

rrrsi

RIVERLAND
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RECREATION

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Acknowledging disability.....focusing on ability

FAMILY/CLIENT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2011

Dear Clients, Families and Carers

Welcome back to another exciting year. We have been hard at work and are pleased to inform you that the previously mentioned refurbishing of our Day Options venue has been completed during the Christmas break, including the installation of 3 brand new computers with Internet access. We are all aware of the dangers the Internet can pose and have spent considerable time discussing and implementing safety procedures to keep our clients safe while allowing them to access the Global Community. The new, colourful and modern furnishings have certainly been a welcome change for all of us, especially our clients. We have welcomed 2 new clients for our Day Options service and continue to provide a variety of programs and activities that allow our clients to experience a variety of different life scenarios, for example Art projects, Computing, Recycling, Volunteering and our Community Garden project to name but a few.

The pressing need for additional supported accommodation in the Riverland has been a longstanding issue and with the ageing of clients and their parents, the need to offer an appropriate, community inclusive supported accommodation option is finally being addressed. A tender for a new service was recently called and we are hopeful that a decision will be made shortly and that selected clients and families can begin with the transition process of their sons and daughters living away from home. It is envisaged that some information should become available over the coming weeks. For parents and families seeking further information about future supported accommodation options for their loved ones, please contact your local Community and Home Support SA, Disability Services (formerly Disability SA) on 8582 2400.

RRRIS is keen on promoting the Respite services we offer and we would be pleased to hear your requests or ideas and we are in the process of meeting with the Riverland Special School to talk to students about what they would like to see happening. Respite is a fantastic way to recharge batteries and give everyone some space and in most cases only attracts a nominal fee to cover food and the like. If you would like some further information please do not hesitate to contact our Office on 85832110 or the Office of Disability SA on 85822400, we will be pleased to answer all your questions.

We recently had a meeting with an organisation called Holiday Explorers, who provides a multitude of holiday services. We thought it would be appropriate to include some information (flier attached) to make people aware of more choices available to them. Of course, we will continue to offer our varied and hugely successful Holiday program for everyone. We are planning our first overseas trip for 2012 and will of course keep you posted with further developments. As part of our meeting we also raised the idea of offering Respite House as a holiday destination, of course during specified and limited times. We believe that it would be a great gesture to offer the opportunity to our 'City Cousins' to come up and spend some time in our lovely region, initially 2 blocks of 1 week each. Alternative respite arrangements would be made for those occasions.

It is pleasing to know that the current Passenger Transport Scheme has been extended, with Tony Townsend continuing with his great service. RRRSI is pleased to maintain our association with Tony and the service and our clients have been lobbying hard to have a bus shelter erected in Berri, a request that was recently approved by the Berri Barmera Council. We are hopeful the erection will be completed before winter. The Council also recently responded to our request to fix the footpath of McGilton Road, a Road that our clients use to access Day Options and the quick response from Council was greatly appreciated and has ensured the safety of our clients and other community members. We are still awaiting confirmation from the Berri Barmera Council in regard to the timeframe for construction of the bus shelter for our Day Options clients. This will be of great assistance during inclement weather conditions.

Our new programs and activities for the first half of 2011 have been sent out and the demand has once again been outstanding, with some activities being booked out very quickly. Our Holiday and Recreation Coordinator Trish Lacey would be happy to hear from you if you have a particular trip or activity in mind or would like to discuss other ideas. We are able to source a multitude of city based Sporting Clubs to visit our region and allow everyone to have a taste of these sports, be it Yachting, Soccer or even Rugby. Over the past few years, the patronage for the School Holiday program has continually lessened to the point where we have decided to suspend it for the forthcoming holidays with the view to assess and review what we can do to improve the program.

We are in the process of setting up our new website and some initial concepts have been produced by our Webmaster. The aim is to enable people from anywhere to access our site and services via the web, including booking into events, activities and to provide feedback and the like. We are very excited about the move towards a new and improved site. As you will notice our correspondence also has a different look as we are using a new logo across our services, have updated signage at our Office and are in the process to adapt our promotional material to the new logo.

The Community Garden is progressing well, with all garden beds completed, water connected and equipment purchased. The recent rains have been great but have also led to an explosion of weeds that require constant attention. We are fortunate to have some very supportive community members that assist us in the initial phase of setting up and two nurseries, Plummer's Nursery and Thymless Nursery, which offer us surplus seedlings. We are looking forward to growing the first crop and to be able to work with a broader section of our community. Further initial discussions were held with Glossop High School to seek their involvement in an ART project to design and build a sculpture to grace then entry to the Garden. At this stage, we meet every Wednesday evening at 6:30pm at the Church of Christ Hall, which is located next to the Garden site, on the Old Sturt Highway, about 1 km out of Berri heading to Barmera on the right hand side. The Community Garden is not affiliated with any Church and encourages all members of our Community to contribute to this exciting project. Diversity and Inclusion for all are key attributes of the Garden. For more information contact our Office on 8582 3110.

You may have heard about the recent release of the Productivity Commission about the proposed 'National Disability Insurance Scheme' which would change the way funding is undertaken and finally ensure that appropriate and long term funding would be available under the scheme, which would be implemented across the country. An Information session is being held at the Loxton Club on the 5/4/2011 from 10am to 1pm. If you are interested in attending, let our Office know and we will register you with the session. We have included the flier for your information. Further information can also be found on www.nds.org.au, which is a peak state and federal disability body.

As always, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, queries, ideas or suggestions, we are after all here to serve our community.

Take care of yourselves and your loved ones.

The Team at RRRSI