

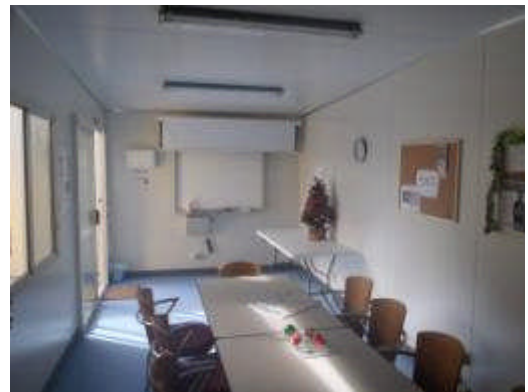
General Managers Report

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Christmas is just around the corner, this is a time when families and friends all come together and share a good time. It is also a time of reflection of what we achieved last year and what we plan to achieve for the next year. At ICG we seem to be continually adding new bits and pieces to our building, staff and programs.

We now have our new portable building installed which is used as our meeting room. We were fortunate to receive financial support from the Latrobe Capital Works Grants to purchase an electronic whiteboard and projector screen as well as some first aids kits for our Host volunteers. Heidi has now conducted 2 sessions in the new building for Volunteers.



We have been successful with other funding applications from RE Ross Trust & Helen Macpherson Smith Trust for implementing our marketing plan and Gippsland Bishops Family Foundation for Volunteer recruitment

this funding will partially fund a marketing specialist to implement our plan and increase the profile of Interchange Central Gippsland. With the generous support from ASA Personnel this position will be re-advertised shortly. With support from DHS we will also be adding an additional Roadies activity in the January school holidays.

I would like to say welcome to Shilo Wilson as the new Team Leader, Shilo will also be the contact person for all new referrals. We say farewell to Tamsin Russell from the Leongatha office. Cathy Brooker has changed her role to work 4 days a week and will now be responsible for the Respite Home & Community, Family Choices, Purchased Care and Social Support Programs from the

Leongatha office, we have been fortunate to have Wendy Milnes providing some additional assistance in the short term.

Our website is now being regularly updated, this is a great way for families to access up to date information that may be relevant to you. www.icg.asn.au.

I would like to thank our participants, families, volunteers and staff for the support towards Interchange over the last year and look forward to seeing you at the Christmas party or during the year

I would like to wish everyone and happy Christmas and New Year

Debbie Knight
General Manager

Team Leader's Report

My name is Shilo Wilson and I commenced in the position of Team Leader and Intake Worker with ICG on Monday 24 October, 2011. I am very excited to be working with ICG and I look forward to the opportunities and challenges that I will be presented with in this role. I would like to thank all of the staff at ICG for making me feel very welcome and sharing in their knowledge and expertise.



Since commencing in the position I have been kept very busy, by familiarising myself with the organisations policies and procedures, attending various meetings and trainings, speaking with many carers / families over the phone, liaising with numerous service providers, and getting to know the ICG staff and the wonderful programs they run.

A big focus of mine since commencing has been the intake process. More time is now being spent talking with carers / families interested in registering for ICG programs; this assists with collecting accurate and relevant information, and determining suitability for various ICG programs. The more detailed intake process also allows me to link carers / families in with other appropriate supports available in the community. My previous employments sees me in a good position to resource carers with information, and link them into community supports such as alternative respite options, carer support groups, support services, and activity and information days.

Over the next few months I will contact most families on the ICG register of needs (waitlist) to complete reviews. These reviews are conducted to ensure that the information we have at ICG is accurate and up to date, as this assists with the allocation of support and packages when vacancies become available. I look forward to speaking with many of you. I also look forward to meeting many of you at the upcoming ICG Christmas Party.

I would like to conclude my first report with an acknowledgement of all the carers and families that support a loved one with a disability. The caring role presents many challenges and I commend you on your dedication and the support you provide.

Shilo Wilson
Team Leader / Intake Worker



Office Closures Over Christmas Period

The Newborough and Leongatha Offices will be closed from the 24th December 2011 and reopen on the 3rd January 2012.

If you are requiring unplanned respite over this period please contact Latrobe Community Health Services on – 1800 242 696.

If you have an issue while caring for a child on behalf of Interchange please contact our On Call service which is also on – 1800 242 696.

ROADIES Recreation Program

Mt Baw Baw Snow Day

A fun-filled day was had at the snow, engaging in tobogganing and snow fights. The only complaint that everyone wished that more time was available to stay longer. Thanks to the volunteers who did a great job with the 'buddy system' in some busy areas. Thanks too to the staff and Roadies for contributing to a successful day.



