

Welcome to the third edition of Rocky Bay Connect.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Safe New Year.

### **Project Update**

Refurbishments to the Mosman Park site are progressing well. Thank you to all the residents and families for your cooperation during the first stage of the Residence renovation. It will be very exciting when the work is complete and residents can move back to a new and contemporary home. Plans have been placed on noticeboards around Rocky Bay for those interested in having a look.

Upgrades to the studio toilets and the open dining area will commence in the new year. As with all refurbishments, there will be some disruption, but it will be worth the inconvenience to enjoy the new, modern facilities.

The next stage of the southern corridor project is due to commence early in 2010. The property in Baling Street Cockburn Central will be fitted out to accommodate Employment Services, Rocky Bay SATS and Posture Tech. In the interim, Employment Services have relocated to 571a Canning Highway Alfred Cove. The phone and fax numbers remain unchanged.

### **City of Cockburn**

If you live in the Cockburn area, you may like to visit the City of Cockburn website to see if there are any activities of interest.

[www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Community\\_Services/Youth\\_Services/](http://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Community_Services/Youth_Services/)

### **Join the walkers**

The Ability First Australia (AFA) 'Walk with Me' event is scheduled for 2nd May 2010. If you would like to support the event or be an "ambassador" please contact Betty Cottrell, Director Marketing on 9383 5141 or email her on [bettyc@rockybay.org.au](mailto:bettyc@rockybay.org.au).

### **Adult Support**

The MDA Adult Support group hopes to connect those with neuromuscular disease, their families, friends and carers for support and inspiration. It is a group where people help people. It offers those facing challenges the chance to talk to others who are experiencing similar issues. It also provides people with an opportunity to meet socially and make friends in an informal setting.

Their next meeting is Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December from 2pm - 4pm. For more information contact Lesley/Brooke on 9382 2700 or email [caremda@cyllene.uwa.edu.au](mailto:caremda@cyllene.uwa.edu.au)

### **Need a break?**

Anne Bluntish Carer's Retreat, managed by Carers WA is a self contained apartment located in South Perth opposite the ferry, overlooking Swan River and with City views. It is available for respite for the Carer only. It is not available for the care recipient or children. Accommodation costs \$15 per person per night. Please contact Carers WA for further details. Ph: 1300 CARERS (1300 227 377) web: [www.carerswa.asn.au](http://www.carerswa.asn.au). They also have other facilities listed in country areas.

## **Inaugural Cut Golf Day**

The weather was great for the inaugural golf day at The Cut Golf Course in Mandurah and participants enjoyed themselves at the golf and post event dinner. Fundraising on the day exceeded expectations; many thanks to all those involved.

## **Sponsorship & Support**

- Channel 7 Telethon Trust supported Rocky Bay by providing funds to purchase a Cough Assist Machine and a Gracile Motomed cycle for use by the children who attend therapy at the Mosman Park site.
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia also supported us in the purchase of several items that will be very helpful for therapy assessments.

## **Caregivers' Report on Supporting Children Who Use Communication Devices**

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices assist people who have difficulty communicating. Twelve families recently participated in a study conducted by Senior Speech Pathologists at Rocky Bay. Caregivers were asked for their perspectives on who should be involved in supporting school-aged children to use AAC.

In general, caregivers reported that a team approach was preferred, particularly between the caregivers, teachers and speech therapists. Some caregivers highlighted their own important role in supporting and developing their child's skills with an AAC device in the long term. Many caregivers reported that using an AAC device helped their child become more easily understood; less frustrated and allowed them to participate in conversations. Some caregivers found the introduction of an AAC device increased their stress and some reported that other communication methods were more effective for their child.

Caregivers reported that children were assisted most by:

- using the device in everyday activities
- receiving adequate training and follow up support
- positive attitudes from the team and community
- teamwork (such as meetings at school and sharing information).

The findings were presented to parents, teachers and therapists at the *More Than Gadgets* Assistive Technology Conference held in Perth in August, 2009. Please speak to your speech pathologist if you would like more information about supporting your child to use a communication device.

## **Preparation for Leaving School**

If you are concerned about ongoing therapy for your child once they leave the school age therapy service, please discuss their needs with your therapists or contact -

- Tracey Delamare, Manager SATS on 0406 381 780
- James Parish, Manager TAPS on 9383 5151

## **Leaving School Soon & Looking For Work?**

If you are a School Leaver venturing into the workforce for the first time and need assistance, then Rocky Bay Employment Services can help.

We work with employers to develop job opportunities suitable for school leavers. We also provide assistance in the following areas:

- Career choices.
- Job readiness skills such as personal hygiene, dress, punctuality and overall demeanour.
- Training in the specific requirements of individual employers.
- Job familiarisation - visits to work sites.
- On site support as required.

