



# Families in Partnership Co-Operative Newsletter

Issue 1 March/April 2009

Welcome to the first edition of the Co-operative Newsletter for 2009. We wish to inform you of some very important changes that have occurred within Families in Partnership Cooperative over the past few months.

## **Staffing Changes:**

Firstly, with much regret Families in Partnership Board of Management wishes to farewell Bob Lester who has been the FIP Co-ordinator for the past five and a half years.

Bob has decided on a career change and is now working for Wollondilly Council as a community project officer, which will still allow him to work closely with the local communities.

On behalf of the Board of Management, Parents, Families and Community Partners we wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Bob Lester for all his hard work and dedication he has shown over the past years. During this time, Bob has worked diligently in partnership with families to improve the services and support systems for people who have a disability and their families in the Macarthur region.

Secondly, the Board of Management would like to welcome Julie Howard, our new Administration Officer. Julie has been employed on a three day basis to manage the Families in Partnership office. Julie comes to this position with many years of office experience.

Julie has a daughter (11) and twin boys (9), one of which was recently diagnosed with ADHD. She has lived in the Macarthur area for nine years. She is looking forward to working in partnership with families and professionals to facilitate the aims of the Families in Partnership Cooperation.

## **Funding Update:**

Funding was gratefully received for Families in Partnership in August 2008 from **Department of Aging, Disabilities and Home Care**, to continue the good work of the FIP Cooperative. This grant will enable FIP members to work in partnership with families and community partners to strive for sustainability beyond 2009. Also a one off grant from **NSW Health Department NGO Program** has been recently received to assist the service with operation costs.

Some of our future projects for 2009 will include:

- Advocacy skills and knowledge for Carers and families – Linda Margrie Communications Workshops
- Lifelong Family Care Programme Workshops – Terry Ryan in partnership with Macarthur District Temporary Family Care.
- Facilitating and building capacity of local support groups – particularly around Autism
- Linking families and carers to peak disability and carer organisations – eg Carers NSW, Family Advocacy, and Autism Spectrum Australia.
- Special Seminar involving FIP members and community stakeholders to consult on the Cooperatives future beyond June 2009.

## **Co-operative News - Memberships Renewals/ Board Membership**

### **Have you renewed your membership?**

Memberships are current for 1 financial year which is from 1<sup>st</sup> July to the 30<sup>th</sup> June the following year. If you have not renewed your membership from the previous year it is now due and all forms should have been sent out to those that do not have a current membership. The fee is still the low amount of \$5.00 and will enable you to retain your voice and active involvement. A copy of the rules of the Co-Operative is available to all current members and can be forwarded to you at your request. Membership of the Co-operative is open to all families with a member who has a disability, local service professionals and interested community members. All members of the Asperger's Support Groups have also been asked if they would like to join. Becoming a member provides making processes and showing your support of the Co-operative's ideals and services.

### **Interested in Joining the Board?**

Wanted – Professionals and parents from the community sector to come and join the Families in Partnership Board, all working towards positive outcomes for families.

If you are interested and would like to make a difference please contact us for a nomination form.

### **Kind Regards**

**Julie Howard**

**Administration Officer**

**Email: [coordinator@fip.org.au](mailto:coordinator@fip.org.au)**

**Phone: 4648 1593 or Mobile: 0400**

**481 520**

#### **Disclaimer:**

This newsletter is provided for information and awareness purposes only. People should make their own enquiries and judgement concerning any information, service or product contained within. The views expressed on this newsletter are not necessarily those of the FIP Co-operative Board, its staff or its members.

The newsletter will continue to be sent out via email & also in paper format to ensure that those who do not have access to the internet, are not disadvantaged. Hopefully the new format will continue to provide people with the information they need and be copied and sent onto other families that may benefit from reading it. The newsletter can be found on our website [www.fip.org.au](http://www.fip.org.au) under the News page. If you have access to the Internet and do not need to receive a paper copy of the Newsletter please let me know and we can both help the environment.

