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Our office

18 Myers Street, Bendigo 3550

9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday

(03) 5441 2666

www.amicus.org.au

A message from our CEO

ANN-MAREE DAVIS

Hello everyone! Welcome to the final edition of the Amicus Exchange for 2020.

Many are glad to see an end to this year and it certainly has been one that we won't forget, having impacted each and every one of us differently. Most of us experienced extended isolation from friends and loved ones. Whether they didn't live with us, lived in metro Melbourne, in other states, or even overseas and were unable to come home, it was difficult to be apart.

We have welcomed babies into our families that we have not been able to meet, or had to postpone weddings, parties and celebrations. We have also had loved ones who may have been ill that we have not been able to see or care for and those we lost that we weren't able to say goodbye too.

For many it has been a year where we have had very little say in how we live and work which has been tough, and for some this has led to major life decisions. These experiences for some will take time to move on from, but as restrictions ease we can start to plan for what our lives look like in a 'COVID normal' world.

At Amicus we have finished a number of very large projects over the past few months and I thank all involved for their hard work. We have established our Pathways team, who many of our participants have now had the chance to work with when recommending their supports after COVID or after a review of their plan.

Our streamlined complaints process is now listed on our website and our first stage of implementation of Lumary is now almost complete. Last week we completed our audit against DHHS and ISO standards with a great result and I would like to thank all those involved in the audit and preparations. We have also received some great feedback from the auditor that will assist us as we prepare for our certification audit for the NDIS Standards in February.



As we look forward to 2021, we are very happy to be starting a new project called HomeLink that will support two young people to learn how to live independently in their own unit with a mentor living in a unit nearby.

We are currently working with DHHS to finalise details of who will be part of the program and we have already identified our HomeLink mentor. Haven, Home Safe have recently completed construction of some beautiful new units in Bendigo that will be the perfect start for these young people, and we are working with them closely on this exciting new project.

Work is also about to commence on construction of our two units at our former Cecil Street site and over the coming months we will be developing our policies and processes for participants who are interested in living there to apply and be selected. We will be busy early next year working on our strategic plan for the next few years and developing ideas for the future services that Amicus could deliver.

I would like to thank Team Amicus and our participants and families for their continued support during all of these challenges. I look forward to working with you in 2021 to make some great plans for the future. I wish you all a very special time with those you love over the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Cheers!
Ann-Maree

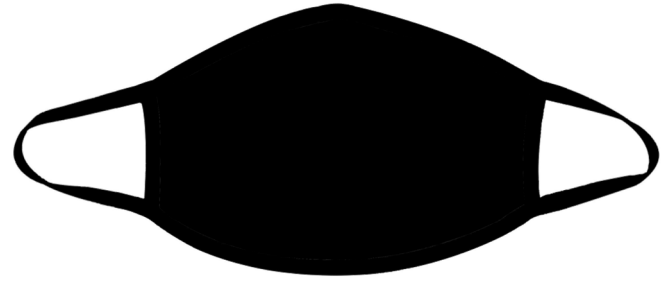
COVID-19 information and updates

CONGRATULATIONS VICTORIA!

We wanted to say congratulations to every Victorian for their hard work and sacrifice to help the state get on top of COVID-19.

After a long nine months, we are excited that we have moved to the last step of restrictions on the 'roadmap to COVID reopening' and we know that many of our participants and staff are too.

At Amicus we are extremely proud of our response as an organisation and that we had no staff or participants contract COVID-19.



REMINDER TO KEEP PRACTICING GOOD HYGIENE

It's vital to do everything you can to continue to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by remembering to wear your facemask in indoors public spaces, maintain good hygiene and social distancing by keeping 1.5m away from people in public.

To minimise the risk of contracting COVID-19 you should continue to:



Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating and after going to the toilet.



Avoid physical contact with others where possible (touching, kissing, hugging etc.).



Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser often.



Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and dispose of tissues.

Christmas and New Year office hours

DEPARTMENT CLOSURES

Amicus offices will be closed from 5pm Friday 18 December and reopen 9am Monday 4 January 2021.

