

April 2017 | Issue 126

 Identitywa  
Celebrating 40 years  
of sharing the journey

**40**  
1977-2017

# Identikite

The official newsletter of Identitywa





## Our Vision

All people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing.



## Our Mission

Identitywa works in partnership with individuals and families to build a community where people with disability enjoy a fulfilled life.

We support individuals to achieve their goals, whatever they may be. We offer families the support they need.



## Our Values

Above all else, we make a commitment to act.

We will look for the opportunities rather than seeing the barriers.

Our approach will be objective, transparent and fair. We will always be honest and open and no matter how challenging, we will endeavour to see it through to the end.

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**Cover photo:** Olivia regularly accesses support at Identitywa's Children's House in Riverton.

# CEO Report

**I am pleased to report that we have recently made the big move and successfully relocated our head office to Northbridge.**

This is a welcomed opportunity to utilise an existing resource of the Archdiocese and achieve a much larger working space which is centrally located and meets the needs of a growing agency. We were able to make this a reality on a tight budget and we are always cognisant of the importance of working efficiently and maximising the impact of funds available to Identitywa.

Similarly, the new Identitywa North: Balcatta has materialised through great support of the Archdiocese and our strong desire to be closer to the people and families we support.

In February, the Board adopted a new Strategic Plan which will guide Identitywa for the next three years. We are both excited and pleased with the new directions and over the next months we will be communicating more about a number of new initiatives which have been planned.

I don't think it has ever been as critical as it is now for non-government agencies to be actively reviewing all practices and openly exploring the possibilities that the future holds.

The 2017-2020 Strategic Plan commits us to making a meaningful difference, implementing innovative solutions and building strong transparent and honest partnerships.

With this firmly in mind we have invested in a program of learning and reflective practice which will enhance the skills of all staff at Identitywa.



**Packing complete... staff farewell the old Kensington office.**

All of this professional development is unfunded, but we see it as a high priority. It is critical that sufficient resources are allocated to allow us to always reflect best practice in our daily work.

Consistent with our focus on culture, we have engaged Andrea Musulin from the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth to present a series of workshops on safeguarding vulnerable people. The Safeguarding Project is informed by a fundamental belief that children and vulnerable people have the right to physical and psychological safety at all times and that as an organisation we must have as the highest priority the protection of children and vulnerable individuals.

The workshops have been planned for April, July, September and October, 2017 and we are working towards endorsement as a nationally accredited Safe Organisation.

Following the recent WA State election, we have expressed our gratitude to former Minister, the Honourable Donna Faragher, for her contribution to disability services in WA. We are looking forward to working positively with the new Minister, the Honourable Stephen Dawson, as he takes on this challenging role.

While there remains some uncertainty about the final form of the NDIS in WA, we will continue our absolute commitment to offering and providing high quality services and supports.

As an outcome of the March Board Planning Day, we are exploring how the resources and expertise within Identitywa can be applied to other areas of need experienced by people with disability within the WA community. This is an exciting development; we are keen to identify new areas of focus, and as always, are very interested in forging new partnerships and relationships, both with familiar parties and also within some new networks.

This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Identitywa. This, together with the opening of Identitywa Northbridge and Identitywa North: Balcatta, gives us much to be thankful for.

Over the next months we will be hosting some special events and inviting our friends and supporters to celebrate with us. The first of these is an Afternoon Tea to be held at Identitywa Northbridge on Saturday May 20 from 2pm to 4pm. We look forward to providing further details closer to the time.

**Marina Re**  
**Chief Executive Officer**





# Archbishop responds to Royal Commission final hearings

## Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB presented a Pastoral Message to Perth Catholic Community in February.

In addition to the Pastoral Letter, he also published a video message to the Catholic community addressing the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Final Hearings of the Catholic Church*.

The *Hearings of Case 50*, which concluded on

Friday 24 February 2017, saw the metropolitan Archbishops of Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth, speak about their understanding of the causes of child abuse by members of the Church, and what they intend to do in response.

.....  
To read the Archbishop's complete Pastoral Letter or to watch his personal video message, please go to [www.perthcatholic.org.au](http://www.perthcatholic.org.au) and follow the links from the Homepage.

