



SKILLS TO ENABLE PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES Newsletter

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Sharing Stories | 1 |
| STEPS Skills Program Reports | 2 |
| ♦ Cherside | |
| ♦ Buranda | |
| ♦ Centenary | 3 |
| ♦ Toowoomba | |
| ♦ Brisbane West | |
| Network Group Reports | 4 |
| ♦ Young ABI Brisbane North | |
| ♦ Bayside | |
| ♦ Ipswich | 5 |
| ♦ Buranda | |
| Network Group Reports Cont'd | 6 |
| ♦ Browns Plains | |
| Regional visits | 6 |
| Brain Injury Awareness Week | 7 |
| Leader Training | 7 |
| How to Join the STEPS Program Facebook page | 8 |
| Leader Training | 8 |
| STEPS Program Network Groups in Queensland | 8 |

From the Manager

The STEPS Program is in full swing with several Skills Program completed and many underway. Many of our STEPS Program Network Groups have been very active and busy.

The NDIS is starting to roll out among many communities in Queensland. See our article about some tips to help with applying for the NDIS.

Brain Injury Awareness week is just around the corner, so if any groups are keen to be involved please let us know what you are up to.

Don't forget that we welcome reader contributions, so if you have something, just send it in to us at STEPS@health.qld.gov.au.

Sue

Sharing Stories

Reece Crawford

Reece Crawford is a member of the Brisbane North STEPS Network Group. He found confidence and friendship from the STEPS group. Reece recently competed in the Pine Rivers Charity Fun Run Half Marathon to raise awareness of brain injury and raise funds for the Queensland Brain Institute.

His story was recently published in the Quest Newspaper in June.

Reece Crawford, was driving home from work on his scooter in August 2014 when he was hit by a car and knocked off the bike.

The crash left him in a coma and his ability to walk was taken away in the blink of an eye.

"I spent three months recovering in hospital and relearning the basics and have been working extremely hard to find a new normal in life," Reece said. "But every day brings about a new challenge or something to be grateful for."

Reece spent the next two months relearning how to walk and, over the next two years, he relearned how to run. "Before I sustained this -injury, I wasn't even aware that it was possible to injure your



brain," he said. "For me now, it sometimes feels like there's a Rubik's cube in your head. The more you try to sort it out, the messier it gets. You question your every move."
Traumatic brain injury is known as the invisible -disability, but even though it often cannot be seen, it has far-reaching effects.

Mr Crawford said he wanted to participate in the fun run to raise awareness of brain injury and raise funds for the Queensland Brain Institute at the University of Queensland.

"My family and I have suffered immensely due to brain injury," he said. "I hope there can be more understanding into brain -injury and a more targeted approach towards treatment and rehabilitation."

I have now found employment as a physiotherapy assistant with RBWH, helping people facing their own health battles. It has been a bumpy road along the way, with my previous employer demanding my resignation because I couldn't work with the ability and pace that they demanded. I love my new job, I am accepted by my new colleagues who give their all to help me.

STEPS Skills Program Reports

Chermside by Nick Johnson & Jacqui Izzard

We have just wrapped up yet another successful STEPS Program in Chermside.

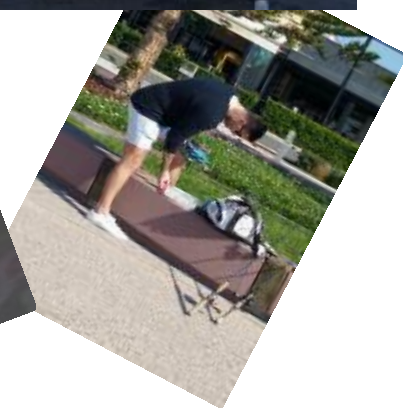
The group had great dynamics and everyone seemed to get along well and contribute evenly to all of the discussions.

We used the 'mindful eating of chocolate' again in week three, and again, it was extremely successful. Jackie has really re-invented mindfulness to something enjoyable and satisfying!

For our break-up activity, the group came up with a lot of great

ideas. A few members wanted to go fishing, so we came up with the fantastic idea of going to the Redcliffe Jetty so everyone could do a bit of fishing. Nobody was lucky enough to catch a fish, so we had to duck across the road for fish and chips for lunch.