Delivery of your services will continue in accordance with the holiday support arrangements you have put in place with your team. We will have a small number of staff working in Adult and Children's Services, Behaviour Support and Support Coordination during this time to assist with any queries or emergencies that arise.

Individual supports will continue over this period as requested so please make sure that you have all your holiday staffing arrangements in place.

Public Holidays

Christmas Day

Saturday 25 December, 2020

Boxing Day

Sunday 26 December, 2020

Public Holidays

Monday 27 to Tuesday 28 December, 2020

New Year's Day

Friday 1 January, 2021

Australia Day

Tuesday 26 January, 2021



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

We celebrated International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) on December 3. IDPWD aims to increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability. It's a day to celebrate the achievements and contributions of people with disability.

This year's theme for International Day of People with Disability is about creating conversations to challenge common perceptions of disability and help create a more inclusive Australia. We can work together to see all abilities and create an inclusive Australia.



AMICUS ANNUAL CALENDAR 2021

2021

Annual Calendar

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M						
January 2021						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
February 2021		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
March 2021		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
April 2021					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
May 2021						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
June 2021			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
July 2021				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
August 2021	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					
September 2021				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
October 2021					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
November 2021		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					
December 2021			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			

Public Holiday Adult Group Support Leave PD Day

*Please note Grand Final Public Holiday still to be declared but likely 24/9.

Adult Services End of Year Party

Amicus would like to acknowledge the wonderful people we support and say **GOODBYE** to the 'COVID Grinch' that was 2020! To do that we would like to invite you to attend a **COVID-safe outdoor event to reflect on the year that was and welcome the new year.**

When: Thursday 17 December 2020

Where: The 'Picnic Lawn' area, The Botanical Gardens
557-559 Napier Street White Hills

Time: 12:00pm - 3:00pm

What do I need to do next?

To book your spot (for you and your support person if required) and select your meal of choice for the day, please call Amicus reception on (03) 5441 2666 or email admin@amicus.org.au

Due to COVID-19 restrictions we need to confirm numbers and catering requirements by Friday 11 December 2020.

Numbers are limited so please get in early and remember you need to select your meal when you book your spot.

Meals

All food will be pre-packaged by the wonderful people at SGAE (Southern Grampians Adult Education).

Cold Drinks and Icy Poles will be provided on the day.

Hand sanitiser and face masks will be available on the day for the times when we can't maintain social distance.

If you need support on the day please bring your support person or family member– please include them in your number/s for catering purposes.

Lunch Options

Please select one for yourself and your support person when booking your spot.

- Gourmet lamb ad feta wrap with potato salad
- Gourmet smokey chicken and salad wrap with potato salad
- Gluten free lamb and feta wrap with potato salad
- Gluten free chicken wrap with potato salad
- Vegan option
- Vegetarian option

 **Adult Services**
End of Year Party here



Living the Values Awards

Each year we call for nominations for awards for our participants who have made achievements in their lives that reflect our values of **Self Direction, Individuality, Active Participation** and **Capacity Building**.

SELF-DIRECTION

Each person decides for themselves

Terry O'Shea

Terry is pleased to say his life is getting back on track after a rough start to the year. After a fall late last year and an extended stay in hospital, Terry also had to deal with the loss of his beloved mother.

We first met Terry when asked to provide him with support to move back into his home which required a bathroom renovation.

Terry admitted that his first few weeks out of hospital were hesitant as he wasn't sure what would happen but 'the new blokes who supported me did a darn good job', Terry told us. He is delighted with his new bathroom and couldn't speak highly enough of the great job that has been done!

Terry said 'the Amicus boys looked after me really well when I had to move out of home while the renovations were being completed'.

Once finding his feet, Terry has self-directed a lot of his supports by speaking up about who he wants on his team of support.

With the recent easing of restrictions it has enabled Terry to get back to his many friends around Bendigo, including the staff at his local bank. He hopes to get back to work at Peppergreen Farm at some time in the near future as well as get back to watch the mighty Bulldogs play in Melbourne in 2021. Terry told us he was barracking for Richmond in the AFL grand final, so we're sure he was happy with the result.