Hazelwood Pondage

Sailing, fishing, and time at the park were included in the enjoyable activities at a day out at Hazelwood Pondage. It is a great location and the participants had fun joining in teams to complete activities. The teams were the 'rev heads', the 'sailing sharks' and the 'great whites'. It was a relaxing, fun-filled day and everyone joined in to have a good time. Prizes were awarded in the fishing activity and the frisbee was a well-used piece of equipment. Thanks to the staff, volunteers and Roadies for a fabulous day.



Walhalla

Walhalla is always a great destination for a relaxing day out. Everyone enjoyed the journey on the Walhalla train, which was followed by a tour of the Long Tunnel Mine. Unfortunately, time was too short to see the Erica flower exhibit but extra 'chill-out' time in the park was appreciated. We thank the Roadies, staff, and volunteers for their participation.



Caringal Scout Camp, Tyers Junction

Another full agenda of activities was planned for this 2 night stay including fishing, bushwalks, 4 Wheel Driving day tour, tenting out if Roadies chose, art & craft, games & cooking, music and dancing. The warmer weather certainly made outside activities more appealing.

The bush band Saturday night played for several hours & had enthusiastic participants stepping out the dance. We appreciate the participation of all staff, volunteers and Roadies who contributed to this weekend camp.



TV Program

Caringal Scout Camp, Tyers Junction

Activities on this camp included fishing, yabbing, the ropes course, bushwalks, song writing & karaoke with Phillip Chalker, a journey on the Walhalla Train & the Long Tunnel Mine tour, 4 wheel driving, tenting out if campers chose to, art & craft, games & cooking!! Wow!! Everyone had a very enjoyable time and we appreciate the efforts of all involved in this camp.



SOCIAL Support

Fathers Retreat

The Fathers Retreat was held at Rawson Village this year and 6 fathers attended. It was an action packed weekend. The fathers went 4x4 driving, braved the ghost tour and had a few games of Paintball. The weather wasn't too kind but the Fathers had a relaxing weekend. New friendships were made and everyone is excited about getting together next year.



Siblings Camp

The Siblings Camp was held at the Summit Camp in Trafalgar this year. We had 8 new families and 3 staff attends, and the weekend weather was beautiful. The children enjoyed The Flying Fox, The Zorb Ball, The Water Slide, The Army Tank and the Monster Challenges. Lots of new friendships were made. We thank LCHS for supporting this camp.

ICG's Annual Christmas Party

**HAVE YOU RSVP'd? The party will be held on 11th December 11am – 3pm.
For more information please call the office on 5127 7979.**

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Family Camp

The Family Camp will be held on the 20th -22nd April 2012. We will be staying at The Phillip Island Adventure Resort. This camp is run in a relaxed manner; and aim to be flexible in the planning of activities.

If you would like to attend, please register your expression of interest by the 2nd April 2012
please call the office on 5127 7979

Couples Retreat

With support from LCHS, Interchange is now offering a couples retreat for parents who would like a night away with another couple. This can also be modified to a few ICG couples having a meal together rather than the whole weekend activity. The idea is for parents to meet and form friendships with other couples. The criterion is that 2 couples go away over night and ICG can provide workers to care for their children in the family home.

This opportunity is for those who would prefer to go away as a couple than attend the Mothers or Fathers retreat.

If you are interested in the option of a couples retreat, please call **Cathy Brooker** on

PH: 5662 0925 or E-mail- cathy@icg.asn.au

Cathy Brooker

Social Support, Family Choices, RH&C, Purchase Care

ICG Family Liaison Officer

My name is Rika Delaney and I am a mum of 2 special needs girls. We live in Traralgon and have done so since 2006. One of my daughter's has reduced white matter of the brain causing global developmental delay and she is 11 years of age and my other daughter has Aspergers and ADHD and is 9 years of age. My eldest daughter is a student at a special school and my youngest is a student at a mainstream school. I am currently on the Board of Management and have been volunteering in the Newborough office and have now taken on the role as Family Liaison Officer at ICG as I feel that I have enough experience (although I still need to learn so much more) to assist other families with guidance or just to be a shoulder to lean on when needed. I am also part of the Carer Advisory Group with Latrobe Community Health Service. I am currently studying a Bachelor of Arts (Community Development) and when I have completed this I wish to take on the role of an advocate to assist parents as needed. Please feel free to contact me if you require any assistance on 0488 447 035.