## Advocacy Workshops

These workshops are sponsored by Families in Partnership Co-operative and presented by Linda Margrie Communications. The Advocacy workshops are designed to give people:

- A basic understanding of the role of being an advocate
- Strategies and resources to become a successful advocate, and
- Skills in communication and dealing with difficult situations.

These workshops are **Free** and will be conducted at the Campbelltown Catholic Club in June, on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> & the 30<sup>th</sup> between 10am -3pm. It will be invaluable to those who have never been to these workshops and also to those that need a refresher course.

RSVP: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Childminding may be available – please contact FIP Ph: 4648 1593 or

Email: [coordinator@fip.org.au](mailto:coordinator@fip.org.au)

## Challenging Behaviours Workshops

Community Links Wollondilly and Brief Therapy Solutions are once again running the very much in demand workshops to help families better cope with children with challenging behaviour. Challenging and disruptive behaviour of children will be the focus of a series of workshops to begin on Thursday 30/7/2009 until Thursday 24/7/2009.

The Special Needs Family Worker for Community Links Wollondilly, Carmel Flavell, said the workshops will be presented by Dr. Steve Walker over a series of eight consecutive sessions, each session building on the previous. The series of eight sessions have been aimed to assist families experiencing the impact of challenging and

disruptive behaviours such as suspensions from school and aggression to family members. During one of these sessions, a visiting paediatrician will discuss current medications occasionally prescribed. For more information please contact Ph: 4683 3371 or ph: 4683 2776

## Asperger's Syndrome Support Groups

Meetings are still held in the second week of each month.

- ★ **Wednesday 10 am - 12 noon at the Coffee Club in Macarthur Square**
- ★ **Thursday 7pm - 9pm at the Harrington Park Community Centre.**

Parents themselves are facilitating the meeting on Wednesday and FIP are facilitating the meeting on Thursday. We are trying to organise guest speakers or information sessions for the night meetings. April's guest speaker will be Lesley Lee from Macarthur District Temporary Family Care and she will be available to answer any of your questions on the night

Please contact the FIP office for more information

Ph: 4648 1593

## Teen after School & Vacation Care

Northcott Disability Services Campbelltown Teen after School and Vacation Care Service will provide access to after school care and vacation care for teenagers with disabilities within the Macarthur area. Teenagers accessing the service will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful centre based and community based activities whilst engaging with their peers. For more information please contact Ph: 4640 8719 Fax: 4625 6389

Email:  
[macarthurcm@northcott.com.au](mailto:macarthurcm@northcott.com.au)

## Through the maze 2008 Edition

The association for Children with a disability NSW has provided the Co-operative with a number of copies of this invaluable resource for families who may have had their child diagnosed with a disability. It has a wealth of information and contacts in a wide range of areas that families face in raising a child, both now and later in life.

First developed and published some thirteen years ago this edition has been funded through the Department of Aging Disabilities and Home Care and is a great Handbook for all families and services working in the disability field.

If you would like a FREE copy from the Cooperative just contact the FIP Administration to enable one to be posted out or you can attend the Advocacy workshops where one will be given to each attendant. Alternatively you can go to [www.acdnsw.org.au](http://www.acdnsw.org.au) web site and download it in electronic form.

## Autism Spectrum Australia

South Coast School Art Show is holding there second annual Art show for Artists with Autism. They are inviting all clients who have autism to submit art work for exhibition or sale.

Where: North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club  
When: 23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> May 2009  
Cost: \$20.00 per artist  
You must register by phoning the school office  
Ph: 4285 2393 **before 9<sup>th</sup> April**

## Understanding Guardianship

### What is a guardian?

The Guardianship Act provides for the appointment of a guardian to make substitute decisions on behalf of a person who is aged 16 years and over, who has a disability and is unable to make their own decisions without support.

There are 3 types of guardians in NSW;

### Enduring Guardians

An enduring guardian is someone whom you have appointed to make personal or lifestyle decisions on your behalf in the event you are not capable of doing this yourself.

### Private Guardians

Private guardians are close family members and/or friends who are appointed by the guardianship tribunal to be the guardian of a person with a disability.

### The Public Guardian

The NSW Public Guardian is a public official who can be appointed by the Guardianship Tribunal to be the guardian of a person with a disability when there is no other person suitable or able to be the guardian.

