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 Identitywa
Celebrating 40 years
of sharing the journey

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Identikite

The official newsletter of Identitywa



Workshops next stage of La Trobe University study



L to R: Facilitator, Lisa Hamilton with Tarren Donetta (leading the Active Support Working Group) and Marina Re.

To improve and monitor Identitywa's success in implementing Person Centred Active Support (PCAS) is the aim of the *Embedding Active Support & Practice Leadership Study* currently being facilitated by La Trobe University.

Marina Re and Identitywa Training Officer, Angela Bamford, travelled to La Trobe's Melbourne Campus in February to discuss Identitywa's results so far.

For the next stage of the study, Lisa Hamilton from La Trobe facilitated workshops for staff at Identitywa's new training facility in Northbridge.

The workshops focused on increasing the knowledge of

staff about PCAS and further developing their skills to successfully put PCAS into practice.

"Person Centred Active Support is about increasing the quality of life for people," explains Lisa.

"It is critical staff understand and value an evidence-based approach to support and appreciate why it is important.

"The PCAS approach is underpinned by four essentials -

Every moment has potential; little and often; graded assistance and maximising choice and control."

During her visit Lisa visited a number of Identitywa shared homes to discuss and demonstrate active support with support workers.

"This is an important part of translating the knowledge learned in the workshops into practical skills in the workplace," said Lisa.

Person Centred Active Support is a way of providing just the right amount of assistance to enable a person with intellectual disability to successfully take part in meaningful activities and social relationships.



Lisa spent time with Mandy and Natalie who share an Identitywa home.



The Identitywa North: Balcatta Team

Back Row: Lee Galer, Tasin Alimul, Tarren Donetta, Michael Wolfenden, Wendy Spicer, Naomi O'Donnell
 Front Row: Tara Ludlow, Natalie Or, Denise Marley, Lee Zwickl, Kathy Naughton and Delia Ward.

Identitywa North: Balcatta Opens

The chance to be closer to the people Identitywa supports and to increase its outreach in the North Metro area, has seen Identitywa open Identitywa North: Balcatta.

“The decision to open this space is important for us,” said Marina Re, Identitywa’s Chief Executive Officer.

“It provides a point of contact for the families and the individuals we support living in these suburbs and enables our staff to be part of the local community.

“This is critical in building connections and offering more responsive and flexible supports,” said Marina.

“Identitywa is committed to growing its support to individuals, including those who are now able to access funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the Catastrophic Injuries Support Scheme.

Help us build our Identitywa on-line community

The chance to read the stories and see the photos of the many people we support, and also learn about the latest developments within the disability sector, are two great reasons to join us on Facebook.



So... if you haven't already, please consider Liking Us and/or Following Us soon and don't forget to encourage others who you think might be interested in joining our growing on-line community. It's a fantastic way to *Share the Journey!*

Honouring a rich history



Sr Beverley Stott RSM

For Marina Re, Chief Executive Officer, and architect, Eamon Broderick, a critical element of the refurbishment of the Federation Arts and Crafts style building in Northbridge - now the corporate base for Identitywa - was embracing its rich history.

An extensive amount of research was undertaken to source photos to be used in the refurbishment. There was even a 'call out' to former students and their family members to share any photos they may have tucked away in their cupboards at home.

"We felt the inclusion of photographs depicting the rich history of the school, which was established by the Sisters of Mercy in July 1888, was so important to the authenticity of this once-in-a-life time opportunity," explained Marina.

"Both Eamon's late father, Michael Broderick, and I are former students of

the school, as were many members of my family, so we are especially keen to ensure that we can share the history of the parish hall and the school through photographs people have.

Sister Beverley Stott RSM, former Congregational Leader of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia & Papua New Guinea, the original owners of the site, provided some of the information for a number of photos being featured. Included on the opposite page are some of the images and associated stories according to Sister Beverley's recollection.



Gathering of the St Brigid's School community

circa
1900s

The photo above features the original Church facing John Street. The school community has been photographed standing along Fitzgerald Street which was a dirt road used mainly by horse and cart and the very rare early car. Sisters Berchmans Deane and John Evangelist Stewart commenced the operation of a school in a four roomed cottage on John Street and as the numbers of students increased, the humble work cottages which surrounded the Church were used as classrooms.

When the Sisters of Mercy sold the buildings in 1974 to the Western Australian State Government, they gifted the deeds of the original Church to Archbishop Goody, Catholic Archbishop of Perth. This historic gesture has now seen Identitywa being able to use the buildings as its corporate base.



circa
1930s

Children of Mary Breakfast

It was on special days held throughout the year that the senior girls at St Brigid's School, West Perth, would gather wearing their uniforms and light blue sashes which signified their membership of the Catholic devotional group, Children of Mary Sodality.

The photo shows senior students gathered in the Church Hall for a traditional English afternoon tea. It is believed that Sister Mary Ursula Stanbury RSM, who regularly took photos of the community at that time, coloured aspects of this picture and others in the Sisters of Mercy archive. The setting is very typical of special feast day celebrations, featuring vases of flowers, candles and elaborate bowls of fruit and grape leaves as part of the decoration.



