



Possibilities

Edition 4

Life's possibilities are endless with Lifestyle Solutions

Jacob finds his niche

For 27 year old Jacob from Drewvale, Queensland, Lifestyle Solutions gives him a great opportunity to showcase his many talents and develop new interests.

"We've supported Jacob for almost five years and he's a very engaging young man," said Julie Corry, Lifestyle Solutions' Allawah House Respite Facilitator.

"We'd always end up talking about AFL when he visited our Beenleigh office and when I suggested he might like to run our office footy tipping competition he jumped at the idea."

"He and his Support Worker, Graham Mayer, quickly got things up and running. They did such a good job they're now also running the NRL tipping competition and everyone's enjoying the friendly footy rivalry."

"It's no secret that Jacob is a huge Geelong Cats fan and we've enjoyed helping him attend the Cat's games in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast."

Allawah House, Lifestyle Solutions' friendly and supportive respite home in Logan, offers Planned Respite Support and Emergency Respite Care.

"It's a positive, inclusive environment where people can learn new skills and develop their interests with supports and services tailored to meet their specific needs and goals," said Julie.

The centre also runs a Flexi Respite Program for day visitors which Jacob regularly attends.

"The popularity of *MasterChef* inspired us to start our cooking program and it's ignited Jacob's passion for food and cooking. His carrot cake is sensational and he makes wonderful sausage rolls."

Julie said the team loves introducing people to new activities in the community.

"We recently introduced Jacob to sailing through *Sailability* and he's also tried his hand at plastering."

"We support him going to the movies and bowling and we're looking forward to helping him enjoy more new experiences — and seeing where the Cats end up on the ladder," said Julie.



Jacob loves supporting the Geelong Cats.



Lifestyle Solutions®
pioneering change for good

NDIS UPDATES

Northern Territory

Alice Springs is gearing up for the NDIS to rollout for accommodation services. Meetings between people we support, Lifestyle Solutions staff, guardians and family members are underway to ensure that plans are in place prior to the rollout.

In Darwin, accommodation participants are already in the process of implementing their plans, with meetings being held among support coordinators and guardians to get these plans underway.

Western Australia

Lifestyle Solutions has been assisting in the training and information dissemination around transition to the WA NDIS for participants, families and carers in the Pilbara Region. Training for staff commenced at the end of September with a series of forums held.

New South Wales

The first phase of the NDIS rollout in South Western Sydney is commencing with accommodation. Planning has been underway with families and participants preparing for their meetings.

A Disability Links Expo was held in Armidale on Wednesday 13 September and in Tamworth on Thursday 14 September. Those attending the expo took the opportunity to talk

to Lifestyle Solutions staff about our broad range of supports and services.

Queensland

Some areas of Queensland have brought forward their NDIS rollout and participants in Northern NSW and Southern Queensland are having their NDIS planning meetings. Staff from Lifestyle Solutions are assisting with meetings and helping people to understand plans and the implementation of plans once received.

More information sessions are being planned for Queensland, NSW and Victoria and these dates, times and venues will be placed on our website as soon as they are organised.

Support Coordination

Do you have Support Coordination included in your plan? If not, talk to our experienced Support Coordinators who can advise you on plan reviews, plan implementation and sourcing alternate supports.

For any enquiries, information or assistance please talk to your local facilitator or contact our Intake Team.

**Phone 1800 NDIS 4 U
1800 634 748**

**Email
enquiry@lifestylesolutions.org.au**



Disability Supports

Lifestyle Solutions is a registered NDIS service provider.

We offer the following NDIS supports in all states and territories.

- Coordination of support,
- Assistance with daily living,
- Travel and transport,
- Assistance with increased social and community participation,
- Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) and SDA Support Coordination,
- Improved living arrangements,
- School leaver employment supports,
- Improved relationships, health and well-being, learning, life choices and daily living,
- Finding and keeping a job (Tasmania – DES, Northern Territory – ADE),
- Early intervention support.