For more information please contact:

Ph Toll Free: 1800 463 928

Email: [gt@gt.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gt@gt.nsw.gov.au)

WEB: [www.gt.nsw.gov.au](http://www.gt.nsw.gov.au)

## Official calls for disabled care levy

*An article by Adele Horin in the Sydney morning Herald February 19, 2009*

A TAX levy should be imposed on all Australians to fund lifelong care of people with severe disabilities the state's chief disabilities bureaucrat says.

Brendan O'Reilly, director-general of the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, has called

for a levy, similar to Medicare, to be in place within four years.

“It’s wrong that a person who is born with a health problem, say a hole in the heart, has a system that guarantees then access to services, but a person who is born with, or acquires, a disability dies not,” he said.

He said 6 to 8 per cent of Australians had severe or profound disabilities and most taxpayers would be willing to pay a small levy for their lifelong care. “My experience is that Australians want people who’ve suffered disabilities through no fault of their own to be well cared for and given opportunities,”

His call coincides with a recommendation by the Federal Government’s national Health and Hospitals Reform Commission for a Dedicare income levy of 0.75 per cent.

The NSW Government has faced abiding criticism over the lack of supported accommodation for people with profound intellectual disabilities.

To read the complete article, please go to <http://www.smh.com.au/national/official-calls-for-disabled-care=levy-20090218bgd.html>

## **Australian Government revision on helping Children with Autism Package.**

[Helping Children with Autism, Early intervention assistance.](#)

The early intervention funding under the Helping Children with Autism package is aimed at providing increased access to early intervention for children aged zero to six with an ASD.

The funding supports the delivery of multidisciplinary evidence based early intervention to facilitate improved cognitive, emotional and social development prior to a child starting school.

Families will use this funding package to access service providers on the [Early Intervention Service Provider Panel](#).

The eligibility criteria for children accessing the early intervention funding through the Helping Children with Autism package is as follows:

- All eligible children up to their sixth birthday will now have access to the early intervention funding of up to \$12,000 (up to \$6000 per financial year) regardless of whether or not they have commenced school.
- From the child’s sixth birthday until their seventh birthday, special consideration may be given which would allow continued access to the funding. This will be determined by an Autism Advisor on a case-by-case basis using national consistent criteria.
- Once a child turns seven years of age they are no longer eligible to access funding under the early intervention component of the package.

For more information please contact: The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Ph: 1300 653 227 (local call) cost

Web: [www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au) Or

Macarthur Early Intervention Services This is a provider of group or individual Speech & Occupational Therapists

Ph: 4628 9332

## **Auslan multimedia tool**

[Helps families learn sign language anywhere, anytime.](#)

The parliamentary secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, The Hon Bill Shorten MP, launched a new multimedia tool at the Royal Institute for Deaf and blind Children recently that will help hearing parents to communicate with their deaf child.

The RIDBC Auslan Tutor, an iTunes application developed by experts at the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC), contains short video clips of more than 300 Australian sign Language (Auslan) signs in context.

"Thanks to the pioneering efforts of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, the Auslan Tutor is an innovative resource which will greatly assist many families," Mr Shorten said.

The application has been designed for use on an Apple phone or ipod Touch. Users search the tutor for words or categories and then view a video clip of those words or categories and then view a video clip of those words being demonstrated in Auslan.

For more information about the RIDBC Auslan Tutor, please call 1300 131 923, email [auslantutor@ridbc.org.au](mailto:auslantutor@ridbc.org.au) or visit the RIDBC Auslan Tutor support page.

## **Playgroups for children with Autism spectrum Disorders**

Playgroup is for babies and young children 0-6 & their mums, dads, grandparents & other carers. It is unique in that adults attend with their children. Playgroups meet regularly at community venues in every corner of Australia. Community, parent-run playgroups have been running in Australia for over 30 years.

For more information and other early intervention services, please call Ph: 1800 171 882 (toll free)

Web: [www.playgroupaustralia.com.au](http://www.playgroupaustralia.com.au)

Email:

[info@playgroupaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@playgroupaustralia.com.au)