INDIVIDUALITY

Each person is an individual

Leigh

Leigh (11) had lived in a number of different placements until he moved back home with his mum 18 months ago. He has told us many times that he loves being home with his mum and that it's his forever home.

Leigh enjoys art and play therapy, where he likes directing roles and scenarios of play, and with his mum joining many of the sessions, it has them engaging well in just having some fun. In doing this, Leigh has made considerable progress and is now able to express how he is feeling and what is happening for him.

Starting at Kalianna School this year with a gradual increase in school hours he has been able to remain at school on a full time basis. Leigh loves school and he is engaged with all aspects of learning and the teachers commend him on his eagerness to learn in the classroom. The school has worked with Leigh, guiding and supporting him in learning appropriate social behaviour and connection with peers.

Leigh is developing a strong sense of self living with his mum and is seeing his siblings regularly. He understands who his family members are and the trusted adults in his life.

He is really happy engaging with Amicus support workers and enjoys the difference in skills they bring. He has been encouraged to explore different interests and hobbies and has participated in scouts, dance, swimming lessons, Auskick, cricket blast and aerial silks.

Over the last 18 months Leigh has developed a passion for the skate park, and with the help of his support staff has been able to learn the skate park etiquette and this has given the opportunity to further develop his social skills.

Leigh is learning to get his own breakfast and he is taking pride in doing his hair and with what he is wearing. He is supported to keep his room tidy, to do chores around the home and to look after his personal belongings.

Leigh looks forward to seeing the support workers and doing different activities with each of them, which has helped him to make huge progress over the last 18 months. Leigh and his mum appreciate the support from Amicus and the staff's commitment to both of them.



ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Each person should be in the community and proud of it

Oscar

Oscar has been engaged with Amicus since December 2018. He is 15 years old and lives with Type 1 diabetes.

Oscar requires routine and structure for his health needs which has enabled him to develop strong relationships and connections with his support workers. Thanks to education on healthy eating habits and behaviours, the change in Oscar has been remarkable.

Oscar is now on track with his health and wellbeing milestones, and is growing taller and developing accordingly for his age. His diet and exercise have dramatically improved and he can now confidently ride his bike for 10 kilometres.

Oscar now knows what foods he can eat and when he can eat them. Recent blood tests show that Oscar is in the perfect healthy range regarding his Diabetes management.

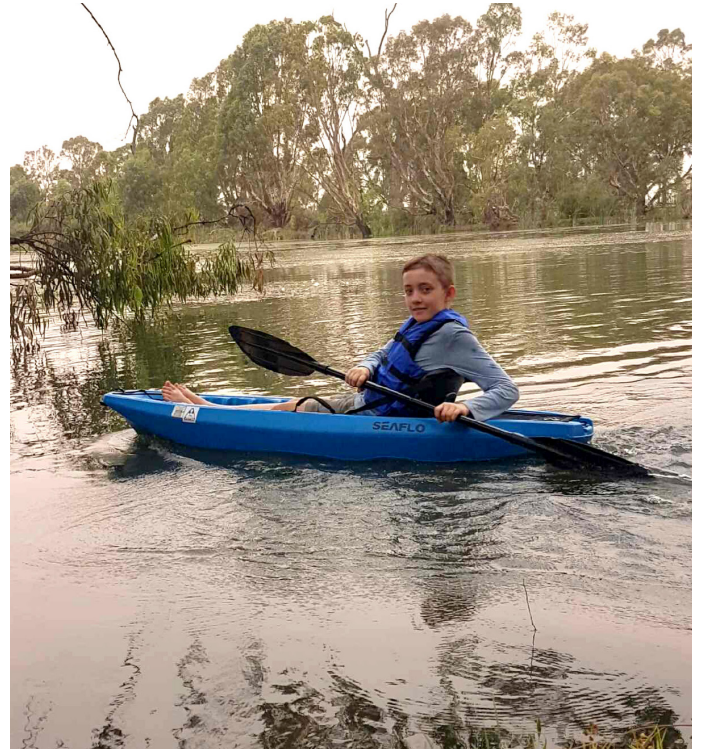
Oscar is involved with the BFLO School and is progressing well with his education. He is well supported and learning social skills and enjoys the company of his peers.

