

Pave the Way Newsletter

March 2014

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 What is Social Capital?
- 2 New Pave the Way website and other news
- 3 Documenting Personal Information workshops
- 4 Contact Us
- 4 Upcoming Events
- 4 Regional Visits

Simply stated, your circles of support and the reciprocity they create are the most important elements in yours and your family member's lives

What is Social Capital

Al Condeluci, an American academic who has written several books on interdependence and social capital, informs us that "Social capital refers to the relationships in our lives, and the value these relationships represent via reciprocity, instrumental, emotional, and informational support."

Today, researchers are convinced that all good things of life; health, happiness, advancement, achievement, and even life expectancy, are directly related to social capital. Indeed, the term "social capital" is a deliberate effort to remind us that our relationships are tangibly valuable to us. This is not a new concept with BC philosopher Cicero quoting, "Friendship makes prosperity more shining and lessens adversity by dividing and sharing it."

The notion that social capital keeps us safe, well-balanced and secure cannot be understated. There is a common expectation that organisations are key contributors to people's safety, however people should be valuing and building relationships in their lives to contribute to keeping themselves safe and healthy. Simply stated, your circles of support and the reciprocity they create are the most important elements in yours and your family member's lives.

Beyond the health and safety benefits of social capital there is mounting evidence that social capital has a positive effect on the more tangible outcomes associated with success in life. That is, when one examines key contributors to success some common elements are found. These elements being for instance: jobs and meaningful things to do, housing and living choices and transportation to engage in community.

A recent Community Engagement Survey conducted by Mamre Association (2013) showed that people with significant disabilities in Queensland have nearly two-thirds less social capital than their able-bodied peers.

If you would like to explore ways to increase your family member's "social capital", you might like to contact Pave the Way for a conversation about this or attend one of our workshops, most of which touch on the idea of social capital as a way of inviting others in.

New Web site and other news

Pave the Way's new look website

Pave the Way is pleased to announce our new look website. You will note some cosmetic changes as well as the inclusion of our new logo. The variations in the colour and size of the circles on the logo signify the interconnections we have, or have the potential to have in our lives and the journey that vision building is – a gradual development of thoughts, ideas and actions.

We aim to keep the website dynamic with regular updates, new stories, articles and links. Like all websites it will be a work in progress.

The website includes information about upcoming regional visits, a calendar of workshops and events and articles by families about their experience of planning and support circles, links to other useful resources and Pave the Way's quarterly newsletters and booklets.

As not everyone is keen on reading off the computer screen most of the information from the website is available in hard copy, which Pave the Way can post to you when requested.

Normanton visit

Towards the end of last year Pave the Way was invited to Normanton by the Local Area Coordinator Kate Eales, to meet with families in the region and talk with them about the importance of planning for the future of their family member with disability.

Development worker Helen Baird and manager David Isitt were the lucky two to travel there for three amazing days meeting with nine families in all. This was a first time for both of us to travel to the region and we were very excited at the opportunity to meet with families and see the beauty of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

It was a busy three days with a lot of interesting conversations about the trials and tribulations of living in such an isolated community and also the benefits of not having to share the best fishing spots!

Families shared a common concern for the future well-being of their sons, daughters and grandchildren. They spoke of wanting the simple but essential elements of a good life for their family members, such as having people who love and care about them, a place to call home, an opportunity to be known and valued in their community, and being financially, physically and emotionally secure.

Pave the Way would like to say thank you to the families we spoke with and the community of Normanton for making us feel so welcome during our short visit. We look forward to our next visit to Normanton.

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

Documenting Personal Information Workshop

Pave the Way's workshop *Documenting Personal Information for your Family Member with Disability* is proving to be one of the more popular workshops we offer. Feedback from families suggests that this popularity stems from the practical application of the ideas presented and also that the workshop addresses a fear of many families about being the main holders of their family member's important information. The workshop explores the very real and important need for families to ensure that all of the information that they have stored in their heads becomes written down somewhere for other loved ones to access in the event of an emergency or the loss of a parent for instance.

Others have said they enjoyed the opportunity in the workshop to explore the heart of who their family member is, and what they love and value about them. This information is as important to share with others, or some would argue, more important to share than just information related to their family member's disability, as their disability is only one part of who they are. Many families who have attended this workshop *find themselves* feeling quite emotional with the realization that this is one of the rare times they were encouraged to write about their family member in a positive way.

While it is quite a commitment of time to do the work of gathering and compiling so much information initially, many families have been doing this for years but perhaps not in such a systematic way and the workshop covers ways of doing this. Some parents have said compiling the information and sharing it with others, has, to some extent, set them free, as worrying about solely holding all that information has caused them sleepless nights.

Workshops are an opportunity to take some time out in the business of life to take stock of what is and what you would like to be. Workshops are also a place to hear an idea that might change the way you do something, or help you to move forward with your plans. It is Pave the Way's aim to ensure our workshops are relevant, practical and not a waste of your time.

If a workshop is not your cup of a tea, we also have a booklet "A Document of Personal Information – Ideas and Strategies" which the workshop is based on and which includes a template for suggested headings. This booklet can be accessed either on our website or by phoning or emailing us to request one to be posted to you. For a digital version of the template you will also need to contact us to arrange for us to send that to you.

This workshop is held regularly across Queensland but we would like to encourage families to contact us to request this workshop, or any of Pave the Way's other workshops if you do not see it advertised in your area.

The popularity of this workshop stems from the practical application of the ideas presented

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.

Street address:

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.pavetheway.org.au

Upcoming Events

Attendance at Pave the Way's workshops is free for families, but bookings are essential

Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future

Locations and dates for this workshop will be announced by mail, email and on our website

Documenting Personal Information

Rockhampton	4 March
Gladstone	11 March
Maryborough	1 April
Bowen	29 April
Roma	29 April
Cairns	30 April
Bundaberg	June
North Brisbane	June
Mt Isa	June
Innisfail	June

Facilitators' workshop

Mt Gravatt 22 March

Regional Visits

Helen Baird

Cairns 25 April – 1 May

MARCH 2014						
m	t	w	t	f	s	s
31					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

APRIL 2014						
m	t	w	t	f	s	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				

MAY 2014						
m	t	w	t	f	s	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	

JUNE 2014						
m	t	w	t	f	s	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						

Public Holiday



To book into a workshop, or for consultation times during regional visits, please phone (07) 3291 5800 or free call 1300 554 402. You can also view the workshop and events calendar online at www.pavetheway.org.au