Job placements for school leavers require a minimum of eight hours per week.

Rocky Bay Employment Services provides ongoing assistance to the employers and students to co-ordinate and resolve any issues that may arise during the placement.

For further information contact Lisa Duckworth at Rocky Bay Employment Services on 0415 383 285 or email: [lisad@rockybay.org.au](mailto:lisad@rockybay.org.au)

### Perth Show Fireworks

Six year old Jaimie Topham recently had the honour of pressing the button to commence the fireworks display at the Perth Royal Show. Together with her sister Hayley, brother Scott and parents Colin and Narelle, Jaimie was thrilled by the fireworks display that followed.



Jaimie, Hayley and Scott have Minicore-multicore Myopathy. The three children have a land and water-based physiotherapy programme provided by Rocky Bay to help improve their overall strength.

Jaimie is doing very well at school; her favourite activities are playing with friends and cooking on Fridays.

### WA Junior Disabled Sports Star



At a gala event at the Sheraton Hotel on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August, Dylan Needham was awarded WA Junior Disabled Sports Star of the Year.

Dylan succeeded against very strong competition, two of whom were Para-Olympians.

The awards were presented to help celebrate the achievements of an amazing group of sports people with a diverse range of disabilities. To be nominated, Dylan was required to play and achieve recognition in his State team, both of which he achieved earlier this year.

Jack O'Keeffe won the "Be Active" award.

Dylan and Jack's nominations were the result of a presentation by Conor Murphy, who did a fantastic job last year as Secretary of the Western Electric Wheelchair Sports Association.

Dylan has a large group of senior players who taught him a great deal about the sports he has participated in over the past four years. Being active in sport has enabled Dylan to achieve his potential, something he also attributed to the assistance of Rocky Bay staff.

There are practice sessions in the gym on Wednesday afternoons allowing network

opportunities for participants and parents. It has become a major social event for the parents who attend, with lots of 'cake and coffee.' It is an important part of the social connection for parents who assist each other with shared information and support in a friendly and supportive environment.

For information on electric wheelchair sports, please contact Terry Butler on 9207 3656 or email: [terence.butler@bigpond.com](mailto:terence.butler@bigpond.com)

### **Intensive Interaction**

Intensive Interaction is engaging and interacting with those who have severe intellectual and communication disabilities; and often complex sensory processing difficulties.

A key component of Intensive Interaction is to engage the person in frequent interaction sequences which they find enjoyable.

If you would like more information on Intensive Interaction go to the following websites.

[www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk](http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk)

[drmarkbarber.co.uk/index.htm](http://drmarkbarber.co.uk/index.htm)

or discuss it with your speech therapist.

### **Feedback Forms**

Feedback from visitors, clients and families of Rocky Bay is always welcome.

Feedback forms can be obtained from staff or by visiting our website [www.rockybay.org.au](http://www.rockybay.org.au). Post the form back to us or drop it in the box in the dining area.

### **Physiotherapist's Registration Board Award Winners**

Thank you to those who nominated staff members for The Physiotherapists'

Registration Board of Western Australia Award for contribution to the community.

The joint recipients of the award were Joanne Dower and Kate Maaskant.

As part of their course requirements at the University of Notre Dame, Joanne and Kate volunteered to work with Dylan Needham, who has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Dylan and his family nominated the girls for the award.

The experience involved carrying out weekly physiotherapy activities provided by Dylan's Rocky Bay physiotherapist Kelly Moffatt. In just over two months they had completed the expected number of hours, and had enjoyed it so much they continued the sessions with Dylan for the next year.

Joanne and Kate still make weekly visits and are committed to carrying out the program for as long as Dylan and his family would like them to do so.



### **Tips**

The following tips have been taken from the Raising Children Network. For further information go to -

[www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au).

**Communication: the key to a successful partnership**

- **Ask any questions you may have**, even if the doctor or specialist seems rushed. If you need to know, you need to know.
- **Write down your questions before the meeting** to help you remember to ask them.
- When you are given information verbally, it can help to **repeat it back** to the professional to make sure you understand.
- **You don't need to learn complicated professional jargon.** Ask your professional to use language and terms that you are comfortable with.
- **Keep notes** about your meetings with professionals, so that you have accurate information for yourself, other family members, or to share with other professionals.
- Ask for important decisions or other pieces of information to be **formally noted in writing.**
- Be **honest** and share your concerns.
- **Share any information** that you think will help the professional work more effectively with you and your child, including information about your family.
- **Give feedback** about the relationship – both positive reactions and constructive criticism are useful and important.
- **Discuss your own needs** with the professional so they are taken into account in decisions about what is best for your child.
- In your role as an advocate for your child, **try to see the situation from the professional's perspective as well.** When you have criticisms or strong negative feelings, express them tactfully and constructively and stick to the issue involved. Keep calm but at the same time make sure you make your point.
- When you are talking to service providers on the phone, make sure you know the **name and position of the person** you are

speaking to in case you need to follow up later.