At home he walks and feeds the dogs, helps prepare meals which has helped him learn about his carbohydrate intake - a critical diabetic management skill. Oscar's support workers help him with social behaviour, perception, and cues when out in the community; encouraging and supporting him to connect with others.

Oscar has been encouraged to develop his interests and hobbies. He has explored a variety of new things including learning about trains, trams and cars, riding a bike, kicking a football, typing letters on an old typewriter, caring for dogs, learning to kayak, and mindful colouring - hours and hours of mindful colouring.

He is encouraged to develop his own sense of identity, choosing what he wants to wear and how he wants his hair cut. Oscar has grown in confidence and can now express his emotions and how he is feeling.

Oscar will continue to be supported by Amicus, learning new social skills, making connections in the community, engaging in school, managing his health, as well as making friends.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Each person has the opportunity to grow and learn new skills

Rodger Taylor

Rodger has made significant progress with working towards his independence in 2020. Due to COVID-19 the opportunity arose for Rodger to relocate to Melissa Court (our Respite House) in Castlemaine.

He has taken the change in his stride and made the decision to dedicate his time at Melissa Court as a learning curve towards his independence. He has taken control of his own personal care and chores around the house with minimal support.

Having celebrated his 21st Birthday at Melissa Court this year, Rodger was delighted to receive a special birthday cake and celebrate his day!



Rodger has a passion for remote control cars and has built quite a collection and thoroughly enjoys pulling them apart, changing parts and rebuilding them again. He has come in leaps and bounds in development of his fine motor skills.

To top off a wonderful year for Rodger, he recently received the great news that he is moving into a shared home later on in the year.

He is over the moon and is counting down the days until he moves in. He regularly visits his new home of a Sunday to have a roast dinner with his new house mates.

Rodger is forever grateful to all the Amicus staff that have worked alongside him over many years and is eagerly awaiting this new chapter in his life.

Announcements and updates

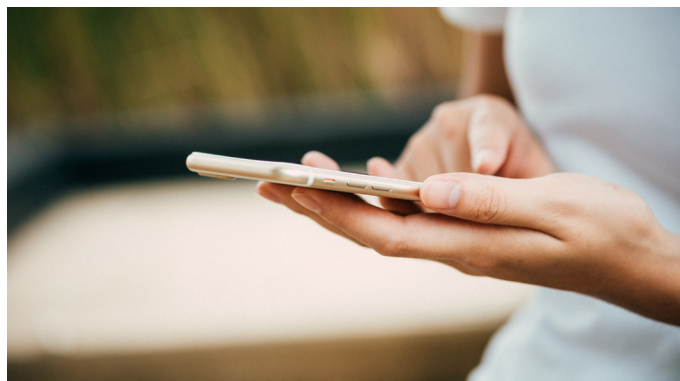
AMICUS AGM AND 2020 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE TO VIEW ONLINE

Our Annual Report was released at our virtual Annual General Meeting on 17 November 2020.

After an extraordinary 2020 with many challenges to face and overcome by all, we are happy to report unprecedented growth experienced right across our organisation. The Annual Report is now online to view at www.amicus.org.au

If you missed our virtual Annual General Meeting, you can watch it via our Facebook page.

Visit www.facebook.com/AmicusBendigo to find the Amicus AGM recording.



UPDATED PRICE GUIDES AND CODE GUIDE

The NDIA have released a new price guide and support catalogue which comes in to effect from 1 December. Whilst there are many updates to the new price guide, only a few of these changes may directly impact your Amicus supports.

The line item funding increases are focused on direct supports in categories such as personal care, social participation and short term accommodation. The line item funding increases are approximately 2.5% to account for an increase to the Equal Remuneration Order.

From December 5, your NDIS plan funding will automatically increase to account for the above changes and Amicus will adjust our pricing as agreed in your Service Agreement.

You do not need to do anything however for more information, questions or discussion, please see the NDIA website ndis.gov.au or make direct contact with your Local Area Coordinator or Support Coordinator. Alternatively, you can make contact with our friendly Amicus Pathways Team on **5441 2666**.

