

Pave the Way Newsletter

March 2010

What do we mean when we talk about vision?

Inside this Issue

- 1 What do we mean when we talk about vision?
- 2 Opportunities for further developing your vision
- 3 Developing a Vision and a Plan – Two day workshop
- 4 Contact Us
- 4 Upcoming Events
- 4 Regional Visits

At Pave the Way we talk often about the idea of vision - the importance of “having a vision” for the life of our family members with disability, how to “develop and clarify” a positive vision and the link between vision and planning. Just what do we mean by all this and why is vision so important?

Talking in terms of having a vision about something may sound rather odd or grandiose at times. Having a vision for a good life, however, really just involves being clear about what you want, and just as importantly, what you don't want, for that life now and in the future. It is often simply a case of naming the *ordinary* but essential elements of life such as having people who love and care about us, a place to live that is really our home, an opportunity to be known and valued in our community, and being financially, physically and emotionally secure.

For most people, the right to such a life is taken for granted. In the case of a person with disability, however, to want these things is often seen as having *extraordinary* hopes and dreams. Creating such a life can be much harder than it is for people without disability. It is important then to be clear about what we really believe – what our vision for life really is. For family members it is also important to listen to what the person themselves is saying through their words, feelings or behaviour. It is time to think ‘big’ and not be afraid of challenging our own or other people's prejudices or limited beliefs of what a person with disability can achieve. The details of what constitutes a good life will not be the same for everyone and might well change over time. It is important, however, to start planning for the essential elements of life with the clear conviction that this is worth achieving for everyone.

This link between vision and planning is clearly expressed in some of the family stories on our website. In Clare's story, it was important that the people planning with her mother kept in mind the kind of life they knew Clare would want for herself when they were thinking about a place for her to live. Other families talk about how vision can help them stay on track and to stay focused when options are limited. For another it was simply that “*if the big picture is firmly in mind, then the steps get lit up on the way.*” Vision is the first step towards action, through planning. To view these stories on our website go to www.pavetheway.org.au/home/stories-pave.php.

Hard copies of information, including stories on our website, can be obtained by contacting the office on (07) 3291 5800.

For further information or advice on vision please contact Pave the Way on (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402 or by email pavetheway@mamre.org.au

Opportunities for further developing your vision

Upcoming events

For families who have already done some thinking about vision and planning for a good life for their family member with disability, Pave the Way is holding a full day **Family Forum** in Brisbane on 27 March. This event will provide an interactive opportunity for families to share ideas and explore what it takes to work together to build a secure future for their family member with practical strategies to put into action. We are encouraging families to invite some of the key people in their lives to join them for the day. Details and registration forms are available on our website or by phoning (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402. RSVP is 15 March.

QCIDD is holding its annual Family Day on the theme of "Friendships, Relationships and Resilience" on 18 March from 9.00am – 3.00pm at the Mater Hospital, South Brisbane. It is free for family members but RSVP is essential by Friday 5 March as numbers are limited. To register, contact QCIDD on (07) 3136 2445 or email qcidd@uq.edu.au.

CRU, in association with Disability Services, is holding a series of three day workshops in Mt Isa, Townsville and Brisbane, in March to May this year. The workshops (for people with disability, family and community members, support staff and service providers) will be presented by Michael Kendrick and are entitled *Living Real Lives in the Community – What does it take and what gets in the way for people who live with disability?* For further information contact CRU on (07) 3211 5700 or email kymmccallum@cru.org.au.

Government Funding Initiative

The Queensland Department of Communities (Disability Services) has recently announced the **Community Living Initiative** to provide assistance for people with disability to live in their own homes in their community. Funding is for individuals who have a clear vision for their future and have developed a plan to create a lifestyle of their choice www.disability.qld.gov.au/support-services/community-living-initiative/.

New on our website - www.pavetheway.org.au

A Place to Call Home: Thinking it Through – a document to help families explore the question of where their family member with disability might live now and in the future. This document can be found under general resources on our website www.pavetheway.org.au/resources/index.php.