Marching Practice

This photo was taken in the playground between the Convent (not visible), the primary school and south side of the Church, the picture shows the students practising their marching, possibly for an event such as St Patrick's Day or a Sports Day.

It was Sr Mary Mechtilde Cullen RSM who gave marching lessons, and it is thought the practice sessions would have had the accompaniment of a piano.

Handbook developed to assist end of life planning

Identitywa has been working over the past few years to develop an Advance Care Planning handbook which can be used by the people we support in consultation with those who are close to them such as family members, friends and trained Identitywa staff.

Manager, Lee-Anne Brensell, has been overseeing the development of the Identitywa Advance Care Planning handbook which aims to guide individuals and families through the various options and important checks needed when planning for the end of life.

"Identitywa is committed to working closely with the people we support and their families to ensure they receive the best possible support and care throughout their life," explains Lee-Anne.

"We believe it is so important for people to consider an ACP as it provides a valuable point of reference when making decisions about personal and medical preferences at the end of their life.

"Planning ahead provides people with confidence in knowing that a person's wishes and choices have been well thought through, checked legally and are formally documented."

For more information or to access an Identitywa Advance Care Planning handbook please call 9474 3303 or email reception@identitywa.com.au.



Advance care planning is a process of an individual making decisions about their health and medical care in the event that they are not able to make or express their decisions in the final stages of their life.



Sincerity and reliability are top of Michelle's list

For 32-year-old Michelle, having support workers who are reliable and sincerely care about her are the attributes she most values.

These attributes definitely describe her support worker, Faye, who has been a staff member at Identitywa for almost 30 years and has supported Michelle since she was five years old!

With the guidance and support of her family, as well as Faye and Identitywa, Michelle has transitioned to having her own house, garden and fully equipped van, and now employs her own support staff. Michelle has achieved a level of independence which she absolutely loves.

When asked what she likes best about having her own home, Michelle says, “ I like going to bed when I want, being able to go out more and to watch what I like on television.”

She also likes to help out with the cooking in her kitchen so it's no surprise one of her favourite TV shows is My Kitchen Rules.

Faye, who finished working with Michelle in February, has really loved supporting her.

“It has been amazing to watch her grow and develop as a person. I am so proud of all she has achieved which is testament to her determination to always do her best,” says Faye.

“The commitment of her mother, Yvonne, and her brothers and sister have also greatly contributed to her independence today.

“She has always been encouraged to have a go...often achieving well beyond her own expectations,” said Faye.

“It has been a privilege to be part of Michelle's life over all these years.”

Both Michelle and Faye are definitely looking forward to the next chapter in their lives.

Blankets, hats, scarves and lots of ice make for a fantastic day

Packing for an excursion in February doesn't usually include extra clothes and blankets to keep warm...that is, unless you are going ice skating!

For Joe and Gloria who share an Identitywa home, that is exactly what they did. Staff who support them wanted to take them on an adventure, an activity that was exciting and gave them an opportunity to do something they might never think of trying.

As experienced ice skaters, support workers Noelle and Emily decided to head to Xtreme Ice Arena in Mirrabooka where they pushed Gloria and Joe onto the ice in their wheelchairs. From there the fun started; Gloria and Joe loved it!

"In addition to organising regular activities such as having picnics in the local parks, going swimming, listening to music, shopping, dining out and going for walks, our support team are always actively sourcing and organising activities which offer opportunities that might not have been tried before," said Noelle.

"Of course, all our excursions need to be well planned - this one in particular, as we had to make sure we had enough staff who could confidently skate and we needed to make sure the ice rink was wheelchair friendly and safe. Oh, and not to forget, packing the blankets, hats and scarves!

The whole experience has definitely left Gloria and Joe wanting more.



It's beautiful, so nice and cold," said Gloria. "I loved having my wheelchair pushed around the ice and the girls spinning me around, and I loved having my photo taken!"

Below: Support workers Emily (left) Noelle (right) make sure Gloria and Joe have a great time on the ice.





Ian is always keen to get out and about in his community

Living in one of Identitywa's shared homes offers many benefits including enhanced independence for the people who live there.



Ian and his brother Clive share an Identitywa home with three other people in the northern suburbs of Perth. A weekly highlight for them is a visit from their brother Richard and also the chance to go on various outings together and independently, assisted by their support workers.

A recent visit to Rotary Park

in Wanneroo provided a really interesting morning for Ian.

Whilst enjoying the bush environment, he also had the chance to explore the Rotary Heritage Wall at the park. Ian is not able to hear or see clearly but he was able to feel the interpretive plaques which feature the themes of The Indigenous Australians,

Early Settlers, Multiculturalism, Transport, Education, Coastline and the Wanneroo Agricultural Show.

His support worker, Guy, accompanies Ian on his regular outings and uses the technique of Tactile Finger Spelling to communicate with him. An enjoyable morning was had by both of them!



**A Catholic outreach supporting people
with disability and their families.**

We welcome contributions
to Identikite from people we support,
their families and staff.

Articles can be emailed to the Editor
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