Community Inclusion and Capacity Plan 2020-21

Amicus is excited to share the launch of our Community Inclusion and Capacity Building Plan, to promote active participation and personal growth for people with disability of all ages and vulnerable youth in our community.

The plan will align with the Amicus vision of creating a welcoming community for everyone for who they are and what they bring. Along with supporting all participants to live their good life through:

- Having valued roles in the community
- Self-directing supports and opportunities
- Active participation to feel part of their community in their own way
- Capacity building to support participants to learn new skills

We are seeking involvement from participants or family members to join us in the development, delivery and implementation of this framework via a paid opportunity.

If this sounds exciting to you and you would like to be part of the development of the underpinning framework which will guide and inform Amicus in the development of participant plans and how we measure success, please contact our Pathways and Engagement Manager by Friday 18 December, 2020.

Nicole Engelmann

Pathways and Engagement Manager

5441 2666

Our first plan includes the establishment of the Amicus Community Inclusion and Capacity Building Framework to guide the development of future plans and how we measure our impact and success.

A Consultation Framework will be developed to engage with key stakeholders regularly to ensure that our inclusion and capacity building strategies are effective in meeting individual and community needs, increasing the sustainability of outcomes.



Inclusive Australia provides organisations across Australia with practical assistance and resources to further inclusion, including the following framework to guide organisations;

1. *Co-design programs with the people they are meant to serve*
2. *Offer two-way communication that allows for clarification*
3. *Find trusted community leaders such as GPs principals and religious leaders to have the more detailed conversations*
4. *Use multiple communication channels such as hotlines, radio, messaging platforms and forums*
5. *Remove assumptions around digital access and literacy, physical ability and confidence with language, authorities and institutions*
6. *Strengthen the agency of minority groups to offer up their own solutions*
7. *Enhance social connection when physical connection isn't possible*

The Pathways Engagement and Capacity Building Team will oversee the development of the framework and implementation of the plan internally and externally in collaboration with all Amicus Business Units.

Our Vision:

A community that welcomes everyone for who they are and what they bring.



Our Purpose:

Supporting people with a disability or disadvantaged of all ages to live their good life.



Our Values:

Self Directed

Each person decides for themselves

We believe that all people have the right to decide about the things that happen in their lives. We give information, support and opportunities for people to direct their own lives and the services they want from Amicus.



Individuality

Each person is an individual

We welcome and respect that people are individuals and have their own cultural background. At Amicus, this means people we support, their families, people who work here, volunteers and everyone in the community.



Active Participation

Each person should be in the community and be part of it

We believe that all people have the right to be part of the community they choose. This means we support people to; be involved in the community, feel part of the community and to add to the community in their own way.



Capacity Building

Each person has the opportunity to grow and learn new skills

We have an important role to make sure that everyone has the skills they need. At Amicus, this means the individuals, their families, people who work here, volunteers, people in the community and our partners. We give everyone the chance to keep learning.



Amicus updates

FAREWELL

We have said goodbye to a couple of Amicus staff in recent months. We would like to thank each and every one for their contribution and wish them all the best for their future.

Peter Fountain is unicycling out of Amicus and we want to acknowledge his significant contributions to Amicus particularly in his role as Community Inclusion Facilitator in the early days, our intake team and more recently as team coach for Self-Directed teams.

Susan, who has led our Support Coordination team for the past 3.5 years, left us in November due to health needs and we thank her for her part in establishing our service at Melissa Court and also establishing our Support Coordination team.

Natalie Hayes, in addition to her work in direct support, has supported the organisation in a variety of leadership roles including team leader, team coach and most recently SIL Coordinator.



Above: Peter Fountain

Mandy has been the first friendly face you see at Amicus when you visit and the voice on the end of our phone for almost three years. Sadly Mandy is leaving us for the sunny shores of Queensland and we wish her and her family the very best on this adventure.



WELCOME

The Amicus team has been expanding and we are so excited to welcome the new additions and the incredible expertise they bring to the team.

Nicole Engleman has commenced in the position of Manager for the Pathways Team which will incorporate Community Inclusion and Engagement.

Bonny Gutteridge has commenced in the Support Coordination Management role. Bonny joins the Amicus team after 15 years within the disability sector, working within the NDIA.