Contact us for additional supports and services.

Lifestyle Solutions celebrates 15 year anniversary

Lifestyle Solutions celebrated its 15th anniversary with a special function for staff and people we support, along with a promise for an exciting future ahead.

The event was held at our Newcastle West Support Centre at 796 Hunter Street, Newcastle West and was attended by staff and people we support from our Wallsend Community Hub.

Four of the original people we support from Lifestyle Solutions' first group home in Warabrook joined the event, and the Wallsend Hub performed a wonderful tribute of Snow Patrol's, *Chasing Cars*.

Lifestyle Solutions CEO, Andrew Hyland, thanked long-standing staff

members who started the journey with us 15 years ago, and those who have just started to share our story.

"We couldn't have achieved everything we have without the incredible support of our passionate and dedicated staff across Australia," said Andrew.

Andrew said the organisation had remained true to its vision, mission and values since its inception and he was looking forward to building on this strong foundation and taking the organisation forward.

"This is a very exciting time for our organisation. Lifestyle Solutions has been an innovative leader in the disability services sector

and we remain committed to developing resources, services and opportunities that assist people to reach their full potential," said Andrew.



Front row: Anthony, Nicole Long (Head of Workforce Support & Engagement) and Jeffrey. Back row: Andrew Hyland (CEO), Andrew Knight (Board member) and Amy.

Finding a way back

When Lifestyle Solutions first met 13 year old Michael* his world was shrinking.

Diagnosed with autism, Michael had distanced himself from his friends and withdrawn to his bedroom with only his computer for company. His self-esteem and communication skills were suffering and his family were increasingly worried about his behaviour and deepening isolation.

Michael's family invited Lifestyle Solutions to meet with them to discuss ways of helping him re-connect with his family, friends and interests.

Until this meeting Michael had not had access to any support services so Lifestyle Solutions helped his family develop a support plan through WA NDIS.

"For the parents and families of children on the autism spectrum, finding ways to help their children develop their communication and social skills can be challenging," said Puja Khadka, Lifestyle Solutions' Facilitator for Disability Support Services in Western Australia.

"Identifying the most appropriate therapies and putting the right people in place to deliver these supports can really help develop positive behaviours and achieve great outcomes."

"Jason is one of our dedicated Support Workers. He has a great background working with young people and we knew he was the right person to work with Michael. He's patient, builds rapport easily and, like all of us, Jason is focused on helping the people we support achieve their full potential."

Puja said their initial meeting with Michael and his family was low key with much time spent observing and building trust and a connection between Michael and Jason.

"Initially, it was Jason who did most of the talking but over weeks and months conversations between the two developed and Michael started to leave his video games alone, preferring to spend time with Jason."

Recently, Michael left home with Jason to enjoy some local community activities.

It was the first time in three years that Michael had left home with someone other than his immediate family.

"At first, Michael wanted to sit in the back seat of the car but, with a little encouragement, he's now sitting up front and having a great time getting out and about."

"Most importantly, this determined young man has found his voice and a great sense of pride in his achievements," Puja said.

* *Not his real name*



Puja Khadka says the right connections can deliver great results.



A message from our CEO

I have recently taken the time to visit some of our remote service support centres across Tasmania, Northern Territory and Western Australia and have profound appreciation for the staff's sincere dedication to the people we support. Meeting these members of staff was both inspiring and uplifting, and makes me very proud of the work that we do as an organisation.

It has been an extremely busy year for Lifestyle Solutions, cemented by the opening of our Newcastle West Support Centre and the celebration of 15 years since our inception. Marking the anniversary, a memorable morning tea was held with four of the original people we support in attendance, from our very first group home in Warabrook, Newcastle.

I look forward to building on this strong foundation over the next 15 years and taking the organisation forward. There is an exciting new future on the horizon for Lifestyle Solutions and we will continue with our focus on delivering quality supports and exceptional levels of service to the people we support.

