

# Pave the Way Newsletter

September 2007

## Inside This Issue

- 1 An opportunity to reflect
- 2 Information .....
- 3 Self awareness .....
- 4 Pave the Way
- 4 Contact us
- 4 New 1300 phone number
- 4 Upcoming events

---

*"Participants have been encouraged by spending time with 'other families who are like-minded' thus feeling that they 'are not alone on the journey'."*

---

## An opportunity to reflect

***Visions to Action through Planning*** is a six day live-in workshop offered to families to assist them to clarify their vision and to provide them with an opportunity to experience planning processes as a strategy to safeguard their sons, daughters and/or family members in the future. Since 2003, these events have been held in different locations in South East Queensland and in Rockhampton with twenty-nine families having now shared this workshop experience. Participants have come from different ends of the state, from different age groups and from very different backgrounds and perspectives. Feedback has reinforced Pave the Way's belief that it is valuable to provide an opportunity for families to take time and have space away from the usual demands of daily life in order to reflect and share their wisdom with other participants.

Families suggest that the significant commitment in time and effort for them to attend is worthwhile. Families are often so busy building good lives for their family members that they may not naturally take time to discuss and reflect on major issues about the future. Some of the benefits for families include time and space as well as the opportunity to work and explore issues as a couple or with family allies. Looking more closely at our vision, our hopes and fears, motivations and dreams can be confronting and provide challenges. Much in life is assumed and it is often in the unpacking of these issues that our direction becomes clearer and we can build solid safeguards for the future. The workshop provides opportunities and processes for families "to go as deeply as they want".

The Pave the Way team and the participants work together to create a comfortable atmosphere with room for free time and a few laughs. Participants have been encouraged by spending time with "other families who are like-minded" thus feeling that they "are not alone on the journey". Despite the possible challenges, the workshop also provides opportunities for families to be encouraged in their efforts and empowered about the direction they are taking. The Pave the Way team of facilitators focuses on exploring the wisdom of families rather than providing glib answers or quick solutions. Participants have valued this approach along with the challenges. In the words of one family, the workshop gives people a genuine opportunity to "work together and to come out the other end feeling strengthened and more aware of the possibilities".

If you would like further information, please contact Sharon Bourke  
on (07) 3291 5800

## Information – the story behind the facts

An important strategy for information gathering is knowing how to fill in the details. This is important when we need to know how to get the “story behind the facts” of information we find and also when we are asked to provide our own information when applying for funding or services.

Pave the Way can help with some of this extra detail by sharing stories from other families and by helping to interpret terminology that can be confusing. The following notes are examples of some issues we have discussed with families in relation to the Housing Information Sheet that was sent with the March 2007 newsletter.

### Co-tenant/co-resident

- **Terminology:** Be aware that government departments can use the term “co-tenancy” to mean people with disabilities organised by others to live together to share support hours. This is a quite different idea from a privately organised flat mate arrangement. Be clear about what you really want.
- **Reality:** Experiences of other families can help in thinking through such arrangements e.g. in terms of different kinds of tenancy agreements, how to find, and then negotiate arrangements with, a flat mate, the implications of sharing support hours if the flat mate also has a disability.

### Applying for Public Housing - now called Social Housing.

It is important to be prepared when completing the general Housing Assistance, Specific Needs and Medical Disability forms. These are some of the important points to consider:

- **Waiting lists:** Apply when your relative turns 18. At least you might then have public housing as an option if you want it.
- **Decision making:** Be clear if you are the person acting formally or informally for your relative, or if they make decisions for themselves. Formal guardianship is not a requirement to apply for public housing.
- **Areas:** Be specific about the location of people and services your relative needs to be close to for ongoing support e.g. family members, transport, doctors, employment.
- **Type of housing:** Think about issues such as noise, number of tenants in a block, physical access.
- **Support:** Applying for housing is a separate issue from support. Be clear that you have current arrangements in place and are actively seeking support for the future.
- **Appropriate housing:** What might be appropriate now may not be as parents age.