Rebecca Klein is our new Incident Reporting and Investigation Officer.

Kim Daniel has joined the team to take over the reins (and phones!) from Mandy and has spent the past few weeks training up in all things Amicus and we welcome her to the team.

Lisa Woods has commenced in the role of Learning and Development Officer. She has worked in the disability sector for the past two years.

Allisyn Carroll has moved into the new role of Executive Assistant to Corporate Services Manager, Cathy Gaskell. Ally joins the Amicus team after transitioning from a 26-year banking career with NAB.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Traditionally we would hold an all staff training day at the end of the year, but this year with COVID-19 restrictions we have needed to rethink how we run this day as our team is too big to come together on the same day.

This year we will hold our first PD day on Friday 18 December and the second on Monday 21 December and this will also mean that we can minimise any service disruption to you and maximise the number of staff who can attend.

If there are any impacts on your staffing we will notify you as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be put in place.

Morten's Adventures

Morten's self-care

The weather is warming up so Morten is enjoying more time outside for some much needed Vitamin D and relaxation. Another of Morten's favourite self-care strategies is colouring. Here are some fun activities to help you relax too:

- Go for a walk
- Call a friend
- Take a bath
- Read
- Dance like nobody's watching
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Eating healthily



You can find some great free colouring pages to print on this website: www.justcolor.net/kids



Morten gets into the footy spirit

Morten enjoyed his first footy colours day at Amicus. You can see by the Richmond gear, the team had a happy end to the season



Getting in the Christmas Spirit

After a big year helping everyone to express their feelings, Morten is very excited that Christmas is just around the corner!



MORTEN'S HOLIDAY BROWNIE RECIPE

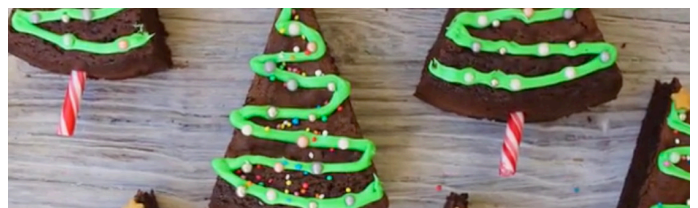
Morten also loves to bake at Christmas. Try Morten's favourite holiday brownie recipe!

Ingredients:

- **3/4 cup** butter (melted)
- **1 1/4 cups** sugar
- **2 tsp** vanilla extract
- **3** eggs
- **3/4 cup** self-raising flour
- **1/2 cup** cocoa powder (sifted)
- **1 tub** Betty Crocker vanilla icing
- M&Ms for decorating

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Line a round cake tin with baking paper and set aside.
2. In a bowl, beat sugar and eggs until light and fluffy.
3. Beat in the flour, melted butter, cocoa and vanilla until well combined.
4. Pour into cake tin and bake for 25-30 minutes.
5. Leave to cool and slice into eight wedges.
6. Place the vanilla icing in a ziplock bag and snip the corner off. Pipe the icing onto the wedges to cover the whole brownie.
7. Place a rice cracker at the bottom to create a tree stump.
8. Decorate with various decorations to your liking.



Participant updates



BOOK WEEK DRESS UPS

These two young people got right into the spirit of dressing up as Harry Potter for book week.

They have been working really hard towards their schooling and being a part of book week was a fantastic achievement for them. But most importantly they had FUN!!



HEALTHY HARRIET

Harriett recently has been working on her healthy eating and healthy choices.

Harriett is very proud of herself and her team are also just as proud.

Here is Harriett with an Asian style Greek salad that she helped to prepare. Looks delicious!



FLEUR MAKES A MOVE

Fleur wanted to move to Bendigo to be near family and better supports for herself and her children.

This year, despite COVID-19, two kids, two dogs and a move of over 300 km, she made it! Fleur showed amazing determination to overcome the difficulties of moving in such a stressful time.

Fleur is looking forward to taking advantage of all that Bendigo can provide.



HAPPY 50TH MARIANNE

Support workers Karen and Ebonie have been secretly coordinating with Marianne's husband to surprise her for her 50th birthday.