HOST Program

Host Reviews & Promotions

I will be continuing to do 'face to face' reviews for families who have a child thirteen years old and under interested in being matched with a volunteer Host in all four shires over the coming months.

These reviews are really important to help with finding a volunteer Host for children. It is much easier to match children who I have met in person rather than just reading about them on paper.

Welcome New Host Volunteers!

We have been very lucky to have a few new Host matches starting up over the last few months. Three of those have been in Baw Baw Shire and one in Latrobe. We also have a new family of Hosts starting screening in Bass Coast, so that is very exciting news!

It is with great pleasure that I announce that our most recent Hosts to go through screening and get ready for matching are:

- **Julie and Milton Keeble**
- **Mary and Jim Tyrrell**

A very warm welcome to you all!

Host Volunteers - Don't forget your CPR updates!

Most people know that they need to update their First Aid Certificates every three years to keep them current, but did you know that you should also be doing an annual CPR update?

The update is usually completed in three hours and the cost for Host volunteers is covered by ICG.

Medication & Authorisation Booklets.

Another important reminder – a child's 'medication and Authorisation Record Booklet' (The 'pink' booklet) should be going with them on every visit to their Hosts and the emergency details and medication information should be kept up to date. If you are having any trouble with this, please contact me asap!

Have a Happy Festive Season!

Last but not least I wish all our wonderful Host Volunteers and matched families a Happy and Safe Festive Season. I hope everyone gets a bit of a break and a chance to recharge a little.

Heidi Kennedy
Host Program Worker

UnitingCare Gippsland Project

Interchange Central Gippsland has been fortunate to receive some funds from UnitingCare Gippsland to run a short term care project. The project aims to link families of children with disabilities residing in South Gippsland and Bass Coast shires to services and supports in the wider Gippsland community.

The group will most likely meet at the Leongatha Community House, with meetings held in February, March and April, 2012; I will advise of exact dates when they are confirmed. The group will have the opportunity to choose the guest speakers they wish to hear from. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided at each meeting.

If you are interested in registering for the project or would like to know more, please contact Cathy on Ph - 5662-0925 or e-mail cathy@icg.asn.au

Flexible Family Respite & Leisure Access

I have recently completed reviews with many families. Some positive changes have been made as to how some families have chosen to implement their package.

I would also like to welcome the new attendant care staff who have recently began working to support the families and young people on behalf of Interchange Central Gippsland. I would also like to thank all the existing staff for their continued dedication and hard work.

Unfortunately, a very small number of families are not able to make full use of their packages because of current difficulties matching their support needs with available support staff.

If you have any questions, ideas or issues about your package, please contact me at the Newborough office on 5127 7979. I'm usually here Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Alternatively, leave a message anytime via email: tim@icg.asn.au and I'll get back to you.

Tim Gallagher
Program Worker
FFR, Leisure Access

Family Choices, Respite Home and Community

I will be working as program worker for the Purchased Care, Family Choices and the Respite Home and Community care programs. I am enjoying working with and meeting the families who receive the much needed respite that Family Choices and the Respite Home and Community programs provide. If you have any questions please give me a call on 5662-0925 or E-mail me on cathy@icg.asn.au. We are nearly at the end of this year, Christmas is just around the corner, and I look forward to another busy year next year.

Cathy Brooker
Social Support, Family Choices, RH&C, Purchase Care

Upcoming Events

- 11 December (Sunday) – ICG Christmas Party
- 11 December (Sunday) - Roadies
- 10 – 13 January (Tuesday to Friday) – Teenage Vacation program
- 23 – 25 January (Friday to Sunday)- Roadies
- 27 – 29 January (Tuesday to Friday) – High Needs Camp
- 18 February (Saturday) - Roadies
- 24 March (Saturday) - ICG Roadies

Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Research

The Victorian Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission is conducting research into the experiences of students with disabilities in schools. Should you like to participate in this research, go to: www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

Complaints Compliment, Feedback

Interchange Central Gippsland Inc values feedback from participants and families, we have an effective policy and procedure for reporting, investigation and management of feedback. This includes compliments, complaints and general feedback.

Interchange Central Gippsland Inc (ICG) views consumer feedback as valuable information. Compliments reinforce to staff the value of the service provided, their vital role in service provision and acknowledge a job well done. Complaints and general feedback provide an opportunity to review and improve the quality of our service. Consumers and stakeholders have the right to complain and seek remedy for decisions that adversely affect them.