Embracing Community Living – a story by Katatina Listopad about the positive experience of her children moving into their own homes. *Sam Moving Into Her Own House* – Cathie Rogers tells the story of her daughter's journey of moving into her own. View these stories on our website www.pavetheway.org.au/home/stories-pave.php.

A free and separate information session about the Community Living Initiative funding will be offered in conjunction with each of these CRU workshops.

For further information please contact Pave the Way on (07) 3291 5800

Developing a Vision and a Plan – Two day workshop

Setting aside time for the reflection and discussion that is required to develop a vision with, and for, their family member with disability is often a challenge for families. Pave the Way's two day workshop, **Developing a Vision and a Plan**, is designed to offer people time to clarify and reflect on their vision and an opportunity to begin to plan based on this vision. Comments from families who have attended suggest that the format and content of this workshop provide "the 'space' and the toolbox to explore future planning".

The design of the workshop requires two people to attend together. Having a full weekend, away from the hurly burly of their everyday lives, to spend time in individual reflection and also to have the opportunity to discuss their thoughts with each other has proven to be of great value to people. Two parents usually attend but sometimes one parent attends with another family member or friend. To make the most of this opportunity, participants are asked to attend all of the sessions and to live in for the weekend. Another pre-requisite is to have attended the one day workshop, "Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future".

The workshop is not a series of lectures but an interactive process in which people are invited to share as much or as little as they feel comfortable with. The starting point for this work around vision and planning is to gain clarity about what people believe is a "good life" and about the gifts and individuality of the person for whom they are planning. Strategies for working with and involving other people are explored through an interactive process so that participants can share their ideas and wisdom with each other. The important issue of dealing with the challenges of continuing what has been started at the workshop is part of the final session. The mixture of theory and practical experience seems to work well for a wide range of people with one father commenting, *"It was realistic and down to earth – not pie in the sky."*

Time is also set aside for relaxation, something that is often missing in the busy lives that families lead. Getting to know the other people and having time to socialise and share stories is an aspect of the workshops that families have found to be very beneficial. People have commented that they have enjoyed the friendship and togetherness of others treading the same path.

This workshop is offered in different regions of Queensland but is always open to families from throughout the state. The next two day workshop will be held on the weekend of 28 – 30 May in the Rockhampton area. Expressions of interest forms will be available on the website shortly as well as sent to those on our mailing list.

Information about all Pave the Way workshops are available on the website and on the back of each quarterly newsletter.

"The opportunity for both of us to attend the workshop and for us to be on the same page was invaluable."

"It was a great opportunity to share thoughts, ideas and dreams with my partner so we can move forward together."

"Though not a course that a bloke would have sought out, it has been really beneficial."

For further information about the Developing a Vision and a Plan workshop, phone (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 400.



Pave the Way

Pave the Way assists families throughout Queensland to clarify their vision for their family member with a disability and to plan to implement that vision. We encourage planning which is vision driven, 'whole of life', developmental, outside service planning and which safeguards family members in the long term. We believe it is other people who keep people safe and support the development of personal networks, including Support Circles.

Contact Us

Please contact us if you would like to be on our mailing list, or would like information or assistance developing a vision and plan or developing a support circle or similar network. If you are part of a group of families and would like us to come and talk about these issues, let us know.

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Upcoming Events

Building Lifelong Supports & Safeguards		
Brisbane	14 March 2010	(PTW)
Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future		
Rockhampton	17 March 2010	(PTW)
Family Forum		
Brisbane	27 March 2010	(PTW)
Developing a Vision and a Plan		
Rockhampton region	28 – 30 May 2010	(PTW)
Coolum	22 – 24 October 2010	(PTW)

Regional Visits

Sharon Bourke		
Cairns	April 2010 – dates TBA	
Julie van Oosten		
Goondiwindi/Stanthorpe	March/April 2010 – dates TBA	
Bundaberg	4 – 6 June 2010	

To book into a workshop, please phone the relevant contact. For Pave the Way (PTW) phone (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402. For regional visits please contact Julie van Oosten or Sharon Bourke on (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402. You can also view the workshop and events calendar online at www.pavetheway.org.au/home/workshop-calendar.php.



MARCH 2010

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