I want to take this opportunity to send warm wishes to you and your family for a Merry Christmas and joyous new year.

Regards

Andrew Hyland

Celebrating our nation's First Peoples

At Lifestyle Solutions, we respect the rich and diverse cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise their significant contribution to Australian society and culture.

Across the organisation we acknowledged the history and achievements of Australia's First Peoples during National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week celebrations.

Here's a quick snapshot ...



Charlestown Office and Hunter Hub staff.

Staff from our Hunter Hubs and Newcastle-based offices caught up over lunch during National Reconciliation Week to watch documentaries from the *Virtual Film Festival*. *Young and Black*, *Songlines: Bulunu Milkarri*, *Koiki Mabo* and *Around the Campfire: Saibai Dance with Jeffery Aniba Waia*, were among the films shown which generated some interesting discussions.

Our North Hobart office also hosted an event for staff and people we support during National Reconciliation Week. *You Can't Ask That*, a documentary from the *Virtual Indigenous Film Festival*, screened after lunch and everyone had fun contributing to a bright, colourful handprint canvas.

Nigel, a proud Palawa man, particularly enjoyed this activity and everyone who attended the event took away something special from the day.

Stuart, who attends programs at one of our centres, put it quite succinctly... "So, [National Reconciliation Week] is about empathy, not sympathy."

Entertaining visitors with songs and a demonstration of their signing skills started off a busy and exciting day for people we support at our Wallsend Community Hub as they celebrated National Reconciliation Week.

After sharing a delicious morning tea with their visitors, everyone settled in to hear the story of *Rainbow Fish*, a gentle tale which focussed on the theme that sharing brings happiness – which is exactly what everyone felt during morning tea.



Everyone enjoyed contributing to the canvas.

The Hub's talented cooking group prepared a great barbequed lunch and everyone enjoyed creating their own rainbow fish during the afternoon's craft activities. Freshly baked coconut and raspberry muffins for afternoon tea and watching *Around the Campfire – Birubi* from the *Virtual Film Festival* capped-off a fantastic day.

The theme for NAIDOC Week this year was *Our Languages Matter* and to help us understand more about First Peoples' languages, Terri Lee from the Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre was invited to address staff at National Office. Terri Lee's presentation created a



Coral Lea captured the happiness of the day in her rainbow fish.

lot of interest and discussion and there was a real appreciation for the importance of capturing and preserving over 250 languages spoken by First Peoples across Australia.



Tatenda Takawira, Business Analyst, had fun adding to the languages map.



Terri Lee highlighted the cultural significance of language.

Pilbara local Julie wins Disability Support Award

Julie Carton was recognised at the WA Disability Support Awards dinner held in Crown Perth's Grand Ballroom in April for the outstanding care she provides to people we support in the Pilbara.

Julie, one of Lifestyle Solutions' dedicated Support Workers, was thrilled and honoured to receive the Excellence in Regional Support Award.

Accepting her award, Julie said it was important to focus on what people with a disability could achieve and not their disability.

"I started working in the disability support sector after helping a friend's young son who lives with a disability. I was helping him to develop crucial skills, such as learning to walk, which entailed physiotherapy, swimming and speech therapy. Taking the pressure off his parents and siblings made me realise I could make a difference," said Julie.

Established by National Disability Services in partnership with the Disability Services Commission, the WA Disability Support Awards celebrate the wonderful work of those who go beyond ordinary standards of service and who have a profound impact on the lives of the people they work with and support.



Julie Carton receiving her Excellence in Regional Support award.

Julie, who has lived in the Pilbara for 15 years, works with people with challenging behaviours in Karratha and Roebourne.

We would also like to acknowledge several other staff members who were nominated for these Awards.