Everyone had a great time and it was wonderful to see so many smiles on peoples' faces!



Buranda by Maria Hoogstrate

The group kicked off in March 2017 and was quick to form a circle of trust.

The STEPS Program group provided a unique and important way for each of the 8 participants + me and Cathie to learn about ourselves and our relationships, to gain confidence, develop new skills and abilities, and to give and get the support and feedback we need .

Some themes for the group emerged for the group and included Linking and Inspiring.

Linking in the form of group members that share the same concerns were able to encourage each other to work together.

Inspiring each other weekly with quirky and powerful quotes that we can use and draw on as individuals living with a brain injury.

Some of the inspirational gems of wisdom from the group are listed below.

"Feelings are not facts!"

"This too shall pass"

"If you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely"



Centenary

The Centenary STEPS Skills Program started on Thursday 4th May and was held at a great venue, Centenary Uniting Church Hall.

It has been a number of years since a group was held in the Centenary area so it was rewarding to finally be able to offer a program. The group was co led by Peer Leader, Elaine Trotman and STEPS Program Coordinator Tanya Ash-

ton. 8 participants attended the program and over the 6 weeks got to know each other and share experiences. The group held there week 6 break up at the Centenary Tavern and many members are looking forward to joining the monthly Centenary Network Group. Congratulations Sharon, Darryl, Tracy, Grahame, Sandra, Valda, Brenda and Anne.



Toowoomba by Mary-Ann Garrahy



We have had another successful STEPS Program in Toowoomba starting in May and with 10 people completing the course. During the course the participants enjoyed some STEPS Program cupcakes made by Mary-Ann and her daughter (as pictured here).



As our final meeting the group organised a morning tea at Downs Steam, where we all enjoyed a wonderful morning tea of scones, jam and cream.

We then toured the facility which is a restored railway station. The highlight was viewing the Dreamtime carriage as shown here.

This is a carriage painted by an aboriginal artist depicting the story of a day in the dreamtime from sunrise to sunset. They played a recording of the artist explaining the story of his paintings. Absolutely fantastic, we were told its the only one in the world.



Brisbane West



The views from Ithaca Hall

The Brisbane West STEPS Skills Program was held at Red Hill and commenced on 19th April.

The program was led by Peer Leader, Danny Trestrail and Social Worker, Communiify Dominic Hale.

This was the first time we had run in the Red Hill area and appreciated the easy location of Ithaca Hall.

Thank you and congratulations to the 5 participants, Ben, Jo, Louise, Claudia and Andrew who attended and completed the program. We look forward to seeing you at a local network group soon.