---

*It is important to be clear about how the information we find fits with our overall vision and planning.*

---



---

*The best advice is to include letters of support and as much information as possible to “paint the full picture” in your application.*

---



For further information, or to receive a Housing Information Sheet, please contact Catherine Raju on 3291 5800

## Self awareness – responding not reacting

On day two of Pave the Way's six day Visions to Action through Planning workshop participants are invited to pause and take a brief 'inward audit'. Pave the Way believes that in order for our efforts around our family members with disability to be effective, potent and lasting we need to take an honest look at ourselves.

We need to understand how our personalities, values and beliefs colour and shape our thoughts, our emotions, our actions, the choices we make and the people with whom we surround ourselves. The impact of our personalities, values and beliefs is enormous and largely unconscious. However, by raising our consciousness of their presence and power we increase the quality of our decision-making, our relationships and our ability to handle more effectively the circumstances and challenges that characterise our lives.

The journey that Pave the Way invites families to embark on, is no mean feat. It calls for a level of clarity and communication that is honed and sustainable. Chief among the strategies that Pave the Way endorses and encourages is the act of "inviting others in", whether by way of a support circle, a loose network of friends and allies, wider family members or one or two people you deeply trust. People to share your vision, because you simply cannot do it alone and you want to be able to pass the baton onto those who know, love, understand and respect your loved one, intimately and practically. This makes perfect sense but is difficult to do. Here are some reasons why and some hints to facilitate this process:

- Before we can work well with others we need to build a working relationship with ourselves via self observation and awareness.
- We may wish that things were different and others would help us, but at the very point of change we are often the first to resist and sabotage offers of assistance.
- By continually over-functioning in a particular area or role, others around us will under-function. Our task may be to let go, do less and let others come to the fore.
- If we gather only like-minded people around the table to plan and walk with us, we run the risk of securing a relatively one-dimensional outcome with limited potential.

Our personalities, be they driven for example by fear, anger, success, control, perfection or procrastination, will stand in the way if left un-managed. Self-awareness breaks the cycle and leads us to respond rather than react to new challenges and needed changes.

---

*We need to invite people who will challenge our thinking, have a different view of the world and who are likely to have a different way of looking at our loved one in terms of their capabilities and gifts.*

---

## 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.

Pave the Way  
 Level 1  
 1428 Logan Road  
 MT GRAVATT QLD 4122

Postal Address:  
 Pave the Way  
 PO Box 949  
 MT GRAVATT QLD 4122

Ph: (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402 [www.mamre.org.au](http://www.mamre.org.au)  
[pavetheway@mamre.org.au](mailto:pavetheway@mamre.org.au)

Jeremy Ward [jeremy@mamre.org.au](mailto:jeremy@mamre.org.au)  
 Sharon Bourke [sharon@mamre.org.au](mailto:sharon@mamre.org.au)  
 Catherine Raju [catherine@mamre.org.au](mailto:catherine@mamre.org.au)  
 Julie Van Oosten [juliev@mamre.org.au](mailto:juliev@mamre.org.au)  
 Michelle Schneider [michelle@mamre.org.au](mailto:michelle@mamre.org.au)  
 Christine Douglas (Consultant) [ctd.innerworks@gmail.com](mailto:ctd.innerworks@gmail.com)

## New 1300 phone number

Pave the Way now has a 1300 number, which allows you to contact us from anywhere in Queensland for the cost of a local call. The number is **1300 554 402**. This service has been introduced to assist those families who live outside the Brisbane area.

## Upcoming events

### “Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future” – Jeremy Ward

Brisbane 22 September 2007 (PTW)  
 Brisbane 03 November 2007 (Commonwealth Carers)  
 Mt Isa 12-13 November 2007 (DSTF)

### “Building Life Long Supports & Safeguards – Exploring Support Circles and Networks” – Sharon Bourke

Townsville 13 September 2007 (Community Connections)  
 Ayr 14 September 2007 (PTW)  
 Charleville Date in October TBA (Parent to Parent)  
 Mackay 20 November 2007 (PTW)



SEPTEMBER 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						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



OCTOBER 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	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 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				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 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						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					

To book into one of the above workshops, please phone the relevant contact:  
 Pave the Way (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402, Community Connections (07) 4779 6500, DSTF 1800 851 848  
 or (07) 3234 0190, Parent to Parent (07) 4654 3500 or Commonwealth Carers 1800 059 059