The surprise was perfectly planned and Mary had some friends and family in attendance as well as support workers Karen, Ebonie, Jillie and Kat.

Looks like lots of fun!



JOE IS SETTING GOALS

Here is Joe with his Behaviour Support Practitioner Georgie, and his strategies on the wall. Joe is about to commence sessions to develop skills to manage his emotions.

Joe is keen to develop skills so that he can achieve his NDIS goals, especially meeting new people, building relationships and engaging in the community more.



ANOTHER FUN DAY IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

When you work hard you can achieve your goals and for this young man, it was going on the MV Mary Ann for the first time.

He spent many weeks placing stickers on a calendar with each sticker getting closer to a cruise on the mighty Murray River.

After many months of the river being closed, he finally cruised down the river on the boat with his support worker. He spent time on the back deck and even watched the Captain sail the boat along the water.



HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LIVE THEIR BEST LIVES

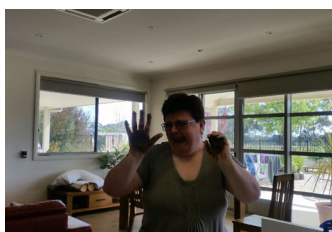
This young lady had a goal to get her Ls and last week she succeeded!

She put in the hard work of studying and is extremely excited to be able to learn to drive with the help of her L to P mentors.



COOKING UP A STORM

Sarah and Rodger had so much fun making rum balls with their support workers that they wanted to show the world. They look delicious!



CARDS IN THE PARK

Even though participating in an organised extracurricular activity hasn't been possible during COVID-19 restrictions, that doesn't mean we can't do fun things!

As a way to enjoy each other's company, some participants organised to play cards in the park whilst enjoying some sunshine.



CUDDLE THERAPY

John recently enjoyed the company of Dash and Halley for some pet therapy.

Everyone's looking very content!



Seasonal health information

HAVING A FIRE PLAN AND PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY NOW COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

Last summer was one of Australia's worst fire years on record, so it is more important than ever to make sure you have a fire safety plan ready.

During an emergency such as a bushfire, it is hard to think clearly. You may forget important things or waste valuable time deciding where to go.

There are some simple steps you can take to get ready in preparation for the bushfire season:

- Learn about what fire danger ratings mean and check them every day during the fire season.
- Make your fire plan and talk with your family about what you will do. Just as every family or household is unique, every plan will be different.
- If you live in a regional area at risk of bushfires or grass fires, be prepared to leave early on very high-risk days or if a fire starts. It is the safest option.



Visit the Victorian Government website for more tips on how you can plan and prepare for bushfires:

www.vic.gov.au/plan-and-prepare



ARRIVAL OF SUMMER

Make sure to protect yourself and your skin from the summer sun by following these sun smart tips.

If you are heading outside, always apply sunscreen every two hours, even if it's a cloudy day.

Ultra Violet levels can still be high even when the temperatures are low and it doesn't feel like a day you could get sunburnt. You can check the UV levels in your local area on the SunSmart website or via the free SunSmart app.



Slip on SPF30 or higher sunscreen and apply every two hours.



Slap on a protective broad brimmed hat.



Slide on wrap around sunglasses that comply with Australian standards.



Slip on sun protective clothing.



Seek shade where possible.



STAYING SAFE IN THE HEAT

The scorching summer heat can be hard on our bodies, and can even lead to serious medical complications, especially for elderly people, young children, pregnant women and people with a medical condition.

As it heats up this summer, it's important to make sure you and your loved ones stay safe.

Here is our easy summer checklist to help you survive the heat this season.

Cool down

- Stay out of the sun during the hottest part of the day.
- Spend as much time as possible in cool buildings. Block out the sun at home during the day by closing curtains and blinds.
- Dress yourself and those in your care in light, loose-fitting clothing.
- Use wet towels, put your feet in cool water or take a cool shower if you're feeling too warm.
- Know your body's best cooling points, such as your wrist and neck. By applying ice cubes wrapped in a towel to these pulse points, you'll cool down quicker.
- Avoid intense activities like exercise, manual labour and gardening.

