basis, you begin to realise that there is not going to be all that much to go around. Moreover, this is the first real increase in funding for the National Disability Advocacy Program in over a decade. Let's hope that the money that is available is well spent and is used to help advocacy organisations protect and promote the rights and interests of people with disabilities.

Robert Dick.
Co-ordinator

Cerebral Palsy Booklet

The third edition of 'Cerebral Palsy: An information guide for parents' is now available from the Royal Children's Hospital. The booklet is published by the Department of Development and Rehabilitation) and copies can be purchased from the Resource Centre for Child Health and Safety (CHAS) for \$6.95 plus postage of \$6.60. Phone CHAS on 9345 6429 for details or visit www.rch.org.au.



Taken from Magazine of the Association for Children with a Disability—February 2007

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF SWAA?

Why become a member of SWAA?

By becoming a member of SWAA you are demonstrating your support for an organisation that supports the rights of people with disabilities. Membership is important as it shows a broad commitment to the work of SWAA and the value that the organisation has in the community. Membership of Southwest Advocacy is absolutely free.

What does membership give me?

- ◆ As a member of SWAA you will receive an invitation to the Annual General Meeting and will be able to nominate for the Committee of Management of SWAA.
- ◆ You will be placed on our mailing list and will continue to receive the newsletter, Southwest Advocacy News and be informed of community forums and consultations as they occur.
- ◆ You will also be counted as one of the many individuals who support the rights of people with disability in our community.

If you would like to become a member please contact Southwest Advocacy for a membership form please contact.

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CONTRIBUTIONS To SWAA NEWS

We welcome any contributions to the newsletter in the form of letters, stories, articles and news items relevant to disability issues.

Items printed in SWAA News do not necessarily reflect the views of SWAA, Staff or Committee of Management

10 tips to survive psychiatry

This Tip 10 was formulated by clients of the mental health care sector in Rotterdam (The Netherlands). They are the results of consumer run research conducted in 1998 and 1999 in Rotterdam with users and refusers of mental health care: interviews with peers, discussions and statistical analysis (concept Mapping).

The English translation is a co-production of Basisberaad GGZ and Capemental Health Society, Cape Town, South Africa.

1. **Respect yourself**

Respect the things you feel and experience. Claim space for yourself and for your way of dealing with your problems. It concerns your life and your feelings. These feelings are genuine, have a meaning and nobody else can take them away from you. Examine those feelings and stand up for them.

2. **Responsibility Works**

Solutions that you are responsible for—preferably outside psychiatry—are better. Don't let anybody take your responsibilities away and guard them by clearly setting your boundaries.

3. **Be Aware**

Judge the purpose of your treatment according to your own standards and views. Don't jeopardise that ability. Try to think ahead and make arrangements for those moments when you are confused (or less able to communicate). Ask other people that you trust to help by thinking with you and to look after your interests.

4. **Take the initiative and don't give up**

Don't live up to your diagnosis. Take the initiative to deal with your situation and don't be bluffed. Your opinion about your situation is just as valuable as that of the professional who try to help you and you may expect them not to patronise you. You can learn to stand up for yourself by joining a clients' organisation.

5. **Use your rights**

Make clear to the professional helpers with whom you have contact, what you expect from them and use your legal rights. They are bound by all kinds of regulations which you can refer to. Don't get stuck with a bad professional helper.

6. **No complete surrender**

Find a professional helper with whom you feel good and whom you trust (invest in that person) but never forget that you have a businesslike agreement and that you don't have to 'give' yourself completely—this is a professional not a friend. The help that you receive must be acceptable and feasible to you.

7. **There's more to life than psychiatry**

Stay active in society and don't let your problems take over your whole life. Family, friends and peers are also able to help and in some situations can help even more. Look after these contracts but don't count on them completely: they are your friends and not professionals.

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8. Understand your problems

Don't deny your problems. Try to understand what they mean and make them part of your life. Take your time for that and actively promote your views. If you feel lost for words, you can express yourself in other creative ways.

9. Secure yourself

Use psychiatry to work on your problems. Don't have unrealistic expectations of yourself. Besides that there are places and people who give your security and peace. Cherish them and make use of them too.

10. Prevent any damage

Take care of your future after psychiatry. Reduce the damage that you might suffer from such things as forced treatment, self-pity, overmedication or prejudices. Look for your own alternative solutions to deal with annoying symptoms. If necessary, run away and join a clients organisation or support group.

Taken from VMIAC Newsletter—November 2006



Disability Education Standards

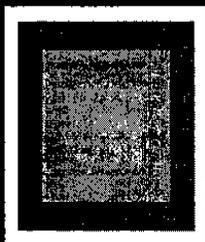
The Disability Standards for Education (2005) were formulated by the Australian Government under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992). The Education Standards aim to provide a framework to ensure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. The Education Standards came into effect on 18 August 2005.

Two new publications provide further information about the Disability Education Standards and how they might be relevant to families of children with a disability.

The department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) has published a 54-page booklet called 'Disability Standards for Education 2005 (plus Guidance Notes): Making education and Training accessible to students with disability.' Copies are available from DEST on 1300 363 079 or from their website www.dest.gov.au.

A consortium of community and education organisations have published a booklet called 'DDA Education Standards-Your right to an education: A guide for students with a disability, their associates and education providers'. For copies, contact Sally Bailey on 9784 0400 or visit www.ddaedustandards.info.

Taken from Magazine of the Association for Children with a Disability—February 2007



Disability Consultants

nothing about us without us

Are you a disability consultant, trainer or guest speaker?

If the answer is YES then this is the ideal product to market your disability consultancy skills and service.

DISTSS Inc. is developing a new and unique database. We are now able to accept applications from disability consultants who meet our particular criteria.

The database will provide an entry point for client organisations—especially those not in the disability sector—to connect with people with expertise informed by their personal experience of disability.

Criteria for a listing are that you:

- ◆ Must have a disability
- ◆ Must have a disability related consultancy service/product
- ◆ Must have experience or qualifications
- ◆ Must be in Victoria
- ◆ Must accept responsibility for 'business-readiness'.

For further information and to make an application for a database listing, please visit www.distss.org.au and follow the prompts to *Nothing About Us Without Us*. Alternatively contact Janet To on details below.

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