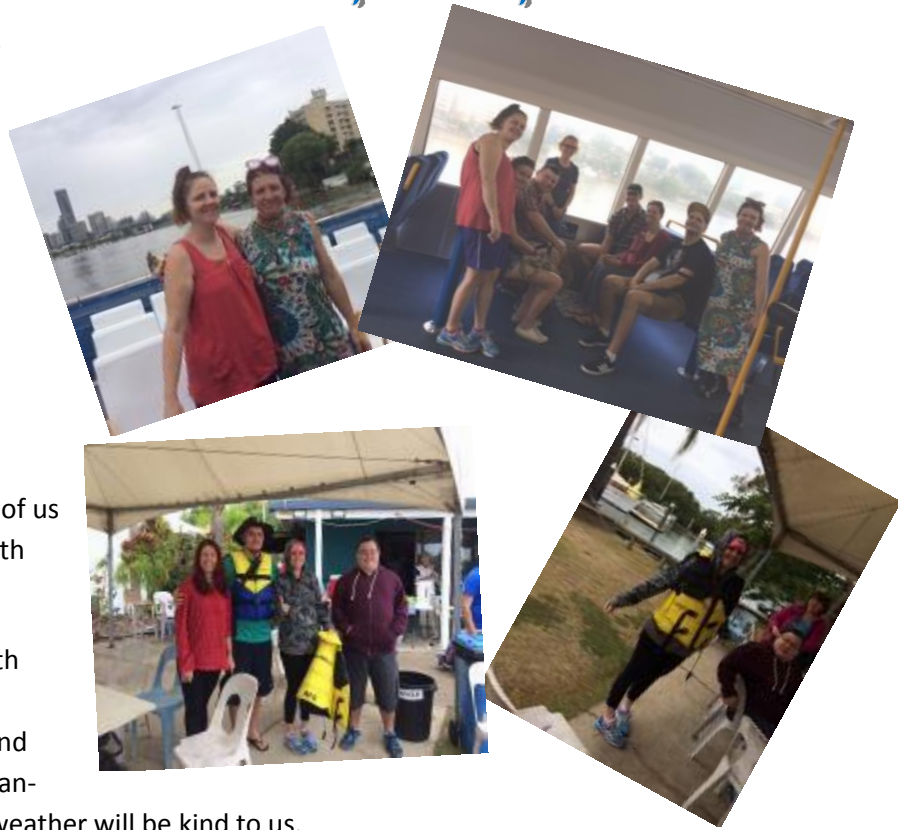
STEPS Network Group Reports

Young ABI Brisbane North

The Young ABI Network group meets monthly and alternates between meeting at a local church hall for a social catch up and group discussion and an outing into the community.

This year we have done a trip from Southbank on the City Cat to Portside. The group enjoyed the sights of Brisbane city from the water and then enjoyed lunch together at Portside. This was a big adventure for many of us as we had to individually find our way to South Bank and find the group. But we did it!

We have also done our first sailing outing with Sailability at Shorncliffe. Unfortunately, the weather was not very conducive for sailing and was cancelled. But we are all keen to give it another go later in the year and hopefully the weather will be kind to us.



Bayside Network Group

What is everyone doing, I hear you ask?

The Bayside Network Group enjoyed a BBQ lunch with staff and patients of Jasmine Unit for the June catch up.

Matthew McCauley, Jasmine kindly organised a guest presenter who led us all in some Laughter Yoga exercises.

Laughter yoga provides another opportunity to relax the body and mind through short voluntary laughter exercises. Although we were all a little un-

sure at the beginning everyone participated, and we were surprised by how much we enjoyed it.

The Yoga followed a shared lunch with each member contributing, a very enjoyable day.



Ipswich Network Group



Boggo Road Gaol Tour

In May the Ipswich Network Group ventured to Woolloongabba to participate in Boggo Road Gaol Tour. The group met

first at a local coffee shop and then walked the short distance to the Gaol. Many jokes had about whether we be let out, but luck was on our side and we were. Enjoy some feedback from one of the participants.

One of the most interesting 1.5 hours I have spent. The gaol has many funny, sad but interesting stories you could ever hear. Transport is very easy to get to the gaol. I left Ipswich, changed trains at Roma St station. Walked 6 or 7 minutes to the gaol. Great day out for anyone of any age. Dave



Buranda

In May the Buranda Network Group organised to catch a train from Roma Street Station and travel together to Cleveland to enjoy lunch at the Raby Bay Marina.

Before the catch up the group planned:

- Which train station and platform to meet at
- Travel time – 1 hour train journey each way
- What time they would leave and approximately get back
- Prepare for an outing that would be longer than usual (allowed 4 hours)
- Look at the distance and accessibility from the Cleveland station to café
- Arrange alternative transport if needed

Ten members enjoyed the outing, with glorious spring weather. The walk to the marina is a few hundred metres and is on flat accessible ground. There are a number of cafés and restaurants located at the marina and close car parking if needed.



Buranda Network Group enjoying the sites of Raby Bay



STEPS Network Group Reports Cont

Browns Plains by Michelle Owens



Browns Plains Network group recently participated in a planned day out sailing with Sailability, an organisation that caters for people with a disability.

We had amazing weather and a wonderful day. It basically consists of meeting up at the club which is at Manly harbour. Whoever wants to have a go is helped to get organised (life jackets) and then taken down the ramp to get into a dinghy. The most beautiful thing is the dinghy is so close to the water and it is so amazingly peaceful when you're out on the bay.

I'm such a chatterbox and I had a super volunteer this time and we had a awesome talk on the sail. For those that feel the dinghies are too close to the water, there is the option of going in the larger boat with some Others. All in all a magical day out.



Combined Cairns and Atherton Network Group meet-up

Brain Injury Groups come together.