Our congratulations go to nominees:

Team Chandala – Rajesh Budhathoki, Sumitra Bhandari and Tony Gbaryou – Excellence in Personal and Community Support Award

Romualdo Ottaviano – Excellence in Leadership

Glenda Fraser – Excellence in Personal Support Award

Fiona Taylor – Excellence for Improving Participation Award

BUNNINGS DIG DEEP



Shaun enjoyed planting seedlings with Vanessa Elward from Bunnings.

It doesn't matter whether you have a lone flower pot or a big veggie patch, the sensory nature of gardening has a positive, therapeutic effect on people's

emotional health and physical wellbeing.

It's an activity everyone can enjoy and the people we support at our Port Stephens Hub are looking forward to finding their green thumbs and enjoying the visual, smell, taste and touch qualities of their own garden.

"A lot of the people we support love gardening, and having a herb and vegetable garden has been on our wish list for quite a while," said Hub Coordinator, Becky O'Leary.

"Unfortunately, we don't have much outdoor space for a garden so the fantastic team at Bunnings Warehouse at Port Stephens recently volunteered their time and materials to construct and plant three raised garden beds for us."

"Having raised garden beds makes it easier for everyone to get

involved with weeding, watering and picking the produce. Gardening isn't just a great social activity, it helps develop motor skills and fitness in an outdoor learning environment which everyone can enjoy."

"We've planted strawberries, mint and spinach seedlings and we're all looking forward to watching the plants sprout and grow over coming months."

"We have regular cooking classes which are very popular and it will be great to use our own fresh produce in our dishes."

"Bunnings has been a great supporter of our Hub and we really appreciate their help with our garden project," said Becky.

Image supplied by Bunnings Warehouse Port Stephens.

DOWN ON THE FARM

Drizzling rain and a chilly April wind couldn't dampen the happiness of the people we support at our Wallsend Community Hub when they visited Oakvale Farm and Fauna World at Salt Ash near Port Stephens.

The Hub's Support Facilitator, Toni Hunt, said it was wonderful having so much access to the animals in the farm's nursery and being able to interact with them so freely.

"Everyone loved being with the baby animals and it was a real treat being able to hand-feed them. Our staff did a fabulous job getting everyone involved, especially when it came to helping some overcome their initial shyness around the animals," said Toni.

A tractor train ride around the farm park was a huge hit with everyone – as was the dual birthday celebration after lunch for Jess and Jess, two of the Hub's popular attendees.



Beanies for brain cancer



It was a sea of beanies around the break-out bench at National Office in Newcastle when staff held a fundraising morning tea on 22 June in support of the Mark Hughes Foundation.

The Foundation's annual Beanie

for Brain Cancer campaign raises funds to promote research into brain cancer, awareness of the disease and support for patients undergoing treatment.

"The Mark Hughes Foundation is inspiring and I wanted to help

make a difference. I'm thrilled we were able to raise \$225 for the Foundation over coffee and cake to help them with their work," said Amanda Holmes, Lifestyle Solutions' Fleet Administrator and the driving force behind this great fundraising initiative.

Lifestyle Solutions teams up to transform *Laurel House*



When it comes to going the extra mile for the people we support, our dedicated staff are hard to beat.

Armed with paint brushes and loads of enthusiasm, staff from our Newcastle and Hunter services volunteered their time and renovating know-how to refresh *Laurel House*, one of our supported group homes.

Fleet Manager, Glenn Matzon, did a fantastic job project managing this great team project and his attention to detail ensured a great result.

Vincent, David and Leon, three wonderful gentlemen we support, now call *Laurel House* home.

Training in on David



David is one of the inspiring gentlemen who has joined Vincent and Leon in *Laurel House* and he loves sharing his passion for trains with his new housemates.

Having more room to display his impressive library of train magazines, DVDs and his *National Geographic* collection, is one of the things David enjoys about *Laurel House*.