ICG is committed to resolving complaints quickly and fairly. We support the right of our consumers to have their complaints heard and actioned appropriately. We believe that all consumer feedback—both positive and negative—presents an opportunity for improvement.

Transparency and access

We are committed to making it easy for our consumers to give us feedback by:

- Consumers with an explanation of the feedback process
- Easy access to our complaints policy
- Assisting consumers to provide feedback
- Providing access to an interpreter, if preferred/required
- Access to Family Liaison Officer to assist in understanding from a family point of view
- Accepting feedback verbally or in writing
- Investigating and following up feedback with staff in a fair and just manner.

Responsiveness

ICG is committed to responding quickly and courteously to concerns raised by our consumers. Our complaints management procedure sets out recommended response timeframes for each type of complaint.

Objectivity, assessment, and action

ICG is committed to ensuring complaints are dealt with fairly and objectively. All complaints are treated confidentially, and complainants do not suffer any reprisal from ICG or its employees for making a complaint.

An appropriate staff member will investigate the issue and if necessary, complaints and/or complainants are referred to external agencies.

Responsibilities

Family Liaison Officer

The Family Liaison Officer is a member of the Board of Management, who is a parent of a child/children with a disability. The Family Liaison Officer may be contacted directly should a family feel the need to raise any issue that they may not feel comfortable to raise with a staff member or volunteer.

General Manager

The General Manager has the responsibility for ensuring that a system is in place for managing and reporting on feedback. When relevant, the General Manager may initiate further action in relation to specific feedback.

Staff

All staff within the organisation have a responsibility to report feedback received in a timely manner to their Team Leader /Coordinator/ Program Worker.

At Interchange Central Gippsland we see feedback as a way to ensure that we are providing a high quality service, all feedback assists us to continually improve our service.

Interchange Jean Simpson Memorial Award

It was a clean sweep for Interchange Western when Phillip and Belinda O'Meara and their two daughters Amy and Jessica accepted Volunteer of the Year, and Janet Petryk, Staff Member of the Year categories of the Jean Simpson Memorial Award, at the Interchange Victoria AGM in November.

The Jean Simpson Awards were presented by Australian of the Year 2011 and Patron of Interchange Victoria, Simon McKeon. A prominent investment banker and record breaking yachtsman, it is Simon's phenomenal advocacy for Australian and international charities that has earned him such recognition and respect. We all know so well the immeasurable value of the dedication and longstanding commitment to others who need assistance, in particular those families who have a child with a disability.

More than sixteen years ago Phillip and Belinda O'Meara and their two daughters began a host volunteer relationship that has had lasting effects on then five year old Kurt, who has Cerebral Palsy. Kurt is now very much part of a family with two sisters and his single mum has enjoyed the respite; it has given her time to work, study, and make friends.

To accommodate Kurt and make him feel appreciated the O'Meara's made changes to their home so that he had his own space, with his own belongings around him. He has spent weekends, holidays and even been for a cruise with the family. Since that first meeting, Kurt has spent more than 13,000 hours with his host family. He affectionately refers to Belinda as his 'Udder Mudder'.

Phillip has been an outstanding contributor to the Interchange Western Committee of Management since 2009. He has independently studied for the Cert IV in governance, in order to provide an even better service to Interchange Western.

In 2010 the family commenced another host relationship with Dylan, a young lad with complex care needs. They now have him to stay with them two weekends in every month.

Winning Staff Member of the Year, Janet Petryk, joined Interchange Western as a casual support worker in 2001. Her endless dedication and commitment to the families and children of Interchange has been inspirational. In her current role of Recreation Programme Assistant Coordinator Janet plays a significant role in every aspect of coordinating the wide range of activities such as movie nights, day activities, school holiday programs, camps, flexible respite and special events

Purpose of the Award

This Award was established to celebrate the life and achievements of the late Jean Simpson (1950-2002), her valuable contribution to Interchange Inner East, and to Interchange and the disability sector across Victoria

Through the Award, Interchange Victoria is able to recognise the excellence, dedication, long and outstanding commitment to the Interchange community, in both a paid and unpaid capacity.

The nominees include all Interchange staff and volunteers who are over 18 years of age and have been involved with Interchange for a minimum of five years.

Interchange Central Gippsland Inc would like to thank the following organisations for their valued sponsorship. We could not provide the level of service and programs we do without their support. **RE Ross Trust, Latrobe Community Health Service, Uniting Care Gippsland, Latrobe City, Bishops Family Foundation, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, ASA Personnel, Department Health - Home & Community Care Program.**



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