Cairns and Atherton STEPS Program Brain Injury groups met together for the first time at the Wild Bean Cafe, Cairns Botanical Gardens on Thursday the 18th May.

The Atherton group including Ashley, Louise and Pam We even had a new lady come from Malanda, as she saw it in the newspaper! Her son has a Brain Tumour.

We really enjoyed the food and service, as well as catching up and meeting up with new people with different types of Brain Injuries and sharing stories and information.

Through the Program and Group meet ups, we aim to improve community life for people with ABI and their families, by connecting people together and fostering a sense of strength and ability.

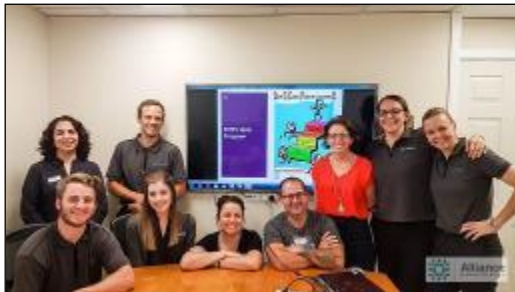
Atherton Peer Leader Louise Anderson-Clemence said "This group and the program have helped me so much! Working through the book I learnt how to deal with stress, managing my injury, making goals, what is appropriate in a social setting and understanding what my brain injury is." Miss Anderson-Clemence has been diagnosed with Post Concussion Syndrome by a Neurologist and confirmed by a Neuropsychologist and has been unable to work since June 2012 when she fainted on a plane, hitting her head multiple times. "I always look forward to going to the monthly network group meet ups, as it's great being around people who understand and are supportive. I also consider these outings as cognitive rehabilitation for my brain. I look forward to meeting the Cairns Group on Thursday." she said.

Regional Visits by Tanya

Townsville

Gladstone

During the week on June 5th, I was very fortunate to travel to Townsville and facilitate a 2 day Leader Training for staff and volunteer at Alliance Rehabilitation. The staff at Alliance Rehab has embraced the STEPS Program with support from their management team and hope to lead a 6 weeks STEPS Skills Program later in the year. Stay tuned for the dates.



Following on from Townsville I travelled to Gladstone to provide an update to training to enable two of STEPS Program Peer Leaders to co-lead a STEPS Skills Program in Gladstone before Christmas this year. This follows the partnership with community health, Gladstone who are supporting one of their community nurses to complete the 2 day leader training and co-lead a future skills program.

On Thursday 8th June I was also able to attend the Gladstone Network Group which is held in the Gladstone Community Hub a wonderful accessible venue open to community groups. It was so helpful to be able to meet members, put faces to names and hear about the group and what it means to them. Thank you to Joyce, Sharyn and Pat, Network Group Leaders for welcoming me and for your commitment to supporting the STEPS Program in Gladstone. The beach photo above is on Barney Point, a regular spot that the Gladstone Network Group meets at for morning tea. The second photo is from the lookout in Gladstone, the north did put on beautiful weather for me.



Brain Injury Awareness Week

Leader Training

We provided STEPS Program Leader training program in Brisbane in May with Nambour on 22 September to workers in our new service partner, SCILS (Sunshine Coast Independent living Service) . Earlier this month, training was offered in Townsville. If you are interested in STEPS Program leader training for your local community, please contact us.

How to Join STEPS Program Facebook page



Leader Training

STEPS Program Network Groups in QLD



We have active Network Groups in the communities below:

Atherton, Biloela, Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Fraser Coast Hinterland, Gladstone, Gold Coast, Mackay, Maroochydore, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Townsville, Yarraman, Yeppoon.

Greater Brisbane: Bayside, Brisbane Central, Brisbane North, Browns Plains, Caboolture, Centenary, Ipswich, Logan North, Mt Gravatt, Redcliffe/North Lakes, Taringa Young ABI Brisbane South, Young ABI Brisbane North.

Check out our website for full details for any group
www.health.qld.gov.au/abios/steps/asp/steps_networkgroups

STEPS Program Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service (ABIOS)

PO Box 6053, Buranda 4102
Ph: (07) 3406 2311 or 1300 727 403 (outside
Brisbane— local call costs from a fixed phone line)
Fax: (07) 3406 2399
Email: STEPS@health.qld.gov.au