- **Make another meeting date** before you leave your meeting. Make sure professionals listen to you. You have a lot of information about your child that any professional dealing with you or your child should want to know. If a professional doesn't pay attention to what you say, you may want to find an alternative

- **What if a staff member leaves?**

It's always hard when you and a staff member have worked to build a good relationship and then he or she moves.

Most services will ensure that your new worker is given background information about you and your child. But you will probably have to tell your story again. Think of this as an opportunity to educate the new worker about your child's history and your family situation and as a chance to highlight what you think is important.

You may regret the loss of the previous relationship, but sometimes **a new staff member can bring a fresh approach and innovation** to dealing with your child.

Another website that may be of interest is Children with Special Needs' [www.mychild.gov.au/specialneeds.htm](http://www.mychild.gov.au/specialneeds.htm).

### **Disability Services Standards Report**

The Therapy and Professional Services (TAPS) Adults team and the School Age Therapy Services (SATS) team would like to thank clients and families who contributed to the above report. We value the feedback as it assists us with continuous service improvement. If you wish to read a copy of the report please contact Ruth Bolar or Wendy Vivian on 9383 5156.

## Discos at Rocky Bay



Rocky Bay is now THE place to be if you're looking for a night at the disco. Discos are held monthly in the gym on a Friday night. The next event will be Friday **27th November** and will have a Race Day theme. Dates for next year will be advised. For more information please call Kerry Walker on 9383 5185 or email [kerryw@rockybay.org.au](mailto:kerryw@rockybay.org.au).

### Recognition for Disability Support Workers

People with disabilities and their families, peers, staff and managers are invited to nominate a disability support worker, whom they recognise as valued and highly respected in their field of work.

Following the overwhelming success of the inaugural Disability Support Worker Awards in 2009, National Disability Services WA (NDS WA), in partnership with the Disability Services Commission (DSC) and St John of God Health Care, will host the 2010 Disability Support Worker Awards in conjunction with sponsors Zenith Insurance Services and G-Force Printing.

These awards recognise the outstanding achievements and contributions made by disability support workers in furthering the inclusion and enrichment of the lives of people with disabilities in Western Australia.

Nominations will be judged by a panel in four award categories. Each winner will be presented with a cash prize of \$2000 at a Gala Dinner in the Grand Ballroom, Burswood Entertainment Complex on the evening of **Saturday 27 March 2010**.

To download a nomination form or for more information please visit the link on the DSC website

[www.disability.wa.gov.au/aboutdisability/dsw2010.html](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/aboutdisability/dsw2010.html)

or contact: Anne Thornton,  
NDS Western Australia, Ph 9208 9807  
or email [anne.thornton@nds.org.au](mailto:anne.thornton@nds.org.au)

Nominations close at 4.00pm on Friday 4th December 2009.

### Carols by Candlelight ~ 2009

On December 16<sup>th</sup> Rocky Bay will hold the inaugural Carols by Candlelight at 60 McCabe Street Mosman Park.

The event is open to the whole community, while raising funds to support people living in Western Australia with disabilities.

We are currently approaching local choirs and personalities to attend as special guests.

Candle glow sticks, glow in the dark head bands, a sausage sizzle and cool drinks will be available to purchase on the night.

The sausage sizzle will begin around 6.30pm with the carols commencing at approximately 7.00pm. Entry is a gold coin donation.

More information can be downloaded from: [www.rockybay.org.au](http://www.rockybay.org.au)

## Introductory computer training



- Are you a computer novice?
- Are you fazed by Facebook, spooked by My Space or worried by the Web?
- Would you like to talk to your friends in faraway places?
- What about doing the shopping from home or picking up bargains on E-Bay?
- Are you interested in making more friends?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, why not apply for First Clicks training?

This course will be presented by the Rocky Bay Training Department in coming months.

It's an easy way to enter onto the "information superhighway" without the pain or expense of formal training.

To register your interest contact the Training Department on 9383 5128 (or if you are really brave send an email to [trainingrbi@rockybay.org.au](mailto:trainingrbi@rockybay.org.au))

## Equipment Maintenance

For those who have equipment that may require attention over the Christmas New Year break, please speak with your therapists for assistance and ensure you have spares such as tubes, tyres and batteries.

Rocky Bay (excluding residential services), will be closed for the Christmas break from 3pm on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December, returning to work on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

As this is our last edition for this year, we would again like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year and look forward to seeing you all again in 2010.