An entertaining man with a great sense of humour, David can find fun in most things. He's also a bit of a foodie who loves a nice home-cooked meal. He's discovering how

to spice up his food and make healthy food choices and has developed a fondness for herbs, chilli, tasty low fat dressings and sauces.

David also loves getting out and about and he's recently enjoyed harbour walks, the Wetlands Walk at Redhead, a city walking tour and a visit to the Walka Water Works in Maitland.

Anyone for coffee?



For Vincent, moving into the newly renovated *Laurel House* is the start of an exciting new chapter in his life – with new friends and a quiet place to enjoy his music.

Lifestyle Solutions has been supporting Vincent for the past eight years, and his Support Workers have nothing but praise for this charismatic gentleman who's a Wii game console star and coffee connoisseur with fondness for cappuccinos.

"I really like playing bowls, tennis and golf on my Wii. Forehand is my favourite tennis shot and I like doing the big golf swings," said Vincent.

His interests don't stop there. He enjoys bowling, playing bingo and cards, and sharing relaxed morning teas with his friends at Allawah

House each week.

He also has an ear for music and while he likes most styles, his preference is for country and western or classical music.

Out and about



Much like his fellow housemates, Leon has a variety of hobbies that he enjoys. The move to *Laurel House* has been very convenient for Leon and he can easily walk to the local shops and is close to public transport.

Leon loves to get out and about in his community and regularly heads down to his local café at Waratah Village for a coffee and a quiet place to read his newspaper. Like David, Leon also loves trains and buses and frequently catches the bus for a day trip to visit his family in Jewells.

When asked what he enjoys most about living in his new home at *Laurel House*, Vincent says, "I love the company, and we all get on really well."

Leon loves getting out in the garden, so to satisfy his green thumb his Support Worker accompanies him to Bunnings to buy pots and plants.

Leon also finds time to go on long walks and is part of a bowling league.

Speech Pathology - more than just words

For Judy Vajak, Lifestyle Solutions' Speech Pathologist, the rewards that come from helping people to improve their communication skills are enormous.

"I work with people of all ages with a broad range of speech and language issues and it's wonderful watching their confidence grow as their ability to communicate develops," said Judy.

"Speech pathology can help people with developmental delays, learning disabilities, dementia and hearing loss but what many people may not know is that Speech Pathologists also treat people with dysphagia, or swallowing disorders."

Many conditions can cause dysphagia. Some are congenital, such as cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorder, whilst others are acquired. For example, people who have suffered a stroke or brain injury can experience swallowing issues, as can people with Multiple Sclerosis, esophageal cancer or Parkinsonian syndromes. Long-term use of some medications can also affect a person's swallowing ability.

"Dysphagia can present in many different ways and lead to significant health consequences such as malnutrition and dehydration."

"It can often go undiagnosed which increases the risk of aspiration, where food or liquid enters the airways, which in turn can lead to pneumonia or lung damage."

"My work treating people with dysphagia involves making caregivers and staff aware of problems in the swallowing process and compensating for their difficulties with either postural changes or changes in food/fluid consistency."

"This usually starts with a swallowing assessment where I observe them eating and drinking and may involve trying different consistencies of food and liquid to determine which part of the process is most difficult for them during eating and drinking."

"Treatment can be as straightforward as adjusting the texture of people's food so that it's easier to swallow, or recommending different cutlery, cups or crockery to assist them to eat more easily."

"Some people respond well to postural changes when eating and others can be helped with exercises to develop and strengthen their mouth and throat muscles," said Judy.

If you or someone in your care suffers from dysphagia, or has difficulties with speech and language, please contact Judy at speechinfo@lifestylesolutions.com.au.



For Judy, helping people with disabilities to communicate better is very rewarding.

Common symptoms of dysphagia include:

- coughing or gagging when eating
- gurgly, wet voice during or after eating
- difficulty swallowing
- drooling
- food leaking from the mouth
- regurgitation
- unexplained weight loss
- recurrent heartburn
- aspiration pneumonia



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