Plan ahead

- Keep up to date with weather forecasts.
- Cancel non-essential outings.
- Plan essential activities for the mornings and evenings.
- Stock up on food, water and medicines so you don't have to go out in the heat.
- Visit your doctor to check your medicines need to change during extreme heat.
- Check that your fan or air-conditioner works well; have it serviced if necessary.
- Prepare for power failures or emergencies. Check you have a torch, battery-operated radio, fully charged mobile phone and battery power bank, non-refrigerated food, medications, and drinking water.

SURVIVE THE HEAT

Heat kills more Australians than any other natural disaster

- DRINK WATER**
Even if you don't feel thirsty, drink water. Take a bottle with you always.
- HOT CARS KILL**
Never leave kids, older people or pets in cars. The temperature inside a parked car can double within minutes.
- KEEP COOL**
Seek out air-conditioned buildings, draw your blinds, use a fan, take cool showers and dress in light and loose clothing made from natural fabrics.
- PLAN AHEAD**
Schedule activities in the coolest part of the day and avoid exercising in the heat. If you must go out, wear a hat and sunscreen and take a bottle of water with you.
- CHECK IN ON OTHERS**
Look after those most at risk in the heat – your neighbour living alone, older people, the young, people with a medical condition and don't forget your pets.

For more information visit the Better Health Channel. Call NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24 or see your doctor if you are unwell. In an emergency, call 000.

SURVIVE THE HEAT
Visit betterhealth.vic.gov.au

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VICTORIA
State Government

Drink plenty of water

- Keep a full drink bottle with you
- Take small sips of water frequently
- If your doctor normally limits your fluids, check how much you should drink during hot weather.

Check on others

- Keep in touch with friends and family who may need help daily during extreme heat
- Offer to take them somewhere cool if they're unable to stay cool in their home.
- If you see symptoms of heat-related illness, seek medical help. Call **000** in an emergency.

Summer Community Events

SKY CASTLE

14 November - 14 December, 2020

Now, with Melbourne reopening, it's time to mosey through a giant inflatable version instead. Federation Square will become home to a luminous installation comprising a cluster of colourful arches — as created by multidisciplinary studio ENESS.

Location: Federation Square, Melbourne CBD

Time: 7:30am - 11:30pm daily

Price: Free



JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL

Friday 4 - Monday 14 December, 2020

Every year, the Japanese Film Festival takes over cinema screens across Australia. But, due to the global pandemic, the annual cinematic event will look a little different this time around, returning for its 24th year as a digital festival called JFF Plus. So, warm up the popcorn and get ready for ten days of Japanese flicks that you can catch from the comfort of your couch.

How to Watch:

Japanese Film Festival website www.watch.jff.jp/

Price: Free



VIRTUAL SANTA IS COMING TO LANSELL SQUARE

Wednesday 9 - Sunday 20 December, 2020

Ring! Ring! It's Santa dialling in from the North Pole to speak to all his wonderful friends at Lansell Square. It's never been easier to visit Santa in the North Pole! Visit Santa's lounge room and say hi to Santa live streaming from his workshop!

Bookings are essential to keep everyone safe! Simply book a 10 minute Zoom session and arrive at Santa's lounge 5 minutes before your session. Bookings open from Wednesday 25 November, 2020 from 9am.

Location: Lansell Square Shopping Centre (next to Cotton On, near centre entry)

Bookings: www.meetvirtualsanta.com/lansell-square

Time: 12-4pm daily

Price: Free



VISION AUSTRALIA CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Thursday 24 December, 2020

Whilst sadly the 50th anniversary of the Bendigo Rotary Club's Carols by Candlelight has been postponed until 2021, you'll still be able to enjoy the tradition with Vision Australia.

How to Watch/Listen: Either watch the television show on Channel 9 or on the radio via 3AW and Vision Australia Simulcasts.

Time: 8:00pm

Price: Free



NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS

December 31, 2020

While the Melbourne and Bendigo New Year's fireworks have been cancelled, Sydney has been given the go-ahead. You'll be able to watch these live via the major television networks.

How to watch: Via the major television networks

Price: Free



**Please follow us on our Facebook as we will be updating
with the latest events as we get confirmation of them occurring**