## Identitywa Northbridge access

Pedestrian access to Identitywa Northbridge is from the 61 Fitzgerald Street entry.

Short-term visitor parking (2 hours only) is located off Aberdeen Street and in the limited bays in Piazza Nanni which is at the front of St Brigid's Church.



# Board approves 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan

**The Senior Management Team and Board have been working over the past six months developing the new Strategic Plan for 2017 – 2020 for Identitywa.**

A critical process when developing the new plan was to consult with our families via a series of focus groups and in-depth interviews. Overall, the feedback showed that our community has confidence in Identitywa to consistently deliver quality care and high levels of service. This was fantastic to hear and great feedback for our dedicated and hard working staff.

This consultative stage provided important insight into the key issues and concerns for people. It also identified our critical drivers which are seen as key to informing and driving the strategic plan.



## **Key issues raised by the focus groups:**

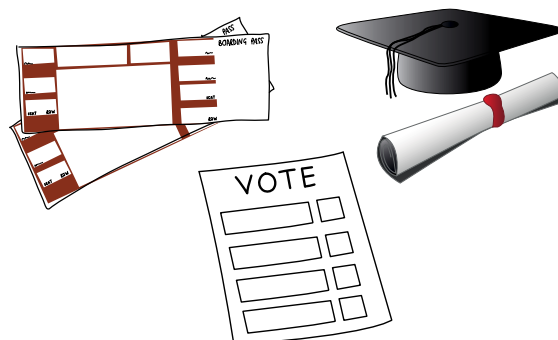
- Communication between staff, families and other service providers.
- The importance of management to focus on staff development, skills (technical), right match and retention.
- Visibility about the path ahead for our individuals.
- Flexibility and greater diversity of living arrangements and support, and how services are delivered.
- Pushing a little harder on goals.
- Facilitating and being supportive of peer connections.
- Quality and reliability of service.
- Promoting harmony in a shared house.

# New Strategic Plan promotes

## EVERYONE EMPOWERED TO THINK BIG



## FULL CITIZENSHIP



## STRONG PARTNERSHIPS



## HAVING THE RIGHT PEOPLE



### Making a meaningful difference

Through our commitment to act, our involvement helps deliver a better solution for the individual and their family.

### Strong, transparent, honest partnerships

We work in partnership enabling control and choice, and help develop a vision for the future.

### Innovative Solutions

Our commitment to innovation allows us to 'raise the bar' and be aspirational.

### Our focus



- Implementing Active Support - We believe this program will significantly help Identitywa achieve strong engagement and actively help us ensure full citizenship for all individuals.
- Putting in place a number of strategies to ensure we are able to develop innovative and responsive solutions around individual citizenship.
- Our systems to deliver meaningful, individualised outcomes.
- Our culture to ensure we recognise, share and celebrate the wonderful stories that exist within our organisation.

# 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.

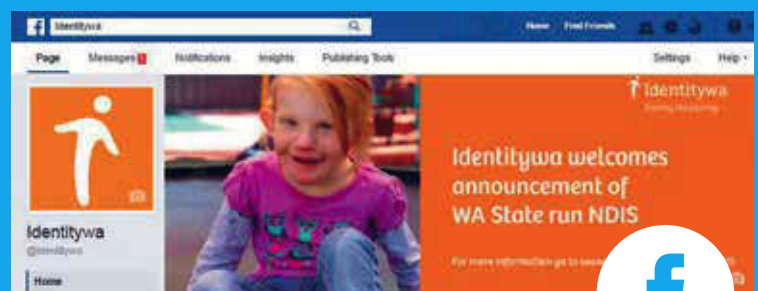
"It provides a point of contact for the families and the individuals we support living in these suburbs and enables our staff to be part of the local community.

"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



**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](mailto: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  
[Michelle.ebbs@identitywa.com.au](mailto:Michelle.ebbs@identitywa.com.au)



### **Contact Us**

T (08) 9474 3303

E [reception@identitywa.com.au](mailto:reception@identitywa.com.au)

[www.identitywa.com.au](http://www.identitywa.com.au)